

Competitive Collaboration: The Dutch and English East India Companies & The Forging
of Global Corporate Political Economy (1650-1700)

by

Andrew Van Horn Ruoss

Department of History
Duke University

Date: _____

Approved:

Philip J. Stern, Supervisor

Edward J. Balleisen

Aaron K. Chatterji

Alison F. Games

Oscar C. Gelderblom

John J. Martin

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores how, during the seventeenth century, the rival Dutch (VOC) and English (EIC) East India Companies forged a corporate political economy that transcended national political and economic frameworks. The dissertation argues that the half-century between 1600 and 1650 was characterized by state dominance over the companies' dealings, and mutual alienation between officials of the EIC and the VOC. However, in response to external challenges and opportunities, during the 1650s, company officials developed shared commercial, capital, and communication networks that integrated institutions and ideologies from across Europe and Asia, forming a common body of practice and thought. The dissertation's analysis of company, state, and personal records reveals how this inter-corporate organization facilitated the evolution of the language and concepts of economic competition, political conflict, and international law. This dissertation challenges notions of "modern" private, collaborative regulatory regimes, while simultaneously introducing a non-state global organization as an influential force in early modern economic and political history.

This project draws into conversation previously unrelated sources from archives throughout the U.K. and the Netherlands, as well as Cape Town, adding a new dimension to the history of European empires, political institutions, and the patterns of global economic organization and governance. The dissertation is situated at the intersection of early modern history, political history, legal history, and economic history; fields which focus on the roles of the rival companies in the coalescence of national bodies of political and economic policy. By combining the study of economic and legal institutions with the analysis of the durable patterns and trends of intra-Asian and Eurasian exchanges, the project examines the formation of political economy as lived experience in a global integrative process.

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A NOTE REGARDING TRANSLATION, SPELLING, AND DATES

All documents in languages other than English (including those in Dutch, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and French) have been translated to modern American English. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. The spelling of early modern English words has also been modernized (“ye” is expressed as “the,” etc.).

During the seventeenth century, the English (“old style”) calendar ran ten days behind the calendar used in Continental Europe (“new style”). Company and state agents frequently alternated their use of both styles, without specifying the specific style in use. Thus, dates given in the dissertation, as well as in the footnotes, reflect the dates (day and month) given in the documents or by the archive. The 10-day difference has been taken into account when sequencing events in the dissertation’s narrative. The “old style” English calendar year also began on 25 March, rather than the “new style” start date of 1 January. For the sake of clarity, all years have been converted to new style.

ABBREVIATIONS

Archival Sources

AA: Amsterdam City Archive, Amsterdam, NL
ANRI: National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta, ID
BL: Western Manuscripts, The British Library, London, UK
BSC: Bodleian Library Special Collections, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
HP: Hartlib Papers, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK
IOR: India Office Records, The British Library, London, UK
KAO: Kent Archives Office, Maidstone, UK
KB: Royal Library of the Netherlands
LULSC: Leiden University Library Special Collections, Leiden, NL
NA: The Dutch National Archive, The Hague, NL
NLS: National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, UK
SHLSC: Senate House Library Special Collections, University of London, London, UK
TNA: The British National Archive, Kew, UK
UA: Archive of the City and Province of Utrecht, Utrecht, NL
WCARS: The Western Cape Archives and Records Service, Cape Town, SA

Publishers:

OUP: Oxford University Press
CUP: Cambridge University Press
PUP: Princeton University Press
HUP: Harvard University Press
YUP: Yale University Press

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My greatest debt is to my family. My parents have served as my primary intellectual role models and champions of my ambition, and it is to them that I dedicate this dissertation. Having committed their own lives to education, they taught me from the start how to blend intellectual curiosity with humility and a public purpose. They read countless drafts and half-baked ideas with seemingly inexhaustible patience and interest. Nate, Charlie, Seth & Jen added to the perspective and encouragement that only a family can give, and I am truly fortunate to have them in my life. And Dijana and Emily have proven to be the stalwart friends that people so rarely find. Margaret Brill has shaped my view on the world more than she can possibly know—urging adventure when reticence seemed more comfortable, and offering a friendship based on confidence and experience that have proven to be unique and powerful gifts.

Early in my education, I benefitted from extremely bright and gifted teachers—masters of the arts of research, instruction, and mentorship—who pushed me to build my own identity within those fields. Steve Esmond, Rosemary Crawford, Patrick Castagno, and William Schluter sparked my excitement for learning at a critical point in my life. At Middlebury, Paul Monod and Ian Barrow shepherded my introduction to history and spurred my intellectual growth with a level of investment, kindness, and energy seldom found among advisors. Roman Graf, Maria Hatjigeorgiou, and Scott Barnicle pushed me to broaden my outlook, to be ambitious in my approach to different languages and cultures, and to contribute broadly to an educational community.

At Duke University, I have benefitted from a team of tremendous advisors. From my first day on campus as a prospective graduate student, Phil Stern has guided my intellectual development as the most dedicated and supportive advisor anyone could ask for. Phil has provided me with seemingly unending opportunities for innovative teaching and research. He has read countless drafts with close attention, and he facilitated my entry into discussions and debates at the forefront of early modern and global research. His knowledge, at times appears boundless, and it has been an honor to train under his tutelage. From my early days at Duke, Ed Balleisen served as an inspiring and attentive mentor. He taught me how to make interdisciplinary work meaningful, how to seek out partnerships that would broaden my views, and how to write with clarity, efficacy, and strength. John Martin encouraged my global ideas about the early modern, pushing me to clearly define ambiguous concepts, and urging me not to withhold from diving in to the most complex archival puzzles.

Ronnie Chatterji eagerly welcomed an historian into Duke's Fuqua Business School, inviting me to conferences and discussions and advocating for the value of my historical approach to fundamental questions within the scholarship of business strategy and organizational management. Neil De Marchi was a most gracious and knowledgeable mentor early in my project. He prepared me to dive into the work of Dutch research, and he pushed me to sharpen my engagement with economic history. Sumathi Ramaswamy challenged me to define my perspective on Asia, and to recognize the centrality of empire and post-colonial theory in the questions that I pursued. In the History Department, Robin and Cynthia kept the train on the tracks at the most critical moments.

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VOC's voluminous archive. Alison Games provided guidance to a fellow American working on an Anglo-Dutch project, and she encouraged my efforts at a critical period in the construction of this dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

The power of multinational corporations has emerged as a driving focus of debate in both public and academic discussions of our global systems of finance, commerce, diplomacy, and politics. Indeed, this issue was a central focus of the 2016 United States presidential election.¹ Contemporary negotiations of international relations, environmental and economic regulations, international law, and human rights all emphasize this debate.² In the wake of the *Citizens United* Supreme Court case, regulatory experts increasingly ask whether the American political system, itself—including U.S. foreign policy—now operates under the direct power of multinational corporations.³

In theorizing our contemporary global economy and political environment, leading scholars of international relations argue that we have entered a new twenty-first century age, in which state sovereignty is no longer the primary organizing force, and they debate whether corporations are best understood as private citizens of nations,⁴ states unto themselves,⁵ or sprawling empires.⁶ Political scientists Tim Büthe and Walter Mattli argue that corporations have filled the vacuum of global governance created by the limitations of individual nation-states. Indeed, they assess that it is the informal agreements between multinational companies that

¹ For some of the most expansive, comprehensive, and consistent coverage of this issue in the 2016 U.S. election, see the nonpartisan reporting of David Fahrenthold at *The Washington Post*.

² Viktoria Dendrinou, “EU to Propose Multinationals Disclose More Tax Details,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 8, 2016, accessed April 8, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-propose-multinationals-disclose-more-tax-details-1460137950>; John Ruggie, *Just Business: Multinational Corporations and Human Rights* (New York: Norton, 2013); Klaus Schwab, “Global Corporate Citizenship: Working with Governments and Civil Society,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (January/February 2008), 107-118; Tim Bartley, “Transnational Private Regulation in Practice: The Limits of Forest and Labor Standards Certification in Indonesia,” *Business and Politics* 12, no. 3 (Oct. 2010), 1-34; Fabrizio Cafaggi, “Transnational Private Regulation and the Production of Global Public Goods and Private ‘Bads,’” *European Journal of International Law* 23, no. 3 (2012), 695-718.

³ Ellen L. Weintraub, “Taking on Citizens United,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2016, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://nyti.ms/1qhmpKB>.

⁴ Jon Burchell and Joanne Cook, “Confronting the “corporate citizen”: Shaping the discourse of corporate social responsibility,” *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 26 (2006), 121-137.

⁵ Joshua Barkan, *Corporate Sovereignty: Law and Government under Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

⁶ Steve Coll, *Private Empire: ExxonMobil and American Power* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

represent the most durable and influential systems of international law, politics, and economy.⁷

Inspired by the struggle to understand the role of the supranational corporation in the modern world, this dissertation focuses on the seventeenth century: a time identified by scholars as the cradle of international relations and state sovereignty. Together with the formation of recognizable fiscal-military states, as well as forums and mechanisms for inter-state alliance and settlement, this period witnessed the unprecedented linking of markets and political systems that connected Nagasaki to Lima, Boston to Amsterdam, and London to Madras with durable circuits of trade, correspondence, violence, and diplomacy. While scholars have plotted a linear march from seventeenth-century Europe to the formation of modern international relations, this historical moment also witnessed the advent of the global corporation. Indeed, it was corporations that frequently drove the expansion of trade and politics across vast geographies well beyond the conception of Europe's early modern states.

While recognizing their early modern commercial, imperial, and political contexts, my dissertation examines the unexplored process by which the competing English (EIC) and Dutch (VOC) East India Companies—the world's first joint-stock companies with global reach—forged a shared corporate political economy for the East Indies trade. The dramatically different political environments of the Dutch Republic and England, as well as other states and empires throughout early modern Europe and Asia, would all come to both define and be defined by this developing corporate system. Employing methodologies from early modern economic and political history as well as legal history, economic sociology, and political science, I show how, in developing a global corporate network, each firm also contributed to a common programmatic, intellectual, and political system. Thus, my dissertation centers on three primary interventions: (1) that the VOC and EIC acted as corporate bodies apart from, but related to, their home states; (2) that these

⁷ Tim Büthe and Walter Mattli, *The New Global Rulers: The Privatization of Regulation in the World Economy* (Princeton: PUP, 2011); Randall Stone, *Controlling Institutions: International Organizations and the Global Economy* (New York: CUP, 2011).

corporations deliberately forged a relationship with each other in a complicated balance of competition and collaboration, and (3) that contemporaries consciously recognized the powerful influence that this inter-company relationship exerted over the formation of the European international community. This system can only be studied by divorcing it from the naturalized national categories through which dominant historiographical narratives have been framed.

Historians of early modern Europe and empire frequently represent the second half of the seventeenth century as a string of international rivalries, conflicts, and agreements, following in the wake of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War. Indeed, many scholars identify Westphalia as both the capstone to medieval negotiation and the gateway to modern international relations, directly tracing Westphalia's expressions of state sovereignty to the charter of the United Nations.⁸ One leading theorist encapsulates the central tenet of international relations theory, however romanticized, that Westphalia represented "the first great European or world charter... to establish something resembling world unity on the basis of states exercising untrammelled sovereignty over certain territories and subordinated to no earthly authority."⁹ Prominent scholars, such as Edward Keene, have challenged this orthodox account.¹⁰ However, dominant arguments, as well as the organization of archival collections, themselves, still represent the Anglo-European treaties that followed in the half-century after the Thirty Years' War as gradually refining the terms and institutions of negotiation between sovereign state

⁸ Derek Croxton, "The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 and the Origins of Sovereignty," *The International History Review* 21, no. 3 (Sep. 1999), 569; Trudy Jacobsen, Charles Sampford, and Ramesh Thakur, eds., *Re-envisioning Sovereignty: The End of Westphalia?* (London: Routledge, 2016); Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin, 2014), 23-27; For a more expansive treatment of Westphalia's Christian lineage, see Robert Bireley, *Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation: Emperor Ferdinand II, William Lamormaini, S.J., and the Formation of the Imperial Policy* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1981); Derek Croxton, *Westphalia: The Last Christian Peace* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁹ Leo Gross, "The Peace of Westphalia, 1648-1948," in *Essays on International Law and Organization*, vol. I, edited by Leo Gross (Dordrecht: Springer, 1984), 3.

¹⁰ Edward Keene focuses on the divisibility of sovereignty and advocates for a more "awkward and unstable" understanding of world order, Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (New York: CUP, 2002), 4-5.

governments. This process is portrayed as yielding today's global "Westphalian System" of competing capitalist democracies.¹¹

In studying the records of both East India Companies, along with the foreign relations archives of early modern states, this dissertation argues that in these key moments at the supposed forging of sovereign state relations—the Treaty of Westminster in 1654, the Treaty of Breda in 1667, and the second Treaty of Westminster in 1674—the two East India companies exerted a powerful independent influence, driving the terms and arguments of negotiation with their own debates of political economy. The companies' directors in Europe, as well as their officials stationed at factories and forts along the Indian Ocean littoral, engaged in arguments over issues, which scholars identify as the core sinews of international negotiations, including international law, commercial strategy, diplomacy, war, and governance. As the community of states began to crystallize in Europe, the leaders of the English and Dutch East India Companies developed a distinct relationship between their two supranational organizations. They integrated institutions, ideas, and arguments not only from Europe, but from their engagements with states and communities in Central and East Asia. What is more, English and Dutch government officials, as well as EIC and VOC leaders, consciously recognized this inter-company system as related to, but discrete from, the evolving politics of Europe.

The impact of this argument, however, is not limited to the conclusion that these two early modern corporations functioned with the same identities as the imperial states of Europe.¹²

Rather, this dissertation shows that inter-company debates and projects deeply affected, and even

¹¹ Hendrik Spruyt, "The End of Empire and the Extension of the Westphalian System: The Normative Basis of the Modern State Order," *International Studies Review* 2, no. 2 (Summer, 2000), 65-92; Benno Teschke, "Theorizing the Westphalian System of States: International Relations from Absolutism to Capitalism" *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 1 (2002), 5-48; One sees this powerfully implied in collections of European treaties, themselves. Indeed, one of the most comprehensive and often-cited collections of early modern European treaties advances this perspective: Frances Gardiner Davenport, ed., *European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies*, vol. II (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1929).

¹² Philip Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty & the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: OUP, 2011); Arthur Weststeijn, "The VOC as a Company-State: Debating Seventeenth-Century Dutch Colonial Expansion," *Itinerario* 38, no. 1 (April 2014), 13-34.

at times drove, the parallel state negotiations in Europe. Company officials directly intervened in state treaties. They collaborated on new international regulatory frameworks. They authored competing interpretations of commercial rights and the entitlements of conquest, and they infused national debates in Europe with commercial ideologies and practices generated in Asia. EIC and VOC leaders frequently intervened in international politics in order to advance interests separate from, and even in opposition to, the agendas of the English Crown and the Dutch States General.

This realization leads to the reconsideration of the very historical foundation of international relations, the nation state, and corporations. Within the field of International Relations, leading scholars argue that in today's world, connected by instantaneous digital communication, global supply chains and supranational financial networks, we need to move "beyond Westphalia" and the traditional chessboard of realist grand strategy to adapt a new foreign policy to the challenges of our global age.¹³ According to this call, nation-states with sovereign borders of power no longer represent the best building blocks for conceptualizations of our global system. Rather, scholars increasingly recognize individuals and non-state organizations—including multinational corporations—as the drivers of global economic, legal, and political dynamics and debates.¹⁴ Political scientists, in particular, have identified the informal relationships between multinational corporations as crucial elements of organization and governance within the contemporary global system; coordinating not only for capitalist goals, but also for the formation of legal frameworks, diplomatic exchanges, cross-cultural understanding, and internal management. Theorists argue that, rather than being submerged beneath notions of

¹³ Gene Lyons and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *Beyond Westphalia? National Sovereignty and International Intervention* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Mortimer Sellers, *The New World Order: Sovereignty, Human Rights and Self-determination of Peoples* (New York: Bloomsbury, 1996).

¹⁴ Anne-Marie Slaughter, "How to Succeed in the Networked World: A Grand Strategy for the Digital Age," *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 6 (2016), 76-89; Anne-Marie Slaughter, *The Chessboard and the Web: Strategies of Connection in a Networked World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017); Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control?: Sovereignty in the Age of Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

state sovereignty, these inter-corporate relationships are most accurately understood as intersecting with the agendas and powers of nation-states.¹⁵

While upending the well-established nationalized narratives of early modern European and world history, this dissertation also argues that the influential role of non-state actors in global politics and economy, identified by social scientists as an emerging characteristic of the twenty-first century, was in fact a foundational building block of the interstate system. It was baked in from the beginning, and it shaped the core debates, institutions, and patterns of global order. Beyond simply correcting the historical record, however, this dissertation also advances a powerful argument for the value of greater historical study among scholars of international relations and global business. We must take care to avoid the temptations of anachronism in directly grafting contemporary issues onto the seventeenth-century world, defined by radically different communication capabilities, understandings of value and profit, and political mechanisms. The dynamics of the seventeenth century, however, defined a world in which the West was not preeminent and the sovereignty of nation-states did not represent definitive power, deferring instead to the complex connections between global, non-state organizations and individual actors. Thus, the history of the English and Dutch East India Companies would seem critical to scholars grappling to understand similar dynamics in the twenty-first century.

Introduction.1 Historiography

While a vast literature has developed around the history of these important institutions, few scholars have focused on the interactions between the EIC and VOC in Europe and in the Indian Ocean trading world. When historians have studied the two companies together, they look only at particular aspects of the Anglo-Dutch relationship, or they place the companies within larger comparative studies of empire, political economy, or Indian Ocean history. Many scholars

¹⁵ Büthe and Mattli, *The New Global Rulers*; Stone, *Controlling Institutions*.

have examined the companies separately, and in doing so they have created two parallel historiographies that focus on many of the same issues. The financial revolution, state formation, political economy, corporate management and control, trade and economic organization, and empire building form critical pillars of both fields. Utilizing historical approaches, as well as methods from political science and business organization and management, I aim to make these apparently parallel fields intersect. My project thus reimagines the ways in which previous historians have defined and understood the nature of the companies as institutions and as actors in shaping early modern political economy.

Some of the most influential historical explorations of the relationships between the EIC and the VOC have come from the works of economic historian Niels Steensgaard. In his 1973 *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, Steensgaard sought to understand the early seventeenth century's critical “development of modern economy,” as the “Catholic Iberian powers” rotated to the “losers” side of the economic balance sheet, and the clear “victors” were the “Protestant channel powers.”¹⁶ For Steensgaard, the VOC and EIC, though emanating from different national contexts and advancing different cultural norms, nonetheless shared the all important joint-stock company structure. Focusing on commercial records, he concluded that the success of such organizations did not depend on government monopolies or on the constant use of violence, but stemmed from their superior ability as market competitors.¹⁷ The companies' shared market focus, “subordinating the production of protection to the market

¹⁶ Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 7, 10-11; Steensgaard presents a much reduced institutional argument in his contribution to the *Companies and Trade* volume; Niels Steensgaard, “The Companies as a specific Institution in the History of European Expansion,” in *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies During the Ancien Régime*, eds. Leonard Blussé, Femme Gaastra (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1981), 245-264.

¹⁷ Niels Steensgaard, “The Dutch East India Company as an Institutional Innovation,” in *Dutch Capitalism and World Capitalism*, ed. Maurice Aymard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982): 235-257; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, 152.

mechanism,¹⁸ contrasted with the Portuguese system, based on the militaristic enforcement of sovereignty. In the first few decades of the seventeenth century, the more efficient corporate traders took the Euro-Asian trade from the Portuguese and from the non-European caravan “peddlers” that operated between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.¹⁹

Other English and Dutch historians have further developed Steensgaard’s model, exploring VOC-EIC institutional interactions later in the seventeenth century. In their contribution to an essay collection assessing the “Anglo-Dutch moment” of 1688, economic historian of the English company, K.N. Chaudhuri, and historian of the Dutch Republic, Jonathan Israel, examine the Anglo-Dutch relationship in Asia. During the 1680s and 1690s, they perceive a dramatic shift in English policy, when the EIC decided to actively participate in Indian Ocean politics, and “the example of the VOC played a major part in the change of course.”²⁰ In agreement with Steensgaard’s assessment of the earlier decades of the seventeenth century, this study represents the two companies as the same breed of racehorse competing in a race where they are the only two real competitors.²¹ The two economic historians approach the companies’ Asian operations from a European perspective. After a century of coexistence and cooperation, Chaudhuri and Israel argue, the 1680s found the EIC surprised by Dutch efforts to push out their “principal threat.”²² The Anglo-Dutch unity, introduced with the crowning of William, the Prince of Orange, as the King of England in 1688, brought a wash of friendly rhetoric in company correspondence, and the VOC was forced to abandon all plans of aggression at a time when it sought to stave off EIC development.²³

Beyond the limited number of studies that have explicitly treated the two companies in

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

²⁰ K.N. Chaudhuri and Jonathan Israel, “The English and Dutch East India Companies and the Glorious Revolution of 1688-9,” in *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact*, ed. Jonathan Israel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 408.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 410.

²² *Ibid.*, 422.

²³ *Ibid.*, 420.

tandem, there is a more significant body of examinations that focuses on larger historical trends and developments, such as the rise of empire, the formation of political economy, and the development of Indian Ocean economic and political systems. These studies frequently understand the EIC and VOC as separately participating in the same historical moment or process. Several edited collections contain articles and chapters addressing the companies individually but place them in the same context of the development of trading networks, competing European merchant empires, and rival systems of political economy.²⁴ In her investigations of patrimonial power structures and principal/agent relationships within the VOC in Amsterdam and across Asia, for example, historical sociologist Julia Adams has also generated a comparative analysis of the hierarchies and control mechanisms within the rival EIC.²⁵

Studies focusing on South Asia and the Indian Ocean have also understood parallel English and Dutch engagements with local economies and rulers. Numerous scholars have examined the competing East India Companies as the seventeenth-century precursors to the rise of recognizable land-based empire in eighteenth-century Asia.²⁶ One of the most prominent approaches anchoring this field has come from the work of Holden Furber. In numerous articles and in his 1976 *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800*, Furber focuses on the seventeenth century as an "age of partnership," wherein employees of both the English and

²⁴ Leonard Blussé and Femme Gaastra, eds., *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies During the Ancien Régime* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1981); James Tracy, ed., *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); James Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade 1350-1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

²⁵ Julia Adams, "Principals and Agents, Colonists and Company Men: The Decay of Colonial Control in the Dutch East Indies," *American Sociological Review* 61 (February 1996): 12-28; Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.

²⁶ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires In World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire Since 1405* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008); Timothy Parsons, *The Rule of Empires: Those Who Built Them, Those Who Endured Them, and Why They Always Fall* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Dutch East India Companies competed to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships with local merchants and cartels across the Indian Ocean.²⁷ Analyzing company correspondence and factory records, Furber shows how the English began to gain on their Dutch competitors through the construction of the tripartite Presidency system and the relaxation of regulations on private trade during the second half of the seventeenth century.²⁸

Furber's periodization of European operations has proven influential, organizing a critical debate in Indian Ocean and South Asian history over the nature of conflict and trade in the Indian Ocean.²⁹ Om Prakash has joined in, arguing that in seventeenth-century South Asia, the companies engaged in both coercive and cooperative relationships with local polities, depending on specific political and economic contexts.³⁰ Noted European and South Asian historians have argued that violence and coercion were, in fact, consistent intrinsic features of early modern European activities in Asia.³¹ Other historians of early modern India have explored the shift to European dominance that would follow the era of seventeenth-century "cooperation." Ashin das Gupta and Sinnapah Arasaratnam have understood the VOC and the EIC as additional players within already developed regional Indian economies that, owing to their own internal flaws, would begin to decline by the eighteenth century.³²

²⁷ Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976); Holden Furber, "Asia and the West as Partners before 'Empire' and After," *Journal of Asian Studies* 28:4 (1969): 711-721.

²⁸ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient 1600-1800*, 330-334, 270-71.

²⁹ Blair B. King and M.N. Pearson, *The Age of Partnership: Europeans in Asia Before Dominion* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1979).

³⁰ Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

³¹ K.M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498-1945* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1965); C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800* (New York: Penguin, 1991).

³² Ashin das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1979); Sinnapah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Sinnapah Arasaratnam, *Maritime Commerce and English Power: Southeast India, 1750-1800* (Brookfield: Variorum, 1996); Sinnapah Arasaratnam, "Monopoly and Free Trade in Dutch-Asian Commercial Policy: Debate and Controversy within the VOC," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 4:1 (1973): 1-15; Sinnapah Arasaratnam,

Rather than viewing the East India Companies as definitive collaborators or competitors in their seventeenth-century relations with South Asia, Sanjay Subrahmanyam insists that the strategies of both companies in Asia were heavily influenced by the political norms of the Indian Ocean trading world. According to Subrahmanyam, the two companies were brought into an Indian Ocean system of "contained conflict," whereby the trading operations of both the English and Dutch were punctuated by periods of warfare with each other as well as with other Europeans and local governments in Asia. However, "the limit to conflict was set largely by the costs it might entail."³³

While a limited number of studies have explicitly treated the EIC and VOC together, and more examinations have focused on larger historical trends or developments involving both competing firms, the majority of the literature addressing the two companies has come from historians and historical sociologists who have studied each company separately. Within these discrete but parallel historiographies, scholars have sought to understand the individual companies' structure, dynamics of trade, and political and economic policy. A number of such studies employ economic models of the firm to assess performance and strategy, while others approach the companies' global operations from a European perspective, as the EIC and VOC served as critical elements of their competing national political economies. Both companies also represent important engines for the development of rival merchant empires, firmly anchored in England and the Dutch Republic.

With a view explicitly oriented to Europe, historians of political thought have situated the companies within state and ideological rivalries, driven by economic and commercial

"Dutch Commercial Policy in Ceylon and Its Effect on the Indo-Ceylon Trade (1690-1750)," *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 4 (1967): 109-130.

³³ Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650*, 297; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); For EIC political participation in Asia, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Frank Submissions: The Company and the Mughals Between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris," in *The Worlds of the East India Company*, ed. H.V. Bowen, Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2002), 69-96.

competition. Studies of mercantilist theory and policy, such as those of Sophus Reinert, see the competing East India Companies as extensions of developing rival national political economies: “as Europe embraced the wider world, through conquest as well as commerce in the early modern period, it was spurred by economic rivalries of this very nature.”³⁴ This approach draws from the preoccupations of early modern British political economists, who located the significance of the East India companies in the metropole. Within this context, the EIC in London has come to be seen as a first line of competition against Dutch trade primacy.³⁵ Historians have also contextualized the emergence of the first two global joint-stock companies with the formation of the first two nationally organized market economies. The English and Dutch economies were governed by liberalizing state governments that operated on permanent public debt supported by massive joint stock companies.³⁶ Financial historians view the two companies as the incubators for discourses defining modern national capitalism: share holders’ rights, international stock market coordination, and stock, bond, and futures market strategy.³⁷ Addressing the same issues, these English and Dutch historiographies have, curiously, failed to intersect.

In keeping the focus on merchant competition to the metropole, economic and intellectual historians have examined the rival companies’ roles in the coalescence of competing national bodies of political and economic thought and policy in England and in the Dutch

³⁴ Sophus Reinert, “Rivalry: Greatness in Early Modern Political Economy,” in *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and its Empire*, ed. Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 348.

³⁵ Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 5-6.

³⁶ Marjolein ‘t Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State: War, Politics and Finance During the Dutch Revolt* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688-1783* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1967); Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

³⁷ Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution: the Finance of the Dutch East India Trade and the Rise of the Amsterdam Capital Market, 1595-1612,” *The Journal of Economic History* 64 (September 2004): 641-672; Larry Neal, *The Rise of Financial Capitalism: International Capital Markets in the Age of Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Republic.³⁸ In England far more than in the Netherlands, the “East Indies Trade” was a ubiquitous feature of political and economic discourse in the public sphere. Intellectual historians’ approaches to this period have frequently sought to determine the dominant ideologies in a tense marriage of politics and economy.³⁹ Seventeenth-century company officials, such as EIC Governor Josiah Child, were polarizing figures in public debates of political economy in England. Tracing the relationships between company officials and public governance, scholars have sought to contextualize such figures and their public discourses.⁴⁰ Analyzing committee membership on the Board of Trade, as well as political allegiances and personal relationships with the Crown, Steven Pincus has argued that the heated political debates surrounding the Exclusion Crisis and the advent of English political parties defined economic debate and the governance of the EIC.⁴¹ Economic sociologists have also contributed to this discussion. Bruce Carruthers, for example, has run comparative analyses of party membership rolls and EIC investment registers in order to understand the relationship between political affiliation and EIC share ownership.⁴²

Only recently have Dutch historians sought to pursue such connections in their own history. The VOC played a much smaller role in the pamphlet culture of the Dutch Republic. However, political and economic historians have begun to trace the networks of investment, ownership, and influence that ran between company figures and virtually every industrial and

³⁸ Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective*.

³⁹ Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Rupali Mishra, “Merchants, Commerce and the State: The East India Company in Early Stuart England,” Ph.D. Diss, Princeton University, 2010; Theodore Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire: Merchant and Gentry Investment in the Expansion of England, 1575-1630* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967); Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London’s Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought*.

⁴⁰ Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire*; Mishra, “Merchants, Commerce and the State;” Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*.

⁴¹ Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 366-399.

⁴² Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution*.

agrarian venture. In a reflection of the far more incestuous institutional ecology of Dutch public governance, scholars have pursued the connections that ran between VOC membership and the city, regional, and national offices of leadership in the Dutch Republic.⁴³ Economic sociologist Julia Adams has influenced this discussion, focusing on the powerful coterie of Amsterdam-based merchant regents who utilized familial networks to exert control across public and private economic and political institutions.⁴⁴

Relating imperial expansion to Dutch mercantilist state strategies, scholars' explorations of the VOC situate the company primarily as an institution of the Dutch Republic's "Golden Age" of exploration and economic primacy. Focusing on the records of the Company's central chambers in Amsterdam and Zeeland, as well as those of the Dutch States General, scholars of empire and trade have framed the Dutch Company's worldwide operations as a projection of the political and economic ingenuity within the Dutch Republic.⁴⁵ One of the most powerful of such theses has been that of Jonathan Israel, who created a chronology of the stages of Dutch "primacy in world trade," largely defined by political developments in Europe.⁴⁶ In their own recent influential study, Dutch economic historians Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude have cast the VOC's seventeenth-century global structure as integral to the advent of the "first modern economy" in the Dutch Republic.⁴⁷ A fundamental view uniting these approaches within the Dutch historiography is that, from its founding in 1602 through the eighteenth century, the VOC was a mercantile operation, first and foremost,

⁴³ Oscar Gelderblom, ed. *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2009); Gelderblom and Jonker, "Completing a Financial Revolution;" Lodewijk Petram, *De Bakermat van de Beurs: Hoe in zeventiende-eeuws Amsterdam de moderne aandelenhandel ontstond* (Amsterdam: Atlas Contact, 2011).

⁴⁴ Adams, *The Familial State*.

⁴⁵ G.J. Knaap and G. Teitler, *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie* (Den Haag: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2002).

⁴⁶ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade: 1575-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire: 1600-1800*; Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walberg Pers, 2003).

⁴⁷ Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

in pursuit of profit. Indeed, Dutch historians have been among the most eager to apply the concept of “reluctant imperialism” to the VOC’s historical legacy.⁴⁸

Economic historians have further added to the literature of trading companies, contributing institutional studies of the English and Dutch corporations. Starting in the late 1970s, economic historians and social scientists, led by K.N. Chaudhuri, employed new methods of large-scale statistical analysis afforded by the advent of more sophisticated computer technology.⁴⁹ Chaudhuri’s work assessed the EIC’s profitability and market behavior through analysis of the company’s vast account books. Understanding the EIC’s operations in Asia as driven by European demand, he also linked the Company to modern notions of the multinational enterprise, envisioning the Indian Ocean world as a series of mercantile markets, each both affecting and greatly affected by EIC activity.⁵⁰ Such work on the EIC casts the seventeenth-century English corporation as a fledgling, inefficient trading network in comparison to a far more developed Dutch company. Favoring comparisons of trade volume, share price, and capital accumulation, such studies have tended to focus on the economic records of the English and Dutch companies, a methodology that, itself, defines the two organizations solely as competitors.⁵¹ However, as previously noted, Niels Steensgaard’s intervention in the economic literature of the companies posited a new periodization of trade and conflict in the Indian Ocean. His works understand the EIC and the VOC as profit-driven “productive enterprises,” in comparison with the “redistributive” *Estado da India*, “aimed at a

⁴⁸ A succinct overview of this trend is available in Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 55-63.

⁴⁹ K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 1978

⁵⁰ Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*.

⁵¹ Tracy, *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World 1350-1750*; David Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires: England and the Netherlands in the Age of Mercantilism, 1650-1770* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

parasitical siphoning off of the juices of Asian trade."⁵²

As economic studies have sought to understand the trading strategies and operations of each of the companies, other scholars have examined the sprawling communication networks of the VOC and EIC, and the ways in which personal interest, corporate policy, and relational networks developed and circulated within the two corporations. As official company reports and letters traveled the network of corporate authority—from factory outposts to regional hubs to European company headquarters, and back again—the content and the forms of these documents changed to articulate the needs of their latest recipient. Historian Miles Ogborn has studied the different forms and uses of writing within the EIC, analyzing the agency of metropolitan directors, ships' captains, and factors in Madras.⁵³ Focusing on the VOC's perceptions of Mughal rule and trade competition, James Tracy has assessed the evolution of information as it traveled the Dutch Company's communication circuits.⁵⁴ The global reach of the companies' operations, paired with the limitations of communication in the seventeenth century, necessitate the focus on individual actors' interests, strategies, and influence in these processes.

Through their communication networks, the companies sought to control their employees' activities in Asia. This effort represented a key to the profitability of the EIC and the VOC. A burgeoning field of scholarship has explored employees' exploitation of company networks, focusing on the systems of private trade within the English and Dutch corporations. Throughout the seventeenth century, the self-aggrandizing interests of factors in Asia ran counter to the accounting efforts of corporate headquarters in Amsterdam and London. Tracing

⁵² Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*; Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, 253.

⁵³ Ogborn has approached the forms and functions of EIC documents and communication networks, themselves, as defining forces in the company history and Tracy has studied how information changed as it circulated through the VOC trading network; Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

⁵⁴ James Tracy, "Asian Despotism? Mughal Government as seen from the Dutch East India Company Factory in Surat," *Journal of Early Modern History* 3 (1999): 256-280.

such internal struggles between company control and entrepreneurial agents in Asia, historians of the long eighteenth century recognize the companies' role in the formation of a British Empire deeply defined by frictions between colonial development and concepts of “free trade.”⁵⁵

While private trade has been examined within the context of company management and profitability, and the personal networks of EIC and VOC factors have been viewed as precursors to eighteenth-century European empire in Asia, political historians have begun to blend the theories of the firm with those of empire, arguing for an understanding of the seventeenth-century VOC and EIC as self-fashioning political bodies. Models of “legal pluralism” have allowed for intellectual historians of law and politics to examine each individual company as an ever changing system of contracts, authority and sovereignty, independent of, but related to, its home state.⁵⁶ Philip Stern has employed this approach to realize consistent EIC claims to corporate sovereignty in the company’s one hundred and fifty year history leading up to Plassey in 1757.⁵⁷ Kerry Ward has mined the VOC’s judicial and correspondence records in order to examine how the Dutch company engineered similar complex systems of law, justice, and control in order to link a network of hundreds of factories and ports throughout Asia.⁵⁸

Beyond early modern political, economic and imperial history, my project also draws

⁵⁵ Sudipta Sen, *Empire of Free Trade: The East India Company and the Making of the Colonial Marketplace* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); Søren Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work: Madras and the City of London 1660-1740* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2005); Santhi Hejeebu, “Contract Enforcement in the English East India Company,” *The Journal of Economic History* 65 (June 2005), 496-523; Emily Erikson and Peter Bearman, “Malfeasance and the Foundations for Global Trade: The Structure of English Trade in the East Indies, 1601-1833,” *American Journal of Sociology* 112/1 (2006), 195-230; Peter J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Pamela Nightingale, *Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India 1659-1760* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980); Arasaratnam, “Monopoly and Free Trade in Dutch-Asian Commercial Policy: Debate and Controversy within the VOC.”

⁵⁶ Lauren Benton and Richard Ross, eds. *Legal Pluralism and Empires: 1500-1850* (New York: NYU Press, 2013); Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁵⁷ Philip Stern, *The Company-State*.

⁵⁸ Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

from the historiography of the multinational corporation (MNC) and intersects with the political and business science literature addressing the governance of multinational enterprise. Business historians have argued that the EIC and VOC represent the world's first multinationals. Scholars such as Ann Carlos, Stephen Nicholas, and K.N. Chaudhuri have identified central concepts of the modern MNC, such as cross-border contract arrangements and foreign direct investment (FDI), within the records of the seventeenth-century East India Companies.⁵⁹ However, such approaches operate with a significant anachronistic tension: they impose contemporary economic concepts of capital flow on institutions without the capability to measure such transactions.

My project argues that a far more fruitful discussion between multinational theory and the early modern may exist with the management research and political science literature addressing multinational business governance. Researchers in business organization and management have developed theories of the "federative MNC," focusing on the complex intra-firm political economy engendered by the "contest for intra-organizational power."⁶⁰ Such approaches examine the relationships between centralized headquarters and far-flung subsidiary offices, which draw their intra-firm influence from their ability to embed themselves in local economies, political networks, and cultures.⁶¹ Recently, social scientists have also begun to

⁵⁹Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas, "Giants of an Earlier Capitalism: The Chartered Trading Companies as Modern Multinationals," *The Business History Review* 62 (October 1988): 398-419; K.N. Chaudhuri, "The English East India Company in the 17th and 18th Centuries: A Pre-modern Multinational Organization," in *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies During the Ancien Régime*, ed. Leonard Blussé and Femme Gaastra (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1981): 29-46; Neal, *The Rise of Financial Capitalism: International Capital Markets in the Age of Reason*.

⁶⁰Ulf Andersson, Mats Forsgren, and Ulf Holm, "Balancing Subsidiary Influence in the Federative MNC: A Business Network View," *Journal of International Business Studies* 38 (2007): 802.

⁶¹Carlos Garcia-Point, J. Ignacio Canales and Fabrizio Naboa, "Subsidiary Strategy: The Embeddedness Component," *Journal of Management Studies* 46 (2009): 182-214; Ranjay Gulati, Nitin Nohria and Akbar Zaheer, "Strategic Networks," *Strategic Management Journal* 21 (2000): 203-215; Ram Mudambi and Pietro Navarra, "Is Knowledge Power? Knowledge Flows, Subsidiary Power and Rent-Seeking within MNCs," *Journal of International Business Studies* 35 (2004): 385-406; David Krackhardt, "Assessing the Political Landscape: Structure, Cognition, and Power in Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 35 (1990): 342-369.

closely examine how knowledge and technology can diffuse between corporate networks. Such research has studied the conditions in which models of corporate governance transfer between firms as a result of company strategy and shared external forces, such as specific market pressures. But this process also may critically "depend on the interests and power of actors that make decisions in organizations."⁶²

Modern MNC theory provides new ways to think about the dynamics of global corporate interaction, not yet available in an early modern historiography still largely defined by state and regional perspectives. However, dominant perceptions in the study of international business cast the East India companies as relics of an antiquated imperial era.⁶³ And organizational management research exhibits virtually no historical perspective, identifying multinational corporate organization as a native feature of the late twentieth and twenty-first century global economy. Understanding a much longer lineage of global corporate interactions and organizations may lead to a reassessment of processes such as the embedding of MNC subsidiaries, especially in regions that have engaged with changing perceptions of state and corporate actors and combines over a multi-century chronology. Though focusing on a different time defined by different challenges, limitations, and cultural norms, this project argues that the competing seventeenth-century East India companies developed a discrete global corporate political economy of their own. My dissertation thus challenges notions of

⁶² Peer Fiss and Edward Zajac, "The Diffusion of Ideas over Contested Terrain: The (Non)adoption of a Shareholder Value Orientation Among German Firms," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 49 (2004), 527; Neil Fligstein, *The Architecture of Markets: An Economic Sociology of Twenty-First Century Capitalist Societies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); The literature on "dynamic capabilities," anchored largely by the work of David Teece, also recognizes the importance of individual figures occupying positions of strategic oversight within worldwide corporate networks; Mie Augier and David J. Teece, "Understanding Complex Organization: The Role of Know-How, Internal Structure and Human Behavior in the Evolution of Capabilities," *Industrial and Corporate Change* 15 (2006): 395-416; Christos Pitelis and David Teece, "Cross-Boarder Market Co-Creation, Dynamic Capabilities and the Entrepreneurial Theory of the Multinational Enterprise," *Industrial and Corporate Change* 19 (2010): 1247-1270.

⁶³ Mira Wilkins, "The History of the Multinational Enterprise," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Business*, ed. Alan M. Rugman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-38; Alfred Chandler and Bruce Mazlish, *Leviathans: Multinational Corporations and the New Global History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

“modern” private, collaborative regulatory regimes, and it simultaneously introduces a new non-state global institution to early modern economic and political history.

Introduction.2 Method

This dissertation is not, as many studies of the EIC and VOC have claimed, a comprehensive history of the companies during a particular era. Inspired by histories of politics and political thought, this project traces developing strands of argument and patterns of practice in order to understand the relationship between the two companies, and the intellectual and institutional products of that relationship. The choice of methodologies shaping this dissertation has been driven both by historiography and by the archive. In studying the key points of intersection between the English and Dutch states during the second half of the seventeenth century, one notices a consistent absence of the EIC and VOC from discussions of peace and regulatory agreements, the historical analysis of international political debate, and the intellectual history of political and economic policy and thought.⁶⁴ Even within the VOC literature, which positions the company as a key organization within a far less hierarchical state structure than that of England, historians and social scientists have studied the interests of the oligarchs who linked the VOC with the ruling councils of cities and provinces. Rarely, however, does the VOC, as an organization, intervene in international agreements.⁶⁵

Archival exploration, however, soon revealed the potential for a very different story to be told. Reexamining key moments and processes of negotiation between the English and Dutch states, this dissertation recognizes that representatives of both companies crafted nuanced, enduring, and cumulative arguments and institutions that drove elements of, for example, the

⁶⁴ In the case of the EIC, one recent exception is Philip Stern, *The Company-State*.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Adams, *The Familial State*; Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Knopf, 1987); Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (New York: OUP, 1995); Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*.

1654 Treaty of Westminster, the 1667 Treaty of Breda, and the ongoing, powerful debates over the governance of trade within both England and the Dutch Republic.

Focusing on specific events and issues, this study triangulates between the records of the English and Dutch states, the EIC and the VOC, and related merchants and diplomats. It traces the terms and arguments shared between the companies, as well as the central, privileged role that each company took in the other's internal discussions and policies. Not only were the two companies unacknowledged participants in historians' coverage of these processes, in fact, they were deeply engaged in durable and evolving conversations of their own, which blended competitive strategy with collaborative goals, centered on how best to manage the burgeoning East Indies trade. This shared system of practice and thought bound the two companies together in a transoceanic network of communication, commerce, and politics. The EIC and VOC's direct intervention into state politics in Europe drew from their mutual relationship, injecting terms and arguments collectively negotiated between English and Dutch company officials in Europe and in Asia into international treaties and debates in Europe. This discovery was further confirmed upon the examination of archival material from other states—including governments from Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Denmark—in which diplomats and officials conveyed their own perceptions of the inter-company relationship's intervention in international debates and agreements.

Introduction.2.1 Historical and Social Scientific Methods

While historians have primarily examined the companies as economic institutions, and a few have focused on the EIC and VOC as political institutions, this dissertation examines the ways in which the companies fashioned a supranational political economy for the East Indies trade: an intellectual and institutional construction that blended together issues of law, finance, commerce, politics, and governance. Uniting the companies' internal and public records, as well

as the records of European states and of individuals, the dissertation traces the debates and terms of these issues. It advances an understanding of how a mutual focus drove the EIC and VOC, and how the products of this relationship—ideologies, arguments, and policies—powerfully impacted the English and Dutch state governments and the crystalizing international community of Europe. In order to assess these documents and to form and advance its arguments, this dissertation brings together a range of methodologies from intellectual, political, and economic history, as well as from political science and organizational studies.

Using the concept of political economy to interpret the relationship between the EIC and VOC, the dissertation draws from several key approaches in intellectual history. Contemporaries and historians alike have identified this period as the cradle of a new kind of science: political economy. French political theorist Louis de Mayerne-Turquet first coined the term to describe the responsibilities of a sovereign to his citizens.⁶⁶ In his 1776 *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith established the term's enduring definition: "a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator, proposes two distinct objects: first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services."⁶⁷

While Smith summarized the objectives of political theorists and sovereigns during the seventeenth century, this dissertation argues that, responding to political and commercial exigencies in Europe and in Asia, the leaders of the two East India companies leveraged their shared operational networks and strategic challenges to craft a political economy of their own. Tailored to the imperatives of their entwined supranational structures, a common programmatic and intellectual system linked the two organizations for nearly half a century before the evolving

⁶⁶ James King, "The Origin of the Term "Political Economy,"" *The Journal of Modern History* 20, no. 3 (Sept. 1948), 230-231.

⁶⁷ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, vol. I (London: Methuen & Co., 1904), 395.

state community of Europe overtook the inter-company relationship. During this time, however, the corporate political economy of the English and Dutch East Indies trade powerfully affected the formation of state governments in Europe and in Asia.

In order to trace the patterns of argument, the emergence of institutions, and the alignment of strategy that linked the two companies, the dissertation draws from the methods of intellectual historians of early modern politics, who have pioneered approaches for tracing supranational circulations of political arguments and ideas. Conceptual scaffolding for how ideas and arguments traveled and were applied in the early modern world have arisen within European imperial history, mapping the ideologies of governance through the expansion of European empires. Anthony Pagden and David Armitage have set the standard for this approach. Their studies trace the emergence of domestic imperial ideology in Britain and in Europe as a link between state-formation and the development of empire.⁶⁸ As Pagden and Armitage plotted the evolution of imperial political arguments, other historians tracked specific intellectual linkages between the crystallization of Great Britain with the frictions of broader imperial governance in the Atlantic World and in Asia.⁶⁹ Armitage again injected this approach within the burgeoning field of area studies, suggesting that the space of the Atlantic World, itself, was most reliably imagined by mapping models of ideological circulation.⁷⁰

While there is now an established literature tracing European imperial ideologies, cultural and intellectual historians of early modern Europe have focused on particular circuits of correspondence to reconstruct political, artistic, and scientific communities that superseded state

⁶⁸ Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500-c.1800* (New Haven: YUP, 1995); David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (New York: CUP, 2000).

⁶⁹ Jane Ohlmeyer, "Civilizing of those Rude Partes": Colonization within Britain and Ireland, 1580s-1640s," in *Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. I: The Origins of Empire*, ed. Nicholas Canny (New York: OUP, 1998), 124-147; Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteenth-Century India: The British in Bengal* (New York: CUP, 2007); Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: YUP, 2014).

⁷⁰ David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, 2nd ed., edited by Michael Braddick and David Armitage (Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 13-32.

definition and fueled concurrent debates and initiatives throughout Europe. The Republic of Letters model now undergirds studies of cultural, economic, and political communities throughout Europe and the United States.⁷¹ This approach relies on the method of communication—letter writing—to define intellectual communities. Historians of science have employed this model to track the evolution of specific ideas and fields of inquiry by following networks of communication among early modern European theorists, apothecaries, merchants, and artisans.⁷² Examining the transference of natural and medical knowledge, scholars have also traced the emergence of the English and Dutch East India Companies, themselves, as scientific communities.⁷³

Building on these approaches, as well as on Miles Ogborn's work in tracing the politics of script within the English East India Company,⁷⁴ this dissertation assesses the East India Companies, together, as creating a community of correspondence. Examining the “production, dissemination, and consumption” of writing within the EIC, Ogborn considers the political relationships that governed witness accounts and formal reports to conclude that the company depended on print and correspondence as crucial tools in the construction of its “global

⁷¹ The most frequently referenced cornerstone of this field is the Republic of Letters project, which maps the intellectual community of the French Enlightenment, Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); subsequent studies have expanded this model across Europe and the Atlantic, including: Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, and Bart Westerweel, eds, *The Republic of Letters and the Levant* (Boston: Brill, 2005); Mordechai Feingold, *Jesuit Science and the Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003); Maria Barbara and Karl A.E. Emenkel, *Portuguese Humanism and the Republic of Letters* (Boston: Brill, 2012); and the letter collections of the American “founding fathers,” James M. Smith, ed, *The Republic of Letters: The Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison 1776-1826*, vol. I-III (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995).

⁷² Among many others, Deborah Harkness, *The Jewell House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven: YUP, 2008); Pamela Smith and Paula Findlen, eds., *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2002); John Young, *Faith, Medical Alchemy, and Natural Philosophy: Johann Moriaen, Reformed Intelligencer, and the Hartlib Circle* (Burlington: Ashgate, 1998); Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, eds., *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

⁷³ Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Harold Cook, *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: YUP, 2007).

⁷⁴ Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

geography.”⁷⁵ Examining the correspondence between the two company directorates, as well as between company employees across Asia, this dissertation argues that, during the second half of the seventeenth century, the EIC and the VOC developed a shared network of shipping and mail carriage. They operated with similar political hierarchies, which governed correspondence between factories in Asia, and the company directors in Europe.⁷⁶ Studying the evolution of specific ideas, arguments, and practices, the subsequent chapters argue that leaders of these communities consciously united the two companies’ communication circuits, circulating common ideological, legal, commercial, and political debates.

Early modern actors saw political economy as a science, and recent approaches in the history of science have developed methodologies to study how individuals not only circulated, but interacted with scientific ideas and arguments. Political and economic ideas were passed among organized “circles” of correspondents, the members of which blended alchemical science with commerce and theories of governance.⁷⁷ Such studies have interpreted scientific theory and experimental method as cumulative constructs of the members’ own observations and applications of ideas and methods.

A focus on the observation and the transference of ideas also guides this study, as agents of both companies bound their organizations in a mutual feedback loop, observing each other’s commercial and political policies and actions—as well as those of other European and non-European rulers and merchants. Scholars agree that early modern scientific researchers and

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁷⁶ A dynamic explored throughout the dissertation.

⁷⁷ Harold Cook, “Moving About and Finding Things Out: Economies and Sciences in the Period of the Scientific Revolution,” *Osiris* 27, no. 1 (2012), 101-132; Ted McCormick, *William Petty: And the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic* (New York: OUP, 2010); For example, the Hartlib Circle, centered on Prussian émigré and intelligencer, Samuel Hartlib, left a prolific archive of correspondence which has recently been explored by historians: Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Cambridge: HUP, 2011); Thomas Leng, *Benjamin Worlsey (1618-1677): Trade, Interest and the Spirit in Revolutionary England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008).

artisans prioritized personal experimentation and experience,⁷⁸ as well as the production of “useful” knowledge.⁷⁹ Political economists also frequently developed their ideas from practice, rather than from study. Hugo Grotius, for example, constructed his influential treatises on trade and the law of nations while in the employ of the VOC as the company’s lobbyist and negotiator.⁸⁰ The dissertation incorporates this methodology to show how, as the English and Dutch companies developed their own system of political economy, a respect for the authority of personal observation, invention, and experience structured the myriad reports and opinions entering the companies’ communication network from ports and courts around the globe.

From the structure and method of communication and observation in the early modern world, political historians’ treatment of the evolution of the arguments of political economy, themselves, have also provided guidance for the present study. In their close examination of the works of leading early modern theorists, historians of political thought maintain that, by the eighteenth century, Europeans had created a global market of competing commercial states, in which “international trade became a matter of military and political survival.”⁸¹ Scholars have fashioned these early modern dynamics of politics and economy as a system of mercantilism: “a set of ideas and programs common to early modern Europe,”⁸² which was based upon “the belief that the economic welfare of the state can only be secured by government regulation of a nationalist character.”⁸³ The community of states and markets was organized around the

⁷⁸ Peter Dear, “The Meanings of Experience,” in *The Cambridge History of Science, Vol III: Early Modern Science*, edited by Katharine Park and Lorraine Daston (New York: CUP, 2006), 106-132.

⁷⁹ Joel Mokyr, *The Gifts of Athena: Historical Origins of the Knowledge Economy* (Princeton: PUP, 2002).

⁸⁰ For a full examination of Grotius’s relationship with the VOC, see Martine van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories and the Rise of Dutch power in the East Indies* (Boston: Brill, 2006). Other leading early modern theorists, including Thomas Hobbes and John Law were also employed by companies, as well as state governments.

⁸¹ Hont, *Jealousy of Trade*, 4-5.

⁸² Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain* (New York: OUP, 2014), 3.

⁸³ D.C. Coleman, *Revisions in Mercantilism* (London: Methuen & Co, 1969), 1; See also the seminal work on the topic, Eli Heckscher, *Mercantilism*, trans. Mendel Shapiro (London: Allen & Unwin, 1955).

entwined imperatives of commerce and conquest.⁸⁴ Though to different degrees, and within different models, the balance of the costs of war and the profits of trade has undergirded international theories, including the law of nations: from the early modern writings of Vitoria, Grotius, and Hobbes, through the commercial conflicts of Marx's *Das Kapital*.⁸⁵

Scholars have identified two critical sinews of this intellectual dynamic: the concepts of translation and emulation. Drawing together the notions of contemporary theorists, Sophus Reinert has traced the ways in which international and inter-imperial competition functioned within the early modern European community of states.⁸⁶ Reinert argues that the theorists and leaders of European nations channeled their observations of rivals through the entwined processes of translation and emulation. As rivals looked upon each others' institutions, arguments, and strategies, they sought to apply successful models to their own contexts, translating them to the particularities of their own political, economic, and cultural environments, rather than simply copying.⁸⁷ Emulation was the "virtue" driving this competitive process between states, Reinert concludes. He cites to Hobbes' synthesis of the contemporary understanding of the term as the "grief" felt by a nation upon the recognition that a rival possessed goods "thereof we are capable, but have them not."⁸⁸

Importantly—and this is key to the interpretation of the companies' relationship advanced throughout this dissertation—the contemporary concept of emulation described an inter-state relationship, which blended competition with collaboration. Drawing from classical

⁸⁴ Though certain eighteenth-century theorists—most notably Montesquieu—divorced violent conquest and virtuous commerce, they were still the guiding elements of state formation. Albert Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (Princeton: PUP, 1977), 117.

⁸⁵ Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War of Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (New York: OUP, 2001); J.G.A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: PUP, 1975), 333-552; Hont, *Jealousy of Trade*, 1-8

⁸⁶ Sophus Reinert, *Translating Empire: Emulation and the Origins of Political Economy* (Cambridge: HUP, 2011).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 29-33.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 30; Thomas Hobbes, *The Art of Rhetoric, with a Discourse of the Laws of England* (London: Croke, 1681), 66-69.

theorists, including Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, early moderns understood rivalries in multiple shades of “jealousy,” such as envy, in which one sought to benefit at another’s expense. They understood emulation, however, as the aspiration “to strive to exceed one” in a common goal or project.⁸⁹ In the commercial context, this created “a cycle of virtuous economic one-upsmanship.”⁹⁰ Early modern political economy was thus not Hobbes’ pantheon of states-as-gladiators, fighting a zero-sum match to the death.⁹¹ Rather, it described a relationship between organizations, relying on a dynamic balance of competition and collaboration.

This dissertation applies a similar method to conceptualize how the two companies fashioned their own system of political and economic ideas and practices, which relied on a conscious blend of competition and collaboration. Company officials, from London and The Hague to Nagasaki and Madras, contributed to this system through mutual experience, observation, emulation, and translation of their own. In the process, they created a shared set of institutions and strategies to govern the East Indies trade. And English and Dutch company directors, with one foot in the East Indies and the other in European state politics, channeled their shared political economy to powerfully impact the dynamics of the European interstate system, as well.

While the vast majority of intellectual historians, including those referenced here, glean their conclusions from the close examination of the published works of theorists, the dissertation examines the two companies’ working documents—meeting minutes, bills, receipts, memos, petitions, and legal briefs—as well as the personal correspondence of company and state officials. Pursuant to the recent approach by Philip Stern, who examined the EIC’s working documents to

⁸⁹ Reinert, *Translating Empire*, 2, 30; In his study of Anglo-French political exchange, Noah Millstone also refers to “emulation” as a “central feature of Early Stuart political thinking,” defining it as a state’s efforts toward “imitating the policy successes of other states,” Noah Millstone, “English ‘Public’ Politics and the French Example, 1620-1640,” in *Early Modern Exchanges: Dialogues Between Nations and Cultures 1550-1750*, edited by Helen Hackett (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 143-144.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; Roger Coke, *A Discourse of Trade* (London: Brome, 1670).

⁹¹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, (London: Crooke, 1651), 53.

understand the English company as a political community, or state, unto itself,⁹² this project seeks to reconstruct contemporaries' understanding of political economy, not as an intellectual abstraction, but as lived experience: actors' perspectives on the rules and best practices of trade, diplomacy, law, and governance. And rather than theorizing the state-like government of the East India Companies, the dissertation focuses on the relationship between the companies. It advances the thesis that, at a time universally scrutinized for the emergence of an inter-state community, the two companies forged a program of governance, commerce, and diplomacy to guide their own supranational system.

While political theory remains crucial to our understanding of the formation of states and markets, as well as of the concept of modernity, historians, economists, and social scientists have also sought to understand early modern global history by codifying transoceanic organizations, like the East India Companies and other trading firms, as well as the institutions which governed them. As referenced in the preceding historiography review, several prominent economic studies have situated the EIC and the VOC within the broader history of global commerce and trade. However, the companies have also been drawn into the burgeoning field of New Institutional Economics (NIE). One of the most active methodologies for understanding supranational networks of finance, commodities, and governance, NIE provides an important lens through which to frame the present study. This method examines “the continuity of society’s institutions,” which Douglass North, one of the field’s founders, defines as the “rules of the game,” including laws, as well as less formal societal and cultural norms “that structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social or economic.”⁹³ While the East India

⁹² Stern, *The Company-State*.

⁹³ Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: CUP, 1990); North is considered one of the three pioneers of NIE, along with Ronald Coase and Oliver Williamson: Ronald Coase, *The Firm, the Market and the Law* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Oliver Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism* (New York: Free Press, 1985).

Companies formed their own institutions for the governance of their employees,⁹⁴ they can also be understood as organizations. If institutions are the rules, organizations are the players: “groups of individuals bound by a common purpose to achieve objectives.”⁹⁵

Historians have employed this methodology to develop models for how medieval and early modern networks of commerce and governance actually functioned. Examining a time in which technology severely limited the monitoring of long-distance networks, economic historians have employed the methods of NIE to examine how trust bound merchants, ships captains, agents, and financiers together through the institutions of religious faith, family groups, and imperial law.⁹⁶ Intersecting with early modern political history, economic historians have also sought to examine how guilds, cities, provinces, and states envisioned themselves as players within a competitive commercial market. They sought to attract merchants and organizations with beneficial legal institutions that provided security of investment, stability in politics, and liquidity of capital.⁹⁷

Pursuant to such an approach, this dissertation examines how, as global organizations, the EIC and VOC created a shared, identifiable framework of institutions for the East Indies trade. The dissertation further employs this methodology to argue that the companies’ relationship, itself, emerged after 1650 as an integrative organization, governed by a political economy, which

⁹⁴ See Julia Adams, “Principals and Agents, Colonists and Company Men: The Decay of Colonial Control in the Dutch East Indies,” *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 1 (Feb., 1996), 12-28; Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* (Princeton: PUP, 2014).

⁹⁵ Douglass North, “Institutions and Economic Theory,” *The American Economist* 36, no. 1 (Spring, 1992), 3.

⁹⁶ Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: OUP, 1989); Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy: Lessons from Medieval Trade* (New York: CUP, 2006); Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: YUP, 2009); Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: PUP, 2011).

⁹⁷ Oscar Gelderblom, *Cities of Commerce: The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250-1650* (Princeton: PUP, 2013); Regina Grafe and Oscar Gelderblom, “The Rise and Fall of the Merchant Guilds: Re-thinking the Comparative Study of Commercial Institutions in Premodern Europe,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11, no. 4 (Spring, 2010), 477-511.

drew in institutions from every community with which either company engaged. The EIC and the VOC served as conduits for the laws, politics, and commercial institutions of England and the Dutch Republic. But in their far-flung operations, company officials blended European laws with the commercial requirements of the Malay Archipelago and the diplomatic norms of the Mughal and Safavid Empires. In so doing, the dissertation traces how the companies created a political economy based on a global catalogue of institutions, which contemporaries identified as distinct from the governance systems of early modern Europe. Indeed, between 1650 and 1690, European state leaders increasingly deferred to the companies' judgment in matters governing the Anglo-Dutch East Indies trade.

The dissertation also examines European political institutions, such as summits, arbitrations, and treaty negotiations, as portals through which EIC and VOC officials could inject their shared political economy into the crystalizing inter-state political system of Europe. Arbitration summits, composed of representatives from two belligerent parties, had, since the Roman Empire, served as the key mechanisms for resolving international disputes.⁹⁸ In addition to compensatory arbitration awards, treaty negotiations, which resulted in binding agreements for future conduct, served as closures for international conflicts. Contemporary Europeans traced these treaty institutions to the accounts of biblical and classical texts,⁹⁹ and treaties served as the ubiquitous tools of European imperial expansion, particularly against the sovereignty of non-Christian populations.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Jackson Ralston, *International Arbitration from Athens to Locarno* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1929), 166-178.

⁹⁹ For an overview of the Peace of Nicias, which served as a powerful historical precedent for early modern peace making, see Raul Rahe, "The Peace of Nicias," in *The Making of Peace: Rulers, States, and the Aftermath of War*, edited by Williamson Murray and Jim Lacey (New York: CUP, 2009), 31-70; James Nathan, ed., *Soldiers, Statecraft and History: Coercive Diplomacy and International Order* (Westport: Praeger, 2002); Nathalie Rivère de Carles, ed., *Early Modern Diplomacy, Theatre and Soft Power: The Making of Peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2016); Derek Croxton, *Westphalia: The Last Christian Peace* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

¹⁰⁰ Among many others, Colin Galloway, *Pen and Ink Witchcraft: Treaties and Treaty Making in American Indian History* (New York: OUP, 2013); Saliha Belmssous has assembled a "state of the field" collection

In order to secure advantages in their trade and governance, the directors of both companies cooperatively used the specific institutions of arbitration and treaty negotiations—the selection process for delegates, the presentation and debate of terms, and the announcement of final agreements—to strategically inject their own political and commercial arguments into European debates over state political economy. While historians of the early modern have largely ignored the relationships between supranational corporations, and the effects of such inter-company organizations on international relations, a core methodology of an emerging field in global political science has identified corporate systems of governance as twentieth and twenty-first century phenomena linked with the integration of global economy. Scholars have argued that multinational corporations have constructed private corporate political economies: systems of regulation and best practices developed within a company's structures and adopted through inter-firm negotiations and industry-wide agreements. Examples of such institutions include informal compacts between companies, as well as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and industry-wide standard-setting bodies such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). In creating private collaborative global networks of administration and governance, these structures have powerfully affected national governments and represent some of the most coherent and effective forms of international law.¹⁰¹ Modern MNC theory provides new ways to think about the dynamics of global corporate interaction, not yet available in an early modern historiography still largely defined by state and regional perspectives.

on this topic, Saliha Belmsessous, ed., *Empire by Treaty: Negotiating European Expansion, 1600-1900* (New York: OUP, 2015).

¹⁰¹ Tim Büthe and Walter Mattli, *The New Global Rulers: The Privatization of Regulation in the World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Randall Stone, *Controlling Institutions: International Organizations and the Global Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); David Vogel, "Private Global Business Regulation," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 261-282; Petra Christmann and Glen Taylor, "Firm Self-Regulation Through International Certifiable Standards: Determinants of Symbolic versus Substantive Implementation," *Journal of International Business Studies* 37 (2006): 863-878.

In addition to the histories of politics and science, international political theory, New Institutional Economics, and modern political science, the final methodological guide for this study comes from the field of legal history, and specifically from the emerging research and theoretical work on “legal pluralism.” Leading scholars in this field understand empires and early modern polities through the analysis of “layered legal arrangements within composite polities.”¹⁰² This approach posits that all early modern communities were legally plural: they functioned with “uneasily maintained overlapping or clashing royal, ecclesiastical, local and seigneurial jurisdictions; and encompassed a variety of forms and sources of law.”¹⁰³ Lauren Benton, in particular, has generated a conceptualization to analyze how early modern empires linked competing claims of sovereignty over rivers, sea lanes, and other arteries of trade to the establishment of forts and settlements.¹⁰⁴ Rather than imagining monolithic uniformity of imperial regimes, this methodology focuses on conceptualizing early modern imperial commerce, politics, and culture through the study of the legal frictions experienced and navigated by actors in empire.

This dissertation gleans particular inspiration from the growing focus on corporations as key elements of the legally plural systems of early modern states and empires. Early modern Europeans, including the English, traced the concept of the corporation as an organizational form in society, or “body politic,” back to the Roman legal concept of “*corpus politicum et corporatum*.” As legally defined, or “chartered” bodies, corporations were endowed with legal

¹⁰² Richard Ross and Lauren Benton, “Empires and Legal Pluralism: Jurisdiction, Sovereignty, and Political Imagination in the Early Modern World,” in *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500-1850*, edited by Richard Ross and Lauren Benton (New York: NYU Press, 2016), 1. See also the seminal work of J.H. Elliot: J.H. Elliot, “A Europe of Composite Monarchies,” *Past & Present*, no. 137 (Nov., 1992), 48-71.

¹⁰³ Ross and Benton, “Empires and Legal Pluralism,” 1.

¹⁰⁴ Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires 1400-1900* (New York: CUP, 2010), 8.

personalities that outlived their human members: “*communitas perpetua*.”¹⁰⁵ In his influential reappraisal of the EIC’s corporate identity, Philip Stern summarized the historical and historiographical perceptions of the centrality of the corporation to Tudor and Stuart England, presenting a view of English society as an “interlocking matrix” of corporations.¹⁰⁶ Towns, guilds, religious confraternities, universities, the state government and even the monarch, were all legally and conceptually corporations.¹⁰⁷ And these organizations shared a common purpose of drawing “a multitude of people together into a legal singularity, an artificial person that could maintain common rights, police community standards and behavior, and administer over and on behalf of the collectivity.”¹⁰⁸

In addition to the legal form of the corporation, this project interprets the companies’ efforts to organize the legal pluralism of the East Indies trade—including communities and regimes throughout Europe and the Atlantic, and across the Indian Ocean—through two fundamental early modern legal concepts: the law of nations, and the commercial law of monopoly.

Monopoly was a key concept within the companies’ legal debates of commercial governance. The founding directors of both companies had claimed that the massive capital requirements of their trade required exclusive rights for any organization that would administer it. And thus Queen Elizabeth and the States General issued charters, respectively for the EIC in 1600 and the VOC in 1602, that included exclusive license to operate the East Indies trade among their

¹⁰⁵ William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. I (Oxford, 1765), 455-473; Harold Laski, “The Early History of the Corporation in England,” *Harvard Law Review* 30, no. 6 (1917), 561-588; Stern, *The Company-State*, 6

¹⁰⁶ Stern, *The Company-State*, 9.

¹⁰⁷ Stern synthesizes the nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiographies of these dynamics, Stern, *The Company-State*, 7-9; F.W. Maitland, “The Crown as Corporation,” *Law Quarterly Review* 17 (1901), 131-146; Phyllis Riddle, “Political Authority and University Formation in Europe, 1200-1800,” *Sociological Perspectives* 36, no. 1 (1993), 45-62; Alexandra Shepard, “Contesting Communities? ‘Town’ and ‘Gown’ in Cambridge, c. 1560-1640,” in *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, edited by Alexandra Shepard and Philip Withington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 216-234; Philip Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005).

¹⁰⁸ Stern, *The Company-State*, 7.

citizens.¹⁰⁹ Throughout the seventeenth century, both charters would encounter legal challenges by English¹¹⁰ and Dutch¹¹¹ merchants who argued against the supposed efficiencies of such an exclusive system. In Asia, however, the exclusions of monopoly contracts played a key role in the inter-company debates about the law of nations. Relying on the arguments of Grotius as a theoretical touchstone, company officials in Europe and in Asia defined their organizations' relationship through the competing legal identities of the sovereign "conqueror" and the trading "merchant."¹¹² Marshaling massive capital and credit reserves,¹¹³ the VOC invested heavily in a robust military infrastructure to support its trade in Asia. The reward for this investment, VOC officials claimed, was exclusive access, among Europeans, to markets in South and Southeast Asia. This was not a blanket effort to colonize Asia; rather, Dutch aggression took the form of surgical military strikes against key nodes of Eurasian trade, such as Malacca, Banten, and Cochin.¹¹⁴ In practice, the VOC's concept of monopoly represented an effort to gain leverage over enough of a market or commodity network so that Dutch officials could control the price and supply of a commodity.

Viewing their company as a member of an East Indian state community, VOC officials further claimed that non-European sovereigns maintained a similar right to establish contracts

¹⁰⁹ Charter Granted by Queen Elizabeth to the First East India Company, 31 December 1600, in *Charters Relating to the East India Company from 1600-1716*, edited by John Shaw (Madras: R. Hill, 1887), 1-15; The Licence granted by the States General to the Dutch East India Company, 20 March 1602, in *VOC 1602-2002: 400 Years of Company Law*, edited by Ella Gepken-Jager, Gerard van Solinge, and Levinus Timmerman (Deventer: Kluwer, 2005), 1-40.

¹¹⁰ Perhaps the most famous (and impactful) challenge to the EIC was the anti-monopoly case between Thomas Sandys and the East India Company between 1682 and 1684; *Cases Argued and Adjudged in the High Court of Chancery, Published from the Manuscripts of Thomas Vernon, Late of the Middle Temple, Esq., By Order of the High Court of Chancery* (Dublin, 1726), 127.

¹¹¹ One of the most prominent challenges to the VOC was in 1622, when a group of major shareholders challenged the leadership of the *Heren XVII*; *Vertooch aen de Ed. Ho. Mo. Heeren Staten Generael*, 1622, LUSC M 1916.

¹¹² The specifics of Grotius's arguments are further explored throughout the dissertation, particularly in Chapters 1 and 2.

¹¹³ See Gelderblom and Jonker, "Completing a Financial Revolution."

¹¹⁴ Explored in great detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

with the VOC, to the full exclusion of all other Europeans.¹¹⁵ The EIC, which in 1650 had far more limited capital and resources than its Dutch counterpart, claimed the rights of the merchant, which, according to Grotius' framing of the law of nations cited ubiquitously by both companies, entitled free access to commerce in the East Indies. Throughout the second half of the seventeenth century, the EIC's executive board, the Court of Committees (or Committees), would consciously accrue the military and political rights and capabilities enjoyed by the VOC's directorate, the *Heren XVII*. But until they developed the military force and colonial infrastructure of the VOC, the natural right of free access and the rejection of monopoly were the beggar's best options.

The Companies' legal debate turned on the concepts of monopoly and the law of nations. By tracing the arguments that arose from EIC and VOC officials' shared experiences in Europe and in Asia, this dissertation shows how the companies' emerging relationship exerted a powerful influence over key moments in the formation of European international politics.

Introduction.2.2 Digital Methods

In crafting my argument, I conducted research in fifteen archives in Europe, the U.K., the U.S., and South Africa, as well as the digital archive of the Republic of Indonesia. The vast majority of my sources (at least ninety percent) were not digitized. I photographed, transcribed, and digitized more than 11,000 documents. In order to map the patterns of arguments, the movement and translation of institutions, and the networked connections of historical actors, I sought to develop a database system that would capture key data points within my sources, making my entire source base relational and searchable.

¹¹⁵ For an overview of the typology of Dutch monopoly frameworks in the East Indies trade, see Chris Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company: The Dutch East India Company and its Servants in the Period of its Decline (1740-1796)* (Boston: Brill, 2012), 73-79.

Using DevonThink database software, I constructed several linked databases, which enabled me to catalogue my research—including manuscripts, images, maps, and objects—chronologically, by archive, and by topic. I designed a system by which I tagged individual documents with events, people, places, and periods, connecting them to my notes and chapter drafts, as well as to digitized secondary sources.

I constructed the databases such that all files were also fully word searchable, including notations and bookmarks within the PDFs of manuscript sources. This feature of the database, paired with the tags, allowed me to instantly collate all of my primary and secondary sources, “scoring” them by the frequency and even the context of tags and terms in each source. This functionality, in itself, led to numerous discoveries. Given that the majority of histories written about either company focus on economic sources and methods, they rarely engage with diplomatic archives, for example, which, reflecting the companies’ powerful role in seventeenth-century international relations, house an enormous volume of EIC and VOC legal and commercial records.

Utilizing these tools, I made my archival research fully relational. I could trace topics, discussions, and institutions across a vast, multilingual source base. Text and topic tagging made the intensity of each company’s focus on the other immediately visible, and the ability to trace the origins of ostensibly inter-state dialogues to inter-company debates revealed the powerful influence that the EIC-VOC relationship exerted over key elements of the formation of empires, states, and international relations.

Introduction.3 The Narrative and Structure of the Argument

This dissertation comprises five chapters, which trace a historical narrative from the first decade of the seventeenth century through the 1690s. Arranged chronologically, each chapter focuses on a particular stage in the development of the companies’ relationship with each other

and tracks that relationship's increasing engagement with the international politics of Europe. Taken together, the chapters trace the evolution of institutions that linked the EIC and VOC during the second half of the seventeenth century, and they analyze company officials' construction of a mutual program of political and economic practice and thought. This historical narrative takes the form of an arc, beginning with the birth pangs of the inter-company system, which responded to mid-century political crisis. Each successive chapter traces the increase in intensity and consistency of this relationship, until inter-company relations collapsed in the late 1680s, leading to increasing state governance in the East Indies trade.

Chapter 1 offers a sweeping examination of the companies' interactions during the first half of the seventeenth century. Exploring contexts of both companies' founding and early growth, and studying the first inter-company summits and correspondence, this chapter argues that the dynamics linking the EIC and the VOC were relatively weak between 1600 and 1650. This period was marked only by punctuated meetings of EIC and VOC officials; strong state control, particularly of the EIC's negotiations; and no sustained veins of dialogue or debate. This chapter also shows that, in recognition of the innovation of the sustained intellectual, programmatic, and institutional links that joined the two companies after 1650, English and Dutch officials would later consciously rewrite this history. Seeking a legal and political precedent to validate the parameters of their new relationship, company leaders cast their earlier dealings as far more robust than they actually were.

The second chapter focuses on the primary construction of the inter-company relationship during the 1650s. Closely studying both companies' petitions to the English and Dutch state governments, as well as EIC and VOC officials' internal correspondence, this chapter shows how a new slate of Anglo-Dutch Committees took hold of the EIC's leadership, responding to the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) by pivoting the English company to publicly engage with the VOC. At the same time, the Committees positioned the Dutch company as a model for the EIC's

constitutional and operational overhaul. The *Heren XVII* responded by reorganizing their own management structures to more effectively engage with the EIC. Both companies used inter-state arbitration frameworks to forge new institutions for the debate of the law of nations and commercial practice. And the leaders of each company positioned the other as a central concern in their long-range strategic policies for commerce, politics, and governance.

While the 1650s witnessed the nascent Anglo-Dutch legal discourse divided between the theaters of Europe and Asia, Chapter 3 traces how, in the 1660s, a durable circuit of argument and emulation linked both companies' relations across Asia with their directors' dealings in Europe. The Committees continued to work toward constitutional parity with the VOC, and Dutch agents throughout Asia began to watch and emulate English agents' political strategies to ally with non-European merchants and sovereigns. The VOC's siege of Cochin in 1662 would result in English and Dutch officials' development of arguments over their shared legal identities. The Committees would maintain that the companies held the rights of the "merchant," with unencumbered access to trade. The VOC representatives would argue that they operated with the privileges of the "conqueror," exerting sovereignty over conquered cities and commerce around them. These identities drew from a mutually recognized body of international law, and they responded to a common set of challenges and goals in the East Indies trade. As this dynamic evolved through the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667), the companies' debates powerfully influenced key developments in European diplomacy and in inter-state negotiations.

By the 1670s, the previous two decades had witnessed the construction of a common intellectual and operational project between the two East India Companies, which integrated European economic and political theories with the diplomatic and commercial institutions of Central and East Asia. In the process, the English and Dutch states had increasingly deferred authority to the companies in issues of the East Indies trade. Chapter 4 shows how, during the 1670s, the companies used an inter-state negotiation in Europe to autonomously design a regime

for the governance of global trade, formalizing a legal geography for Anglo-Dutch Asia. Having reached constitutional parity with the Dutch, the Committees developed a split identity for their company, claiming the rights of both free “merchant” and sovereign “conqueror.” Consciously recognizing the companies’ intertwined goals and strategies, with this development, the *Raad* and the *Heren* acknowledged a new dynamic in the East Indies. They moved to fundamentally reorganize their own policies in response to the advent of the English Company’s dual legal claims.

Chapter 5 traces the inter-company relationship to its apogee, and then to its sudden collapse. Both events turned on a single Javanese port: Banten. Long the hub for the EIC’s operations in the area, the Sultanate of Banten was one of the last remaining states to successfully resist alliance with the VOC. With capital reserves increasing, the Committees, led by Sir Josiah Child, sought to use an embassy to bolster the EIC’s profile as a merchant in Southeast Asia, and to expand their trading network throughout East Asia, as well.

But when the *Raad* invaded Banten in 1682, intervening in a civil war between Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa and his son, Sultan Haji, the Committees abandoned this plan. They shifted the foundation of the EIC’s negotiations with the VOC toward one of aggression, and they turned to focus on imperial investment in South Asia. The Committees and the *Heren* would neither correspond nor meet again. Both directorates engaged in significant reorganization of their companies, which would lay the institutional grounding for the global European empires of the eighteenth century. Importantly, however, this chapter concludes by revealing how the echoes of the previous inter-company relationship still rang powerfully through both companies’ diverging imperial trajectories.

CHAPTER 1

DIVERGING HISTORIES: THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF THE ENGLISH AND DUTCH EAST INDIES TRADE

The *Heren*¹ and the Committees² valued history. In 1654, as the English and Dutch directorates prepared for their first summit in more than a quarter-century, the leaders of both companies framed this meeting as the latest event in fifty years of shared experience in the East Indies trade. Just as the nascent system of international relations in Europe had been built on common historical and legal precedents,³ the *bewindhebbers* (directors) assured the Dutch state officials that this would not be the first time that the Companies of England and the Netherlands had dealt with each other.⁴ In a series of “mutual concerts,” the companies had been equitable partners, whose representatives resolved their differences “company to company,” with the English and Dutch states intervening only “whenever the companies together could not come to an accord.”⁵ The *Heren* detailed inter-company conferences in 1613, 1615, and 1619, as well as a series of hybrid company-state dialogues that trailed through 1621 and 1625.⁶ In recounting this history, the *Heren* sought to legitimize their proposal for an East India Company summit in 1654. In the wake of the bloody First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654), which produced violently hostile political environments in both countries, the *Heren* advocated for negotiations conducted “only between representatives of the respective companies,” and free from state direction.⁷

¹ The executive board of the VOC was known as the *Heren XVII*, or “*Heren*.” Individual directors were “*bewindhebbers*.”

² The executive board of the EIC was known as the Court of Committees, or “Committees.” An individual director was a “Committee.”

³ Among many others, see Derek Croxton, *Westphalia: The Last Christian Peace* (New York: Palgrave, 2013); Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and International Order from Grotius to Kant* (New York: OUP, 1999).

⁴ All translations are my own unless otherwise noted; *Heren XVII to Heeren Beverinck, Nieupoort, and Jongstal, Extraordinary Ambassadors from this State in England*, 8 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*; The *bewindhebbers* also make reference to the interstate negotiations of 1628 and 1634.

⁷ *Ibid.*

In their own preparation for the summit, the leaders of the English Company took a similar stance. They drafted historical narratives, which also constructed a shared history with the Dutch Company, centered on direct dealing, free of state intervention. The Committees outlined a relationship that stretched even farther than the *Heren*'s perspective, reaching from the 1580s and the earliest English and Dutch forays into the East Indies, through a full seventy years of Anglo-Dutch relations in that trade. From the English point of view, however, the coherence of this relationship stemmed from continual Dutch predation on the EIC.⁸ Separate from the foreign policies of the English and Dutch nations, the VOC had seized EIC ships, captured their sailors, and ruined their factories. VOC officials had violated Anglo-Dutch treaties, and the English were hopeful that this summit would finally right a half-century of wrongs and return both companies to the natural equity originally intended in their founding.⁹

While the Committees cast the Dutch as the bullies of seventeenth-century European imperial expansion, their historical perspective rested on the same foundation as the arguments advanced by the *Heren*: institutionally, the companies were equal peers in the East Indies trade. The English directors argued that their company had always possessed the will and capacity to equal its Dutch competitor in commerce and military might. Indeed, the Committees maintained, it was the English who first enabled Dutch forays into Eastern waters, following in the wake of Sir Francis Drake's voyage in 1583.¹⁰ It was not reflective of any shortcomings of the English Company that, by 1650, the VOC now dwarfed English capital reserves and commerce in Europe and in Asia. Rather, the Committees urged, it was the Dutch, who "endeavored the utter extirpation" of the EIC, and relegated the English Company to Holland's shadow.¹¹

⁸ A Narrative of the Settlement of ye Trade in the East Indies and of the Injuries Susteyned by the Dutch, November 1652, TNA CO/77/7 f. 187.

⁹ *Ibid.*; East India Company Petition to Parliament, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 78v.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*; A Narrative of the Settlement of ye Trade in the East Indies and of the Injuries Susteyned by the Dutch, November 1652, TNA CO/77/7 f. 187.

¹¹ East India Company Petition to Parliament, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 78v.

Both companies strained credulity in their accounts of the previous fifty years. Indeed, this chapter will show that the first half-century of the companies' existence had been marked by a powerful divergence in the constitution, development, and politics of both organizations. The companies were spurred on by similar motivations, and constructed with related legal frameworks. However, they developed within dramatically different political environments that conditioned their divergent evolution, as employers, political organizations, and commercial institutions in Europe, and as traders, diplomats, and governments in Asia.

The English and Dutch directors were not simply writing political fiction in the 1650s. They recast history in order to legitimize a new project that they actively forged between their two organizations. This new relationship would operate through a shared set of institutions for the brokerage of arbitration agreements, direct communication between EIC and VOC leaders, and the restructuring of both companies toward common practices of management, commercial, and political strategy. This system would enjoy unprecedented autonomy from European state oversight.

Historians have largely taken their lead from the mid-century company directors, positioning the Anglo-Dutch relationship in the East Indies trade within a consistent, sequential narrative of commercial competition that depicts the weaker English as gradually gaining on the VOC through the seventeenth century.¹² Punctuated conflicts and exchanges serve as data points for this overarching trend in the historical narrative.

¹² This narrative is pervasive among histories of the English and Dutch companies. Among many others, see Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003); Els Jacobs, *Merchant in Asia: The Trade of the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: CNWS, 2006); Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (New York: Longman, 1993); KN Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company 1660-1760* (New York: CUP, 1978); Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976); The narrative also forms a key strand of world historical studies including, Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (Berkeley: UCP, 2011); Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: PUP, 2010), 170-178; CA Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (London: Blackwell, 2004).

Tracing the very string of events highlighted by the mid-century English and Dutch Company directors, Chapter 1 shows how the companies' relationship between 1600 and 1650 was defined by fundamental constitutional and ideological incompatibility. The chapter further argues that the English and Dutch state governments directly controlled the meetings and correspondence between the companies. In stark comparison to the discrete, supranational system forged between the EIC and VOC after 1650, the chapter supports the position that even the early seventeenth-century summits, treaties, and partnerships involving both companies served as expressions of different state institutions, ideologies, arguments, and strategies that pushed the EIC and VOC further apart. After a decade of such negotiations, an Anglo-Dutch crisis in 1624 should have compelled intensive debates between the companies. However, the so-called "Amboyna massacre" initiated a quarter century of alienation between the *Heren* and the Committees, encouraging the development of radically different English and Dutch organizations in the East Indies trade.¹³

1.1 The Formation of the English and Dutch Companies

The companies emerged in conversation, as English and Dutch merchants and state officials developed new organizations to meet shared challenges of commerce, finance, and governance. Both companies were formed by state governments in response to political opportunities and a desire to replicate the fantastic wealth reaped by the Portuguese *Estado*, which had, for nearly one hundred years, served as Europe's primary conduit for the East Indies trade. In their arguments for a royal charter, English East India merchants explicitly cited Dutch

¹³ Heren XVII to Heeren Beverinck, Nieupoort, and Jongstal, Extraordinary Ambassadors from this State in England, 8 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

trade to Asia.¹⁴ English and Portuguese competition, in turn, largely prompted the formation of the Dutch United East India Company (VOC) in 1602.¹⁵

Historians have focused primarily on the institutional similarities between the EIC and VOC, contrasting them to Iberian imperial frameworks in order to cast the two companies as racehorses of the same breed in a competition for European empire and colonial commerce.¹⁶ However, the English and Dutch states largely controlled the companies' relations through their early decades of existence. Indeed, the dramatically different institutional ecologies of England and the Dutch Republic conditioned an inconsistent and divergent relationship between the EIC and the VOC that clashes with historians' linear narrative.

Seventeenth-century England was a highly complex political environment animated by a tension between two opposing forces: (1) the development of London as the preeminent center for commerce, finance, communication, and the sovereignty of the Crown government and (2) the persistence of well-established forms of local governance.¹⁷ The corporation served as one of the

¹⁴ Peter Mancall, *Hakluyt's Promise: An Elizabethan's Obsession for an English America* (New Haven: YUP, 2007), 237-243.

¹⁵ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 17.

¹⁶ The most influential study to advance this narrative is Niels Steensgaard's 1973 monograph, Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Virtually all economic and European imperial histories of the Indian Ocean have further advanced this perception, for example, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650* (New York: CUP, 2002); Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel 1605-1690* ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962); Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India* (New York: CUP, 1998); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: PUP, 2000).

¹⁷ For a seminal study of English state centralization, see GR Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government: Administrative Changes in the Reign of Henry VIII* (New York: CUP, 1953); For an influential study, which employs economic and legal analysis of this trend, see Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (New York: St. Martin's, 1998); For one of the most influential assessments of the endurance of local, corporate institutions in England, see Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (New York: CUP, 2005).

key institutional conduits through which this tension was negotiated by monarchs, government elites, religious leaders, local officials, and merchants.¹⁸

The first English corporation to gain success in international trade was the Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers, which, during the first half of the sixteenth century, came to dominate the English cloth trade, particularly at Antwerp. The Merchant Adventurers exhibited a corporate form identified by historians as the regulated company.¹⁹ This organization did possess a charter from the Crown, granting monopoly rights over the cloth trade with northern Europe. However, the regulated company acted much like a guild or a licensing agency, granting its members the right to engage in a particular vein of commerce, and operating under a hierarchical body of officials charged to maintain the standards of membership or “freedom” in the private society.²⁰ While merchants within the regulated company mobilized to protect their rights, this was not an organization of collective investment, and such a company “offered little more than protection to its members: they succeeded or failed on their own merits.”²¹

This regulated form worked well for English trade within Europe, but trading ventures designed to access North America, the Caribbean, and certainly the Indian Ocean would require far greater investment than any single English merchant could supply. This necessitated the import of an innovative merchant organization from Italy: the joint-stock. Each voyage would become a joint undertaking. Company members, through their investment, owned a share of the venture. As Theodore Rabb summarized in his seminal study of English joint-stock investment,

¹⁸ Sir Edward Coke, Report on Dr. Bonham’s Case, in the Court of Common Pleas, 1610, in *Selected Writings of Sir Edward Coke*, vol. I, edited by Steve Shepherd (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2003), 266-271. William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. I (Oxford, 1765), 455-473; Harold Laski, “The Early History of the Corporation in England,” *Harvard Law Review* 30, no. 6 (1917); Philip Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: OUP, 2011), 6.

¹⁹ Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 52; Oscar Gelderblom, “From Antwerp to Amsterdam: The Contribution of Merchants from the Southern Netherlands to the Commercial Expansion of Amsterdam (c. 1540-1609),” *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 26, no. 3 (2003), 250-251.

²⁰ Theodore Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire: Merchant and Gentry Investment in the Expansion of England, 1575-1630* (Cambridge: HUP, 1967), 28-29; William R. Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, vol. I (Cambridge: CUP, 1912), 7, 10-14.

²¹ Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire*, 28.

with this institutional shift, “the Company itself, abandoning the role as mere regulator, took over the direction of the trade.”²² The Company’s elected officers no longer simply regulated merchant policy. They formed an executive board of directors, managing the venture for the body of investors that could now include those without mercantile expertise.²³

While the joint-stock form allowed for wider societal participation in trade, there is a well-chronicled narrative, detailing how the EIC was born within, and remained under, the control of a tight cabal of London merchants. From the late 1580s, a small merchant group dominated share ownership across the most prominent trading organizations, with members of the Smith, Middleton, Garaway, Cockayne, Abbott, and Staper families frequently occupying the directorates of Baltic, Levant, Atlantic, Mediterranean and East India ventures.²⁴ These merchant families also solidified their bonds through intermarriage, leading historian Robert Brenner, in his seminal Marxist study of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century London merchant community, to identify them as a discreet class: a tight-knit “Levant-East India Combine” of powerful merchants driving the English metropole’s commercial politics.²⁵

The English East India Company was born into this institutional environment on New Year’s Eve of 1600. Founded as the “Governor and Company of Merchants of London, Trading into the East-Indies,” the EIC embodied the commercial and political trends of England.²⁶ It was a venture conceived of, and launched by, a group of key figures in the Levant trade, who, after sending a series of unsuccessful individual voyages toward the East, recognized the need for the greater capital and lifespan that a joint-stock could offer to the East Indies trade.²⁷ The very name of the Company conveyed a strong centralized leadership hierarchy, characteristic of the

²² *Ibid.*, 29.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 43-44, 52.

²⁵ Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 51; Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire*, 97.

²⁶ Charter Granted by Queen Elizabeth, to the East-India Company, 31 December [1600], in *Charters Granted to the East-India Company from 1601* (London, 1774), 3-25.

²⁷ Lawson, *The East India Company*, 14-15.

new joint-stocks. The Company was led by a Governor and a Deputy, along with an executive council of twenty-four directors or “Committees.” Elections for this “Court of Committees” were held annually among the General Court of EIC shareholders, and the procedures of the Court were modeled after those of Parliament.²⁸

Economic historians have, however, frequently been too eager to label the EIC an innovation.²⁹ EIC shares were, in theory, publicly available for purchase by anyone able to meet the minimum investment. In reality, the Company operated more as an exclusive clique of London merchants. Several mechanisms enforced this structure of a closed society, including a minimum buy-in: a steep £200.³⁰ In addition, the major shareholders, who were the only ones eligible for a seat on the Court of Committees, wielded considerable control over those who could buy stock, limiting membership to a select 219 members.³¹ While the Queen granted these merchants an exclusive charter for the English East Indies trade for a period of fifteen years, historians of the Company are quick to note that the early EIC took much more comfort in the operations of a regulated company than in those of an innovative permanent venture. The first joint-stocks, or “voyages,” were issued only for periods of three or four years, then wound up.³² In fact, it would not be until the Court of Committees launched a new relationship with the VOC in the 1650s, that the English Company would take the form of a permanent joint stock.³³ Only then would the Company’s permanent capital base and consistent leadership allow it to step beyond the English state and forge a relationship directly with the VOC.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

²⁹ Asking the fundamental question “why did the companies triumph and why did the Portuguese fail,” Niels Steensgaard points to the institutional innovations of the EIC and the VOC, as they subordinated “the production of protection to the market mechanism,” Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, 11; Business historians have taken this narrative further, arguing that the two companies represent the precursors to modern multinationals, Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas, “Giants of an Earlier Capitalism: The Chartered Trading Companies as Modern Multinationals,” *The Business History Review* 62, no. 3 (Autumn, 1988), 398-419.

³⁰ John Bruce, *Annals of the Honorable East India Company* (London: Black, Parry and Kingsbury, 1810), 112.

³¹ Charter Granted by Queen Elizabeth, 3-6.

³² Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 226-227; Lawson, *The East India Company*, 20-21.

³³ Lawson, *The East India Company*, 21.

The exclusivity of the EIC may have insured the Company's investment, but it also locked the Company within consuming domestic political battles. While King James I championed the expansion of overseas trade, including the ventures of the East India Company, tensions within the merchant communities of England constantly challenged the exclusive privileges of the Company. These challenges were articulated through the proposals of rival ventures, as well as through the evolving discourse of English political economy, centering on the balance of trade.³⁴ Constantly strapped for cash and political support, the Crown offered privileges to the highest bidder, authorizing competitors to the EIC if the Company balked at the Crown's loan and gift requests. While one historian has recently challenged the well-established binary of state parasite and corporate host, even revisionist political studies acknowledge the EIC's institutional dependence upon an often fickle and always indebted Stuart government. With regard to the EIC's monopoly charter, such a privilege "was only as valuable as the monarch's commitment to upholding it."³⁵

Just as the EIC had emerged in England, the Dutch East India Company was founded in 1602 as a solution for challenges that the East Indies trade posed to the well-established institutions of Dutch commercial organization. Domestic politics within the Dutch Republic conditioned the goals and aspirations for the VOC's trade. During the final two decades of the sixteenth century, Dutch merchants had sponsored voyages to the East Indies, encouraged by the impressive profits of the Portuguese trade, which carried back spices and East India wares that

³⁴ There is a small, though well established, historiography that analyzes how the early Stuart Sovereigns harnessed resentment of the EIC's monopoly rights in order to extract funds from the English company and its rivals. These studies include, Robert Ashton, *The Crown and the Money Market, 1603-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 44-45, 178-179; Robert Ashton, *The City and the Court 1603-1643* (Cambridge: CUP, 1979), 126-127; Lawson, *The East India Company*, 33; KN Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint Stock Company 1600-1640* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1965), 4; In her dissertation, Rupali Mishra offers a revision of this long held perspective, arguing that the Company could, and did, maintain leverage in the Company-Crown relationship during the early seventeenth century, Rupali Mishra, "Merchants, Commerce, and the State: The East India Company in Early Stuart England" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2010).

³⁵ Mishra, "Merchants, Commerce and the State," 61.

were rapidly growing in popularity in European markets.³⁶ The *Voorcompagnieën*, as the early Dutch ventures were called, drew on standard institutions of corporate organization in the Low Countries. By the sixteenth century, a consistent legal framework coordinated all sectors of Dutch trade, industry, local and regional civic administration, and even the admiralties: the *partenrederij*. Limited liability was a central element of these partnerships, serving as “the general principal of law.”³⁷ In his *Inleiding tot de Hollandsche Regtsgeleerdheid*, Hugo Grotius, arguably the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic’s most influential legal thinker and the architect of the VOC’s foundational arguments of international law, recognized as a fundamental element of the contemporary Dutch commercial partnership that “each merchant would only be bound for his part in the trade.”³⁸ This was much the same model as the “regulated company” of English economic history. These organizations were restricted to small associations of participant-owned “*parten*,” or shares of the company. During the sixteenth century, Dutch merchants applied this framework, as English merchants had with “regulated companies,” to fund trade to the Mediterranean, across the Atlantic, and to the Western Coast of Africa, settling their accounts at the end of each voyage.³⁹

By the final decade of the sixteenth century, northern European demand for East India spices, principal among which was pepper, far outstripped the supply provided by the Portuguese.

³⁶ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 13-17.

³⁷ The term was first coined by nineteenth-century historians, WMF Mansvelt, *Rechtsvorm en Geldelijk Beheer bij de Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1922), 31; Oscar Gelderblom and Joost Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution: The Finance of the Dutch East India Trade and the Rise of the Amsterdam Capital Market, 1595-1612,” *The Journal of Economic History* 64, no. 3 (September 2004), 649; Oscar Gelderblom, Abe De Jong, and Joost Jonker, “An admiralty for Asia: Isaac le Maire and Conflicting Conceptions About Corporate Governance of the VOC,” *ERM REPORT*, no. ERS-2010-026-F&A (2010), 35.

³⁸ As quoted in Mansvelt, *Rechtsvorm*, 31; For Hugo Grotius’s role in the establishment and legal defense of the VOC, see Martine van Ittersum, *Profit and Principal: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories and the Rise of Dutch Power in the East Indies, 1595-1615* (Boston: Brill, 2006); Peter Borschberg, “Hugo Grotius, East India Trade and the King of Johor,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 30, no. 2 (September 1999), 225-248; Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 78-108; David Armitage, “Introduction,” in Hugo Grotius, *The Free Sea*, ed. David Armitage (Indianapolis: The Liberty Fund, 2004), 5-10.

³⁹ Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution,” 648; Gelderblom, De Jong, and Jonker, “An Admiralty for Asia,” 34.

Dutch merchant organizations, such as the Ximenes cartel, saw an opportunity to eliminate Lisbon as a middleman, and to direct the profits of the East Indies trade directly to the Low Countries.⁴⁰ The East Indies trade, however, would demand innovations to the extant *partenrederij* model. Voyages to Asia required unprecedented capital investment. At about 100,000 guilders per ship, early Asian voyages tripled the cost of outfitting a ship for the Mediterranean.⁴¹ The risk was much greater, and the voyages were longer. Round trips took at least two years, and voyages could take as long as a decade to wind up. To answer these challenges, each of the East Indies companies operated under the governance of an executive committee.⁴²

These forerunners to the VOC, the *Voorcompagnieën*—among which were Amsterdam’s *Compagnie van Verre* and the *Oude Compagnie* as well as associations in the South Holland port of Rotterdam and the province of Zeeland’s flagship port of Middleburgh—were partnerships formed of small groups of merchant investors, comprised primarily of business associates and relatives.⁴³ The early voyages were highly profitable, as evidenced in the popularity of their investments. The rapidly multiplying Dutch forays into the East Indies, however, did not occur in a bubble of Dutch innovation, but rather drew from the Republic’s strong connections to the Portuguese trading houses in Antwerp and the Mediterranean.⁴⁴ To captain their early voyages, the partnerships also recruited Dutch sailors with experience in service to the *Estado*.⁴⁵ After the fall of Antwerp to Spanish forces in 1585, Amsterdam quickly grew to be the epicenter of Dutch-Asian trade. Between 1595-1602, at least eighty ships sailed from the United Provinces to Asia,

⁴⁰ Christopher Ebert, *Between Empires: Brazilian Sugar in the Early Atlantic Economy, 1550-1630* (Boston: Brill, 2008), 30, 70; Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 13-15.

⁴¹ Joost Jonker and Keetie Sluyterman, *At Home on the World Markets: Dutch International Trading Companies from the 16th Century Until the Present* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 42-44.

⁴² More than 20% of the *Voorcompagnieën* ships were lost, Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution,” 648-649.

⁴³ Gelderblom, De Jong and Jonker, “An Admiralty for Asia,” 36.

⁴⁴ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 13.

⁴⁵ Jan Somers, *De VOC als Volkenrechtelijke Actor* (Gouda: Gouda Quint, 2001), 42.

more than sixty percent of which were launched from Amsterdam. During the same period, no more than forty-six Portuguese East Indiamen (as the Eurasian return route ships were called) left Lisbon.⁴⁶

Competition among these Dutch ventures, combined with the new rival organization in London, soon threatened their viability. Under the pressure of Amsterdam's merchants and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the leading politician, or *Landsadvocaat*, of Holland, and the States General—the Dutch assembly that joined representatives from each of the seven United Provinces—negotiated the consolidation of the East India ventures.⁴⁷ A deal was finally brokered with a 21-year charter that would grant a “united company” a monopoly over Dutch trade to and from the East Indies.

In stark contrast to the EIC's close cabal of investors, every inhabitant of the seven United Provinces would be able to take part in the venture as a participant, or shareholder.⁴⁸ The final charter for the United East India Company (*Vereinigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*), established six chambers across the cities, which had housed *Voorcompagnieën*. Five of the chambers—Amsterdam, Enkhuizen, Hoorn, Rotterdam and Delft—were located in Holland, and the sixth chamber sat at Middleburgh in Zeeland. Each VOC chamber sold shares, outfitted ships, and auctioned goods. While more than half of the 6.4 million guilders of initial capital came from the Amsterdam chamber, the Middleburgh merchants insisted that the 1602 charter outline a company-wide distribution to block the Amsterdammers from taking control of the Company. Expenditures and activities were thus divided, such that Amsterdam carried one-half,

⁴⁶ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 17; Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution,” 649-650.

⁴⁷ Arguably the most powerful political office in the province of Holland, this office combined the responsibilities of Secretary of the States of Holland (the provincial legislature) and leader of Holland's delegation to the States General. After Oldenbarnevelt's death in 1619, the office would become the *Raadpensionaris*, or Grand Pensionary of Holland, Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 454-455; Jan den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, vol. III, 773; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 175-175.

⁴⁸ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 20.

one-quarter was allocated for Middleburgh, and then one-sixteenth each for the remaining four chambers.⁴⁹

While the leadership of the EIC was centrally organized around the Committees, the VOC distributed its operations, as each chamber selected its own panel of directors, or *bewindhebbers*: twenty for Amsterdam, twelve for Zeeland, and seven each for the other four chambers. Two to three times a year, an executive committee of seventeen *bewindhebbers*, nominated by each chamber, would meet in Amsterdam (six years in succession) or Middleburgh (two years in succession) in order to decide company-wide policy. This body, known as the *Heren XVII*, or “Gentlemen Seventeen,” was comprised of eight Amsterdam directors, four Zeeland directors, and one director from each of the four smaller chambers.⁵⁰ In addition, the *Heren XVII* was staffed by an *Advocaat*, who was always a trained lawyer and served as the secretary to the board and to the *Haags Besogne*.⁵¹

As with the EIC, in Europe and in Asia, the actions of Company officials were legally determined by the VOC’s charter, issued by the States General. The Dutch Company’s charter, however, bore little resemblance to the document issued by Queen Elizabeth in 1600. Along with exclusive rights to Dutch trade East of the Cape of Good Hope, the States General had endowed the VOC with “all sorts of authority and jurisdiction” in the East Indies. The VOC exercised authority in the “making of laws and ordinations, the appointment of high and low political officials and justices... for the making of alliances, peace, and war with other potentates.”⁵²

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 21; Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution,” 651.

⁵⁰ The *Heren* also maintained four subcommittees, each with specific running tasks and responsibilities in preparation for meetings of the full board. One committee checked the bookkeeping of the factories and chambers, one prepared the annual accounting of the company, one managed the auctions, and the final subcommittee, known as the *Haags Besogne*, managed the correspondence with officials in Asia. This final committee, formed of four Amsterdam directors, two from Zeeland, and one each from the smaller chambers, met at The Hague. In the second half of the seventeenth century, it also came to manage the company’s relationship with the States General, and the VOC’s role in diplomatic policy and correspondence; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 21; 149-151.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁵² Pieter van Dam, *Beschryving van de Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 1, part 1, ed. FW Stapel (‘S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1927), 717.

Historians of law and politics have examined the clear linkages between the Republic's continued fight for independence against Spain and the martial powers with which the States General endowed the VOC. Indeed, in the Company's first five years, armed VOC ships would reveal their mission to attack the Portuguese *Estado da India* while building their trading network in Asia. And Hugo Grotius would author his seminal tracts on the "freedom of the seas" and the law of nations, originally designed as legal defenses for Dutch aggression in the East Indies.⁵³

While the VOC's early trade directly competed with that of the inchoate EIC, the companies remained closely defined by the domestic politics of their respective countries. The VOC quickly took on a dramatically different domestic profile than that of the tightly-limited joint-stock in London. Historians have located significant benefits in the "oligarchic" Dutch system of governance, wherein, without a monarch, nor any form of strong national government, a small group of families came to control, not only the leading merchant organizations, but also the United Provinces' leading social and political institutions. The preeminent families of trade also supplied the capital and leadership for the institutions of public governance and finance for the nascent Republic.⁵⁴

Unlike the EIC, which, operating within the political tensions of England, was always at pains to neutralize the resistance of landed, agrarian antagonists of overseas trade, doggedly recruiting allies within the landed gentry and nobility, the Dutch regent networks ensured that this was not a challenge faced by their own East India Company. While provincial tensions frequently flared, pitting the interior regions of Friesland and Utrecht in opposition to the dominant coastal maritime centers, the urban regents from Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Leiden, and

⁵³ Peter Borschberg, "Hugo Grotius, East India Trade and the King of Johor," 225-248; Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 78-108; Martine van Ittersum, "The Long Goodbye: Hugo Grotius' Justification of Dutch Expansion Overseas, 1615-1645," *History of European Ideas* 36 (2010), 386-411.

⁵⁴ Recognizing this form of societal organization, historical sociologist Julia Adams has concluded that, in contrast to the centralizing states of France, Spain, and England, the Dutch Republic emerged as a "familial state," in which "the state builder, moneyed man, and family patriarch tended to be one in the same," Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 29.

Delft gradually became the Republic's most prominent landlords, consolidating most of Holland's rural agricultural sector within their own account books.⁵⁵

In addition to the tightly networked Dutch regent class, the VOC's comparatively autonomous position in the Dutch Republic drew from a swiftly developing public understanding of the Company's indispensability. The most striking comparison of the early English and Dutch companies can be recognized in the contrast between their shareholding populations. The English Company's socially controlled membership, with only 219 original members, reflected the comparatively small role of merchant organizations in English society. Only 6,300 people invested in English joint-stocks between 1575 and 1630 (of an English male population of 4.5 million).⁵⁶ The VOC's Amsterdam chamber, alone, had more than 1,100 initial subscribers (drawn from an adult population of, at most, 50,000 people). Within Dutch companies, shares were divisible, and small investors could buy 1/32, or even 1/128 of a share.⁵⁷ During the first decade of its existence, the VOC established a permanent capital base—in contrast to the English Company's stocks, which were wound up every three to five years—and thus the Dutch Company developed a secondary market, diffusing the VOC's ownership even further. Reflecting on the VOC's role as an employer, the importance of its capital market to a diverse array of shareholders, and its role as an engine of trade and re-export, Joseph de la Vega, a member of Amsterdam's thriving Sephardic Jewish community, concluded in his 1688 historical treatise on the Amsterdam Exchange, *Confusion de Confusiones*, that the VOC served as the Republic's "tree of life, because innumerable men earn their living in its shadow."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Bas van Bavel, "Rural Development and Landownership in Holland, c. 1400-1650," in *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic*, ed. Oscar Gelderblom (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 167-196.

⁵⁶ Charter Granted by Queen Elizabeth, 3-6; Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire*, 26-27.

⁵⁷ Gelderblom and Jonker, "Completing a Financial Revolution," 645, 654.

⁵⁸ Joseph de la Vega, *Confusion de Confusiones*, trans. Hermann Kellenbenz (Cambridge: Harvard University Printing Office, 1957), 3.

1.2 Competition and State Negotiations: 1613-1615

In the first decade of the seventeenth century, both companies dispatched fleets of ships from Europe, carrying bullion and European trade goods. The EIC and VOC ships followed well-established Portuguese trade routes, which were, themselves, enmeshed in bustling non-European commercial circuits that had been active for nearly a millennium.⁵⁹ Cargoes were first taken to the ports of the Safavid Empire and the Western Coast of South Asia, where they were traded for textiles, dyes, and other goods. They then sailed for Southeast Asia, where these commodities were traded for spices, which were carried back to Europe.⁶⁰ Both companies began to establish permanent trading outposts, or “factories,” at ports such as Bandar Abbas, Surat, and Banten. But the militarized mission of the Dutch quickly distinguished the VOC’s political aspirations in Asia from those of the English merchants. Beginning with the Dutch Company’s very first fleets, “guns and ammunition bulked as large as merchandise and specie.”⁶¹ As the Dutch began attacking Portuguese fortifications in Southeast Asia, their victories gave them territorial claims on Ambon Island (1605), followed swiftly by the accrual of other territories in the Maluku Islands. These territorial acquisitions encouraged early VOC leaders to begin asserting monopoly claims over regional spice markets, and signing contracts of alliance and commerce with neighboring sovereigns that restricted the sale of commodities to the Dutch Company, alone.⁶²

⁵⁹ Among many others, Abdul Sheriff, “Globalization with a Difference: An Overview,” in *The Indian Ocean: Oceanic Connections and the Creation of New Societies*, ed. Abdul Sheriff and Eng seng Ho (London: Hurst, 2014), 11-44; Sebastian Prange, “The Contested Sea: Regimes of Maritime Violence in the Pre-Modern Indian Ocean,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 17 (2013), 9-33; Johan Talens, *Een feodale samenleving in koloniale vaarwater: Staatsvorming, koloniale expansie en economische onderontwikkeling in Banten, West-Java (1600-1750)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999); Eng seng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: UCP, 2006); Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*; Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Y. Andaya, *A History of Early Modern Southeast Asia, 1400-1830* (New York: CUP, 2015).

⁶⁰ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 34; Lawson, *The East India Company*, 24.

⁶¹ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 33.

⁶² For transcribed texts of these contracts, see JE Heeres, ed., *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum*, vol I (S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1907); Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 34-35.

The VOC's policy of exclusive contracts soon added friction to the competition between the English and Dutch in the East Indies trade. David Middleton led the EIC's fifth voyage, which lasted from 1609 to 1611. When he returned to England, he brought accounts of how the merchants in the Banda archipelago and the Moluccas refused to trade with the English, abiding by the restraints of their exclusive contracts with the Dutch.⁶³

Dutch officials combined the reports of these tensions developing between the English and Dutch ships in the East Indies with the shifting international politics of Europe, to propose the first institutional relationship between the two companies: a state facilitated plan to unify the two countries' trading interests. After the 1610 assassination of King Henri IV removed France as a potential ally against Catholic Spain, the Dutch ambassador in London, Noel de Caron, had presented a proposal to the English Crown for the union of English and Dutch trade interests for ventures in Virginia and in the East Indies.⁶⁴ The London lawyer and M.P., John More, wrote to the English Crown's ambassador at The Hague, Sir Ralph Winwood, sharing his view that Caron's proposal was essentially dead on its arrival in Westminster. The Atlantic and East India merchants held no illusions about the fact that Dutch commercial capacity was rapidly growing and swiftly overtaking their own. In a move to protect its own commerce, the Crown government reasoned, "we fear that in case of joining, if it be upon equall terms, the Art and Industry of their People will wear out ours."⁶⁵

Upon hearing Middleton's accounts of the VOC's exclusion of English trade in the South Seas, however, the Committees called together a commission to address their complaints with representatives of the VOC. David Middleton's brother, Robert, led a delegation to Amsterdam. Middleton was hopeful that the companies might resolve any issues between them, forming a

⁶³ G.N. Clark and Jonkheer van Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences Between England and the Netherlands in 1613 and 1615*, vol. II (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 42.

⁶⁴ Mr. John More in London to Sir Ralph Winwood at The Hague, 15 December 1610, in *Memorials of the Affairs of State in the Reigns of Q Elizabeth and K James I*, vol III (London: W.B., 1725), 239.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

common understanding of the governance of the trade “in firm bonds and league of amity, so we might peaceably proceed to trade jointly together without troubling of either states... or giving such an advantage to others.”⁶⁶ Middleton’s efforts did, at first, show promise for inter-company cooperation. However, in his absence, his fellow EIC Committees had also submitted a detailed petition of damages to the Lord High Treasurer and Earl of Salisbury, Robert Cecil. Upon his return to London in December, Robert Middleton immediately recognized that this move dissolved any chance of the progression of the companies’ negotiations, instead locking control of the EIC-VOC relationship within the theater of the state.⁶⁷

In early January 1611, the ailing Lord Cecil wrote to Winwood, enclosing the EIC’s petition, which detailed “diverse wrongs and ill offices which have been offered them by the Hollanders... contrary to that general law of nations... to hinder and exclude the English from tradeing in those parts.”⁶⁸ Having just renewed the EIC’s charter in 1609, the king took great personal interest in the trade, “being sensible both as the Parent and Protector of his subjects.”⁶⁹ The king ordered Winwood to fully take over the representation of EIC interests in the United Provinces, and “in his name” to write to the VOC, “strictly charging them to hold better correspondency with his Majesty’s subjects in their traffic.”⁷⁰

The Crown government would make good on its promise. Cecil died in the early spring of 1613, and rather than immediately replacing him, James I took personal control of foreign

⁶⁶ The specific addressees of Middleton’s letter reveal the East India merchants’ understanding of the complex politics of the Dutch Republic. The seven officials to whom his letter was addressed represented not only several of the company’s most significant shareholders, but also the leading Burgomasters and leaders of Amsterdam, which housed the VOC’s most significant chamber; Mr. Robert Middleton to Burgomaster Oatgens, Burgomaster Pavij, Skepen Hasselare, Skepen Jacop Gersonheind, Pentionaris Pavij, Dericke van Os, and John van Harrell, at Amsterdam, 15 October 1611, in GN Clark and Jonkheer van Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences Between England and the Netherlands in 1613 and 1615*, vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 1940), 44-46.

⁶⁷ In his letter to the Burgomasters, Middleton sought to backtrack the Committees’ actions, assuring the Dutchmen that he had convinced the EIC Court to stay any further action with the Crown’s government, *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶⁸ The Earl of Salisbury to Sir Ralph Winwood, 4 January 1611, in *Memorials of the Affairs of State in the Reigns of Q Elizabeth and K James I*, vol III (London: W.B., 1725), 320.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 321.

affairs. The king prioritized a state resolution to the Anglo-Dutch disagreements over the East Indies trade and the North Sea fisheries. In August, the king instructed Ambassador Winwood to invite the VOC to dispatch commissioners to London for a negotiation. The *Heren* moved quickly to select and dispatch three commissioners, all of whom were significant investors and influential leaders within the Company: Reynier Pauw, who had been a Burgomaster of Amsterdam and was a sitting member of the States of Holland and Westfriesland; Jacob Boreel, who had served as a Burgomaster of Middelburg, and Dirck Meerman, a member of the governing council of Delft.⁷¹ Their principal charge was to clearly show to the English the “great costs, pains, dangers, losses, and interest” incurred by the VOC, on behalf of the Republic’s fight against “the Spanish and the Portuguese, their enemies” in the East Indies since 1592.⁷² Furthermore, they were to make the English commissioners understand that an alliance and union with the Dutch Company against this Iberian “tyranny,” and to promote and preserve “free trade,” would require burden sharing in the great costs and sacrifices of such a goal.⁷³ To this short roster of VOC directors, Oldenbarnevelt added his protégé Hugo Grotius, at that point the chief officer of the Courts of Zeeland and Delft, ostensibly to supply the commission with a lawyer to negotiate the legal arguments for their contracts and trade.⁷⁴

From the outset of the first talks on 22 March 1613, it was clear that this would not be a negotiation between the directors of the companies. Rather, King James would direct the negotiations. Dutch Ambassador Caron reported to the States General on 6 April that the king was eager to establish a cooperative union between the English and Dutch East India interests,

⁷¹ Instructie voor de Gecommitteerde van de XVIIe gaende na den Hage hen gegeven in Augusto 1612, 28 August 1612, in Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. I, 73-76; Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde van haere Besogne in Englant, June 1613, in Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. I, 135-136.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 73.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 73, 75.

⁷⁴ Henk Nellen, *Hugo Grotius: A Lifelong Struggle for Peace in Church and State, 1583-1645* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 151.

describing the issues as being of “such weight and importance... for the service of his Majesty and his kingdom, as for the good health and conservation of your high and mightyness’ general affairs.”⁷⁵ On 6 April, the commissioners met with the king, and in this initial conversation, the terms for the five-week sequence of conferences were set.

While James expressed his desire that English merchants should trade freely in the East Indies, the arguments of the 1613 Dutch commission, led by Hugo Grotius, responded to the English Crown’s claim of free trade by focusing on the entitlements of investment. Scholars of international political thought have traced the core of the VOC’s self-definition as an armed merchant in Asia to the influential arguments that Hugo Grotius advanced in *De Jure Praedae*, written as a defense of VOC Captain Jacob van Heemskerck’s seizure of a Portuguese vessel in 1602. In this work, Grotius established two justifications for the VOC’s offensive war against the *Estado*. First, he argued that, as a corporation, the VOC was entitled to the rights of a sovereign state to wage an offensive war to “correct” the crimes of the *Estado*, which had blocked Dutch trade.⁷⁶ In addition, Grotius drew from the theories of the Salamancan School, most notably from Francisco Vitoria, to argue that the VOC could also act in defense of the rights of allied East Indian sovereigns.⁷⁷

In the negotiations with the English Crown, however, Grotius developed a third, related argument, focusing on the significant resources required to wage offensive war against the Portuguese and to defend non-European allies. The VOC’s trade in the East “must be taken in regard of the great costs” undertaken by the Company in the creation and maintenance of an armed network in Asia, Grotius maintained. Thus, the VOC could not allow the English free

⁷⁵ Ambassador Caron to the States General, 6 April 1613, in Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. I, 88-89.

⁷⁶ Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 82-85.

⁷⁷ Borschberg, “Hugo Grotius, East India Trade and the King of Johor,” 242-243; George Cavallar, “Vitoria, Grotius, Pufendorf, Wolff and Vattel: Accomplices of European Colonialism and Exploitation, or True Cosmopolitans,” in *Imperfect Cosmopolis*, edited by Georg Cavallar (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 24-25; Antony Anghie, “Francisco De Vitoria and the Colonial Origins of International Law,” *Social & Legal Studies* (1996), 321-336.

benefit of “the fruits” of this system “without reimbursement,” which the EIC had not yet offered.⁷⁸ While the Crown officials would not engage the Dutch commission in a substantive debate of this point, the VOC’s concept, blending theory and practice, would endure as a central argument of the companies’ relationship during the later seventeenth century. The English king quickly demurred, and he selected commissioners of his own to confer with the Dutch representatives.⁷⁹

Further removing any chance of the EIC’s direct engagement with the Dutch Company’s arguments, the Crown approved eight commissioners, and these selections reflected the broad range of state interests, which the king sought to have addressed in the conferences. Two senior jurists led the commission: Sir Daniel Dun of the Admiralty Court and Sir Christopher Perkins of the Prerogative Court. Both of these men had been authors of the authoritative report supporting James’ claim to the Northern European fisheries in 1609, as well as the subsequent negotiations with Caron over the issue in 1610.⁸⁰ Clement Edmondes was clerk to the Privy Council and had significant experience in the Netherlands as a military administrator for Elizabeth’s army in the late 1590s. A fourth legal specialist, Dr. William Bird, is mentioned in the original commission, but nowhere else in the documents.⁸¹ The commissioners with ties to the EIC, including EIC Governor Thomas Smythe, also held major investments in the Muscovy, Levant, and Virginia Companies.⁸²

The meetings between the commissioners did not commence until 15 April, when the two delegations met at Thomas Smythe’s house, beginning a series of meetings that would last through the second week of May, as the delegations engaged with each other via written statements, in Latin and in French. Both sides professed a desire for “good correspondence” and

⁷⁸ Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde, 137.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 136-137.

⁸⁰ Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. II, 56.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 57-58.

“friendship.”⁸³ But the original arguments initiated between James I and Grotius had previewed the discussions to come. The English complaints were primarily comprised of damages resulting from the VOC’s blockage of entry into East Indian ports. Such claims were predicated on an interpretation of the law of nations that guaranteed freedom of trade for merchants. Using Grotius’s own arguments from *De Jure Praedae* against him, the English commissioners urged that the VOC had violated this universal right, as the EIC “had a right to trade there, with the universal law of all nations... exercising the right of free trade in the East Indies.”⁸⁴

In response, the Dutch commissioners doubled-back to Grotius’s third argument, that while the English sought “free traffic in the Moluccas and in other places,” the EIC demonstrated no understanding of the “greatness and the necessity of the costs, which we support” to maintain that trade.⁸⁵ While the English thought that joining in the trade with the Dutch, and the attendant military confrontation with the *Estado da Índia*, would simply require the defense of native populations against Spanish aggression, and the selective predation of Spanish ships, the Dutch argued that this betrayed a significant ignorance of the trade. The Spanish and Portuguese would not simply allow this aggression, and “the King of Spain would employ his power” against both companies. To succeed against such a threat, the English would need to contribute to the efforts already begun by the Dutch, in the massive investments in military and commercial infrastructure in Asia: forts, convoys, and capital required to establish and defend sustained diplomatic and commercial relations with non-European leaders.⁸⁶ Only then could both organizations negotiate any foundation for a common system of trade in the East Indies.

This was beyond the capabilities of both parties, however. After consulting records of these meetings, it strains credulity to even refer to them as inter-company conferences as

⁸³ Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde, 139.

⁸⁴ East Indies Negotiation, 1613, TNA CO/77/1 f. 67v-68r.

⁸⁵ Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde, 143.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

historians of both companies have done.⁸⁷ No substantial discourse over the East Indies trade ever developed between the two commissions, and the commissioners' arguments were framed within European state politics. The Dutch continued to advocate for their Republic's foreign policy, arguing that the dissolution of their model of armed trade would lead to the "great advantage of the Spanish."⁸⁸ The English continued to push for their freedom to trade in the East Indies, and by the second week of May, it was obvious to all involved that the negotiations over the East Indies trade were going nowhere.⁸⁹ On 9 May, Christopher Parkins informed Caron, that though these talks were concluded, the king would select representatives to be sent to the Netherlands for future talks.⁹⁰

Emphasizing the state control over the talks, G.N. Clark and Jonkheer van Eysinga, the seminal chroniclers of these meetings, have interpreted Grotius's writings to conclude that they were not engineered to deal with the East Indies trade, at all, but rather to focus, first and foremost, on the religious politics of Europe: "this was a matter concerning authority and an affair of state rather than of trade."⁹¹ Such an interpretation finds a great deal of corroborating evidence. After his time in office, Oldenbarnevelt would later admit that he had sent Grotius on the mission, not with the primary goal of advancing the interests of the VOC, but principally to "inform 'certain leading bishops or theologians' about the religious controversy in the Netherlands."⁹²

Indeed, the Dutch commission can most accurately be seen as an extension of Dutch domestic turmoil, as the chief political rival to Oldenbarnevelt's regent government, Prince Maurits of Orange,⁹³ had also recruited the eminent Zeeland regent, Reynier Pauw, to serve on

⁸⁷ Borschberg, "Hugo Grotius, East India Trade and the King of Johor," 241-28; Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 30.

⁸⁸ Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde, 141.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 144, 146.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁹¹ Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. II, 62.

⁹² Nellen, *Hugo Grotius*, 151.

⁹³ The Prince was a "quasi-monarchical figure," who sought to rally support among landed nobles and opponents of the merchant oligarchs; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 421-424.

the commission—both as a *bewindhebber*, and to represent the Prince’s position on government and religion to James I and to his government.⁹⁴ The Prince’s brother, Hendrick, also met with the commissioners in London.⁹⁵ At the expense of substantial debate between the English and Dutch commissioners, the Dutch representatives aggressively lobbied key religious and government figures during their time in London.⁹⁶

The absence of sustained negotiations over the East Indies trade during the 1613 Anglo-Dutch conference, and the clear primacy of Dutch religious disputes, has led religious and political historians to further argue that the trade mission was just a shill for the more pressing religious missions.⁹⁷ But intellectual historians have also questioned whether, in the early seventeenth century, the directors of either company would have possessed even the barest ability to negotiate robust policies for the East Indies trade. In her book-length study of the summit, Martine Van Ittersum focuses on the inadequacy of the EIC commissioners as a key source of the conference’s failure. Van Ittersum claims that the primary spokesperson for the English commission, Christopher Parkins, “proved no match for Grotius. He showed himself poorly informed about the situation in the East Indies.”⁹⁸ While it is true that none among the English representatives possessed the pedigree in Roman legal philosophy held by Grotius, both directorates were, in fact, poorly informed of specific events, as well as macro trends and patterns in the East Indies trade.

⁹⁴ Platt, *Britain and the Bestandstwisten*, 78.

⁹⁵ Verbaal van de Nederlandse Gecommitteerde, 137.

⁹⁶ Grotius repeatedly met with George Abbott, Archbishop of Canterbury. In the wake of Cecil’s death, Abbot was also the King’s first minister, and the brother of eminent EIC Committee Maurice Abbott. Grotius also met with James, himself, to discuss non-company issues. On 15 May 1613, Grotius wrote to Oldenbarnevelt, recounting that he had just finished two hours in discourse with James over theology and the public administration of Protestant religion; Hugo de Groot to Oldenbarnevelt, 15 May 1613, in *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, vol II, 546; As Oldenbarnevelt and Grotius worked closely together on Dutch religious policy, it comes as no surprise that this letter was but one in a series of communications from Grotius, detailing his conversations with religious leaders in England. See, for example, Hugo de Groot to Oldenbarnevelt, 19 April 1613, in *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, vol II, 542.

⁹⁷ Adam Platt discusses the contours of this historiographical argument, Platt, *Britain and the Bestandstwisten*, 78; Hugh Trevor-Roper, “Hugo Grotius and England” in *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution*, edited by Hugh Trevor-Roper (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 52.

⁹⁸ Van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle*, 376.

Neither company had yet established a governance hierarchy or a consistent communication network linking its agents along the Indian Ocean littoral with the directors in Europe.⁹⁹ Peter Borschberg, one of the foremost experts on Grotian legal theory, has concluded that the *Heren*'s own understanding of Eurasian trade would have been quite limited. Given that Grotius received all of his information from the *Heren*, the Dutch theorist's sweeping legal claims appear to be grounded far more in European and Roman law, rather than reliant on any practical knowledge of the East Indies.¹⁰⁰

As they came to a close in May of 1613, it was clear that there had been no substantive dialogue between the EIC and VOC representatives, and the meetings bore no resemblance to the conferences that would anchor the relationship between the two organizations during the second half of the seventeenth century. If anything, the summit between April and May of 1613 represented an exchange of European international politics. As the roles of James I, Grotius, and Pauw demonstrated, neither company was yet in a relationship with its own state where the directors could differentiate the negotiation of their company's interests from state authority.

When, in 1615, another round of Anglo-Dutch commercial talks were held at The Hague, little had changed in the disjointed dynamic between the two companies. This round of talks also situated the East Indies trade within conversations of state policy.¹⁰¹ The conflicting international strategies espoused by James I and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt continued to drive the negotiations.¹⁰² State priorities pushed the English and Dutch Company representatives toward preliminary consideration of a military and commercial alliance against Iberian power in Asia. But the fundamental incommensurability of the two companies' goals and abilities clearly limited

⁹⁹ Batavia would not be established by Jan Pietersz. Coen until 1619.

¹⁰⁰ Peter Borschberg, "Grotius, Maritime Intra-Asian Trade and the Portuguese Estado da Índia: Problems, Perspectives and Insights from *De iure praedae*," *Grotiana* 26-28 (2005-2007), 31-60.

¹⁰¹ The East India Business with the States, [10 April 1615], TNA CO/77/1 f. 83r-83v.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

the progress of discussion.¹⁰³ In addition, it was the English Crown's new ambassador to The Hague, Sir Henry Wotton, who ran the talks. Wotton was openly unsupportive of the EIC's cause, and his limiting of the discussion on East India issues ensured the lack of any substantive debate between the companies' officials.¹⁰⁴

Neither in 1613 nor in 1615 had there been any "mutual concert" in which EIC and VOC representatives, independent of the English and Dutch state governments, had debated commercial practices, diplomatic relationships, or the terms of non-European trade. And, more importantly, these summits confirmed the lack of any sustained and substantive circuit of communication and debate linking Anglo-Dutch relations in Asia with the relationship between the companies' directorates in Europe. The records of these meetings were not detailed in communications dispatched to the factories from Amsterdam or London, and any specifics of the companies' operations in Asia were not mentioned in the talks at The Hague. The vision of the East Indies trade that drove the 1613 and 1615 summits was firmly anchored in the shifting state politics of Europe.

1.3 1617-1619 Divergence in Asia

While the English and Dutch states ran negotiations over the East Indies trade in Europe, in Southeast Asia, the epicenter of English and Dutch activity in Asia, company relations flailed with even less coherence. Both companies competed as relatively minor figures in Southeast Asian trade, and nearly a decade of simmering hostility between leaders like John Jourdain, who became the EIC director at Banten in 1613, and the VOC's Jan Pietersz. Coen, boiled over into

¹⁰³ Ibid., f. 83v, 84v; Verbaal van de Conferentie ende besogne gehouden in den jaere XVICXV, May 1615, in Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences*, vol. I, 260-261.

¹⁰⁴ In a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood (Ambassador to The Hague during the first 1613 negotiation, and now James I's principal Secretary of State), Wotton expressed his feelings that "this open interposition of the matter of complaint and difference between us and the States [Dutch], at this point of time, when we should most agree or most seem to agree, will do some hurt to the general matter, by adding encouragement to the other side upon our distractions," Wotton to Sir Ralph Winwood, January 1615, in *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, ed. Logan Pearsall Smith, vol II (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), 73.

violent clashes in 1617. After a brief visit to England, Jourdain returned in early 1618 with a new fleet and Sir Thomas Dale, a seasoned commander with military experience in Virginia and the Netherlands¹⁰⁵ Fighting between English and Dutch factors spilled into the streets of Banten and Makassar, and between 1618 and 1619, the, albeit small, English and Dutch forces engaged in a period of sustained hostility in the waters around Java.¹⁰⁶

Both sides courted non-European allies, and the Dutch scorched English outposts in the Maluku, including a small factory on the island of Pulo Run.¹⁰⁷ In their correspondence with the *Heren XVII*, the Dutch leadership on Java conveyed the insecurity of circumstances facing the VOC. “The English have taken on a general war against us,” the Dutchmen wrote, and for the survival of their trade in the East Indies, the Dutch had to demonstrate their “courage, might, and means” to win over the Javanese as allies.¹⁰⁸ Their subsequent courtship of regional sovereigns was, in fact, what saved the VOC. As the English bombarded the small Dutch fort at Jakarta through early 1619, the VOC outpost was relieved only by the intervention of the Banten regent.¹⁰⁹

Historians have focused on these clashes as examples of the emergent companies’ dueling competition for the same model of trade in the East Indies.¹¹⁰ However, the violence around Java distracted from a more subtle, yet fundamental, divergence in the evolution of the English and Dutch East India ventures. Driven by the differing political positions of the companies in Europe, during the late 1610s, architects of the policies of both companies

¹⁰⁵ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 43.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ George Ball to Mr Lawrence Reael at Jakarta, 19 November 1617, in *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. VI, ed. William Foster (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1902), 309.

¹⁰⁸ J.P. Coen, P. De Carpentier and Pieter Dirckxsoon to Heren XVII, 14 January 1619, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol I, ed. Dr. HT Colenbrander (‘S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1919), 440.

¹⁰⁹ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 43.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 105; Alison Games, “Anglo-Dutch Maritime Interactions in the East Indies During the Early Seventeenth Century,” in *Governing the Sea in the Early Modern Era: Essays in Honor of Robert C. Ritchie*, ed. Peter Mancall and Carole Shammas (Pasadena: Huntington Library Press, 2015), 171-195.

constructed fundamentally different ideologies and infrastructures to govern their trades in the East Indies.

The English Company, heavily invested in political and economic governance debates in England, projected the terms of English political discourse onto EIC dealings in Asia. Beginning in 1615, Sir Thomas Roe, the Crown's first ambassador to the Mughal Court, embodied this tension between the Company's interests and state control. At the same time, Jan Pietersz. Coen authored a dramatically different perspective for his Dutch Company. With far greater political autonomy at home and in Asia, Coen generated a strategy for Dutch trade that emulated the customs and practices of non-European trading patterns, contrasting sharply with the comparatively insulated English policies advocated by Roe.

In response to a request from the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, James I and the EIC sent a joint embassy, led by Roe, to the Mughal Court in 1614. From the beginning, Roe's mission was fraught with the tensions that plagued the EIC's relationship with its sovereign. As Rupali Mishra has examined, he was to maintain contact, both with King James, and with the Company, simultaneously representing the interests of the EIC's merchants and the "honor" of the English Crown.¹¹¹ These "split interests" reflected the position of the EIC in English politics, trapped in a state of constant dependence on the Crown's prerogative rights.¹¹² As he made his way onboard EIC ships, first to Persia and then on to the Mughal Court at Agra, the Crown-Company ambassador wrote frequently to James and to EIC factors on the Gujarati Coast. His correspondence served as an authoritative source for the English government and for Company

¹¹¹ James I to Sir Thomas Roe, 4 February 1616, TNA CO/77/1 f. 112; Rupali Mishra, "Diplomacy on the Edge: Split Interests in the Roe Embassy to the Mughal Court," *Journal of British Studies* 53 (January 2014): 9-10.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

leaders, and historians have recognized his reflections on Central Asian administrations as key sources for understanding European expansion in the seventeenth century.¹¹³

True to his mission, Roe's perspectives on the East Indies trade translated non-European institutions through the terms of English commercial debate. Stopping first in Safavid ports, Roe questioned the nature of the English East Indies trade. "There are many difficulties unconsidered in the beginning" of the trade in Persia, Roe wrote to King James. He begged the king for more time to gain "knowledge of the merchants means to compass it [trade], without prejudice to your majesties kingdoms, & to their own profit & securitie."¹¹⁴ Roe stopped short, however, of actually explaining the challenging nature of trade under Shah Abbas, assuring his king, "The particulars are both too many, & of too Low an Elevation to trouble your Majestie, your general command being obeyed."¹¹⁵

This framing of trade in the Western Indian Ocean drew directly from powerful currents of thought animating early seventeenth-century political and economic debate in England. As foreign trade had grown to occupy a greater position in the English economy through the reign of Elizabeth I, politicians, ministers and theorists increasingly argued for suspicion of the self-interest of the merchant, and they mandated strong regulatory power in government to control the personal ambitions of merchants.¹¹⁶ Indeed, the monarch to whom Roe wrote, James I, had clearly articulated his own position on the debate in 1599. Merchants "think the whole commonwealth ordained for making them up," James wrote, "to enrich themselves upon the loss of all the rest of the people."¹¹⁷ At the founding of the EIC, other theorists had begun to further refine the concepts of English political economy needed to govern the necessary, but potentially

¹¹³ Rupali Mishra provides a current overview of this literature, Mishra, "Diplomacy on the Edge," 6-8.

¹¹⁴ Sir Thomas Roe to James I, 15 February 1617, TNA CO/77/1 f. 114.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Andrea Finkelstein provides an excellent analysis of these developments in English political and economic thought, Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 15-23.

¹¹⁷ James I, *Basilikon Doron. Or His Majesties Instructions to his dearest Sonne, Henry the Prince* (Edinburgh, 1599), quoted in Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*, 16.

dangerous, self-interest of merchants. In two tracts published in 1601, Gerard de Malynes (c. 1560-1641), the Flemish émigré, assay master, and government commissioner, railed against the leaching of specie out of England encouraged by international exchange. Institutions of foreign trade and exchange, including the East India merchants, Malynes claimed, operated to their own benefit and “to Englands great prejudice.”¹¹⁸ Malynes was a leading voice in ‘bullionist’ thought, which measured the economic health of a country by the specie that it possessed. With relationship to trade, Malynes, along with Thomas Milles, believed in strong government regulation of commerce, to maintain a positive balance of trade, which resulted in greater specie accumulation in England.¹¹⁹

Wherever he travelled, Roe focused doggedly on the daily prices and exchange rates of gold and silver.¹²⁰ Indeed, he weighed his diplomatic strategy in specie, endeavoring never to be paid in gold prior to the completion of a task or trade, for fear of becoming subject to the leverage of the credit of Mughal merchants or government officials.¹²¹ Roe had so internalized this debate, that he, himself, had taken on a hybrid form, both as king’s ambassador, and as private trader. His correspondence with Company officials in Surat found him begging for instruction on where and how to best sell pearl and other commodities for the greatest financial gain.¹²²

In addition to his English economic and political ideology, Roe also focused on separating English identity from non-European institutions. Rather than emulating or interpreting the institutions of the Persian Court, for example, Roe’s correspondence demonstrates a consistent othering of non-European officials. To be sure, the VOC’s Governor-General, Jan

¹¹⁸ Gerard de Malynes, *A Treatise of the canker of England’s Commonwealth*, (London, 1601), 40.

¹¹⁹ Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*, 44-48; Later political economists, particularly Adam Smith and John Locke, repudiated the bullionist theories, Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: HUP, 2005), 78-79.

¹²⁰ Sir Thomas Roe to Sir Thomas Kerridge at Surat, 6 December 1617, in *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. VI, ed. William Foster (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1902), 213.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Sir Thomas Roe to Thomas Kerridge at Surat, 2 December 1617, in *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. VI, ed. William Foster (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1902), 209.

Pietersz. Coen, also spared no invective against non-European “heathens,” but Roe’s observations bow under his constant references to “cold,”¹²³ “proud and unjust”¹²⁴ “Moors,” with “Moorish tricks” fuelled by “their pride & dull ignorance.”¹²⁵ Roe’s posture represents a key difference between the English strategy in Asia and the VOC’s rival system of trade and governance that was soon to emerge from Batavia.

By 1618, Jan Pietersz. Coen was the Director of the VOC’s factories at Banten and Jakarta, making him the second-in-command of the VOC in Asia behind the Governor-General, Laurens Real. Coen viewed the clashes between the English and Dutch companies as short sighted, and on 29 September 1618, Coen offered the *Heren* a new vision for the VOC’s administration in Asia, completely divorcing the VOC from the ideology of its English counterpart.¹²⁶

In his report, Coen acknowledged the commands and desires of the *Heren* and of the States General, principal among which were “to send over rich returns, to occupy the Molluccas, Amboina, and Banda, and to drive ... all other strangers from there, to visit the [Spanish] enemy in Manila with a good fleet, to procure the rich Chinese trade... to form a general rendezvous [place], ... to take part in the inland trade, and to do all possible harm to the enemy.”¹²⁷ Coen sought to educate the *Heren* about what would be required to reach these goals.

While Coen wrote many reports—forerunners of the *generale missiven*—his 5 August 1619 memorandum has been isolated by the VOC’s most prominent contemporary historian,

¹²³ Sir Thomas Roe to Sir Thomas Kerridge at Surat, 6 December 1617, 213.

¹²⁴ Sir Thomas Roe to the Factors at Surat, 29 September 1617, in *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. VI, ed. William Foster (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1902), 302.

¹²⁵ Sir Thomas Roe to Thomas Kerridge at Surat, 2 December 1617, 214; Sir Thomas Roe to James I, 15 February 1617, TNA CO/77/1 f. 114.

¹²⁶ Jan Pietersz. Coen and Raad to Heren XVII, 29 September 1618, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol. I, 380-399.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 388-389.

Femme Gaastra, as Coen's first effort to sketch a trading system for the VOC in Asia.¹²⁸ The Governor-General's report represents the first such effort to instruct the *Heren* in the particular characteristics and necessities of the Southeast Asian trade. His proposals clearly reflect an effort to build Batavia in the image of Banten and other model non-European entrepôts. And in its strategies and institutions, Coen's proposal diverged starkly from the EIC.

Coen made no mention of either the English or the Portuguese in his sketch of an aspirational VOC trading network. Instead, he focused on tracing the circulations and linkages between Chinese, Japanese, Southeast and South Asian markets and regimes. He showed that Gujarati textiles needed to be exchanged with pepper and gold on the Coast of Sumatra, and with gold and clothing from the Coromandel Coast, pepper could be purchased at Banten. Silver from Japan would be needed in order to trade successfully with the Chinese merchant rings, which dominated Southeast Asian agrarian markets. The trade of the Western Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf would similarly operate on an exchange of gold and East India wares for silks and other fine goods.¹²⁹

In contrast with Roe's Anglo-centric interpretation of Asian political economy, Coen's arguments were clearly built on observations of non-European trading networks. He essentially proposed to build a rival Bantenese trading system, anchored at Jakarta. Banten would serve as a model for Dutch factory and plantation development over the course of the seventeenth century. But Coen's proposal traced the commercial network of the Banten Sultanate, which circulated pepper and other spices, along with textiles, East Asian wares, and precious metals from Japan and China, throughout Southeast Asia, and all along the South Asian and Persian littoral.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Jan Pietersz. Coen to The Heren XVII, 5 August 1619, in Jan Pietersz. Coen: *Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol. I, 445-494; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 121.

¹²⁹ Jan Pietersz. Coen to The Heren XVII, 5 August 1619, 485-486.

¹³⁰ Jeyamalar Kathirithamby-Wells, "Banten: A West Indonesian Port and Polity During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Southeast Asian Port and Polity: Rise and Demise*, ed. J. Kathirithamby-Wells and John Villiers (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1990), 111-115.

Through linking and integrating these markets, the *Heren* had an opportunity to secure “the most outstanding trade of the entire world,” Coen argued.¹³¹ But building a truly East Indian organization would require much greater investment in ships, men, and military goods. To think that they could accomplish this with “the 30, 40 or 50 ships” that the VOC currently had operating in the Indian Ocean, he declared, “is a great error.”¹³² In order to effect this, Coen required not only ships, merchants, and soldiers, but capable, “suitable” men to serve as accountants, lawyers, equipage masters, and captains to administer the proposed system.¹³³ To impart the scale of what he was proposing, the Governor-General confronted the *Heren* with the fact that they would need significant international recruitment to attain the numbers of soldiers, settlers, and merchants needed to meet their goals in Asia, “with all of the ships and the people that your honors have in [the Netherlands], can one-tenth of that which you command us not be undertaken.”¹³⁴

1.4 The “Union” of 1619: Alliance or Misalignment?

While Coen’s proposals would not reach the *Heren* until 1620, during the late 1610s, King James and the States General continued to receive reports of violent English and Dutch clashes in Southeast Asia. The two governments thus moved to organize a third state-sponsored summit to negotiate terms of the Anglo-Dutch relationship in the East Indies trade. But it was European international politics, just as in 1613 and 1615, which again drove the general call to resolve hostilities in Asia. The Twelve Years’ Truce with Spain would expire in 1621, and the *Heren*, as well as the States of Holland and the States General, recognized the need to reduce their active enemies in the East Indies.¹³⁵ James and his Privy Council sought to solidify a closer

¹³¹ Jan Pietersz. Coen to the *Heren* XVII, 5 August 1619, 485-486.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 486.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 487.

¹³⁴ Jan Pietersz. Coen and Raad to the *Heren* XVII, 29 September 1618, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol. I, 389.

¹³⁵ Van Dam, *Beschryving*, vol I, part II, 157.

relationship with the United Provinces, especially at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War in 1618, in which Elizabeth, daughter of James I, and her husband Frederick, the Elector of the Palatinate, were driven by Spanish forces to take refuge in South Holland.¹³⁶ Indeed, a growing rift with Spain would lead to an Anglo-Spanish War in 1624. The effort "carefully to remedy and prevent all such inconveniencies" as had plagued the companies' relationship became a priority of the Crown's efforts to work with the States General to "fasten the concord, amities and good correspondence between their estates and subjects."¹³⁷

The Crown and the States General selected commissioners, and talks for the treaty began in London in the early summer of 1619. Both commissions included representatives designated by the state as well as a delegation of East India Company directors. As it had during the previous two commissions, however, the composition reflected more of the difference in governance between the two states, than it did any similarities shown between English and Dutch East India interests. The English distinguished between members of the king's Privy Council and administrators of the Court and the Exchequer who were present to represent the Crown, and those merchants, such as Thomas Smith, Dudley Diggs, and Maurice Abbott, who stood as delegates of the Company.¹³⁸ The Dutch representatives reflected the oligarchical nature of the Republic's governance, including Company directors who also served as Burgomasters, Provincial Admiralty administrators, and members of the Dutch Council of State.¹³⁹

While the documentation of the meeting, itself, is sparse, the resulting agreement, announced on 17 July 1619, revealed what, at first glance, appeared to represent a shockingly coherent Anglo-Dutch regime for the East Indies trade. The nineteen articles of the treaty addressed concerns that both English and Dutch representatives had voiced during the previous two summits. The English got a guarantee of free commerce in the East and amity between the

¹³⁶ Peter Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge: HUP, 2009), 314-316.

¹³⁷ Treaty of Defense, 1619, IOR/I/2/6, [unfoliated].

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

personnel of both companies.¹⁴⁰ The Dutch got absolution for any and all past wrongs against the English and a framework for military and commercial cooperation against the Spanish. The agreement went on to stipulate comprehensive frameworks through which to affect these commercial, legal, and military goals. The two companies would enter into a defensive alliance against the Spanish in Southeast Asia, and the military and commercial activities of both the EIC and the VOC would be governed by a Council of Defense, made up of four representatives each, from the EIC and VOC chief councils in the East Indies.¹⁴¹ Each company would maintain sovereignty over its personnel, though the Council would coordinate macro-policy. And the companies would cooperate, each providing warships, commercial vessels, and finance for the missions and factories under the direction of the Council of Defense.

However, while the agreement can be read as supplying the fusion of interests so long desired by the Dutch in market and cost-sharing agreements, the treaty also formalized and insured the marked institutional differences between the two companies. In explicit recognition of the English Company's considerably smaller size, far smaller military capacity, and more constricted capital flow, the English would shoulder a lesser percentage of the burden, but also reap less of the profit. In an effort to stabilize the notorious fluctuations of the price of pepper, the companies would split the Banda, Javanese and Maluku pepper markets, with the English entitled to one-third of the pepper, and the Dutch the remaining two-thirds.¹⁴² In order to enforce and protect this crucial market governance, the companies would split the outfitting of twenty war ships.¹⁴³ The English would pay rent for access to the VOC's nascent network of armed forts, such as Fort Geldria at Pulicat, and, later, Batavia, which would house the joint Council of

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*; J.K.G. De Jong, *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag in Oost-Indië*, VI (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1870), cxxiv.

¹⁴¹ Article 13 of the Treaty of Defense, 1619, IOR/I/2/6, [unfoliated].

¹⁴² Article 8, *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Article 10, *Ibid.*

Defense.¹⁴⁴ And both companies would equally absorb losses incurred from their shared missions.¹⁴⁵

The commissioners dispatched a copy of the treaty on the EIC ship, *The Bull*, bound for Banten. Upon its arrival, announcement of the terms would be made, and the Asian leaders of both companies were to begin to assemble the shared Council of Defense, and to initiate the administration of joint military and commercial ventures. When *The Bull* arrived at Banten on 27 March 1620, the reception of the treaty exposed the agreement for what it was: the experimental concept of a handful of European state officials, who possessed little understanding of the workings of Southeast Asian trade, politics, and violence.

In his response, Coen directly targeted the European politics that had driven the formation of the 1619 alliance. He acknowledged the current state of international politics in Europe and recognized “how much the state [status] of the United Netherlands rests on the good friendship, correspondence, and union with the Crown of England.”¹⁴⁶ But the *Heren*, Coen quickly reprimanded, had been entirely “too hasty” in their dealings. The “contract,” as Coen referred to the Treaty, evidenced a complete lack of understanding of the current status of trade in the East Indies, and, more specifically, of the relative relationship between the English and Dutch in Southeast Asia. “We cannot understand where the English are permitted one-third of the nutmeg, cloves, and mace,” he responded, when “they have not a grain of sand on the beach in the Mollucas, Amboyna or Banda.”¹⁴⁷

In its market and cost-sharing schemes, the treaty ran counter to Coen’s recent designs, which had embraced non-European institutions and focused on building a Dutch version of

¹⁴⁴ Articles 7 and 12, *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Article 19, *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Jan Pietersz. Coen to The Heren XVII, 11 May 1620, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol I, 544.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Banten at Jakarta, securing a greater share in the principal Southeast Asian spice markets. The Governor-General chastised the *Heren* and the States General for pushing “so hasty” a conclusion, wishing that they had trusted instead in his judgment and not “bridled” their officials in Asia.¹⁴⁸ Coen drew an even greater distinction between the European theories of trade, and the real exigencies on the ground in the East Indies, questioning how the *Heren* could have agreed to such significant changes following “such petty necessity and unreasonable fear.”¹⁴⁹ The Governor-General asked whether the *Heren* had forgotten the significant advantage in size and strength that the VOC maintained over the English Company. Through this agreement, “should the English become our master,” Coen cautioned, then “it is to be feared, that your honors with your hastiness, shall have fewer profits.”¹⁵⁰ The English likely “laughed,” the Governor-General fumed, as the *Heren* had done more to advance the business and rights of the EIC than the English had for themselves.¹⁵¹

One can understand Coen’s rage at the treaty’s European regime, so poorly matched for the political and economic dynamics of Asian trade and running contrary to Coen’s vision for the VOC’s institutional growth within extant Asian networks. Far from laughter, however, EIC factory officials also balked at the prescriptions of the 1619 agreement. Thomas Kerridge, factor at Surat, replied to the Committees with skepticism. While the English could be counted upon to keep up their end of the agreement, “we doubt how their [Dutch] will keep them.”¹⁵² As the EIC’s Banten agents began to assemble the Council of Defense with Coen and his *Raad*,¹⁵³ the spirit and directives of unity, encapsulated in the 1619 Treaty, were clearly limited to Southeast Asia. As Surat became the key entry point for English and Dutch trade with the Mughal Empire,

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 543.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 544.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Thomas Kerridge aboard the Hart to the Company [in London], 10 April 1621, in *The English Factories in India 1618-1621*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), 251.

¹⁵³ The *Raad van Indië*, or “*Raad*,” was the governing council, which sat at Batavia, and maintained authority over the VOC’s operations in Asia. The Governor-General served as the council’s chief officer.

factors at subsidiary inland outposts wrote to the English Council at Surat, assuring them of their efforts to undermine Dutch trade within that empire. After securing trading privileges from the Mughal Governor at Broach, for example, two English factors assured the Surat Council that, “Nothing should be said about it to the Dutch.”¹⁵⁴

As the terms of the European commissioners’ agreement were implemented in Southeast Asia, the superficial nature of the two states’ efforts to smooth over hostilities in the East Indies trade immediately conflicted with the two companies’ diverging approaches in Asia. Pursuant to Article VII of the treaty, one of the first tasks of the Council of Defense was to establish a framework for the incorporation of the English into the flagship VOC outpost on the Coromandel Coast: Fort Geldria at Pulicat. The “agreement” implemented by the Council of Defense, reflected nothing of the equity envisioned by the state commissions, and it read more like a Dutch containment strategy for the English. Reflecting the comparative realities of the English and Dutch East Indies trade, the treaty institutionalized English dependence on Dutch military and colonial superiority in Asia. At Batavia, Pulicat, and elsewhere, the English merchants became the tenants of the VOC. At Pulicat, the Dutch agreed to rent houses to English factors, though they would be “without the Fort Geldria:” placing them physically beyond the wall of Dutch trade.¹⁵⁵

Frictions arose in the policy stipulations that governed the actions of both English and Dutch officials in these “shared” factories. The EIC’s model for business and governance condoned, and in fact relied upon, private (or “particular”) trade conducted off of the Company’s books.¹⁵⁶ The VOC, pursuant to Coen’s model, derived significant profits from intra-Asian trade,

¹⁵⁴ Robert Young and Justinian Offley at Broach to the Surat Factory, 29 December 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 193.

¹⁵⁵ “Treaty Between the Presidencies of the English & Dutch Companies at Jaccarta,” 13 April 1621, IOR/H/628 f. 111.

¹⁵⁶ See Ian Bruce Watson’s book-length study on how private trade formed the foundation for Britain’s later imperial expansion, Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980).

and thus strictly forbade such activity among its own employees. The agreement reinforced the unequal terms of this “cooperation:” at Pulicat, Banda, Jakarta, and Ambon, employees of both companies were “expressly forbidden to drive any particular Trade.”¹⁵⁷ English officials in the East Indies complained to the Court of Committees that the terms of the agreement had been engineered to the complete benefit of the Dutch Company’s model of trade.¹⁵⁸

From 1621 to 1622, the Council of Defense evolved into an inconsistent meeting of the top English and Dutch officials in Southeast Asia, permanently located at Batavia—again with the English living as tenants of the Dutch. Pursuant to the 1619 agreement, the Council drew up the instructions for a shared armada, or “league of defense,” charged with the capture of Portuguese ships and the blockade of the *Estado*’s headquarters at Goa.¹⁵⁹ However, EIC and VOC officials’ cooperation was forced and uncoordinated, and the separate goals of the individual companies seem to have continued as the primary drivers of commercial and military strategy. Joint missions were far from organized, as one English captain recounted: “as soon as it was day, we went to work, being but five ships English and Dutch... but we never looked who should shoot the first shot.”¹⁶⁰ The English quickly became frustrated, however, with what appeared as increasingly less cooperation from their Dutch counterparts. Annoyance grew as the Dutch repeatedly left Batavia without notifying the English, and, periodically, Dutch ships missed scheduled rendezvous with their English allies.¹⁶¹

Governor-General Coen and the *Raad* agreed with the English perception of the impracticality and farcical implementation of the European alliance scheme. Indeed, Coen did

¹⁵⁷ “Treaty Between the Presidencies of the English & Dutch Companies at Jaccarta,” 13 April 1621, IOR/H/628 f. 115.

¹⁵⁸ William Methwold at Masulipatam to the Company, 10 October 1621, in *The English Factories in India 1618-1621*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), 298.

¹⁵⁹ President Fursland and Council at Batavia to the Surat Factory, 18 August 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 112-113.

¹⁶⁰ Captain Bartholomew Goodall, aboard the Royal Anne, to the President at Batavia, 19 October 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 130.

¹⁶¹ Consultation of the Commanders of the English Section of the Fleet Cruising Against the Portuguese, September-December 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 175.

not let the agreement forestall his expansive plans for the VOC. By the summer of 1621, it had become clear to Coen and to the *Raad* that the lesser capital and operational capabilities of the EIC formed a tether that was weighing down the VOC's ambition. Preparing a new offensive fleet to attack the Portuguese *Estado's* installations on the Malabar Coast, Coen seethed with frustration that the English mercantile organization failed to provide the strength "that we, ourselves, could provide."¹⁶² Coen hoped to rid himself of the English burden. He was eager for the arrival of new victuals from the Netherlands, "especially people, money and ammunition of war" to support his strategy for the Company.¹⁶³

Coen's waiting was not in vain. In the wake of the 1619 Treaty, the *Heren* finally received, and clearly supported, his proposals. They dispatched a flood of ships, personnel, and financing to Batavia. Between 1620 and 1630, the *Heren* sent at least 23,700 men to the East Indies, more than half of whom were soldiers and military personnel.¹⁶⁴ By 1622, EIC factory records show that the English officials on the Council of Defense, as well as directors and merchants at English factories from Pulicat to Surat, had recognized that the 1619 regime had placed the English merchant network in little more than a tenuous holding pattern, while the Dutch surged ahead with Coen's aggressive plans for an armed factory system.

As Coen ratcheted up military aggressions across the Indian Ocean, English factors channeled their frustrated observations into policy, publicly differentiating themselves from the Dutch in relationships with non-European merchants and sovereigns. In 1622, the Surat Council shifted proposed shipping routes, avoiding stops at Sumatra, where the Dutch had made threats against the local government, leaving the English to fear that, in response, "the natives might not

¹⁶² Generale Missive, 9 July 1621, in *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. I, ed. W. PH. Coolhaas ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 109.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ J.R. Bruijn, F.S. Gaastra, and I. Schöffer, *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, vol. I (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 144; Estimates of the professional composition of the VOC voyagers are provided in Gerrit Knaap, "De 'Core Business' van de VOC: Markt, Macht en Mentaliteit vanuit overseas perspectief," Oratie van de Universiteit Utrecht, 10 November 2014, 11-10.

discriminate between the two nations.”¹⁶⁵ Earlier that year, the English factors at Ahmadabad, in Gujarat, had written to their regional superiors at Surat, that they had been compelled to appear before the Mughal Emperor’s Dewan—the chief provincial revenue officer—to answer the complaints of Hindu traders, demanding restitution for the Dutch robbery of 10,000 rials of eight (silver). When the English factors responded that the aggrieved merchants should interrogate the Dutch, “another nation,” they received the answer that the EIC and VOC “were joined as one and that all we took or stole we shared, and wished us give better satisfaction then words, or else we could not be believed but that we were one.”¹⁶⁶ In the weeks following this audience, the Company agents sought out leading merchants in Surat to publicly corroborate that “we and the Hollanders were not one people, and as it plainly appeared traded apart.”¹⁶⁷

The hopeless impracticality of the 1619 state alliance laid bare the dramatic differences between the companies’ ideologies and capabilities in the East Indies trade. And when reports of this disjuncture circulated back to Europe, King James forced two small, unofficial summits in 1621 and 1622.¹⁶⁸ Neither, however, amounted to any formal agreements.¹⁶⁹ Throughout 1623 and 1624, James I continued to hold sporadic negotiations between Ambassador Caron, the Dutch embassy, and commissioners of the Privy Council.¹⁷⁰ Even this inter-state dialogue began to fall apart, however. By 1624, the *Heren* had fully invested in Coen’s vision for a Dutch colonial

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Rastell, William Biuddulph, Giles James, and Nicholas Bangham at Surat to the President and Council at Batavia, 10 December 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 164.

¹⁶⁶ Nathaniel Halstead and William Hill at Ahmadabad to the Surat Factory, 21 March 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 68-69.

¹⁶⁷ Nathaniel Halstead and William Hill at Ahmadabad to the Surat Factory, 7 April 1622, in *The English Factories in India 1622-1623*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908), 71.

¹⁶⁸ The State of the Question Betweene the English and Dutch Compaine trading into ye East India, [1620], IOR/I/2/6 f. 14r.

¹⁶⁹ The Privy Council at Whitehall, 16 June 1621, TNA CO/77/1 f. 201r-201v; Minutes of Conference between the delegates of the Dutch & English Companies, 1622, IOR/I/2/6 f. 64v.

¹⁷⁰ John Chamberlain in London to Sir Dudley Carleton at The Hague, 4 January 1623, in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. II, ed. Norman McClure (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 471.

Asia, and the Republic's ambassadors again recited Grotius's third argument. Responding to the Crown, the States' ambassadors quipped that, if the English thought themselves entitled to half the profit, "they ought to bear half the charge."¹⁷¹ Far from offering general concessions to English demands in service of political alliance, the Dutch ambassadors now recognized the existence of no real relationship between the two companies.¹⁷²

1.5 Amboyna & the Road to Isolation

The diverging political trajectories of the two companies would ultimately rip apart the fragile bonds formed by the two state governments in 1619. In 1624, word reached London of an aggressive VOC reaction to an alleged English plot to overtake the Dutch fort on the island of Ambon in the Banda Archipelago. In the wake of 1619, the "Amboyna massacre," as it would come to be called, should have initiated intensive negotiations between the Crown, the Republic, and the two companies. Instead, it accelerated the two East India organizations' complete divorce, exposing the divergent political economies and fundamentally incompatible institutional frameworks that now defined both companies. Amboyna would inaugurate a quarter-century of isolation between the *Heren* and the Committees in Europe, as well as a period of inconsistent interactions in Asia.

On 5 June 1624, Stuart Court insider and prolific letter-writer, Sir John Chamberlain reported to Ambassador Carleton on the final preparations for an allied fighting force that James had pledged to the States General, in order to secure the United Provinces against the rapid advances of the armies of Hapsburg Spain. The continued complaints of the EIC, it seems, had been dismissed in favor of state policy. Chamberlain reported, however, that "in the very nick" before the military mission was dispatched, news from the East Indies had rocked London. Allegedly, on 9 March 1623, the VOC's officials at Ambon in the Maluku Islands had directed

¹⁷¹ Submissions of the Dutch Ambassadors, [1622], TNA CO/77/2 f. 119r.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

the “cutting of ten of our principal factors heads after they had tortured them.”¹⁷³ Such “barbourous” dealings had apparently come after the Dutch received word “of a plot they [English] had to surprise their fort at Amboyna.”¹⁷⁴ The “Amboyna Massacre,” or simply “Amboyna,” as the English fashioned the events, came to play a prominent role in the Anglo-Dutch relationship in Europe through the close of the seventeenth century.

While they uniformly recognize that Amboyna enjoyed far greater influence in English politics than in the Dutch Republic, English and Dutch historians have represented the events quite differently in the respective historiographies of the two states and companies. Scholars of the English East India Company focus on the events of 1623 as a key point of reflection for the English, centering the event in the debate over the EIC’s shift of focus to South Asia as a more promising and less threatening prospect.¹⁷⁵ In his business analysis of the EIC, K.N. Chaudhuri identified the event as a key point in the English company-state relationship, arguing that the “diplomatic turmoil” following news of the “massacre,” gave King James an opening to seek financial leverage over the merchant organization,¹⁷⁶ and led to widespread criticism and speculation as to the Committees’ business acumen in their leadership of a demonstrably flailing venture.¹⁷⁷

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth-century historiography of the VOC, Dutch historians uniformly take the defenses of VOC officials at their word, casting Amboyna as a rupture, stemming not from a massacre, but from an English conspiracy against the Dutch Company. In the early seventeenth century, the VOC far outpaced its resentful English competitor, and reflecting the contemporary Dutch dismissal of the events, only two historians

¹⁷³ John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 5 June 1624, in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. II, ed. Norman McClure (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 562.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Lawson, *The East India Company*, 32; D.K. Bassett, “Early English Trade and Settlement in Asia, 1602-1690,” in *Britain and the Netherlands in Europe and Asia*, ed. JS Bromley and EH Kosserman (London: Macmillan, 1968), 91-92.

¹⁷⁶ Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 30-31

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

have addressed the events specifically.¹⁷⁸ Other scholars have contextualized Amboyna within Coen's efforts to gradually drive the EIC from the VOC's envisioned spice monopoly zone in Southeast Asia, and legal historians have verified the legal justifications of the VOC officials' torture and executions of the English.¹⁷⁹ In the broader legal debates of European imperial expansion, Adam Clulow contributed a different perspective by studying Amboyna with a focus on the Japanese mercenaries prosecuted by the Dutch as collaborators in the English plot.¹⁸⁰

Beyond the two companies, political historians have also studied the role of Amboyna in English politics and assessed it as a point of Anglo-Dutch political convergence. Anthony Milton has examined how the EIC's graphic pamphlet campaign affected English politics and the emergence of an English "public sphere."¹⁸¹ Further interrogating Amboyna as a crucial moment in the English company-state relationship, economic and political historians have concluded that many English officials, and much of the public, submerged the violent tales of Amboyna below the need for an Anglo-Dutch political alliance in the face of rising Catholic power in France and Spain.¹⁸² Over the EIC's outrage, in June 1624, King James approved payments for 6,000 troops to defend the Netherlands against impending Spanish aggression.¹⁸³ And while, through naval threats and military leverage, James, and his successor, King Charles I, pushed the Dutch to

¹⁷⁸ FW Stapel, "De Ambonsche 'Moord,' (9 Maart 1623)," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 62 (1923), 209-226; W. Ph. Coolhaas, "Aanteekeningen en Opmerkingen over den Zoogenaamden Ambonschen Moord," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche-Indie* 101 (1942), 49-94.

¹⁷⁹ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 46; Gerrit Knaap, however, contextualizes Amboyna in the ebb and flow of competition and cooperation that characterized the EIC-VOC relationship in Asia, Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika 1602-1814," 79; For a legal analysis, see J.K.J. de Jong, *De Opkomst van de Nederlandsch Gezag*, vol. V, v-xxix.

¹⁸⁰ Adam Clulow, "Unjust, Cruel and Barbarous Proceedings: Japanese Mercenaries and the Amboyna Incident of 1623," *Itinerario* 31, no. 1 (March 2007), 15-34.

¹⁸¹ Milton argues that the Committees marketed Dutch hostility to leverage the EIC's position in "state business" and to draw importance to its central role in the economic health of the Commonwealth; Anthony Milton, "Marketing a Massacre: Amboyna, the East India Company and the public sphere in early Stuart England," in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 168-190.

¹⁸² Karen Chancey, "The Amboyna Massacre in English Politics, 1624-1632," *Albion* 30, no. 4 (Winter, 1998), 589; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 117-119.

¹⁸³ Chancey, "The Amboyna Massacre in English Politics," 592.

conduct an investigation against the VOC perpetrators, Chancey and Steensgaard highlight how both the States General and the Crown moved to preserve the Anglo-Dutch state alliance, even above the wishes of their respective East India Companies.¹⁸⁴

Historians pursuing a broader perspective on European commercial and imperial expansion tend to mark the 1623 controversy on Ambon as a key point of rupture in a consistent seventeenth-century dynamic of competition between English and Dutch expansion into the Indian Ocean.¹⁸⁵ In concert with such perspectives, Alison Games has recently examined Amboyna as a point of “unique expression” for the Anglo-Dutch hostilities that had been mounting through “two decades of trade wars.”¹⁸⁶ Using Amboyna as a starting point, Games projects Anglo-Dutch tensions through a seventeenth century history littered with conflicts between English and Dutch merchants and governments, including the first three Anglo-Dutch Wars.¹⁸⁷ Elsewhere, Games has linked Amboyna with other British victimizing experiences, exploring how English narratives and reactions to violence and competition formed a key element of the shared experience and the competing ambitions of European powers, during a “period of major transition for European states in their efforts around the world.”¹⁸⁸

In response to Amboyna, heated negotiations did ensue between the Dutch ambassadors and the Crown, but no substantive agreements or settlements came from these meetings.¹⁸⁹ Were it that the states and companies had, through the conferences of 1613, 1615, and 1619, actually engaged in sustained, meaningful debate over the governance of the East Indies trade, Amboyna

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 594-595; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 117-119.

¹⁸⁵ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 49; James Tracy, “Introduction,” in *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade 1350-1750*, ed. James Tracy (New York: CUP, 1991), 9; MN Pearson, “Merchants and States,” in *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade 1350-1750*, ed. James Tracy (New York: CUP, 1991), 91-92; DK Bassett, “The “Amboyna Massacre” of 1623,” *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 1 (Sept. 1960), 1-19.

¹⁸⁶ Games, “Anglo-Dutch Maritime Interactions,” 188.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 189-190.

¹⁸⁸ Alison Games, “Violence at the Fringes: The Virginia (1622) and Amboyna (1623) Massacres,” *History* 99 (2014), 528-529.

¹⁸⁹ Heren XVII to Heeren Beverinck, Nieuupoort, and Jongstal, Extraordinary Ambassadors from this State in England, 8 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

should have united the two companies (and states) in a concentrated legal and commercial discourse. Instead, Amboyna marked the dissolution of the fragile, dislocated, and largely superficial relationship that characterized the first twenty-five years of the companies' existence. Rather than catalyzing any process for arbitration or debate, both companies channeled the controversy into the domestic politics of the English and Dutch states. Amboyna initiated a quarter century of alienation between the two directorates in Europe and a severing of any Eurasian ties in the EIC-VOC relationship. That is, while English and Dutch factors continued to clash and cooperate at specific ports in the East Indies, these actions were sporadic, and not linked to any systemic program of observation, emulation, and competition between the two companies.

Upon first learning of the execution at Ambon, the Committees sought to use the “tyrannous” proceedings as leverage to regain access to Crown policy, rather than to directly engage with the VOC.¹⁹⁰ So much had the dynamics in the companies' relationship changed, that the Committees wrote to their king that they had voted to shutter their operations going forward, “being now wholly discouraged any longer to continue that trade, wherein they are so much oppressed by the said Netherlandish Company.”¹⁹¹ Throwing themselves back on the dependent relationship with their monarch, the Committees compelled the Crown to fashion some “expedient for the safety of your majesty's said subjects.”¹⁹² With their king's intercession, the Committees were confident that they could return to England with twenty-four ships and “bring into this kingdom for the value of eight or nine hundred thousand pounds sterling at the least.”¹⁹³ Consciously equating the profit of the Company with the wellbeing of the kingdom, the Committees argued that their shifting relationship with the Dutch was of critical interest to the

¹⁹⁰ East India Company Petition to King James I, 10 July 1624, TNA CO/77/3 f. 42r.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 42v.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

English nation. The continued loss of the EIC's assets in Asia "would be a very great impoverishing of the Commonwealth."¹⁹⁴

The VOC's new direction under Coen ensured that any chance for a mutual "reglement" in Asia had passed, and the Committees urged King James to marshal a strong state reaction to the "outrages" against his subjects, "to seize upon their East India ships passing through the narrow seas as often as they shall wrong us in the Indies."¹⁹⁵ As the Committees continued to petition the king and the Privy Council, at the end of the summer they received a missive from the *Heren XVII*, confirming that they, too, recognized the events at Ambon to be an issue of great importance. The *Heren*, however, did not understand the EIC's need to air the issue publicly. "Many strange misconstructions are cast abroad there in England as well in Courts of other places," the *bewindhebbers* claimed, and this did no good to the Dutch investigation of the events, with which the *Heren* had promised to punish any offenders and to do justice to those harmed.¹⁹⁶

The *Heren* had, however, already launched a public political campaign in Holland, tying the sovereignty and well being of their Republic to the VOC's defense against the EIC's accusations. The Committees pounced on the *bewindhebbers*' admonishment, firing back eight days later that the VOC directors could not possibly expect any quiet negotiation of the matter. While the VOC expected that "we would not exaggerate anything" in public displays to the king and Court, it was, in fact, the *Heren* who had initiated a defensive print campaign about Amboyna.¹⁹⁷ The Committees made reference to the *Declaration*, originally published in the Netherlands, but translated and released in England on 23 July 1624.¹⁹⁸ The tract recounts the basic narrative of how the plot to overthrow the factory was discovered, and ten EIC agents,

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ "Some Brief Noates concerning the strength and wealth which the East India Trade doth bringe to this Kingdome," 10 July 1624, TNA CO/77/3 f. 85r.

¹⁹⁶ The Chamber of the Mayors of the United East India Company of the Netherlands to the Governor and Committees of the East India Company in England, 6 August 1624, TNA CO/77/3 f. 91r.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 93r-93v.

¹⁹⁸ Anon., *A True Declaration of the News that came out of the East-Indies* (1624).

along with their Japanese conspirator, were tortured until they confessed, and then they were tried and executed for their crime.¹⁹⁹ The *Declaration* goes on to offer a strong defense of the VOC. Though the author of the tract is anonymous, the level of detail mandates close affiliation with the VOC, and indeed the English did not hesitate to connect the two directly, and to counter with their own published response.²⁰⁰

Rather than drawing the two companies toward a direct negotiation, the Amboyna debate evolved in the public political discourse that linked the politics of England and the Dutch Republic.²⁰¹ The published tracts emphasized both the power of the English and Dutch states over their companies' relationship, and the institutional incommensurability that had ensured the failure of the 1619 alliance.

The author of the 1624 Dutch tract anchored the legal defense of the VOC's actions in claims of the Dutch Republic's jurisdictional rights. The VOC Governor at Ambon held the fort for his company, which operated in the name of the Dutch States General.²⁰² The Dutch held "supreme power," or sovereignty, over that castle, while the English were simply their tenants, according to the terms of the 1619 partnership. This fundamental asymmetry in the English and Dutch legal and political status at Ambon enabled the Dutch apologist to classify the alleged

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

²⁰⁰ East India Company, *A True Relation of the Unjust, Cruell, and Barbarous proceedings against the English at Amboyna* (London: H. Lownes, 1624).

²⁰¹ For an examination of the ways in which seventeenth-century political publications of the English entered into Dutch debates, Helmer Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics, and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639-1660* (New York: CUP, 2014); With specific regard to political pamphlets, the market for information, and trade in the Netherlands, see the authoritative studies of Clé Lesger and Roeland Harms Clé Lesger, *The Rise of the Amsterdam Market and Information Exchange: Merchants, Commercial Expansion and Change in the Spatial Economy of the Low Countries, c. 1550-1630* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006); Roeland Harms, *Pamfletten en publieke opinie: Massamedia in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011); The broader collection of essays in which Anthony Milton's piece appears offers multiple leading conceptualizations of the English public sphere, Milton, "Marketing a Massacre," 168-190; Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); Helen Pierce also offers an analysis of the role of graphic satire, including Amboyna tracts, in the politics of the English public sphere, Helen Pierce, *Unseemly Pictures: Graphic Satire and Politics in Early Modern England* (New Haven: YUP, 2008).

²⁰² Anon., *A True Declaration of the News that came out of the East-Indies* (1624), 10.

English plot as treason against the Dutch sovereign. The Dutch officials had thus administered justice “according to the laws of the Netherlands,” which, along with those of England, permitted torture and mandated death for the crime of treason.²⁰³

In keeping with the dynamics of the 1613, 1615 and 1619 summits, the two companies did not directly engage with each others’ arguments. The “compiler” of the 1624 English “Answer to the Dutch Relation” largely sidestepped the VOC’s core jurisdictional claims, instead dissecting every detail of the alleged plot narrated by the Dutch officials at Ambon. If the Japanese sentry had been in league with the English, the author reasoned, then “who should have opened the gates to the English... who should have killed the Court of guard at the gate?”²⁰⁴ If the VOC was, indeed, sovereign of the Ambon Castle, then how could EIC agents have hoped “to win the Amboynezes (the Hollanders sworn subjects) to his side,” the author mused.²⁰⁵ The English respondent developed this barrage of interrogatories to remind the Dutch of the 1619 stipulation that “all disputes that cannot be decided by the Council [of Defense], should be remitted into Europe.”²⁰⁶ Indeed, the English tract maintained that it was the two state governments that possessed the authority to judge the crimes committed at Amboyna, not solely the Dutch States General.

While the authors of the two tracts remain anonymous, the terms of this published exchange tracked closely with the companies’ internal responses to Amboyna. Both the VOC and EIC referred the matters wholly to their state governments. The VOC consulted prominent Dutch legal officials, who affirmed the Republic’s claims to sovereignty, and the right to torture the conspirators and to prosecute treason.²⁰⁷ The Committees drew directly from the arguments set

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 10, 16.

²⁰⁴ East India Company, *The Answer unto the Dutch Pamphlet, Made in Defence of the Unjust and Barbarous proceedings against the English at Amboyna* (London, 1624), 13.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁰⁷ Tractaet bij den advocate Mr. Dirck Graswinckel, 9 December 1653, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12581.23 [unfoliated].

forth in the Dutch tract, incorporating them into damage claims made to James I.²⁰⁸ Amboyna became the headline, under which the Committees listed all of their complaints against the Dutch, drawn from the first quarter-century of both companies' existence.²⁰⁹ Indeed, the EIC sought a complete break from any partnership with the Dutch, including a formal dissolution of the 1619 treaty.²¹⁰ After the companies' public print battle, communication on the matter was fully taken over by the two states, as James I and his ministers engaged back-and-forth throughout the autumn and winter of 1624 regarding an appropriate resolution of the matter, and the future of Anglo-Dutch relationship in the East Indies trade.²¹¹

1.6 Greater Divergence 1625-1650

Far from catalyzing any sustained negotiations between the companies, the Amboyna debate centered on the jurisdictions of the English and Dutch states over the East Indies trade. Even with their exaggeration of the companies' control over the early summits of the 1610s, in 1654, the *Heren* would look back on the Amboyna controversy as the gateway to a quarter-century of alienation between the two organizations. During this time, the directorates neither met nor corresponded in any sustained manner. In each company's records, the other company played no significant role in systemic discussions among factories related to commercial, political, or governance strategy.

This estrangement reflected the companies' diverging models for the East Indies trade. Between 1625 and 1650, the Committees fought to keep their organization afloat—both in England and in Asia. They channeled considerable effort to fend off English competitors, and

²⁰⁸ “The Injustice of the Dutch proceedings at Amboyna, against the English there,” [1624], TNA CO/77/3 f. 111r-112r.

²⁰⁹ “Breife extractes of Divers wrongs which the English East India Companie have latelie sustained by the Dutch in the East Indies,” [1624], TNA CO/77/3 f. 133r.

²¹⁰ “A Translate of part of the States Answer,” 29 December 1624, TNA CO/77/3 f. 156r-v.

²¹¹ This dynamic of state control continued during Charles I's reign, as well; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, 120; Chancey, “The Amboyna Massacre in English Politics,” 595-596.

they focused on navigating the national tumult of economic recession and political revolution in England.²¹² In Asia, their underfunded network struggled to survive, with agents relying on sporadic diplomatic and commercial initiatives to keep what footholds they could in the East Indies trade.

In stark contrast, the VOC, unchallenged in the Dutch Republic and drawing from burgeoning commodities and secondary markets, continued to invest fully in Coen's scheme for a colonial infrastructure in Asia. In this goal, the *Raad*'s competitive focus rested squarely on the *Estado da India*, and rather than any engagement with the English, company leaders prioritized internal debates over a political economy that balanced military and colonial expenditure with mercantile profit.

Following Amboyna, the governments of James I, and after March of 1625, Charles I, only expanded the Crown's intervention into the governance of the English East Indies trade. The Crown engineered proposals for imperial expansion into Asia, indicating that, if the EIC was not up to the task, the Crown, itself, would compete with the VOC. On 6 December 1624, Secretary of State Conway reported to Attorney General Coventry that James had ordered the preparation of a "commission to the East India Company to build forts in the Indies in as large and ample manner as by the treaties with the Dutch may be warranted."²¹³ That same day, Secretary Conway met with the Governor and Committees of the EIC. In the fallout from Amboyna, the king, himself, now resolved to tap the wealth of his nobility to enter the East Indies trade in "his own way."²¹⁴ Pursuant to the overtures of Robert and William Shirley, English

²¹² Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 19.

²¹³ Secretary Conway to Sir Thomas Coventry, 6 December 1624, in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies, China and Japan, Volume 4, 1622-1624*, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1878), 704.

²¹⁴ Court of Committees, 6 December 1624, in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies, China and Japan, Volume 4, 1622-1624*, vol. IV, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1878), 706.

brothers who now served as emissaries of Shah Abbas I, James' government would take advantage of the EIC's use of the Crown in relations with Asian rulers. A 1622 Anglo-Persian alliance, facilitated by EIC agents to eject the Portuguese from the Persian island of Ormuz, remained the last best hope for an English foothold in the East Indies. King James desired "to bring the whole trade of the Persian silk upon freight hither into England by contract between the two Kings."²¹⁵ When the Committees protested Conway's announcement, arguing that the EIC "had not deserted the trade," the Secretary responded that the king had not empowered him to negotiate any terms with the Company.²¹⁶

Suddenly forced to defend the EIC's trade against the encroachment of the Crown government, the Committees turned Grotius's arguments for the rights of contract with East Indian sovereigns against their own English sovereign. They reissued the Company's contract for the "privileges as the demand from the King of Persia."²¹⁷ In four articles, the Committees outlined their historical and contractual relationship with Shah Abbas I, formalized in 1622 with their assistance in seizing the island of Ormuz from the Portuguese. They forcefully reiterated the terms of the 1622 agreement, which granted the Company occupancy of the island, which controlled the mouth of the Persian Gulf. More importantly, the EIC was to receive rights to the customs levied on passing trade in that busy maritime corridor.²¹⁸

The Shah had yet to deliver on his end of the bargain, however, and now, with the image of the EIC weakening on the London exchange in the wake of Amboyna, the Stuart government sought to inject control where the Company had failed. The Crown reissued the Company's charter in 1625, granting the Committees monopoly rights over English trade East of the Cape of Good Hope. However, sharpening the threats originally made by King James at the end of 1624,

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ The Proposition of the Governor & Company of Merchants of London trading, into the East Indies for such privileges as they demand from the King of Persia, January 1625, TNA CO/77/3 f. 173r.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Charles I's government reserved English trade at Mocha, on the Red Sea, for itself. In doing so, the Crown turned a fundamental tenet of English law against the Company, arguing that "although it [Mocha] be within the Company's Patent, yet they do not make use of it."²¹⁹ Active "use" of land would continue as a fundamental requirement in the English understanding of imperial sovereignty, particularly in the expansion of the Stuarts' Atlantic Empire and in their competing claims against the Spanish Empire in the Americas.²²⁰ Pursuant to this principle, the king issued a call for his own rival joint stock "to own the trade as his own."²²¹

Though they never materialized in actual trade or operations, the Crown's intrusions fit into a greater domestic set of challenges that marked the most difficult quarter-century in the EIC's history. The political pressure mounting against the EIC, paired with an increasingly arid credit market, encouraged Charles to entertain rival proposals for the East Indies trade. Perhaps the most substantial proposal came from William Courteen and Endymion Porter in 1637.²²² Using the same justification for his own efforts to grab the trade of Mocha in 1625, Charles I issued a patent for the Courteen Association to trade "in those areas of the East not frequented by East India Company ships."²²³ The Courteen Association was an abject failure: underfunded and poorly governed.²²⁴ Courteen was bankrupt shortly after 1641.²²⁵

²¹⁹ Proposition to Trade, [1625], TNA CO/77/3 f. 212r.

²²⁰ See, among many others, Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (New York: CUP, 1995), 16-40; Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Sovereignty, Property and Empire, 1500-2000* (New York: CUP, 2014); Ken Macmillan, *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576-1640* (New York: CUP, 2006); Macmillan also offers an explicitly comparative study with Spain, Ken Macmillan, *The Atlantic Imperial Constitution: Center and Periphery in the English Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave, 2011).

²²¹ Proposition to Trade, [1625], f. 212r.

²²² For other smaller challengers, see William Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, vol. II (Cambridge: CUP, 1910), 113-115.

²²³ Contract between Charles I and William Courteen, [undated], NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.78 [unfoliated]; Lawson, *The East India Company*, 34.

²²⁴ Memories van de Engelse envoyé Downing aan de Staten-Generaal, 1664, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.80.2; There is a file in the archive of the States General that contains the English complaints, Dutch responses, and associated documents relating to the VOC's treatment of the Courteen venture, *Stukken betreffende de bemoeiingen van de Staten-Generaal met de klachten van Engeland over het gebeurde met de Engelse schepen, de 'Bonne Esperance' en 'Henry Bon Avonture,' 1642-1662*, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.78.

Public resentment toward the monopoly rights of the tight cabal of merchants who still controlled the EIC had only mounted since Amboyna, and the EIC now sat at the very center of heated domestic debates over the optimal management of English trade. Between 1625 and 1650, the escalation of the Thirty Years' War, plague in London, a crippling commercial recession, and a protracted political revolution in England stalled the Company's growth, scuttled any plans for institutional revision, and left many of the EIC's factors in Asia largely rudderless for more than two decades.²²⁶

During this time, the Company's profile in London remained nearly as socially exclusive as when it began in 1600. In contrast to the VOC, which had shifted to a permanent capital stock and unlimited shareholder base in the second decade of the seventeenth century, EIC ventures were still organized around term-limited joint-stocks. In 1642, for example, the "Fourth Joint-Stock" in the Company's history was floated, while the returns for the third joint-stock were still yet to be distributed to shareholders.²²⁷ While many of the same merchants invested in successive stocks or "ventures," this time-limited, disjointed structure hindered any substantive long-range planning for the Company, locked up capital flows to Asia, and resulted in diminishing financial reserves. The Fourth EIC Joint-Stock drew only £105,000 in subscriptions, while contemporaries valued the VOC's annual net income at between £900,000 and £1,100,000.²²⁸ Excluded merchants thus rallied around the king's own criticism of the Company, arguing that the EIC hardly made use of the advantages that the Committees had been given by the Crown.

While the VOC grew, unencumbered by such hostilities in the Netherlands, the Committees diverted an enormous amount of energy to fending off political attacks during this

²²⁵ Scott, *The Constitution and Finance*, vol. II, 118.

²²⁶ Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 19.

²²⁷ Scott, *The Constitution and Finance*, vol. II, 118.

²²⁸ The VOC operated at a conversion of 11 guilders/pound sterling in 1654, Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 15 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated]; At the valuation of 11 guilders/pound sterling, Colbert valued the Dutch East Indies trade at between 10 and 12 million guilders, Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 296; Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies*, vol. II, 118.

quarter-century, selecting two of their own to serve as intellectual advocates in the heated political economy debates that engulfed London during the 1620s and 1630s. During this time, the EIC was caught in the crosshairs of the same political debates, about the relationship between international trade and the economic health of the nation, which had fueled Roe's observations of Persian and Mughal market mechanisms. Disciples of Gerard de Malynes and other "bullionists" measured national wealth through the volume of specie in the country's economy. International trade and monetary exchange posed a grave danger, as these processes required the input of English coin without guaranteeing a greater fair return of that wealth to English coffers, thus creating a deficit in England's balance of trade.²²⁹ With a business model based on the export of bullion, the exclusive East India Company became the prime target of theorists and critics.

In response, advocates of the EIC sought to cast the Company, not as an independent, supranational organization, but as a core component of England's crystalizing national economy. In 1621, Thomas Mun, a prominent international merchant, EIC Committee, and an advisor to the Company's dealings with the VOC, published *A Discourse of Trade, From England unto the East-Indies*. The tract offered a staunch defense of the EIC's trade, arguing that, in its balance of exports and imports, the Company did not leach England's resources, but rather contributed greatly to the wealth of the Crown and the English people.²³⁰ Citing the company's own internal statistics and accounts, Mun argued that the EIC had opened massive new markets for the export of English goods, expanding employment within England.²³¹ In addition to these benefits, Mun argued, the EIC merchants leveraged their expanding geographic network to pursue opportunities

²²⁹ Gerard de Malynes, *A Treatise of the Canker of England's Common Wealth* (London: Richard Field, 1601), 13-15.

²³⁰ Thomas Mun, *A Discourse of Trade, From England unto the East-Indies: Answering to diverse Objections which are usually made against the same* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1621).

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

for arbitrage, gaining advantageous prices on goods and specie, thus, they “yearly bring in as much silver, as they send forth.”²³²

In 1623, EIC Committee Edward Misselden followed Mun’s efforts and directly assaulted Malynes’ logic in a widely-circulated tract, *The Circle of Commerce. Or the Ballance of Trade*. Praising Mun’s commercial model, Misselden reiterated that the EIC increased England’s treasure, “which is not as some think carryed out, but rather conveyed in through the channels of this trade.”²³³ The EIC only multiplied England’s bullion reserves through trade, Misselden argued, as £100,000 “purchaseth Five hundred thousand pounds returns from the East Indies.”²³⁴

As the Committees continued to defend their company against competitors and critics in England, they did build a fragile web of forts and factories, particularly along the Coast of South Asia—securing a position at Surat and establishing Fort St. George at Madras in 1639. Lacking consistent financial support from the Committees in London, and viewing their company as not strong enough to stand on its own in East Indian markets, EIC leaders in Asia looked for partners in the most established European network of fortresses and shipping lanes that crisscrossed the Indian Ocean: the *Estado*. When the Dutch ratcheted up their aggression against the Portuguese, in the mid-1630s, the correspondence between the Viceroy of Goa and EIC President Methwold at Surat found the EIC factory Chief congratulating the Portuguese for victories against prowling VOC ships.²³⁵ In 1637, the EIC and the Portuguese fused a shared intelligence network, informing each other of Dutch strategies and movements.²³⁶ By December of 1640, the "maintenance of that mutual amity" with the Portuguese entered its fifth year, and the relationship continued for the ensuing decade. Indeed, by 1647, it had become clear that the informal Anglo-

²³² *Ibid.*, 21.

²³³ Edward Misselden, *The Circle of Commerce. Or the Ballance of Trade, in defence of free Trade* (London: John Dawson, 1623), 36.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ Pero da Silva, Viceroy of Goa, to President Methwold at Surat, 4/14 May 1637, in *The English Factories in India 1637-1641*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), 20.

²³⁶ Pero da Silva, Viceroy of Goa, to President Methwold at Surat, 11/21 November 1637, in *The English Factories in India 1637-1641*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), 31.

Portuguese alliance had opened a new branch of trade for the Company, as the EIC leadership transferred the "management of the Manila business' to the [closer] Bantam Presidency."²³⁷

The weak position of the Company's finance and governance in London, however, meant that much of the English trade in Asia depended upon the initiative of individual merchants. The Company's servants also pursued commercial partnerships separate from the business of the Company.²³⁸ In his investigation of the Anglo-South Asian relationship between 1659-1670, Ian Bruce Watson posits that the private trade of Company factors characterized English trade during the first half of the seventeenth century. As a result, English merchants embedded in local markets and forged close relationships with local and regional leaders, laying the foundation on which the eighteenth-century British Empire would be constructed in Asia.²³⁹

In the Dutch Republic, the institutional politics of the VOC appeared as a mirrored reflection of those under which the Committees labored in London and Whitehall. While the English Company was consumed in a simultaneously dependent and defensive relationship with the Crown, the VOC began to build out Coen's vision in Asia, and the *Heren* gained further autonomy from public scrutiny and oversight in Holland. The VOC found only support from the provincial governments and the States General. When a group of shareholders publicly questioned the *Heren's* management style in 1624, the courts and politicians of Holland immediately dismissed their complaints.²⁴⁰ The core financial institutions of Dutch "capitalism," including the Amsterdam exchange bank, or *wisselbank*, serviced the massive gap loans required

²³⁷ President Breton, Thomas Merry, and William Pitt at Swally Marine to the Company, 25 January 1647, in *The English Factories in India 1646-1650*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1914), 81.

²³⁸ Watson, *Foundation for Empire*, x-xi, 16-17.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Klaer Vertooch van de schadelycke Directie der Bewindhebberen der Vereenichde Oost-Indische Compaignie in vier Jaeren nae dat het acoort met d' Engelsche Compaignie gemaecht is gheweest* (Leiden: Pieter Gerritsz., 1624), 3r; Jeffrey Robertson and Warwick Funnell, "The Dutch East-India Company and accounting for social capital at the dawn of modern capitalism 1602-1623," *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 37 (2012), 354-356.

to cover the VOC's burgeoning expenditures in the period before the next return fleet arrived and sales of East India wares could be held.²⁴¹

No longer in need of considering the English alliance in the East, and with Coen—the architect of a new, autonomous Dutch Asia—advising policy for the Company back in the Republic between 1624 and 1627,²⁴² the *Heren* felt that they could ramp-up the construction of their colonial network across the Indian Ocean. VOC leaders in Europe and in Asia confirmed that the EIC had declared “total separation from us in the Treaty of 1619,”²⁴³ and they reflected on the Dutch ambassadorial reports of the Crown's intervention in the East Indies trade. With their King's direction, the English “desired to build forts for themselves, toward the security (so they say) of their goods and servants.”²⁴⁴ But fully dependent upon the VOC in the partnership provided in the 1619 Treaty, interim Governor-General Pieter de Carpentier dismissed the EIC as an entirely different class of organization, without the means to compete in the “burdensome trade of the Mollucos, Ambon and Banda.”²⁴⁵ Since they were in no position to replicate the VOC's colonial ambition, the only option open to the EIC, in the *Raad's* opinion, was to withdraw from Batavia and to become someone else's tenant, no longer a concern of the Dutch Company.²⁴⁶

The resolutions of the *Heren XVII* struck a tone very different from those of the Committees. Benefitting from Coen's detailed communications, and, for a brief time before his return to Batavia, his presence in debates and discussions, the *Heren's* resolutions were grounded in a Eurasian perspective, balancing European policy with a comparatively well-informed

²⁴¹ De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 132-133.

²⁴² Menno Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen: De opkomst van de VOC in Azië* (Amsterdam: Pallas, 2011), 103.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*; Pieter de Carpentier at Batavia to Jan Pietersz. Coen, 29 January 1624, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol. II, ed. W. PH. Coolhaas ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953), 1090.

²⁴⁴ *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 19 November 1624, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 314 f. 225.

²⁴⁵ Pieter de Carpentier at Batavia to Jan Pietersz. Coen, 29 January 1624, 1091-1092.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1092.

consideration of the realities of trade and politics in Asia. The *Heren* and the *Raad* prioritized the further construction of Batavia into a thriving multicultural military and mercantile hub in Southeast Asia.²⁴⁷ Freed from the English, Coen was unbridled in the development of the VOC's fort and factory network, directing the Company into three initiatives that would drive Dutch strategy in the East Indies for the next quarter-century: (1) flooding significant investment and military presence into the most important East Indies trading networks, particularly those connecting across and emanating out from the South China Sea; (2) solidifying mercantile contracts with Central, South, and East Asia's imperial states, and (3) targeting the key nodes of Portuguese commerce.

Following Coen's return to the Netherlands, the *Heren* dramatically increased the flow of men, money and ships to Asia. All of the areas in which their tenants, the English, had depended upon the Dutch Company since 1620—in the construction of factories, the sailing of naval missions, the financing of trade, and the provision of diplomatic gifts and military muscle—Coen now dedicated solely to the advancement of the Dutch organization in the East Indies. Pieter de Carpentier focused on the VOC's push into the trading networks of East Asia, which Coen had first perceived as the key to the East Indies trade. The interim Governor-General recounted the accords made with merchants and political leaders in China and on Taiwan, the very core of Coen's envisioned trading networks for Asia.²⁴⁸ Pursuant to the *Heren's* instructions, Carpentier sought to consolidate Dutch control along the capital and commodity networks that he traced down from China into archipelagic Southeast Asia and across the Bay of Bengal to the Malabar Coast. The Dutch officials' focus had now shifted to bringing the remaining independent Muslim trading hubs within the leverage of the VOC's network, particularly Makassar, Aceh, Ambon and

²⁴⁷ For detailed studies of this development at Batavia, see Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: Europeans and Eurasians in Colonial Indonesia* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009); and Henk Niemeijer, *Batavia: een koloniale samenleving in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2005).

²⁴⁸ Pieter de Carpentier at Batavia to Jan Pietersz. Coen, 27 January 1625, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol II, 1094-1095.

Ternate. The push for a “monopolie” of the Eurasian spice trade in the Maluku islands would continue through the 1640s.²⁴⁹ While they never fully disappeared, the English faded from the communications and strategy that circulated between the Dutch factories, Batavia, and Amsterdam, as VOC officials focused more and more on bringing regional sovereigns to their exclusive terms of trade.

While the *Raad* directed unprecedented coercive force against the entrepot kingdoms of archipelagic Southeast Asia, pursuant to the second branch of Coen’s strategy, the Dutch constructed different diplomatic relationships with the imperial regimes of Central, South and East Asia. The Mughal and Persian empires, the King of Golkonda, and the Tokugawa Shogunate were unthreatened by Dutch arms. They oversaw vast governmental organizations that tightly regulated sprawling trade circuits;²⁵⁰ participation in which the *Raad* understood to be crucial to the VOC’s continued commercial expansion in the East Indies. In other words, these were not scenarios in which a few of the VOC’s Men-of-War ships could impose an exclusive contract. Rather, these regimes demanded delicate diplomatic negotiation to establish favorable, and ideally exclusive, access to their markets. Leveraging their company’s expanding networks, shipping and capital capacity, VOC officials could often overtake rival European trading in imperial ports, as English factors lamented how their constrained capital prevented any real competition with the Dutch.²⁵¹

The VOC’s expansion into Asian imperial ports was also driven by the third prong of Coen’s colonial vision: the amplification of the VOC’s aggression toward the *Estado*. While the EIC had pivoted to the Portuguese as a partner to keep the English network afloat in Asia, Coen launched the VOC into an effort that would intensify through the 1630s and 1640s, to uncouple

²⁴⁹ Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen: De Opkomst van de VOC in Azië*, 222-223.

²⁵⁰ For a comparative overview of governance structures of Central and South Asian imperial regimes, see Stephen Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (New York: CUP, 2010).

²⁵¹ George Tash, Hugh Fenn, and Anthony Smith at Ahmadabad to the President and Council at Surat, 4 October 1647, in *The English Factories in India 1646-1650*, ed. William Foster (Oxford: Clarendon, 1914), 161.

and destroy the Portuguese network in Asia, replacing the *Estado* in key imperial ports. This also linked with a fundamental restructuring of the Dutch trading network in Asia. Capitalizing on the Tokugawa government's resentment of the proselytizing Portuguese, the VOC launched a "grand embassy" to the government center at Edo, in Japan, in October of 1627.²⁵² While these first diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful, the *Raad* developed a sensitivity to the hierarchy of Japanese politics. In stark contrast with the English, who continued to position the Crown at the forefront of their diplomatic efforts in the East Indies, the Dutch refashioned their embassies in the 1630s to represent the Company, itself, as a vassal of non-European sovereigns, such as the Shogun, rather than an envoy of a European power.²⁵³ In 1641, this approach succeeded in gaining the VOC a factory on Deshima Island in Nagasaki harbor, as well as preferred access to what was to become the lynchpin of the seventeenth-century Dutch East India system: the vast silver reserves of Japan, which offset the need to export bullion from the Atlantic and Europe.²⁵⁴

This engagement with the Shogunate was rehearsed again and again in courts along the Indian Ocean littoral, as the Dutch adapted to different systems of imperial politics, while playing on the *Estado*'s century-long history of violence against East Indian sovereigns. In the kingdom of Golkonda, on the Coromandel Coast, the Dutch sought to enmesh themselves into the royal court to secure rights for its Fort Geldria at Pulicat and its merchants in Masulipatnam. In a two-decade game of trial and error, successive administrations honed their courtship of powerful Golkondan merchants and royal officials.²⁵⁵ Always maintaining a systemic perspective on the East Indies trade, VOC officials sought out advantageous trading terms in the Coromandel outlets for the key commodities demanded in Southeast Asian markets.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 1-2.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

²⁵⁴ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 171-174.

²⁵⁵ Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 39-58.

²⁵⁶ Marten Ysbrantsz. at Geldria, 20 October 1627, in *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, vol II, 1181.

Blending violence and coercion with sensitive political maneuvering and an unbridled war against the *Estado*, subsequent Governors-General carried Coen's tripartite policy through the quarter-century after the bellicose colonial architect's death: violently coercing Southeast Asian markets into exclusive contracts, leveraging the VOC's growing capacity to gain favor in Central and South Asian imperial ports,²⁵⁷ and doggedly unraveling the *Estado da India*. Between 1630 and 1650, the costs of shipping and manpower skyrocketed, as the VOC dispatched an estimated 62,000 people into the East Indies.²⁵⁸ Between 1636 and 1645, Antonio van Diemen, Coen's equally aggressive apprentice, served as the VOC's Governor-General and oversaw the active expansion of the VOC's colonial network and the unprecedented prosecution of war against the Portuguese.²⁵⁹

Van Diemen resolutely kept to Coen's systemic perspective of East Indian trade. He focused on securing crucial chokepoints for the Asian trading networks so closely studied by Coen. The targets of Van Diemen's swelling forces were Malacca—which linked key Eastern and Western trading routes—and Ceylon, representing a key strategic hub of the *Estado*, a central node of East Indian trade flows, and a crucial point of commercial importance as the world's preeminent source of valuable cinnamon.²⁶⁰ Between 1640 and the mid-1650s, the *Raad* would send thousands of soldiers every year onto the shores of Ceylon, gradually eroding the Portuguese positions there, and bringing local leaders under Dutch control.²⁶¹

²⁵⁷ This strategy is documented in great detail in Cornelis Speelman, *Journaal der Reis van den Gezant der O.I. Compagnie, Joan Cunaeus, naar Perzië in 1651-1652* (Amsterdam: Johannes Müller, 1908).

²⁵⁸ J.R. Bruijn, F.S. Gaastra and I. Schöffer, *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, vol. I (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 144.

²⁵⁹ Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen: De Opkomst van de VOC in Azië*, 17-18; Van Diemen, and his predecessor Hendrik Brouwer [1632-1636], prioritized the predation of Iberian supply lanes in and out of Goa and Manila, blockading Goa and other Portuguese outposts in Malabar between 1637 and 1644, and besieging Malacca in 1640, *Ibid.*, 210-211; Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 85-87.

²⁶⁰ Maetsuycker reflected on Van Diemen's policies, Joan Maetsuycker to the Heren XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated]; Governor-General and Raad to Governor Laurens Pith, 15 July 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 877 f. 204-205.

²⁶¹ Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 85-93.

By the mid-1640s, the *Heren* and the *Raad* were linked in a consistent cycle of instruction, reporting, and debate. Freed from political debates in Europe, the *Heren* and the *Raad* now shifted to consider a dramatic overhaul of their commercial framework in Asia. The *bewindhebbers* and members of the *Raad* engaged in a detailed written debate over the political economy of Dutch trade in the East Indies, laying the foundation for the future of the VOC. While the Committees were constantly in the position of defending themselves against public critique, the key debates over Dutch East India policy remained internal to the VOC. In the hundreds of pages of correspondence and reports that passed between Batavia and Amsterdam between 1648 and 1650, VOC officials offered detailed considerations of their trade and political strategy, the institutions and policies of the most prominent East Indian regimes, the vulnerabilities of the Portuguese, and the management of the VOC's own employees. The English, however, were not mentioned once.

As the costs of the VOC's dramatic military expansion continued to balloon through the mid-1640s, the Company's increasing expenditures prompted the same debates of political economy among the *Heren*, balancing the costs of colonies with the profits of trade.²⁶² While revenue from the Dutch East Indies trade continued to climb, expenses surged during the 1640s and 1650s. Profits plummeted from 12,000,000 guilders in the 1630s to just 2,300,000 guilders in the 1650s.²⁶³ Concern over the decreasing return on greater military and infrastructure investment joined with debates over an internal issue with grave implications: private trade. In August of 1646, the *Heren* raged at Cornelis van der Lijn, then Governor-General at Batavia, that

²⁶² In the late 1640s, the VOC dramatically expanded its military force, dispatching at least 10,500 soldiers to Asia between 1648 and 1652, Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 245; The *Heren* sent these troops to secure their key conquests at Ambon, Malacca, and Ceylon and to target the *Estado's* remaining strongholds at Goa and along the southern coasts of the Indian subcontinent, Gerrit Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika 1602-1814," 85-106.

²⁶³ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 132.

the Company's "whole government in the Indies is infected with private trade."²⁶⁴ The *Heren* issued a new battery of regulations against private commerce, targeting the top ranks of their administration as the greatest offenders. In direct contrast with the EIC model, which relied on employees' private commerce and personal entrepreneurship in lieu of a strong company infrastructure, the *Heren* declared, "should this evil not be extracted from the Company's body, as like a cancer, it will be completely consumed."²⁶⁵

To answer the entwined threats of soaring expenses and metastasizing private trade, the *Heren* proposed dramatic reform. In 1647, along with their instructions, the *Heren* submitted a concept proposal to their governing council at Batavia, the *Raad van Indië*. In order to curtail private contracting and to reduce their operating costs in Asia, the *Heren* would open selected trading hubs as colonial settlements for Dutch citizens, including significant expansion at Batavia, Ambon, Banda, Melaka and Taiwan.²⁶⁶ A leading voice in the debate was Johan Maetsuycker, who had entered the VOC's service in 1636—the first year of Van Diemen's regime—at the age of twenty.²⁶⁷ Van Diemen's death in 1645 ushered in a period of instability at Batavia, from which Maetsuycker wrested the Company, serving as Governor-General between 1653 and 1676.

In his 1651 memorandum to the *Heren*, the ascendant *Raad* member crafted his arguments, channeling Coen and Van Diemen as he claimed that settler colonies were "the most suitable and the only manner through which to secure the state [status] of the Company in India."²⁶⁸ While the *Heren* and their shareholders had questioned the Company's colonial initiatives since Coen had first introduced his ideas in the early 1620s, Maetsuycker argued that

²⁶⁴ "dat de geheele Indische regeringe met particulieren handel besmeth sijn," Instructions from the *Heren* XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 16 August 1646, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317, f. 66r.

²⁶⁵ Instructions from *Heren* XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 16 August 1646, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317, f. 70v.

²⁶⁶ Instructions from the *Heren* XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 4 October 1647, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317, f. 92v; Carel Reyniersz to the *Heren* XVII, 25 November 1648, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated].

²⁶⁷ Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen: De opkomst van de VOC in Azië*, 154.

²⁶⁸ Joan Maetsuycker to the *Heren* XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated].

the project actually “came into balance with great advantages and profit,” relieving the VOC of the enormous costs of garrisons, armadas, and forts, and transferring these costs to the Dutch colonial societies that would be built across the Indian Ocean.²⁶⁹ Maetsuycker encouraged the *Heren* to “hold a mirror to the example of the Portuguese,” as the *Estado* crumbled under the weight of its military network, having never fully committed to a self-sustaining colonial system.²⁷⁰

In the hundreds of pages of these reports, encapsulating the perspectives of the Company’s most experienced officials in Asia, the English East India Company was absent. As VOC leaders debated the future of their company, the EIC played no role in the considerations of trade, governance, or diplomacy. The reports would return to Europe, making their way to the desk of the Company’s newly appointed chief administrator, or *Advocaat*, Pieter van Dam.

While Maetsuycker and the *Heren* drove an important internal debate, free of any consideration of English interests and activities, the EIC underwent a dramatic overhaul of its own. In the early 1650s, under the leadership of an insurgent cabal of Anglo-Dutch merchants, the English Company responded to a rupture in Anglo-Dutch state politics, initiating a dramatic re-orientation in the policies of both companies, and locking the Committees and the *Heren* in a new and powerful Eurasian relationship that would define the European East Indies trade for the subsequent half-century.

1.7 Conclusion

Tracing the engagements between the EIC and the VOC during the first half of the seventeenth century, this chapter has identified two defining features of the inter-company relationship during this period: (1) the dominance of the English and Dutch state governments and domestic politics in the companies’ relationship and (2) the fundamentally different

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

institutional and organizational development of the EIC and the VOC. The distinctive political environments of England and the Dutch Republic conditioned key constitutional differences in the companies that defy historians' efforts to paint them as corporate racehorses of the same breed. Company summits in 1613 and 1615 served more as competitive arenas for emerging European state ideologies than they did for the articulation and codification of informed East India trade policy. Rather than uniting the companies in a common understanding of commerce and governance, the Treaty of 1619 underscored the fundamental incompatibilities of the companies' capabilities and ideologies. Amboyna, which should have catalyzed an intensive negotiation between the "united" organizations, instead revealed the clearly diverging trajectories of the two companies: the VOC following Coen's path toward military and political development in Asia, and the EIC, locked within the spirited commercial debates of England's political sphere.

By the 1650s, the last thing to be expected was a convergence of the two companies and the formation of a sustained inter-company dialogue. But it was precisely the unstable and disjointed nature of the early company relationship that required both directorates to re-write their historical narratives in 1654. Indeed, contrary to the perspectives of most historians who have studied the two organizations, the directorates recognized that, after 1650, the Anglo-Dutch relationship in the East Indies trade would bear little resemblance to that which had come before, inverting the two key features of the earlier inter-company relationship.

Pitching an inter-company summit that would allow delegations of both companies to resolve mutual concerns and individual complaints without direct state oversight, the two directorates sought to convince the Crown and the States General that debates on the political economy of the East Indies trade would be most productively conducted between the two organizations with expertise in that trade. Just as international treaties were based on precedent, the companies sought to legitimize their authority by casting an historical relationship—through summits, clashes, and complaints—that depicted a consistent relationship between the two

organizations, that operated beyond direct state control. The first summit in 1654 would catalyze a dramatic reorientation in each company: EIC and VOC leaders in Europe and across Asia began to prioritize a program of mutual observation, emulation, and translation of each other's institutions and strategies.

CHAPTER 2

GATHERING THE 'MUTUAL CONCERT': THE FIRST ANGLO-DUTCH WAR AND THE TURN TO A NEW RELATIONSHIP (1649-1659)

After nearly twenty-five years of silence between the two directorates, the Anglo-Dutch state crisis of the 1650s prompted a dramatic emergence in the relationship between the EIC and the VOC. Historians have traced political, commercial, and ideological motivations for the aggressive mid-century English foreign policy toward the Dutch. And scholars of economic thought and institutions tend to see Dutch innovation during this period as home grown, perceiving an English turn to Dutch economic models as a critical step in the history of political economy. Focusing on the English and Dutch East India Companies, rather than on the crystalizing European states, Chapter 2 argues that it was during the 1650s that a key mutual reorientation took place in both companies, and a new relationship emerged between EIC and VOC leaders in Europe and in Asia.

A new cohort of merchants, specializing in transoceanic and Anglo-Dutch trade, assumed the leadership of the EIC. And the chapter contends that these new Committees recognized opportunity in Oliver Cromwell's anti-Dutch foreign policy. They initiated dramatic public and private reforms for the ailing English Company, emulating the VOC's constitutional structure, as well as its European and Asian commercial models. In order to accomplish this overhaul, the Committees centered the VOC at the heart of their domestic political strategy, launching a public pamphlet campaign against the Dutch Company.

With Protector Cromwell's declaration of war against the Dutch Republic in 1652, the *Heren* followed suit, nominating a permanent subcommittee of their members to study the English Company's political strategies and to launch a public campaign of their own. Having dramatically expanded the scale of their operations between 1625 and 1650, the *Heren* had also

gained far greater autonomy from state oversight in their political and commercial policies.¹ In stark contrast to the state-governed negotiations of the early seventeenth century, the *Heren* now sought to extend this autonomy by initiating a direct relationship of communication and debate with the Committees.

The brief First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654), traveled to Asia in the form of the English and Dutch directors' instructions to their factory officials. The *Heren* and the Committees dramatically altered their policies of mutual isolation to demand that their employees focus intently on the commercial, military, and political activities of the other company's agents. A close examination of English and Dutch factory correspondence demonstrates that, during these years, intensive observation led to company officials' mutual study and calls for emulation of each other's institutions and strategies. This shift in posture engendered two significant inter-company negotiations: the 1654 arbitration in London, and the legal debate between the VOC's Governor-General and the EIC's Banten Agent between 1656 and 1657. While the London and Banten dialogues occurred in isolation from each other, this chapter traces how, in both forums, company leaders argued points of the law of nations, and they acknowledged a common logic of East Indian commerce, diplomacy, and governance.

2.1 The Committees Shift Focus: 1650-1652

In 1650, Maurice Thomson led a group of East India interlopers in a "hostile takeover" of the EIC.² The bloody and divisive English Civil War had resulted in the execution of Charles I in 1649 and had elevated Oliver Cromwell to the leadership of England's Commonwealth government. The Thomsons were at the heart of a merchant group, which Robert Brenner has

¹ For example, treaties with non-European rulers were, by mid-century, almost exclusively established between the Company and the non-European sovereign. The States-General was no longer a party to such agreements. See, for example, the treaties in the *Corpus Diplomaticum*: J.E. Heeres, ed., *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum Vol. II (1650-1675)* ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931).

² Thomas Leng, *Benjamin Worsley (1618-1677): Trade, Interest and the Spirit in Revolutionary England* (London: Boydell, 2008), 66.

famously dubbed the “New Merchants:” influential brokers who had launched their trade careers in the Atlantic, accumulated extensive experience in the Dutch Republic, and made significant investments in Asian trade.³ They bolstered the EIC’s influence in the Commonwealth’s trade policy, as Maurice Thomson joined William Methwold, a long established EIC director, on Cromwell’s new Council of Trade.⁴

Thomson had also corresponded closely with Benjamin Worsley, Secretary to the Council, during both men’s respective residencies in Amsterdam between 1648 and 1649. In his letters, Thomson recorded a collection of accounts and studies of Dutch Asian trade, which he also shared with Cromwell.⁵ Both Worsley and Thomson participated in the so-called “Hartlib Circle,” a scientific and philosophic correspondence network active between the 1640s and the 1660s, which was coordinated through London-based Prussian émigré and intelligencer, Samuel Hartlib.⁶ Stronger state support of English mercantile activity was a central tenet of the political economy espoused by the Hartlibian writers. Of the aspirational models put forward by Worsley and others, none stood more prominent than that of the Dutch Republic.⁷

In the wake of failed treaty negotiations with the States General in 1651, during which Cromwell had proposed political union with the Dutch Republic, the Council of State assembled recommendations for greater state support of Commonwealth trade.⁸ The resulting Navigation Act of 1651 made a clear target of the Dutch carrying trade, permitting goods to enter England and English colonies only via English ships or vessels from the original exporting country.⁹

³ *Ibid.*; Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 622-623.

⁴ Leng, *Benjamin Worsley*, 60-61.

⁵ Ephemerides Part 2, 1650, Hartlib Papers, University of Sheffield (HP) 28/1/49B; Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 552.

⁶ Carl Wennerlind, *Causalities of Credit: The English Financial Revolution 1620-1720* (Cambridge: HUP, 2011), 6; Leng, *Benjamin Worsley*, 22.

⁷ Thomas Leng, “Commercial Conflict and Regulation in the discourse of Trade in Seventeenth-Century England,” *The Historical Journal* 48 (December 2005), 933-954; Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit*, Chapter 2.

⁸ For a detailed Anglo-centric examination of the unification negotiations, see Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 15-39.

⁹ Leng, “Commercial Conflict,” 944-945.

Following the passage of the Act, Maurice Thomson returned full-time to the EIC and to his other merchant ventures. Thomson took up key leadership positions on subcommittees of the EIC directors. At the same time, the Committees shifted the terms of debate over the East Indies trade, bringing the VOC to the center of arguments concerning reform and advancement. This new Dutch-centered strategy took two forms: a political petition campaign, and an internal administrative initiative.

Publicly, the Committees, led by Thomson and the Hartlibians, capitalized on the decaying diplomatic relationship between Cromwell and the States General. They moved to centralize the VOC in the emerging Anglo-Dutch foreign policy fight, in which Cromwell's government sought to demonize the Dutch Republic's bastardized form of Protestantism.¹⁰ The Court of Committees deluged the Protector and the Council of State with petitions, which harmonized with the alarmist Republican vocabulary, casting the Dutch as the seventeenth-century mercantilist heirs to sixteenth-century Iberian "universal monarchy."¹¹ In the politically charged Protestant rhetoric of Commonwealth England, the reference to Spain's goal of becoming the Catholic "universal monarch" of the world was applied to describe the similarly voracious Dutch dominance in trade.¹² This rhetorical move allowed the new Committees to inject their Company's competition against the VOC, waged in the "remote Eastern parts of the world," into the central political battle emerging in London and on the waters of Northern Europe.¹³ The VOC sought not to compete with the EIC in Asia, the Committees claimed, but rather endeavored to take the whole of Indian Ocean commerce for themselves through the total

¹⁰ Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 14.

¹¹ Steven Pincus, "Popery, Trade and Universal Monarchy: The Ideological Context of the Outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War," *The English Historical Review* 107 (Jan. 1992), 19-20.

¹² *Ibid*; Bridget Orr, "Poetic Plate-Fleets and Universal Monarchy: The Heroic Plays and Empire in the Restoration," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 63, no. 1/2 (2000), 75; David Armitage, "The Cromwellian Protectorate and the Languages of Empire," *The Historical Journal* 35, no. 3 (1992), 551.

¹³ EIC Petition to the Council of State, 9 September 1653, TNA CO/77/7 f. 193-194.

“extirpation” and “expulsion” of the English from the East Indies.¹⁴ Casting themselves as patriots, the Committees claimed that their Company had waged the Commonwealth’s fight against “the great dishonor of this Nation” at “extraordinary great losse” of profit, investment, and lives.¹⁵

In their petitions, the Committees aggressively presented three categories of claims against the Dutch Company: (1) the inhibition of trade, including the long-term blockade of the port of Banten, a critical outlet for pepper as well as a hub for South and Sino-Southeast Asian commercial circulations;¹⁶ (2) the seizure of English holdings, principal among which was a demand for the return of Pulo Run, a small island in the Banda archipelago, designated for the EIC’s cultivation of pepper, mace, and nutmeg in the 1619 Anglo-Dutch Treaty, and seized and scorched by the Dutch in the early 1620s;¹⁷ and finally (3) a more general category of offense to English “honor,” including the “murders” at Ambon and attacks on the image of the English Company in Asian markets.¹⁸ In all of these claims, the EIC directors sought to represent themselves first and foremost as victimized Englishmen, rather than as wronged parties of a private trading corporation.

Led by the Hartlibian merchant cabal, the Committees bolstered their government petitions with the reissue of the Company’s anti-Dutch pamphlets from the 1620s, which condemned the so-called “Amboyna massacre.”¹⁹ In early March of 1623, the VOC Governor of Ambon had tried and executed ten of the EIC’s agency along with eleven of their contracted Japanese and South Asian employees, allegedly for plotting to overthrow the VOC administration

¹⁴ EIC Petition to Parliament, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 78r-79v.

¹⁵ EIC Petition to the Council of State, 9 September 1653, TNA CO/77/7 f. 193-194.

¹⁶ At that point, the EIC claimed the VOC had blocked Banten for 6 years, EIC Petition to Parliament, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 78r-79v.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; EIC Petition to the Council of State, 4 July 1652, TNA CO/77/7 f. 184-185.

¹⁸ EIC Petition to Parliament, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 78r-79v; EIC petition to the Council of State, February 1652, TNA CO/77/7 f. 92r.

¹⁹ The Company had originally published *A true relation* in 1624, Alison Games, “Violence on the Fringes: The Virginia (1622) and Amboyna (1623) Massacres,” *History* 99 (2014), 517-518; The pamphlet was republished in 1651, Anon, *A true relation of the unjust, cruel, and barbarous proceedings against the English* (London, 1651).

on that important outlet for the clove trade in the Banda archipelago.²⁰ Thirty years later, the reprints of harrowing accounts of EIC factors, along with the publication of new tracts commissioned and authored by Hartlibians, including Thomson's close colleague, Benjamin Worsley, positioned Amboyna as a cornerstone for claims against the Dutch Company. These pamphlets joined a surge of anti-Dutch broadside propaganda, which graphically illustrated the crimes committed by the fallen Dutch Christians against their devoutly Protestant English neighbors.²¹ The pamphlets joined with the English Company's petitions to Cromwell in charging that VOC officials had tortured EIC employees to exact invalid confessions, resulting in unjust capital punishments. The authors claimed that these transgressions amounted to an egregious violation of the law of nations, a charge that was in concert with other popular English pamphlets, which painted the Dutch as "cruel" and "barbarous."²²

While the EIC's printers continued to press pamphlets and petitions, Thomson and the other directors initiated a second, internal political strategy that targeted the VOC. They reinvigorated a long dormant subcommittee, assigned to manage relations with the Dutch Company. This group of Committees was tasked with combing through the EIC's vast administrative archive to assemble a compendium of all claims and complaints against the VOC over the past five decades.²³ Even after Cromwell declared war on the Dutch Republic on 10 July 1652, this subcommittee labored on, collecting every possible grievance against the VOC. The English directors continued to work in preparation for an inter-company arbitration following the

²⁰ Anthony Milton, "Marketing a Massacre: Amboyna, the East India Company and the Public Sphere in Early Stuart England," in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, ed. P. Lake and S. Pincus (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Games, "Anglo-Dutch Maritime Interactions in the East Indies During the Early Seventeenth Century," 171-195.

²¹ Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 75-76; Helen Pierce, *Unseemly Pictures: Graphic Satire and Politics in Early Modern England* (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 199-203.

²² James Ramsey, *Bloudy newes from the East-Indies* (London, 1651); Anon, *A True Relation* (London: 1651); Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 59-60.

²³ Originally established in 1650, the subcommittee had accomplished nothing, hindered by the death of Methwold and internecine leadership battles, Court of Committees, 5 July 1650, IOR/B/23 f. 2r-v; Thomson joined with William Cokayne, Andrew Riccard, and twelve other Committees to re-establish the subcommittee, Court of Committees, 6 July 1653, IOR/B/23 f. 237r-v.

international conflict. The expectation of such a proceeding had not been made public, but Thomson and the other Committees had clearly coordinated with Cromwell to ensure that the arbitration would take place. The work was arduous and time-consuming, but showing their confidence that such a negotiation was imminent, the directorate voted to compensate the subcommittee members three percent of any arbitration award secured from the VOC.²⁴ The Committees perceived the opportunity for arbitration as critical for the EIC's future. Presupposing the Commonwealth's approval of a new charter, no matter the specific outcome of the petition debates over the regulation of the trade, the Court of Committees resolved, "this business will depend upon the successe of our restitution from the Dutch & the Delivery of the spice Islands..."²⁵

News of the EIC's public shift in focus on the VOC did not take long to reach Pieter van Dam and the *Heren XVII*. The merchant exchanges and publishing markets of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and London were increasingly integrated, with news taking only one or two days to cross the Channel.²⁶ The EIC's petition campaign and their reissuing of the Amboyna pamphlets brought the English Company to the attention of the VOC's executive leadership. The *Heren* rightly linked the EIC's actions with the increasingly ominous diplomatic relationship between the States General and the new English Republic. Since Cromwell's failed 1651 embassy to The Hague, English privateers had seized 140 Dutch merchant vessels in the Channel and in the North Sea.²⁷ The Commonwealth's unsurprising declaration of war in July of 1652 would ignite two years of brutal naval conflict in Europe's northern waters.²⁸

²⁴ Court of Committees, 6 July 1653, IOR/B/23 f. 237r-v.

²⁵ Court of Committees, 10 May 1654, IOR/B/25 f. 181v-182r.

²⁶ Peter Koudijs, "The boats that did not sail: Asset Price Volatility and Market Efficiency in a Natural Experiment," National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper No. 18831 (February 2013).

²⁷ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 209.

²⁸ For a military-political history of the First Anglo-Dutch War, see J.R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

In response to the war, both the *Heren* and the Committees sought protection from their respective states, soliciting naval escorts for their valuable ships returning from Asia. Both directorates also leased ships to their states' admiralties.²⁹ However, beyond these protective reflexes, this international crisis prompted the *Heren* to focus much more keenly on the politics and policy of their English counterparts. It had been more than a quarter-century since the actions of the Court of Committees had prompted any consideration or reaction in the *Heren's* own strategy. But the EIC's wartime engagement in Commonwealth debates quickly gripped the Dutch directors' attention. The *Heren* had recognized the pivot in EIC strategy, publicly hammering the Dutch Company with claims of brutal crimes as a pretext for Cromwell's assistance in extracting massive damages from the VOC. Though they did not know of the EIC's secretive internal restructuring in preparation for a future arbitration, the *bewindhebbers* responded to the Committees' maneuvers with public and internal strategies of their own.

After the English Company returned the issue of Amboyna to the fore in 1651 and 1652, the VOC reissued its own battery of pamphlet responses to EIC allegations. However, the pamphlets bear a striking contrast to the EIC rhetoric, designed to align with the charged anti-Dutch printed propaganda flooding London. Rather than responding with grotesque depictions of Englishmen or attacks on English character, in their broadsides, the VOC offered detailed refutations of the English legal claims. VOC pamphlets supported the lawful actions taken by VOC employees against dangerous "English conspirators."³⁰ While animated anti-Commonwealth rhetoric did course through the politics of the Dutch Republic at this time, the

²⁹ EIC Petition to the Council of State, 3 October 1653, TNA CO/77/7 f. 195; Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 16 June 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149; Erik Odegard, "The Sixth Admiralty: The Dutch East India Company and the Military Revolution at Sea, c. 1639-1667," *International Journal of Maritime History* 26 (2014), 674-676; Alfred Staarman, "De VOC en de Staten-Generaal in de Engelse Oorlogen: Een ongemakkelijk bondgenootschap," *Tijdschrift voor zeegechiedenis* 15 (April 1996), 3.

³⁰ *Englesche-Duyndrayery*, 1652, Leiden University Library Special Collections (LULSC), Tiele 4037, Knuttel 7201; *Journaal ofte Waarachtige Beschrijvinge van de gruwe-lijke Conspiratien der Engelsche*, LULSC, Tiele 4036, Knuttel 7200.

Heren saw no need to publicly align with these factions.³¹ Instead, the VOC directors dispatched deputies, along with Van Dam, to meet with representatives of the States General to discuss the legal and foreign policy implications of the VOC's position on the 1623 events at Ambon.

Unlike the EIC, the VOC directors had no vision of a future inter-company arbitration summit. As hostilities developed into full-scale naval war with the English Commonwealth, the *Heren* prepared for what had, over the past two decades, become the expected form of resolution in European foreign policy: state peace treaties, on which the Company could advise and comment. The VOC was required to accede to the terms of any state treaty, but their continued belligerence against the *Estado da India* in the wake of the recent treaty with Portugal, for example, demonstrated the *Heren*'s inconsistent commitment to the terms of such international agreements.³²

Throughout 1653, the *bewindhebbers* worked with the States General to assemble arguments, which could be used in a peace negotiation with the Commonwealth.³³ The States retained Dirck Graswinckel, then one of the Dutch Republic's most prominent legal theorists. Graswinckel's particular expertise was in mercantile rights and international law. He had served as an *Advocaat* at the Hof van Holland, as well as *Advocaat* for the King and Queen of Sweden. Formerly a personal secretary to Hugo Grotius, Graswinckel had developed widely read treatises on the Baltic grain trade, and he was well known in English legal circles, having authored the Dutch response to John Selden's *Mare Clausam* in 1635.³⁴ The States General contracted the lawyer to draft a brief, assessing the legality of the VOC's actions at Ambon against current

³¹ Helmer Helmers has recently provided the first book-length study of mid-century Anglo-Dutch political discourse in the Netherlands, Helmer Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics, and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639-1660* (New York: CUP, 2015).

³² Resolutions of the States General, 8 May 1646, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500-1700* (Malden: Longman, 2012), 183.

³³ Resolutions of the States General, 29 February 1652, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the States General, 10 May 1652, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

³⁴ "History of Anglo-Dutch relations with respect to herring fishery rights and British claims to sovereignty at sea," n.d. [1660?], TNA SP/84/163 f. 114-119; Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 89; Henk Nellen, *Hugo Grotius: A Lifelong Struggle for Peace in Church and State, 1583-1645* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 72.

standards of law. While the States General signed Graswinckel to author the treatise, they referred the detailed review of the document to the expertise of the *Heren XVII*. The *Heren*, in turn, assigned Pieter van Dam to work with Graswinckel, in order to craft a legal argument that best represented the Company's interests. In late September of 1653, Van Dam and a select committee of VOC directors began their review.³⁵

Originally thankful and eager for the opportunity to directly examine key documentation for their Republic's diplomatic dealings with England, this team returned the draft to the *Heren XVII* four days later with significant comments. Advancing legal arguments to diffuse the resurrected "Amboyna" debate in English politics, Graswinckel's report concluded that the executions of the EIC factors at Ambon complied with the tenets of the law of nations. It was not by torture that the Englishmen had confessed their plot to overthrow the VOC's administration on the Southeast Asian island, but by their own "free will" the EIC's employees had confirmed their conspiracy to overtake the Dutch factory there.³⁶ Thus, the VOC's judgment and execution of the perpetrators was valid. The *bewindhebbers* did not dispute this legal reasoning. However, they voiced strident disagreement with Graswinckel's recognition of the influence that the EIC's portrayal of these events carried in English politics. In response to his identification of Amboyna as a primary English motivation for prosecuting the current war against the Dutch Republic, the board demanded that the lawyer change his "mistaken" position, seeking to distance the Company from the cause of the costly state conflict.³⁷ After a contentious meeting with the *Heren*, Graswinckel amended his draft, the final version of which was circulated to all six VOC chambers for approval, before it was returned to the States General and dispatched to the Dutch

³⁵ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 15 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

³⁶ Tractaet bij den advocate Mr. Dirck Graswinckel, 9 December 1653, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12581.23.

³⁷ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 19 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 5 November 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

ambassadors in London for use in the peace negotiations with Cromwell's government.³⁸ While the directors had pivoted to absolve their company of any wrongdoing alleged by the English, and to extricate themselves from European international politics by “once and for all dismiss[ing]” the English claims of atrocities committed by VOC employees, the *Heren* had also mirrored their competitors, prioritizing a much closer focus on the EIC's politics.³⁹

The two companies' rhetorical strategies were disjointed, reflecting the difference in English and Dutch politics. However, in resurrecting the Amboyna dialogues, in initiating debates about international law, and in valuing the optimal governance of their trades—especially in the wartime waters of Europe—the *Heren* and the Committees had initiated the coalescence of a common set of legal, political, and economic arguments that aligned their two organizations beyond the bounds of English and Dutch domestic politics. In addition, through their pamphlet campaigns, legal briefs, and political lobbying, the *Heren* and the Committees had begun to channel this common cannon of arguments to guide their maneuvers within their home states. This activity would lay the groundwork for the post-war construction of institutional bridges, linking the two companies in arbitration frameworks, communication circuits, and active debates of political, economic and legal policies.

2.2 Turning Toward Each Other: Translating The War in Asia

While tailoring their responses to the different political ecologies of their home states, the two directorates had nonetheless both adapted to the European state crisis by shifting institutional priorities to focus on each other's political activities. In their subsequent orders to their factors across Asia, however, the *Heren* and the Committees communicated their shifting priorities in identical terms. Their instructions channeled fears, suspicions, rights, and rhetoric generated

³⁸ Graswinckel, *Tractaet bij den advocate*, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12581.23; Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 28 November 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

³⁹ Graswinckel, *Tractaet bij den advocate*, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12581.23.

from an established European debate over the law of nations. Their perspectives on the vulnerabilities and opportunities of East Asian trade were also aligned by a common understanding of the asymmetric geo-military balance of England and the United Provinces, and the implication of this dynamic on the transoceanic shipping networks of both companies. Just as their directors had in Europe, however, English and Dutch employees across the Indian Ocean would tailor these mandates to the regional political and economic ecologies of their factory system, largely defined by non-European institutions and policies. In response to instructions from Europe, a concomitant inter-company relationship, advancing a different set of terms and norms, emerged in Asia.

Throughout 1652, news of Cromwell's shipping raids against the Dutch mercantile fleet had flowed into Asia, and it was no surprise to the EIC agent at Isfahan (an inland Persian mercantile hub that linked the westward overland routes with the Persian ports along the Gulf) when, in November of 1652, he received a missive from London, announcing that formal war was "likely to ensue."⁴⁰ Indeed just a month later, on 4 December 1652, the Dutch factors at that city received news from the *Heren* that Parliament had formally declared war on the Dutch Republic.⁴¹ Word traveled quickly at the busy Persian city, as the EIC agent reported that "at which very instant" the VOC factor had received the news, he "dispeded their linguist to Port" to announce the war.⁴² English Company leaders read their directors' instructions that warned of the potential for a gruesome outcome resulting from the geographic inversion of English and Dutch naval strength. Since the Dutch could not repel the stronger English Navy in European waters, Maurice Thomson wrote from London, the VOC would "revenge themselves ... begin[ing] with our small force in India."⁴³ So as to guard against threats of violence from the VOC, Thomson

⁴⁰ Thomas Park at Bandar Abbas to the Factors at Isfahan, 17 November 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 88r.

⁴¹ Henry Young and Edward Joscelyn at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 December 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 96v.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Thomas Park at Bandar Abbas to the Factors at Isfahan, 17 November 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 88r.

further instructed the factories to bring all of their goods and ships in to safety, to cut costs as much as they could, and to dismiss any untrustworthy personnel back to England.⁴⁴ Upon receipt of such orders and warnings, the President of the EIC's Council at Surat wrote to the Council of State, begging for any help that the Commonwealth could supply in the continued fight against "the Tyranny of our Dutch Neighbors."⁴⁵

For the first time in twenty-five years, the *Heren's* wartime instructions to their factories agreed with the English Committee's global assessment. Throughout 1652, ships of both companies reloaded and traded side-by-side at East Indian harbors, but in January of 1653, Johan Van Riebeeck, the newly appointed governor of the VOC refueling station at the Cape of Good Hope, received instructions from Amsterdam to prepare for imminent English attack. The *Heren* believed that the English meant to extend their naval superiority in Europe towards Asia, and Van Riebeeck was instructed to build up the Cape Fort's defenses "to withstand European War."⁴⁶ The *Heren's* orders to their factors, and to the *Raad* at Batavia, reflected the legal and intellectual battles that drove the cannon fire across European waters. Cromwell's naval force had, indeed, proven intimidating to the leaders of the Dutch Republic. The *Heren* perceived English wartime strategy to be motivated by Cromwell's clear Seldenian goal "to unlawfully appropriate the dominion or ownership of the sea."⁴⁷ Invoking the Grotian defense of "just war" in response to the illegal infringement on the "freedom of the seas,"⁴⁸ the VOC directors felt compelled to block

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*; Copy of Frederick Skinner and Godfrey Goodman at Bantam to Aaron Baker and Council at Madras, July 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 72r.

⁴⁵ Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat to the Council of State in London, 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 94r.

⁴⁶ "Ende also wy met ons fort noch vrÿ bloot leggen, insonderheyt, om Europise oorlogen aff te staen, soo hebben ordre geste," Journal of the Cape Governor, 18 January 1653, WCARS VC 1, vol. II, f. 398.

⁴⁷ "maer de geheele negotie ter see te bekommeren, ende haer selven het dominum maris oft d' eygendom vande Zee ongerechtelyck te approprieren," *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 24 July 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 261v.

⁴⁸ This was a rehearsal of one of Grotius's original justifications for the VOC's attacks against the Portuguese in 1602, in which he argued that as a corporation, the VOC, was entitled to the rights of a sovereign state to wage an offensive war to "correct" the crimes of the *Estado*, which had blocked Dutch trade; Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 82-85.

the English from engrossing “the whole trade of the sea.” Such a mission would require the VOC to “stand against them [English] with all our might.”⁴⁹

Thomson’s suspicions were confirmed, as the *Heren* instructed their own factors that the States-General had given them license to “do all possible harm to the English.”⁵⁰ It was the state crisis in Europe that compelled the *Heren*’s orders, as they advised VOC employees to strike the English in response to the Commonwealth’s clear violation of the law of nations. The *bewindhebbers* reasoned that EIC factors in Asia had received orders to attack the Dutch, driven by Cromwell’s ambition, not by defense. As the English Navy had done in Europe, English vessels would now seek to do damage to the VOC, as the vanguard of an effort to extend English imperium into the Indian Ocean.⁵¹ In the ensuing months, the Cape bustled with construction work, as Van Riebeeck feared the fort would not survive an English attack without “twenty times more power than we [currently] have.”⁵² The great historical irony in the VOC Governor’s concern was that, as Dutch factors, laborers, and slaves worked feverishly to lay the stone for new defensive walls at the Cape, Maurice Thomson and the other Committees had halted all EIC shipping out of London, for fear that any outgoing English ship would not make it past the Channel.⁵³

⁴⁹ “ende derhalven genootsaeckt warden haer met alle macht daertegens te stellen,” *Ibid.*, 262r.; There is also a distinction made throughout the *Heren*’s instructions that it is the “new government” in England that has led this shift in martial foreign policy, after overthrowing their king. Such sentiments have led historians such as Helmer Helmers to identify a strong Royalist profile in the 1650s Dutch Republic; Helmers, *The Royalist Republic*.

⁵⁰ “... mitsgaders de Engelse natie alle mogelycke afbreuck te doen, waer van wy by haere Ho Mo brieven van 18 deses mede vermitticht synde met ordre omme in Oostindien ons daernae te reguleren,” *Heren XVII* to the Directors of Trade at Gamron, Surat, and Coromandel, 24 July 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 268v.

⁵¹ “considerende de importantie vande saecke ende dat wel lucht de ministers vande Engelse Oostindische Comp. in Oostindien hier van door de haere tydelyck gewaerschouwt ende oock ordre gekregen soude mogen hebben om d’ onse in oostindien mede aente lasten ende het Oorlogh aen to doen,” *Ibid.*

⁵² “da took also weynigh voor de Engelsen machte te duchten hebben, daer nu Gode loff soo wel al voor begraven sijn, datter ons sonder harel caetsballen ende 20 mael meerder macht als wy hebben,” *Journal of the Cape Governor*, 23 January-12 February 1653, WCARS VC 1, vol. II, f. 402-403, 412.

⁵³ Thomas Park at Bandar Abbas to the Factors at Isfahan, 17 November 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 88r.

The EIC and VOC directorates' nearly identical wartime instructions focused English and Dutch agents on one another's activities in an effort to gauge and anticipate their competitor's future movements and long-term strategies. While factory officials translated these orders to generate practices and policies conditioned by the regimes in which they lived, traded, and traveled, the directorates' instructions engendered a new competitive dynamic between English and Dutch factors. The *Heren's* warnings encouraged their company's leadership in Asia to concentrate on the EIC as an insurgent organization. The contractual and political elements of English officials' preferential relationships with regional sovereigns, and the English Company's comparatively liberal private trade policies, moved into central focus of the VOC's long-term planning in Asia, previously preoccupied with the *Estado da India*. Dutch leaders from Batavia to Isfahan took on their directors' instructions, launching targeted strategies to neutralize English advantages. The Court of Committees' instructions added to the widely recognized insecurity among EIC agents that they operated with decidedly fewer capabilities than those of their Dutch competitors. The mandate to track the VOC's investments and warships would lead EIC factors to develop dramatic recommendations for the overhaul of the Company's system, suggesting a commercial, military, and factory structure with characteristics of the more robust VOC network.

Maurice Thomson's wartime instructions reached Frederick Skinner, agent at the EIC's Banten factory, in March of 1653.⁵⁴ Upon receiving the missive from London, Skinner's thoughts flew immediately to the *Dove*, one of his company's vessels, which he had recently dispatched on a trading mission across the Java Sea to Makassar. Skinner's concern was not that the waters of Southeast Asia would suddenly churn with Anglo-Dutch war. Rather, on its return voyage, the *Dove* would sail right past Batavia, and the defenseless merchant vessel would be low-hanging

⁵⁴ Copy of Frederick Skinner and Godfrey Goodman at Bantam to Aaron Baker and Council at Madras, July 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 72r.; The Committees' correspondence had come to Banten by way of Aaron Baker, Skinner's uncle, and the President at the EIC's factory at Madras on the Coromandel Coast, Copy consultation about Bantam affairs by Henry Greenhill and Council at Madras, 12 September 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 37r.

fruit for any armed VOC ships carrying the *Heren*'s orders. The agent dispatched an express *prowe*, a contracted Javanese merchant's ship, to warn the *Dove* to stay put in Makassar.⁵⁵ But it was too late. Batavia was indeed aware, both of the war and of the unsuspecting *Dove*. Armed VOC ships would be waiting for the peaceful *Dove*, and it was with "extreme grief" that Skinner reported the seizure of the English vessel on 15 July.⁵⁶

While the seizure of the *Dove* may appear as an opening salvo in the VOC's prosecution of the war in Asia, the evidence does not lead in that direction. The *Dove* did not carry the wake of a richly-laden East Indiaman. It was a small "country" vessel,⁵⁷ used to circulate the Indonesian archipelagos, returning directly for Banten. The prize of a captured English ship was not what Batavia was after. The *Raad*'s interest revealed the new primacy of the EIC, which the *Heren*'s instructions had inspired in their company's communications. The *Raad*'s perspective on the East Indies trade now considered the *Dove*'s mission to Makassar, and the greater role played by the EIC in the international relations of Southeast Asia. Governor-General Joan Maetsuycker was in the midst of planning a siege against Makassar, including 100 ships and 500 men.⁵⁸ Makassar had resisted VOC encroachment and had developed, in concert with Banten, into a key independent entrepot of Indian Ocean trade, linking the commercial flows from South Asia, the Middle East, and the Bay of Bengal, with Chinese mercantile networks and the Southeast Asian spice circuits.⁵⁹ If the *Heren* were right about Cromwell's support of the English

⁵⁵ Copy of Frederick Skinner and Godfrey Goodman at Bantam to Aaron Baker and Council at Madras, July 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 72r-73r; Skinner compensated a local "great man," meaning one of Banten's most significant merchants, 500 Rialls to send the *Prowe*, Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam to the East India Company in London, 26 November 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 247v.

⁵⁶ Copy of Frederick Skinner and Godfrey Goodman at Bantam to Aaron Baker and Council at Madras, July 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 75v.

⁵⁷ A smaller vessel, frequently built in Asia, and used for intra-Asian or regional trade in the East Indies (referred to as "country trade" by the English).

⁵⁸ From The Governor-General and Raad to Amboina, 7 November 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 877 f. 459.

⁵⁹ Gerrit Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika 1602-1814," in *Oorlog en Overzee: Militair Optreden door Compagnie en Staat buiten Europa 1495-1814*, eds. Gerrit Knaap, Henk den Heijer, and Michiel de Jong (Amsterdam: Boom, 2015), 104-106; Kathirithamby-Wells, "Banten: A West Indonesian Port and Polity During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 111.

Company, the EIC strengthening any connections with Makassar's authorities would provide that kingdom with a possible alternative to contracts with the VOC.

In addition, the *Raad* was also aware of the *Dove*'s role in the EIC's burgeoning arms trade—a strand of commerce which EIC factors, including Skinner, had long used to expand their own personal trading portfolios.⁶⁰ On its way to Makassar, the *Dove* had made a stop at Cambodia, allegedly to supply 20 cannon and 2000 pieces of shot to the king there, a sovereign who had also remained resistant to Dutch overtures for exclusive trade.⁶¹ Combined with the *Heren*'s persistent warnings of an India-bound English naval fleet, it is unlikely that the VOC leadership at Batavia had initiated an effort to carry the European war into Asian waters, snatching up every English vessel and man. Rather, the *Raad* translated the rights of war, granted by the *Heren* and the Committees to their agents in the East, to effect their long-term strategy for the political economy of Southeast Asia. Disrupting the EIC private trade and arms supply circuit, and intercepting further EIC communications, Batavia would weaken the ascendant English Company's leverage as a competitor for the privileges of Southeast Asian sovereigns.⁶²

An important element of the *Dove*'s fate also lies in the rarity of this episode. The Dutch could make such a seizure only because the unsuspecting vessel sailed right through the road adjacent to the VOC's Asian headquarters. In the waters surrounding the vast majority of ports occupied by both companies, including Banten, Madras, and Surat, such hostilities did not occur between 1652 and 1654. When given the opportunity at the end of the war to list any and all claims against the Dutch Company, the Committees could only reference four such ship seizures

⁶⁰ Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 136; Declaration by Johan Maetsuycker and Council against Frederick Skinner and James Bostock, 5 January 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 120-123.

⁶¹ Skinner had sent the arms to the King of Cambodia as a gift from Cromwell, Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 136; Batavia dispatched envoys to the Cambodian Court to secure immunity for its traders and, unsuccessfully, to secure an exclusive trading contract, Quarles Browne and factors in Cambodia to James Bostock and factors at Macassar, 19 November 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 227r-v.

⁶² Governor-General and Raad to Bantam, 12 April 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 877 f. 30-32.

across all European, Atlantic, and Indian Ocean waters.⁶³ Batavia would only report five captures of English ships to the *Heren*, all of which were restricted either to the Java Sea or to the Persian Gulf.⁶⁴

In fact, agents of both companies perceived any Anglo-Dutch hostilities as relating more directly to regional politics than to any geographic extension of inter-European conflict. The foremost considerations of English and Dutch factory leaders consistently related to the jurisdiction and policies of regional sovereigns, as well as the political and economic dynamics of the non-European merchant communities that dominated the trade networks of the Indian Ocean. The perspective of EIC factors Henry Young and Edward Joscelyn, stationed at Isfahan in December of 1652, revealed an unstable “Western Quarter” of the Indian Ocean, writhing in the overlapping conflicts between the heirs to the Mughal throne, between the VOC and the Portuguese *Estado*, and between the *Estado* and Shah Abbas II.⁶⁵ The companies shared a long history of fraught relations with the Safavid Court.⁶⁶ During the early 1650s, the *Heren* and the *Raad* had watched with frustration as EIC agents gradually forged closer relationships with the Muslim traders who operated this circuit, securing better rates of trade.⁶⁷ As VOC officials closed their hostilities with Abbas II, they chose to use the *Heren*’s license of violence to position the English at the forefront of Dutch strategy in that region. The VOC Agent Pelgrom at Surat, in

⁶³ East India Company, “A Complaint, or certain Schedule of Losses, which the Merchants of the English Company trading to the East Indies have sustained in the said Indies,” 1654, in *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce Between Great-Britain and other Powers*, vol I, ed. Charles Jenkinson (London, 1785), 52-58.

⁶⁴ Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 3-6r.; While it is important to note that the English arbitration commissioners met before peace had been announced in Asia, VOC and EIC sources do not indicate further seizures in the Indian Ocean.

⁶⁵ Henry Young and Edward Joscelyn at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 December 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 96v-97r.

⁶⁶ The English had yet to realize the full benefits from their agreement to help drive the Portuguese from Hormuz in 1622, and the Dutch had engaged in intermittent war with the Safavid Emperor, in an effort to secure more significant trading rights, Stern, *The Company-State*, 20; *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 29 March 1649, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 129r.

⁶⁷ The *Heren XVII* (at Middelburgh) to the Governor-General and Raad, 29 March 1649, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 129v; VOC Amsterdam Chamber to the Governor-General and Raad, 14 October 1651, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 233v.

consultation with the VOC Directors at the Persian ports, had planned to use the “advantage” of the Anglo-Dutch War in order to target the gains made by their English competitors in the cultivation of merchant contracts.⁶⁸ On one hand, the VOC negotiated for more favorable privileges with the Mughal Governor at Surat and a new *farman*, or charter, from the Mughal Emperor.⁶⁹ And in the second swing of Pelgrom’s strategy, the VOC Director at Bandar Abbas (also referred to as Gombroon or Gamron) would maneuver his company’s Men-of-War ships to occupy the mouth of the Persian Gulf, in order to block the EIC’s access to the central artery of trade in the Western Indian Ocean.⁷⁰

As Dutch ships began to take EIC merchantmen in February of 1653, the English factors at Bandar Abbas recognized their new role in Dutch strategy and anxiously wrote to their London employers that such events signaled a far greater danger than lost goods. Persian merchants and political figures marveled that “a Dutchman, should make prize of an English man, indeed the Dutch themselves doth not boast a little of it, having so far transported them, that they are thereby grown so imperious, that tis almost past belief.”⁷¹ Far from declaring an Anglo-Dutch War in the Western Quarter, the VOC needed only to seize a few EIC vessels in order to achieve their goal of fracturing non-European merchants’ preference against the Dutch.⁷² Even with the protection of advanced insurance brokerages available at Mughal and Persian ports, the image of weakness and risk was lethal in the conflict-ridden world of Indian Ocean trade. And the EIC agents were in danger of losing the very lifeline—the shipping and trade contracts with non-European merchants—with which they had kept their company’s business, and their own private trading,

⁶⁸ Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 297v.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 298-300.

⁷⁰ Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 302-303.

⁷¹ John Spiller, Henry Young, Thomas Park and Edward Joscelyn at Bandar Abbas to the East India Company in London, 28 February 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 148r-148v.

⁷² Between 1652 and 1655, EIC factors in Surat, Isfahan, and Bandar Abbas would report the seizure of five of their vessels in this VOC trap, including *The Rubharb* and *The Lemarrett*, John Spiller, Henry Young, Thomas Park and Edward Joscelyn at Bandar Abbas to the Commanders of all Marchants, 21 February 1652, IOR/E/3/23 f. 140v; *The Supply* and *The Blessing*, Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat tot eh factors at Bandar Abbas, 9 May 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 176r-176v; and *The Bonita*, Account of Events in India, December 1653 – April 1654, IOR/E/3/23 f. 259v.

alive. In much the same way that the Committees had employed conflict with the VOC to secure charters in Parliament, Bandar factors Spiller and Young pleaded with the EIC Committees that swift targeting of the VOC was needed to reverse the plummeting value of the English Company. Without it, the Company risked losing their favorable profile, diligently constructed over long years of experience in Persia: “if not you must bid a due to your East India Trade, but yet thus to be beaten out of it, we should be very loath to see, being it will be soe great disparagement to all English men especially in the place, where they have gained so much honor, and thereby so many immunities.”⁷³

In line with the VOC’s focus on “respect, reputation, and appearance,” English factors responded to the sporadic seizures of their ships during 1653 and 1654, lamenting how confidence cratered among their trading partners as the Dutch Company made sure to bring captured English vessels to rest at the busiest Persian ports. The presentation of English prisoners made for all the more poignant attacks on the “honor” of the EIC. And perhaps the most important captives were not among the living. Along with crewmembers, VOC agents made it known that they had also seized reams of EIC correspondence, as well as English factory account books; both of which would have included many carriage and credit contracts with non-European merchants.⁷⁴

Between 1652 and 1655, EIC factors in Surat, Isfahan, and Bandar Abbas would report the seizure of five of their vessels.⁷⁵ This was a small percentage of English shipping in the Western Indian Ocean, as even VOC agents, themselves, noted that around the time of the first

⁷³ John Spiller, Henry Young, Thomas Park and Edward Joscelyn at Bandar Abbas to the East India Company in London, 28 February 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 148r-148v.

⁷⁴ Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat to the factors at Bandar Abbas, 9 May 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 176r-176v; Account of Events in India, December 1653 – April 1654, IOR/E/3/23 f. 259-260; Some EIC captives were able to escape the Dutch prison ship when it came into the harbor at Bandar Abbas, John Spiller and Thomas Park at Bandar Abbas to the East India Company in London, 6 May 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 170v; Henry Young, Thomas Park and Daniel Otgher at Bandar Abbas to Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat, 4 March 1654, IOR/E/3/23 f. 292r-293r.

⁷⁵ For ships’ names, see note 73.

seizure in early 1653, as many as nine English ships rode in Swally Marine, near Surat.⁷⁶ While President Blackman, leader of the EIC's Surat Council, certainly took great care with his dispatch of ships, both companies felt compelled to limit hostilities to the open seas, beyond the jurisdiction of Persian or Mughal ports. The correspondence of English and Dutch officials emphasized their understanding that they operated within the regulatory institutions of non-European imperial and regional authorities, which maintained superior military strength and exerted significant leverage over the companies' access to trade. The Muslim port administrations along the Indian Ocean littoral competed closely for trade. In order to provide a safe, attractive environment for the exchange of valuable cargoes, ports from Banten to Bandar enforced common mandates banning violence in and around their marine roads.⁷⁷ The VOC, at this point seeking to mend relations with the Persian Court and to secure even greater benefits from Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's administration, would thus reap no advantage from violating these policies by snatching up every EIC vessel within reach.

With no sign of aid from Cromwell's navy⁷⁸ to counter the VOC's strategy, English factors sought to salvage their rights and business by positioning the Dutch at the heart of their own legal and commercial strategy. The only recourse available to EIC factors came through the legal and political institutions that governed trade in the Persian and Mughal Empires. Both companies enjoyed the right, as merchants, to voice grievances before port officials, and appeals processes were in place, which provided pathways for complaint beyond the port authorities, or Shahbandars, and regional Governors all the way up to the Imperial Court.⁷⁹ EIC agents recognized both this core set of institutions, and the motivations behind their installation, as they

⁷⁶ Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 295v.

⁷⁷ Abhay Kumar Singh, *Modern World System and Indian Proto-Industrialization: Bengal 1650-1800*, vol. I (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 2006), 279.

⁷⁸ Cromwell benefitted from Charles I's focus on building a fleet of significant warships. And while the Navy had deteriorated in organization by the early 1650s, Cromwell made it a priority to build the fleet back up, N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 3, 10-11.

⁷⁹ Singh, *Modern World System*, 278-285.

appealed to Persian officials, and even to Shah Abbas II, himself, for restitution for the VOC's seizure of their ships. As Bandar Abbas sat at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, the English argued that Safavid jurisdiction followed that empire's economic and political interest out into the maritime zone beyond that port's harbor. In reference to the VOC's seizure of the English Company ship *Supply*, President Blackman encouraged the factors at Bandar: "the shabander invited you to order her [*Supply*] coming thither as a place of safety and doubtlesse he will stand by you in it..."⁸⁰ To further secure support from Abbas, Blackman implored the factors at Bandar to convince the Persian officials that a favorable ruling would encourage the English Parliament to dispatch one of its powerful naval fleets to the Gulf, countering any threat of VOC retribution.⁸¹

This second hook of Blackman's instructions reveals how the EIC factors began to utilize the rights of war in service to their own organization. While, in Europe, the *Heren XVII* had reacted to the English Committees' preemptive strategies by pivoting to focus more intently on the EIC, in Asia it was the EIC factors who scrambled to assemble a response to the activist VOC leadership. Both companies self-consciously relied on ships, forts, and credit lines to project a perception of strength far beyond either company's actual means to affect it.⁸² While Dutch officials had seized English ships in order to weaken the EIC's profile in the eyes of non-European merchants, without the military strength in Asia to answer the effects of the VOC's targeted seizures, EIC leaders began to appropriate the European war, itself. In August of 1653, the desperate EIC factors in Persia were given their first opportunity to answer the VOC's efforts toward expansion.

⁸⁰ Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat to the factors at Bandar Abbas, 9 May 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 176r.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 232r-232v; Military force was principally applied to preserve and advance "the great reputation" of the VOC, *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 12 April 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 417r.

News had come to the EIC factory at Isfahan, via the Portuguese priests who facilitated one of the major overland communication routes between Persia and Europe, that in February of that year, the English Navy had routed the Dutch forces at the battle of Portland, forcing the United Provinces' armada to flee.⁸³ Throughout the war, fleets of both republics would trade victories and defeats, but military historians have noted that this three-day battle provided a clear illustration of why the English forces ultimately won the naval war, as "the more heavily built and armed English ships had again proved to be too formidable for even the largest Dutch ships."⁸⁴ The EIC factors were quick to spread the news across the great market center of Isfahan, and to bring word of the Dutch defeat to the Persian Court. For the VOC's employees, this news connected with the fears that the *Heren* persistently dispatched to Asia, that superior English naval might could extend into East Indian waters.⁸⁵ It now seemed possible that the VOC leadership's translation of the rights of war into the East Indies, manifest in symbolic seizures against English shipping, could result in the actual shift of the European war into Asia. With their open enemy, the Portuguese *Estado*, still strong at Goa and on Ceylon, VOC officials combined this fear with the disastrous possibility of a formal alliance between their company's two European competitors.⁸⁶

But the greater effect of the EIC's public campaign was to push back against the VOC's casting of the meek and meager English. By bringing the merchants and authorities of Isfahan to "knowe that they [Dutch] are worsted, and are still like to be, beaten in Europe," the EIC factors could answer the image of Dutch warships in Gujarati harbors and frustrate the VOC's "grand

⁸³ John Spiller, Henry Young and Thomas Park at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 18 August 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 182v.

⁸⁴ Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 126.

⁸⁵ Heren XVII to Hr. Commissaris Pieter Claisz Croon, 19 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 355 f. 5r-5v; Heren XVII to Hr. Commissaris Jacob Aggesz, 19 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 355 f. 5v.

⁸⁶ Heren XVII to the Commander and Opperhoofden at Cape of Good Hope, 18 April 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 267r-267v; Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 24 July 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 267v-268r; Batavia's Instructions for the Fluyt Ship *d' Post ende Patientie*, 15 July 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 877 f. 195; Generale Missive, 9 January 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1196 f. 96-101.

design.”⁸⁷ The merchants and sovereigns of South and Southeast Asia might think twice before investing in a sprawling Dutch network that was in danger of being cut off at its European base. Even in the majority of ports where the two companies remained nonviolent competitors, such as Jambi on Sumatra, English factors used the news of Portland to publicly question the future of Dutch trade, hoping to combat the favoritism shown to the comparatively deeper pockets of the VOC factory there.⁸⁸

Signs began to emerge that this English strategy was gaining traction against the VOC. In mid-January of 1654, Surat’s Mughal governor, along with a cohort of senior merchants, approached Blackman, requesting an EIC pass for a heavily laden vessel to travel into the Persian Gulf. Ultimately coerced by the Governor into providing the pass, Blackman resisted the request as long as possible, noting that it was the VOC’s local financial broker, or “shroff,” who was operating the voyage, and that, in an effort to mask their intentions, the invested merchants had lowered the Dutch Company’s colors, replacing them with the flag of a Muslim trader.⁸⁹ Though the VOC had invested heavily in efforts to project the image of military and commercial strength in that region, by early 1654 the threat of English naval power was nonetheless perceived as strong enough that Surat merchants would not allow the vessel out of the harbor without an English pass.⁹⁰

Just as VOC officials contemplated massive new investments in the expansion of military and commercial infrastructure in order to bolster Dutch political and economic leverage in Southeast Asia and Ceylon, English Company employees soon discovered the vulnerabilities of a strategy that drew its strength from perception. An inherent weakness plagued the EIC’s reliance

⁸⁷ John Spiller, Henry Young and Thomas Park at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 18 August 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 182v.

⁸⁸ Quarles Browne in Cambodia to Thomas Lever at Jambi, 16 October 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 115r; John Edwards on the Pinnance Hope at Japara to Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam, 28 October 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 124r.

⁸⁹ Jeremy Blackman and Edward Pearce at Surat to the East India Company in London, 18 January 1654, IOR/E/3/23 f. 272r.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

on the European war for its strength in Asia: any continued effectiveness of this approach was predicated on the ongoing replenishment of victorious news from Europe. Factors soon realized that intelligence from Europe might very well be the most valuable commodity to save the EIC's trade. English agents Spiller and Daniel wrote to President Blackman with a renewed confidence in their future trade, "soe long as we receive soe good newes out of Europe, which will be a maine matter to facilliate, and further our cause with the King."⁹¹ If the VOC kept hauling English prizes into merchant harbors, a single victory in Europe would not dissolve the EIC's problems in Asia.

Luckily, for the English, the next major news that they and the VOC agents would receive from Europe would be a proclamation of peace, ending the two-year conflict.⁹² But awaiting further instruction from their directors, agents of both companies would push ahead with their own long-term strategies in Asia. In the years prior to the war, English and Dutch agents had only sporadically reported on each other's commerce. By the mid-1650s, both companies represented key systemic considerations in each other's political and commercial activity. The VOC would launch a surge of military force into the Indian Ocean, pursuant to the goals laid out by Maetsuycker and the *Raad* in the early 1650s. Having shifted their own focus toward the VOC's developments in Asia, English factors would come out of 1654 with an understanding that their organization stood at a decisive moment. In order for English trade to continue in Asia, EIC officials were convinced that their company would need to cultivate its own version of the Dutch strategies for control and leverage in the East Indies.

⁹¹ Here Spiller and Daniel reference their conversations with the I'timad al-Dawla, a senior official in the Persian Court, John Spiller and Anthony Daniel at Isfahan to Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat, 10 November 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 218r.

⁹² Persia had heard by October 1654, John Spiller and Henry Young at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 14 October 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 109r.

2.3 Building Institutional Bridges: The Arbitration of 1654

While the companies' factors employed reports and threats of war to maneuver through the shifting dynamics of Indian Ocean commerce, the First Anglo-Dutch War had severely damaged the economies of the two belligerent states, for which marine trade was absolutely crucial. Finally, on 5 April 1654, the Treaty of Westminster was ratified, ending the Anglo-Dutch War in Europe.⁹³ The ambassadors of the Dutch Republic and the delegates of the English Republic had negotiated a treaty that was not revolutionary in its form or in its priorities. In 1642, the Dutch Republic had signed a similar treaty with Portugal, agreeing to mutual defense and commercial rights, as well as measures designed to reduce piracy and advance free navigation of the seas.⁹⁴ The Stuart Crown had also previously agreed to several analogous treaties with France, Spain, Portugal, and with the Dutch Republic.⁹⁵ The 1654 treaty delegated to the two East India companies the responsibility to notify their servants abroad, establishing timelines, which dictated when the terms would take effect in Europe and in Asia.⁹⁶ The negotiators had agreed on regulations for commerce as well as military and legal interactions between the states. And the Dutch ambassadors, especially, had pushed for mutual protections for merchant shipping in Europe.⁹⁷ The treaty mandated that the Dutch seek out and punish any "perpetrators" involved with the Amboyna incident. But aside from that article, the agreed terms applied to geographic regions and shipping lanes within both republics' direct control, and it left East India issues largely untouched.

Rather than a reversal of the companies' recent pivot toward each other, however, the absence of the East Indies trade from the Anglo-Dutch state treaty provided an opportunity for the

⁹³ States General to the Chambers of the VOC, 15 May 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

⁹⁴ Resolutions of the States General, 25 May 1646, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

⁹⁵ For several examples see, Charles Jenkinson ed., *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and Other Powers*, vol. I (London, 1785).

⁹⁶ The terms took effect within 12 months in all areas West of the Cape of Good Hope, and 18 months in all areas East of the Cape, *Ibid.*, 46.

⁹⁷ Willem van Nieuwpoort to John Thurloe, 9 December 1654, TNA SP/84/160 f. 104r-105v.

construction of new institutional bridges between the EIC and VOC. While the English and Dutch delegates chose not to incorporate their respective East India Companies under the treaty, the state negotiators provided for a separate arbitration framework, to which merchants and companies of both republics could submit claims and seek restitution for damages.⁹⁸ The thirtieth article of the treaty provided that both countries would nominate and send four commissioners to arbitrate mutual claims of English and Dutch trading interests in Greenland, Russia, the West Indies, and the East Indies. The treaty ended the war, but this arbitration framework was designed to settle claims stretching from 1611 only up to the outbreak of the war in 1652.⁹⁹ In other words, the opportunity to put an official end to the current conflict was leveraged to create a forum for the adjudication of damages incurred during past periods of peace. The arbitrators would be appointed and begin meeting on 19 May 1654, and they would then have three months to reach resolutions on these claims, after which time, remaining disputes would be referred to the Swiss Cantons for adjudication.¹⁰⁰

While this development had been anticipated neither by the States General, nor by the *Heren*, the Dutch ambassadors Willem van Nieuwpoort, Hieronymus van Beverningk, and Allard Pieter Jongstal had agreed with the Commonwealth representatives on a familiar structure of mercantile arbitration. This framework drew from English and Dutch legal traditions, both of which included robust mechanisms for the resolution of merchant disputes. Arbitration arrangements had been attached to international treaties under Roman Law, and the subsequent medieval and early modern legal systems, including those under the Papacy and the Hanseatic League, had further developed such mechanisms for the quick and equitable resolution of

⁹⁸ The 28th article of the Treaty of Westminster provided this for English ships detained by the Dutch in Denmark, for example, *Treaty of Westminster, Arbitration Instruments*, 1654, TNA SP/103/46-15 f. 247r-252r.

⁹⁹ *Treaty of Westminster - Latin Text*, 1654, TNA SP/103/46 f. 253r-260r.

¹⁰⁰ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 5 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900; Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce*, Vol. I: 47.

commercial disputes.¹⁰¹ In the two centuries prior to the 1654 treaty, the cities and provinces that would become the Dutch Republic had drawn on Roman and Germanic legal traditions to develop arbitration frameworks tailored to the financial and legal realities and intricacies of international trade. But the choice to take a conflict to arbitration, rather than open court, was also a political choice. In a business where confidence and discretion were of paramount importance, merchants preferred the relative speed, discretion, and lower cost of private arbitration.

By the seventeenth century, two forms of arbitration were available to merchants operating in Holland: (1) voluntary, and thus binding, arbitration, in which two parties would appoint arbitrators, or “goede mannen,” to develop an equitable resolution to a conflict; and (2) court-appointed arbitrators, whose judgments could be appealed.¹⁰² Indeed, the recent historical work of Oscar Gelderblom has pointed to the accessibility of reliable, experienced commercial arbitrators as a key magnetic force that drew merchants from across Europe and fueled the dramatic rise of mercantile entrepôts within the seventeenth-century Republic.¹⁰³ The directors of the VOC regularly relied on this system to resolve shareholder disputes and conflicts with contractors.¹⁰⁴

In England, a similar system of conflict resolution had developed by the mid-seventeenth century. In English towns and cities, arbitration served as a common forum for the efficient and discreet adjudication of economic disputes; a middle ground between mediation and legal action.¹⁰⁵ Contemporary legal definitions provided that an arbitrator was an “extraordinary judge,” empowered by the “mutual consent” of two opposing parties. The arbitrator was thus

¹⁰¹ Jackson Ralston, *International Arbitration from Athens to Locarno* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1929), 166-178.

¹⁰² Gelderblom, *Cities of Commerce*, 107.

¹⁰³ Oscar Gelderblom plots this narrative throughout Chapter 5 of his study, *Ibid.*, 102-140.

¹⁰⁴ Ella Gepken-Jager, Gerard Van Solinge, and Levinus Timmerman, eds., *VOC 1602-2002: 400 Years of Company Law* (Deventer: Kluwer, 2005), 138.

¹⁰⁵ Craig Muldrew, “The Culture of Reconciliation: Community and the Settlement of Economic Disputes in Early Modern England,” *The Historical Journal* 39 (Dec, 1996), 929-932.

authorized to assess the outcome of a dispute “according to lawe with equitie mingled.”¹⁰⁶ In a process with multiple arbitrators, should the arbitrators not agree on an award (the judgment of an arbitration), the process would devolve to the final judgment of an “umpire” or “imperator.”¹⁰⁷ Just as they did in Holland, London merchant arbitrations could present especially complex political challenges for arbitrators. Samuel Pepys, the English Navy administrator and MP, recounted an arduous 1663 negotiation in which he sat as an adjudicator, complaining of both parties, that “their minds are both so high, their demands so distant, and their words so many and hot against one another, that I fear we shall bring it to nothing.”¹⁰⁸ By the 1650s, the EIC Committees were well practiced in the resolution of disputes via arbitration. The EIC outsourced its shipping, victualing, and the processing of its spices and saltpeter, and thus the joint-stocks were constantly involved in contractual disputes.¹⁰⁹

As the governments and East India Companies of both republics were familiar with the elements of the arbitration process prescribed by the Treaty of Westminster, both sides immediately began preparations, with less than two months before the meetings were to commence in London. There is little known documentation of the English process for the selection of their arbitrators. We know that the Dutch ambassadors were advised that the English Council of State would submit four names to Cromwell, two of whom would be doctors of law, and two would be merchants.¹¹⁰ And on 10 May, Cromwell approved William Thomson and Thomas Kendall, both London Aldermen, merchants, and future EIC Committees; and Juris Doctors William Turner and John Exton, the latter of whom was an Admiralty Judge.¹¹¹ Though

¹⁰⁶ John Cowell, *The Interpreter* (Cambridge, 1607).

¹⁰⁷ William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. III (Oxford: 1769), 16.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Muldrew, “The Culture of Reconciliation,” 932.

¹⁰⁹ One such example can be found in the Committees’ dispute with powder refiners in 1654, Court of Committees, 28 February 1654, IOR/B/25 f. 203r-203v.

¹¹⁰ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 11 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

¹¹¹ Ethel Bruce Sainsbury, *A Calendar of Court Minutes Etc. of the East India Company 1650-1654* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), xx; Exton was a prominent Admiralty Judge, Report of the Commissioners of

the Thomson syndicate had long-standing commercial involvements in Holland, and Maurice and William had served on state missions to the Dutch Republic, the Dutch legislators failed to recognize the overwhelming influence of the East India interests in the English delegation.

The Committees had not prepared a state-governed meeting, like those of the early seventeenth century. Rather, they had engineered unprecedented control for themselves over an arbitration process with the VOC. Indeed, the EIC's initial internal reaction to the war, negotiating an arbitration framework with Cromwell, had been set in motion.

Approaching the arbitration for its professed purpose, to provide a forum for disparate claims—from Greenland to Curaçao and Jakarta—to be heard by legal and mercantile experts, the States General called for nominations from each of the Dutch provinces to fill the four commission chairs.¹¹² In order to guarantee that no single interest would take hold of the arbitration, the legislators mandated that nominated lawyers and merchants could not be “members directly or indirectly interested in the East and West India, the Greenland and Muscovy Companies.”¹¹³ Indeed, the first task of any nominee was to provide the legislators with a full disclosure of his investment in any of these companies.¹¹⁴

While the States General sifted through the incoming nominations, the VOC directorate, now keenly focused on their agents' reports from London, had recognized the Committees' potential use of the summit. This would be no broad-spectrum arbitration. The EIC, the *Heren* posited, would use this meeting as an opportunity to directly claim each and every grievance against the VOC. The Committees would seek to advance their footing in Asia at the Dutch

the Two East India Companies, 30 August 1654, TNA SP/103/46 f. 489-520; John Thurloe's Review of the Anglo-Dutch Negotiations, n.d., TNA SP/103/46 f. 415-429.

¹¹² Resolutions of the States General, 13 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

¹¹³ Resolutions of the States General, 17 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the States General, 20 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the States General, 28 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

¹¹⁴ Resolutions of the States General, 24 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Jacques Lones, merchant of Amsterdam, reported holdings of more than 4000 guilders in WIC stock. He sold off his shares in an effort to remain on the Commission, Resolutions of the States General, 27 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the States General, 28 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

Company's expense. And in an effort to pre-empt this, and to justify their own greater control over the arbitration, the *Heren* drew up a historical memo for the Dutch Ambassadors in London.¹¹⁵ In it, the *bewindhebbers* re-cast the state-dominated meetings of the 1610s and 1620s. They claimed that the success of the earlier summits was that they had not been grounded in either state: "only when the companies, together, could not come to an accord" did the ministers of both states intervene.¹¹⁶ If this was to be an East India negotiation, it should not be presented in the guise of a general mercantile arbitration. Instead, the *Heren* argued, the meeting should revert back to the framework of the independent inter-corporate summits of the 1620s, which followed a strict pattern of alternation between London and The Hague. Given that the last meeting was held in London, if the Committees truly wanted to deal directly with the VOC, they should concede to a meeting, held between the two companies' directorates, at The Hague.¹¹⁷

The ambassadors, however, under the authority of the States General, rejected the *Heren's* arguments and confirmed the arbitration for the summer of 1654 in London.¹¹⁸ And the conditions of the arbitration meetings continued to appear directed by Protector Cromwell.¹¹⁹ The emerging politics of this new leadership in the Court of Committees convinced the *Heren* of the need to extend the greater control, which they had, over the previous twenty-five years, secured over their own dealings in Asia, into their dealings with the English Company, as well. The *bewindhebbers* could not leave the negotiation of a binding inter-company agreement to disinterested parties. The VOC needed familiar and knowledgeable voices in this arbitration;

¹¹⁵ Heren XVII to Heeren Beverinck, Nieupoort, and Jongstal, Extraordinary Ambassadors from this State in England, 8 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Resolutions of the States General, 7 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 14 May 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

¹¹⁹ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 11 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

experts who could specifically address the differences between the two East India Companies and effectively answer the EIC's claims with their own.¹²⁰

With no debate or committee delegation, the directors immediately resolved three strategies to inject control into the management of affairs with the English Company, even if it meant undermining the States General's efforts. First, recognizing that this, unlike the meetings of the 1610s and 1620s, would be no "mutual concert" between the two companies, the *Heren* sought clarification from the States General regarding the exact nature and membership of the Dutch commission. Second, the *Heren* selected a group from among their own to work with Pieter van Dam, in order to collect and study all materials related to possible EIC claims against the Company. In an additional effort to exert control over the upcoming talks, five representatives from this group would be sent to London as a shadow commission to advise and instruct the States' delegation. This group included Michiel Goch, a former VOC *Advocaat* and *Raad* member, who would accompany the delegation to provide his first-hand expertise in company operations in the East Indies.¹²¹ The States General kept to its goal of nominating two legal experts, Adriaen van Aelmonde and Christiaan Rodenburgh, and two merchants, Jacques Oysel and Louys Houwen, none of whom had any significant connection to the Dutch East India Company. In the week before May 19, the States General's arbitrators were dispatched to London, followed by the VOC's unofficial delegation.¹²²

As the arbitration meetings began on 5 June, there was, at first, a strong state-centered identity to these talks, vindicating the States General's view of the summit. Cromwell's Secretary of State, John Thurloe, as well as members of the Council of State and the Dutch embassy to

¹²⁰ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 21 March 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

¹²¹ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 15 April 1654, NA 1.04.02. Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 11 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]; The *Heren* also debated Goch's compensation, part of which would be based on a review of the merits of his contributions to the negotiations, Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 12 May 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the States General, 15 May 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4842 [unfoliated].

¹²² Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 12 May 1654, NA 1.04.02. Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated].

London were in attendance at that first meeting in the London Guildhall. Thurloe dictated that the commissioners from “each nation” were to develop their own report of recommendations, which would be exhibited to the English Council of State and the States General.¹²³ Immediately, however, several practical challenges threatened to derail the international summit’s progress. Linguistic disagreements arose, as the English commissioners assumed all meetings and documents would be in English. Only half of each delegation understood the other’s language, and when the Dutch suggested Latin to be a “common and neutral language” which members from each side understood and provided “neither side with an advantage,” the English objected that half of their delegates (likely the two merchants) did not read it.¹²⁴ It was finally agreed that the talks would go on in Latin, and records of the meetings were translated into Dutch and English when transmitted back to the respective governments and companies.¹²⁵ In addition, the English commissioners argued that, in their legal tradition, such negotiations required an external “president” to conduct the sessions. The Dutch commissioners objected to the authority that such a title implied over what was designed as an equitable process between representative arbitrators, to whom authority had been directly delegated by the two state governments. The Dutch arbitrators did not object to the concept, but rather argued that such an official should be given the title “moderator” so as not to confuse the source of authority in the arbitration process.¹²⁶

As the talks continued beyond the first meeting, the dynamics between the two delegations shifted radically. The Dutch commissioners were quickly overwhelmed by the preparation of the English arbitrators. It was now plainly obvious that there had been a dramatic difference in interpretation of what this summit would accomplish. The four English commissioners came with two dedicated secretaries who unleashed a deluge of claims and demands on the Dutch arbitrators, all of which seemed to center on the VOC. It became apparent

¹²³ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 5 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*; Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 24 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 5 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

that the *bewindhebbbers*' suspicions had been on the mark, and that the EIC would use this seemingly state oriented arbitration framework as a Trojan horse, designed to advance the English Company's interests; a strategy that focused squarely on the VOC.¹²⁷ Maurice Thomson and the EIC's subcommittee on the "Dutch Business" had spent more than a year preparing for these specific meetings.¹²⁸ And while the EIC Committees still publicly denied any influence in the arbitration, it was now unquestionable that, in the guise of a binding, state-sponsored arbitration, Cromwell had granted the English Company the opportunity to secure their future trade in regulations and extractions from the VOC.¹²⁹ All the worse for the Dutch, the States General's vetting strategy, weeding out those with any first-hand knowledge and experience in the very organizations that were at the core of the English demands, had equipped their representatives with blunt weapons of state for what was clearly going to be a detailed company battle.

Struggling to grasp the sheer volume of claims daily introduced by the English commissioners, the four Dutchmen wrote back to the States General that, no matter the original intention, this was to be a summit for the East India companies. The English wanted to deal with the East Indies issues first because they were the "oldest and most important" submissions.¹³⁰ However, it was clear that the Commonwealth's commissioners had no intention of moving beyond those claims. While they commented that the English demands were submitted with no proof or grounding in testimony, the Dutch arbitrators floundered in their responses as they lacked the required expertise and experience in East India affairs.¹³¹ The *Heren XVII* recognized the threat posed by this scenario, and they moved quickly to gain control over the States

¹²⁷ The Dutch commissioners immediately requested their own administrative staff, nominating Johannes van Sommeren of Utrecht to be dispatched to London as soon as possible, *Ibid.*; Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 24 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹²⁸ This also further emphasizes the management differences between the two companies. The EIC was still fundamentally a collection of merchants, most of whom had significant investments and businesses running outside of their involvement with the EIC. Reflecting this, positions of leadership, such as the Governorship, were also compensated, as were one-off services to the Generality, such as membership on this committee, Court of Committees, 6 July 1653, IOR/B/23 f. 237r-237v.

¹²⁹ Court of Committees, 22 July 1654, IOR/B/23 f. 263r.

¹³⁰ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 24 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹³¹ *Ibid.*; Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 15 July 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

General's commission. The Dutch ambassadors instructed the States' arbitrators to hold from discussing any issues involving the VOC, pending the imminent arrival of the VOC's shadow delegation. The commission was forced to stall the negotiations for a few days in anticipation of the *bewindhebbers*' arrival, and then to stall another three to four weeks, requested by the VOC representatives to review the English Company's claims.

Through the summer, the arbitrators assessed the claims of both companies, as the VOC representatives closely advised the Dutch commissioners.¹³² The distraught commissioners reported that the relationship between the EIC and VOC continued to dominate the negotiations.¹³³ Further confirming the evolving character of the summit, the VOC would agree to absorb the full cost, of more than 14,500 guilders, for the Dutch Republic's entire three-month commission.¹³⁴ As the *bewindhebbers* took control of the claims process, friction quickly developed between the Dutch state commissioners and the VOC representatives. The States General's bewildered commissioners wrote to their government, complaining "we find the treatment of us by the Company directors strange...and we judge that they are not free to examine the commission of the States General, as the 30th article explicitly says that we, the commissioners, are to deliberate..."¹³⁵ They begged the States General to reel in the domineering *bewindhebbers*, lest the commissioners find themselves "very anxious in this sensitive and delicate material."¹³⁶

While the day-to-day records from those three months of meetings remain sporadic, the lengthy arbitration award provides significant detail for the claims of both companies and reveals much about the *Heren*'s shift to emulate the English. The EIC Committees' claims would have certainly been familiar to anyone involved in the Commonwealth's recent commercial politics, as

¹³² Dutch Ambassadors to Griffier Ruysch, 3 July 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹³³ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 14 August 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated]; Dutch Ambassadors to the States General, 9 September 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹³⁴ W.V. Haren to the States General, 7 December 1654, NA 1.01.01 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹³⁵ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 24 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

they were nearly identical to the Company's petitions to the Council of State in the early 1650s.¹³⁷ The EIC's submissions fully vindicated the *Heren's* suspicions of the arbitration. The English Company based fifteen claims in the terms of the previous EIC-VOC agreements of the 1610s and 1620s. The Committees alleged exorbitant costs incurred through the VOC's willful disregard of mutual profit and cost-sharing arrangements, as well as the Dutch Company's outright hindrance of the EIC's trade. The Committees' formal claims then listed eight more recent events, including the VOC's seizure of the *Endimion*, the blocking of Banten's harbor, and the commandeering of the islands of Pulo Run and Loutor; judiciously adding a few zeros to the original damage estimates from 1650. All in all, the EIC respondents alleged, the Dutch Company owed them the enormous sum of £2,695,999, more than twelve times the VOC's estimated profit for the entire decade of the 1650s.¹³⁸

Only after receiving preliminary notice of the English Company's claims, did the *Heren* formulate claims of their own.¹³⁹ Thus, the VOC's catalogue of complaints hewed to the terms and contractual interpretations of the English submissions. Throughout the 1620s, the VOC had not abandoned its contracted partner in Asia. Rather, the Dutch Company alleged, it had shouldered the bill for its over-extended smaller partner, amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds in outstanding financial claims. In addition, the *Heren* argued that, far from endangering and attacking their English counterparts, their company had, in fact, gone to great expense to ensure the safety of returning English East Indiamen, which enjoyed the protection of Dutch

¹³⁷ 1654 Anglo-Dutch Arbitration Judgment, 30 August 1654, TNA SP/103/46 f. 141r-151v; Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 51-66; An Abstract of the perticuler and reall losses which the English Company have sustained in divers parts of the East Indies by the proceedings of the Netherlands Company, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 82r-85r.

¹³⁸ 1654 Anglo-Dutch Arbitration Judgment, 30 August 1654, TNA SP/103/46 f. 141r-151v; Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 51-66; Calculations made based on the VOC's contemporary valuation of 11 guilders per pound sterling, Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 15 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated]; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 132.

¹³⁹ States General to the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC, 6 April 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated]; 1654 Anglo-Dutch Arbitration Judgment, 30 August 1654, TNA SP/103/46 f. 141r-151v; Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 51-66.

convoys in Asia and in Europe.¹⁴⁰ All of this amounted to English debts to the VOC totaling £2,069,861.¹⁴¹

After nearly three months of reviewing all of the damages, proofs, and evidence to disentangle the arguments of both companies, each “forming and corroborating their own demands, as for destroying and refuting those of the opposite party,” the commissioners announced their judgment on the last day of August.¹⁴² The Dutch Company would pay the EIC an £85,000 award, to be cashed out in two equal installments in January and in March of 1655. The VOC would also cede control of the island of Pulo Run to the EIC. Amboyna garnered separate treatment. Cognizant of the power of that event in the English Company’s own political campaigns, and responding to the individual claims for reparations from the heirs of the executed EIC employees, the Dutch commissioners agreed that the VOC would pay out a separate total sum of £3,650 to those individual claimants.¹⁴³

Given the Dutch commissioners’ own reporting of the overwhelming influence that the *bewindhebbers* exerted over their side of the arbitration, on its face, this result, so clearly in the EIC’s favor and completely silent on any of the Dutch complaints, seems baffling. It had been more than two decades since the two directorates had negotiated anything, and in the context of the “mutual concerts” of the 1610s and 1620s, such an outcome was unexpected, and more than a little unnerving. While the award, itself, would not threaten the Dutch Company’s bottom line, eighty-five thousand pounds was certainly more than a nominal sum for the VOC. The *Heren* thought it best to absorb the cost by dividing the responsibility of this payment among the six chambers, with each of the smaller chambers shouldering one sixteenth of the award, Zeeland

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 58-62.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁴³ Only one of the claimants was among those collected and submitted by the EIC petitioners during the first round of the EIC charter battle in 1652, Petition of William Coulson to the Council of State, n.d. [1652?], TNA CO/77/7 f. 128; Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 63; Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 11 September 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

contributing one quarter, and Amsterdam responsible for one half. According to the Dutch Company's contemporary valuation of 11 guilders per pound sterling, the Amsterdam chamber's share alone, totaling 487,383 guilders, was equivalent to more than ninety-three percent of the VOC's revenue from the previous week's marquee auction of Malacca spices.¹⁴⁴

Employing the shared language of English and Dutch arbitration traditions, the States General's commissioners explained to the *Heren* that their conclusion had been reached considering nothing other than "law, reason and equity" and producing a judgment that exhibited "great consideration to the good standing of the Dutch East India Company and the service of the States General."¹⁴⁵ But how, under the close watch of a cohort of the VOC's most senior directors, had the arbitrators come to a conclusion, which assigned full wrongdoing and punitive damages to the Dutch Company? And why did the *Heren XVII* seem to accept this judgment with a muted reaction?

The explanation for the *Heren's* behavior seems to lie in their perception of the English East India Company's strategy within the commercial politics of the Commonwealth. In their reaction to the Graswinckel brief, the *Heren* had already demonstrated significant anxiety towards any effort to connect the war to their employees' actions in Asia. They were clearly aware of the focus, which the English Company had put on the VOC, and specifically on Amboyna, in petitions and pamphlet campaigns. The VOC directors thus likely judged the value of the perpetual stipulations embedded in the commissioners' decision to outweigh the cost of the monetary award. The core of these stipulations read:

we make
void, extinguish, obliterate, and altogether wipe out
and commit to oblivion (so as never to be revived at any
time, and upon any pretense by any person whatsoever)
all complaints, pretensions and controversies mentioned
... and all others whatsoever which the
English Company trading in the East Indies doth or may

¹⁴⁴ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 15 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated].

¹⁴⁵ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 11 September 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

form against the Dutch Company...¹⁴⁶

Mandating the same for the Dutch claims against the EIC, the award aimed to expunge past transgressions, laying “a good grounding between both East India Companies” and, as a result, “to do away with any bitterness between the citizens of both republics.”¹⁴⁷ In the payout, and the additional side award specifically earmarked for Amboyna, the commissioners had explicitly erased all claims of the VOC’s violent predation on the English from future political use. In acceptance of the award, all complaints, claims, and reference to Amboyna were dissolved, never again to be raised: “that no person... shall molest, disturb, or vex the said Dutch Company... on that pretext.”¹⁴⁸

Beyond simply quieting the EIC’s persistent accusations, the *Heren* also demonstrated more serious strategic motivations for diffusing the emphasis on Dutch violence in the EIC’s petitions and pamphlets. The *bewindhebbbers* had been struck by the strength and efficacy of Cromwell’s navy, and they were fearful of the real damage that the militant Commonwealth government could inflict on the European base of the VOC’s arborescent shipping system.¹⁴⁹ More importantly, after their jarring arbitration experience, the *bewindhebbbers* perceived that, as they did with the States General, the EIC enjoyed a privileged relationship with the English state. While the English Company still operated with a lapsed charter, and internecine battles over the future management of the Company continued to fracture the Court of Committees, the Dutch directors harbored an insistent belief that the EIC was capable of dispatching English state warships to Asia.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 63.

¹⁴⁷ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 11 September 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

¹⁴⁸ Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties*, 65.

¹⁴⁹ Heren XVII to Pieter Claesz. Croon, 19 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 355 f. 5r-5v; Heren XVII to Jacob Aggesz, 19 September 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 355 f. 5v; Heren XVII to Andries Friesius, 7 November 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 355 f. 6v-7v.

¹⁵⁰ The *Heren* connected this assumption to the English Company’s public call for subscription to such a fleet, which of course was never fulfilled, Court of Committees, 19 August 1653, IOR/B/25 f. 132r-132v; Court of Committees, 26 August 1653, IOR/B/25 f. 132v-133r; Heren XVII to the Commander of the Cape

In their reactionary engagement with the EIC's politics, the *Heren* also sought to continue the shift in their own relationship with the States General, begun during the arbitration, towards a greater autonomy in their dealings with the English Company. Their actions complicate an influential historiographical narrative, which ties the economic success of the Dutch Republic to the tightly woven social networks of the Dutch merchant elite. Linking the leadership of the VOC, the city of Amsterdam, and the States General, the argument goes, these networks coordinated the governance of the Republic's principal institutions.¹⁵¹ In the late summer of 1654, however, the *bewindhebbers* engaged in serious debate over how best to confine the knowledge of their actions to within the Company, itself. The VOC operated in an evolving securities market where share prices could fluctuate wildly on the slightest rumor. In addition, this all occurred during a year ordained for the VOC's quadrennial audit presentation to the States General.¹⁵² The benefits of discretion were clear to the Company directors, most of whom actually sought to remove themselves from the direct administration of the English award. The board designated a group of seven representatives to manage these affairs with the EIC, including five *bewindhebbers* and one major shareholder, as well as Van Dam. This cabal was to "operate with the most secrecy" in order to implement the mandates of the arbitration judgment, such that the "greatest service to the Company should be understood."¹⁵³

The new, central position of the EIC in the *Heren*'s strategic considerations did not dissipate with the close of the First Anglo-Dutch War. In fact, the Dutch directorate's focus on

of Good Hope, 24 July 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 269v.

¹⁵¹ In her sociological study, Julia Adams has examined the patrimonial networks that undergirded institutional governance in the Dutch Republic, Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005); Adams' views correspond with established narratives, including De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*; Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Vintage, 1987).

¹⁵² Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 14 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated]; Every four years the *Heren XVII* brought a "four-year accounting" before the States General, Mansvelt, *Rechtsvorm en Geldelijk Beheer*, 7; For the dynamics of the VOC securities market, see Adams, *The Familial State*; Gelderblom and Jonker, "Completing a Financial Revolution."

¹⁵³ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 9 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated].

the English Company continued to intensify. More than ever before, the *Heren* solicited intelligence on the internal and public debates of the EIC, the economic status and commercial returns of the English Company, and the relationship between the Committees and Parliament. Dutch state ambassadors and contracted agents supplied the VOC directors with the latest developments in the English joint-stock's fight for survival. As they organized the payout of their settlement (albeit several months behind schedule), the *bewindhebbers* even considered an aggressive attack on the EIC, proposed by their financial broker in London, Lucas Luce. Luce argued that, if the VOC could negotiate a license to import and sell spices in England, effectively breaking through the proscriptions of the Navigation Act, the Dutch Company could capitalize on the integrated markets and undersell the poorly supplied EIC. The profits derived from this scheme, Luce assured the *bewindhebbers*, would far exceed the payment due to the English Company.¹⁵⁴

In even further service to their new focus on the EIC, the *Heren* sought to take advantage of the final remaining element of the 1654 arbitration, the formal payout of the award. Rather than entrusting the payment to Luce, the VOC directors dispatched Pieter Van Dam to London as a courier for the payment and to collect a formal receipt from the Court of Committees. While the official purpose of this mission fell far below Van Dam's level of responsibility, it provided the chief administrator of the Dutch Company with the opportunity to personally assess the politics and direction of the EIC. And indeed, this was no quick transactional visit. In May and June of 1655, Van Dam spent five weeks in London. The Dutch ambassador, Willem van Nieuwpoort, coordinated Van Dam's stay and his formal meeting schedule with English government and EIC officials.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 29 September 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 150 [unfoliated]; Arguments against the management of the East India Trade in a joint-stocke, n.d. [1654?], TNA CO/77/7 f. 218-219.

¹⁵⁵ Throughout April, Van Nieuwpoort had laid the groundwork for Van Dam's visit, holding several meetings with John Thurloe and William Turner to establish the terms of the payout and the clauses related

While Van Nieuwpoort made many introductions for Van Dam, the ambassador's diary makes it clear that, after his arrival on 16 May, Van Dam's mission was not to be conducted under the supervision of the States General. In one-on-one meetings, or with Van Nieuwpoort present only as a bystander, Van Dam met repeatedly with Thurloe, Cromwell, Aldermen Viner and Riccard, as well as numerous EIC Committees.¹⁵⁶ Given the purpose of Van Dam's visit—to finalize and effect the payout to the EIC and to the Amboyna claimants—it comes as no surprise that, in relationship to EIC affairs, the *Advocaat* seems to have dealt primarily with William Garway, who had served as one of the EIC's designated advisors to the English arbitrators.¹⁵⁷ The Ambassador's diary captures only ten of Van Dam's official meetings over the course of the *Advocaat's* month-long stay. However, by the time Van Dam sealed the payments and departed for Amsterdam on 23 June, he had personally met with many of the key figures who were actively involved in shaping the future of the English East India trade, and he had been provided with the opportunity to gain a nuanced understanding of the ideologies and debates that would define the profile of the English Company going forward.¹⁵⁸

Following the First Anglo-Dutch War, the European leadership of both companies prepared to effect the terms of the arbitration judgment. Both directorates understood the punitive and compensatory elements of the award as strands of a new regime, governing the inter-company relationship in Europe and in Asia. The Committees and the *Heren* dispatched copies

to the arbitration's damage ruling "Quoad Injurias et Damna." Van Nieuwpoort was responsible for every detail of Van Dam's visit, even including the rental of a fashionable "stone house" for the *Advocaat*, Daily Journal of Willem van Nieuwpoort during his embassy in England, 1654, NA 1.10.110 Inv. Nr. 65; Willem van Nieuwpoort, who was a close friend of Walter Strickland and his wife, Ann Morgan (a Dutch woman), had been resident in London since January of 1653, Daily Journal of Willem van Nieuwpoort during his embassy in England, 1653, NA 1.10.110 Inv. Nr. 64; Helmers, *The Royalist Republic*, 34.

¹⁵⁶ There are numerous occasions in which Van Nieuwpoort does not specify the Committees present, simply noting "East India Directors," Daily Journal, NA 1.10.110 Inv. Nr. 65 [unfoliated]; Aldermen Riccard and Viner would serve as leading Committees of the new English East India Company in 1657, Governor & Company to Agent and Factors at Fort St. George, 31 December 1657, IOR/E/3/84 f. 198-200.

¹⁵⁷ Court of Committees, 25 July 1654, IOR/B/23 f. 264.

¹⁵⁸ Daily Journal, NA 1.10.110 Inv. Nr. 65 [unfoliated].

of the judgment, along with instructions for the implementation of the arbitrators' orders, to their leadership in Asia. In their communication with their employees in Asia, English and Dutch directors continued to prioritize consideration of the other company. Understanding each other to be increasingly aligned in their goals, strategy, and organization, the *Heren* and the Committees came to view one another as the primary competition in a shared set of challenges, and both directorates adopted elements of their competitors' organizations. This was not European mercantilism gone global. The directors self-consciously understood that most Indian Ocean markets had yet to be entered, let alone mastered. The potential of the East Indies trade may very well have, at some point, come to be perceived as finite, but in the 1650s, both directorates focused on the race to get the most favorable trade conditions in ports where they operated, and they moved to explore and exploit new opportunities.

After three years of post-war chaos, most historians of the English Company recognize 1657 as a turning point, during which the charter for a new EIC, with a permanent capital stock, was approved by Parliament. After 1657, the EIC organization shifted to a structure much more akin to its Dutch sibling, as the formation of a permanent capital stock can be traced to this year, and the Court and factory records correspond to reveal the launch of a revised hierarchical factory network in Asia. The hierarchical Presidency system of governance, and robust, ambitious investment in factory infrastructure, political intervention, and shipping networks gradually developed during the second half of the EIC's seventeenth century.¹⁵⁹ In Asia and in Europe, the narrative goes, the EIC had begun its rise, while the VOC was reaching its peak.¹⁶⁰ If the leadership of the EIC served as any indication of the future of EIC's posture toward the Dutch, Maurice and William Thomson, as well as Thomas Kendall, were among the New East India

¹⁵⁹ Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 57-67; Lawson, *The East India Company*, 46-48.

¹⁶⁰ Synthesizing English and Dutch historical records and historiography, Jonathan Israel refers to the period of 1647-1672 as the Dutch "zenith," Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 197.

Company's most prominent Committees. Maurice would serve as the new joint-stock's first governor, and William would transition to that office in 1668.¹⁶¹

Maurice Thomson's influence echoes through the EIC's instructions sent out to English factors across Asia, guiding them through the transition to the new Company system. In a letter dated New Years' Eve 1657, Governor Thomson as well as William Cokayne and eight other committees wrote to Fort St. George, instructing the factors there to value the United Stock's assets, which were to be "turned over to the present New Stock" in the exact manner proposed by Thomson three years earlier.¹⁶² The Governor and Committees offered confidence to their employees that the New Joint-Stock had the full support of Cromwell in any confrontation with the VOC in the Indian Ocean. In order to better compete against their Dutch rivals, plans were immediately put in motion to restructure the EIC's network.¹⁶³ Following the approach explicitly advocated by Thomson in his petitions to Parliament, the Committees rolled out a new factory hierarchy, where EIC operations in Asia would fall under the direction of a Presidency at Surat, while four Agencies, akin to the VOC's regional governors, would direct operations within the orbits of Fort St. George, Banten, Persia, and Hugli.¹⁶⁴ The Committees also immediately began developing plans for the construction of a colonial hub to rival nearby Batavia on the island of Pulo Run. More than a strategic shift towards greater permanence for their Southeast Asian trade, this initiative took center stage in the Committees' charter negotiations with Cromwell, and later with Charles II. A permanent hub on Pulo Run, with English settlers and agrarian infrastructure,

¹⁶¹ Extract of Letters from East India, Received by William Thomson, Governor, 1668, TNA CO/77/10 f. 174-177; East India Company to Agent and Factors at Hooghly, 27 February 1658, IOR/E/3/84 f. 213-219.

¹⁶² East India Company to Agent and Factors at Fort St. George, 31 December 1657, IOR/E/3/84 f. 200r.

¹⁶³ Cokayne, Thomson and the other Committees requested that Banten report any "insolencies" committed by the Dutch to London, East India Company to the Agent and Factors at Bantam, 7 May 1658, IOR/E/3/84 f. 202.

¹⁶⁴ East India Company to the Agent and Factors at Hooghly, 27 February 1658, IOR/E/3/84 f. 213v.

bolstered the Company's image as a central pillar of English honor and the prosperity of the English nation.¹⁶⁵

The Committees, as well as the *Heren*, also felt it essential to maintain a current understanding of the politics and policy of the other organization's trade, and this priority was permanently institutionalized in both companies' administrations. While the EIC's subcommittee on Dutch affairs remained active as ever, and the leading members of that group took on the roles of Governor and officers of the Company, Van Dam and the *Heren XVII* positioned the EIC as a key strategic consideration in their relationship with the States General, in their own commercial planning, and in their instructions to VOC officials in Asia. Prior to the war, the most pressing debates and communications between the European and Asian leadership of the VOC entirely omitted the English from discussion of private trade, infrastructure and colonial investment, relationships with non-European state governments, and other issues central to the long-term planning of the Dutch Company. By the end of the war, the EIC was of critical importance in all such considerations.

Through the VOC's intelligence network in London, anchored by Lucas Luce and the ambassadors, as well as through direct meetings, Van Dam and the *Heren* continued to monitor the chaotic state of the English East Indies trade in the wake of the First Anglo-Dutch War. Between 1654 and 1658, the EIC hobbled along on an expired charter, fostering insecurity in the Company's future that encouraged prominent Committees to focus as much on growing their own private trading networks as on strengthening the EIC's profile in Asia. For the VOC, such chaotic dynamics within their competitor were far from any cause for celebration. The *Heren* warned their Governor General to monitor the robust private trade of EIC Committees, particularly the ventures of Maurice Thomson, who the *Heren* recognized as one of the "principal

¹⁶⁵ EIC Petition to the Lord Protector, 19 July 1655, TNA CO/77/8 f. 29; EIC Petition to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 26 November 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 105.

private trade investors.”¹⁶⁶ It is a testament to the gravity with which the VOC directors viewed Thomson’s trade that they described his activities with the same phrasing that had been used to assess the threat of English naval intervention in the East Indies, warning that voyages in which Thomson was involved had the potential to “do us *all possible* damage.”¹⁶⁷

The EIC and VOC directorates had reacted to the European state crisis by crafting institutional bridges—establishing permanent committees for correspondence and mutual observation, constructing common arbitration frameworks, formulating shared commercial best practices, and recognizing collective canons of law and economic thought—that linked their two organizations. Guided by English merchants with deep experience and a strong affinity for the VOC, the remodeled post-1657 EIC would align closely with the structure and vision of its Dutch sibling. For their part, the post-war *Heren* now exerted direct control over their own dealings with the EIC. They viewed the monitoring of, and engagement with, the English Company as strategic priorities at home and in Asia. During the late 1650s, both companies’ directors would cycle their new inter-corporate regime out to their Indian Ocean factories, ordering new initiatives, priorities, and policies.

2.4 Continuing Debates and Emulation in Asia

The announcement of peace had reached Southeast Asia by early October of 1654.¹⁶⁸ Unlike the VOC’s consistent program of *generale missiven* correspondence from Batavia to Amsterdam, encapsulating the “state of the company” in a comprehensive document, during the

¹⁶⁶ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 2 November 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 409v; Thomson’s ventures were sanctioned and accounted for in the EIC factory records, Joseph Taylor at Goa, 29 January 1656, IOR/G/36/103 f. 37v-38r.

¹⁶⁷ The emphasis is my own, “Maurice Thompson een vande principaelste particuliere avanturiers heeft geordonneert alle de schepen daerin... schynen het op syne goederen aen te leggen, en ons daer mede alle moochelycken affbreuk te doen,” Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 2 November 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 409v.

¹⁶⁸ Governor-General & Raad to Agent Skinner, 17 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 878 f. 484v-485r; The *Heren* had also written directly to Persia and Surat (overland), Governor-General & Raad to Bengal, 19 October 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 878 f. 468-469.

1650s the EIC's correspondence from Asia reflected the English Company's still fragmented factory structure. From 1654-1657, Company factors across the Indian Ocean received no coherent instructions from London, operating with "no course of government."¹⁶⁹ As the EIC's profile weakened, factors conducted the majority of English trade on their own private books, backed by the personal investment of merchants in London. As they did trickle back to the EIC's headquarters, however, reports from Bandar Abbas, Surat, Cambodia, Madras, and Batavia were unified in the conclusion that the English Company had reached a critical juncture.¹⁷⁰

When examining the seventeenth century, historians tend to see the companies' relationship as asymmetrical—with the Dutch far greater than the English in trade, military capability, and financial backing—but consistent: the steady competition of two similar organizations, driven primarily by commercial and political policies and trends in Europe.¹⁷¹ Presenting a non-linear history of the companies' seventeenth-century relationship, this chapter argues that the 1650s were a turning point for the dynamics linking the two companies, both in Europe, and in Asia.

Between 1652 and 1654, English factors had shifted from a quarter-century of passively living with their Dutch neighbors in East Indian ports, to implement a sustained, systemic policy of studying, emulating, and responding to VOC officials' commercial and political strategy and activity. But the factors needed rapid investment to replicate the infrastructure, commercial capabilities, and political strategies of the VOC. With a concerted push in these three areas, English agents agreed that the EIC could cultivate the perception of strength and capability

¹⁶⁹ John Spiller, Henry Gary and Anthony Smith at Swally to the East India Company in London, 24 February 1656, IOR/E/3/24 f. 339r.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ This is a central argument of many of the most cited works on the companies, including: Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*; Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*.

needed to win the confidence of East Indian markets and leaders, and to advance its trade against the VOC in Asia.¹⁷² Without it, any organized English trade was finished.

The contrast with the VOC was perhaps strongest with regard to the EIC's physical infrastructure in Asia. From his vantage point at Isfahan, Agent John Spiller argued to the Committees that the only way the English could maintain any relevance in the competitive trade of the Western Indian Ocean was to "get into your hands about Surat or on the Coast of India some convenient Towne or Castle," over which the Company could fully control the terms of trade and government.¹⁷³ This was no cheap proposal, and Spiller was aware that significant long-term investment, beyond immediate profit, was a hard sell to his superiors.

Such an investment represented not only a crucial operational strategy but also an important political argument that invoked the VOC's navigation of the political economy of the Indian Ocean. If the EIC could emulate the Dutch at Batavia, and build and fortify a port of their own, linking to prime trading circuits, Spiller's experience told him that the Company could also reproduce the VOC's success. This investment would "much increase your [Committees'] strength and force and honor in the Orientall parts; as the actions of the Dutch can too well witness."¹⁷⁴ While, over the past fifty years, the EIC had built factories and shipping patterns, the short-term focus on individual voyages and limited joint-stocks restricted English capital flows to Asia. English factors at Bengal, Surat, and the Persian ports claimed that the inconsistency of English liquidity caused local merchants to look upon Company contracts and credit with great "suspicion."¹⁷⁵ In contrast, argued Spiller, the VOC leaders "look not nor stand so much upon present gains, if (they have hopes that a place will prove at least beneficial) as their future

¹⁷² Frederick Skinner and John Rawlins at Bantam to James Bostock and factors at Macassar, 10 February 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 193.

¹⁷³ John Spiller at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 April 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 38v.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Paul Waldegrave and Thomas Stevenson at Balasore to the East India Company in London, 28 December 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 146r.; Nicholas Scrivener at Tatta, 3-7 March 1656, IOR/G/36/103 f. 87; William Jesson at Agra to Edward Pearce and Council at Surat, 20 December 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 303.

profit.”¹⁷⁶ In a near-perfect recitation of Governor-General Maetsuyker’s 1649 arguments to the *Heren*, advocating for colonial investment in Southeast Asia, Spiller reminded the Committees that the Portuguese had fallen from prominence in the East Indies precisely when the *Estado* halted such long-term investment.¹⁷⁷ In his understanding of the Company’s trade as a braid of politics and commerce, the EIC’s Isfahan agent joined with other factory chiefs in noting that the presence and protection of military strength would refute any Dutch claims of English weakness, inevitably bolstering confidence in EIC contracts and trade and granting EIC agents great opportunity and leverage in negotiations with non-European sovereigns.¹⁷⁸

In their correspondence, the EIC’s factors relied on the same dual rhetorical patterns that animated their employers’ political arguments in London. During and after the Anglo-Dutch War, the factors advocated for resources and support in hyperbolic terms. Without capital, military strength, and infrastructure, the EIC would “fall to ruine.”¹⁷⁹ These dire warnings were perfectly tailored to grip the attention of their London audience, accustomed to such apocalyptic rhetoric in Commonwealth policy debates.¹⁸⁰ The factors’ communications to their European superiors, however, did not dwell on mercantilist fear, and always shifted quickly from dire exclamations to sober, practical considerations for the improvement of the Company’s trade. Rather than a duel for a greater slice of the East Indian pie, the factors’ chosen terms cast competition with the VOC as a race for opportunity. The door was wide open for investment in Bengal, the EIC’s Balasore factors urged, estimating that the Dutch poured nearly £200,000 into their trade at that port.

Along with their calls for expansion, the Bengal factory also provided specific instruction for how

¹⁷⁶ John Spiller at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 April 1654, IOR/E/3/23 f. 38v.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; Johan Maetsuycker to the Heren XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated].

¹⁷⁸ John Leigh’s Account of his Imprisonment, Madras, c. July 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 29-31.

¹⁷⁹ Edward Pearce and Council at Swally to the East India Company in London, 20 October 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 285.

¹⁸⁰ David Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries: Religion, Politics, and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* (New York: CUP, 2001), 158-161; Gayla McGlamery, “The Rhetoric of Apocalypse and Practical Politics in Marvell’s ‘The First Anniversary of the Government under O.C.’,” *South Atlantic Review* 55 (Nov. 1990), 19-35.

to achieve this proposal: the English Company needed to replicate the VOC's intra-Asian trading system. This was a key growth opportunity, the Balasore council assured the Committees, as EIC shipping could connect the markets of "the Red Sea, Acheen, Pegue, Janassara & Zeilon... within the Monsoon," reaping greater profit and more confidence from local brokers and regional sovereigns.¹⁸¹

In following the example of the VOC's more prominent military strength and stronger financial standing, the EIC could also develop a third core Dutch competency: the navigation of Indian Ocean politics. The cultivation of an intra-Asian "country trade" like that at the heart of the VOC's business model in the East Indies, would further enmesh the EIC in Asian political structures. The EIC could thus "beare such a countenance as would be allowed and seconded by the favor of their great person [local leader] and continued without the least disturbance."¹⁸² In addition, greater knowledge of political affairs would enable EIC factors to generate more informed long-term goals and strategies. For example, in following the lead of VOC envoys from Batavia, English factors recognized the complex succession politics in the kingdoms comprising Cambodia and Cochyn Chyna (modern Vietnam) as environments where shrewd political navigation, and the backing of the right ascending leader, could result in significant trade privileges.¹⁸³ On the Coromandel Coast, EIC factors at Madras promised similar benefits from a more concerted effort to court the allegiance of local leaders in areas beyond the major trading entrepots like Metchlepatam. Pursuant to the VOC's plans for its own Coromandel factories, brokers in smaller markets like Verasheroone, for example, could directly supply the EIC with

¹⁸¹ Paul Waldegrave and Thomas Stevenson at Balasore to the East India Company in London, 28 December 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 146r.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Quarles Browne and Thomas Greenway in Cambodia to Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam, 17 January 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 177r; Quarles Browne and factors in Cambodia to James Bostock and factors at Macassar, 19 November 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 227-228.

textiles from adjacent inland villages, avoiding altogether the great merchants' fees in the larger "head places" of trade.¹⁸⁴

Throughout the 1650s, EIC factory heads would continue to write back to London, urging the implementation of strategies and the construction of infrastructure needed to fully engage with the VOC in the East Indies. In ports around the Indian Ocean, however, direct interaction between English and Dutch officials continued to shift the terms of competition and cooperation between the two companies. A significant issue with which the EIC and VOC wrestled was control over personnel. While it is difficult to assess the numbers of English Company employees active in Asia between 1655 and 1660, we do know that the EIC held at least 92 active contracts for factors at the beginning of the decade.¹⁸⁵ Throughout the 1650s, the VOC on the other hand, sent an estimated 40,200 people to Asia onboard its ships from Europe.¹⁸⁶ The vast majority of these individuals were classified as soldiers, evidenced in the thousands of troops dispatched to Ambon and Ceylon, the two principal VOC conflict zones during the 1650s.¹⁸⁷ Anyone who contracted with either company signed on for a multi-year service term and compensation scheme, and thus both the EIC and VOC sought to maintain direct control over how and when their employees returned to Europe.¹⁸⁸

In the aftermath of the Peace of Westminster, the imperatives of employee control took on a new prominence in mediating the dealings between both companies. When Johan Maetsuyker informed Frederick Skinner, the EIC's Banten Agent, that he had been glad to "restore to their Liberty" those EIC employees who had been captured in ship seizures, Skinner

¹⁸⁴ William Curtis and John Chambers on the Three Brothers to Henry Greenhill and Council, Madras, 27 December 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 308r.

¹⁸⁵ The Companies' Reasons for a Joynt Stocke, 8 February 1647, TNA CO/77/7 f. 62.

¹⁸⁶ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 81; The average annual estimate for VOC personnel shipped from Europe sits at c. 4,900, Knaap, "De Core Business van de VOC: Markt, Macht en Mentaliteit vanuit overseas perspectief," Universiteit Utrecht (Oratie 10 November 2014)," 7.

¹⁸⁷ Knaap, "De Core Business van de VOC;" Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 103-118.

¹⁸⁸ Claudia Rei, "Careers and Wages in the Dutch East India Company" *Cliometrica* 8 (2014), 27-48; Christiaan van Bochove and Ton van Velzen, "Loans to Salaried Employees: the case of the Dutch East India Company, 1602-1794," *European Review of Economic History* 18 (2013), 26-27; After 1658, VOC seamen were on 5-year contracts, Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 81.

was enraged to learn that the Governor-General had actually allowed free passage on the Dutch return fleet to any English employees who wanted out of their contracts and a one-way trip back to Europe.¹⁸⁹ Skinner was suspicious of Maetsuycker's intentions, given the Governor-General's understanding that the EIC's operations were stretched thin, to an extent far greater than the VOC with its annual influx of thousands of new personnel. Reminding the Governor-General of the terms of their shared contracting system, Skinner argued that their imprisonment had not rendered the EIC employees "disengaged of their former obligation to the Company," and the Banten agent questioned why the *Raad* had not simply notified his nearby factory to reclaim its factors.¹⁹⁰ Should any of Maetsuycker's personnel approach Skinner with the same request, the Banten agent assured, "your worships will not take it ill if we do grant them the same..."¹⁹¹ Skinner made good on his promise, and, perhaps confirming the Governor-General's nefarious intent, the following spring found Maetsuycker sharply reprimanding the EIC agent for allowing VOC personnel free travel on English shipping.¹⁹²

Beyond employee contract enforcement, there was, however, a related post-war issue of employee control that drove far greater concern among the leaders of both companies in Europe and in Asia: the regulation of trade within the EIC. The comparatively liberal EIC private trade policies had long threatened the VOC's highly regulated intra-Asian commercial system.¹⁹³ Along with their suggestions for the dramatic realignment of the Company, leading EIC figures in Asia joined the *Heren* in the observation that during the war, the scale of Anglo-Dutch private trade in the East Indies had increased to dangerous levels. EIC factory directors began to seek greater controls over private ventures mirroring the stricter VOC policies for Dutch factors. In

¹⁸⁹ Johan Maetsuycker at Batavia to Frederick Skinner at Bantam, 18 October 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 101r-102v.

¹⁹⁰ Frederick Skinner at Bantam to Johan Maetsuycker at Batavia, 21 October 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 103r.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² Johan Maetsuycker at Batavia to Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam, 13 May 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 250r.

¹⁹³ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 21 September 1644, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 3r.

May of 1654, Jeremy Blackman wrote to London, registering his concerns over “the great quantity of private trade” aboard recent EIC ships at Surat. Blackman was particularly alarmed by the ways in which English private traders were conducting their business with Dutch partners, “in the night carrying it aboard the Dutch ships, or to the Dutch tents, and there by them and their brokers owned and sold to your no small prejudice...”¹⁹⁴ Sanctioned private contracting was a pillar of the EIC model, but the revisions suggested by the EIC’s Asian leadership now cast any collaboration with VOC factors, at the expense of the EIC’s own commerce, as a serious transgression. This can be clearly seen in the correspondence from Madras, on the Coromandel Coast, during the summer of 1654. In an internecine corruption scandal involving local merchants, one of the EIC factors, John Leigh, accused factory President Aaron Baker of engaging in a child slavery scheme with the VOC factory at Pulicat, resulting in “the greatest dishonor that ever the Company had in these parts.”¹⁹⁵ While Leigh wrote this from the holding cell to which his nemesis, Baker, had condemned him, it is significant that Leigh thought this particular accusation would tap most directly into the Committees’ concerns. Not only would private cooperation with the Dutch erode the EIC’s bottom line, but such activity worked in direct opposition to English efforts to win the contracts of local merchants, casting themselves as a preferable alternative to the tyrannical VOC.

Sanctioned “private trade” and illegal “interloping”¹⁹⁶ were no longer distinguishable if there was no enforced regulation of the Company’s commercial rights among the English merchant community in Asia. The agents at the EIC’s Cambodia factory reacted with wonder at

¹⁹⁴ Jeremy Blackman and Council at Surat to the East India Company in London, 23 November 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 60r.

¹⁹⁵ John Leigh’s Account of his Imprisonment, Madras, c. July 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 29v.

¹⁹⁶ As has been explored in Chapter 1, “private trade” was sanctioned activity among EIC employees who could, and were through the first half of the seventeenth century, even encouraged to trade on their own accounts. Interlopers were English competitors to the Company’s charter. They sought no permission from the Company, but rather outfitted and dispatched ships of their own. For an historical and historiographical overview, see Timothy Davies, “English Private Trade on the West Coast of India, c. 1680-c. 1740,” *Itinerario* 38, no. 22 (Aug., 2014), 51-73.

the scale of Frederick Skinner's personal, or "particular," operations there, which had "infinitely... wronged us," setting prices for Benjamin [Benzoin Gum] on an upward spike: "Wee cannot Imagine that the agent of Bantam should give any such order to you & we [find] strange how any Particular man dares abuse [his] employer in so high a nature."¹⁹⁷ More over, EIC administrators watched in horror as the actions of their own subordinates dissolved the Company's advantages with regional sovereigns. Recognizing the chaotic state of English trade regulation, Shah Abbas II's ministers told the EIC agents at Bandar Abbas that the present organization of the English trade could render the Shah's customs contract with the EIC null and void, given that "the King [Shah] had remitted the customs only to the old Company."¹⁹⁸ The EIC's weak position was swiftly debilitating the credibility that English agents had built up with strategically released news from Europe and lobbying efforts during the First Anglo-Dutch War.

While they certainly took advantage of the faltering EIC governance, from Amsterdam to Surat and Batavia, VOC officials' reaction to the chaos engulfing English trade was far from any celebration of their competitors' multiplying disabilities. VOC leaders also recognized that the two companies had developed an interdependence in the East Indies trade. The *Heren* and the *Raad* could not have agreed more with EIC administrators' fears of the dire threat posed by the current state of the English East Indies trade. Three key features combined to make English disorganization especially threatening to the *Heren* and to Batavia.

First, these private voyages were well-funded and operated on a large scale. In their instructions to Maetsuycker, the *bewindhebbers* warned Batavia to monitor the robust personal ventures of Committees, such as Thomson.¹⁹⁹ However, the *Raad* also tracked the expanding

¹⁹⁷ Quarles Browne and Thomas Greenway in Cambodia to Thomas Lever at Jambi, 30 December 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 149.

¹⁹⁸ William Weale, Daniel Otgher and Anthony Daniel at Bandar Abbas to the East India Company in London, 24 November 1655, IOR/E/3/24 f. 295r.

¹⁹⁹ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 2 November 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 409v; Thomson's ventures were sanctioned and accounted for in the EIC factory records, Joseph Taylor at Goa, 29 January 1656, IOR/G/36/103 f. 37-38.

ventures of major English administrators in Asia. Just as the English officials had begun to target Frederick Skinner's personal trading, the VOC closely followed his operations, as well, tracking Skinner's vast trading network on the Coromandel Coast, likely in partnership with his uncle, Aaron Baker.²⁰⁰ And in grasping the scale of this "particular trade," VOC reports did not describe English ships coming into ports, such as Surat, alone or in pairs. In a year when the EIC sent out only three ships, Dutch factors recorded private English trading vessels entering Asian roads in waves of five or six!²⁰¹

Second, the private English operations had recruited experienced EIC employees. The close relationships, which EIC factors forged with brokers in the Western Quarter had, since the late Anglo-Dutch War, frustrated VOC agents and focused the attention of Batavia's strategy on that region. Now, the *Heren* viewed these English private traders as a dire threat to the VOC's state relationships in Asia. Highly connected English agents could leverage their relationships for the benefit of individual voyages, threatening VOC contracts at the very moment when a priority of the Dutch Company centered on closer contractual relationships with non-European merchants from Ambon to Surat and Bandar Abbas.²⁰²

Third, experienced agents with local knowledge, combined with deep-pocketed investors, enabled these private English voyages with the potential for significant geographic reach along the major trade routes at the heart of the long-term plans crafted by the *Heren* and Batavia. The VOC was in the midst of a decade-long push to gain greater control over the lucrative trading circuits that linked the western Indian Ocean with Ceylon and the southern Coromandel Coast.²⁰³ In their instructions to Maetsuycker, the *Heren* reflected on this danger posed by the open English

²⁰⁰ Generale Missive, 4 December 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1214 f. 47r.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, f. 69v; *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 2 November 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 409-410.

²⁰² A key goal of the post-war VOC was to correct the "sober profits" that the Dutch Company was making in the Western Indian Ocean, Generale Missive, 26 January 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1202 f. 130.

²⁰³ Batavia to Coromandel, 15 July 1653, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 877 f. 204-205; Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 92; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 52-53.

trade. Leveraging their experience, funding, and freedom from any corporate price-point guidelines or buying regulations, the private traders could expand from the EIC hubs in Persia and at Surat, threatening the VOC in markets along the entire Malabar Coast. If English free traders could get into Cochin and tap into the Ceylon circuit, they could destabilize VOC purchasing in core commodities, including pepper, cardamom, cinnamon and saltpeter.²⁰⁴

Taken together, the *Heren*'s three concerns demonstrate that a robust, well-funded, open English East Indies trade would render the VOC's image-based political strategy completely incapacitated. Just as the evolving "Westphalian" system in Europe depended upon the competitive engagement of similar states, a key to successful Dutch competition against the English was having an identifiable and coherent "other" in the EIC.²⁰⁵ If the English trade was to be run by innumerable private voyages, Asian administrations and markets would have infinite competing alternatives to the Dutch Company, and the system of exclusive contracts, political agreements, and image campaigns on which the two companies had based their systemic competition would lose any and all efficacy. The *Heren* implored their factors to follow the English traders closely, especially on India's western coast, were "caution and good management" would be required "to ensure that they [English] never surprise us."²⁰⁶

It was, however, not characteristic of the Dutch to watch and wait. Not only did the devolution of English trade regulation threaten to upset the dynamics of the VOC's current position in the East Indies, but it jeopardized the long-range strategic goals advanced by the *Raad* and the *Heren*. In 1656, the VOC signed a tenuous peace with Makassar, "the most important

²⁰⁴ Generale Missive, 4 December 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1214 f. 69V-70r; Any English advantage in the Salt Petre market was of particular concern to the *Heren*, Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 13 October 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 461v.

²⁰⁵ This argument remains consistent in the VOC's dealings with the EIC, at least through the 1680s, Arnout van Citters to the States General, 4 September/25 August 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

²⁰⁶ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 13 October 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 464v-465r.

opponent to Dutch monopoly strategy” in Southeast Asia, and the Company’s “most prominent competitor in the clove trade.”²⁰⁷ The Dutch Company was engaged in unprecedented military operations against the *Estado* in Ceylon, and Batavia was in the midst of a bloody and expensive war for control over Ambon and the Molucca Islands’ clove trade.²⁰⁸ In addition, the political complexity of the Coromandel Coast required enormous resources to buy-off (pishcash) and placate local leaders in order to secure Dutch contracts.²⁰⁹ Along with orders to continue close observation of English trade, the *Heren* directed Maetsuycker to have his factors operate with “wisdom and good management,” and to keep VOC employees from entangling the Company’s business in any English ventures: “the least community with them should bare the most peace.”²¹⁰

But along with these instructions, two key strategies had been put in place to counter the threat posed by the opening of English trade. In markets where the Dutch Company maintained strong political and economic leverage, the VOC would parrot the English, deploying expert merchants, with significant local knowledge and experience to reinforce existing contracts, and to insure regional authorities’ affinity. The *Heren* had received intelligence of the EIC’s arguments to Cromwell, professing the importance of the exclusive joint-stock in the future settlement of a substantial English colony on Pulo Run. Batavia could not tolerate any erosion of their influence in the critical spice islands of the Banda and Molucca archipelagos, and thus the *bewindhebbers* charged Maetsuycker to align the inhabitants as close to the VOC as possible before the English arrived.²¹¹ The VOC could best accomplish this through the careful positioning of employees with expert knowledge of the geography, politics, and culture of the inhabitants.²¹² The same direction was issued to the factory leaders in the Western Quarter, in order to preempt the expansion of English private trade there. In these challenging times at Surat and the VOC’s

²⁰⁷ Knaap, “Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika,” 104.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 97-101.

²⁰⁹ Generale Missive, 4 December 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1214 f. 40r.

²¹⁰ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 13 October 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 453v.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*

Persian factories, only loyal, experienced, trusted personnel were to occupy leadership positions.²¹³

While this first policy was designed to secure the affinity and stability of the VOC's relationships with local authorities and commercial brokers, the *Raad* also engineered a second approach, which put the English at the center of aggressive efforts to protect Dutch interests in markets where the Company had heretofore proven unable to gain dominant leverage. To effect this goal, Governor-General Maetsuycker and his *Raad* crafted a legal strategy that blended the rights and imperatives negotiated in Europe with a detailed understanding of the dynamics of international relations in Southeast Asia.

The proving ground for the *Raad*'s Anglo-focused approach would further emphasize the EIC as a priority in Dutch strategy. By the 1650s, Banten had long served as a primary entrepot for Indian Ocean trade. The Javanese port sultanate successfully resisted Dutch expansion and remained a free trading center. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa granted factories to the VOC, the EIC, and Danish traders, and agents of both companies emulated Banten's tightly managed, interoceanic trading network. In addition to the Sultanate's leading role in the politics of Southeast Asia, Banten's geographic location made it a prime target for the implementation of the companies' converging perspectives on the East Indies trade. The port was less than a day's sail from Batavia, and the EIC's center of administrative authority for the South Seas sat behind the Sultan's own walls.²¹⁴

The *Heren* and the *Raad* were convinced that a revitalized and re-aligned EIC would leverage the peace in Europe and the resulting arbitration agreement, granting the English protection of their shipping in addition to a factory hub of their own on nearby Pulo Run, to erode Dutch influence in Southeast Asia. The First Anglo-Dutch War had ground the EIC's European shipping to a halt, and deprived its Banten factory, responsible for coordinating English trade

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 465r.

²¹⁴ Kathirithamby-Wells, "Banten: A West Indonesian Port and Polity," 111-114.

South and East of Madras, of capital and credit lines. It also deprived the factors of their only advantage in trade against the VOC. With neither the capital nor the human resources of their Dutch competitors, the English could offer the sultan something that other Europeans refused: guns and cannon. Compensating for their inconsistent trade from South Asia, the EIC factors sought to insure their commercial agreements with Ageng Tirtayasa by arming his troops and traders. However, their provision of powder and weapons was also a political statement. They solidified their legal identity as merchants under the sultan's authority and created a diplomatic bond of amity between Banten and their home government in England. In the process, they actively differentiated themselves from the Dutch who, with their ongoing construction of a rival political center at Batavia, refused to sell arms to Southeast Asian leaders.²¹⁵

Governor-General Maetsuycker and his *Raad* were well aware of the EIC's strategy to ingratiate themselves with Ageng Tirtayasa through the supply of arms. In addition, they knew that the VOC did not possess the ability to seize the pepper trade by affecting an assault on Banten, which was unthreatened by Dutch military capabilities and possessed a versatile shipping network, with hundreds of small ships that could easily evade a Dutch blockade.²¹⁶ The *Raad* would instead use Banten as a pivot, locking the English out of their flagship factory in Southeast Asia, and thus stemming competition in the pepper trade and reducing the flow of arms into rival ports.

On 10 July 1656, Maetsuyker and the *Raad* wrote to the EIC's agent, Frederick Skinner, and the English Council at Banten, announcing an intended blockade of that port. Their justification echoed the interpretation of the law of nations first developed by Francisco de Vitoria in the 1532, and expanded upon by Hugo Grotius in the early years of the seventeenth

²¹⁵ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 14 April 1654, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 330r.

²¹⁶ J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Banten: A West Indonesian Port and Polity," 111.

century.²¹⁷ As Grotius defended the VOC's expansion against the Portuguese *Estado* in the early years of the seventeenth century, he argued that violence committed against the VOC or its allies, in addition to the blocking of access to trade and travel, "violated accepted conventions and even the law of nature," and thus necessitated retribution and "just war."²¹⁸ While war was a response reserved for states, Grotius argued that companies like the VOC, which was chartered by the Dutch States General, possessed the same rights as states did in international relations.²¹⁹

The *Raad* presented a list of allegations against the Banten Sultan, insisting that he had violated his late treaty with the VOC by obstructing the Company's ships, threatening the invasion of Batavia's surrounding lands, and sanctioning the murder and obstruction of VOC officials. Casting the VOC's actions in terms of the retribution guaranteed by both companies' shared understanding of the law of nations, Maetsuycker lamented that these egregious violations had "forced" the Company from their "great forbearance and patience" into an open war with Ageng Tirtayasa.²²⁰ Referencing the recent peace agreements in Europe, the Governor-General assured Skinner that the VOC would give their English friends "all possible and reasonable help" during the imminent conflict.²²¹ Men-of-War ships were dispatched from Batavia to establish the punitive blockade.

By November, the Dutch siege entered its fifth month, during which the EIC factory had been completely blocked from accepting or dispatching ships. On the sixteenth, the English Council received word that the *Endimion*, one of their company's vessels from London, had arrived at Jambi, having been turned away from Banten by a Dutch patrol, several leagues out

²¹⁷ Rogelio García Mateo, "Universelles Völkerrecht: Francisco de Vitorias Anschauung einer Weltgemeinschaft," *Stimmen der Zeit* 59, no. 12 (Dec., 1992), 831-840; Borschberg, "Hugo Grotius, East India trade, and the King of Johor," 232.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 81-87.

²²⁰ Governor-General and Raad to Agent Frederick Skinner at Bantam, 10 July 1656, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr 1214 f. 116-117.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

from the sultan's harbor.²²² After the Governor-General rebuked a subsequent request for the *Endimion* to enter Banten, Skinner and his Council initiated a legal debate with the Governor-General.²²³

In his response, Skinner launched a two-pronged argument against the VOC's claims. The companies did share a legal identity, Skinner argued. However, they were not states, rather they were merchants. The VOC enjoyed the same rights as the EIC: entitled to the law of nations' protections for merchants' free access to trade. The two companies operated under the legal identity of a merchant, and not of a conqueror. He contended that the just retribution designed by the Dutch against the Sultan of Banten was a concept reserved exclusively for nations. Like the EIC, the Dutch Company was "only a society of private merchants in a Joynt Stocke, adventurers to all parts of the East Indies, by virtue of a patent or Permission from the Lords the States Generall."²²⁴ As such a trading organization could not legally be empowered to conduct a "national war," the VOC was "not in the least empowered to embark or hinder our masters ships."²²⁵

As the VOC's *Raad* and the EIC's Council at Banten continued to correspond, the very same challenges that had plagued the London arbitration arose in the Anglo-Dutch debate on Java. Just as language became a key issue with the London arbitrators, Maetsuycker rejected the 19 December missive, demanding that all such communications should be translated into Dutch.²²⁶ While most of the EIC's Banten Council could understand Dutch, and Skinner had strong facility with that language, one of the Council, James Bostock, did not. Reflecting the

²²² Copy letter from the *Endymion* at Jambi to Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam, 16 November 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 89-92.

²²³ John Rawlins and Council at Bantam to the Dutch Governor-General and Council at Batavia, 4 December 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 108-109.

²²⁴ Frederick Skinner and Council to the Dutch Governor-General and Council, Batavia, 19 December 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 112.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ Additions to Frederick Skinner and Council to the Dutch Governor-General and Council, Batavia, 20 December 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 114r.

importance of politics and honor in commerce, as well as the legal obligations of employee contracts, Bostock reasoned that, “ours being a publick business, Concerning our honorable employers, and both of us, being jointly obliged to give the same under our hands,” he would not affirm “anything, whatsoever... that should be written in any other language but English.”²²⁷ The debate thus continued along the common practice, whereby each party submitted to the other in their home language.

Skinner and Maetsuyker continued their correspondence-based legal debate into January, but with every passing day, the *Endimion*'s options narrowed as the winds of the Monsoon threatened to shift. Growing desperate, Skinner argued that not only was their legal identity the same, but Maetsuycker's motivation for blocking Banten was, itself, proof of this fact. The Governor-General had dispatched ships to Banten in order to stifle English competition, Skinner asserted. The EIC may have been the much weaker competitor of the two companies in East Asia, but Skinner maintained, for all their bluster, Maetsuyker and his *Raad* were not much less constrained in their control over Banten's trading network. The manifold “Boats, Prawes and Junks belonging to the said Bantammers” could easily evade the lumbering Dutch Men-of-War. During the past months of the VOC's so-called “siege,” Skinner remarked, the Bantanese trading fleets continued “sayling daily all the seas over, where they please themselves without any endeavor that wee see on your part to hinder the same.”²²⁸ With the real intention of compelling the English to quit Banten, the armed VOC ships rode at least four leagues out to sea, blocking only the comparable English vessels as the “siege rather lay against the English house & people.”²²⁹ The *Endimion* wished only to engage in “fully lawful negotiations” at Banten, Skinner pleaded, with a mission simply to lade commodities for London and supplies for the

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ Response from Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam to the Declaration of the Dutch Council at Batavia, 10 January 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 135r.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 135r-136r.

return journey, with no intention of hindrance or aggression towards the VOC.²³⁰ It was obvious to the Dutch officials, engaged in the same business model as Skinner and his factors, that the denial of the *Endimion* would be economically disastrous, costing the English Company 70 tons dead freight, the Council argued.²³¹ As for Maetsuycker's consistent claims of Christian and civil friendship towards the English, the EIC Council invoked one of Aesop's fables, charging that in their pretended friendship, the VOC was like the devious snake, that when rescued from death, repaid the kindness of its friend with the poison of a venomous bite.²³²

However, in the darkness of that night—the same day that the English Council wrote to Batavia—as two Bantanese merchant prowes, under contract to the EIC factory, glided out towards the *Endimion*, attracting not the slightest notice from the Dutch sentries, it became clear that an alternative motive may have animated English frustration. Indeed, the crew of the *Endimion*, already almost fully laden with pepper, was in no dire need of filling their hull at one of Southeast Asia's primary pepper entrepôts. The ship's mission, in fact, confirmed the *Raad's* worst fears and their competitive reasoning behind the faux blockade. Along with more than 465,000 pounds of pepper, the *Endimion* carried chests holding 180 firearms, promised to Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.²³³ Fashioned as a gift, officially given in amity by Cromwell, but engineered, bought, paid for, and dispatched by the Company, these guns were the key to Skinner's strategy to endear the English to the sultan, surging EIC trade and securing the sultan's endorsement for the EIC's entry into allied Muslim ports, at the very moment that the *Raad* prompted heightened

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² *Ibid.*, 136r.

²³³ *The Endimion* was laded with 3487 picol (pecul) of pepper, with 1 pecul equivalent to 133.5 English pounds, Copy Letter from the Endymion at Jambi to Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam, 16 November 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 91r; Stephan Diller, *Die Dänen in Indien, Südostasien und China (1620-1845)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 343; While *The Endimion* register claimed 180 Harquebuses (guns fired from the shoulder), the Banten Sultan only received 178, and Skinner billed the two missing weapons to the ship's account, Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam to the East India Company in London, 9 March 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 184r.

anxiety and suspicion of their own posture towards Banten.²³⁴

Tired of Maetsuyker's intransigence, and making no headway in the use of natural law and European treaty arguments, the Council decided to take advantage of the Governor-General's own limitations in dealing with the sultanate. Through the trading institutions of Banten, they would effect their rights and advance their interests in competition with the VOC. The Council hired two Bantanese prowes, which would, of course, attract no scrutiny from the Dutch. They instructed their factors to take these vessels out to meet the *Endimion*, ordering them not to speak loudly and to go under cover of darkness to avoid identification as English factors.²³⁵ Ageng Tirtayasa got his arms shipment, and the *Endimion*, having completed its mission, departed for England.²³⁶

The *Raad* and the Banten Council would keep the correspondence records from those three months readily available for reference, and they would dispatch full copies back to their respective directorates in Amsterdam and London. This documentation added to a developing cannon of hybrid commercial, legal, and political policies that regulated the relationship between the two companies in Europe and in Asia. These records would serve as the basis for multiple rounds of inter-company negotiations in Europe, and would be cited in future arguments and agreements between EIC and VOC officials in London, Surat, Batavia, and Madras. Banten would remain an anchor of the intercompany relationship over the subsequent four decades. The shifting political landscape in Asia and the addition of new European competitors would only add to English and Dutch factors' prioritization of their study of each other, their construction of shared organizations, their engagement in legal discourse, and their competition in commerce and diplomacy.

²³⁴ EIC Petition to the Lord Protector, 2 January 1656, TNA CO/77/8 f. 41r.

²³⁵ Frederick Skinner and Council to John Gerrard, Commander of the *Endymion*, Bantam, 10 January 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 141-142; Frederick Skinner and Council at Bantam to the East India Company in London, 9 March 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 184.

²³⁶ List of the Bantam packet for London by the *Endymion*, c. 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 143-144.

While their factory would never justify its exorbitant costs, the EIC Committees would continue to privilege the relationship with the Banten Sultan into the 1680s, leveraging his diplomatic networks to gain entry into markets previously dominated by the Dutch on the Coromandel Coast, and in mainland Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. Subsequent Governors-General, on the other hand, would maintain Banten, and the English factory there, as a central consideration in VOC strategy, in their efforts to gain control over the global pepper trade, and in extending their political influence throughout Southeast Asia. Reflecting on this multi-decade courtship of Banten, Maetsuyker was fond of claiming that the two companies “were like two suitors for one Lady.” English agent William Mainstone agreed, stating in 1659 that, with regards to Banten, “the Dutch intended to ravish her, we to gain her affection.”²³⁷

The Sultanate of Banten served as the key entrepot in the companies’ shared aspirations for the Southeast Asian pepper trade. When combined with the companies’ correspondence from factories across the Indian Ocean, it becomes clear that Skinner and Maetsuycker’s “courtship” of Banten represented how EIC and VOC officials now saw each other as the principal competitors for many of the same prized markets in the East Indies trade.

2.5 Conclusion

In early 1658, Johan Cunaeus sat aboard the flagship of that year’s VOC return fleet, riding before the “Church Valley” on St. Helena Island. After stopping at the Cape, and leaving Batavia’s detailed instructions for Governor Van Riebeeck and the growing colony there, Cunaeus was in the final leg of his journey back to Amsterdam, awaiting a rendezvous with ten other returning VOC vessels at the arid South Atlantic island.²³⁸ It had been nearly a year since he had led the fleet out of Batavia Road, and it would be until August before he would again see

²³⁷ William Mainstone to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3/1 f. 64r.

²³⁸ Instruction for Governor Van Riebeeck at the Cape from Jan Cunaeus, 18 March 1658, WCARS VC 36 f. 137; Maurice Thomson, William Vincent and Samuel Moyer to Mr. Jonas Abeeles in Amsterdam, 2 July 1658, IOR/E/3/85 f. 65v.

his homeland.²³⁹ But Cunaeus and his crew were not the only ones tracking the Dutch fleets' progress. Sitting in their London boardroom, Maurice Thomson and the other leading Committees of the restructured East India Company pored over intelligence reports. Their agents in Amsterdam supplied specific information on the prices of commodities on the Dutch market, as well as events in Asia, and details of the pacing and schedule of Cunaeus's return journey, including weekly estimates of the time spent at the Cape and on St. Helena.²⁴⁰ Indeed, after the First Anglo-Dutch War, the Company maintained a standing committee of its most senior directors, tasked with monitoring all intelligence on the VOC, which was considered crucial for "the Companies best advantage."²⁴¹

After returning to Holland, on 10 January 1659, Cunaeus stood before the States General to deliver the VOC's annual report of the "state of the Indies." In his presentation, he described his world for the past fourteen years. Factory by factory, the *ex-Raad* member narrated the VOC's vast trading network, optimistic at the commercial potential to be unlocked with the Company's recent surge of investment and manpower into Ceylon, South Asia, and the spice archipelagos. But as he spoke to the room of representatives, he also hit a note of caution, relating the complexity of the trade and politics that governed the Company's operations at the Southeast Asian heart of its factory system.

Cunaeus spoke in terms that could have been drawn directly from Jan Pietersz. Coen's seminal 1619 memo, which launched the reorganization of the VOC's trade into a commercial organization that also claimed the sovereign rights of conquest. Cunaeus described the regimes of Banten and Mataram, which defined the political, economic, and geographic boundaries of the

²³⁹ Joan Cunaeus to the States General, 10 January 1659, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738 [unfoliated]; J. Nieuhof's 1658 drawing depicts the fleet riding before the Kerkvalley on St. Helena "at the beginning of 1658," 'Kerckvally van 't Eijlant Sant-Helena,' Coll. Bodel Nijenhuis, UB Leiden; Nieuhof's drawing is also printed in Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 42.

²⁴⁰ Maurice Thomson, William Vincent and Samuel Moyer to Mr. Jonas Abeeles in Amsterdam, 2 July 1658, IOR/E/3/85 f. 65v.

²⁴¹ Court of Committees, 11 June 1658, IOR/B/26 f. 56r.

Company's operations in Southeast Asia. Tracing how the Company had grown according to Coen's plan, Cunaeus placed the success of VOC strategy in agents' ability to navigate the cultural, commercial, and political flows that defined the Indian Ocean World.²⁴²

The challenges facing the VOC were vast, as the report detailed the strengths and policies of the Asian sovereigns, like the Sultan of Banten, who regulated trade along the Indian Ocean littoral. Before commanding the 1656 Return Fleet, Cunaeus had served for at least eight years as one of the most influential members of the *Raad*. During his tenure, he oversaw the *Raad*'s policy shift to prioritize the observation of, and engagement with, the English Company. The recent *generale missive*, which he would have had an influential role in compiling, placed the English Company in a key position in almost every corner of the political and commercial mosaic that formed the VOC's operations in Asia. The EIC was the Dutch Company's peer in a crystallizing system of law, contracts, market strategy and political and economic thought.²⁴³

Cunaeus, of all people, knew that in Batavia, Banten, Isfahan, Surat, and Bengal, the EIC had become a focus of his company's observation, a key consideration of strategy, a significant competitor, and a steady partner. But in his speech before the States-General, Cunaeus mentioned the EIC only once, and in this, he reflected the *Heren*'s approach to their relationship with the EIC, evolving out of the late war.²⁴⁴ In Asia, the EIC was of paramount importance, and the *Heren* certainly understood this, as evidenced in the prominent focus, which the English Company had garnered in VOC correspondence since 1652. But with regards to the Dutch state, the *bewindhebbers* had learned their lesson with the 1654 Commission. If both companies had reacted to the events of the past five years by refocusing on each other, and emulating the principal strategies of their rival, the VOC directors would maintain direct control over their

²⁴² Reporting on the health of the VOC's trade at Malacca, for example, Cunaeus conceded that "due to the great journey of the Moores [Hajj], our business in these parts is not flourishing," Joan Cunaeus to the States General, 10 January 1659, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738 [unfoliated].

²⁴³ Generale Missive, 26 January 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1202 f. 43r-46v, 108r-110r, 114r-120r, 141r, 160-161r.

²⁴⁴ Joan Cunaeus to the States General, 10 January 1659, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738 [unfoliated].

company's engagement with the English East Indies trade.

As Cunaeus reflected on the familiar world he had left behind, William Mainstone reported to the London Committees on the new world, which he had just entered. After recalling Skinner, and cleaning out the corrupt Banten Council leading their South Seas trade, the Committees, led by the Thomson brothers, Cockayne, and Kendall, moved quickly to re-invest in Southeast Asia. Reflecting their new relationship with the VOC, in January of 1658, the Committees replaced the Banten Council with a cohort of merchants like Mainstone, who had extensive Anglo-Dutch mercantile experience.²⁴⁵ Owing to his linguistic and commercial expertise, upon his arrival in Southeast Asia, Mainstone immediately took up a leadership role in the ongoing negotiations with the *Raad*, begun by Skinner and Maetsuyker. He spent much of his first months as the English representative at the VOC's headquarters: a guest of the *Raad*. In early March of 1659, after less than six months in his new posting, Mainstone generated a comprehensive report on the EIC's status in Asia for Governor Thomson and the London Committees. When placed next to Cunaeus's contemporary document, Mainstone's recommendations perfectly outline the contrasting positions of the two companies. Nonetheless, it is striking that both officials assessed their organizations (and each other) with the same set of perspectives, arguments, and practices.

Mainstone saw an EIC network that was not poised, as the Dutch Company was, for the continuation of an already strong commercial inertia. He saw a system in need of radical change if it was to have any chance of survival. There were positive signs. With a new, expanded charter issued in 1657, private trade and interloping again came under the EIC's control, and "our domestick distractions being now (by God's blessing) composed,"²⁴⁶ there was new promise of

²⁴⁵ Court of Committees, 12-13 January 1658, in *A Calendar of The Court Minutes of the East India Company, 1655-1659*, ed. Ethel Bruce Sainsbury (Oxford: Clarendon, 1916), 212-213; [Biographical Note for William Mainstone], nd., IOR/G/21/3/3/1 f. 61r; Skinner returned to England to face the Committees in April 1660, Company in London to the Bantam Council, 12 April 1660, IOR/E/3/86 f. 156v.

²⁴⁶ William Mainstone to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3/1 f. 64r.

more stability and support from the London merchant community and from the Commonwealth government.

However, Mainstone joined the chorus of EIC factors who had presented their directors in London with two options: the Company could either build in the image of the VOC structure, or wither in the Dutch Company's shadow. The past several years of prioritized study and emulation of the Dutch had begun to align the practices, policies, and goals of the two companies in Europe and in Asia. Indeed, Mainstone's present mission, as the EIC's resident at Batavia, was a product of the legal debates developed by Maetsuycker and Skinner, which were, in turn, made possible by the two companies' imperatives for negotiation after 1654, and the shared goals of settlement, commerce, and leverage in Southeast Asia.²⁴⁷

Mainstone argued, however, that the English should emulate the VOC, not only as a free trading merchant, but also as a sovereign conqueror. If done correctly, the EIC had the opportunity to expand and to fully replace the Dutch in Asia. He concluded that, still reliant on the image of strength, the Dutch had yet to realize their goals of adding muscle to an overextended, skeletal factory system. The VOC may have had more than 140 ships in the East Indies, Mainstone noted, but most were for show: ill-manned and ill-equipped.²⁴⁸ The Dutch may fashion Batavia their wealthy "castle" in Asia, but the walls of the city, Mainstone claimed, were so weak that "with the discharge of their own guns, they would fall."²⁴⁹ The VOC's foreign policy was ill-managed, and the new English agent was certain that the thousands of Dutch, Chinese, Malay, and Arab merchants who lived at Batavia harbored nothing but disdain for the Governor-General and the *Raad*, such that "upon sight of an English fleet in that Road, & publication of freedom to the Burghers... the Town Castle & ships would suddenly be

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 64r-v.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 64v.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

surrendered.”²⁵⁰ In short, the VOC was a weak and vulnerable sovereign.

During the previous decade, English factors had begun to translate the VOC’s terms of politics and trade through their own company’s capabilities and internal debates. In the process, it had become clear, Mainstone argued, that with a shared system based on exclusive contracts and preferential political agreements, there could be but one winner. The English agent had experienced the First Anglo-Dutch War in Europe, and he employed the rhetoric of anti-Dutch propaganda from that period to call for the EIC to “beat them [Dutch] into better manners; or beat them out of these.”²⁵¹ He wagered “his life,” that should the Company persuade Cromwell to dispatch 20 frigates and 4000 soldiers to take The Cape and Batavia, in a few months’ time, the EIC would be the master of Eurasian trade.²⁵² If the goal of constitutional parity with the Dutch now united the London boardroom with the factory councils in Asia, and the two companies were increasingly aligned in their laws of commerce, politics, and policy, an injection of state force, Mainstone argued, could turn this common system against the Dutch: “when we are strongest we may do what we please, while they are, they will.”²⁵³

Mainstone and Cunaeus, working for competitors, and writing from opposite sides of the world, nonetheless envisioned futures for their companies that were designed with the same braid of economic ideas—capital liquidity, commercial competition, and credit—and essential political imperatives—employee control, a public image of strength, and interpretations of the law of nations. These ideas were manifest in a common set of institutions, including hierarchical factory networks, privileged trade contracts, and negotiation procedures. These were not the elements of a distinctly European system that had invaded Asia. Rather, they were the results of concomitant events, practices, and beliefs that emerged from Amsterdam and Batavia, London and Madras, Banten and Isfahan.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

The companies' shared structures of communication and control allowed these disparate elements to travel and to blend. And the quotidian and official interactions between the two organizations offered opportunities to breed commensurability, knowledge sharing, and yes—competitive scheming. Looking back ten years prior to the spring of 1659, the *Heren* and the *Raad* had observed the EIC only for incidental commercial statistics, and the London Committees had advised their factors to ignore Dutch activity in favor of closer focus on their own internal operations.²⁵⁴ But through the 1650s, in response to a decade of political challenges in Europe and in Asia, leaders and factors of both companies had refocused on each other. In Southeast Asia, they had initiated debates through which they sought to define their organizations with the same legal identities. And in Europe, company directors had injected an unprecedented level of control into arbitration processes, historically dominated by state governance.

The subsequent decade would witness EIC and VOC leaders link these efforts in Europe and in Asia, in order to develop a trans-oceanic circuit of practice and thought that would define the East Indies trade through the end of the century.

²⁵⁴ Court of Committees to the President and Council at Surat, 30 January-13 February 1650, IOR/E/3/84 f. 104v.

CHAPTER 3

MERCHANT & CONQUEROR: COCHIN & THE FOUNDATION OF A EURASIAN DISCOURSE (1660-1667)

As the Committees and the *Heren XVII* continued to build increasingly overlapping communication and governance networks, the 1660s witnessed the construction of an unprecedented circulating discourse, linking Anglo-Dutch legal and political debates and commercial strategy in Asia with arguments between the directorates in Europe. Chapter 3 traces these developments through a process that would consume both companies for three years: the debate over Cochin. In December of 1662, a VOC armada laid siege to the Malabar port of Cochin, where the Portuguese maintained a significant presence. During the siege, the Dutch held two English ships, the *Leopard* and the *Hopewell*, from entering the port. Historians largely cast this event within a Dutch obsession with dismantling the *Estado da Índia*.¹ The VOC's seizure of the Portuguese stronghold did prompt complaints from the Portuguese embassy at The Hague, but it was the blocking of the two English ships that initiated a far more vigorous and sustained debate between the EIC and VOC directorates.

Through their debates, EIC and VOC officials channeled arguments of law, commerce, and diplomacy to establish legal identities for their companies, constructed in the common terms of the law of nations. The Dutch Company claimed the “conqueror’s” rights of redress and war to prove the legality of their blocking English traffic in a belligerent port. While building to replicate the VOC’s factory network in Asia, the English, nonetheless, maintained the legal entitlements of the “merchant,” advancing the unconditional right of free access to trade.

¹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500-1700: A Political and Economic History* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990); Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1991); Glenn Ames, *Renascent Empire? The House of Braganza and the Quest for Stability in Portuguese Monsoon Asia, ca. 1640-1683* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000); Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003); Gerrit Knaap, Henk den Heijer, Michiel de Jong, eds., *Oorlog en Overzee: Militair optreden door compagnie en staat buiten Europa 1595-1814* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2015); Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976).

Through close examination of the detailed arguments generated by both companies, this chapter exposes the extent to which officials in Europe and in Asia prioritized their mutual observation and emulation, explicitly differentiating their organizations' relationship from their engagement with other Europeans and non-Europeans. While ostensibly inspired to extirpate the Portuguese, Chapter 3 argues that the Dutch strategy on the Malabar Coast was also motivated by VOC officials' recognition that the companies' commercial strategies were now evolving into direct competition.

Political historians have identified the 1660s as an era of continued development of an international system in Europe, in which mercantilist competition dominated European imperial policy.² Chapter 3 upends this historiography. It recognizes a far more nuanced, global system of political and commercial debate driving the East Indies trade, in which the two companies blended their engagement with the ideas and institutions of Asian regimes, as well as European political arguments. Utilizing their overlapping communication networks, they drew in their employees' circulating records from factories in South and Southeast Asia, in addition to the legal standards and political realities of Anglo-Dutch interaction in the Atlantic World.³ The chapter further argues that, as it developed, the companies' transoceanic legal debate deeply influenced European state politics, determining the public discourse of political economy in England and guiding the internal organizational reforms characteristic of governance in the Dutch Republic.

² Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and its Empire* (New York: OUP, 2014); Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*; Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires: England and the Netherlands in the Age of Mercantilism*; James Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (New York: CUP, 1991); The field of World Systems Theory, established by Fernand Braudel to understand the dynamics of global economy and politics also takes this perspective, Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century Vol II: The Wheels of Commerce* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 97-112; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011);

³ Other studies have traced the circulation of ideas in empire within travel narratives and family archives. Among many others: Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (New York: OUP, 2008); Emma Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth-Century History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600-1850* (New York: Pantheon, 2002).

Indeed, it was the companies' legal arguments over Cochin that drove the peace process following the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667), a keystone in the evolution of the "Westphalian" international regime.⁴

3.1 A Common Model: Observation and Emulation Continue

In the early 1660s, EIC officials built on the policies of the previous decade, explicitly imitating the VOC in the further development of English trade in the East Indies. The English Company's existing factory network, however, increasingly proved insufficient to replicate, let alone to compete with, the VOC's sprawling system. But the Restoration of the Stuart Crown, in 1660, presented the Committees with an opportunity to harness European politics toward securing the future of their company. They wrote to their factors, assuring them of the Company's priority to obtain the new king's "royall favour and assistance" in claiming damages against the VOC: "wee doubt not but to recover from them [the Dutch] due satisfaction for what is past, and a good settlement with them in trade for the time to come."⁵ The Committees had reason to be positive. Charles had signaled early support for international trade, and he encouraged his counselors to personally invest in the growing number of trading companies populating the London Exchange. This sentiment was bolstered by the establishment of the king's Councils for Trade and Plantations, which would channel the petitions, complaints, and debates surrounding international trade, with the goal of synchronizing the policies of English East and West Indian ventures.⁶

During the early days of the new king's government, the Committees launched an aggressive two-part approach to Charles and his Council for Trade. In an effort to gain greater

⁴ Randall Lesaffer, *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History: From the Late Middle Ages to World War One* (New York: CUP, 2008), 369; Stephen Neff, *War and the Law of Nations: A General History* (New York: CUP, 2005), 117; Heinz Duchhardt, "From the Peace of Westphalia to the Congress of Vienna," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of International Law*, edited by Bardo Fassbender and Anne Peters (New York: OUP, 2012), 640.

⁵ London to Ft. St. George, 28 January 1660, IOR/E/3/85 f. 183v.

⁶ C.H. Wilson, *Profit and Power: A Study of England and the Dutch Wars* (London: Longmans, 1957), 90-91.

leverage in their relationship with the VOC, the Committees would apply the ideas and institutions, forged in the past decade of dialogue with their Dutch competitors, to Restoration politics. First, they sought the Crown government's endorsement of their interpretation of the law of nations. And second, the Committees endeavored to secure state approval for a colonial regime, including key revisions to their charter that would align their corporate form, legal rights, and commercial model more closely with those of the VOC.

In mid-October of 1660, just four months after Charles II was restored to the throne, the Committees petitioned the new king to review their legal claims against the VOC.⁷ In his formal submission, the EIC's Governor, Andrew Riccard, requested that the king select members of his Admiralty Court to evaluate the Company's claims against the VOC, "according to the law of nations."⁸ The Committees gathered the materials from the previous decade's intercompany debates at Banten, generating summaries of the VOC's patterns of practice and policy in the East Indies.⁹ Framing Charles' new government as the international equal of the States General, the Committees were confident that the Admiralty Judges would approve the EIC's legal interpretations, compelling the king to engage the Dutch States to guarantee the English Company's reparations, as well as "good & sufficient security for the performance of such terms & agreements" for East Indian trade.¹⁰

Charles accepted the EIC's request, and his judicial appointments signaled support for the Committees' strategy. In the fall of 1660, the king referred the case to John Exton, who had previously served as the EIC's advocate in the 1654 arbitration with the Dutch, and to Robert Mason.¹¹ The judges, in addition to the Chief Admiralty Judge, Richard Zouch, returned their report the following January. The Committees could hardly have wished for a more favorable

⁷ EIC Petition to Charles II, 16 October 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 104r-v.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Report of Robert Mason, Richard Zouch and John Exton, 19 January 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 119r-121r.

¹⁰ EIC Petition to Charles II, 16 October 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 104r-v.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Report of the Commissioners of the Two East India Companies, 30 August 1654, TNA SP/103/46, f. 487-519.

ruling on their claims. The judges responded to each of ten individual claims from the past five years, the majority of which dealt with the VOC's blockage of English access to Javanese pepper ports. Beginning with Frederick Skinner's records for the *Endimion* negotiations, the Admiralty jurists indicted the VOC for the barring of English ships from free ports in Southeast Asia and on the Malabar Coast. In the process, they endorsed the EIC officials' own interpretation of the law of nations, which centered on the right of merchants' free access to East Indian ports and markets. The Committees had also structured their submissions to guide the judges towards a particular understanding of their relationship with the VOC in the East Indies trade. The commercial geography of the claims, extending from Java to the Malabar Coast, traced the trade flow of one specific commodity: pepper. The VOC sought the "ingrossing of commodities" at ports where the English competed for trade, the Committees argued, and pepper was the one commodity referenced in all ten claims.¹²

Fully endorsing the Committees' legal self identification as merchants, the three judges decried the VOC's "violent debarring" of EIC ships from English factories and from the independent ports of Aceh and Banten. They condemned the Dutch Company's seizure of English arms at Goa, and they denounced the VOC's practice of exclusive contracts and Dutch officials' targeted "ingrossing" of pepper. Taken together, this pattern of practice amounted to a violation of the law of nations, which "allows all people in Amity the freedom of trade & Commerce."¹³ Recognizing the EIC as an aggrieved merchant organization under the protection of the English Crown, the judges implored the king to take this matter to the Dutch Ambassadors, adding that the Crown had lost potential customs, and the English nation had been greatly dishonored by the VOC's impunity.¹⁴

¹² Report of Robert Mason, Richard Zouch and John Exton, 19 January 1660, f. 119r-121r.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

With the Admiralty Court's endorsement of their legal arguments, the Committees offered the new king a plan for guaranteeing the Company's, and thus his, honor in the East Indies. The opportunity arose in the island of Pulo Run. The arbitration settlement of 1654 mandated that Pulo Run, an island in the Banda Archipelago, which had been seized by the VOC during the 1620s, be returned to the EIC's possession.¹⁵ Dutch intransigence, together with the EIC's own capital and political weakness during the 1650s, had prevented the English Company's occupation of the island.¹⁶ But in light of the restored Stuart monarchy's early support, in late November 1660, the Committees wrote to Charles II requesting a Royal commission for the settling of the island. The commission sought by the EIC would "empower[] them to possesse & plant" Pulo Run, and their establishment on the island would "conduce to the repairation of the Pristine honour of your Majesty's Crowne in those parts" and "increase of your revenue by the enlargement of their [petitioners'] trade."¹⁷ But the Committees also seized on the opportunity to accelerate their construction toward constitutional parity with the Dutch. The benefits of a colonial establishment on Pulo Run would only be realized if the commission also granted the Company a new charter of rights and privileges. The Committees argued for full control over the individuals visiting and settling the island, and ceding the Company "military & civil power, for the perfecting of so hopefull a design."¹⁸

This was a bold request for a brief petition. But the commission for Pulo Run was not solicited in isolation. It was a component of the EIC's greater Restoration strategy, which pursued a dramatic expansion of the privileges and powers of the Company's charter. The Committees also sought to expand the EIC's jurisdictional geography well into the Atlantic, to

¹⁵ Charles Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and Other Powers*, vol. I (London, 1785), 51-66.

¹⁶ Court of Committees to the Directors of the Dutch East India Company at Amsterdam, 5 September 1656, IOR/E/3/84 f. 189v.

¹⁷ EIC Petition to Charles II, 26 November 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 105.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

cover the primary trading routes of West Africa.¹⁹ In concert with the Committees' desire for "military & civil power" at Pulo Run, Riccard detailed the specific institutions and rights, which the EIC desired within the geographic "limits of their Charter."²⁰

For their proposed colonial project in Southeast Asia, as well as a new surge of colonial investment for their South Atlantic victualing station on St. Helena island, the Committees requested that Company officials have the authority "to send to any the places of their Trade such ships of war, men & Ammunition as their occasions shall require, or as to them shall be thought fitting."²¹ With these resources, the EIC would "make peace or War with any Prince or people that are not Christians, in any the places of their Trade, as may be at any time most for the just advantage & benefit of the Company or their Trade."²² To this end, the Committees required the ability to "erect Castles, Fortifications, Forts, Garrisons, Colonies or Plantations..." Furthermore, all of these locations of trade "shall be immediately under the power & command of the Company." Within the growing ranks of the EIC, the Committees sought the authority to manage personnel issues directly, rather than defer to the king's jurisdiction. They sought sovereignty over the Crown's citizens operating within the geography of the Company's charter. This included the administration of civil and criminal law, the capacity to enforce the Company's rights within their jurisdiction, and the ability to seize the ships and assets of those who violated the Company's monopoly on English trade to and from the East Indies.²³ The Committees also requested that their officers in Asia be able to unilaterally seek justice for any "injuries, loss or damage" committed against the Company.²⁴

Rather than an organic development from within English political thought, however, these petitions drew directly from the accumulating legal and commercial debates carried on

¹⁹ Court of Committees, 14 November 1660, IOR/B/26 f. 106r.

²⁰ Additional Provisions and Powers Requested by the EIC, 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 103v.

²¹ *Ibid.*, f. 103r.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, f. 103r-v.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 103r.

between English and Dutch Company officials in Asia and in Europe.²⁵ And they exemplify the emerging influence of intercompany dialogues on European international politics.

Since the First Anglo-Dutch War, English Company officials in Asia had recognized the limitations of their own company's charter, compared with the more expansive regime under which the VOC operated. In the revisions they sought for the EIC charter, the Committees emulated the core privileges enjoyed by the VOC. Through the charter for the Dutch East India Company, the States General had endowed the VOC with "all sorts of authority and jurisdiction" in the East Indies. The VOC exercised authority in the "making of laws and ordinations, the appointment of high and low political officials and justices... for the making of alliances, peace, and war with other potentates."²⁶

The Committees were in possession of Frederick Skinner's detailed legal arguments with Maetsuycker, as well as William Mainstone's reports from within the government compound at Batavia, which described a wealthy and prosperous fortified trading hub, under the direct governance of the *Raad*. From Batavia, Mainstone reported that the VOC officials "Prescribe Lawes to the natives... even to our Nation in these parts."²⁷ He had encouraged his employers to replicate the Dutch system at Batavia, from which "140 or 150 ships... are dispersed about the military & negotiatory Affaires."²⁸ He compelled the Committees to build a Batavia for the EIC somewhere in the Banda islands, concluding that "without some sufficient place of retreat it will be almost impossible to maintain any Trade."²⁹ And Mainstone was not alone. He joined in

²⁵ While Philip Stern has analyzed the evolution of the political debates within the EIC's network, studies of the English Company, and of English Empire, tend to focus on the expansion of English political thought, and ignore the powerful role of Dutch, Portuguese and non-European ideas and institutions; Philip Stern, *The Company-State*; David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: HUP, 2000); Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: YUP, 2009); Philip Lawson: *The East India Company: A History* (New York: Longman, 1993); Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980).

²⁶ Pieter van Dam, *Beschryving van de Oostindische Compagnie 1639-1701*, ed. F.W. Stapel, 1.1, GS 63 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1927), 717.

²⁷ William Mainstone to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3/1 f. 64r-65v.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 64v.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 65r.

chorus with the EIC's Persian factors, who called for the Company to establish its own harbor "towne or castle" on the western coast of India.³⁰

These strong patterns of argument that coursed through a half decade of English factory officials' observation, competition, and negotiation with the VOC, contributed a shared framework of rights, practices, and ideas that led to optimal conditions for the management of the East Indies trade. The English Company's 1657 charter had emulated the VOC's European organization, establishing a permanent capital stock for the EIC. The Committees now employed their factors' reports on the Dutch to replicate the VOC's regime in Asia, securing control over the trade, personnel, and diplomacy of a proprietary port.

The Committees found necessity in such a project, not only in the continued political and commercial ascendance of Batavia, but also in the sustained influence of powerful non-European sovereigns in Asia: Mughal officials at Surat, the Persian Shah at Bandar Abbas, and the Sultan at Banten. If the Crown and Parliament were to grant the EIC rights and abilities commensurate with those of their Dutch competitors, then the English king and Company would be "revered by the Neighbour Indians" and "put sober thoughts into the Agents of the Holland company."³¹

Almost immediately, the Committees began to reap the benefits of their new strategy. Pursuant to the priority of expanding English trade, the Crown granted their expanded charter rights.³² The 1661 charter endowed the EIC with the right to military force in the protection and advancement of their factories and established the Company's ability to "make peace or Warr with any people that are not Christians in any places of their Trade."³³ The Crown approved the Company's privileges to construct and govern factories "within the Limits of their Trade," and the charter also granted the Company further autonomy from the strictures of English diplomacy, allowing Company officials "to right themselves upon any people [both European and non-

³⁰ John Spiller at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 April 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 38v.

³¹ EIC Petition to Charles II, 26 November 1660, TNA CO/77/8 f. 105r-v.

³² Abstract of the Charter Granted to the East India Company, 3 April 1661, TNA CO/77/8 f. 138r-141v.

³³ *Ibid.*, f. 140r.

European] by whom they shall sustaine any Losse or that shall interrupt them in their Trade.”³⁴

Reaffirming the EIC’s monopoly rights, the charter further provided that EIC officials could seize English vessels sailing within their jurisdiction without the Company’s license.³⁵ The legal geography of the EIC’s regime was the only request on which the Committees had not secured affirmation. While the Crown reaffirmed the EIC’s control over English trade “beyond the Cape of Bona Esperanza to the Streights of Megallan,” the Company’s specific request for jurisdiction on the Atlantic Gold Coast was not acknowledged in the government license.³⁶ Forthcoming shifts in Restoration imperial policy would, in fact, altogether remove the EIC from the West African trade.³⁷

With the Crown’s charter, the Committees had succeeded in securing the English government’s endorsement of their arguments, which linked them with the Dutch in a shared historical experience in the East Indies.³⁸ Clearly revealing the confluence of the English and Dutch Companies’ goals, and of their constitutional structure in the East Indies trade, the charter went on to assert that the primary motivation behind the expansion of the EIC’s rights was not domestic. Rather it was to achieve parity with the Dutch East India Company. “Experience hath taught besides the example of the Neighbour [Dutch] Competitors to this Kingdome,” the charter elaborated, “that otherwise by a Joynt Stocke the said Trade is not to bee managed & improved.”³⁹

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 140r.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 138v.

³⁷ Articles Between the Africa & India Companies, 8 December 1663, IOR/H/42 f. 103-104.

³⁸ EIC Petition to the Council of Trade, January 1661, TNA CO/77/8 f. 114r-115r; EIC Petition to Charles I, 3 January 1661, TNA CO/77/8 f. 116r-117v; In their petitions to the Crown, the Committees had steadily developed this narrative since the early 1650s; Abstract of the perticuler and reall losses which the English Company have sustained in divers parts of the East Indies by the proceedings of the Netherlands Company, 14 November 1650, TNA CO/77/7 f. 82r-85v; A Narrative of ye Settlement of the Trade in the East Indies and of the Injuries Susteyned by the Dutch, November 1652, TNA CO/77/7 f. 187r-188v.

³⁹ An Act for Incorporateing the Governor and Company of Merchants of London Tradeing into the East Indies, and for Confirmation [] Charter, 3 April 1661, TNA CO/77/8, f. 144r.

Between 1660 and 1662, the Committees consciously sought to reconstruct their organization to match the constitutional structure of the VOC, securing the same rights, privileges, and autonomy enjoyed by the *Heren* under their own charter. They secured the Admiralty Court's approval for their interpretation of the law of nations, legally identifying the Company as a merchant, entitled to free access to trade.⁴⁰ And they also obtained an expanded charter in direct imitation of the privileges and abilities enjoyed by the VOC. However, a framework for negotiation and debate, linking the companies' relationship in Asia with English and Dutch directors' dealings in Europe, had yet to emerge.

In 1662, the Stuart monarchy focused on sealing an alliance with the Dutch Republic—a treaty that would stabilize the Anglo-Dutch relationship in a politically volatile Europe. Of the twenty-four articles of the Anglo-Dutch treaty issued at Westminster on 4 September 1662, only one dealt explicitly with the East Indies trade. Article 15 reconfirmed the EIC's receipt of Pulo Run, while the *Heren* were again guaranteed indemnity against any English claims in the East Indies prior to 1659.⁴¹ All mutual prescriptions for the treatment of merchant vessels and freedom of trade were restricted to waterways and ports in the parties' "Dominions in Europe."⁴²

However, as the *Heren* and the Committees dispatched copies of the treaties to their factories, a crisis was brewing off of Cochin, on South Asia's western coast. Through the three years that followed, the companies would respond to this crisis by fashioning an unprecedented cycle of legal and commercial dialogue, constructed with arguments generated, not by the state governments, but by company officials from across the EIC and VOC factory networks. For the

⁴⁰ Report of the Admiralty Judges, Robert Mason, Richard Zouch, John Exton, 19 January 1661, TNA CO/77/8 f. 119-121.

⁴¹ *Articles of Peace & Alliance between the most Serene and Mighty Prince, Charles II By the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c and the High and mighty Lords, the States General of the United Netherlands, Concluded the 4th day of September, 1662* (London: John Brill and Christopher Barker, 1662).

⁴² *Ibid.*

first time, these debates would link English and Dutch exchanges in Asia with the companies' relationship in Europe.

3.2 Cochin: Rupture, Debate, & Realization

As copies of the peace treaty made their way out of European harbors, a heavily armed VOC war fleet cut through the waters off of Ceylon. The *Raad* had sent the fleet, led by the battle-tested ex-Governor of the Moluccas, Jacob Hustaerdt, to attack the Portuguese *Estado*'s outposts along the Malabar Coast, the Southwestern Coast of India.⁴³ Throughout the previous decade, the VOC invested tremendous financial resources and thousands of lives to extirpate the Portuguese from Ceylon, the world's primary source of cinnamon and the lynchpin of centuries-old trading circuits that linked the Bay of Bengal with the Western Indian Ocean.⁴⁴ In order to secure these gains against the Portuguese, Rijckloff Van Goens, the VOC's Superintendent at Ceylon, had amplified the aggression of the Company's already hostile relationship with the *Estado*, attempting four attacks on Goa and other Portuguese positions on the Malabar Coast in the late 1650s and early 1660s.⁴⁵ In the autumn of 1662, Hustaerdt overran the *Estado*'s remaining Malabar strongholds, including Cochin and Porca, and established Dutch positions in their place.⁴⁶

⁴³ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 25 September 1662, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738.

⁴⁴ M.N. Pearson, *The Indian Ocean* (New York: Routledge, 2003); R.J. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas: The Indian Ocean World of the Seventeenth Century* (Armonk: ME Sharpe, 2002); K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility Across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge: HUP, 2006); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*.

⁴⁵ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 4 July 1661, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738; J. Heniger, *Hendrik Adriaan Van Reed Tot Drakestein 1636-1691 and Hortus, Malabaricus* (Boston: AA Balkema, 1986), 14; Hugo s'Jacob, "De VOC en de Malabarkust in de 17de eeuw," in *De VOC in Azië*, ed. M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs (Bussum: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1976), 85-99; Hugo s'Jacob, *The Rajas of Cochin 1663-1720* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2000), 17-29; A.R. Disney, *Twilight of the Pepper Empire: Portuguese Trade in Southwest India in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: HUP, 1978), 65-70.

⁴⁶ Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 91-95; Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 186-187.

As news of these bloody events circulated back to Europe, it complicated the already tenuous relationship between the Dutch Republic and the weakened Portuguese Crown, itself besieged by the Hapsburg monarchy of Spain. Historians have interpreted the VOC's aggressive Malabar campaigns as a demonstration of the Dutch Company's unbridled determination to rout the *Estado*.⁴⁷ Subsequent negotiations did ensue between Portuguese and Dutch representatives in Europe.⁴⁸ However, the events of late 1662 would generate far more correspondence and negotiation between English and Dutch Company officials than had ever developed between the States General and the Portuguese embassy.

The Cochin siege was as much a signal of the close convergence of EIC and VOC commercial strategies as it was an element of the VOC's campaign against the *Estado*. As part of the Thomsons' overhaul of the EIC, the Committees had shifted their company's policy, escalating English activity in the primary pepper markets of the East Indies. This pivot was a conscious engagement with the VOC's own strategy. In direct response to Dutch efforts to secure an exclusive contract for the Banten pepper trade,⁴⁹ the Committees dedicated significant political and financial resources to their chief factory of the "South Seas." They watched the records and accounts from Banten closely, as did George Oxinden, the EIC's President at Surat in Gujarat. Ineffective factors were moved out, and in the early 1660s a new wave of agents was dispatched to Banten—the vanguard of an effort to tie Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa closer to the interests of the

⁴⁷ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 52-53; Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 91-95; Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 186-187; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 248-249; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 26-27, 83.

⁴⁸ Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 11 October 1666, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151; Stukken betreffende het feitelijk doen ingaan van de vrede tussen de Staten-Generaal en de Koning van Portugal, 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12577.35.

⁴⁹ The Dutch Governor-General Maetsuycker and his *Raad* continually sought to leverage their greater cash and purchasing capacity, lobbying the sultan to erode the EIC's trading privileges, Factors at Bantam, 30 July 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3/2 f. 187r.

English Company.⁵⁰ Experienced Anglo-Dutch merchants, originally sent to reform the factory in the late 1650s, were now shifted to the neighboring pepper ports of Sumatra to bolster the EIC's business across the most prominent pepper outlets.⁵¹ The Banten agents had also begun to coordinate more consistently with President Oxinden and his Council at Surat, who, in turn, established more trading circuits down the coast to the Indian Ocean's other leading pepper region: Malabar.⁵²

The EIC's recent movements had not gone unnoticed at Batavia, and in fact, VOC factory chiefs from around the Indian Ocean had written to the *Raad* confirming their own interpretation of the EIC's apparent goal of strengthening the English position in key pepper markets.⁵³ With the continued commercial development of Batavia, along with significant military incursions into Java, the Bandas, and Sumatra, the *Raad* had sought to tighten its grip on the Southeast Asian spice outlets. In the VOC's annual "state of the indies" report to the States General, the commander of the 1662 return fleet assured the States that, through the Company's concerted exertion of strength, "great tranquility" had been achieved in its business in the eastern quarters of the Indian Ocean, including "the principal pepper places" on Sumatra.⁵⁴

Rijckloff Van Goens' establishment of Ceylon as a second operational hub in addition to Batavia now allowed the *Heren* and the *Raad* to focus on the pepper markets of the Malabar Coast. Competition for Malabar pepper was stiff. Along with the Portuguese, the *Raad* tracked the significant presence of the EIC agents at Malabar's markets. As was the case at Sumatran

⁵⁰ Court of Committees, 15 October 1660, IOR/B/26 f. 155r; The Committees replaced misbehaving factors, fearful of damaging the relationship with the sultan, Court of Committees, 3 February 1661, IOR/B/26 f. 230v; The Committees also convinced Charles II, himself, to write to the sultan, endorsing the EIC's trade there, Charles II to the King of Bantam, 28 March 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 121v; Charles II to the King of Bantam, 1663, TNA CO/77/9 f. 52r-v.

⁵¹ William Mainstone, William Crouch and Joseph Sayer at Jambi to the Agent and Council at Bantam, 25 August 1664, IOR/E/3/28 f. 124-135; Instructions to Mr Richard Ward and factors at Jambi, 7 September 1668, IOR/G/21/5 f. 35-36.

⁵² John Hunter and Council at Bantam to Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat, 18 August 1663, IOR/E/3/28 f. 34r-35v.

⁵³ Resolutions of the Raad at Batavia, 22 August 1662, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 678 f. 217-224.

⁵⁴ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 25 September 1662, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738.

ports, such as Jambi, it was in spite of the growing English presence that Dutch trade continued to do well at Malabar's pepper outlets.⁵⁵

While the *Heren* and *Raad* had ordered Van Goens to lead an armada to Malabar in order to secure the VOC's gains in Ceylon and to "drive our enemies the Portuguese from there,"⁵⁶ another "very considerable" issue for the Company had also inspired these orders.⁵⁷ If Van Goens could successfully overrun the *Estado's* well-defended garrison at Cochin, then the VOC would "doubtless... become the master of the entire pepper trade along the coast of Malabar."⁵⁸ The *Heren* and the *Raad* reasoned that, if they were able to link their dominance in the centuries-old Southeast Asian spice circuits with control over the well-established Malabar markets, the VOC could exert leverage over the most important networks of the pepper trade. Upon receipt of Van Goens' advance estimates of the pepper available from Cochin, the *Heren* wrote to Governor-General Maetsuycker, hopeful that "through their violence... they would get the entire pepper trade."⁵⁹ The *bewindhebbers* did not expect to gain mastery of Malabar pepper simply by expelling the Portuguese. Rather, this show of force would bolster the effectiveness of the VOC's legal tools of commerce, ensuring that subsequent exclusive contracts with the regional sovereigns of Malabar would be fully observed.⁶⁰

The EIC's evolving commercial priorities in Asia, however, as well as the previous year's news of the English state's closer political alliance with the Portuguese Crown, infused this mission with a new urgency.⁶¹ The *Raad* knew of Charles' marriage to the Portuguese *Infanta* in 1662, in which the English Crown had received the Island of Bombay in the marriage contract

⁵⁵ Emphasis is my own, Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 4 July 1661, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738.

⁵⁶ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 25 September 1662.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*; This goal is also confirmed in the *Raad's* resolutions, Resolution of the Raad, 22 August 1662, ANRI K66a/874 f. 290-298.

⁵⁹ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 25 September 1662.

⁶⁰ Rapport van de Retour Vloot aan de Staten Generaal, 25 September 1662; Resolutions of the Raad at Batavia, 22 August 1662, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 678 f. 217-224.

⁶¹ Resolutions of the Raad at Batavia, 22 August 1662, 219.

with the House of Braganza. The Crown dispatched Sir Abraham Shipman and the Earle of Marlborough with a small naval fleet to take possession of Bombay.⁶²

While the turnover of Bombay had not yet been announced at Batavia, the *Heren* informed Maetsuycker that any alliance would likely result in the Portuguese gifting Charles with one or more of their forts in Asia, introducing the possibility of allied Anglo-Portuguese shipping and defense in the East Indies. The VOC had fought to gain its advantages in Ceylon, and now Van Goens saw his company in a position to extend “lordship of the Indian Sea” against the *Estado*.⁶³ But if the EIC, supported by the new king in London, and gaining ground in the Asian pepper markets, was to suddenly receive key Portuguese ports on the Malabar Coast, “so must the ruine of the Company [VOC] follow, the English should reach their long desired goal,” Van Goens argued to his fellow *Raad* commissioners.⁶⁴

In late August, the *Raad* dispatched a fleet of thirteen ships from Batavia,⁶⁵ under the command of Jacob Hustaerdt, to take Cochin and nearby Portuguese pepper markets, including Porca. The ships were to allow no English vessel to dock at any besieged ports. Invoking the law of nations, the *Raad* instructed Hustaerdt to block any English vessel as a suspected ally of the besieged Portuguese.⁶⁶

Hustaerdt’s fleet arrived at Ceylon on 18 October 1662, quickly overpowering the Portuguese defenses around Cochin.⁶⁷ Portuguese observers were impressed by the Dutch units, which totaled at least 800 men. But even more awe-inspiring to the Portuguese was the “infinite number of the Country people” that marched with the Dutch—the result of Van Goens’ previous three Malabar campaigns and his ongoing efforts to establish political alliances with local

⁶² Court of Committees, 18 December 1661, IOR/B/26 f. 221r.

⁶³ *Ibid.*; Resolutions of the Raad at Batavia, 22 August 1662, ANRI K66a/874 f. 290-298.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Wouter Schouten, *Wouter Schouten’s Oost-Indische Voyagie*, Book III (Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs, 1676), 2.

⁶⁶ Resolutions of the Raad at Batavia, 22 August 1662, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 678 f. 220-222.

⁶⁷ Account of the Siege of Cochin City, 27 December 1662, IOR/G/36/103 f. 20r-v; Narrative of the Dutch Siege of Cochine, 7 February 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 73r-74v.

rulers.⁶⁸ On 3 November, Van Goens, who had been kept at Batavia by illness, arrived at Cochin with a support fleet and launched a series of attacks that eventually overran the Portuguese garrison. Three days after Christmas, the Portuguese governor surrendered the city to terms that purged Cochin of *Estado* officials, officers, and priests.⁶⁹

While Van Goens had achieved his goal of extirpating the Portuguese, the *Raad*'s instructions, providing a legal defense for the blocking of English vessels, presaged a conflict that lingered long after the VOC's siege. All Hallows' Eve of 1662 found James Snow, Captain of the EIC ship *Hopewell*, in his cabin angrily drafting a protest against Commander Hustaerdt. Sitting off the coast of Porca, just south of Cochin, Snow's *Hopewell* rode high in the water, the ship's hull empty of its contracted cargo of pepper which still sat in port.⁷⁰ Snow claimed that, for nearly a week's time, his vessel had been illegally prevented from entering Porca. The VOC officials were impeding the free trade of a peaceful merchant vessel, not the warships of a belligerent's ally. Snow recounted how a Dutch Man-of-War had blocked all of his efforts to sail nearer to the city, denying his voyage its valuable cargo and costing the EIC dearly.⁷¹

After the disappointing return of the *Hopewell*, EIC President Oxinden at Surat sought a different avenue for the lading of his company's Malabar pepper. He and his Council established an agreement with Lord Marlborough, and the Royal Navy's ship *Leopard* would stop in Porca to lade the pepper and return it safely to England.⁷² But the VOC ships also denied the *Leopard* entry, Hustaerdt offering instead to ferry supplies into the English factory, and return with the

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 73r.

⁶⁹ The same policies employed by the VOC against English captives in the First Anglo-Dutch War also guided Van Goens' response to the Portuguese garrisons at Cochin. Any Eurasian organization was dependent upon the relatively small number of employees operating in Asia, and thus the most damage would be dealt to the *Estado* by altogether removing their personnel from the East Indies. Portuguese soldiers were to be shipped to Batavia, where they would be loaded onto that year's return fleet for the Dutch Republic. Upon arrival in Holland, they would be "set at liberty"—all at the VOC's expense, Account of the Siege of Cochin City, 27 December 1662, 20r-v.

⁷⁰ Protest Against the Dutch at Cochin by James Snow and Officers of the Hopewell, 31 October 1662, IOR/E/3/27 f.174-175.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Sir George Oxinden and Council at Swally to John Harrington and Alexander Grigby at Porkad, 6 December 1662, IOR/E/3/27, f. 181-182.

pepper for the *Leopard's* voyage. The *Leopard's* captain declined the offer, and the ship was forced to make the long journey back to London without any of its intended cargo, save detailed accounts of the VOC's denial of English commerce on the Malabar Coast.⁷³

Hustaerdt had also generated reports of the encounters and responses to the English protests. His justification was simple: the VOC sought to conquer the "Portugall towne" of Cochin. As the English were known "friends of our Enemies," the VOC could, "according to the rights of all nations" block the English from entering the *Estado's* Malabar harbors.⁷⁴ The protests of the *Hopewell* and *Leopard* circulated back to London and to Amsterdam. Following the Treaty of 1662, both directorates applied the arguments articulated through these protests to generate a heated political debate in Europe. In addition to generating rival legal identities for corporate trade into the East Indies, the Committees and the *Heren* used the debates to analyze the differences in each other's institutional contexts. English and Dutch directors then applied their assessments of their rival, influencing powerful domestic debates of political economy in England and in the Dutch Republic.

Following the *Leopard's* arrival back to England in June of 1663, the reports of what had passed between the two English vessels and Commander Hustaerdt quickly reached the Court of Committees.⁷⁵ After two weeks of analyzing the accounts and protests, Sir Richard Ford and his subcommittee for "dutch business" developed a petition and submitted it to the king.⁷⁶ The Committees were hopeful, if not expectant, that the king would be quick to respond to their

⁷³ Instructions from Sir George Oxinden and Council to Capt Richard Minors to Sail for Porkad, 6 December 1662, IOR/E/3/27, f. 183-184; List of the Surat Packet for London, November 1662, IOR/E/3/27 f. 178; Sir George Downing to the States General, 7 November 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5904 [unfoliated].

⁷⁴ Translations of Jacob Hustaerdt's Declaration and Reply to Snow's Protest, 9 November 1662 – 11 November 1662, IOR/E/3/27 f. 176-177.

⁷⁵ Court of Committees to Capt. Richard Minors, 30 June 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 131v.

⁷⁶ Court of Committees, 15 July 1663, IOR/B/26 f. 323v; Court of Committees to the President and Council at Surat, 10 August 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 148v.

request for reparations and satisfaction, “himself being somewhat concerned therein.”⁷⁷ The *Leopard*, after all, was a Royal Navy vessel. Ford’s strategy worked, and on 30 October, nearly a year to the day after the events in question, the Committees dispatched a thick packet, including all of the protests and counter-protests received via the *Leopard*, to Sir George Downing, the king’s ambassador at The Hague. With the king’s instruction, the Committees requested Downing to “use your utmost endeavors to get us Just satisfaction” for the lost cargoes of the *Leopard* and the *Hopewell*.⁷⁸ A year after the ratification of the 1662 Treaty, and still without possession of Pulo Run, the Committees also solicited Downing to use these complaints to secure a much greater goal in their relationship with the VOC: “assurance of their (VOC) fair correspondence for the future in all parts of India.”⁷⁹

As a state diplomat, Downing’s management of the negotiations appears to support political historians’ casting of the 1660s as a period in which politics and ideologies overtook merchant interests as the primary driver of England’s international relations in northern Europe. However, the Company’s dealings with Downing regarding Cochin reveal a far more nuanced relationship.⁸⁰ Downing had served as Oliver Cromwell’s Ambassador to The Hague, and he was one of a handful of Dutch experts, including Benjamin Worsley on the Council of Trade, who remained in influential commercial policy positions in the Restoration government.⁸¹ While the Committees had sought the king’s official referral of the Cochin matter to Downing’s care, the

⁷⁷ Court of Committees to the President and Council at Surat, 10 August 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 148v

⁷⁸ List of the Packett sent Sr George Downing, 30 October 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 161r.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ David Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires*, 40; Charles Wilson, *Profit and Power*, 143-158; Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England 1660-1760* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 136-144; Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 379-406; Keith Feiling, *British Foreign Policy, 1660-1672* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 207; Gijs Rommelse, “The role of mercantilism in Anglo-Dutch political relations, 1650-74,” *Economic History Review* 63, no. 3 (2010), 591.

⁸¹ Benjamin Worsley to the Duke of Buckingham, 23 January 1670, TNA CO/77/11 f. 187-208; Leng, *Benjamin Worsley (1618-1677)*, 154-155.

subcommittee on “dutch business” had clearly been communicating with him immediately after receiving news of the *Leopard* and the *Hopewell*.⁸²

Indeed, early modern diplomats such as Downing rarely conformed to the one-dimensional image of state ambassadors presented by historians of diplomacy and international relations.⁸³ In addition to representing the interests of Charles II and his subjects, Downing acted as a dually authorized agent of the English East India Company.⁸⁴ The Committees left crucial decisions to Downing’s discretion, reminding him that “when your Honor was here we gave you sufficient power to ask therein, and intimated our desires that things might be brought to an issue by your hands.”⁸⁵ It was in no way a special occasion for selected Committees to meet and to dine with Downing privately to discuss EIC business. The ambassador corresponded directly with the Committees regarding Cochin and other issues, frequently relying on their discretion to report his work to the Council of State and to the king.⁸⁶ The geographic proximity of London and The Hague also meant that the Committees could feed him any necessary answers and documentation within a few days of his asking.

After receiving the preliminary materials relating to Cochin, Downing moved quickly, submitting an official complaint to the States General on 17 November, which indicted the VOC

⁸² List of the Packett sent Sr George Downing, 30 October 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 161r.

⁸³ Mattingly’s study is still the standard work on the subject, Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1955); Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox, eds., *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); Daniela Frigo and Adrian Belton, *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000); Michael Brown, *Itinerant Ambassador: The Life of Sir Thomas Roe* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1970); Colin Mitchell, *Sir Thomas Roe and the Mughal Empire* (Karachi: Area Study Center for Europe, 2000); Michael Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe, 1581-1644: A Life* (Salisbury, Wiltshire: M. Russell, 1989); Recent studies have moved away from the literature’s Eurocentric approach, focusing instead on state formation and inter-cultural contact in Asia, including: Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge: HUP, 2012); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mughals and Franks: Explorations in Connected History* (New Delhi: OUP, 2005); Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

⁸⁴ Letters of Attorney or Procuracon to Sir George Downing, [undated], IOR/I/2/6 f. 116r.

⁸⁵ William Thomson to Sir George Downing, 28 September 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 217v.

⁸⁶ Court of Committees, 20 March 1662, IOR/B/26 f. 300v.

for the blocking of the *Hopewell* and the *Leopard*. Both ships meant only to fulfill the EIC's pepper contracts at Porca, the Ambassador wrote. In their denial of this mission, the VOC officials caused "great dishonor to the king and damage to the English Company."⁸⁷ Refining Snow's arguments from aboard the *Hopewell*, Downing put forward the EIC's claim to the merchant's rights to the free access of trade, provided by the law of nations.⁸⁸

Ten days later, the VOC's chief administrator, or *Advocaat*, Pieter van Dam, authored the VOC's response to Downing. This first exchange initiated a nearly six-month written debate between the two company officials over the correct legal identification shared by both organizations in the East Indies trade. Citing his own copy of the *Leopard's* official protest, as well as reports from Van Goens and the Dutch factory at Surat, the *Advocaat* did not deny the facts of the matter: representatives of his company had stopped the *Leopard* and the *Hopewell* before Porca. But this had all been in accordance with the law of nations. Indeed, Van Dam could not understand "with what right this issue with the English... may be voiced."⁸⁹ While Downing had focused on the rights of commerce, Van Dam claimed that the EIC was seeking to deny the Dutch Company the sovereign rights of conquest, "as if the conquests of lands and cities gave no

⁸⁷ Protest of Sir George Downing to the States General, 26 November 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.83.1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*; The tensions between the rights of merchants to access trade and the sovereign rights of conquerors to control occupied areas run throughout Hugo Grotius's *de iure Praedae*, originally commissioned by the VOC in 1603, as a legal defense for the Company's seizure of the Portuguese carrack, Sta. Catarina, in the straits of Malacca; Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (New York: OUP, 1999), 78-108; Peter Borschberg, "Grotius, Maritime Intra-Asian Trade and the Portuguese Estado da Índia: Problems, Perspectives and Insights from De iure praedae," in *Property, Piracy and Punishment: Hugo Grotius on War and Booty in De iure praedae – Concepts and Contexts*, ed. Hans W. Blom (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 31-60; On private property and the Law of Nations, see Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (New York: CUP, 2002), 52-59; Grotius's work for the VOC had already served as the principal text through which the companies generated arguments over the Law of Nations in the 1610s. See, among others, Van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle*; David Armitage, "Introduction," in *The Free Sea, trans. Richard Hakluyt, with William Welwod's Critique and Grotius's Reply*, ed. David Armitage (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004), 6-13; Clark and Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences Between England and the Netherlands in 1613 and 1615*.

⁸⁹ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 26 November 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.83.1 [unfoliated].

right of lordship.”⁹⁰ The *Advocaat* followed Hustaerdt’s argument, casting Porca and Cochin as cities under Portuguese sovereignty, subsequently conquered with the VOC’s weapons and investment.⁹¹ The Dutch commanders were thus more than justified in turning away the EIC’s commercial vessels, like the *Hopewell*, Van Dam argued.

But beyond his legal identification of the Dutch Company, Van Dam also attacked Downing’s casting of the EIC as a merchant. After all, for the previous three years, the Committees had consciously built toward the Dutch model of trade and settlement in Asia. Maintaining that the English were not simply passive merchants on the Malabar Coast, Van Dam invoked the *Raad*’s suspicions, which had served as an original motivation for the Cochin campaign. The *Advocaat* reported that the *Leopard*, “supposing itself to be Portuguese,” had actually been dispatched with the mission to assist the *Estado* in re-taking its Cochin fortress from the Dutch.⁹² This allowed Van Dam to conclude that Hustaerdt had been more than generous in his offer to ferry the EIC’s pepper between the *Leopard* and the English factory at Porca. Rather than only being barred from the harbor, the ship could have been justly seized as a belligerent vessel.

Correspondence traveled quickly between London and The Hague. And just as it did amid Banten and neighboring Batavia in the late 1650s, a written legal discourse developed between the two company directorates—though officially facilitated through Downing and the States General. In a letter to Downing, dated 4 December, the outgoing Governor of the EIC, Thomas Chamberlain, rebutted Van Dam’s limiting of the companies’ rights to the conqueror’s privilege. Chamberlain agreed that there was no difference between the two companies’ legal identities. His disagreement was that Van Dam had privileged the wrong rights. Chamberlain flatly denied the idea that either the *Leopard* or the *Hopewell* were in any way sailing missions

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

for the Portuguese. Both ships' instructions were for the English Company's commerce: lading pepper, opium, and calicos, and not "any other goods that were contrabanda."⁹³ He then shifted to challenge Van Dam's characterization of Malabar's political geography. Both ships were bound for Porca, not Cochin, he argued. While the *Estado* maintained a garrison near Cochin, Porca lay a full fourteen miles to the South, and was "a place of noe defence, having noe garrison or Fortification."⁹⁴ If the VOC wanted to claim the rights of conquest against the Portuguese fort at Cochin, then English trade at Porca fell well beyond the jurisdiction of the VOC's claims.

Turning to a detailed analysis of South Asian politics, the Committees sought to further deny Van Dam's access to the rights of war, reminding him that Cochin and Porca were, in fact, not Portuguese towns. Rather, the two port cities operated under a complex political system of vassalage, with the Rajas of Cochin and Porca ruling under the authority of a regional Zamorin or Emperor. Van Goens' claim to besiege the Malabar cities was thus "mere fallacy," as was the VOC's argument for enforcing an exclusive pepper contract with the Raja of Porca. The VOC had not claimed to besiege either of those rulers.⁹⁵ As a merchant organization, the EIC, like the Dutch Company, had maintained a factory in Porca for more than a decade by invitation of the Raja, Chamberlain argued. The sovereignty thus lay with that ruler, and only he could block continued English trade. The Committees argued that, "by the law of nations, the Hollanders upon the pretense of an agreement, made with the said Rajah to buy up all his pepper, have no power to exclude us from the trade of that place."⁹⁶

This was a familiar pivot for the EIC, and the Committees' interpretation resonated with strong echoes of the arguments levied by Frederick Skinner against Governor-General Maetsuycker on Java in the late 1650s. Skinner had attacked the Governor-General's argument that the VOC possessed the same rights as a sovereign state, to seek redress, to declare war, and

⁹³ Thomas Chamberlain to Sir George Downing, 4 December 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 162v-163r.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Thomas Chamberlain to Sir George Downing, 4 December 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 163r.

to impose exclusive control over commercial waterways. Indeed, Skinner's protests, which cast both companies' rights as mercantile agents under the regime of the Sultan of Banten,⁹⁷ would have been at the fore of the Committees' minds. They were key references in the EIC's recent petition campaign, leading up to the 1662 Anglo-Dutch treaty.⁹⁸

As the arguments continued to escalate between the companies, by March of 1663, so much had been written back-and-forth, yielding no resolution regarding the *Leopard* and the *Hopewell*, that Downing welcomed the invitation to join several *bewindhebbers*, in laying all of their arguments before a full session of the States General. All parties could be exposed to the same information and opinions, and a resolution could, hopefully, be brokered between the companies.⁹⁹ Downing's chronicle of the session describes how, with the States-General delegates watching, he engaged Van Dam in a four-hour bilateral negotiation on the floor of the Dutch legislature's *Ridderzaal*.¹⁰⁰

The negotiations were "for the most part a Repetition" of previous written arguments.¹⁰¹ Addressing each of Van Dam's contextual explanations in turn, Downing maintained a close focus on the legal arguments for the EIC's right, as a merchant, to trade unhindered at Porca. Directly engaging with each of Downing's arguments, Van Dam was even willing to entertain that the two companies' shared legal identities could be those of the merchant, rather than of the conqueror. Were this to be the case, the *Advocaat* maintained, the EIC still need not have incurred losses. The VOC officers did offer to ferry the English goods between shore and the

⁹⁷ Court of Committees to Sir George Downing, 16 August 1661, IOR/E/3/86 f. 19v; For Skinner's earlier arguments, see for example, Frederick Skinner and Council to the Dutch Governor-General and Council, 19-20 December 1656, IOR/E/3/25 f. 112-114.

⁹⁸ Court of Committees to Sir George Downing, 16 August 1661, f. 19v.

⁹⁹ Sir George Downing to the Company, 18 March 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 81r-82v.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*; For an examination of the spaces and practices of regular and special meetings of the States General see: Henk te Velde and Diederik Smit, eds., *Van Torentje tot Trêveszaal: De geschiedenis van de noordzijde van het Binnenhof* (Den Haag: De Nieuwe Haagsche, 2011); Th.H.P.M. Thomassen, "Instrumenten van de Macht: De Staten-Generaal en hun Archieven," PhD diss., Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2009.

¹⁰¹ Sir George Downing to the Company, 18 March 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 81r.

Leopard.¹⁰² Downing cut back, however, that one could not claim ownership over that which he could not have custody: “to say they [goods] were Ours and yet that we might not dispose of them, was all One as to say they were not Ours.”¹⁰³

Downing also turned to the corporate structure, which the EIC had built over the past three years, and which now united the EIC with the VOC in a common constitutional framework. He urged that the system of contracts that held up the hierarchy of both companies would not have allowed the EIC President at Surat, the factors at Porca, nor the captain of the *Leopard* to cede the goods to the custody of a Dutch ship. The Court of Committees had issued orders for the lading of the Porca pepper by English employees on English vessels. To do otherwise violated their contract with their employers, and placed an unthinkable liability on their heads. Should the factors have approved the lading of the pepper onto a Dutch vessel, and then lost the pepper to an accident, storm, or scheme of the VOC employees, “who should have secured them from their Masters at London[?]”¹⁰⁴

After more than four hours of debate, Downing seemed confident enough that he had proven the two companies’ shared merchant rights, that he asked Van Dam “whither there remained the least shadow of a Pretext for what had been done to the said ship in defeating her voyage.”¹⁰⁵ In what must have been a moment of deafening silence in the chamber, Downing reported no response from Van Dam. After hours of reserve, *Raadpensionaris* De Witt, the leader of the Republic’s government, reacted from the presiding chair, “press[ing] the Advocate very hard” for further justification. But the flustered VOC official could only fall back on the disjointed communication networks of Eurasian trade, responding that the *bewindhebbers* awaited

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 82r.

the year's *general missive*,¹⁰⁶ which would come with the return fleet, to be more “fully informed” on the matter.¹⁰⁷

Likely sensing that he had a moment of leverage to secure the argument in the EIC's favor, Downing concluded with a push for the Committees' central goal in their relationship with the Dutch Company. Likely looking straight at Van Dam, Downing pledged his eagerness to debate proposals “for the better Ordering the affaires of the two Companies.”¹⁰⁸ After Van Dam and De Witt quickly agreed to the same, Downing assured them that the establishment of a regulatory framework between the two commercial organizations would be “a greate Proffitt to both,” likely surging both Companies' share prices “50 pCent more.”¹⁰⁹

Downing's concluding comment likely targeted his specific audience. Indeed, beyond the VOC's officials, the broader populace of the Dutch Republic perceived the VOC as a commercial organization. A significant source of the VOC's influence in the Republic stemmed from one of its key institutional features, which also differentiated it from the EIC's capital market: ownership of VOC shares was open to anyone, and a significant cross-section of the Dutch populace were shareholders.¹¹⁰ In addition to the companies' legal debate over the rights of the merchant versus the privileges of the conqueror in Asia, Downing's comment leads to a second key dynamic at play in the Cochin negotiations. In articulating their arguments, Company officials revealed their close study of each other's political contexts in Europe. They employed their observations, both to gain leverage in their legal arguments, and to craft powerful interventions in the debates driving the formation of political economy in England and in the Dutch Republic.

¹⁰⁶ The *generale missive* was the summary memo sent annually from the Governor-General and *Raad* at Batavia to the *Heren XVII* in the Republic. This document, frequently over 400 pages in length, summarized the reports from all of the *Raad*'s subsidiary factories in Asia.

¹⁰⁷ Sir George Downing to the Company, 18 March 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 82r.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution,” 641-672; Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 23-25.

Through debate over Cochin, officials in both companies continued to build a mutually recognized system of legal discourse that had emerged from the First Anglo-Dutch War and the Banten siege disputes of the 1650s. In order to form their arguments, EIC and VOC officials generated nuanced understandings of the rival company's political context. The EIC became an entry point through which Van Dam and the *bewindhebbers* examined the Restoration's organization of politics and commerce. The VOC served as a similar portal for Downing and for the Committees. They studied each other, not in the terms of the monolithic abstractions of theorists, or "mercantilists," that have come to define early modern international relations.¹¹¹ Rather, in service to their arguments, English and Dutch Company officials prioritized a detailed understanding of their competitors' institutions and ideas. They also infused these perspectives into key arguments driving debates over political economy in England and in the Dutch Republic.

Along with his lengthy commentaries on the law of nations, Pieter van Dam's responses to Downing were also riven with informed observations of the EIC's position in the developing imperial policy of the Restoration government. While Van Dam argued for the legality of the VOC's interception of English shipping at Porca, he also instructed Downing that the same practice was at the core of English imperial policy in the Caribbean: "we took both places by force, as the English like to reflect, on that which is practiced and done by them in the Caribbean Islands," where Dutch ships were seized and expelled from waters surrounding islands claimed by the English.¹¹² The *Advocaat* argued that complaints of the Dutch West India Company (WIC)

¹¹¹ Eli Heckscher, *Mercantilism*, trans. Mendel Shapiro (New York: Macmillan, 1955); Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and its Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Lars Magnusson, *Mercantilism: The Shaping of an Economic Language* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires*; Steve Pincus, "Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, No. 1 (January 2012): 3-34; Hont, *Jealousy of Trade*.

¹¹² Pieter van Dam to the States General, 26 November 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.83.1.

were constant, regarding the English blocking of Dutch traffic “in the seas around the lands that they [English] possess.”¹¹³

Van Dam’s pivot to a perspective of English imperial policy represented more than a move to parry Downing’s arguments. It was an indication of the *Advocaat*’s greater understanding of the EIC’s competitive position within the political economy of English trade. Unlike the VOC, which Van Dam and the *Heren* deliberately sought to distance from Dutch West Indies activity, many of the leaders of the EIC, including the Thomsons and Sir Richard Ford, were also prominent figures in English Atlantic ventures.¹¹⁴ But Van Dam had also acquired an understanding of the rival English interests faced by the EIC within the East Indies trade. Since Charles II had regained the throne, Van Dam had been busy fending off Downing’s claims for Stuart loyalists who had been denied access to the Commonwealth regime. The heirs and creditors of William Courteen, to whom Charles I had granted the right to trade in the East Indies during the 1630s and 1640s, now appealed for restitution for the VOC’s seizure of their ships *Bon Esperanza* and *Bonaventura*.¹¹⁵

While state sanctioned rivals to the English Company’s monopoly added to the context of the debate between Downing and Van Dam, a key dynamic of the English East Indies trade had also shifted since 1662, when the English state, itself, had entered the Indian Ocean. The article of the marriage contract between Charles II and Catherine of Braganza granting Bombay to the English King circulated from The Hague across the VOC’s factory network.¹¹⁶ This only

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Steven Pincus and Robert Brenner have examined these connections in exhaustive studies. Pincus refers to Richard Ford, for example, as “perhaps the single most powerful merchant in Restoration London,” Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 249; Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*.

¹¹⁵ Charles II to the States General, 20 March 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5904; Memories van de Engelse Envoyé Downing aan de Staten-Generaal, 21 August 1664, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.80.2; Protest of Sir George Downing to the States General, 7 November 1663, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 12576.83.1; Pieter van Dam to the States General, 25 November 1663, TNA CO/77/9, f. 42r-v.; Memorie van de Staten-Generaal aan den Engelschen gezant Downing over de kwestie van de schepen Bonne Espérance, en Henry Bon Aventure, alsmede van de schepen der O.I.C. Hoopwel en Luypaard, 1664, NA 1.10.48 Inv. Nr. 32.

¹¹⁶ Copia Artyckel van Vreede tusschen Engelant en Portugaal aangegaan, 23 November 1663, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1245 f. 371r; Raad to Coopman and Council at Wingurla, 2 September 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr.

confirmed Van Goens' original fears of an Anglo-Portuguese alliance and Van Dam's persistent allegations, that the *Leopard*—officially a state ship under the command of the Earl of Marlborough, and not the EIC—was carrying communication for the Portuguese. Along with supplies for Bombay, the *Leopard* had, prior to stopping at Porca, also delivered the *Estado*'s new Viceroy to Goa—a fact known to Van Goens and the *Raad*, as well.¹¹⁷ This was an awkward scenario for the EIC: the Committees needed to maintain a positive relationship with their king, and better yet, cultivate his dependence on their network in Asia. But Company officials were also well aware of the liabilities that the Crown brought into the East Indies, injecting men, ships, and strategy that the Company could not control, especially so close to the EIC's seat of administration at Surat.¹¹⁸ The Committees, themselves, had begun to carefully highlight these conflicts in their petitions in London.¹¹⁹

Van Dam's accusations confronted the Committees with the precise vulnerabilities that they feared in this increasingly complicated arrangement with the Crown. And in his advocacy for both the Company and his king, Downing was forced to tread carefully, recognizing Van Dam's clear understanding of the current jurisdictional overlaps between the EIC and the English state in the East Indies. Responding to the *Advocaat*'s accusation that the *Leopard* was really sailing for the *Estado*, Downing employed rather liberal exaggeration, claiming that, at the time of the siege of Cochin, the English king maintained a “considerable fleet” on the West Coast of India, under the command of the Earle of Marlborough. Though the Earle had been “solicited by

888 f. 400.

¹¹⁷ Generale Missive, 21 December 1663, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1241 f. 181; Court of Committees to Joseph Bathurst and Richard Manning in Amsterdam, 27 February 1662, IOR/E/3/86 f. 112r.

¹¹⁸ Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat to the Company in London, 16 March - 4 April 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 187v-188v.

¹¹⁹ Instructions from Sir George Oxinden and Council to Capt Richard Minors, 6 December 1662, IOR/E/3/27 f. 183-184; Statement of Company's Case for not allowing dead freight for the ship *Leopard*, 5 February 1667, IOR/H/36 f. 1-2.

the Portguezes” to meddle in the VOC’s siege, he did not, confirming that “his majesty was a Neuter as in friendship with both.”¹²⁰

Downing’s communications with the Committees and the Council of State were not always defensive. Far beyond the immediate issues of the *Hopewell* and the *Leopard*, he also used his encounters with the *Heren*, and with the States General, to develop an understanding of the VOC’s position in Dutch politics. In March of 1664, Downing confirmed the Committees’ views, demonstrating “what influence this East India Company [VOC] have” over the Dutch government—a perception made all the more powerful by De Witt’s entry, side by side with Van Dam, to the VOC’s negotiation with the English Ambassador.¹²¹ In addition, Downing had gained an appreciation for the inter-provincial politics with which the VOC leadership engaged. While its chambers of *bewindhebbers* were spread across six cities, the VOC’s center of power was unquestionably in Amsterdam. Zeeland was the second most influential chamber, and the *Heren XVII* did meet in Middleburgh every six years. However, Amsterdam represented more than fifty percent of the Company’s gross share capital and held eight of its directors’ seats.¹²² It was always either to the *Heren*, or to the Amsterdam “Presiding Chamber,” that Downing directed his inquiries and communications.

The greater point to be gleaned from Downing’s observations was that, when compared with its English counterpart, the institutional politics of the Dutch Republic allowed the VOC far greater control to define its role in public governance and diplomacy: a responsibility that fell, primarily, to Pieter van Dam. While the Committees sought to build their company through shaping the terms of argument in England’s political debates, the *Advocaat* preserved the VOC’s gains by segregating the Dutch Company from institutional issues within the United Provinces

¹²⁰ Sir George Downing to the Company, 18 March 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 81v.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 81r.

¹²² Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 149-151.

and from the foreign policy of the States General.¹²³ In the mounting Atlantic and Asian tensions with England, for example, Van Dam continued his policy of portraying the Dutch West and East India Companies as two distinct entities and interests. While individuals could, and did, own shares in both companies, there does not appear to have ever been any pattern of board interlock between the *Heren XVII* and the WIC's *Heren XIX*—certainly nothing like the overlap between English East and West Indies trading organizations, evident in the EIC's founding and in the Thomson cabal.¹²⁴ Indeed, Van Dam had little affection for the WIC and its directors, frequently seeking to push responsibility for international conflict with the Portuguese and the English onto the West India Company's shoulders. Downing's hearing before the States General, for example, was originally designed to address both VOC and WIC complaints, but with Van Dam's presence, not a single WIC issue was raised.¹²⁵ Indeed, both Downing and the Committees envied the Dutch Company's ability to define the relationship between company and state, Europe and Asia, and East and West India interests.¹²⁶

Reflecting the differences in political context that defined the companies' relationship, leaders in the EIC and the VOC also applied the legal discourse of Cochin to domestic policy debates over the political economy of trade. In the United Provinces, the VOC's comparatively

¹²³ Downing's assessment was accurate. As the cases of the *Leopard* and *Hopewell* demonstrated, the States General, and its subcommittee on English affairs, deferred to the VOC's *Haags Besogne* and the company's "Presiding Chamber" in Amsterdam for explanations and arguments that then became the official responses to international disputes. The VOC also did not hesitate to contradict, or consciously ignore, the policy and agreements of the States General. Again, with regards to Cochin, the VOC's martial actions were in clear violation of the "worldwide" peace established between the Portuguese Crown and the States General in the previous year; *Heren XVII* to the States General, 20 January 1661, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5738.

¹²⁴ See Sections 1.1 and 2.1.

¹²⁵ Sir George Downing to the Company, 18 March 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 82r.

¹²⁶ After nearly two decades of leadership in England's trade policy, the ailing treasurer and secretary for the Council for Trade, Benjamin Worsley, would write to Buckingham in unabashed admiration for the control that the VOC exerted over domestic politics in the Dutch Republic, Benjamin Worsley to the Duke of Buckingham, 23 January 1670, TNA CO/77/11 f. 187-208; Worsley's perspective aligns with a well established vein of English economic thought that sought to emulate the Dutch in the East Indies trade. See Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*, 15-100.

autonomous relationship with the States General allowed the *bewindhebbers* to keep arguments over trade and governance within the Dutch Company's organization. The events at Cochin, and the expansive agenda of Maetsuycker and Van Goens, breathed new life into an internal debate over the optimal regulation of military and colonial investment and expenditure, balanced with a mandate to maintain high profits from commerce. In the case of the English Company, by 1664, the Committees had assembled a significant catalogue of their factors' reports, collectively outlining a nuanced understanding of the VOC's strategy to "engross" the trans-oceanic pepper network.¹²⁷ The Committees employed these observations from Asia to engage with popular political and diplomatic currents that coursed through London and Westminster, blending ideology and commerce in an indictment of Dutch attempts at a "universal monarchy" of trade.

While a central tenet of early modern European historiography rests on the identification of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic as one of the early modern world's centers of wealth and innovation, the historiography of Dutch political economy barely exists.¹²⁸ This is, in large part, due to the source base: unlike the English, the Dutch did not maintain a robust public forum of published debate over political and economic policy. Historians and sociologists have pointed to the tight management of the Republic's institutions, dominated by a merchant regent cabal that kept policy arguments within the closed doors of ruling families and companies.¹²⁹ However, scholars have also begun to more closely examine the sporadic moments of seventeenth-century

¹²⁷ Robert Masters, Richard Ball and Caesar Chamberlain at Karwar, 27 February 1663, IOR/G/36/103 f. 16.

¹²⁸ The dominant vein of Dutch economic history praises the mercantile innovation of the Dutch Republic against an ineffective Hapsburg administration. Prominent examples include: De Vries & Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*; Violet Barbour, *Capitalism in Amsterdam in the 17th Century* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966); Marjolein 't Hart, *The Making of a Bourgeois State: War, Politics, and Finance During the Dutch Revolt* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993); Joost Jonker and Keetie Sluyterman, *At home on the world markets: Dutch international trading companies from the 16th century until the present* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); Recently, however, Oscar Gelderblom has organized an effort to identify the political economy of the Dutch Republic, in which the strategies of local taxation and land management remain a focus, Oscar Gelderblom, ed., *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009).

¹²⁹ Adams, *The Familial State*.

Dutch political debate. Focusing on the writings of prominent republicans, like Pieter de La Court, or the interplay of English and Dutch politics during the 1650s and 1660s, historians of political thought have begun to map the dynamics of Dutch political and economic discourse.¹³⁰ Much has also been written, using the works of legal theorist Hugo Grotius as an entry point through which to explore the Dutch conception of the law of nations in the Republic's commercial governance earlier in the seventeenth century.¹³¹

In the context of the costly, protracted expansion of the Dutch military presence in Ceylon, the campaign against Cochin reignited a long smoldering debate within the VOC. Between 1649 and 1652, as the VOC expanded its footprint in Southeast Asia in order to gain greater leverage in the pepper and spice markets there, members of the *Raad* and the *Heren* argued over whether to implement a radical policy shift. In order to curtail private trading and to reduce burgeoning operating costs at factories in Southeast Asia, the *Heren* proposed to open selected trading hubs as colonial settlements for Dutch citizens, including significant expansion at Batavia, Ambon, Banda, Malacca and Taiwan. This would include an allowance of free trade for the citizens of factories on Java and Sumatra.¹³² Seeking a balance benefitting the interests of shareholders in Europe and the encouragement of officers and settlers in Asia, senior officials at Batavia and Amsterdam debated the benefits and drawbacks of this change in policy, loosely modeled on the Portuguese *Estado*'s settlement system.¹³³ While the *Heren* ultimately tabled the proposal, Johan Maetsuycker remained one of the most vocal proponents of the colonial project,

¹³⁰ Arthur Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Boston: Brill, 2011); Helmers, *The Royalist Republic*.

¹³¹ Van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle*; Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 78-108; Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society*, 40-96; Nellen, *Hugo Grotius: A Lifelong Struggle for Peace in Church and State*; Blom, *Property, Piracy and Punishment*.

¹³² Particulier advise van de Gouverneur-Generaal, 1649-1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated].

¹³³ As Chapter 1 discussed, the *Estado* was built on a network of settlement hubs. While multiple (frequently conflicting) hierarchies governed this network, *casados* (married settlers) and *mestiços* (mixed race citizens) were two of the fundamental institutional elements of every settlement, Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 229-233.

arguing that “it was the most suitable and only manner through which to secure the state of the Company in India.”¹³⁴

A decade later, the *Heren* returned to the arguments of Maetsuycker and the *Raad*, who continued their advocacy for the same shifts in the regulation of the Company. The VOC was again in the midst of costly infrastructure and military expansion to secure marquee spice and pepper markets, this time in Ceylon and Malabar. In order for their gains not to decay under the competition of the English, Portuguese, and non-European traders, the *Raad* and the *Heren* reasoned that the Company must develop colonial settlements.¹³⁵ Directly referencing the previous decade’s colonial debates concerning Southeast Asia, the *Heren* claimed that, through past experience, the Company had learned that agriculture and side trades alone would not be sufficient to allow colonists to subsist. Rather, trade would have to be opened to burghers in Ceylon, as well as along South Asia’s Malabar and Coromandel Coasts.¹³⁶ For Maetsuycker, however, this remained an issue of right. If Dutch citizens were to come to Ceylon and to Malabar, they were owed the same commercial rights enjoyed by non-European merchants under the VOC administration: “it is a great injustice that free citizens of our own nation are banned from that which had been permitted for Moors and heathens.”¹³⁷

The Amsterdam *bewindhebbers* were swayed by Maetsuycker’s arguments, and in 1661 they implemented a pilot system of free trade among the Dutch residents in Ceylon. However, they also tasked Pieter Van Dam—as the principal policy official of the Company—with drafting a report on the proposed expansion of the open trade policy.¹³⁸ Van Dam’s observations would

¹³⁴ Johan Maetsuycker to the Heren XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69.

¹³⁵ Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 11 September 1662, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151 [unfoliated].

¹³⁶ This plan also included opening trade in Bengal, *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*; Maetsuycker had first argued for this plan in 1651, Johan Maetsuycker to the Heren XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69.

¹³⁸ A detailed job description for Pieter van Dam can be found in the Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber. His responsibilities were extensive, as he personally read and organized all communications from throughout Asia and Europe, developing summaries for the *Heren XVII* and the *Haags Besogne*. He also served as the primary representative of the company to the States General, Resolutions of the

be circulated for debate among all six chambers of the Company.¹³⁹ The resulting report supported the Amsterdam chamber's perspective, advocating radical change to the VOC's management of trade and colonies. Unlike the EIC's participation in discussions of national political economy, this debate was kept within the Company. Historians recognize Van Dam's detailed memorandum as an important source for understanding the fundamental tension at the core of the VOC's sprawling Eurasian network: balancing commercial profitability with colonial expansion.¹⁴⁰ In their assessments of the *Advocaat's* internal review, however, scholars have missed a crucial outward looking issue driving his argument: the evolving Eurasian relationship with the EIC.

Van Dam's recommendations operated on the premise that, as the VOC's trade had expanded, so too had its occupied areas and conquered spaces in Asia. The exorbitant costs associated with constructing, maintaining, and defending these garrisons, factories, and settlements were draining the VOC's finances. As the Company became more and more "secure," its profits were plummeting.¹⁴¹ Van Dam endorsed Maetsuycker's solution of opening up trading rights and encouraging the development of colonial settlements. The VOC would continue to enforce its exclusive rights of Eurasian trade in pepper, spices, and the most profitable commodities.¹⁴² However, intra-Asian trade would be opened at the Company's factories in Bengal, Malabar, Coromandel, Ceylon, and in Southeast Asia. This effectively shifted the crushing cost burden of these factories from the Company onto the new colonists and independent

Amsterdam Chamber, 18 September 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149.

¹³⁹ Van Dam, *Beschrijving*, vol 6, book 3, 356-9; Arthur Weststeijn, "The VOC as a Company-State: Debating Seventeenth-Century Dutch Colonial Expansion," *Itinerario* 28 (April 2014), 17.

¹⁴⁰ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 246-247; Weststeijn, "The VOC as a Company-State;" S. Arasaratnam, "Monopoly and Free Trade in Dutch-Asian Commercial Policy: Debate and Controversy within the VOC," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 4 (1973): 1-15.

¹⁴¹ Pieter van Dam, "Een advies van Mr. Pieter van Dam, advocaat der Oost-Indische Compagnie, over een gedeeltelijke openstelling van Compagnie's handel voor particulieren," ed. J. de Hullu, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlands-Indië* 74 (1918), 273.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 278, 283; Arasaratnam, "Monopoly and Free Trade," 6.

traders. The VOC would continue to profit from the factories in licensing the trade: collecting tolls and tariffs.¹⁴³

Van Dam had not developed his ideas solely from within the vacuum of the Company's experience. Indeed, his decade-long focus on relations with the EIC greatly influenced his arguments. While the *Advocaat* made liberal reference to the Portuguese *Estado*, he did so primarily as a cautionary tale. It was the forts and factories recently seized from the Portuguese for which this overhaul had been designed.¹⁴⁴ In contrast, his new proposals directly engaged with EIC policies. Citing the English Company's comparatively liberal private trading regime, the *Advocaat* cast his proposal as partly in response to the English practices in the East Indies: "The English have their ships in great use in the Indies, allowing for Mores and other Indian nations' carriage of goods and merchandise."¹⁴⁵ Open Dutch ports, in which the Company would no longer have to invest the resources to enforce an exclusive trade to maintain profitability, would encourage flourishing markets for the hiring of private ships. The *Advocaat* anticipated skepticism among VOC officials, concerned that these shifts in governance would "give an invitation to the English and other nations to further advance their Indian trade."¹⁴⁶ And while Van Dam's model forbade any cooperation with English traders, he was convinced that independent Dutch traders would prove the most attractive partners for profitable contracts with non-European merchants.¹⁴⁷

The political and commercial strategies of the EIC, in fact, sat at the core of Van Dam's reasoning in his presentation to the *Heren*. He entered his office in 1652, on the eve of the First Anglo-Dutch War. And one of his formative challenges had been to respond to the dramatic

¹⁴³ Pieter van Dam, "Een advies," 276.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 291; Though Van Dam does cite the Portuguese as an example of a colonial system based on burgher self-defense, Arasaratnam, "Monopoly and Free Trade," 6.

¹⁴⁵ Van Dam, "Een advies," 281.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 294.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 295-296.

policy changes of the English Company, ushered in by the Thomson regime.¹⁴⁸ Van Dam had prioritized the close study of the EIC ever since.

He directly connected his own company's East Indian strategy with recent shifts in England's international politics. While the Portuguese were currently at peace with the Dutch, Charles II's treaty with the House of Braganza allowed the monarch to "take over Portuguese places in the Indies," as the English king thus "sought to become a participant in that trade."¹⁴⁹ This would flood the European market with East Indian goods, causing more and more harm to the VOC's current model of commerce.¹⁵⁰

Thus, a close read of Van Dam's proposal reveals the *Advocaat's* opinion that, rather than concern for the *Estado*, it was the prospect of an ascendant EIC, that now "forced" the *Heren* to secure their company's survival in strategically opening up the trade on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. Not "wanting to succumb to the burden" induced by English alliances, the VOC would free itself of such damage, shifting the risk to private traders.¹⁵¹ Explicitly prioritizing the relationship with the EIC above other external considerations, Van Dam cautioned that the VOC did not have the same reasons for concern from nations other than the English.¹⁵²

While opening the Company's trade would answer challenges in intra-Asian and Eurasian commerce, Van Dam also proposed that this shift in governance would upend the system of legal discourse, which gradually bound the two companies in Europe and in Asia. The VOC would be "liberated from all of the vexations and disturbances, that they can now expect every time from the English," Van Dam argued.¹⁵³ All of the petitions and complaints from the EIC would be deflected onto Dutch private traders, Van Dam contended, transforming English

¹⁴⁸ See Chapter 2.

¹⁴⁹ Van Dam, "Een advies," 297.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹⁵¹ Van Dam uses the turn of phrase "van de Bank te schuiven," or "sliding [money] out of the bank," indicating that the VOC was shifting its investment away from risk, *Ibid.*, 297.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 296.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 281.

claims into “private questions, which would not concern the Company.”¹⁵⁴ The proposed colonial policies would extricate the Dutch Company from the legal debates with the EIC, which had linked the VOC’s practices with the politics of international relations in Europe and in Asia.

The Amsterdam chamber supported Van Dam’s arguments, however, his proposal was not ratified by all of the chambers. In April of 1663, the *Heren* tabled the issue, unable to surmount the “discrepant opinions on this matter in and between the Chambers.”¹⁵⁵ While neither Van Dam nor the *Heren* elaborated beyond this explanation, it seems likely, as Arthur Weststeijn has concluded, that the political and economic tensions between the chambers, themselves, prevented the implementation of the Amsterdam *bewindhebbers*’ vision.¹⁵⁶ The VOC would maintain its exclusive hold over Dutch trade in the East Indies, investments in military and infrastructure would continue to soar, and the commercial, institutional, and intellectual relationship with the EIC would only intensify.

In response to the events at Cochin, the EIC Court of Committees in London also engaged in debates of their own. While their strategies did not demand the convincing of multiple chambers of directors, the politics of Restoration England required the Committees to straddle public and private debates. The English directorate’s engagement with popular arguments of political economy frequently took on terms and ideas quite different from those that drove internal discussions over the relationship with the VOC in the East Indies.¹⁵⁷

Throughout 1664, the Committees received reports from their factories, which chronicled the most prominent political and economic trends of their regions. While accounts from the

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Weststeijn, “The VOC as a Company-state,” 20; Van Dam, *Beschryving*, vol 6, book 3, 359.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ There is a significant literature addressing the EIC’s role in English public discourse, including (among many others), Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*; William Barber, *British Economic Thought and India, 1600-1858: A Study in the History of Development Economics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975); William Letwin, *Sir Josiah Child, Merchant Economist* (Boston: Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, 1959); Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Cambridge: HUP, 2011); Stern, *The Company-State*; Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 366-399; Huw Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).

agents at Porca were inflamed with criticism of Dutch tyranny,¹⁵⁸ reports from Fort St. George at Madras; the factory at Masulipatnam, on the Coromandel Coast; and the outpost at Karwar, near Goa, all agreed in their assessment of the Dutch activity in Malabar. Dutch incursions at Cochin were not the vanguard of an imperial thrust to overtake the kingdoms of South Asia or to gain imperium over the whole of the Indian Ocean. Rather, the Dutch Company sought leverage over the pricing and supply of pepper. The factors at Karwar reported to the Surat President that, “The Dutch hath added to Cochin the Castle of Cannanore, and are now sole masters of the Malabar coast, it will be an easy matter for them to engross all pepper since they are of such power & force in these parts.”¹⁵⁹ The Council at Madras agreed, citing the Dutch goal to manipulate the transoceanic pepper network, linking South and Southeast Asia: “wee believe it will not end there alone, but they will seek to get all the pepper into their own hands, & that they will doe by laying siege to Bantam....”¹⁶⁰

Indeed, even as Company officials wrote back to London, describing Dutch activity in political terms, they still understood Dutch proclamations of themselves as “Lords of all the South Seas, and the Coast of Malabar from Cocheen to Cape Comoreene,” in terms of the VOC’s specific goal of “prohibiting all nations whatsoever to trade upon the said Coast for pepper.”¹⁶¹ Sir George Oxinden wrote to London that political structures established by the VOC in South Asia, such as a pass system, were enacted in service to their long-term goal of synchronizing a transoceanic market network, linking with their commercial dominance in Southeast Asia. Of the Malabar pepper trade, he wrote that, “the Dutch intend to make it their own, as absolutely as the spices of nutts & mace, and to that intent... prohibiting all cotton, & ophium, to be transported

¹⁵⁸ Edward Winter, William Gyfford, John Niclaes and Jonathan Budley at Madras, 11 April 1663, IOR/G/36/103 f. 24v.

¹⁵⁹ Robert Masters, Richard Ball and Caesar Chamberlain at Karwar, 27 February 1663, IOR/G/36/103 f. 16.

¹⁶⁰ Edward Winter, William Gyfford, John Niclaes and Jonathan Budley at Madras, 30 April 1663, IOR/G/36/103 f. 28.

¹⁶¹ John Hunter and Council at Bantam to the Company in London, 25 August 1663, IOR/E/3/28 f. 36r.

downe the coast.”¹⁶²

Back in London, the EIC Committees relied on such factory reports to inform them of the dynamics of Indian Ocean politics and commerce. They then incorporated these perspectives into their closed deliberations and instructions for Downing in his continued legal debates with the VOC. In early December of 1663, EIC Governor Thomas Chamberlain wrote to Downing, urging him to rebuff the VOC’s claims to exclusive contracts for pepper at Porca: “wee know that by the law of nations, the Hollanders upon the pretence of an agreement, made with the said Rajah to buy up all his pepper, have noe power to exclude us from the Trade of that place.”¹⁶³

Furthermore, the Committees developed arguments that were grounded in their factors’ understanding of Cochin’s role in the networked pepper strategy of the VOC. March 1664 found the newly elected EIC Governor, William Thomson, writing a lengthy instruction for Downing, warning that, both on the Malabar Coast and at the remaining free pepper hub of Banten, the Dutch “grow very high,” threatening regional sovereigns to lock the English Company out of the trade in pepper and other spices.¹⁶⁴ Voicing their understanding of the effectiveness of the VOC’s strategy, the Committees pleaded with Downing, that unless he and the *Heren* were to work out a new regulation of trade that secured the EIC’s commercial rights in these commodities networks, “it is not possible to maintain an English commerce in India.”¹⁶⁵

While issues at the core of the dialogue regarding Cochin drove internal Company debates, the Committees also employed them to influence arguments over the Crown’s foreign policy with the United Provinces in the lead up to the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667). While influential narratives of early modern history have long maintained that the war was

¹⁶² Cotton and opium were the primary commodities for which pepper was traded at Malabar ports, Sir George Oxinden and Henry Gary at Swally to the Company in London, 28 January 1664, IOR/E/3/28 f. 99r.

¹⁶³ Governor Thomas Chamberlain to Sir George Downing, 4 December 1663, IOR/E/3/86 f. 162.

¹⁶⁴ Governor William Thomson to Sir George Downing, 3 March 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 235v.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

fundamentally a commercial dispute, resulting from the complaints of companies like the EIC,¹⁶⁶ political historian Steven Pincus suggests that the conflict was the result of powerful “Anglican Royalist” ideological positions held by key figures in the Restoration regime and in London’s mercantile community.¹⁶⁷ A central tenet of this ideology held that the aggressive actions of the VOC represented the Dutch Republic’s inheritance of sixteenth-century Spain’s goal of “universal monarchy” over the world. In the mid-seventeenth century, the term “universal monarch” came to signify dominance in trade rather than territorial control.¹⁶⁸ Their actions at Cochin, their continued refusal to hand over Pulo Run, and their history with the EIC at Banten all suggested that VOC leaders were at the lead of a Dutch effort “to use a trade monopoly as the foundation of a universal monarchy.”¹⁶⁹ Employing the communications from Asia, as well as the correspondence of the English Committees, Pincus argues that, while the EIC as an institution was not eager for war, many of the Committees, including Restoration Court insider Richard Ford, were energetic advocates of this ideology, which guided their interpretation of the VOC.¹⁷⁰

While EIC officials and surrogates involved in the legal discourse surrounding Cochin—including Ford, Downing, and Oxinden—may have espoused such ideological perspectives, Pincus’s argument flattens these multidimensional figures with a heavy Anglo-centrism. A key implication of Pincus’s view is that the good, Protestant English read the Dutch goals as

¹⁶⁶ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy*; Charles Wilson, *Profit and Power*; Gijs Rommelse, *The Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667): Raison D’état, Mercantilism and Maritime Strife* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006); J.R. Jones, *Britain and the World, 1649-1815* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980); Beyond studies of trade and mercantilism, influential narratives in the historiography of British foreign policy also promote commercial motivations for the war, Feiling, *British Foreign Policy, 1660-1672*; Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart 1641-1672*, trans. Arnold Pomerans (New York: Scribner, 1970); Herbert Rowen, *John De Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); For a discussion of the historiography of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, though distinctly weighted towards his own perspective, see Steven Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 195-198.

¹⁶⁷ Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 199-452; Steven Pincus, “Popery, Trade and Universal Monarchy: The Ideological Context of the Outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War,” *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 422 (January 1992): 1-29.

¹⁶⁸ Pincus, “Popery, Trade and Universal Monarchy,” 19-20; Pincus credits Thomas Mun’s influential study of foreign trade—with special focus on the Dutch—as the path-breaking work in this vein of thought, Thomas Mun, *England’s Treasure by Forraign Trade* (London, 1664).

¹⁶⁹ Pincus, “Popery, Trade and Universal Monarchy,” 22.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 19, 22-24.

fundamentally evil and wrong and, therefore, intolerable. According to Pincus, figures like Ford believed that the Dutch were bad Christians, “simply ‘perfidious, self-ended neighbours,’” and that this was a “necessary consequence of seeking universal monarchy.”¹⁷¹ However, Pincus’s othering of the Dutch through English eyes closes the opportunity to also recognize the Committees as participants in a broader Eurasian discourse that connected the two companies in a system related to, but separate from, English and Dutch state relations.

EIC factors under President Oxinden understood the events at Cochin in terms of the VOC’s two long-range goals: (1) to bolster its position against the *Estado* in Ceylon and (2) to gain leverage over the transoceanic pepper network. These were goals with which the English sought to compete, and not to ridicule the VOC. Even those factors closest to the siege at Porca wrote, that pursuant to the Dutch strategy of using Cochin as a launching point to strengthen ties with the King of Kandy and other leaders on Ceylon, “wee shall take all opportunities to give the King of Kandy notice, hoping thereby to make the Dutch more odious in his sight, and to ingratiate ourselves... as also may prove an opportunity for settling a factory there.”¹⁷² While they resented the immediate negative effects on their own business, English factors did not find the VOC’s goals loathsome, they found them inspirational—ideas on which to build and perfect their own trading system. Indeed, this was a central dynamic of the companies’ relationship that had emerged out of the previous decade. It was the view of William Mainstone, now the EIC’s most respected official in Southeast Asia, when he argued for an English takeover of Batavia, and it was the perspective advanced by the Committees, including Richard Ford, in their continued dedication to establishing a colony on Pulo Run.¹⁷³

English political ideology was an important force steering Anglo-Dutch relations towards a political breach in Europe. But the participation of EIC officials in the Restoration discourse of

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁷² John Harrington and Alexander Grigsby at Porca, 17 April 1663, IOR/G/36/103 f. 29v.

¹⁷³ William Mainstone to the Governor and Company in London, 12 March 1658, IOR/G/21/3/3/1 f. 64r-65v.

universal monarchy did not preclude their simultaneous understanding of a parallel ideology taking shape between the two companies in the East Indies trade. While Ford, Chamberlain, and Thomson collated a summary of complaints against the VOC to submit to Parliament for the inflammatory anti-Dutch trade resolution of 1664, they also kept in close contact with Downing, to maintain a pulse on the status of the ambassador's ongoing negotiations with Van Dam and De Witt for a "regglement of Trade betweene the Two Companies."¹⁷⁴ For their part, the *Heren* and their *Advocaat* had taken seriously Downing's proposal to establish a joint commission to form regulations for both companies, to govern their interactions in Asia, and to craft a process for handling inter-company disputes. In the weeks following Van Dam's heated debate with Downing on the floor of the States General, the *Heren* identified seven commissioners, among the wealthiest, most experienced *bewindhebbers*, to represent the Company in the proposed negotiations.¹⁷⁵

However, through 1664, as both directorates continued to prepare their points of negotiation, Anglo-Dutch hostilities in the Atlantic began to consume the international politics of Europe. Rival trading interests at the English Court were hard at work conjuring the clouds of war over European and Atlantic waters. In 1662, Charles had stripped the EIC of its rights and holdings on the West African Coast (Guinea), transferring them to the new Royal African Company (RAC), of which his brother James, the Duke of York, was the most prominent investor and patron.¹⁷⁶ Responding to complaints of Dutch abuses on the Guinea coast, Charles had endorsed a military expedition to West Africa, which overran the WIC outposts there, save for the

¹⁷⁴ Thomas Chamberlain to Sir George Downing, 15 April 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 203v.

¹⁷⁵ Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber, 28 April 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151 [unfoliated].

¹⁷⁶ Writing to their agents in Amsterdam, Joseph Bathurst and Richard Manning, the Committees lamented that their agents in Holland were now without the mission of purchasing goods for the Gold Coast trade, "for since our leaveing of the Gold Coast Trade, wee have had little to doe in your Parts," Governor William Thomson to Joseph Bathurst and Richard Manning at Amsterdam, 5 August 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 211r.

Dutch forts at Elmina and Mouré (in Ghana).¹⁷⁷ The States General responded to these aggressions by dispatching their celebrated Admiral De Ruyter to retake the coast and to expel the English.¹⁷⁸ As hostilities progressed, both directorates sought to isolate their organizations from the mounting inter-state conflict, continuing their communications while Anglo-Dutch violence erupted in the Atlantic.

3.3 The Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667)

The Second Anglo-Dutch War triggered familiar protective reflexes among English and Dutch Company officials. Trade was more timid, factories and ships were fortified, and capital stagnated. However, the conflict also provided the companies with an opportunity to continue their debates over the legal identity of English and Dutch trade to the East Indies. Company officials used this dialogue to secure their networks in Europe, while seizing new occasions to lobby sovereigns and merchants in Persia, as well as in South and Southeast Asia.

At the outbreak of war, both companies' directors leaned heavily on their private intelligence networks. They prioritized the gathering of information regarding naval equipage, as well as the assembly of their counterpart's East India fleet for the fall, while simultaneously taking extra measures to shield their own intentions from the public eye.¹⁷⁹ The *Advocaat* acknowledged the increasingly bullish position of the States-General, which resolved that, in response to the "capitulation of New Netherland" and the English naval attacks on the Guinea Coast, the Republic "cannot stand still" and would "move against violence with violence."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 273.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*; Heren XVII to Governor-General and Raad, 14 August 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318, f. 704.

¹⁷⁹ Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber, 19 June 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151; Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber, 24 June 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151; Governor William Thomson to Joseph Bathurst and Richard Manning in Amsterdam, 5 August 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 211r; The Committees reported that the VOC "slunk away some shippes for East India in a very private manner, without any noyse, or publishing of it in the least," Governor William Thomson to Joseph Bathurst and Richard Manning, 9 September 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 216v.

¹⁸⁰ Heren XVII to Governor-General and Raad, 14 August 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318, f. 704.

However, the records of the VOC directors do not suggest any surge in patriotic fervor to support preparations for war with the English.¹⁸¹ The leaders of the VOC, in fact, sought to remove themselves—and their ships and factories—as much as possible from the conflict. Fearful of England’s naval might, and wary of the Crown’s entry into Asia at Bombay, the *bewindhebbers* instructed their factors to maintain a “posture of defense” at their factories, in expectation of a rupture with England.¹⁸²

The *Heren* also continued communications with the Committees through Downing. And EIC leaders, including those most directly affiliated with the political discussions at Charles’ Court, sought to distance their own East India Company from the RAC and the Courteen heirs and creditors, who continued to leverage their close relations with the king to benefit from the anti-Dutch political turn.¹⁸³ In early October, William Thomson again provided Downing with a list of specific EIC claims. The Governor implored the ambassador to “distinguish between what is demanded by us, and what may be demanded by particular persons in ye East Indies, that so there may be no reflection upon us for other actings.”¹⁸⁴

De Ruyter’s response to the English naval missions off the coast of West Africa was devastating to the Royal Africa Company and embarrassing to the Crown. Royal Navy administrator Samuel Pepys concluded that the English “were beaten to dirt at Guinny by De Ruyter to the utter ruin of our Royal Company and reproach and shame to the whole nation.”¹⁸⁵ Charles dispatched fleets to New Netherland and to the Caribbean, and he unleashed privateers in

¹⁸¹ Indeed, when the WIC did seek the VOC’s help in carrying its gold out of its Guinea factories on passing East India ships, the *Heren* and Van Dam responded that, only with an enormous fee, paid in gold, would they consider such a risk, Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber, 6 November 1665, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 151.

¹⁸² *Heren XVII* to the Directors and Councils at Gamron, Surat, Coromandel, Malabar, Ceylon, and Bengal, 5 November 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 768; One can trace the increasing apprehension in the *Heren*’s instructions throughout the Autumn of 1664, *Heren XVII* (at Middelburg) to Governor-General and Raad, 8 October 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 721, 725-726; *Heren XVII* to Governor-General and Raad, 24 October 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 767.

¹⁸³ Court of Committees to Sir George Downing, 7 October 1664, IOR/E/3/86 f. 218v-219r.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 219r.

¹⁸⁵ Quoted in Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 273; Wilson, *Profit and Power*, 114.

European and Atlantic waters. The king and his government embraced the mission “to strip the Dutch completely of their possession in the Americas.”¹⁸⁶ By the time Charles II declared war in March of 1665, more than two hundred Dutch merchant ships had been seized.¹⁸⁷ While they sought to protect their negotiations with the Dutch Company, the Committees still maintained the most effective anti-Dutch weapon in English popular politics—a weapon which was swiftly appropriated by those supporting the Crown’s war. The EIC’s highly effective Amboyna tracts were republished, including the “True Relation” with its vivid woodcut of a flayed English victim, tortured at the hands of VOC officials.¹⁸⁸ In a more subtle reproduction of the Company’s Amboyna campaign, Restoration poets and pamphleteers frequently invoked the details of the Company’s Amboyna narrative, celebrating English victories against the Dutch and framing the war as the king’s effort to secure retribution for the “malice,” “massacre,” and “barbarous proceedings at Amboyna.”¹⁸⁹

While both states entered the war with bullish outlooks,¹⁹⁰ the Committees and the *bewindhebbers* prepared for the burdens that the conflict would bring to their Eurasian shipping networks. Many of the most influential leaders in both companies had also guided their organizations through the First Anglo-Dutch War ten years earlier, and in 1665, the EIC and VOC returned to familiar wartime reflexes. Both companies shifted their shipping routes: the Dutch directed their return fleet to Bergen, Norway, and the English sent their own returning

¹⁸⁶ Israel, *Dutch Primacy*, 273.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 274; Jones, *Britain and the World*, 80.

¹⁸⁸ Anon, *A True relation of unjust, cruell, and barbarous proceedings against the English at Amboyna in the East Indies by the Neatherlandish governour and council there* (London: 1665).

¹⁸⁹ Robert Codrington, *His majesties propriety and dominion on the British seas asserted together with a true account of the Neatherlanders insupportable insolencies and injuries they have committed...* (London: T. Mabb, 1665); John Crouch, *The Dutch embargo upon their state fleet, or, Newes from Holland a poem* (London: Edward Crouch, 1665); Anon, *Bellum belgicum secundum, or, A poem attempting something on His Majesties proceedings against the Dutch* (Cambridge: J. Field, 1665).

¹⁹⁰ The States General was also confident, particularly following De Ruyter’s stinging victories against the English on the Gold Coast, Pieter van Dam to the States General, 29 January 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

Eastindiemen around Ireland to avoid the Dutch navy in the channel.¹⁹¹ The war also complicated both companies' relationships with their charter governments. Just as they had in the First Anglo-Dutch War, the *Heren* again contracted with the States General to provide vessels for the Republic's admiralties. But the *bewindhebbers* also sought the provincial admiralties' protection for their incoming and outgoing fleets to safely traverse European waters.¹⁹² Just as they solicited the Royal Navy's protection of their own ships, the EIC's support of state war efforts now extended to the East Indies. Charles sought the Committee's carriage of supplies to the Crown's new fort at Bombay, as well as the provision of funds for the defense of his administration there.¹⁹³

English and Dutch factors in Asia also repeated their reactions to the hostilities of the 1650s: they translated the international conflict from Europe into English and Dutch strategies for navigating the politics and commerce of the Indian Ocean. Where the capture of a ship could be accomplished and would make a positive impact, it was attempted. Where the seizure of an island would limit future legal and political risk, it was done. Where news of the war in Europe would benefit the image of either company, local exchanges buzzed with reports of naval battles. But even with the addition of French belligerents, in the vast majority of ports and sea lanes along the Indian Ocean littoral, the inter-European conflict had little effect on trade and commerce.

Diverging from the predominantly Euro-centric perspectives with which historians have assessed the companies' seventeenth-century relationship,¹⁹⁴ a different narrative emerges from

¹⁹¹ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 18 July 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739; Amsterdam Chamber to the States General, 7 September 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

¹⁹² Pieter van Dam to the States General, 18 July 1665; Amsterdam Chamber to the States General, 4 May 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

¹⁹³ Court of Committees, 3 April 1666, IOR/B/28 f. 64v-65v.

¹⁹⁴ The dominant perspectives driving the historiographies of both companies focus either on the EIC-VOC relationship in Asia or in Europe. A sampling of those literatures includes, K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (New York: CUP, 1976); Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (London: Longman, 1993); Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire*; Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*; Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*; Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*; Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Jan*

following the Eurasian circulation of communication that connected the companies by the late 1660s. While the Amsterdam and London directors feared more violence in European waters, the mid-1660s represented a time of significant political turmoil in the Indian Ocean world, as well. The Anglo-Dutch conflict added further complexity, but the EIC and VOC factors kept their perspectives firmly grounded in the context of regional developments. Henry Gary may have feared a Dutch attack on his fort at Bombay, but his reports detail how, in 1666, all of Gujarat was unstable, owing to the continued clash between Mughal forces and the Maratha leader, Sivaji, who had sacked Surat three years prior.¹⁹⁵ The Mughal-Maratha conflict consumed much of the subcontinent, captivating the factors at Hugli, in Bengal.¹⁹⁶ And while they remained focused on the volume of English trade in the Western Indian Ocean, the *Raad* was even more concerned about the strength of non-European commerce in the Persian Gulf, which, they lamented, would always limit their profits in the rich markets of that region.¹⁹⁷ Wary of the conflict with the English, VOC officials in Persia harbored greater apprehension over the

Company in Coromandel 1605-1690 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962); Few studies assess the circulation of ideas between Europe and Asia, and those that do focus on networks of knowledge and argument within one company, Philip Stern, *The Company-State*; Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Leonard Blussé and Ilonka Ooms, eds., *Kennis en Compagnie: De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de Moderne Wetenschap* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2002); Gerrit Knaap and Gerke Teitler, *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie* (Leiden: KITLV, 2002); The most prominent study linking the two companies is the economic history of Niels Steensgaard, which problematically yokes the EIC and VOC as twin institutions divorced from Iberian trading models, Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1974); The tendency to yoke the companies together has been perpetuated in the historiography of empire, James Tracy, ed., *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early modern World, 1350-1750* (New York: CUP, 1993); James Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade 1350-1750* (New York: CUP, 1991); Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976); Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 170-173.

¹⁹⁵ Henry Gary at Bombay to Lord Arlington, 16 December 1665, TNA CO/77/10 f. 48r-49v.

¹⁹⁶ Philip Giffard and Caesar Chamberlain at Hugli to Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat, 5 September 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 234-235.

¹⁹⁷ Pieter van Dam, Mondeling Rapport wegen den toestant der saecken in Oost-Indien, 26 October 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

mounting hostilities between the Safavid and Mughal empires.¹⁹⁸

That being said, when news of the Anglo-Dutch War reached Central Asia, it catalyzed reactions among EIC and VOC agents across the Indian Ocean, providing an opportunity for leaders of both companies to further refine their legal identities of merchant and sovereign in non-European political systems. These reflexes evolved directly from the policies and practices engendered by the Cochin discourse, which had animated the companies' trans-oceanic communication networks for the past two years. The first move of EIC and VOC officials was a pivot to focus on the two proposed English colonial developments, which had served as the geographic focuses of the EIC's legal claims. In a second, systemic reaction, the conflict encouraged a mutual reassessment of the legal, political, and commercial strategies used to navigate the Indian Ocean world. In comparison to its English counterpart, the VOC remained a much larger, wealthier, and well-armed operation. However, this second wartime reflex revealed the *Heren's* detailed perspective on the power of non-European institutions, the tenuous nature of Dutch trade, and the political capabilities of the English Company.

As news of the war reached Surat and Batavia, English and Dutch officials directed their attention to the two sites through which the English sought to develop a colonial infrastructure in Asia: Pulo Run and Bombay. The *Heren*, the *Raad*, and Van Goens had partly predicated their Malabar strategy on countering the EIC's designs to strengthen the English position in intercompany debates and negotiations. Upon learning of the state of war between the English and Dutch nations in Europe, the *Raad* immediately dispatched orders to its Banda Governor to retake Pulo Run from the English.¹⁹⁹ The VOC forces found the island without any fortifications, the small EIC lodge occupied only by Banten factor Thomas Harrington and a small party of

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Generale Missive, 25 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255, f. 28-29; Rapport van de Retour Vloot, 22 December 1666, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

twenty-six other “English servants,” along with two “bantanesse javans.”²⁰⁰ Outgunned and outnumbered, Harrington surrendered the island.

Rather than a violent warlike capture of the EIC presence on Pulo Run, the VOC officers’ orders prioritized removing the English factors as quickly as possible. Harrington and his party were transferred to Batavia, and then sent back to Banten as free men.²⁰¹ Batavia’s leaders had taken advantage of the state of war to eliminate the EIC’s ability to establish rival colonial claims in the South Seas. “In taking possession” of Pulo Run, the *Raad* confirmed to the *Heren*, they had achieved their long-time goal of “great quiet” in the Bandas.²⁰² English Company officials in Asia perceived this action in much the same way: seizing Pulo Run was not so much an act of war, as it was the VOC’s use of the rights of wartime conquest to effect a long-term goal. Sir George Oxinden reported to his counterparts at the Banten factory in March of 1666, that “by reason of the war,” the VOC had seized Pulo Run and removed the English personnel.²⁰³

Oxinden went on to confirm that the Council at Surat had given orders to bring all nearby English vessels to safety, and he was happy to report, that “they have not attempted his Majesty’s Island of Bombaim.”²⁰⁴ The conflicts with the *Hopewell* and *Leopard* would still have been fresh in the Surat President’s mind, and he was well aware of the VOC’s concern over the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, which had driven the events at Cochin. In November of 1664, the *Hopewell* returned to Surat to deliver the Committees’ overland letters that confirmed the escalation of Anglo-Dutch hostilities in Europe. Oxinden quickly wrote to Bombay, concerned that the VOC would turn its conqueror’s gaze to the new Crown outpost: “the first thing the Dutch will do, will

²⁰⁰ Generale Missive, 25 January 1667, f. 28-29.

²⁰¹ After the VOC’s chief merchant at Banda and EIC agents Harrington and Willebey signed official documents surrendering the island, the *generale missive* from 1667 notes that the EIC party was “transferred to Batavia at the first opportunity, and put on free feet from here [Batavia] to Banten,” Generale Missive, 25 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255, f. 29.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁰³ Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat to the Agent and Council at Bantam, 30 March 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 200r-v.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

bee to destroy you & take the Island Bombaim, to their own use.”²⁰⁵

As the Crown’s officials at Bombay, Shipman and Marlborough, were still mired in negotiations with the Portuguese Viceroy and had yet to fully take possession of the island, Oxinden dispatched one of his seasoned Company officials, Henry Gary, to aid in the assembly of vessels and men to deny any attempted Dutch conquest of Bombay.²⁰⁶ During the course of the next year, Gary was frustrated in his task of establishing a fort and garrison on the island. As he wrote to Marlborough in December of 1665, Gary invoked the threat of Dutch attack in his pleas for the needed provisions and resources: “the time of the enemy’s coming upon this Coast is very near approached.”²⁰⁷ Gary and Lt. Governor Humphrey Cooke continued to fortify Bombay, keeping their small garrison of about 100 soldiers “in a posture of defense” against the continued expectation of a Dutch attack.²⁰⁸

By the following year, however, Oxinden had shifted his understanding of Bombay’s role in Anglo-Dutch relations. From his perspective at the Mughal Emperor’s flagship port of Surat, where the EIC and VOC still traded actively side-by-side, the Crown officials had, themselves, become the greatest liability to English trade in the East Indies. While Oxinden developed the nuanced understanding of a merchant within the complex politics of the Mughal administration, the Crown’s officers at Bombay were perilously naïve, their reckless outbursts of violence casting the English not as merchants, but as belligerents against the Mughal Empire. In March of 1666 Oxinden reported to the Committees that in retaliation for the Company’s repeated denial of funds, the Crown’s acting Governor of Bombay, Humphrey Cooke, had seized a trading vessel

²⁰⁵ Sir George Oxinden at Surat, 23 November 1664, TNA CO/77/9 f. 94r-v.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, While Oxinden cited Gary’s “voluntary service of his Majesty” and “his zeale to ye Kings service,” Gary’s motives were entirely self-serving. He had tired of Oxinden’s strict regulation of trade, and was keen to enrich himself under the Crown government at Bombay, Henry Gary at Goa to the Earl of Marlborough in London, 16 February 1662, TNA CO/77/9 f. 6r.

²⁰⁷ Henry Gary to the Earl of Arlington, 16 December 1665, TNA CO/77/10 f. 51r.

²⁰⁸ Sir George Oxinden at Surat, 29 December 1665, TNA CO/77/9 f. 311r; This is the exact turn of phrase used in the *Heren XVII*’s wartime instructions to their factors in Asia, *Heren XVII* to the Directors and Councils at Gamron, Surat, Coromandel, Malabar, Ceylon, and Bengal, 5 November 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 768.

belonging to the Mughal Governor of Surat, “apprehending this a fit occasion to wreake his malice upon us.”²⁰⁹ When called before the Mughal Governor, Oxinden’s deputy, Gerald Aungier, sought to define and differentiate the commercial activities of the Company from the conquests of the English state. Aungier was “utterly ashamed of & disavowed it, that it was done by the Governor of Bombay who had a power independent of him that neither he nor the Company’s estate were liable to answer it.”²¹⁰

Oxinden knew that in order to maintain the EIC’s mercantile rights, it was crucial to remain in the good graces of the Mughal Emperor’s representative. However, the EIC President also understood that Cooke had given the Dutch a powerful weapon within the tight Mughal regulations over regional politics and commerce. Writing to the Committees, an exasperated Oxinden lamented, “The Dutch in the meane time working on this advantage, have possessed the Governor with such prejudiciall thoughts on us, that you are in danger to lose all your privileges.”²¹¹ Oxinden was well aware that a single event, such as Cooke’s blunder, could grant the Dutch the leverage to achieve their longtime goal of weakening the English position on India’s Western Coast—without firing a single shot.

Oxinden’s fears were well founded. The records of VOC officials confirm their alignment with the English President’s understanding of Surat’s commercial politics.²¹² While, like Pulo Run, Bombay did not yet pose a commercial threat to the Dutch Company, it gave the English a geopolitical foothold in a region over which the Dutch had long sought greater leverage. Rather than dispatch a fleet up the coast from Malabar, however, Van Goens and the *Raad* sought to capitalize on fractures emerging in the EIC’s legal identity in Gujarat. In their January 1667 report to the *Heren XVII*, the *Raad* elaborated on the efforts of their Surat Council,

²⁰⁹ Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat to the East India Company in London, 16 March 1666-4 April 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 188r.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 188v.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Pieter van Dam, Mondeling Rapport wegen den toestant der saecken in Oost-Indien, 26 October 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

which was in the process of negotiating an agreement with the Mughal Governor for a joint VOC-Mughal operation to “win [Bombay] from the English with the force of weapons.”²¹³ While a cooperative siege of the island never materialized, English and Dutch Company officials’ strategies for Bombay and Pulo Run reveal how the legal arguments that propelled the debates over Cochin continued to drive the Companies’ relationship during the Second Anglo-Dutch War.

These dynamics were not limited to the Mughal administration in Gujarat. The legal debate between the rights of war and commerce conditioned the engagement between company officials in jurisdictions along the Indian Ocean littoral. After receiving notice of the war in October of 1665, the VOC’s Council at Pulicat, on the Coromandel Coast, reflected on the chaotic nature of that region’s politics. Upon learning of the conflict between the English and Dutch nations in Europe, the Council instructed their captains to keep news of the war in the strictest confidence, not revealing anything to their crew or to non-Europeans.²¹⁴ Records such as these upset historians’ characterization of the 1660s as a period of unchallenged dominance for the Dutch Company in the East Indies trade.²¹⁵ The Dutch interpreted their own leverage on that Coast as irregular, and the English were perceived as “at best equal [strength] with the Company’s.”²¹⁶ The Pulicat Council explained that this was due to the EIC’s successful lobbying of Coromandel leaders, to maintain port regulations that guaranteed peace and punished violence that impeded commercial activity. Should the VOC “make the least harm at Masulipatnam,” for example, the Council assured that they, the VOC, would be damaged.²¹⁷ And indeed, the English Company successfully appealed to the King of Golkonda to punish the Dutch, should they

²¹³ *Ibid.*; Generale Missive, 25 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255 f. 273-275.

²¹⁴ Cornelis Speelman and Anthonio Pavilioen at Pulicat to The Governor-General and Raad at Batavia, 18 October 1665, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1253 f.1757.

²¹⁵ Jonathan Israel summarizes this perspective, referring to the period between 1647 and 1672 as the company’s “zenith,” Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 197.

²¹⁶ Cornelis Speelman and Anthonio Pavilioen at Pulicat to The Governor-General and Raad at Batavia, 18 October 1665, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1253 f. 1751.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

commit the least violence against EIC vessels in Masulipatnam.²¹⁸

The English officials' ability to engage non-European legal and political systems for their own protection stemmed from the EIC's consciously crafted institutional identity that, over the previous decade, had become as well known to Dutch factors in Asia as to their employers in Amsterdam. In his 1662 report, Pieter van Dam explicitly modeled his recommendations for the VOC on the English Company's much more aggressive efforts to secure carriage contracts with non-European merchants.²¹⁹ While this policy was a necessity for the English, it nonetheless tied the interests of local leaders to those of the EIC. In his threats against the Dutch Company, for example, the King of Golkonda sought, not only to uphold the peace of his ports, but to protect his own investments, which frequently rode on vessels under contract with the English Company.²²⁰ The EIC agents had thereby enmeshed their company in the jurisdictions of regional rulers. And as a merchant organization, the EIC's claims against the VOC for any conquest or loss "would be protected through the land regents." Therefore, it was "fundamental" that in the road before Masulipatnam and the other places where VOC agents traded, they "should respect the favor of the English."²²¹ Indeed, the Pulicat Council "knew of no places on the whole Coast [Coromandel] ... where they could attack that nation... except Madras," where the EIC claimed its own political jurisdiction in the garrison at Fort St. George.²²²

VOC officials across Asia sought to counter the EIC's legal strategy, leaning on the relative strengths of their own company. Once the European war had been made public, agents of both companies reflected on the VOC's accelerated efforts to establish closer commercial relationships of their own with regional sovereigns. Writing from Banten in May of 1666,

²¹⁸ William Jearsey, et al. at Masulipatnam to Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat, 25 May 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 222r.

²¹⁹ Pieter van Dam, "Een advise," 281.

²²⁰ Relation from Aleppo, 1 November 1666, TNA CO/77/10 f. 53r-4v.

²²¹ Cornelis Speelman and Anthonio Pavilioen at Pulicat to The Governor-General and Raad at Batavia, 18 October 1665, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1253 f. 1751.

²²² *Ibid.*

William Turner, the EIC's Agent at Ageng Tirtayasa's Court, complained to the Committees in London that the VOC had moved to push the English out of the nearby Jambi pepper market. Batavia's representatives sought to augment "their Esteeme and ingratiatie into that Princes favour" by flushing Jambi "with all sorts of Cloth and Creditted the King in a New Debt of 6000P to his old one of 13000P."²²³ This would greatly harm the EIC's standing at that critical pepper port, Turner argued, as the highly complex politics of Southeast Asia mandated that "those Kings nay most in these parts respect only the present advantage."²²⁴ The English factors at Persia reported the same VOC strategy, suddenly intensified at the Safavid Court,²²⁵ and the *Raad* confirmed to the *Heren* that they had redoubled their efforts to tie Dutch interests to those of the Nawab and other regional leaders throughout Bengal.²²⁶

Both companies responded to the war by continuing the negotiation of their legal identities. However, the conflict's costs to the companies' Eurasian trade began to take a serious toll. By 1667, the English Company had lost at least three ships to the VOC, and EIC officials had also lost vessels on their private accounts.²²⁷ The VOC suffered the capture of two of its Eastindiamen to the English Navy in Europe. Just as they had in the English Channel, both companies had also forgone significant profits in Asian waters, re-routing and interrupting their shipping networks out of fear for the safety of their fleets.²²⁸

In 1667, news of the peace negotiations at Breda met with great relief among the officials

²²³ William Turner and Council at Bantam to the Company in London, 8 May 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 217r.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Relation from Aleppo, 1 November 1666, TNA CO/77/10 f. 53r-4v.

²²⁶ Generale Missive, 27 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255 f. 170-172.

²²⁷ The EIC lost two ships at Ballasore and one in Gujarat, *The African*, Pieter van Dam, Mondeling Rapport wegen den toestant der saecken in Oost-Indien, 26 October 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739; The Dutch also seized William Jearsey's private vessel, Sir George Oxinden at Surat, 29 December 1665, TNA CO/77/9 f. 311r-v; Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat to the Company in London, 24 November 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 283-290; The Royal Navy seized two VOC return ships in 1665, Court of Committees, 10 November 1665, IOR/B/28 f. 23v-24r.

²²⁸ Officials of both companies held their ships in the Bay of Bengal, Generale Missive, 27 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255 f. 180; Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat to Capt Robert Lord at Diu, 16 July 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 228-229; The *Heren* held their 1665 return fleet at Bergen in Norway, Pieter van Dam to the States General, 18 July 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739; The EIC ships from Banten docked at Kinsale in Ireland, Governor William Thomson to Sir William Coventry, 15 July 1665, IOR/E/3/86 f. 244v.

of both companies. The *Heren* reflected on the “damage and losses” that the international conflict had put on their organization.²²⁹ While he certainly breathed a sigh of relief at the news of peace in Europe, George Oxinden sought to ensure that his superiors in London had found instruction in the two years of conflict. The EIC’s factors worked hard to secure protection and encouragement for their trade through the local and regional institutions of law and commerce. They continued to benefit from their shipping contracts with non-European merchants and their rights under regional authorities.²³⁰ But the greater scale and resources of the Dutch guaranteed that any English gains would be temporary: “they are so powerfull & bribe so high; wee have been laboring with this [Mughal] Governor, at last can get only a bare promise that the Dutch shall committ no hostility in the usuall anchoring place before this Rivers mouth, and that is the outside and utmost extent, which he saith the Dutch have oblided themselves to.”²³¹ The English Company could not grow to match the VOC’s resources overnight, and thus the reliance on Asian regimes would provide an insecure future for the EIC. Rather, the Committees would employ opinions such as Oxinden’s in a renewed push for an inter-company regulatory regime. During the next five years, the EIC-VOC discourse would be dominated by efforts to formalize a shared interpretation of the law of nations and a mutual understanding of commercial and colonial development in the East Indies.

3.4 The Treaty of Breda

While the effects of the war varied widely across Asia, for the *Heren* and the Committees, the conflict severely heightened the risks of an already perilous business. The two directorates welcomed 1667’s international treaty negotiation at Breda that would put an end to

²²⁹ The *Heren* were eager, however, to return to work “on the old foot,” continuing to build on their plans prior to the war, *Heren XVII* to the Governor-General and Raad, 20 November 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319.

²³⁰ Sir George Oxinden and the Council at Surat to the Company in London, 25 September 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 239r-v.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 240r.

the Second Anglo-Dutch War. The accepted narrative describes how an international treaty process came about, urged by the dynamics of European inter-state politics. Scholars of European treaties and international law cast Breda as a key development in the evolving “Westphalian system” of European international relations,²³² and as a strong example of how international treaties serve as the primary conduits for the negotiation of the law of nations.²³³ Channeling the “strategic and shifting alliances of the great states, England, the Dutch Republic, and France,” this negotiation had a “major impact on international law and politics.”²³⁴

Negotiations between English and Dutch ambassadors were brokered by Louis XIV in Paris throughout 1666, and the first round of official peace talks began at Breda in the spring of 1667. At the same time, the French king, who had entered the war on the side of the Dutch in 1666, ostensibly to eject the forces of the English-allied Bishop of Munster, which threatened the Republic from the South and the East, had been in separate negotiations with both parties, seeking to establish official peace alliances.²³⁵ Louis took advantage of the instability in Europe to secure France’s dominant position in international politics, extracting concessions from both nations, each eager for a French ally. From the English, he sought the right to retake the Spanish Netherlands for his wife, Maria Theresa of Spain, whom he saw as the rightful heir to that region.²³⁶ From the Dutch, he sought ships and aid in the effort to build his own East India Company.²³⁷ After two years of costly fighting and the transparent political machinations of the

²³² Lesaffer, *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History*, 369; Duchhardt, “From the Peace of Westphalia to the Congress of Vienna,” 640.

²³³ Neff, *War and the Law of Nations*, 117.

²³⁴ Shavana Musa, “The Peace of Breda (1667),” in *Oxford Public International Law*, <http://opil.ouplaw.com/page/peace-of-breda>; In his seminal work on the later Stuart period, G.N. Clark set the terms of the English historiographical debate over Breda, describing it as a turning point away from raw economic competition toward an identifiable international system of negotiation: “the ensuing period laid the foundations for a community of interest which ultimately found expression in alliance,” G.N. Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 68.

²³⁵ Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 294.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 391.

²³⁷ Resolutions of the States General, 30 April 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; Resolutions of the States General, 29 August 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; The French East India Company solicited the ships through a merchant representative in Amsterdam, Claude Both, Resolutions of the States General, 30

French, *Raadpensionaris* De Witt, leading the Republic's government, sought to bring the war with England to a close in a single motion. He engineered the Dutch navy's storied raid on Chatham, which resulted in the surprise destruction of the English fleet, and the capture of the Crown's flagship, the *Royal Charles*.²³⁸

Shocked, militarily hobbled, and financially exhausted, the Crown had no choice but to move for a quick peace, accepting the Dutch terms.²³⁹ Beyond the standards of the previous 1654 and 1662 agreements, for the first time, the 1667 Anglo-Dutch treaty extended to govern extra-European colonies. The rule of *uti possidetis*—a principle mandating that parties retain possession of those lands, which they currently hold—guided the negotiations. Pulo Run was left to the Dutch, while New Netherland was ceded to the English. Scholars have debated whether the treaty should be read as a Dutch economic coup, at the expense of the fledgling English trading empire,²⁴⁰ or as a key moment in the development of international and inter-imperial politics.²⁴¹ The principal actors were competing European states, and the Treaty of Breda was a

September 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; To enter the war on their side, the English offered France any Dutch possessions in Africa or the East Indies, which they could take jointly from the VOC, Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 320; The VOC's ultimate denial of ships to Colbert's French East India Company provoked anger from Louis XIV, but the Dutch mollified his upsetment by allowing French ships to convoy with the VOC fleet at Texel, Memorial from the Count d'Estrades, Presented to the States General, 19 May 1666, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D'Estrades*, vol. II (London, 1711), 477-478.

²³⁸ N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 76-77.

²³⁹ Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*, 133; Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 403-404; Jones, *Britain and the World*, 80-81.

²⁴⁰ Economic historians have tended to see the treaty as confirming the Republic's trade dominance, while simultaneously recognizing England's ascendance in Atlantic trade with the Crown's acquisition of New Amsterdam (even at the expense of Pulo Run) as a crucial step in the tightening of English trade regulations in the Atlantic, Cathy Matson, *Merchants & Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 36-72; Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires*, 40; Wilson, *Profit and Power*, 143-158.

²⁴¹ A growing number of political historians have recognized Breda, not as an historical point of brokerage for Anglo-Dutch commercial interests, but for its significance as a negotiation of Anglo-Dutch political conflict, Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England 1660-1760*, 136-144; Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 379-406; Keith Feiling demands Breda be examined in the context of the political "troubles of Europe, so far transcending Dutch commercial quarrels," Feiling, *British Foreign Policy*, 207; and Gijs Rommelse has recognized the treaty as the "major turning point" away from a mercantilist system of European international relations, and toward a new international system driven by political goals, Gijs

result of the complex issues linking the governments in Paris, London, and The Hague.²⁴²

In this important process of statecraft, however, the English and Dutch East India Companies were influential non-state actors on the stage of international politics—and not just as players within dueling empires. Linking their ongoing legal discourse, inspired by Cochin, with their own interventions in national political and economic debates, both directorates actively sought to manipulate the outcome of the treaty to their company's favor. The arguments that had developed between EIC and VOC leaders determined the pace and terms of the international negotiations.

Talks to end the war had begun almost as soon as the hostilities were initiated. As ambassadors in Paris and at The Hague began to negotiate terms, with the mediation of Louis XIV and his ministers, one issue continually stalled the discussions: Pulo Run.²⁴³ During the summer of 1665, the French Ambassador in London, the Marquis de Ruvigny, presented Charles II with Louis' initial peace proposal, which included stipulations that New Netherland would remain with the English, in exchange for the Dutch Republic's keeping Pulo Run.²⁴⁴ To the English Crown and to the States, Louis' proposal linked Pulo Run in "a general reciprocal restitution of all the lands and places outside of Europe, that one has conquered from the other," with the "exchange of New Netherlands and Fort St. Andries on the island of Boa Vista, for the island of Pulo Run."²⁴⁵ Charles rejected the proposal, arguing that the VOC had taken the island "without any color of Right." The treaties of 1654 and 1662 had granted the EIC Pulo Run. But "breaking the publick faith," the Dutch had never actually restored the island to the English,

Rommelse, "The role of mercantilism in Anglo-Dutch political relations, 1650-74," *Economic History Review* 63, no. 3 (2010), 591

²⁴² Indeed, Pincus argues that any participation of mercantile figures "existed largely for show," Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, 400.

²⁴³ Van Beuningen was in Paris, while Lord Arlington represented the English through the Earl of St. Albans at Versailles, much to the discontent of the official Ambassador, Denzil Holles, *Ibid.*, 387.

²⁴⁴ *Proposals made by the Lords Ambassadors Extraordinary of France, to his Britannick Majesty, in the Name of the most Christian King*, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D'Estrades*, vol. II, 68.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Charles claimed, and instead they “made themselves the aggressors.”²⁴⁶

As Charles publicly spiked the French King’s preliminary proposals, in closed conversations with French officials, English ministers offered political context for their king’s position. The Crown’s ailing Lord Chancellor Clarendon had confessed to the French Ambassador, d’Estrades, that the recent aggressive public “Amboyna” campaigns, drawn from the 1650s tracts of the Hartlibians and the East India Company, made the abandonment of the island politically impossible for the monarch. So effectively had Pulo Run been cast as reparation for “the Cruelties exercis’d on their Countrymen,” that, were the king to drop the claim, the Chancellor assured d’Estrades, “all England wou’d rise against him.”²⁴⁷

Though neither the EIC nor the VOC had any representatives at the talks that continued between ambassadors in Paris, it soon became clear that the companies’ debate over a shared legal identity in the East Indies was at the core of the negotiations for peace. Coenraad van Beuningen, the States’ representative to France—as well as future Amsterdam mayor, and influential VOC *bewindhebber*—held the most authority for the Dutch at the Paris talks.²⁴⁸ And before the States General’s representatives could respond to any proposal, he asserted, they required the written opinions of the directors of the Dutch East and West India Companies.²⁴⁹

While the VOC’s report does not survive in the archives, it seems clear that the *Heren*

²⁴⁶ *The King of England’s Answer to the Proposals, made by the Ambassadors Extraordinary of France, in the Name of the King*, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. II, 69.

²⁴⁷ Louis XIV to the Count D’Estrades, 29 August 1665, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. II, 57.

²⁴⁸ The Count D’Estrades described Van Beuningen as speaking with “the city of Amsterdam for him in everything,” The Count D’Estrades to Mons. De Lionne, 27 August 1665, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. II, 53; For historical analysis of Coenraad van Beuningen’s role in the governance of the VOC, see Femme Gaastra, *Bewind and Beleid bij de VOC: de financiële en commerciële politiek van de bewindhebbers, 1672-1702* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1989); Femme Gaastra, “Coenraad van Beuningen en de Beurscrash van 1688,” in *In Het Verleden Behaalde Resultaten: Bijdragen tot de Nederlandse Beleggingsgeschiedenis*, eds. H.W. van den Doel and G. van Boom (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2002): 77-102; Jonathan Israel, “The Amsterdam Stock Exchange and the English Revolution of 1688,” *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 103 (January 1990): 395-440.

²⁴⁹ Resolutions of the States General, 29 August 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; Resolutions of the States General, 1 September 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; Resolutions of the States General, 4 September 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843.

had no interest in returning Pulo Run. In October of 1664, the *Heren* had written to Governor-General Maetsuycker, conveying that his continued refusal to cede the scorched atoll had resulted in the escalation of English legal claims against the Company. Far from a reprimand, however, the *bewindhebbers* congratulated Maetsuycker for his “prudence,” considering his actions “well done.”²⁵⁰ The VOC’s position on Pulo Run was clearly communicated to Van Beuningen, and while the ambassador appeared to concede the Dutch West India Company’s loss at New Netherland, he held fast on Pulo Run. In September of 1665, Van Beuningen declared to Louis XIV that, should the king refuse the exchange of New Netherland for the VOC’s keeping Pulo Run, then the States General “would not consent to the Exchange of either of those Places.”²⁵¹

While the state representatives worked through terms of trade and sovereignty in Europe, the companies’ dueling claims on Pulo Run remained the focus of debate in preparation for formal peace talks in the summer of 1667. Louis XIV wrote in exasperation to d’Estrades, worried that Pulo Run was “probably the principal and almost the sole stumbling-block to the Conclusion of the Peace.”²⁵² While it was without question that the VOC held the island at the end of the war, the English Crown had remained steadfast in its support of the EIC’s arguments of legal possession, claiming that the *Raad* had, in fact, never officially turned the island over to English custody. Were this the case, then the terms of the 1654 and 1662 treaties remained unfulfilled, and *uti possidetis* would not apply. The Dutch Company’s claim to the EIC’s proposed hub in Southeast Asia would be groundless.²⁵³ Both East India Companies understood this, and the *Heren* and the Committees were now put in the position of proving the status of Pulo Run at the outbreak of the war.

²⁵⁰ Heren XVII (at Middelburg) to the Governor-General and Raad, 8 October 1664, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 726.

²⁵¹ Louis XIV to the Count D’Estrades, 18 September 1665, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. II, 102.

²⁵² Louis XIV to the Count D’Estrades and Courtin, 8 June 1667, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. III, 212.

²⁵³ Instructions for Denzell Lord Holles & Henry Coventry Esqr., 18 April 1667, TNA SP/84/182 f. 98.

The limitations of distance and inter-oceanic sea travel kept the *Raad's* 1667 report, confirming in great detail the seizure of the island from Agent Harrington and the small English party, from reaching the *bewindhebbers* until well after the Breda negotiations were settled and a peace had been sealed.²⁵⁴ Thus, the companies relied on established records for their arguments. The Committees generated historical narratives of the VOC's blocking English access to the island, and they assembled a compendium of prior treaties and claims, including a damage estimate for costs of their company's rebuffed attempts to take possession of Pulo Run.²⁵⁵ In response to these claims, the States General referred the matter to the *Heren*, depending on the VOC to inform them "as soon as possible of the legal truth" of "how it presently lies with the constitution of Pulo Run... specifically whether that island was withheld or surrendered to the English..."²⁵⁶ The report of the previous year's return fleet supported the *Heren's* position, stating that, prior to the war, "the English had taken possession of Pulo Run, occupying it." As soon as news of the war had reached Batavia, the report claimed, "orders were dispatched to Banda to again drive the nation (English) from there."²⁵⁷ In his subsequent conversations with d'Estrades, *Raadpensionaris* De Witt replicated the VOC's narrative in the official Dutch position at the talks: "they had made good their Agreement, in delivering it [Pulo Run] up; but having recover'd it during the War, they were to retain it according to the Fundamental Article of ev'ry ones keeping what they were in Possession of."²⁵⁸

While the terms of debate over Pulo Run had been largely shaped by the EIC and the VOC, as the diplomatic retinues arrived to Breda in the summer of 1667, the international

²⁵⁴ Generale Missive, 25 January 1667, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1255, f. 28-29.

²⁵⁵ Petition touching Pulo Run, [undated], IOR/I/2/6 f. 103r-v; Petition to the King and narrative about Pulo Run, Hopewell & Leopard, 29 July 1663, IOR/I/2/6 f. 106v; The instructions for the EIC commission estimated the total loss in equipage and fees for Pulo Run to be £23,000, Instructions for the Companies Commissioners, 27 April 1667, IOR/I/2/6 f. 120r.

²⁵⁶ Resolutions of the States General, 8 March 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843.

²⁵⁷ Rapport van de Retour Vloot, 22 December 1666, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739.

²⁵⁸ Count D'Estrades to Monsieur de Lionne, 10 March 1667, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D'Estrades*, vol. III, 64.

meeting revealed the contrasting positions of the two companies within the politics of England and the Dutch Republic. Even with Pulo Run still an open issue, the VOC sent no official representatives to Breda. A close examination of the Company's relationship with the States General, however, reveals strong reasons for the *bewindhebbers'* confidence. In the same correspondence that clarified the Dutch Company's enduring stance on Pulo Run, the *bewindhebbers* also negotiated the terms of a 330,000 guilder wartime loan to the States General, as well as the lending of twenty VOC ships to the Dutch war effort.²⁵⁹ In return, the *Heren* received the extension of their current monopoly charter rights through 1700.²⁶⁰ With the States General's financial dependence on the Company, the *bewindhebbers* in Amsterdam and at The Hague evidently had little concern for the support of their interests at the nearby peace treaty.

In the wake of the Cochin debates, the Committees understood the influence of the VOC in Dutch politics. When the EIC's Governor, Andrew Riccard, wrote to Sir George Oxinden in the spring of 1667, he was wary of tying the fate of the EIC to the forthcoming international treaty, cautioning that "those subtle people of the Netherlands have ever advantaged themselves by treaties."²⁶¹ The Committees, however, had moved to secure their own leverage over English priorities going into the talks. In the Crown's instructions for the English envoys, the English government prioritized the EIC's concern for Pulo Run. The Company was the lone organization authorized to send a shadow delegation to Breda, which it staffed with three of its most senior Committees: Deputy Governor Jollis, Thomas Papillon, and Major Richard Thomson (brother of Maurice and William Thomson).²⁶² The Crown's envoys, Denzell Holles and Henry Coventry,

²⁵⁹ The VOC contracted with the States General to provide 20 warships, Resolutions of the States General, 19 December 1666, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; Following the war, the *Heren* pursued reparations against the Admiralties, Resolutions of the States General, 14 April 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; The VOC also furnished the States with a 330,000 guilder loan, Resolutions of the States General, 9 April 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843; Resolutions of the States General, 5 April 1667, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843.

²⁶⁰ Resolutions of the States General, 21 February 1665, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 4843.

²⁶¹ Andrew Riccard to Sir George Oxinden, 4 April 1667, BL Add MS 40713, 38r.

²⁶² Court of Committees, 22 March 1666, IOR/B/28 f. 144r; Court of Committees, 16 April 1667, IOR/B/28 f. 151r.

were instructed with the EIC's legal and historical talking points, previously fed to the Council of State in Company petitions.²⁶³ If the negotiations required greater detail, the state representatives were to defer to the "abundant satisfaction & information from those of the E. India Company who attend you."²⁶⁴ Should the Dutch flatly refuse to hand over the island, and offer alternative rights instead, it was the Committees who would take authority over the negotiations.²⁶⁵ Holles and Coventry were instructed that, should the VOC offer, for example, a share of the nutmeg trade instead, they should lean on the three Committees to take the deal: "you will put them in mind how hard the Company can bear the reproach of having the War continued."²⁶⁶ These instructions implied that it was the EIC representatives who had final say over the East Indies debates. The Court of Committees clearly shared this perspective, and they endowed their three representatives with the authority to make decisions in the Company's name, "as if wee ourselves were there present."²⁶⁷

De Witt's attack on Chatham, however, occurring midway through the talks, changed everything. The authority of the EIC's prominent role in the delegation fell precipitously to the less conspicuous influence of the VOC. In the immediate wake of De Witt's destruction of the English fleet, Holles and Coventry informed the EIC representatives that "in regard of the present condition of the nation (which they said could not subsist without a peace) their damages & demands might be waved and not insisted on, thereby to obtaine a peace."²⁶⁸ A despondent Papillon reported that the English envoys agreed to "grant all the Dutch demands."²⁶⁹ The final

²⁶³ Instructions for Denzell Lord Holles & Henry Coventry Esqr., 18 April 1667, TNA SP/84/182 f. 98; The instructions make specific reference to the sequence of EIC claims, as well as the phrasing for the "unjust taking" of Pulo Run from the EIC, for example, The Humble Representation of the Governor & Company of Merchants of London Tradeing to ye East Indies Concerning Pula Run [to the Privy Council], 22 October 1663, IOR/I/2/6 f. 109v; The Company's Petition Touching Pulo Run, nd., IOR/I/2/6 f. 116.

²⁶⁴ Instructions for Denzell Lord Holles & Henry Coventry Esqr., 18 April 1667, TNA SP/84/182 f. 98r.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 98r-v.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 98v.

²⁶⁷ Instructions for the Companies Commissioners, 27 April 1667, IOR/I/2/6 f. 119r.

²⁶⁸ Thomas Papillon, [Account of the Negotiations at Breda], 1667, Kent Archives Office Maidstone (hereafter KAO) U1015.O13-14.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

treaty bares this out. While the Dutch did not get their desired full repeal of the Navigation Acts, and the contents of the treaty appear surprisingly lenient on the English, the terms of peace were in lockstep with the VOC's policy positions. This included an amnesty of "all the pretences of the [English] East India Company," a priority for the VOC since 1654.²⁷⁰ The state representatives agreed to *uti possidetis*, and thus Pulo Run stayed in the Dutch Company's hands. Riccard's earlier warning to Oxinden proved prescient, as the VOC's influence was confirmed in the treaty. In response to the new terms, Papillon concluded that his "East India Company's demands are quite out of doors."²⁷¹

Perhaps even more important than the article in the VOC's favor were the treaty's blaring silences. Through its colonial regulations, the final agreement did become the first treaty to govern Anglo-Dutch rights beyond Europe. Hostilities were to cease "everywhere" on earth, with special decree to the "Places and Governments... within the Jurisdiction of either Party."²⁷² However, the stipulation to liberty of trade for English and Dutch merchants extended only to "Trade and Navigation as well in Africa as in America,"²⁷³ with the conspicuous omission of any article addressing trade within the VOC's jurisdiction. While Holles and Clarendon had been instructed to claim Pulo Run as a "principal cause of the war,"²⁷⁴ the *Heren's* consistent policy of seeking to divorce their company's authority as a sovereign in Asia from issues of international governance in Europe appears to have won out. Though Charles II had originally desired a treaty

²⁷⁰ Papillon, [Account of the Negotiations at Breda]; Indeed, the VOC had endeavored to erase all of the English claims against them in 1662, and had pushed for the same with regard to the EIC's claims in 1667, as well as those of the Courteen heirs. The third article of the Breda treaty provided that any offenses and injuries before or during the war "be buried in Oblivion," *Articles of Peace & Alliance Between the most serene and mighty Prince Charles II, by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. and the States General of the United Netherlands* (The Savoy: John Bill and Christopher Barker, 1667).

²⁷¹ Papillon, [Account of the Negotiations at Breda]; Henry Coventry, somewhat self-consciously, confirmed to Secretary William Williamson that the final agreement certainly would not please everyone, Henry Coventry at Breda to William Williamson at Whitehall, 11 July 1667, TNA SP/84/183.

²⁷² *Articles of Peace & Alliance*, Article II.

²⁷³ *Articles of Peace & Alliance*, Article IX.

²⁷⁴ Instructions for the Companies Commissioners, 98r.

for “a general and universal Regulation”²⁷⁵ for English and Dutch commerce around the world, including the East Indies, any discussion of a regulatory framework for the two companies was pushed, somewhat obliquely, to a separate marine treaty, that would be taken up subsequent to the passage of the Breda Treaty. Control of the East Indies trade remained beyond European state negotiation.

3.5 Conclusion

Throughout the 1660s, Company officials developed a legal debate that connected Porca, Surat, and Masulipatnam with Batavia, London, and the floor of the States General’s *Ridderzaal*. The companies advanced dueling interpretations of their shared legal identity: as merchants or conquerors under the law of nations. Evolving English and Dutch arguments provided a prism for the companies’ relationship, through which EIC and VOC officials actively sought to understand the differences between the politics of London and The Hague, Europe and Asia, the Company and the state. As the Committees leveraged the pro-trade inclinations of the restored Stuart monarch to further develop the EIC’s rights and political and commercial capabilities, VOC officials responded by shielding their own organization from the authority of European state politics.

Cochin, however, had linked the European and factory debates over the regulation of English and Dutch commerce in the East Indies. The very emergence of this circulating, trans-oceanic debate, concerning corporate identity in the East Indies trade, acknowledged a common language of the law of nations, shared understandings of non-European political economy, a common priority of mutual observation and emulation, and a shared infrastructure for communication, commerce, and governance. The Second Anglo-Dutch War, and its subsequent peace process, revealed the powerful effects that these trans-oceanic debates between companies

²⁷⁵ Louis XIV to the Count D’Estrades, 29 August 1665, in *Letters and Negotiations of the Count D’Estrades*, vol. II, 56.

could have on the emerging international system in Europe.

Running throughout these events was a growing braid of commercial, legal and political policy and argument, through which Company officials defined their activities in the constant tension between free merchant and sovereign conqueror, profit and loss, legal and illegal. A focus on this emerging system of practice and thought demonstrates the powerful role of a supranational corporate community in the formation of an international system in Europe. The discourse of “universal monarchy” and the arguments related to the definition of colonies emerged from a lineage of European ideology. But through the companies’ interventions, they were also driven by the centuries-old dynamics of Indian Ocean trade and the sovereign politics of non-European administrations.

This inter-company discourse only intensified following Breda. In the task of formulating a marine treaty, which would not be finalized until 1674, both companies shifted away from episodic arguments toward a more sustained discourse. This would serve to further entangle the companies’ relationship, connecting Europe and Asia in an ever-tighter bond of commercial competition and legal argument.

CHAPTER 4

THE THIRD ANGLO-DUTCH WAR (1672-1674) AND AN ANGLO-DUTCH REGIME FOR ASIA

The Cochin debate had drawn English, Dutch, Portuguese and non-European arguments and institutions into a common conversation concerning standards of law, commerce, and politics. In the wake of Cochin, inter-company debates continued to circulate between Europe and Asia, facilitated by the companies' shared transoceanic factory and shipping networks. The companies' negotiations, however, had yet to produce a formal regulatory framework for the East Indies trade.

Historians of the companies, as well as scholars of early modern Britain and the Dutch Republic, highlight the tumultuous European politics between 1667 and 1674 as exerting powerful influence over the dynamics of the East Indies trade. This narrative argues that inter-imperial politics flooded into the Indian Ocean during the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674).¹ VOC leaders responded by marshaling their company's sprawling colonial structure to lash out against English and French mercantile ventures.² And while the EIC acquired the small outpost of Bombay in 1668, the dominant scholarly narrative argues that the English company remained a merchant venture in comparison with the VOC's burgeoning empire of conquest through the early eighteenth century.³ Historians have labeled the war a pet project of Charles II, and as the

¹ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 292-299; C.R. Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-1674)," *The Mariner's Mirror* 16 (1930), 365; Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 108-109; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 433, 466; For the war's systemic financial burden, particularly for the Dutch company, see M.N. Pearson, "Merchants and States," 86; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 26-27.

² A process specifically traced in Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-1674)," 365.

³ One of the most influential articulations of this argument can be found in Holden Furber's approach to comparative merchant empires, Holden Furber, "Asia and the West as Partners before 'Empire' and After," *Journal of Asian Studies* 28, no. 4 (1969), 711-721; and an array of scholars carry this theme throughout Furber's festschrift, Blair King and M.N. Pearson, eds., *The Age of Partnership: Europeans in Asia before Dominion* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1979); This perspective also drives many of the most authoritative accounts of the EIC, including: Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 113; Sen, *Empire of Free Trade*, 80; Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution*, 114; H.V. Bowen, "No Longer Mere Traders': Continuities and Change in the Metropolitan Development of the East India Company, 1600-1834," in *The*

cost of the conflict climbed, Parliament cut off the English war effort. The Crown and Republic subsequently signed peace and maritime treaties, which the historiography mentions only in passing, as the latest additions to a growing catalogue of international agreements that came to define the politics of seventeenth-century Europe.

This chapter argues that far from a linear progression of European imperial competition, the 1670s witnessed significant changes in the relationship between the English and Dutch Companies in Asia, which deeply affected state politics in Europe. Responding to mounting Dutch attacks on their trade in Malabar and across the Western Indian Ocean, the Committees created a corporate hydra, continuing to advance the legal identity of the merchant in Southeast Asia, while anchoring a second, colonial organization at Bombay and Madras. VOC officials perceived this shift clearly. Rather than a confirmation of Dutch military supremacy against the English Company, the Third Anglo-Dutch War represented a moment of significant reshuffling in the East Indies trade. The *Raad* reassessed its own strategy in response to, what they perceived as, the rise of an English colonial rival in South Asia.

Even with the addition of French competitors in the East Indies trade, the leaders of both companies prioritized their mutual observation and emulation, with each company shifting its political and commercial initiatives in direct response to the other's evolving policies. The effects of the companies' changing relationship were not confined to Asia, and the companies' debates strongly influenced European politics in the wake of the Third Anglo-Dutch War. Now claiming the free trading rights of the "merchant," as well as the "conqueror's" rights of sovereignty, the Committees moved to secure greater autonomy from the Crown in the negotiation of East Indies policy. In a parallel dynamic with their own state administration, now

Worlds of the East India Company, edited by H.V. Bowen, Margarete Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 19; C.A. Bayly, "The British Military-Fiscal State and Indigenous Resistance: India 1750-1820," in *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, edited by Lawrence Stone (New York: Routledge, 1994), 325-326; One notable exception is the work of Philip Stern, who traces the political arguments of English empire through the development of Bombay, Stern, *The Company-State*, 6-7; 19-82.

under the Prince of Orange, the *Heren* met directly with the Committees to negotiate the 1674 marine treaty. The far-reaching terms of the treaty, though ratified by the states, were debated and finalized by company officials and driven by the companies' arguments.

4.1 Policy Friction: Competing Agendas in 1668

After the ratification of the Treaty of Breda in 1667, European states were left with the task of pursuing the mandates for subsequent “marine” or “commercial” agreements between the signatories. In the two years following the 1667 treaty, several commercial agreements would be established between England, France, Denmark and the Netherlands, formalizing the terms of commercial exchange and the rights of nautical travel in the waters of Northern Europe.⁴ The European treaties all held to similar terms, and contemporary state and company officials recognized these as efforts toward the formation of a common set of rules and rights for northern European commerce.⁵

In the autumn of 1667, Charles II dispatched a special envoy, Sir William Temple, to negotiate additional terms of alliance and commercial regulation with the States, represented by *Raadpensionaris* De Witt, at The Hague. On 17 February, 1669, the two states signed a treaty, which built on many of the same stipulations from the Treaty of Westminster (1654), the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1662, and the Treaty at Breda. The 1669 commercial treaty guaranteed liberty of shipping and trade for ships of both nations in English and Dutch “ports, bays, seas, &c.”⁶ However, just like its predecessors, the agreement mentioned no regulations for the East Indies

⁴ The Treaty of Peace between the two Kings, Louis XIV of France, and Charles II of England, concluded at Breda, July 21, 1667, in *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and Other Powers*, Vol. I, edited by Charles Jenkinson (London: J. Debrett, 1785), 186-187; Articles of Alliance and Commerce between the Most Serene and Potent Prince, Charles the Second... and the Most Serene and Potent Prince, Christian the Fifth, by the grace of God, King of Denmark, Norway &c., in *A Collection of Treaties Between Great Britain and Other Powers*, edited by George Chalmers (London: John Stockdale, 1790), 78-87.

⁵ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 19 March 1669, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

⁶ The Treaty of Commerce between Charles II, King of England, and the States of Holland, concluded at the Hague, 17 February 1668, in *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce*, 191.

and established standards only for the immediate European jurisdictions of both countries. The treaty's final clause provided that, whenever both parties should think it fit, "commissioners be appointed on both sides to supply all the defects that shall be found in these articles."⁷

Leveraging their king's activist foreign policy, the Committees saw their opportunity to push a long-held goal for the East Indies: to ratify a shared set of rights and restrictions for the East Indies trade, formalizing specific agreements on international law, commercial practice, and diplomacy with non-European nations. In this approach, the Committees argued for an authority that differentiated the East Indies trade from Anglo-Dutch state negotiations over Suriname and other Atlantic colonies.⁸

In early April of 1668, the Committees proposed to the Council of Trade regulations for governing the English and Dutch East Indies trade. The EIC proposal cast both companies as equal merchants in a coherent East Indian market. The Committees urged that the European commercial regime was mismatched to the realities of the East Indies trade: "some things being required, which are wholly impracticable [in] India, and others very dubious & uncertaine."⁹ The Committees proposed discrete terms for the governance of commerce and diplomacy for the two companies, and in doing so, they advanced a legal and commercial geography fundamentally distinguished from the jurisdiction of European international relations.

Excluding any mention of other European institutions of trade and governance, the jurisdiction of the Anglo-Dutch East Indies regulations would be defined by "the confines" of the two companies' respective charters.¹⁰ Honing in on the dueling rights of sovereignty and commerce, the Committees reflected on the terms of the 1669 marine treaty. They singled out the

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Charles I to the States General, 17 August 1671, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5909 [unfoliated]; Ambassadors Coenraad van Beuningen and Johan Boreel in London to the States General, 24 June 1670, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5909 [unfoliated].

⁹ At the Court at Whitehall, 3 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 75v.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76v.

general language of the treaty, which they claimed was “impracticable” in Asia.¹¹ The treaty’s lack of definition for the terms “besieged, blocked up, or invested” presented particular problems for the East Indies.¹² The Committees understood the terms to mean “the stopping up of all passages by sea and land.”¹³ Recalling their previous experiences at Banten, in the 1650s, and at Cochin in 1662, they argued that, without stricter definition, either party could “under pretense of a few ships lying before any port” claim to besiege said port, and to block others’ trade there. Thus, the *de facto* rule would be that, “commerce be obstructed by them who have the greatest force.”¹⁴

This was not mere haggling over semantics. Skinner’s debates with Maetsuycker in the mid-1650s had begun an enduring debate over whether both companies were best understood as merchant organizations, with free access to trade, or as possessing the rights of redress and war ascribed to sovereign states.¹⁵ Downing’s exchanges with Van Dam about Cochin between 1663 and 1665 had further evolved the arguments, as the officials argued over the VOC’s sovereign right, as a conqueror of a belligerent fort, to determine the difference between economic competitor and wartime belligerent.¹⁶ Both remained marquee issues in the Committees’ damage petitions to Charles II, and they were the keystones of the EIC’s presentation of a cumulative experience with the strategy of Dutch officials in Asia.

In fact, it was in the specific meaning of “besiege” that the Committees provided the first glimpse into their true intention for creating a discrete system of East India regulations. The legal guidelines governing the relations between the companies would go further than the mandates of the European regime because the EIC’s proposals were not meant simply to guarantee “the future

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 76r.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Section 2.4.

¹⁶ Section 3.2.

settlement of the trade in these parts.”¹⁷ Rather the Committees envisioned regulations designed to defang the VOC’s legal and political strategies that were, the EIC directors believed, the very source of Dutch supremacy in the East Indies trade. In their presentation to the king’s Council, the Committees could not well fault the financial extortion of the Crown, an unsupportive Parliament, or the comparatively shallow capital well of London for a half-century of limited development in the shadow of seemingly unbridled Dutch expansion. The best way to gain back ground in the trade, the Committees argued, was to neutralize the Dutch advantage, and so the petitioners pushed that any provision for the companies’ besieging a port in the East Indies include a clause, recognizing it to “be lawful” for the other company “to carry any other commodities, except arms & victuals” into a port besieged by either the EIC or the VOC.¹⁸ Subtly drawing in their arguments from Banten and Cochin, the Committees worked to secure a common understanding of the rights of war, but as a safeguard, they would also force a mutual interpretation of the law of nations that elevated mercantile access above martial entitlement.

In order to reinforce this legal interpretation, the Committees also presented a set of regulations tailored to their experience with the Dutch in the East Indies trade. They refashioned the key institutions of the East Indies trade—the commercial contract, the militarized factory, and the states of war and peace with non-European sovereigns—so that, while the two European nations were at peace, the two companies would operate within a transoceanic commercial market, characterized by perfect competition, unhindered by either company’s military incursion or political strategy. The proposal required the companies to agree that neither EIC nor VOC factors would be “visited, troubled, or hindered in port or at sea by the other [company] nor in any wise retarded, or diverted from the free and present []¹⁹ of their intended voyage.”²⁰

¹⁷ At the Court at Whitehall, 3 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 75v.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 76r.

¹⁹ Illegible word.

²⁰ At the Court at Whitehall, 3 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 76v.

The Committees had effectively inverted the foundational assumptions of the 1669 European marine treaty. They argued that the East Indian commercial market operated above the authority of military forts or political treaties. If either company maintained a fort or “castle” on a river or shoreline, for example, such a military installation gave that company no right of sovereignty over the surrounding area’s commerce, as it would in Europe.²¹ Either company’s military exercises could “not hinder the other company from trading with the natives.”²² In addition, if either company declared war on a non-European sovereign, the other would not furnish the East Indian belligerents with weapons or aid of any sort. Given this stipulation, the Committees maintained, the besieging force would “not hinder the other company from trading to any the []²³ places adjacent, not besieged where the natives have a government.”²⁴

Aside from political and military regulations, the stipulations proposed by the Committees also aimed to maintain commercial competition, and to restrict economic and political leverage in East Indian markets. The companies could continue their use of exclusive contracts with non-European merchants and rulers, but such contracts could not be permanent, as neither organization could “hinder the liberty of commerce with the other company.”²⁵ This was a particularly crucial stipulation for the English East India Company, the primary goal of which was expansion: building from the Dutch model, the Committees sought to pave the way for their entrance into new markets, many of which were already dominated by the VOC.²⁶ Against Dutch advantages, the Committees sought to level the playing field in the South and Southeast Asian

²¹ The basis for the treaty marine rested in the cooperation of national sovereignties, not in the creation of a supranational common market, The Treaty of Commerce between Charles II, King of England, and the States of Holland, concluded at the Hague, 17 February 1668, in *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce*, 191; See this debate over sovereignty, as a legacy of Roman Law, explicated in Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, 8, Chapter 4.

²² At the Court at Whitehall, 3 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 76r.

²³ Illegible word.

²⁴ At the Court at Whitehall, 3 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 76v.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 75v.

²⁶ As we shall see in Section 4.3.

markets in which the VOC had expended millions of guilders and thousands of lives to gain political and economic leverage.²⁷

None of the EIC's strategy was lost on Pieter van Dam, who responded to the Committees' proposals, drawing a different perspective on the companies' history and shared challenges. Finishing his second decade of service to the VOC, Van Dam remained the company's central arbiter of relations with the EIC. Though they maintained a Subcommittee on Dutch Business, the EIC directors had no salaried staff member to equal Van Dam's role in the VOC.²⁸ As the States General received reports on the Committees' actions from their embassy in London, as well as petitions from the EIC and Charles II, they immediately dispatched them to Van Dam and the *Heren's* committee at The Hague, the *Haags Besoigne*. The States deferred to the VOC to answer the Committees' legal arguments. This pattern, consistent since the Amboyna campaigns of the early 1650s, only intensified once Ambassador Temple arrived in the fall of 1667 to negotiate a commercial treaty, acting as an envoy on behalf of Charles and his subjects, the Committees.

In a series of written correspondence between the *Heren* and the States General, Van Dam drafted three significant legal treatises. In his arguments, Van Dam built on the same history of legal debates that formed the foundation of the Committee's proposals. The *Advocaat* distilled the EIC's arguments against two central features of the VOC's regime in Asia: (1) the VOC's claims of sovereignty, particularly related to the Dutch Company's laying siege to the ports of

²⁷ The specific targets of these policies, including sieges and castles, relate to the EIC's experience with the Dutch in archipelagic Southeast Asia, in particular Banten, Makassar, and the Banda and Maluku Islands, as well as on the Malabar Coast and Ceylon. For a comprehensive overview of these events, see Gerrit Knaap, "Vestiging van het Imperium (1635-1685)," in *Oorlogen Overzee: Militair optreden door compagnie en staat buiten Europa 1595-1814*, edited by Gerrit Knaap, Henk den Heijer, and Michiel de Jong (Amsterdam: Boom, 2015), 85-122.

²⁸ For Van Dam's job description, see Resolutions of the *Heren XVII*, 18 September 1652, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 149 [unfoliated]; The Governor of the EIC fulfilled most of Van Dam's responsibilities in the English company, including directing the correspondence to factories and serving as the primary interlocutor with the Crown and with Parliament.

East Indian rulers, and (2) the VOC's use and enforcement of a broad spectrum of exclusive commercial contracts within Asian markets.

Van Dam recognized the legal and political motivations for a European commercial treaty, citing to the 1667 Breda negotiations, as well as to the commercial treaty recently negotiated between the States General and Louis XIV.²⁹ He nonetheless felt the “prolix treaty of sea commerce” proposed by the Committees (via Temple) would spell the “doubtless ruin of this company.”³⁰ He acknowledged the English Company's arguments over the rights of commerce provided in the law of nations. The rights of commercial access facilitated international trade, Van Dam argued, but the law of nations and “exchange among people” did not provide, as the Committees' designs currently suggested, for a party, “under the pretext of commerce, beyond necessity, to make another's commerce fruitless.”³¹

As Temple had done, Van Dam sought to differentiate Europe from the East Indies, contextualizing the VOC's perspective on the Anglo-Dutch relationship, and on the proposed treaty. Summits and treaties, like that at London in 1654 or, most recently, at Breda in 1667, centered on complex and fluid international discourse over the rights and methods of commerce, public governance, and finance. These agreements linked ports along Northern European and Mediterranean coasts, prioritizing mutual open access to markets and finance.³² But “all that is useful in Europe,” Van Dam cautioned, did not “follow in the Indies,” where different inconveniences and challenges required different forms of governance.³³ Defending the VOC's exclusive trading contracts and sovereign claims, Van Dam firmly divided the regulations of commerce in Europe from the companies' trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope.

²⁹ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 19 March 1669, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*; Also see the conditions set out by the Treaty of Breda in 1667, *Articles of Peace & Alliance, Between the most Serene and Mighty Prince Charles II...And the High and Mighty Lords the States General*, (London: John Bill and Christopher Barker, 1667).

³³ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 19 March 1669, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

The *Advocaat* reminded the Committees that they were partners in this project of commercial governance, related to, but ultimately separate from, European states. Indeed, he was surprised at their efforts to expand the European commercial regime into the East Indies. Since taking office in 1652, Van Dam had closely studied the political and financial networks of the Committees, the most prominent of which were also directors and significant investors in Atlantic trading companies and proprietary colonial projects.³⁴ How could the Committees complain about Dutch exclusionary trading and claims to sovereignty over the waterways of conquered ports—both designed to compensate for the massive investments required for imperial trade—when the English did the same in the Caribbean and in North America?

Conceding that the English were stronger than the Dutch in the Atlantic, Van Dam reasoned that the Committees' reliance on the legal identity of the merchant stemmed from the plain fact that the EIC "was the weakest in the East Indies, with no opportunity to gain the same advantages as the Dutch Company."³⁵ If the Committees truly believed in full freedom of commerce, at the expense of sovereign claims, the *Advocaat* puzzled as to why he heard no offers for reciprocal freedoms for the Dutch in "Virginia, New Netherland... and their colonies in the West Indies," over which the English maintained exclusionary trade regulations.³⁶

Answering his own question, Van Dam perceived the English plans clearly. In their proposed regulations, the *Advocaat* argued, the Committees sought to pursue the aspirations through European law that they could not gain through commercial and military strength in Asia. The EIC targeted the VOC's system of exclusive contracts, for example, not because the English disagreed with the concept, but because the Committees sought advantage in weakening Dutch

³⁴ Since the First Anglo-Dutch War, the Van Dam and the Heren had closely tracked the Thomsons' investment network, Heren XVII to Governor-General and Raad, 2 November 1655, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 317 f. 409v; The works of Robert Brenner and Theodore Rabb offer an historical perspective on the level of cross-investment between the London trading companies, Theodore Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire*; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*.

³⁵ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 19 March 1669, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

³⁶ *Ibid.*

commerce.³⁷ To Van Dam, the open, competitive market envisioned by the Committees would lock the VOC within specific definitions of war and siege. In ports besieged by the VOC, the EIC would reap extreme profits as the lone purveyor of European goods and specie, leveraging their position as the sole European competitor to buy at the lowest possible prices.³⁸

A more comprehensive fear of the English strategy, however, was that EIC agents would also leverage access to ports besieged by the Dutch in order to elevate their diplomatic profile in the East Indies, depressing the political influence of the VOC as sovereign, and guiding “Indian nations” toward ever-wider breaches with the Dutch.³⁹ Synthesizing his suspicions into a pithy phrase, Van Dam concluded that, “in troubled water” the English “could fish for more advantage.”⁴⁰ The English article proposals, codifying the rights of siege as they did, were a “dangerous and very pernicious” threat to the VOC, and Van Dam urged the States General to reject them in order to protect the company and the economy of the Republic.⁴¹

Drawing from two decades of recorded negotiations between EIC and VOC officials, Van Dam and the Committees had shifted the debate over the rights of the free “merchant” and the sovereign “conqueror” to ascribe motivation to each other’s arguments. According to the Committees, the VOC would continue to use the rights of a sovereign in Asia, particularly the broad claims of sovereignty over the waterways of a besieged port, as a competitive tool against English trade. Van Dam, however, appeared to recognize the EIC’s own strategy of making the VOC’s military incursions a commercial liability for the Dutch Company. Through these arguments, both companies also actively sought to separate their debates from the commercial negotiations of European states.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Beyond the mutual recognition of Van Dam and the Committees, however, officials of the Crown and the Republic explicitly identified the companies' strategies that were driving the commercial negotiations.⁴² Upon receiving the EIC's proposals, the Crown dispatched Sir William Temple to renegotiate the terms of the 1669 marine treaty.⁴³ Temple turned first to the province's *Raadpensionaris*, Johan de Witt.⁴⁴ Temple's relationship with De Witt was a stark contrast to that of his predecessor, Sir George Downing, who was now serving the Restoration Government as Secretary to the Commissioners of the Treasury in London. Whereas Downing had frequently negotiated from an adversarial position with his Dutch hosts, Temple was eager to maintain a cordial relationship with De Witt and the States—a posture, at times, manipulated by Charles and the English Secretaries of State.⁴⁵ In early October of 1668, Temple reported to Lord Arlington that he had “fallen into debate” of the new terms with De Witt, and he was optimistic that “the differences between us are not great.”⁴⁶ And of the *Raadpensionaris*'s disagreements with the EIC proposals, Temple conceded, “some of his exceptions seem so reasonable, that I must be furnished with arguments to maintain the points against him, if they must be insisted on.”⁴⁷ Far from a champion of the Committees' cause, as Downing had been, Temple clearly remained unconvinced of their proposals, leaving him completely unresistant to De Witt's arguments.

⁴² Adding significant complexity to the dominant historical narratives of European diplomacy and state formation, which focus on the competing national agendas of the English and Dutch states: John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York: Knopf, 1989); Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (New York: CUP, 2000); Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*; Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*; J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossman, eds., *Britain and the Netherlands in Europe and Asia* (London: Macmillan, 1668); Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen, eds., *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (New York: CUP, 1995).

⁴³ King's Council's Answer to the Petitions of the EIC, 15 July 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 85r-86r.

⁴⁴ William Temple [to Sir John Trevor], 2 October 1668, in *Letters Written by Sir William Temple, During his being Ambassador at The Hague*, ed. D. Jones (London: A. Baldwin, 1699), 1-2.

⁴⁵ Herbert Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672* (Princeton: PUP, 1978), 724-725.

⁴⁶ Sir William Temple to Lord Arlington, 2 October 1668, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. II (London: S. Hamilton, 1814), 21.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

In Temple's reporting of their discussions—the only extant comprehensive records of the negotiations—the two officials honed right in on the Committees' strategy. Temple validated the VOC's reluctance “for the truth is, our trade in the Indies being so little, and theirs [VOC] so much, all equalities of this kind are gains to us, and loss to them.”⁴⁸ In a single phrase, Temple had encapsulated the Committees' approach to the VOC. Reading the English Company's proposals, Temple recognized no recommendations of strategic advantages in new and different markets, but rather a blueprint for setting the rules of the game to advance the EIC by disadvantaging the Dutch. And the ambassador went on to report De Witt's own recognition of this strategy.

Writing sympathetically of De Witt's rebuke of the EIC, Temple reported that the *Raadpensionaris* recognized the competing companies' strategies just as clearly. Distilling the key elements of the VOC's arguments over Cochin, which he had personally witnessed between Downing and Pieter van Dam six years earlier, De Witt defined the VOC's goals of sovereignty: that control over the waterways and markets was “the very end of either Company's building a fort or castle.”⁴⁹ As Pieter van Dam and the *Heren* had made clear in their own internal policy debates,⁵⁰ forts and garrisons were not intended simply to be constructions of grandeur, as the Portuguese had built in the preceding century. Rather, they represented calculated long-term investments in influence over transoceanic shipping lanes and the commerce of the surrounding

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 23; See Chapter 3 for extensive coverage of the Downing-Van Dam debate in 1664, over which De Witt had presided.

⁵⁰ Johan Maetsuycker to the Heren XVII, 18 January 1651, NA 1.11.01.01 Inv. Nr. 69 [unfoliated]; Van Dam, “Een advies van Mr. Pieter van Dam.”

waters.⁵¹ To allow the English to freely compete “under a [VOC] fort built to the aforesaid ends” would deprive the Dutch Company of “all the benefit of the expense they had been at.”⁵²

Furthermore, De Witt confirmed the VOC’s jurisdictional autonomy in Dutch politics. He concluded, for example, that even if the States General was to concede to free English commerce in markets under the influence of the VOC’s forts, “nor would it ever be executed, though the States should consent to it.”⁵³ In Temple, on the other hand, the EIC hardly had an informed advocate. While the Committees had contracted with and compensated Downing for his advocacy,⁵⁴ Temple’s records indicate no such agreement, and, in fact, reveal a clear priority of solidifying an Anglo-Dutch state alliance as a bulwark against an increasingly strong and militant Louis XIV. Referencing De Witt, Temple concluded to Secretary Arlington, “I thought his reasoning seemed good, and besides I imagined the thing was not of weight.”⁵⁵ If some sort of regulatory “instrument” was, in fact, needed for the East Indies trade, Temple argued, then a commission should be established, with specialist commissioners on either side dispatched to negotiate the issue.⁵⁶

While we have no records of the Committees’ reception of Temple’s less-than-staunch advocacy for the EIC’s strategy, the Company’s continued petitions to Charles II indicate their desire for stronger support. Through late 1668 and early 1669, the Committees continued to supply the government with reports from their factories, highlighting Dutch predation on English

⁵¹ An understanding that aligns with Lauren Benton’s conceptualization of sovereignty, Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, particularly chapters 2 and 4.

⁵² “Under a fort” served as a reference to the geopolitical sovereignty surrounding a VOC military installation, specifically “under the reach of their cannon,” Sir William Temple to Lord Arlington, 2 October 1668, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. II (London: S. Hamilton, 1814), 23.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵⁴ Downing’s successor, Sir William Temple, contrasted his state-focused mission to The Hague with the former ambassador’s parallel arrangement with the EIC: “Sir George had made use of that disposition, to get a great deal of money from the East-India company, who were willing to bribe his good offices, in some disputes that remained between the two companies,” Sir William Temple to Sir John Temple, 10 October 1667, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. I (Weybridge: S. Hamilton, 1814), 288.

⁵⁵ Sir William Temple to Lord Arlington, 2 October 1668, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. II, 24.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

trade in South and Southeast Asia.⁵⁷ By April of 1669, the negotiations between De Witt and Temple had still not advanced and Temple was growing frustrated with the Committees. By continuing to press their proposals, the EIC had “left our treaty a-ground now for about eight months past,” Temple lamented to Arlington.⁵⁸ In fact, Temple painted the EIC’s efforts to undermine the VOC’s sovereignty as opposed to the diplomatic goals of the English state. Temple further complained to Arlington: “I very much fear our East-India merchants have some farther meaning in it, than yet we understand, and than they desire we should.”⁵⁹

The Committees, however, refused to give in to Temple’s criticisms, and they responded by submitting a set of “final articles” for the proposed treaty.⁶⁰ Responding to the ambassador’s criticisms, the Committees recast their proposals to highlight the centrality of their trade to the health of the English nation. Their proposals sought to offer a framework “for setting things in an equal way between the two Nations, and not to yield up the Trade of this Kingdom.”⁶¹ In response to Temple’s uncovering of their strategy, which separated the interests and jurisdiction of European commerce from that of the East Indies, the Committees fluidly reverted to time tested arguments in English politics, claiming the VOC to be aspiring “universal monarchs” of trade, as they “still adhere to their old principles, of grasping the whole commerce of India into their own hands.”⁶²

The mounting tensions between the Crown representatives and the EIC insured that no East India treaty would come of the talks in 1669 and 1670. But a dramatic shift in both companies’ strategies in Asia would fundamentally realign the companies’ relationship. The binary of merchant and conqueror that had, for so long, defined the Anglo-Dutch debates over the

⁵⁷ Extract of a letter from Bantam to the East India Company, 15 October 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 111r-112r.

⁵⁸ Sir William Temple to Lord Arlington, July [] 1669, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. II, 47.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶⁰ The East India Company to Lord Arlington, 2 July 1669, TNA CO/77/11 f. 139r-141v

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 139r.

⁶² *Ibid.*; See extensive discussion of this concept in the Introduction and in Section 2.1.

East Indies trade, would soon be upset, as the companies both overhauled their approaches to governance, commerce, diplomacy, and war.

4.2 Joining the Free “Merchant” and the Sovereign “Conqueror”

In their arguments to De Witt, the *Heren* had shifted their claims to the rights of war and redress, fashioned in the siege of Banten in the 1650s, and Cochin in the 1660s, toward claims for their castles and forts as footholds for sovereignty over commerce in the surrounding waters. The Committees had adjusted their arguments accordingly. Without the resources to build a network of armed fortifications, the Committees sought to leverage their more nimble commercial model to turn the vast expenditures of forts, castles, and sieges into a liability for the VOC.

Behind the Committees’ efforts to compete with the resources they had, however, the English East India merchants had long pined for the advantages of the Dutch ports and castles. While it remained beyond their capacity, a strong desire coursed through the trans-oceanic communications of English officials, pushing the EIC to acquire a “Batavia” of its own. The ability to control the shipping, government, and commerce of a node of East Indian trade, as the Dutch did, represented a principal goal of the English company’s South Asian factors since the First Anglo-Dutch War. In addition to the VOC’s ability to claim, and to enforce, sovereignty over surrounding commerce, the English also longed for the self-sustaining financial resources that such a port’s tariffs and duties would provide.⁶³

In 1668, the Committees got an opportunity to turn this aspiration into a reality. On 5 October 1668, Henry Gary, the King’s Governor of Bombay, issued a warrant, pursuant to orders from Charles II, transferring the title of “His Island of Bombaim” to the East India Company.⁶⁴

⁶³ See, for example, John Spiller at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 April 1654, IOR E/3/24 f. 37r-38v; William Mainstone at Japarra to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR G/21/3/3 f. 64r-65v.

⁶⁴ His Majesty’s Warrant for the Transferring of this His Island of Bombaim, 5 October 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 128r.

While the subsequent years would see entire volumes of correspondence and instructions dispatched from London, delineating the exact institutions of governance prescribed for the island,⁶⁵ in this brief preliminary notice, one can recognize the beginning of a pivot in the EIC officials' conception of their company. With the grant of the island, Charles II had dramatically altered the Crown's relationship with the company, ceding to the Committees autonomous jurisdiction over the island; as EIC factors had so envied in Batavia.⁶⁶ These constraints broken, Bombay would be "under our Government & our charge for the future," the Committees assured.⁶⁷ The Committees instructed their President at Surat to assert the company's sovereignty over the island, using legal claims that were identical to those of Van Dam's own conception of sovereignty. In their preliminary instructions, the Committees informed Oxinden and his Council that the company now held all "Rights, Proffitts, Territories and Apurtenances" of the island, and claimed sole jurisdiction over the "Royalties, Revenues, Rents, Customes, Castles, Forts, Buildings & Fortification, Priviledges, Franchizes, Preheminenes, & Hereditaments within the said Premises."⁶⁸

Bombay would be a fully governed, self-sustaining colony, that it "may bear its own charge & be to our honor & profit."⁶⁹ And as their factors had desired an English entrepot, like the Dutch had at Batavia, Bombay's government was to "incourage the natives that are there, & invite others to come thither."⁷⁰ In building Bombay to be a "port for importation & exportation," the Surat Council was to blend the well-established expectations of Atlantic colonial administration with the powers and priorities required of East Indian political and commercial

⁶⁵ See, for example, the IOR/E/3/87 and IOR/E/3/88 Letter Books held in the British Library, which include the Committees' detailed instructions for the establishment of Bombay between 1665 and 1678.

⁶⁶ Memorial to Lord Arlington, 4 March 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 42r; The Heads of the Grant of Bombay to the East India Company, 15 February 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 41r; William Mainstone at Japarra to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3 f. 64r-65v.

⁶⁷ The Court of Committees to Surat, 27 March 1668, IOR/E/3/87 f. 75r; While not the focus of his work, Philip Stern makes passing reference to the Dutch influence in the foundational instructions for the government of Bombay, Stern, *The Company-State*, 49, 84-89.

⁶⁸ The Court of Committees to Surat, 27 March 1668, IOR/E/3/87 f. 75r.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

management.⁷¹ Owing to the vast distance between London and the EIC's Indian Ocean factories, the Committees granted sweeping authority to Oxinden, "wee doe wholly leave the government and direction of the same unto you."⁷²

The colonial jurisdiction that the Committees proposed for Bombay would have been familiar to the *Raad*, as well. Indeed, the Committees pursued the exact same privileges as a sovereign at Bombay that they had decried in the claims of Dutch officials at Batavia and Cochin. The Surat Council and the Committees sought the Crown's assistance in recognizing the Company's control over the waterways and islands surrounding Bombay, specifically with relationship to trading networks.⁷³ "Portuguese" and "Moorees" traveled through adjoining waterways and onto the neighboring islands of Tannah and Carinjah "without paying custome" to the Company.⁷⁴ Aligning their arguments with the defenses issued by Van Dam and De Witt, the Committees maintained that it was the company's "right" to sail freely in the waters surrounding Bombay, while enforcing customs duties on other inhabitants.⁷⁵

In their instructions to their factors in Gujarat, the Committees now began to envision their competition with the Dutch as a contest between sovereigns, not free merchants. Through "good government, & moderate customs" the Council should seek always to attract "trading Merchants to inhabit there."⁷⁶ Bombay would not invent a parallel system for already thriving East Indian trading routes. Rather, the goal of EIC leaders was to encourage non-European

⁷¹ Officials from Atlantic colonies were even physically circulated into the East Indies to apply specific policy changes, Alison Games, *Web of Empire*, 147-180; Stern, "British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparisons and Connections;" Tracing the circulation of political ideologies in the British Empire, see Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*.

⁷² The Court of Committees to Surat, 27 March 1668, IOR E/3/87 f. 75r.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ "A Clause humbly desired to be incerted in his Mats Letter to his Ambassador in Portugall touching Tannah & Carinjah," 14 August 1669, TNA CO/77/11 f. 168r.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ The Court of Committees to Surat, 27 March 1668, IOR/E/3/87 f. 75v.

mercantile networks from Persia and the Red Sea to channel through the English harbor, as the VOC had done since Jan Pietsz. Coen had authored his 1619 overhaul of the Dutch Company.⁷⁷

No longer a transient merchant traveling between the ports and courts of South Asia, the leaders of the EIC now saw their own corporation as a member of an interstate community in the East Indies.⁷⁸ While the Company had maintained a colonial administration on the island of St. Helena since 1659,⁷⁹ aspirations for the arid South Atlantic refueling station bore little resemblance to the grand designs for Bombay. The Committees' instructions to their factories reflected the priority of this fundamental policy shift, as Bombay now received a packet of its own, with voluminous instructions for the governing "Council at Bombay."⁸⁰ The soldiers, merchants, and officials at Bombay were employees of the Company. As the VOC required of its staff at Batavia,⁸¹ every EIC employee at Bombay took an oath of allegiance to the Company's government.⁸² With the investment in Bombay, the focus on the Anglo-Dutch relationship did not dissipate. Rather, it intensified.

While the Committees shifted their governance from free merchant to sovereign at Bombay, discussion of the VOC's own burgeoning colonial network continued to dominate the correspondence between the *Raad* and the *Heren*. Ceylon had become the beating heart of this system, drawing in capital and soldiers, and delivering cinnamon, elephants, and textiles across the Company's factories. This crucial exchange point had, however, become a massive expenditure for the *Heren*. Rijckloff van Goens had not simply ousted the Portuguese and taken

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; For Coen's perspective, see Section 1.4.

⁷⁸ This vein of thinking comes through, not only in plans for fortification and city management, but also in the aspirations for Bombay to serve as a regional trading hub, in the same way that the VOC built Batavia, Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 23 January 1670, IOR/E/3/30 f. 344r.

⁷⁹ William Foster, "The Acquisition of St. Helena," *The English Historical Review* 34, no. 135 (Jul. 1619), 284.

⁸⁰ List of Writings sent on the Loyall Subject for Surratt, January 1669, IOR E/3/87 f. 155v.

⁸¹ Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 9.

⁸² Court of Committees to Surat, 27 March 1668, IOR/E/3/87 f. 78r.

the *Estado*'s forts at Gale, Negombo, Battacolo, Colombo and Jaffnapatnam. He had used these bases as launching points from which to wrest sovereignty over the massive island.⁸³ Such continued colonial expansion carried an enormous price tag. The *Heren* fretted, "money is so scarce" on account of all of the "cities, castles, forts, bridges, and other works" across at least ten major installations on Ceylon, that the Company now operated under significant financial duress.⁸⁴ Cochin, Ceylon, and Batavia now formed the three anchors of the VOC's system of colonial commerce—nodes "so costly, but so important" to the company's well being.⁸⁵

These VOC strongholds had also matured into colonial societies that conformed to the visions articulated by Jan Pietersz. Coen, Johan Maetsuycker, and Pieter van Dam. Batavia had, since the 1620s, grown as a city government of Dutch burghers.⁸⁶ This jurisdiction grew with the expansion of the Dutch plantation system on Java,⁸⁷ and, by the late 1660s, Ceylon and Malabar represented promising opportunities for the *Raad* to export this model. Along with voluminous discussion tracking the trading patterns and capital flows of Cochin and the factories of the Malabar Coast, the *Heren* also assessed the capital and personnel needs of the core institutions of Dutch colonial society, monitoring the development of churches, schools, courts, banks and even fire brigades.⁸⁸ They also inquired about the potential for the growth of industry and "handworks" at Ceylon.⁸⁹

The *Raad* and *Heren* had, since the early 1650s, focused on the EIC as a commercial competitor in key markets, particularly on Java, in the Bandas, and Bengal, Gujarat, and Malabar.

⁸³ Sinnappah Arasaratnam, "Elements of social and economic change in Dutch maritime Ceylon (Sri Lanka)," *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 22, no. 35 (1985), 37-39; Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika 1602-1814," 113-114.

⁸⁴ Heren XVII to Batavia, 26 April 1668, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319 [unfoliated].

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 9.

⁸⁷ For a comprehensive anthropological analysis of this process, see Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, chapters 2 and 3.

⁸⁸ Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 4 May 1669, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 152 [unfoliated]; Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 5 May 1671, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 152 [unfoliated]; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 92-95.

⁸⁹ Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 6 May 1669, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 152 [unfoliated].

And this continued now, with the *Heren* lodging concern over English trade, particularly in Southeast Asia and in Bengal, where the Dutch directors consistently commented about the strength of English purchasing.⁹⁰ VOC officials comprehended an uptick in commercial activity and personnel for the English company at Surat, and they sought to replicate the EIC's successful market in textiles at the Mughal port.⁹¹

While historians of both companies tend to cast the EIC as a mere nuisance to the far larger VOC during this period, this perspective relies solely on comparative commercial statistics, and misses the relationship that had developed between the two companies since the First Anglo-Dutch War.⁹² Indeed, by the late 1660s, the EIC represented a core political and economic concern within the VOC, and the *Raad's* apprehension over the increasing vigor of English commerce contributed to a dramatic surge in the VOC's colonial development. Among the most significant events in the VOC's history was the multi-year siege of Makassar, led by Cornelis Speelman between 1667 and 1669. Leading historians of the VOC, including Femme Gaastra and Gerrit Knapp,⁹³ have joined with influential scholars of Southeast Asian history, Leonard Andaya and Anthony Reid,⁹⁴ to recognize the siege of that South Sulawesi port kingdom as a watershed moment in Dutch imperial history. The Makassar siege signaled a clear uptick in the scale and violence of Dutch strategic aggression, aimed to snuff out non-European resistance to the *Heren's* desired monopoly of the key Southeast Asian spice markets. However, along with the

⁹⁰ Heren XVII to Batavia, 26 April 1668, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319 [unfoliated]; Rapport van de Retuur Vloot, 30 July 1669, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

⁹¹ Particularly in lakens, Resolutions of the Heren XVII, May 6 1669, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 152 [unfoliated].

⁹² Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 329-331; Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 6-7; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 79-80, 89.

⁹³ Jur van Goor provides an overview of this historiographical focus on Makassar: Jur van Goor, "De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in de historiografie: Imperialist en multinational," in *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie*, edited by Gerrit Knaap and Ger Teitler (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2002), 12-14; Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 50; Knaap, "Expansie in Azië en Zuid-Afrika," 104.

⁹⁴ Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 1-3, 113-116; Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680, Volume II Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven: YUP, 1993), 278-279.

competition of Portuguese and French merchants, the shifting policies of the EIC were also important motivations for this aggressive strategy.

In November of 1666, Speelman arrived off of Makassar with twenty-one Men-of-War, more than 818 Dutch soldiers, 578 Dutch sailors, and 385 “native” soldiers—numbers that were to quadruple over the subsequent two years.⁹⁵ While the Makassar sovereign, Sultan Hasanuddin, offered gold for peace, after the summer of 1667, Speelman moved ahead with the siege, fashioned as retribution for the alleged murder of Dutchmen. The *Raad*’s only real interest in South Sulawesi, claims Leonard Andaya, was insofar as the rapidly expanding empire of Makassar’s sovereign, Karaeng Goa,⁹⁶ “impinged on its [VOC’s] principal concern: the spices of the Moluccas.”⁹⁷ Hundreds of Dutchmen and thousands of Makassar troops lost their lives in the conflict, which ended with the royal family’s humiliating public submission to Speelman and their acceptance of a draconian peace treaty with the *Raad*, which granted the VOC exclusive trading rights at one of the flagship entrepôts of Southeast Asia.⁹⁸

The siege of Makassar was a momentous tremor in the shifting order of Indian Ocean politics and commerce. However, a closer reading of the Dutch Company’s own reports of these events reveals a powerful and focused anxiety over other Europeans, and particularly the EIC, to be a significant driver of this aggressive, violent, and costly strategy. Speelman’s naval campaign between 1667 and 1669 was not just a siege of Makassar, but rather a sweeping consolidation of the Dutch Company’s power across archipelagic Southeast Asia—specifically targeting the markets and kingdoms in which the English had proven enduring competitors for commercial contracts and government favor. Maetsuycker and the *Raad* used their closely tracked system of

⁹⁵ The most complete account of the events is Speelman’s own “journal” of the siege, Cornelis Speelman, *Journael of Kort Verhael van ‘t begin / voortganch en Eynde des Oorloghs tusschen Den koningh en verdure Regeeringe van Macasser en de Nederlandsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Amsterdam: Marcus Doornick, 1669), [unfoliated].

⁹⁶ The Karaeng title was an indication of Makassar’s ruling class, which governed under the will of the Sultan, Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 97-99.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁸ The full text of the treaty is printed in Speelman, *Journael of Kort Verhael*, [unfoliated].

financial debt, military assistance, and commercial protection to align the sovereigns of Ambon, Buton, Ternate, and several of Makassar's own tributaries.⁹⁹ Soldiers from these kingdoms joined with Speelman's forces in this multi-year siege, designed to bring the primary market linking these regions under the VOC's own management.¹⁰⁰

It was in the subsequent peace agreement, however, that the Anglo-centric motivations were revealed. Among several articles detailing the specific terms of retribution and recompense for the Company's expense and losses in the war, Makassar was to be incorporated into the coalition of aforementioned "allies," with which the VOC would be the lone European trading partner. The well-established and profitable English trading network at Makassar would be extirpated, root and branch.¹⁰¹ All Portuguese and Englishmen were to be expelled, and their "creatures," or non-European agents, were to be expelled as well.¹⁰² Any English goods, contracted for in advance, or warehoused at Makassar, were to be loaded onboard VOC ships and sent to Batavia.¹⁰³ The *Raad* proclaimed this new order over the Java and Banda Seas as their "right of war" won through the most violent and costly conquest that the region had ever seen.¹⁰⁴

4.3 A Corporate Hydra

As the Committees sought to secure their own fledgling colony in South Asia, their agents in Southeast Asia pushed them to drive English military might into the South Seas. Witnessing the powerful Dutch response to their expanding trade, the English factors at Banten lived under another shadow of the Second Anglo-Dutch War. Showcasing stories of the De Witt

⁹⁹ Speelman, *Journal of Kort Verhael*, [unfoliated].

¹⁰⁰ Rapport van de Retuur Schepen, 19 July 1670, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated]; Andaya tracks the VOC's manipulation of disaffected regional leaders who had been brought to heel under the Goa empire, Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 73-77.

¹⁰¹ Since the 1650s, the Banten Council had maintained a regular trading circuit with Makassar, Copy of Frederick Skinner and Godfrey Goodman at Bantam to Aaron Baker and Council at Madras, [] July 1653, IOR/E/3/23 f. 72r-73r.

¹⁰² Speelman, *Journal of Kort Verhael*, Articles 6 and 7, [unfoliated].

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Article 27.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*; Rapport van de Retuur Schepen, 19 July 1670, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5739 [unfoliated].

brothers' destruction of the English fleet, the VOC had tried to convince the Banten Sultan that "they had by the late war so disabled the [English] nation," such that English shipping could no longer reach Java.¹⁰⁵ Since the First Anglo-Dutch War had turned the two companies into direct competitors, such stories from Europe "had so much credit," the English factors exclaimed, that if the Committees were at all committed to maintaining their trade in the South Seas, they would flush the Java Sea with the same military force envisioned for Bombay. Indeed, the factors wrote, "that nothing but playne force must regain a Resettlement where you [Committees] are outed, & ascertain it in the future."¹⁰⁶

While the Committees had gathered decades of correspondence, detailing the competition with, and observation of, the Dutch to design a new colonial regime for South Asia's coasts, they had different plans for Southeast Asia. The Committees had endured twenty years of failed and expensive attempts to rival Batavia by establishing a colonial base at Pulo Run. And while Makassar demonstrated the futility of confronting the Dutch with colonies and firepower, it did spur the EIC to explore non-military advantages.¹⁰⁷

Following the founding of Bombay, the Committees split the political identity of their company in Asia. As the hydra, the marine serpent of Greek mythology, responded to an attack on one head by generating two in its place, the Committees reacted to the VOC's engrossing of markets and blocking of English vessels by creating a corporate hydra of their own. One head of the EIC continued to act as the merchant in Southeast Asia, and the other claimed the rights of the sovereign in South Asia.

The Committees recommitted to a Southeast Asian network, which reflected their carefully crafted legal profile, vis-à-vis the Dutch, of the corporate "merchant." Banten would remain the hub of an English mercantile network strung out along the islands of the Malay

¹⁰⁵ Extract of a Letter from Bantam to the East India Company, 15 October 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 111r.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Court of Committees to Bantam Council, 26 May 1669, IOR/E/3/87 f. 129v-132v; Extract of a Letter from Bantam to the East India Company, 15 October 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 111r.

Archipelago. If a primary motivation for the VOC's siege of Makassar had been English expansion, the EIC's reinvigorated merchant strategy was equally Dutch-focused. The blueprint for this strategy was, itself, seized from a Dutch ship. During the Second Anglo-Dutch War, the VOC had directed its return fleet to Bergen, Norway in hopes of evading the Royal Navy. However, in 1665, an English squadron pounced upon the fleet, and managed to seize two of the VOC's ships, the *Slothany* and the *Golden Phoenix*.¹⁰⁸ While the two return ships were filled with valuable East India goods, they also carried the previous years' books of correspondence, sent home from Batavia to the *Heren*. The Court of Committees tasked a sub-group, led by Governor William Thomson, to study the books "that they may be of use to this Company for discovery of the Japan trade."¹⁰⁹ Of the seventeenth century's three great Southeast Asian metropolises, the VOC had now blocked English trade at Makassar, and Maetsuycker was shifting military and political pressure to Aceh, leaving only Banten as a safe hub for the English "merchant."¹¹⁰ In the VOC's East Asian factory books for 1665, the Committees would have also read of the Dutch Company's loss of Formosa (Taiwan), the colonial outpost that had, since 1624, served as a lucrative exchange point for Chinese and Japanese trade.¹¹¹ In 1662, the factory was overrun by the armies of Zheng Chenggong.¹¹² This event was a harbinger of a far greater instability for the VOC in the South China Sea during the 1660s, when Dutch commanders unsuccessfully tried to supplant the sovereign maritime commercial state of the Zheng dynasty,

¹⁰⁸ Court of Committees to Banten, 7 March 1665, IOR/E/3/87 f. 6v.

¹⁰⁹ Court of Committees, 10 April 1668, IOR/B/30 f. 127r.

¹¹⁰ Court of Committees to Banten, 26 May 1669, IOR/E/3/87 f. 130v.

¹¹¹ For an authoritative study on seventeenth-century Taiwan, see Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

¹¹² Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia*, 7; For the VOC Governor's account of the loss of Formosa, see [Frederick Coyett], *'t Verwaerloosde Formosa, of Waerachtig Verhael Hoedanigh door verwaerloosinge der Nederlanders in Oost-Indien, het Eylant Formosa, van den Chinesen Mandorijn, ende Zeeroover Coxinja...* (Amsterdam: Jan Claesz ten Hoorn and Michiel Pieters, 1675).

following the Zheng scion Koxinga's death.¹¹³ Thus, the Committees sought to use Banten as a center from which to weave a commercial web throughout the South China Sea.¹¹⁴

The Committees and the *Heren* had long admired the Banten Sultanate's international political influence, cultivated through a wide-reaching diplomatic network, stretching from Mecca to Nagasaki. It was Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's particularly strong diplomatic networks in East Asia, however, which the Committees, in coordination with their Banten Council, now sought to exploit. If the VOC was more dedicated than ever to the role of sovereign in the South Seas, then the EIC's best chance, the Committees reasoned, was a renewed push to emphasize their company's profile as the peaceful merchant.

Accordingly, the Banten Council dispatched ships to Nagasaki and to Taiwan, in order to establish articles of "free trade" between the EIC and the Tokugawa Shogunate, as well as the new Zheng "king of Taiwan."¹¹⁵ The plan, conceived of in the Committees' study of the Dutch records from the *Phoenix*, was to sign favorable agreements with these sovereigns, guaranteeing "free trade" for the EIC within Japan, Taiwan, Tonkin, and the trading zone of the South China Sea more generally. This would open new markets for English manufactures, particularly those viewed by the VOC as contraband: arms and gunpowder. With particular focus on Japan, the EIC officials sought to unlock access to the cornerstone of the VOC's own market strategy: Japan's seemingly inexhaustible bullion mines.¹¹⁶ While the Dutch, and increasingly the English, had insinuated themselves in intra-Asian trade networks, bullion was still the most valuable "European" good in East Indian markets. Access to Japan relieved the Dutch Company's reliance on Spanish bullion, which, for the English, needed to be shipped from Europe.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia*, 152-155.

¹¹⁴ Court of Committees to Bantam, 21 September 1671, IOR E/3/87 f. 235r-238v.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Court of Committees to Bantam, 23 October 1674, IOR E/3/88 f. 68r.

¹¹⁷ While the *bakufu*, or shadow government of the Tokugawa, banned the export of silver after 1668, the Dutch continued to export gold from Japan to fuel its East Indian trade. Sanjay Subrahmanyam estimates

As they continued to negotiate the EIC's rights as sovereign in Gujarat, the Bombay Council enthusiastically approved of this plan for Southeast Asia.¹¹⁸ President Aungier and his Council provided London with instructions gleaned from Dutch factors in Gujarat, who revealed the timing of the VOC's shipping circuits to and from Nagasaki. The Council further reported that the VOC was significantly weakened in East Asia, where non-European sovereigns had reacted negatively to the increasing "slavery and tyranny" of the *Raad's* military escalations at Makassar and throughout their East Asian network.¹¹⁹ While they succeeded in strengthening ties within the Zheng government—linking English factories on mainland South China with Taiwan, and benefitting from the robust Zheng commercial circulations that flowed down through the Java Sea¹²⁰—breaking into the highly-regulated market of the Shogunate required delicate diplomatic manipulation.

As the EIC's *Return* weighed anchor near Nagasaki harbor on 29 June 1673, the captain and crew anxiously prepared for the first English mission to Japan in forty-nine years.¹²¹ Administrative officials representing the Japanese government at Edo sailed out to meet the English vessel and over the course of two months, interrogated the crew, ferrying the information and English documents back to their superiors on shore.¹²² The English submitted to the seizure of their weapons and to an inspection of their ship, understanding this to be the normal custom in Japan.¹²³ While the EIC Council at Banten had sent the captain with documentation of their company's fruitful relationship with Edo in the early seventeenth century, as well as letters from

that the VOC exported some 14.5 million florins worth of gold from Japan during the 1660s alone; Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 186.

¹¹⁸ Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to London, 23 January 1670, IOR E/3/30 f. 341v.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Diary of the Return at Nagasaki, 29 June - 28 August, 1673, TNA CO/77/12 f. 262v, 267v-268r.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, f. 267v.

¹²² For a full English diary of the events, see *Ibid.*, f. 262-269.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 262r-263r.

Charles II,¹²⁴ the crew found their relationship with the Dutch to be the most crucial, yet complicated issue of negotiation.

Through August, the Nagasaki officials continually pressed the EIC crew: Why now? What had changed in the past forty-nine years that they now sought re-entry into the Japanese market? The captain cited the problematic politics of Europe—the two Anglo-Dutch Wars and the English Civil War—as the cause for the English Company’s stunted ambition.¹²⁵ But he enthusiastically highlighted his company’s recent commercial expansion in Southeast Asia as an indication of the EIC’s goal to become a trading partner of the Shogunate.

In previous decades, the English had remained at Banten because the direct trade in pepper between the Sultanate and London required less capital and less coordination.¹²⁶ Successful trade in Japan, they argued, required “a settlement in several places of India as Tonkin, Siam, Combodia & Taiwan.”¹²⁷ Between 1668 and 1673, however, the Committees had authorized an investment of “twenty tons of gold” to establish these factories, linked with the hub at Banten, and the Bengal and Coromandel markets in South Asia. The English Company was thus prepared to supply the Japanese with the commercial networks to which the Shogunate had become accustomed to with the Dutch.¹²⁸ It was under the pretext of this recent strategic shift to bolster the English “merchant” in Southeast and East Asia, explicitly contrasting with the VOC’s claims of sovereignty, that the EIC officials petitioned to build a merchant house and mercantile network at Nagasaki.¹²⁹

As the Japanese officials pondered the English case, the crew of the *Return* recognized the need to nuance their relationship with the VOC. Unlike their dealings with the Zheng leaders and with Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, presenting the EIC as a political alternative to the Dutch would

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 262r.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 262v.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 267v-268r.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 267v.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 267v-268r.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 265r.

not suffice. Since the Shogunate maintained unquestioned sovereignty over Japanese markets, the officials from Nagasaki were unthreatened by the VOC's aggressions in Southeast Asia.¹³⁰ Perhaps the greatest sticking point of the almost daily negotiations was cultural. In their first meetings with the Japanese "governor" and "secretaries" onboard the *Return*, the EIC officials encountered a hatred for the Portuguese that had decreased little since the *Estado's* expulsion in 1639.¹³¹ The Shogun's officials displayed particular enmity toward the Catholic or "popish" faith, which they associated with the Portuguese, who had been expelled for proselytizing among Japanese populations.¹³² Thus, the English sought to affiliate themselves with the Protestant Dutch. The crew made sure not to hoist the EIC's colors, as they had been warned of the "insult" which the Japanese read in any display of the cross.¹³³ And in repeated waves of questioning regarding the English crew's faith, the captain responded to the Japanese officials that his was the same "reformed religion so called in English & in Dutch."¹³⁴ Accordingly, while face-to-face conversations were conducted in Portuguese, the officials from Nagasaki required the crew's written correspondence to be in Dutch.¹³⁵ The Japanese officials seemed skeptical though, and the English crew continued to wait anxiously for orders from Edo regarding their access to the Nagasaki market.

¹³⁰ Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun*, 10-13.

¹³¹ Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 179.

¹³² Portuguese missionaries were first expelled by the Shogunate in 1614. Then, after a series of mounting tensions between the *Estado's* officials and the Shogunate, including 1638's Shimabara Revolt, in which rebelling peasants used Christian symbols to rally their cause, all Portuguese were expelled in 1639, Subrahmanyam, *Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 179-181.

¹³³ Diary of the Return at Nagasaki, 264v.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 263v.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

4.4 The Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674): Realizing a New European Order in the East Indies Trade

While the *Return* waited, news would reach Japan that a third Anglo-Dutch War had been declared.¹³⁶ This conflict would prove costly to both companies, and it would be distinguished for its peculiar political upheavals in Europe, which produced powerful echoes in Asia. Historians have focused on the war as a chapter in European political history and the formation of the imperial state, but the conflict would also serve as a proving ground for a new European order in Asia. To the exclusion of other European ventures, English and Dutch officials would focus on the changing dynamics guiding the relationship between their companies: the evolving patterns of competition, cooperation and emulation linking the strengthening EIC—now merchant and colonist—with an increasingly martial VOC. The English would surprise the Dutch with the effectiveness of their new divided model, and Dutch officials would reform their own strategies to address the dual identity of their English competitor.

Both historically and historiographically, the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) can be clearly distinguished from the previous two Anglo-Dutch conflicts of the seventeenth century. Political historians almost uniformly view the war as an ill-conceived foreign policy experiment by Charles II, who sought to expand his position as an international broker following Breda.¹³⁷ Focusing on state rather than company records, historians have tended to argue that the Third

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 265r.

¹³⁷ Some historians have cast the three conflicts together as driven by commercial competition against the Dutch, Wilson, *Profit and Power*; George Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 420-421; But political and military historians have fought vigorously against this notion, arguing that Charles and his small cabal of advisors were wholly responsible for engineering the secret alliance with Louis XIV, that pitted an affinity for Catholicism and Absolutism against the Dutch Republic, Ronald Hutton, "The Making of the Secret Treaty of Dover, 1668-1670," *The Historical Journal* 29, no. 2 (June 1986), 297-318; Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 179-180; Wouter Troost, *Sir William Temple, William III and the Balance of Power in Europe* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 2011), 35; De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 119, 135-136; Alan Marshall, *The Age of Faction: Court Politics, 1660-1702* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 105; John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: 'This Masquerading Age'* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 23-24; Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship*, 61-62.

Anglo-Dutch War served as a birth pang of competitive European empires in the East Indies.¹³⁸ In doing so, scholars miss the companies' experience of the war, and the powerful role that the conflict played in confirming a new order in the East Indies trade.

The outbreak of this conflict was different from the previous two Anglo-Dutch Wars, in which organizations such as the East India Companies played key roles as instigators. In 1668, Charles and a small group of advisors arranged the so-called Triple Alliance, joining England together with Sweden and the Dutch Republic, ostensibly designed to check the development of French political supremacy in Northern Europe. The Treaty seemed to have been successful, compelling Louis XIV to sign the subsequent Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, halting the push of French troops into the Spanish Netherlands (today, Flanders).¹³⁹ While Temple toiled away in negotiations with De Witt, however, the Crown government signed a "secret treaty" of offensive alliance with Louis XIV at Dover on 22 May 1670. Louis demanded that an attack on the Dutch be "the basis for any alliance."¹⁴⁰

While a lengthy debate over the war's causes lays beyond the scope of this study, it remains important to note that the EIC was completely absent from the Crown's strategy.¹⁴¹ While EIC leaders like Sir Richard Ford had contributed to the anti-Dutch rhetoric of 1664 and 1665, Company officials did not participate in the pamphlet campaigns promoting the hostilities with Holland in 1672.¹⁴² Ambassador Temple was also kept in the dark. In fact, even up through the months immediately preceding Charles II's declaration of war, both East India Companies'

¹³⁸ Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East," 343-386; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 296-297, 402.

¹³⁹ Hutton, "The Making of the Secret Treaty of Dover," 300.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 301. Extrait de L'Alliance Entre le Roy de France & d' Angleterre, 1670, BL Add MS 41803, f. 6r.

¹⁴¹ Ronald Hutton has confirmed that the tight cabal of engineers for this conflict was well insulated from those beyond the Court, as well as institutions like EIC, confined to circles closest to Charles and James, the Duke of York; Hutton, "The Making of the Secret Treaty of Dover, 1668-1670," 297-298.

¹⁴² These were dominated largely by recycled pamphlets from the Second Anglo-Dutch War and religious rhetoric generated by pamphleteers close to the Crown, for example [Henry Stubbe], *A Justification of the Present War Against the United Netherlands* (London: Henry Hills and John Starkey, 1672); Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*, 137-143.

directorates were hard at work, actively establishing a commission to continue their negotiations.¹⁴³

Temple's earnest efforts to forge a workable relationship with De Witt, and to understand the motivations and points of intersection between the two East India Companies, were now thwarted by his own government's foreign policy. Charles recalled Temple in the summer of 1671, and upon his return, the ambassador passed through the Dutch fleet, readying for war.¹⁴⁴ When Charles' intentions became clear to him, Temple fumed that his mission had "ended in smoke, which for almost three years made so much noise in the world, restored and preserved so long the general peace, and left his Majesty the arbitrage of all affairs among our neighbours."¹⁴⁵

As word of an Anglo-French Alliance gained credibility in Amsterdam and London, both companies' directors were hardly bullish at the prospect of war. France was a fearsome threat to the Republic's Southern borders, and the *Heren* had maintained a strong fear of the Royal Navy since the First Anglo-Dutch War. The loss of return ships could prove an existential threat to the VOC's carefully orchestrated capital model, which balanced auction sales with enormous debt and bullion contracts, as well as dividend commitments.¹⁴⁶ With the English fleets' seizure of two VOC return ships in the last war fresh in their minds, the *Heren* wrote to the States General in April of 1672, entreating the States that the "likely war with France... and possible war with England to follow" mandated immediate consideration for the safety of the VOC's return fleets.¹⁴⁷ As they wrote to their factors in Persia, the Committees also revealed their lack of zeal

¹⁴³ Just as they had at the opening of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, Sir William Temple, "Deduction of what hath passed in the Negotiation touching the Marine Treaty in Holland," 18 March 1669, BL Add MS 28093 f. 172r-172v.

¹⁴⁴ Sir William Temple to Sir John Temple in Ireland, 14 September 1671, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. II, 181-182.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹⁴⁶ Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company*, 26; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 435, 454; Indeed the closely calibrated relationship between the company and the provincial and urban financial institutions with which it did business was also tested in the 1670s by the failure of the Middelburgh Wisselbank, Resolutions of the VOC Amsterdam Chamber, 13 February 1676, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 27 [unfoliated].

¹⁴⁷ Heren XVII to the States General, 1 April 1672, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 152 [unfoliated].

for Charles' strategy. Indeed, they warned their factors of the strong potential for a coming conflict with both the Dutch and the French. They stirred their employees to be alert and to brace for the "disruption to our trade" that any war with either of these nations would bring.¹⁴⁸

"Disruption" seems an appropriate term to describe the effects of this third Anglo-Dutch conflict on the English and Dutch merchant communities. Even with its numerical and technological advantages, the authoritative military historian of the three Anglo-Dutch Wars, J.R. Jones, is quick to note that the English fleet "failed to win a single victory during the whole war."¹⁴⁹ English merchants took comparatively massive losses to Zeeland privateers, who seized English ships by the dozens.¹⁵⁰ While the Dutch Navy held back the English at sea, the major shock to the Republic came from what Jones labeled, the French "blitzkrieg" of 1672.¹⁵¹ In May of 1672, Louis XIV led 120,000 troops in an invasion of the Republic's South and Eastern borders, invading Utrecht and threatening Holland, itself.¹⁵² De Witt had ignored the diplomatic reports, which warned of such an offensive against the Republic's poorly maintained Eastern defenses.¹⁵³ Support for De Witt's government disintegrated, and had provincial leaders not opened the sluices, thus creating a floodplain below Amsterdam, the French very well could have taken all of Northern Holland.¹⁵⁴

This war stirred only concern among both companies' directors: a significant portion of the companies' sales (for the EIC, greater than half) were derived from the re-export of East India goods across European markets.¹⁵⁵ In contrast to the previous two Anglo-Dutch Wars, the only EIC involvement in the public debate of the war was to highlight its negative effects on commerce. London's powerful French Huguenot merchant community, including senior EIC

¹⁴⁸ Court of Committees to Gombroone, 15 March 1672, IOR E/3/87 f. 270r.

¹⁴⁹ Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 179-180

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁵² De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 410.

¹⁵³ Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 186.

¹⁵⁴ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 798-799.

¹⁵⁵ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 91; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 10, 30-31, 36.

Committee, Thomas Papillon, actively disparaged the continued prosecution of the conflict.¹⁵⁶ After suffering through significant maritime losses, and facing dogged Dutch propaganda labeling the war a Catholic “conspiracy” to impose arbitrary government on England,¹⁵⁷ by the end of the summer of 1673, Parliament halted funding for the war.¹⁵⁸ The *Heren* sought, above all, to secure their fleets from the English. Beginning in 1672, they wrote to Batavia, preparing them for paltry shipments from Europe, as “the war has brought a standstill to trade, not only in these lands, but through all of Europe.”¹⁵⁹

In Asia, the Third Anglo-Dutch War took on very different dynamics from the previous two conflicts, especially as the leadership of both companies now viewed the other not only as a commercial competitor, but as a colonial rival. The First Two Anglo-Dutch Wars had seen the *Heren*’s fears of English naval expansion into Asia unfulfilled. By 1672, the *Raad* operated across an Indian Ocean increasingly occupied by very real signs of European colonial competition. The EIC now had armed ships gathering in East Indian waters, particularly to protect its two fortified cities at Bombay and Madras. In July of 1672, a French squadron had also bombarded and overtaken the fort at São Thomé, in Golkonda.¹⁶⁰ In response to the declaration of war, the *Heren* abandoned their concern over the vast expenditure of military and infrastructure development on Ceylon and across the Malay Archipelago, ordering their lieutenants to defend and bolster fortifications across South and Southeast Asia to a level of strength that could repel a “European enemy.”¹⁶¹ In the previous two conflicts with the English, this order had extended

¹⁵⁶ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 136.

¹⁵⁷ [Peter Du Moulin], *England’s Appeal from the Private Cabal at White-hall to the Great Council of the Nation* (1673).

¹⁵⁸ Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 210-212.

¹⁵⁹ Heren XVII at Middelburgh to the Governor-General and Raad, 21 September 1672, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319 [unfoliated].

¹⁶⁰ Boxer, “The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4),” 347.

¹⁶¹ The Heren XVII at Middelburgh to the Governor-General and Raad, 14 May 1672, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319 [unfoliated].

only as far as the Cape of Good Hope, indicating the *Heren*'s belief that colonial clashes with the English were confined to the Atlantic realm.¹⁶² But the prospect of an English alliance with the nascent French military forays in Asia, as well as with the limping *Estado*, further strengthened this threat. The EIC's development of Bombay and Fort St. George only added to this, as did the significant growth of English business in Bengal, Coromandel, and in the "small places" throughout Southeast Asia.¹⁶³

Two strategies enabled the *Raad* to prosecute an aggressive inter-European war in the East Indies. First, the VOC now controlled far more shoreline than it had in the 1650s or 1660s, and the seizure of English vessels in the Bandas or along the Malabar Coast was no longer a liability to its diplomatic goals. Batavia had also built on an old playbook governing its relations with non-European sovereigns. As Speelman had done at Makassar, the *Raad* secured allegiance among local and regional leaders by leveraging the financial indebtedness that the VOC had assiduously cultivated among non-European states through lending money, military force, and commercial carriage.¹⁶⁴

Governor-General Maetsuycker and the *Raad* also restructured their military hierarchy to answer the threats posed by the war. The *Raad* elevated its two primary military and colonial architects to be pan-oceanic military commanders, who led the fight against the Company's European rivals. Following his conquest of Ceylon, Rijckloff van Goens commanded the war effort in the Western Quarter and along South Asia.¹⁶⁵ Fresh from directing the VOC's most significant military operation in history, resulting in the establishment of the Company's newest

¹⁶² See, for example, the instructions from 1653, ordering the Cape Governor Van Riebeeck to prepare the fort to "withstand European war," Journal of the Cape Governor, 18 January 1653, WCARS VC 1, vol. II f. 398.

¹⁶³ The Heren XVII at Middelburgh to the Governor-General and Raad, 14 May 1672, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 319 [unfoliated].

¹⁶⁴ William Gyfford, Thomas James and Nicholas Waite in Tonkin to the East India Company in London, 7 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 224r-224v.

¹⁶⁵ Acte van aanstelling van Rijckloff van Goens tot superintendent, admiral en veldoverste op Ceylon, Malabar en Coromandel in de op handen zijnde oorlog met Frankrijk en Portugal, 14 April 1672, NA 1.10.32 Inv. Nr. 17 [unfoliated].

colonial hub at Makassar, Cornelis Speelman directed operations East of the Coromandel Coast.¹⁶⁶ The *Raad* also coordinated the dispersal of military personnel and the Company's swelling slave population, informing their colonial hubs, like the fort at the Cape, that they could expect increased shipments of slaves and support.¹⁶⁷

This leadership change signaled a broader policy shift in the VOC's military aggression. In the Second Anglo-Dutch War, VOC officials had been at pains to keep news of the conflict from their captains and lieutenants, for fear of retribution from more powerful sovereigns, like the King of Golkonda, who enforced zero-tolerance policies against European belligerents at their ports or in shipping lanes under their control.¹⁶⁸ In 1672 and 1673, the Dutch became far more aggressive. In Southeast and South Asia, the VOC seized at least seven English vessels and reduced the French fleet to a mere two ships—heavily damaged.¹⁶⁹

The VOC's actions reflected not only the Company's stronger military establishment in the late seventeenth century, but also the VOC's response to the evolution of English policy as both merchant-diplomat in Southeast Asia, and as a colonial government in South Asia. English reports out of Java and Sumatra acknowledged the limitations of the merchant-diplomat against Batavia's militarized colonial operation. Without substantial fortifications of their own, the EIC officials still acted as merchants, operating behind the protection of the walls of the cities and citadels of non-European sovereigns. As they looked out to the swelling Dutch fleets in the Java and South China Seas and saw the Dutch flag flying above key commercial hubs like Makassar, English captains found their voyages increasingly unsettling.¹⁷⁰ English factors argued that the war only emphasized that the last best hope for English trade in the South Seas lay in linking the

¹⁶⁶ Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4)," 348, 351, 360.

¹⁶⁷ Council of Policy at the Cape to Batavia, 29 October 1672, WCARS C 1341 f. 120-121.

¹⁶⁸ Cornelis Speelman and Anthonio Pavilioen at Pulicat to The Governor-General and Raad at Batavia, 18 October 1665, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1253 f. 1751; William Jearsey, et al. at Masulipatnam to Sir George Oxinden and Council at Surat, 25 May 1666, IOR/E/3/29 f. 222r.

¹⁶⁹ Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4)," 348, 351, 360.

¹⁷⁰ Consultation by Simon Delboe, Hamon Gibbon and William Ramsden on the Return at Sea from Japan, 1 September 1673, IOR/E/3/34 f. 137r.

English Council at Banten with the markets of Southern China and Japan, which like the Sultanate, remained under the unquestioned control of non-European sovereigns.¹⁷¹

When read together, the wartime records of the *Raad* and the Banten Council confirm that both company governments maintained a common perspective on the opportunities of the EIC and the limitations of the VOC in East Asia. The VOC could do little to hinder English trade within the Zheng system, and, during the war, EIC agents continued to expand their operations throughout the South China Sea.¹⁷² Japan, however, was a different story. As the crew of the *Return* waited through June and July of 1673 for their answer from Edo, several Dutch ships passed by them into Nagasaki harbor, one carrying news from Batavia of the Anglo-Dutch War.¹⁷³ While any seizure of the English vessel risked the VOC's trading license, the Dutch apparently recognized the benefit that the English Crown's political machinations in Europe could provide them at Edo.

When the representatives of the Shogunate finally returned with an answer on 28 July 1673, their judgment betrayed a heavy reliance on the Dutch descriptions of the political turmoil in Europe. The EIC was denied access to Japan, owing to the English king's recent marriage to the Portuguese *infanta*, and now, the war he had declared in alliance with Catholic France against the Protestant Dutch.¹⁷⁴ Such developments fatally undermined the EIC's claims of cultural alliance with the Dutch and tainted the English in the minds of Japanese leaders.¹⁷⁵ While they had used the European conflict to successfully block—at least temporarily—the EIC's access to Japan, the *Raad* prioritized the focus of its regional officials on the EIC. The English factors coordinated through the Banten Council and Fort St. George, strengthening their networks linking

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Translation of the King of Siam's Tarra (Permission to settle to the East India Company), 1675, IOR/E/3/35 f. 250r-250v.

¹⁷³ Diary of the Return at Nagasaki, f. 264r.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 266r; Indeed, this same narrative can be found in the anti-English pamphlets that the Dutch published in Europe during the war, for example: [Peter Du Moulin], *England's Appeal from the Private Cabal at White-hall to the Great Council of the Nation* (1673).

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

flourishing trades in Bengal and on the Coromandel Coast with the commerce that they cultivated on mainland Southeast Asia and China.¹⁷⁶

The leaders of the English factory system in South Asia, anchored at the fortified factories at Madras and Bombay, and a substantial factory within the Mughal city of Surat, reflected on the difference of their stronger position in this Anglo-Dutch conflict. At Madras, William Langhorn relayed to London that the increasing political and commercial profile of the EIC had enabled him to block the VOC officials—likely Coromandel Governor Pavilioen—from any diplomatic coups, such as that accomplished at Edo.¹⁷⁷ While Van Goens sailed a fleet of seven Men-of-War up the Malabar Coast with the intent of bombarding Bombay, upon arriving in Bombay's road, he turned back after recognizing the strength of the city's defenses and the presence of armed ships in the harbor.¹⁷⁸

As it had at Edo, the circulation of news from Europe also remained a potent weapon throughout East Indian markets. And while the EIC factors had clung to life in the previous two conflicts by spreading rumor of Dutch defeats through Mughal and Persian markets, at Bombay, the Council and President reported to London that within the city, they designated a formal “day of thanksgiving,” producing a “public show,” put on for spectacle to commemorate English naval victories in Europe.¹⁷⁹ Indeed, factory correspondence dismissed the only naval loss to the Dutch,

¹⁷⁶ Henry Dacres and Council at Bantam to Sir William Langhorn and Council at Madras, 22 September 1673, IOR/E/3/34 172r-173v; Rapport van de Retour Vloet, 15 July 1675, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5740 [unfoliated]; Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 12 May 1674, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 320 [unfoliated].

¹⁷⁷ Sir William Langhorn at Madras to the East India Company in London, 1 January 1673, IOR/E/3/33 f. 309r.

¹⁷⁸ Gerald Aungier and John Shaxton at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 18 March 1673–28 March 1673, IOR/E/3/33 f. 373v-374r; In their instructions to Batavia, the Heren XVII even referenced the “good strength” that the EIC had built up at Bombay, Heren XVII to Governor-General and Raad, 12 May 1674, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 320 [unfoliated].

¹⁷⁹ Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 6 January 1673, IOR/E/3/33 f. 319r; Proclamation for a day of thanksgiving for the English victory [sic] over the Dutch at Solebay..., 22 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 301r-302v.

in a pitched battle off of the coast of Masulipatnam, as an ill-fated endeavor of a rogue English commander, and not a signal of any real threat to the English factory system.¹⁸⁰

English factors across South Asia were actually of the opinion that the war could be a good reset in their competition with the Dutch, which had, in recent years, swung out of balance. The English company had grown too large too quickly, according to the Council at Swally, the seaport for Surat. The Council seemed to welcome the disruptions anticipated in a state of war in Europe. They hoped it would lessen shipments to their factory and lead the Committees to understand how London had oversaturated the Western Indian Ocean market.¹⁸¹ The factors at Madras—which, by 1672, had come to rival Banten as the link between the EIC’s Eastern trading operations, and English trade in the “Western Quarter”—were particularly well positioned to assess the company’s business vis-à-vis the Dutch across the breadth of the East Indies. The Madras factory ran ahead of the Dutch in intelligence and shipping from the other parts of the Indian Ocean, as well as from Europe, President Langhorn reported to London. The Madras leader continued that, just as with Surat, the Coromandel factory’s wartime business and relationships with local merchants were “even beyond my own expectations.”¹⁸²

The war further enabled the EIC’s officials to emphasize their new profile in South Asia through calculated English military rivalry with the Dutch. The only VOC casualties in the previous two wars had been in European waters. In 1672 and 1673, however, the EIC managed to capture no fewer than four Dutch Eastindiamen. In late October of 1672, four English cruisers seized one of the principal workhorses of the VOC’s commercial fleet off of Wingurla, on the Malabar Coast.¹⁸³ Since the early 1660s, the *Meijboom* (or as the English called it, the “Mayboom”) had been a primary carrying vessel of spices and slaves throughout Southeast

¹⁸⁰ Boxer, “The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4),” 357.

¹⁸¹ Consultation by Matthew Gray and Council at Swally, 30 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 303r-304v.

¹⁸² Sir William Langhorn at Madras to the East India Company in London, 1 January 1673-27 January 1673, IOR/E/3/33 f. 309r.

¹⁸³ Attestation about Dutch prizes by Capt John Pierce of the Golden Fleece, Capt Henry Risbie of the Loyall Merchant and Richard Goodlad, 13 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 245r-246r.

Asia.¹⁸⁴ As the *Meijboom* sailed with 1000 chests of copper and an array of spices, acquired in Persian markets, four armed EIC ships intercepted the substantial vessel and took it, as a prize, to Surat.¹⁸⁵ The *Raad* was clearly shaken by this development and recognized it as a further signal of the shifting profile of the English company in South Asia. In their January 1673 *generale missive* to the *Heren*, Maetsuycker and the *Raad* made the *Meijboom*'s seizure the headline of a thirteen-page discussion of the strengthening of English naval might in the Western Indian Ocean. They also gave particular attention to the increasing presence of the English, building seemingly friendly relations with the French and Portuguese, in the harbors and markets of South Asia's coasts.¹⁸⁶

The seizure of the *Meijboom* was a sensation in English correspondence during 1672 and 1673. It represented a major coup against the long superior Dutch, which in turn spurred the further development of the EIC's colonial government.¹⁸⁷ It prompted the Bombay government, already busy establishing courts of judicature, to establish a mechanism to adjudicate prizes, such as the *Meijboom*: taking narratives of the seizure, assessing and holding the captain and crew, dispersing the proceeds through the company, and establishing indemnity for the commanders responsible for bringing in the prize.¹⁸⁸ Prize Courts had been consistently operated by the Royal Admiralty Courts in England since the early sixteenth century.¹⁸⁹ Since the reign of Edward III (r. 1327-1377), the Admiralty had served as a principal institution of maritime international relations in the waters of Northern Europe, adjudicating the legality of ship seizures between English

¹⁸⁴ Dutch Council at Amboina to Governor-General Maetsuycker and the Raad, 14 May 1666, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1257 f. 51r; The *Meijboom* was also the vessel in the 1663 return fleet, entrusted with carrying Van Goens' reports on the progress of the Cochin siege and the related legal discourse with English officials, Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 24 August 1663, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 318 f. 618.

¹⁸⁵ Raad van Indië to the Heren XVII, 31 January 1673, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1285, f. 326r.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 326r-332r.

¹⁸⁷ Gerald Aungier and Council to Pierce, Risbie and Goodlad, 16 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 252r; Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 21 December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 290r-291r.

¹⁸⁸ Summary of Consultations about the Dutch by Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay, December 1672, IOR/E/3/33 f. 243r-244r.

¹⁸⁹ E.S. Roscoe, "The Early History of the English Prize Court," *The Edinburgh Review* (January 1, 1923), 134-135.

vessels and between the naval forces of other nations, including the Dutch.¹⁹⁰ The most recent substantial study of seventeenth-century Bombay has traced how the EIC applied the institutions of English prize litigation to assert sovereignty over the company's expanding colonial system in South Asia during the Anglo-Mughal conflicts of the 1680s and 1690s.¹⁹¹ Bombay's records from the Third Anglo-Dutch War, however, reveal how the EIC's drive for military competition against the Dutch prompted the fledgling Council to debate how the norms of international adjudication in England's local waters could be translated into the Indian Ocean.

While the *Meijboom* encouraged the expansion of the English establishment in the East Indies, the VOC's perceptions of the war also prompted the Dutch Council at the Cape of Good Hope to dispatch a fleet of four ships to the EIC's arid Atlantic island colony of St. Helena.¹⁹² While the Dutch had originally claimed the island in 1633,¹⁹³ abandoning it to settle the refueling colony at the Cape in the early 1650s, the subsequent English outpost had developed into a key weigh station for the EIC fleets, as well as for the Dutch fleets returning home to Europe. In order to protect the Cape and to cut off the English refueling patterns in the South Atlantic, the four heavily armed Dutch ships easily overtook the poorly protected EIC outpost, and the English Governor and his inhabitants escaped on a single English vessel.¹⁹⁴ The Cape government, confident in the security of the return fleet, immediately incorporated the island into the VOC network. They ordered the 1673 Europe-bound fleet of six richly-laden ships to proceed to St. Helena, carrying a VOC Commander, Jacob de Geus, and even a *Raad*, or council, for the

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, For Roscoe's seminal monograph-length study on the subject, see E.S. Roscoe, *A History of the English Prize Court* (London: Lloyd's, 1924).

¹⁹¹ Stern, *The Company-State*, 78-79, 188-189; For a recent study of the role of admiralty courts in Atlantic imperial governance, see Julia Gaffield, *Haitian Connections in the Atlantic World: Recognition after Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

¹⁹² A Dutch letter giving an account of the consequences of keeping Cape Bonne Esperance, 1673, TNA CO/77/12 f. 281r-282v; Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East," 362.

¹⁹³ VOC Claim for St. Helena Island, 15 April 1633, WCARS A 851 [unfoliated].

¹⁹⁴ The Late Dutch Governor's Journal of St. Helena, 1673, TNA CO/77/12 f. 283r-284v; Boxer, "The Third Dutch War in the East," 362.

island.¹⁹⁵ When the fleet arrived to St. Helena on 5 June, however, it was met by a squadron of heavily armed English ships, which promptly seized three of the VOC's return vessels.¹⁹⁶ Another fleeing VOC ship was seized by the English Navy off of Texel in August.¹⁹⁷

By mid-1673, however, English and Dutch factors around the Indian Ocean were, as historian C.R. Boxer summarized succinctly, “utterly sick and weary of the war.”¹⁹⁸ The VOC had obliterated the French forces on the Coromandel Coast, and far from following their king's orders for Anglo-French alliance, EIC officials could have hardly been happier at the damage caused to the French East India project.¹⁹⁹ Indeed, shortly after the French capitulation at São Thomé, both companies ended their hostilities in Asia before receiving any notice of peace in Europe.²⁰⁰

Through the war, EIC and VOC officials recognized the developing English hydra-like structure—a merchant-diplomat in Southeast Asia, and a merchant-colonist at Bombay and Madras in South Asia. The factors of both companies also perceived the VOC's defensive moves to strengthen a hold over key hubs of Southeast Asian trade and Dutch colonial governments in Ceylon and on the Malabar Coast. These shifting dynamics in Asia opened a new opportunity for inter-company negotiations in Europe. Unlike the failed commercial negotiations of 1669, in 1674 the companies powerfully intervened in state policy. The terms of the two directorates'

¹⁹⁵ Council of Policy at the Cape of Good Hope to Commander Jacob de Geus and the Raad at St. Helena, 30 January 1673, WCARS C 1342 f. 110-111; Friderici Bollingii's *Oost-Indisch Reisboek* details his experience of the English recapture of St. Helena from aboard the captured VOC return fleet in 1673. The original account was published in Copenhagen in 1678, and a translated version is available (in Dutch): Friderici Bollingii, “Friderici Bollingii, Oost-Indisch Reisboek,” trans., Mej. Joh. Visscher, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandisch-Indië* 68 (1913), 372.

¹⁹⁶ Bollingii, *Oost-Indisch Reisboek*, 372-375; The Court of Committees reported the dispatch of four Royal Navy Men-of-War, as well as two fire ships, Court of Committees to the President and Council at Surat, 28 April-8 May 1673, IOR/E/3/88 f. 21v.

¹⁹⁷ Boxer, “The Third Dutch War in the East,” 365.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 359.

¹⁹⁹ Aungier had written to the Committees that “the French carry themselves very high” and that their “settlement at St Thome will be very prejudicial to the Company's interest,” Gerald Aungier at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 15 January 1674, IOR/E/3/34, 339r; Boxer, “The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4),” 358-359.

²⁰⁰ Boxer, “The Third Dutch War in the East (1672-4),” 361.

debates, reflecting the evolving relationship of their companies in Asia, determined the establishment of the first formal Anglo-Dutch regulatory framework for the East Indies trade.

4.5 Joint Regulation & the Creation of Anglo-Dutch Asia

While the Royal Navy continued to battle against Admiral De Ruyter and the Dutch fleet, by autumn of 1673, the English merchant marine had sustained debilitating losses to Dutch rovers, and Dutch forces had retaken New Netherland from the English.²⁰¹ In what many historians view as a rejection of absolutist rule and the Catholic faith,²⁰² Parliament, having already withheld funding for the war, now pushed Charles to pursue formal peace negotiations with the United Provinces. Despite their stout defense against English naval forces, the States General was no less eager for peace with England. The year 1672 had seen a devastating French invasion, halted only by the decision to open the sluices, which simultaneously flooded vast swaths of the Republic's cropland.²⁰³ The so-called *Rampjaar* or "disaster year" peaked with the fall of De Witt's regent government, and the public mob execution of the *Raadpensionaris* and his brother.²⁰⁴

In June, the States of Holland and Zeeland elected De Witt's chief rival, Prince William of Orange, as Stadholder, a pseudo-monarchical political and military office. The Prince already served in this role for the other Dutch provinces, but between 1650 and 1672, De Witt had maintained a "stadholderless" government of regent oligarchs over the two large and powerful provinces. Two days after the De Witt brothers' murder, the *Griffier*, or administrative secretary to the States General, Gaspar Fagel, was elected by the States of Holland to be the province's

²⁰¹ Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, 211-216.

²⁰² *Ibid.*; Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*, 153-154; De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 119, 134-136.

²⁰³ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 798-799.

²⁰⁴ The most famous depiction of this gruesome mob murder, in which a crowd at The Hague killed, mutilated, and strung up the brothers' bodies, is Jan de Baen's painting, now held in the Rijksmuseum; Jan de Baen, "De lijken van de gebroeders de Witt," 1672-1675, Het Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam).

chief administrative official, and effectively, the most influential elected official in the Netherlands.²⁰⁵ He held office for sixteen years, and served as William's chief political minister and advisor, helping him to navigate continued friction with the Amsterdam regents. He managed the Republic's finances and the operations of the States General, and directed the Dutch diplomatic core in relations with other European powers and colonial negotiations.²⁰⁶ In opposition to the historical judgment of English scholars, who condemn Charles II's dalliance with French absolutism, the influential nineteenth-century historian Robert Fruin anchored his position in Orangist historiography by casting the Fagel-Williamite administration within the House of Orange's institutional emulation of the Stuart Crown.²⁰⁷

William and his *Raadpensionaris* moved quickly to address the French diplomatic threat that had proven the downfall of De Witt. They forged a political alliance with Spain,²⁰⁸ leveraging that partnership to force Charles to a treaty negotiation at Westminster, in which Temple served as a principal negotiator (along with Arlington), and the Marquis de Fresno, the Spanish Ambassador to the Court of St. James, represented the Republic.²⁰⁹ After only three days of negotiations, the treaty was concluded by Charles II and the Marquis on 19 February 1674.²¹⁰ The parties renewed the terms of the 1667 Treaty of Breda, reconfirmed the maritime treaty of

²⁰⁵ Elizabeth Edwards, "An Unknown Statesman? Gaspar Fagel in the Service of William III and the Dutch Republic," *History* 87 (July 2002), 354.

²⁰⁶ For a wide-ranging sampling of the issues that Fagel managed, see his archive in the Dutch National Archive, NA 1.10.29 Inv. Nrs. 397-564.

²⁰⁷ For Orangist historians, the House of Orange brought stability and unity to Dutch government, E.H. Kossman, "The Crisis of the Dutch State 1780-1813: Nationalism, Federalism, Unitarism," in *Britain and the Netherlands, Volume IV: Metropolis, Dominion and Province*, ed. J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossman (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 150; Robert Fruin, *Geschiedenis der Staatsinstellingen in Nederland tot den Val der Republiek*, ed. H.T. Colenbrander ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1901), 295.

²⁰⁸ Treaty Between the United Netherlands and Spain concluded at The Hague, 30 August 1673, in *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies*, vol. II, ed. Frances Davenport (Washington DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1929), 221-227.

²⁰⁹ Sir William Temple to the Prince of Orange, February 1674, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. IV (Weybridge: S. Hamilton, 1814), 6-9.

²¹⁰ Sir William Temple to Sir John Temple, 17 February 1674, in *The Works of Sir William Temple*, vol. IV, 16.

1668, and restored New Netherland to the English Crown.²¹¹ The treaty further stipulated that, given that the “wealth of both nations chiefly depends on the mutual and undisturbed freedom of navigation and commerce,” a subsequent commission should be formed to negotiate a new commercial treaty: a “regulation of commerce, and especially in the East Indies.”²¹² Suggesting that the 1654 arbitration would be prologue for the coming negotiations, the treaty further emphasized that the East Indies trade was “of the greatest moment, it will take up a great deal of time for the making of firm and durable articles for the satisfaction and security of the subjects of both parties.”²¹³ The treaty’s provision for the empowerment of a special commission to prioritize negotiation of the East India trade would provide an avenue for the two directorates to bolster their autonomy within the shifting international politics of Europe and to support their competing political and economic profiles in Asia. The resulting commercial treaty would blend the terms of the companies’ past policy debates with evolving strategies for Asia into a united regulatory framework for the East Indies trade.

After five months of debate in Westminster, on 1 December 1674, twelve commissioners—six English and six Dutch—announced an agreement for an Anglo-Dutch commercial treaty. Without any explicit mention of governance over the East Indies trade, the treaty formalized a global jurisdiction, regulating Anglo-Dutch commercial interaction “throughout all and every the Countries and Parts of the World, by Sea and Land.”²¹⁴ The treaty provided general securities, meant to ensure subjects of both states “all freedom and safety to sail,

²¹¹ Treaty of Peace between Charles II King of England, and the United Provinces of the Netherlands at Westminster, 19 February 1674, in *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and Other Powers*, vol. I, ed. Charles Jenkinson (London: J. Debrett, 1785), 202-207.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 205.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 205-206.

²¹⁴ *A Treaty Marine, between the most Serene and Mighty Prince, Charles the Second, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. and the High and Mighty Lords, the States General of the United Netherlands*, 1 December 1674, in *A Collection of Treaties Between Great Britain and Other Powers*, vol. I, ed. George Chalmers (London: John Stockdale, 1790), 177.

trade, and exercise any manner of traffic.”²¹⁵ English and Dutch subjects would enjoy these freedoms in nations at peace, and at war, with both countries. Neither country’s military activity could block the other’s trade. Beyond access for shipping, the treaty also established a classification of the cargo carried aboard English and Dutch ships. Stipulations limited “contraband,” which could be seized during wartime to powder, shot, and “warlike instruments.”²¹⁶ In addition, the treaty’s fourth article listed commodities forever exempt from the label “contraband,” including virtually every good traded by both East India companies.²¹⁷ To enable this worldwide regulation, the treaty provided forms for passports that captains would carry to identify their ships as English or Dutch, and thus protected by the treaty regulations.²¹⁸

The States General and the English Crown authorized the treaty, and the stipulations throughout referred to the rights and powers of the two states, invoking the companies only indirectly as “subjects” of either state. Thus, the 1674 commercial treaty has appeared to historians of the early modern and scholars of international relations to fit within the political trends of the later seventeenth century, as the institutional sinews of competing fiscal-military states gradually coalesced in Europe and expanded outward to form increasingly coherent imperial administrations.²¹⁹ While the terms of the 1674 treaty explicitly built on those ratified in 1667 at Breda, a closer examination of the treaty commissioners, and an analysis of the records of both company directorates, reveal an unprecedented level of company control over these talks. Just as with the 1667 Breda negotiations, debates between the East India Companies drove the landmark international agreements of 1674. In other words, the 1674 maritime treaty can be

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 178-179.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 179.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 187-189.

²¹⁹ Randall Lesaffer, “De Vrede van Breda en de Europese Traditie van Vredes-Verdragen,” in *Ginder 't vreêverbont bezegelt: essays over de betekenis van de Vrede van Breda 1667*, edited by Raymond Knubben (Breda: Uitegeverij van Kemenade, 2015), 124-138; Lesaffer, *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History*, 369; Neff, *War and the Law of Nations*, 117; Duchhardt, “From the Peace of Westphalia to the Congress of Vienna,” 640.

better understood as an articulation of inter-company arguments and not an episode of inter-state negotiation.

It was the English company's new abilities as an aggressor in the East Indies, represented in the seizure of the three Dutch return ships from St. Helena, that initiated a new pattern of deferral from the Crown to the EIC regarding East India issues. Legally, the three prize ships from St. Helena belonged to the King. One was seized in European waters, and all were captured by vessels of the Royal Navy.²²⁰ While the Admiralty's Prize Commissioners debated the fate of the prizes, Charles simply referred the entire "management in the sale & disposition" of the ships to the Committees' care.²²¹ Acknowledging his "experience of the company's conduct," the Crown deferred to the Committees' expertise to "transact the said affair in such manner as may be most for his majesty's advantage."²²² In the same manner, the king delegated the negotiation of the VOC prisoners' release to the English East India Company. While state governments normally negotiated the return of captured subjects after a conflict,²²³ Charles II left this to the Committees. Nearly eight months before an international peace would be negotiated at Westminster, the EIC and VOC directorates established terms for the mutual return of crew and personnel, ferrying them across the Channel on protected vessels, the special status of which both nations agreed to recognize.²²⁴

By the late spring of 1674, preparations were underway for the commission prescribed by the Westminster Treaty. Negotiations were to run two months (July and August), with the goal of

²²⁰ Court of Committees, 15 October 1673, IOR/B/32 f. 151r-151v.

²²¹ Court of Committees, 18 August 1673, IOR/B/32 f. 135v.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ See, for example, Article X of the 1667 Peace of Breda; *Articles of Peace & Alliance, Between the most Serene and Mighty Prince Charles II... and the High and Mighty Lords the States General of the United Netherlands*, 31 July 1667 (The Savoy: John Bill and Christopher Barker, 1667), 8-9.

²²⁴ Court of Committees to the Directors of the Dutch East India Company at Amsterdam, 4 September 1673, IOR/E/3/88 f. 33r; Court of Committees to the Directors of the Dutch East India Company at Amsterdam, 4 October 1673, IOR/E/3/88 f. 37v.

establishing regulations for Anglo-Dutch trade “all the world over.”²²⁵ With such a wide-reaching goal, it is notable that the commissioners that the Crown appointed shared a trading interest: the East India Company.²²⁶ The commission’s members were: Lord Culpeper, a confidant of the king and vice-chair of the Royal Council of Foreign Plantations;²²⁷ Sir George Downing, the EIC’s longtime contracted political operative in the Dutch Republic; James Jollise and John Buckworth—both senior Committees of the EIC; and the two leading architects of the EIC’s relationship with the VOC since the mid-1650s, Sir Richard Ford and the EIC’s governor, William Thomson.²²⁸ Furthermore, just as he had with the sale of the VOC prizes and the negotiation of the VOC prisoners, Charles explicitly deferred authority to the expertise of the Committees in East India issues. With regard to preliminary regulatory proposals for the East Indies, the Secretary of State, Henry Coventry, responded: “His Majestie thinketh it totally unpracticable...in a country where His Majestie hath no legal way of Information.”²²⁹ If, however, “upon debate amongst your selves you shall find it practicable,” the king promised the commissioners, he would follow their guidance, considering whatever regulations the EIC had approved.²³⁰

Upon announcement of the English commission, the members of the Dutch embassy to London, led by Coenraad Van Beuningen, wrote to the States General, conveying the message that, no matter the claims to establish a marine treaty for all Anglo-Dutch relations beyond Europe, as with the 1654 Arbitration, this would be a negotiation dominated by the East Indies

²²⁵ Court of Committees to the President and Council at Surat, 13 March 1674, IOR/E/3/88 f. 51v.

²²⁶ Dutch Ambassadors at London to the States General, 16/26 June 1674, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5910 [unfoliated].

²²⁷ Culpeper would become Governor of Virginia in 1677; Hardwick, “Culpeper, Thomas, Second Baron Culpeper of Thoresway,” 596-598.

²²⁸ Meeting of the English Commissioners for the Treaty Marine, 27 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 f. 7r; Dutch Ambassadors at London to the States General, 16/26 June 1674, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5910 [unfoliated].

²²⁹ Henry Coventry to the English Commissioners, 25 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 f. 7r-7v.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

trade.²³¹ Van Beuningen and his counterparts encouraged the States to follow suit with their own delegation. Just like Sir George Downing, Van Beuningen had previously attended summits in parallel capacities, contracted to represent both the interests of the state and those of the VOC.²³² He conveyed that same sensibility in his perspective on the forthcoming negotiations. While the company was critical to the state's interest, he encouraged the States General to see the negotiations as a dialogue between the two companies, seeming to divide company and state interests in his assurance that that there was no danger of the companies' debate affecting the relationship between the states.²³³

Both the States General and the *Heren* heeded Van Beuningen's warning, working together to craft an institutional response that blended their experiences from previous Anglo-Dutch negotiations. The States authorized six commissioners of their own, none of whom were members of the VOC's board.²³⁴ Following the precedent of the 1654 arbitration, the *Heren* selected five *bewindhebbers* to travel to London and to serve as expert "instructors" for the negotiation of the East Indies treaty.²³⁵ It was in the specific terms of the VOC commissions, however, that the *Heren*'s strategy was revealed. In accordance with Van Beuningen's view, completely absent was any mention of deference to state interests or authorities—a radical shift from the previous commission, in which the States' representatives could even seek to have the

²³¹ Dutch Ambassadors at London to the States General, 16/26 June 1674, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5910 [unfoliated].

²³² For Van Beuningen's role at Breda, see Section 3.4; Following this treaty, he would return to The Hague to serve as a senior member of the *Heren*, and direct the company's first comprehensive audit and restructuring, a study of which can be found in Femme Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC: De financiële politiek van de bewindhebbers, 1672-1702* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1989).

²³³ Dutch Ambassadors at London to the States General, 16/26 June 1674, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5910 [unfoliated].

²³⁴ The States General selected six commissioners, though there are no records of any kind of comprehensive audit, like that required of the 1654 commissioners, in order to assure that they were not investors in any of the Dutch trading companies. The Commissioners were: Jan Corver, Giles Sautin, Samuel Beyer, Andreas van Vossen, Pieter Duvelaer, and Michael Michielzen; A Treaty Marine Between the Most Serene and Mighty Prince Charles the Second... and the High and Mighty Lords the States Generall of the United Provinces, 1 December 1674, TNA SP/104/48 f. 22.

²³⁵ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 3 July 1674, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5740 [unfoliated].

bewindhebbers reprimanded for their direct participation.²³⁶ In terms almost identical to the EIC's own contract with its bonded representative in the Republic during the 1660s, Sir George Downing, the *Heren* granted the five representatives "full power, and special authority to confer and treat with the Governor and Directors of the Honorable English East India Company."²³⁷ They further empowered their delegation to develop, approve, and ratify "the necessary acts and good and proper instruments" to regulate the relationship between the companies in the East Indies.²³⁸

In order to use the new commission to most effectively defend the company's interest in this state sponsored summit, the *Heren* issued commissions to five *bewindhebbers*: Jeronimo de Haze, Alexander de Muncq, Cornelis Grafland, Adriaen Bogaert, and *Advocaat* Pieter van Dam.²³⁹ All of these individuals had significant experience as architects of the relationship with the EIC—some, including De Haze, Bogaert, and Van Dam, since the 1654 negotiations. Throughout the previous two decades, Van Dam, himself, had authored the lion's share of his company's legal arguments with the EIC. As they prepared their representatives in May of 1674, the *Heren* envisioned any real negotiations as occurring between the representatives of the EIC and VOC, and not the state delegates. They wrote to the Committees, professing their eagerness to rebuild the "friendship and good correspondence... between companies," to which the late state policy, the war "between our nations," had proven an "obstacle."²⁴⁰

The multi-month summit, which ran from July through November of 1674, vindicated Van Beuningen's suspicions. The company delegations dominated the debate throughout, revising and submitting proposals and counter proposals to each other during the five-month

²³⁶ Dutch Arbitrators to the States General, 24 June 1654, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5900 [unfoliated].

²³⁷ *Heren XVII* to the VOC Commissioners, 12 May 1674, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 153 [unfoliated].

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Heren XVII* to the Governor and Directors of the English East India Company, 12 May 1674, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 153 [unfoliated].

period.²⁴¹ The Committees controlled the English commission, and records show that they developed their proposals both at the East India House, and at the Fishmonger's Hall, where the summit was officially held.²⁴² Indeed, the only outside advisors requested by the commissioners were other members of the Court of Committees, including Josiah Child and Sir John Banks.²⁴³ The VOC's delegation of "instructors" was no less involved in formulating the Dutch responses. The States General's commissioners never issued immediate responses to English officials, rather allowing the VOC delegates to generate counter-proposals to the English.²⁴⁴ Indeed, so consuming was the work, that as the talks dragged past their original two-month timeline, members of the VOC Commission began to petition the *Heren*, citing their need to return home and care for their own businesses.²⁴⁵

The sporadic records of the two delegations' written proposals and counter-proposals indicate the significant extent to which this state-sponsored negotiation, which the Crown and the States General ratified, was guided by the ongoing policy debates between the two companies. The articles of the treaty, itself, when compared with the terms of the companies' previous debate over the maritime negotiation between 1668-1670, represent a compromise between the arguments of the *Heren* and the Committees.²⁴⁶

In the regulations guaranteeing "freedom of navigation" for English and Dutch subjects, the Committees had secured two victories in their decades-long debates with the *Heren XVII*.

²⁴¹ Submissions relating to the Anglo-Dutch Marine Treaty, 1674, TNA SP/103/48; Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 27 July 1674 – 8 March 1675, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 f. 7-75.

²⁴² Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 27 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 f. 7.

²⁴³ Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 12 August 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [f. 11v].

²⁴⁴ Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 15 December 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated]; Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 16 December 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated].

²⁴⁵ Resolutions of the *Heren XVII*, 29 October 1674, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 153 [unfoliated].

²⁴⁶ Indeed, the principal authors of both companies' legal arguments since the mid-1650s were leading the commissions in 1674, including Pieter van Dam, Coenraad van Beuningen, William Thomson, and Sir George Downing.

Article I stipulated that English and Dutch subjects would be guaranteed “all freedom and safety to sail, trade, and exercise any manner of traffic in all those kingdoms... which are, or at any time hereafter shall be in peace,” with the subjects of either country.²⁴⁷ Such an order weakened the VOC’s use of exclusive contracts and sieges to block English access to markets, effectively installing the competitive markets for which the EIC had argued in 1668.²⁴⁸ In theory, under this regulation, a company could have an exclusive contract, for example, with Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa of Banten for his pepper supply. But that contract would have to remain open to renegotiation if a more competitive offer arose.

In a second victory for the EIC, Article II explicitly addressed the most enduring legal debate between the two companies, consistently prosecuted since the First Anglo-Dutch War: the right of an aggressor to block the access of other merchants to a besieged port.²⁴⁹ The freedom to trade should not “be infringed by occasion or cause of any war,” Article II demanded.²⁵⁰ This had been the breaking point of all of the companies’ previous debates, in which at Cochin, Banten, Makassar, Ambon, and throughout Ceylon, the VOC had justified its blockage of English trade by arguing that, in order to effectively besiege an East Indian port, all traffic must be stopped. In targeting this strategy, the Committees hoped to disarm the VOC of its primary mechanism for hindering English expansion in the East Indies trade.²⁵¹

While these central provisions of the commercial treaty seemed to indicate a diplomatic triumph for the EIC, the Dutch Company’s commissioners secured victories of their own. Article IV protected most East India goods from seizure, but Article III specifically defined contraband that could be seized, listing nearly every conceivable form of European weapon that could be

²⁴⁷ A Treaty Marine, between the most Serene and Mighty Prince, Charles the Second... and the High and Mighty Lords, the States General of the United Netherlands, in *A Collection of Treaties between Great Britain and Other Powers*, vol. I, ed. George Chalmers (London: John Stockdale, 1798), 178.

²⁴⁸ See Section 4.2

²⁴⁹ See Section 2.4; The Propositions of the East India Company, 27 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated]; Translation of the Dutch Commissioners’ Answer, [undated], TNA SP/103/48 f. 161r-170r.

²⁵⁰ A Treaty Marine, 178.

²⁵¹ The Propositions of the East India Company, 27 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated].

brought into the East Indies. Decades of correspondence between the VOC's factories, the *Raad van Indië*, and the *Heren*, reveal a consistent apprehension over English factors' provision of such weapons to non-European sovereigns. The English arms market ran in direct opposition to VOC strategies, which leveraged superior military power to subdue resistant regimes. Indeed, the English recognized their ability to meet East Indian rulers' demands for such weapons as a key advantage in their commercial competition against the Dutch.²⁵² And in the subsequent decade, the treaty's formal identification of arms as liabilities in an English ships' cargo would, itself, become one of the favored legal tools of the VOC in Asia.²⁵³

Beyond the definition of "contraband" and protected cargo, and the sample form for Anglo-Dutch commercial passports, the treaty contained few legal definitions, and relied on generalities that created openings for broad interpretation. While this almost certainly reflects the Committees' considerations of their own colonial desires for Bombay and Madras, it was in the treaty's ambiguities that key advantages for the VOC can also be recognized. The Committees knew that their efforts to curtail the VOC's use of siege declarations and exclusive contracts relied on formalizing the definitions of key terms like "besiege." Beginning in 1668, binding the VOC to a shared legal definition of "besieged," which required actual military occupation, had been the marquee goal in their efforts to disable the VOC's use of vague "claims" of a siege as a pretext for cutting off English access to an East Indian port.²⁵⁴ The EIC's commissioners had pushed equally as hard for the same provision in 1674, but in a compromise with the Dutch representatives, any such legal definitions were apparently cut.²⁵⁵ The Committees, themselves,

²⁵² See, for example, regarding Banten in the 1650s: Declaration by Johan Maetsuycker and Council against Frederick Skinner and James Bostock, 5 January 1657, IOR/E/3/25 f. 120r-122v; And continuing through the 1680s, Arnout van Citters to the States General, 21 July 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

²⁵³ Charles Sweeting's Narration of Events at Banten, 17 September 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 67r-73v.

²⁵⁴ Things doubtfull, and impracticable in the Treatie Marine, 9 April 1668, TNA CO/77/11 f. 76r.

²⁵⁵ The Propositions of the East India Company, 27 July 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated].

smarted at the advantage this left to the VOC, “because little regard is in the Indias given to general Articles.”²⁵⁶

4.6 Conclusion

The 1674 commercial treaty was the product of two-and-a-half decades of an evolving inter-company relationship. Driven by the particularly consistent and intensive pattern of legal discourse between the two companies, the treaty also represented the clearest example yet of how the two directorates channeled their organizations’ relationship in Asia to influence inter-state policy in Europe. Articulating company debates through a formal resolution to an international crisis, the treaty represented the dynamic tension between company and state in Europe’s evolving system of imperial diplomacy. The first test of the companies’ new regime for Anglo-Dutch Asia came quickly, in 1682, when a civil war on Java set the stage for another significant shift in the East Indies trade.

From 1674 through the 1680s, the leaders of both companies engaged in critical, and intimately related, internal debates over the future form that their respective organizations should take. Continuing to navigate state politics in Europe, while demanding authority over affairs in the East Indies, the *Heren* and the Committees negotiated competing ideals of political economy with their employees in Asia. The *Heren* brought to a head the same colonial debate that had bedeviled the VOC’s leaders since the first proposals of Jan Pietersz. Coen. And the Committees made a definitive decision between the rights of sovereign colonists and the entitlements of commercial agents—a debate which had also formed the bedrock of the EIC’s legal strategies since the First Anglo-Dutch War. As the 1680s would witness the Committees kill off the merchant hydra, turning their company strategy firmly in the direction of the colonist, the *Heren*

²⁵⁶ Sir Richard Ford, Mr Jollise, Sir George Downing, Sir William Thomson, Mr Buckworth at the Fishmongers Hall, 14 August 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 f. 13r.

would react, developing competing identities for their own company's future in the East Indies trade.

CHAPTER 5

BANTEN: APOGEE & DIVERGENCE (1681-1688)

From the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) onward, the Sultanate of Banten served as a key focus of a new, consistent relationship between the EIC and the VOC. With this focus, the leaders of both companies in Asia and in Europe organized their commercial and political strategies around a common understanding of optimal trading patterns and institutions, as well as methods for diplomacy, finance, and governance. Chapter 5 argues that, by the early 1680s, this three-decade relationship produced ambitious efforts within the English and Dutch companies to reorganize their trades, pivoting the EIC and VOC into direct competition over a shared vision for the future of the East Indies trade. New leaders within both companies would center efforts on reforming trade in the well-networked Javanese Sultanate.

In the wake of the 1667 Makassar siege, Cornelis Speelman used his new position as Governor-General to re-center the VOC on securing its trade in Southeast Asia, systematically targeting the Javanese and Sumatran sovereigns who were prominent partners in the English Company's competing trade.¹ Meanwhile, as the Thomson brothers' three-decade-long leadership of the EIC gave way to a new administration, Sir Josiah Child placed Banten at the heart of an effort to reinvigorate the company's merchant profile in Southeast Asia. The chapter traces how the companies' converging initiatives would manifest in three linked events: the 1682 Banten embassy to London, the VOC's siege of Banten in the same year, and the subsequent negotiations held in Europe between the companies from 1683 to 1685.

While debates over Banten had engendered a new connection between the companies in the 1650s, Chapter 5 traces how the English and Dutch Company negotiations of the 1680s would result in the permanent dissolution of the relationship that had driven key elements of the English

¹ M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, "Aspects of Dutch Colonial Development in Asia in the Seventeenth Century," in *Britain and the Netherlands in Europe and Asia*, ed. J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossmann (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1968), 64-65; F.W. Stapel, *Cornelis Janszoon Speelman* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1936), 131-138.

and Dutch East Indies trade for nearly half a century. When the *Raad* defeated Child's costly reinvestment in the EIC's "merchant" strategy of free trade in Southeast Asia, he abandoned his push for his company's claims to merchants' rights. And he turned to focus on advancing the EIC's claims to colonial sovereignty in South Asia. This decision forced the Committees to fundamentally alter the nature of their company's established arguments against the VOC, resulting in the sudden dissolution of the discourse between the two directorates. The *Heren* would respond by doubling down on their own investment in a colonial infrastructure in Southeast Asia, consciously recognizing the divergence in the two companies' goals and the rapid misalignment of their understandings of the politics and economics of the East Indies trade.

After 1685, the directorates no longer communicated, their priorities became geographically disparate, and the actions of each company drifted out of priority in the other's strategic considerations. However, the arguments and institutions of the companies' four-decade relationship still fueled the two organizations' diverging trajectories. Key elements of Child's colonial vision for South Asia drew explicitly from the Committees' decades of observation and emulation of Dutch methods and successes at Batavia. And the *Heren* put the EIC's sustained arguments regarding merchant rights at the heart of their own debates over the reorganization of the Dutch East India Company.

Chapter 5 further argues that the nationalized historiographies of both companies overlook the powerful influence that the inter-company relationship exerted over such critical historical processes. The 1680s were one of the most decisive decades in the history of the EIC and the VOC. Scholars of both East India Companies have examined this time as one of significant internal change within the EIC and the VOC. Economic and political historians have traced how the *Heren* responded to shifting commercial and financial challenges by reorganizing

their trade to focus on Southeast Asia and to closely reexamine inefficiencies and corruption.² This resulted in a pivot toward developing a sovereign empire in the South Seas, which could cultivate greater non-commercial sources of income: taxes and customs duties.³ During the same period, English historians have traced a revolution within the internal debates and policies of the EIC, as Governor Child led the English company to shed its identity as a peaceful merchant, and to invest fully in the construction of an English colonial state in South Asia.⁴ Political historians and social scientists have told this story by highlighting the close personal ties and ideological links between Child and the Tory government of James II,⁵ and Steven Pincus has recently built on this perspective to argue that such relationships provided an avenue for land-based models of English political economy to project out onto the Indian subcontinent, forming the basis for the British Empire.⁶

By adding a supranational perspective to the heavily nationalized histories of the EIC and the VOC, this chapter demonstrates the significant influence that the inter-company relationship had over the development of both organizations. The Dutch were certainly not the only European influence on the Committees' policies,⁷ and the English were among many concerns in the *Heren's* proposals for a cost-cutting overhaul.⁸ But an examination of both companies'

² The benchmark study of this process remains Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*; See also, F.W. Stapel, "Johannes Hudde Over de Balansen van de Oostindische Compagnie," *Economisch-Historisch Jaarboek* 13 (1927), 215-239.

³ De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 443-447; Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*, 206.

⁴ Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company*, 116-117; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 89-103; Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 366-399; While recognizing the impact of Child's policies, Philip Stern has recently argued that the seed of state governance had been planted at the Company's inception, Philip Stern, *The Company State*, 141-144.

⁵ Bruce Carruthers, *The City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 146; De Krey, *A Fractured Society*, 24-25; William Letwin, *Sir Josiah Child: Merchant Economist* (Boston: Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, 1959), 22-23.

⁶ Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 373-376.

⁷ See, for example, Philip Stern's assessment of the lasting influence of the *Estado* in the establishment of law courts at Bombay, Stern, *The Company-State*, 26-28.

⁸ Dutch historians have long seen the 1680s as an entry into a period of relative decline, or "naeblœi" (afterglow), following the Dutch Golden Age of the seventeenth century, F.W. Stapel, *Geschiedenis van*

arguments in the Banten debates reveals the extent to which nearly four decades of mutual observation, emulation, and translation of institutions and ideas had shaped the strategies of both companies.

5.1 Asia Comes to Europe: The Banten Embassy of 1682

In the aftermath of the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674), officials within both companies agreed that the Committees' merchant strategy in Southeast Asia was working. As the VOC secured Ceylon and Malabar during the late 1670s, the English had gradually gained ever-greater market share in pepper and spices at the key outlets of Java and Sumatra.⁹ Following the war, the Committees ordered a full reassessment of their strategy for the Malay Archipelago. They instructed their Banten Council to compile ideas for how the EIC might again leverage the diplomatic networks of Banten's Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa to re-approach the Shogunate and to strengthen English presence within the Zheng trading system, linking Mainland China with Taiwan and the shipping of the South China Sea.¹⁰ The *Raad* and the *Heren* also saw their own company's future in Southeast Asia, and as Cornelis Speelman, the architect of the English oyster

Nederlandsch Indië, vol. III (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1940), 310, 425; W. Ph. Coolhaas, "Overzeese Geschiedenis 1648-1795," in *Algemeene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, VIII (Haarlem, 1955), 352-364; C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800*, 302-331; C.R. Boxer, *Jan Compagnie in Japan, 1600-1850: An Essay on the Cultural, Artistic and Scientific Influence exercised by the Hollanders in Japan from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), 59-61; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 329-331; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 126; For a brief overview of this literature, see Gaastra, *Bewind and Beleid bij de VOC*, 15-17; Dutch Economic historians, as well as the eminent Dutch Indonesian historian J.C. Van Leur, have disputed this, citing to the VOC's volume of trade, which remained above that of the EIC through the 1740s, De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 441-442; Sinnapah Arasaratnam, "The Dutch East India Company and its Coromandel Trade 1700-1740," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 123 (1967), 337, 346; J.C. Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society*, 266-288.

⁹ Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. II, part 2, ed. F.W. Stapel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1932), 276-8, 307; Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 316.

¹⁰ Court of Committees to the Agent and Council of Bantam, 1 May 1674, IOR/E/3/88 f. 62v; Court of Committees to the Agent and Council at Bantam, 23 October 1674, IOR/E/3/88 f. 68r.

at Makassar in 1667, rose to power in the *Raad*, he turned the VOC's allocation of military and financial resources back to Java and Sumatra.¹¹

The *Heren* also kept close watch over the EIC in London. The Dutch ambassador, Arnout van Citters, monitored the Royal Court, the Privy Council, and Parliament, and he kept the States apprised of religious, political, and economic frictions between England, Scotland, and Ireland.¹² Van Citters maintained particularly tight focus on a series of high-profile embassies that circulated through London in 1682, linking the diplomatic missions to the expansion of English militarized trading networks in the Levant and in the East Indies. The VOC, itself, had a long history of entertaining non-European diplomats at The Hague, but news of these missions was largely contained to the Dutch Republic, and their occurrence was not a focus of the EIC agents' reporting from the Netherlands.¹³ In early February of 1682, Van Citters wrote several missives to the States General, recording the negotiations between Charles II and the ambassador of the sovereign of Morocco, particularly focusing on the debates over Tangier.¹⁴ A key element in the English competition against the Dutch in the Levant trade,¹⁵ that port had been acquired as a Crown colony in 1661, and English merchants and officials discussed the commerce and fortification of the city to increase their advantages against European competitors.¹⁶

While Van Citters tracked the movements of the Moroccan ambassador, however, it was another non-European embassy that hijacked the Dutch official's primary focus during the late spring and early summer of 1682: a delegation from the recently-abdicated Sultan Ageng

¹¹ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 86-87.

¹² Arnout van Citters to the States General, 3 February 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

¹³ The three East Indian embassies that came to the Netherlands did so during the first decades of the VOC's existence, including Aceh, Johor, and Siam, Peter Borschberg, ed., *Journal, Memorials and Letters of Cornelis Matelieff de Jong: Security, Diplomacy and Commerce in 17th-century Southeast Asia* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015), 56-57.

¹⁴ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 13 February 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

¹⁵ Jonathan Israel, "Trade, Politics and Strategy: The Anglo-Dutch Wars in the Levant," in *Friends and Rivals in the East: Studies in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Levant from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century*, edited by Alastair Hamilton, Alexander H. de Groot and Marits H. van der Boogert (Boston: Brill, 2000), 11-24; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 307-313.

¹⁶ Tristan Stein, "Tangier in the Restoration Empire," *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 4 (2011), 985-987, 991.

Tirtayasa of Banten. Van Citters' intensive reporting on this embassy, when combined with the EIC's own records of the Banten delegation, reveal the event as a powerful demonstration of the centrality of each company in the other's strategy. As the roughly six-week embassy unfolded, the officials of both companies recognized the Committees' clear effort to replace a key circuit of Dutch commerce, linking Southeast Asia with Japan, with a rival English organization. And while the embassy carried with it the pomp and ceremony of a state visit, it produced a shared anxiety among English government ministers as well as Van Citters. They recognized that this embassy was the product of Josiah Child's bold strategy to blend political developments in Asia with the Company's politics in England. The clear goal was to strengthen the EIC's "merchant" profile in Southeast Asia, reliant on commercial agreements and peaceful diplomacy, at the expense of the VOC's expanding sovereignty, enforced with the conquests of military strength and control over key sea lanes of maritime trade.

After resigning the throne to his son, Haji, in 1676, Ageng Tirtayasa had alerted the EIC's Banten Council of his desire to send an embassy to England. The sultan refused, however, to disclose his specific reasons, sending the ambassadors with Arabic documents for Charles II.¹⁷ While it was a considerable risk—not knowing what the documents said—Child opened the EIC's treasury to make the embassy a political spectacle for the company, not the Crown. Once the ambassadors arrived in the second week of May 1682, they attended audiences with the king and presented their credentials. There was a massive parade throughout London, in which the ambassadors rode in the royal coach.¹⁸ But, Van Citters cautioned, this was no state visit, as the Moroccan embassy had been. All of this was at the EIC's expense, and members of the Committees were never far from the Banten ambassadors' side.¹⁹ Indeed, the Dutch envoy wrote to the States General that it was becoming increasingly clear that Josiah Child and the

¹⁷ Lord Thomas Hyde to Sir Leoline Jenkins [Secretary of State], 25 May 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 52r

¹⁸ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 19/9 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

¹⁹ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 15/5 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated]

Committees had harnessed the diplomatic mission for an aggressive public and strategic push against the VOC.²⁰

Child was an authority on Dutch political economy,²¹ and the embassy could greatly aid his aspirations, which echoed those of the Committees since the Thomsons first took the leadership of the Company, for the EIC to reach the scale and scope of their Dutch competitor's commercial prowess in Southeast Asia's spice trade.²² For this goal, the company would need capital and the continued political support of the Crown. And it seems to be no coincidence that, at the time of the embassy, the Committees had launched their most aggressive investment call in history, along with a concerted effort to secure a renewed exclusive charter to destroy the burgeoning trade of rival English ventures, or "interlopers."²³

Drawing from his close relationship with the *Heren XVII*,²⁴ Van Citters made the connection immediately. The Dutch diplomat marveled at "how far the new capital for the East Indies trade had advanced," tracing its continued growth from £1.2 million at the beginning of the embassy.²⁵ With the surge of capital subscriptions for the company, the share price also soared during the Banten embassy, implying the perceived future gains of the English Company in the Banten pepper trade.²⁶

Indeed, Van Citters wrote warily, that the Committees had timed the public embassy in order to coincide with their petitions for a reconfirmed exclusive charter from Charles II. The number of so-called "interlopers," or English competitors in the East Indies trade, had surged recently. The Stuart Crown had long troubled the EIC, particularly during the reign of Charles'

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Josiah Child, *Brief Observations Concerning Trade and Interest of Money* (London, 1668).

²² See Section 2.1.

²³ Attorney Generall's Report upon the Petition of the East Indi[] Company Touching the Affaires of Bombaim, 18 November 1681, TNA CO/77/14 f. 36r; Arnout van Citters to the States General, 2 June/23 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated]; William Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, vol. II (Cambridge: CUP, 1910), 177-179.

²⁴ Van Citters's collection in the Dutch National Archive includes an entire volume of letters between him and members of the *Heren*, NA Collectie Van Citters, 1.10.19.

²⁵ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 18/28 April 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

²⁶ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 2 June/23 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

father, publicly condoning commercial missions that directly competed with the Company. As at least five interloper ships prepared to sail for the East Indies in the spring of 1682,²⁷ the Committees faced a dire crisis. It was clear to the Dutch ambassador that the Committees leveraged the Banten embassy, and the favor that it implied in that critical spice market, along with the subsequent robust subscription of the capital stock, and the soaring share price, to pressure Charles II into reconfirming their exclusive charter. This would nullify English competitors' ability to "interlope" on their trade. By early June, Van Citters reported that, after several audiences with the Banten ambassadors,²⁸ Charles declared that "there was no reason to hinder the East India Company's charter," driving the share price of the company to an unprecedented £640.²⁹ Though share prices were fickle and rapidly changing, and thus poor barometers of economic value,³⁰ Van Citters nonetheless read the surge in EIC securities as a signal of the EIC's mounting political strength and support.³¹

Van Citters also saw the fate of the VOC in the English Company's actions. From one perspective, the ambassador was pleased with the strengthening of the EIC's charter against interlopers. Since the 1650s, when the *Heren XVII* first turned to the English as a primary consideration in Dutch East India planning and operations, the *bewindhebbers* strongly believed that their company was best served by a single English competitor, and could, potentially, be fatally undermined by an open English trade in the East Indies.³² Should the interlopers be able to equip ships for Asia, and "all English be allowed to trade to the Indies free and unhindered,"

²⁷ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 16/26 June 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

²⁸ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 22/12 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated]; Arnout van Citters to the States General, 26/16 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

²⁹ Van Citters to the States General, 2 June/23 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated]; Scott, *The Constitution and Finance*, vol. II, 177-179.

³⁰ Chaudhuri cautions us to remember that, as with the VOC share price, "share prices are only individual quotations and in reality likely to vary a great deal from day to day," Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of the Asia and the East India Company*, 421; Jonathan Israel, "The Amsterdam Stock Exchange and the English Revolution of 1688," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 103 (January 1990), 395-440.

³¹ Van Citters to the States General, 2 June/23 May 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

³² The earliest articulations of this opinion can be found in the *Heren's* instructions to Batavia in the aftermath of the First Anglo-Dutch War, when the EIC operated on a lapsed charter; Section 2.3.

then it would bring “no small disadvantage, particularly to the Dutch and English companies.”³³ This echoed a logic, developed among the *Heren* in the late 1650s, of the mutual structural reliance of the two companies: that any alteration to the companies’ shared systems of exclusive trade offered the opportunity for mutual destruction.³⁴

While Van Citters was pleased by the public outcome against the interlopers, in the Banten embassy, itself, he recognized a far more sinister threat to the VOC. As the Banten officials readied to depart for Java, the full breadth of the Committees’ intentions came into clearer focus for the Dutch envoy. The Committees moved to blend the EIC’s thirty-year marquee narrative against the VOC’s aggressions in Banten, with the most recent dispatches from the EIC’s Banten factory and from Ageng Tirtayasa, which conveyed the abdicated sultan’s fears of increased Dutch aggression on Java.³⁵ Wresting control of the embassy from the Crown government, the Committees would make a play to realize their long-desired mercantile expansion into East Asia by becoming the favored broker of arms, defense, and diplomacy for a resurgent and avowedly anti-Dutch administration of Ageng Tirtayasa.

Historians, sociologists, and economists have all pointed to the 1680s as a period when, under Josiah Child, the EIC closely aligned with the waning Stuart regime, and Child, himself, served as a key economic advisor to the Crown.³⁶ As it developed, however, the Banten embassy actually came to represent a point of friction with the Crown government, and an example of the Committees’ continued efforts to gain greater autonomy from the state in their dealings with the VOC and in the governance of the East Indies trade. Child sought to control the embassy in order

³³ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 4 September/25 August 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

³⁴ See Section 2.3.

³⁵ King of Bantam to His Majesty, 19 April 1681, TNA CO/77/14 f. 34-35.

³⁶ Bruce Carruthers, *The City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 146; Gary De Krey, *A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688-1715* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 24; Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: YUP, 2009), 374.

to bolster the company's diplomatic alliances as a peaceful merchant in Southeast Asia. Once Ageng Tirtayasa's envoys presented the sultan's sealed missives to Charles II, Secretary of State Jenkins referred the communications to the respected Arabic expert at Oxford and member of the Privy Council, Lord Thomas Hyde. When Hyde reported that the diplomatic missives conveyed absolutely "no power to conclude anything" with the Crown, Child moved quickly to shift the embassy wholly into the EIC's hands.³⁷ If there was to be no agreement with the Crown, then Child moved to harness the political momentum of the embassy to build the company's identity as a diplomatic merchant in Southeast Asia. He sought to widen the autonomy of the company at the expense of the English state—a core jurisdiction of which was diplomacy and foreign policy.³⁸

Child's strategy built not on personal relationships, but on an established pattern of the English state's deference to the company in matters of the East Indies trade—as shown in the prisoner exchanges following the Third Anglo-Dutch War, and in the 1674 maritime treaty negotiations. Child lobbied members of the Privy Council, including Hyde, urging that the EIC should treat directly with the ambassadors.³⁹ This was granted, in sharp contrast to the Crown's continued control over the Moroccan embassy,⁴⁰ and Child deputed a small group of EIC Committees, as well as the company's recently returned Java expert William Mainstone, to meet directly with the ambassadors and to draft agreements between the Company and the sultanate.⁴¹

While the ambassadors could not negotiate an official state treaty with the Crown, Child hoped that he could secure a more informal, but no less substantial, agreement with the Company. If the EIC was to demonstrate strong dedication to helping Ageng Tirtayasa against his "dreaded

³⁷ Josiah Child to Lord Hyde, 2 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 53r; Thomas Hyde to Leoline Jenkins [Secretary of State], 25 May 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 52r.

³⁸ Elton, *Tudor Revolution in Government*, 326-328; G.E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 59-68; Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 170.

³⁹ Josiah Child to Lord Hyde, 2 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 53r.

⁴⁰ Lord Thomas Hyde to Leoline Jenkins [Secretary of State], 25 May 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 52r

⁴¹ Court of Committees, 24 May 1682, IOR/B/37 f. 9r-9v.

neighbors, the Dutch at Batavia,” then Child hoped that the sultan would lend his transoceanic diplomatic and commercial networks to the company’s use.⁴² In return, the summer fleet would sail to Banten and carry Ageng Tirtayasa’s delegation home. The company also loaded their ships with more than 500 pieces of canon shot, weapons “for 6000 men,” and multiple shipments of gunpowder, all designed as gifts of alliance and amity for the sultan.⁴³

The English Council at Banten had long facilitated Ageng Tirtayasa’s own commerce and embassies throughout the Indian Ocean.⁴⁴ They had consistently filled the sultan’s requests for arms and gunpowder,⁴⁵ and the EIC had even carried his son, Haji, on his first Hajj to Mecca.⁴⁶ In return, Child implored the sultan to facilitate the EIC’s continued efforts to enter the Japanese market. The Committees envisioned Japan as a solution for pressing challenges, both at home and in the East Indies. Japan represented a wealthy market of consumers for Chinese and South Asian goods, and thus was key to the development of a robust intra-Asian trade for the English.⁴⁷

In order to further develop the EIC’s merchant operations in Southeast Asia, the Governor hoped that Ageng Tirtayasa would grant the EIC customs-free trade on all Japanese goods sold in Banten, and that he would sponsor an embassy to Japan, where Banten’s merchants already enjoyed trading privileges.⁴⁸ The VOC had blocked the *Return*’s efforts to enter Nagasaki in 1672, casting the English Company as a Catholic-sympathizing enemy of East Asian sovereigns.⁴⁹ Child desired that Ageng Tirtayasa counter this image by offering the Japanese

⁴² Sir Josiah Child to Leoline Jenkins, 16 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 56r.

⁴³ Court of Committees, 24 May 1682, IOR/B/37 f. 9r-9v; Court of Committees, 7 June 1682, IOR/B/37 f. 13r-13v; Arnout van Citters to the States General, 21 July 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁴⁴ Bantam Consultation, 17 May 1679, IOR/G/21/6/A f. 192r-193r; Sir Josiah Child to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 16 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 56r.

⁴⁵ The most recent shipment of powder had gone out to Banten with the December 1680 fleet, Court of Committees, 1 December 1680, IOR/B/36 f. 71r-71v.

⁴⁶ Henry Dacres, John English, Albinus Willong and Able Payne to the Bantam Council, 17 March 1676, IOR/G/21/6/A f. 54r-v

⁴⁷ Sir Josiah Child to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 16 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 56r.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ The Committees had presented a diary of the *Return*’s voyage to the Crown government, Diary of the Japan Voyage, 29 June 1673 to 28 August 1673, TNA CO/77/12 f. 262r-269v.

officials his guarantee for the English traders.⁵⁰ Both in London, and in Southeast Asia, Child had brought the state functions of diplomacy within the EIC's purview, in order to launch a risk-laden venture to dramatically expand the company's merchant profile in the South Seas.

While the Banten ambassadors did have to seek Charles' official credential to take leave of England and to return to Java, this was a formality. Members of the Privy Council clearly recognized Child's efforts to internalize diplomatic authority—a fundamental domain of the state—within the company. Privy Council members chafed at Child's "earnest and hasty" machinations, accusing the Committees of plotting "to get this Bantam business huddled up in haste."⁵¹ What is more, the explicit target of this Banten strategy was the VOC, and more generally the Dutch Republic, effectively granting the Committees significant authority in one of the most consistent and intensive international relationships for the Stuart Monarchy.

None of this was lost on Ambassador Van Citters. He quickly discovered that Governor Child and the Committees could use the embassy as a fulcrum with which to launch an aggressive push into Southeast Asia. Van Citters hurriedly reported on the arms, shot, and multiple shipments of gunpowder, readied by the EIC as allied gifts for the sultan.⁵² While the EIC had along undermined Dutch military strategy in Southeast Asia through their supply of weapons to the sovereigns of Banten, Aceh, and Makassar, Van Citters recognized Child's hopes that this closer relationship with the abdicated sultan would serve as the key, to finally unlock East Asia for the English.⁵³ The Banten ambassadors' inability to sign formal agreements with the Crown was irrelevant if, as Van Citters argued, the English company would leverage a close relationship with Ageng Tirtayasa, which the Committees had cultivated since the early 1670s, to access Banten's diplomatic and commercial networks and "to procure access to Japan."⁵⁴ Throughout

⁵⁰ Sir Josiah Child to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 16 June 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 56r.

⁵¹ Lord Thomas Hyde to Leoline Jenkins [Secretary of State], 25 May 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 52r.

⁵² Arnout van Citters to the States General, 21 July 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

the embassy, the *Heren* eagerly received Van Citters' reports and analyses, transferring them quickly through their instructions to Batavia.⁵⁵

5.2 Civil War: The Dutch Conqueror Responds and the English Merchant is Undone

After the ships carrying the ambassadors left in late July of 1682,⁵⁶ the Committees and the *Heren* waited anxiously for news from their respective agents at Banten. During the last week of March 1683, the *Amoy Merchant* arrived in London with a bombshell. Previous communications from the Banten factory had referenced the Dutch courtship of the young Sultan Haji, as the *Raad* sought to insert its influence into the hitherto impenetrable Banten Court.⁵⁷ New reports revealed that a full-fledged civil war had broken out between Ageng Tirtayasa and his son.⁵⁸ The newly appointed Governor-General Speelman and the *Raad* had apparently thrown their support behind Haji, and in the final week of March 1682, flooded Banten with “a fresh supply of forces,”⁵⁹ recently arrived from Europe.⁶⁰ EIC factor Charles Sweeting reported that waves of VOC troops “soon routed” the forces of Ageng Tirtayasa, and “mostly burnt, and marched in triumph through every part of the Towne.”⁶¹ The Dutch troops “received a welcome admission into the fort of the young king,” while the English Council locked the gates to their fortified compound.⁶² By five o'clock that evening, however, Sweeting reported that Speelman had immediately leveraged the monarchical dispute between father and son to expel the EIC from the last remaining English stronghold on Java.

The Committees' plan to intervene in Bantanese politics had backfired. Sultan Haji now

⁵⁵ VOC Amsterdam Chamber to Batavia, 8 June 1682, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 [unfoliated]; Extract Resolution of the States General, 22 August 1682, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 31 [unfoliated].

⁵⁶ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 31 July 1682, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁵⁷ Account of Captain Ledger, Commander of the Ship Falcon, [1681-1682?], TNA CO/77/14 f. 40r-v.

⁵⁸ Account of Charles Sweeting at Batavia, 17 September 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 67r.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 334.

⁶¹ Account of Charles Sweeting at Batavia, 17 September 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 67r.

⁶² *Ibid.*

“designed to cut us all off that very night,” in response to the “conceived assistances of men and ammunition afforded [to] his father by us,” Sweeting reported.⁶³ The fearful EIC factor painted a harrowing picture of the compromised English trading hub later that night, as the factory’s Council, among whom were the senior architects of the EIC’s recent expansion into the South China Sea,⁶⁴ witnessed their commercial network unravel before them. The Chinese merchants who ran the Banten market, and who the EIC had assiduously cultivated during the previous decade, had stored their wares and valuables in the English factory at the onset of the siege. But later, the Chinese merchants “like so many bees flocked about us” to remove their goods from the English warehouses.⁶⁵ The VOC standard now flew over a city that, for a quarter century, had stood as one of the last free metropolises in archipelagic Southeast Asia.

As files of Dutch soldiers marched in and dismantled the English factory, the EIC Council witnessed the dissolution of their commercial initiative in the South Seas and the conquest of their mercantile legal identity. The following day, Sweeting and the members of the EIC Council went before Sultan Haji who reproached them, charging that, in their assistance of his father, they had acted “contrary to our engagements of standing neutrals,” and thus negated the very profile of the peaceful merchant, which they had for so long established at Banten.⁶⁶ In his account, however, Sweeting argued that it was the degeneration of the Banten Crown that had eroded the merchant-sovereign relationship between the English Company and the sultanate. Far from a civil war, Sweeting implored the Committees to see that the Dutch had conquered the city. Officials from Batavia were now clearly controlling the sultan’s policy, the frantic factor claimed, as Haji moved with “a Dutch Renegade” by him and quoted the VOC’s counsel in his reprimand

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Among whom were the former factory chiefs at Tonkin and Siam, Account of Charles Sweeting at Batavia, 17 September 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 68r, 70v

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 67r.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 68r.

of the English.⁶⁷ The English were ordered to vacate their factory, to load all goods onto their remaining ships, and to set sail out of Banten immediately.⁶⁸ Sweeting's contacts within the sultan's court had informed him that it was the Dutch who insisted upon the English expulsion, while Haji knew "how great... enrichment of his Kingdom our trade had been."⁶⁹ Sweeting wryly lamented of Haji, "alas poor man had so unking'd himself as could command no further than stood with the Dutches pleasure."⁷⁰

Sweeting continued to describe how Sultan Haji faded from public view, and a company of Dutch soldiers, led by Lieutenant Jacob d'Roy, began to board the EIC ships and harass their remaining factors in the city.⁷¹ If the Dutch were now the *de facto* sovereigns of Banten, then the English Council determined to evacuate Banten and to sail for nearby Batavia, in order to air their grievances before the *Raad*.⁷² Once there, the Council procured a house, and by 12 April 1682, all of their factors, save one, had arrived safely from Banten.⁷³

Sweeting wrote his account from behind Batavia's walls; a position which seemed only to stoke the factor's frustration and resentment. While watching at least 1000 Dutch troops, fresh from Europe, march out to Ageng Tirtayasa's stronghold to exterminate his supporters, Sweeting lamented that, while his company had grown an impressive commercial network by playing the peaceful merchant to the VOC's aggressive sovereign, this same strategy, reliant on the protection and stability of non-European sovereigns, would prove the EIC's undoing in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the despondent factor called for the Committees to turn toward the Dutch example, rather than continue to fight a losing battle: "so great was our rage against the Dutch, as had our Powers been consonant to our wills, [I] am confident [we] should have treated them much worse

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 68r-68v.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 68v.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 69r.

⁷¹ Sweeting implied that De Roy was tasked with rooting all other European nations from Banten, as well, seizing the goods of the Danes, French, and Portuguese, *Ibid.*, f. 69v-70r.

⁷² *Ibid.*, f. 70v

⁷³ *Ibid.*, f. 70v-71r.

than the Java's.”⁷⁴

Sweeting dispatched his account on the *Amoy Merchant* to London.⁷⁵ And the dueling political perspectives, which he offered in his narrative—between the de-neutered merchant at the mercy of a vengeful monarch, or the “unking’d” sovereign’s dissolution of his responsibilities to a corporate subject—would set the terms of a crucial debate in Europe that would, itself, chart the diverging course of both companies for the next century.

Josiah Child led the charge to bolster the merchant profile of the EIC in Asia, directly targeting the Dutch and infuriating members of the Crown government with his boldness. Now in his final month as Governor of the EIC, Child’s grand plan came crashing down. Immediately upon reading the reports from Java, Child frantically wrote to Secretary of State Jenkins of the “conquest” of Banten by the VOC, and he informed the Secretary of his plans to present the narratives, in full, to Charles II “with the first conveniency.”⁷⁶ Jenkins, himself, was intimately familiar with the historical and legal arguments between the English and Dutch companies. While an Admiralty Court Judge, Jenkins had processed the affidavits for the EIC’s cumulative claims against the Dutch in the 1674 maritime treaty negotiations.⁷⁷ The subsequent and hastily assembled petition to the king eschewed any narrative and bluntly put forward the Committees’ two grievances: (1) the VOC’s seizure of long-held and valuable English property at Banten, and (2) that with the elimination of that EIC hub, the Dutch were now “masters of the whole trade of India.”⁷⁸ The second point was critical, because it exposed the central dynamic of the Anglo-Dutch relationship in the East Indies trade. English and Dutch company officials privileged each

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 71v

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 70v-71r; Arnout van Citters to the States General, 30/20 March 1683, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁷⁶ Child’s letter is undated, but references having received the Banten letters from the *Amoy Merchant* the previous day, Sir Josiah Child to Leoline Jenkins, [undated], TNA CO/77/14 f. 106r.

⁷⁷ Minutes of the Proceedings of the Anglo-Dutch Commissioners, 20 August 1674, BSC MS Rawl. A 302 [unfoliated].

⁷⁸ Josiah Child’s Petition to King Charles II, [undated], TNA CO/77/14 f. 107r.

other's capabilities and roles in the East Indies. It also underscored the arguments driving the EIC out of the 1670s: its two operations in Asia—the merchant in the East, and the colonist in South Asia—were interdependent. Without one head, the other would die too.

The news diffused quickly through the London merchant community, and by 30 March, Van Citters reported to the States General that “rumors have run on the London exchange” about the VOC's seizure of Banten and the expulsion of the English company.⁷⁹ Van Citters recounted the English narratives in great detail, adding that the EIC was presenting all of the information to the Crown, and that through London and the government, “the conduct of the Dutch company was much declaimed.”⁸⁰ What is more, all of the confidence that Child had built for the company's future in the pepper and spice trades had instantly evaporated in reaction to the news. The EIC's share price cratered at £140, “and some want an even lower price.”⁸¹ Hostility mounted in the London merchant community, and Van Citters, himself, was assaulted in a London street.⁸²

Van Dam and the *Heren* were clearly shocked by the news from Van Citters. Their recent reports from Batavia and the return fleets mentioned nothing of a planned siege. On 10 March 1683, the *Heren* wrote to Speelman and the *Raad*, “Of the work at Banten and the outcome there, we are, and remain, wholly ignorant.”⁸³ Indeed, it is possible that both Amsterdam and even VOC officials at Banten were left in the dark about plans hatched within the *Raad's* fortress at Batavia. Sweeting reported that, when the longtime Dutch factory chief—an “intimate companion” of many on the English Council—arrived at the EIC's factory to force the English out, he “induced us to believe his morosity might be the effect of his superiors orders, and that

⁷⁹ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 30/20 March 1683, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Arnout van Citters to the States General, 9/19 November 1683, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁸³ Heren XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 10 March 1683, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 f. 79r.

from him we might possibly understand the reality of the reported massacre the night before.”⁸⁴ As Child and the Committees began to assemble a strategy for engaging the *Heren* directly and aggressively, the Dutch directorate was forced to rely on the English reports of events. By June, the *Heren* wrote to Batavia that they were still wholly “ignorant” of the events at Banten, and uncomfortable in responding to the English accusations, as well as mounting complaints from French and Danish officials over the expulsion of their own smaller trading operations at Banten.⁸⁵ The *bewindhebbers* anxiously awaited the next return fleet, which they hoped would carry “a detailed relation and report” of the VOC’s procedures and actions at Banten.⁸⁶

While the *Heren* implored their own officials in Asia to pass them news of the events at Banten as soon as possible, the Committees quickly recognized an opportunity to salvage their own company’s leverage over the VOC. In April of 1683, with his term as Governor expired, Child would leave office with his bold public plan to advance the company merchant in Southeast Asia having redounded upon him. Van Citters reported that English investors welcomed the “change in directors,” and the EIC stock rallied on the London Exchange to £245.⁸⁷ The year 1683 was to be challenging for the EIC. By April, interlopers still sailed to and from Asia, and news reached the Committees that Thomas Sandys would lodge his court case, which famously challenged the fundamental right of the EIC to hold a monopoly over the English East Indies trade.⁸⁸

While he left the official leadership of the company, in the thicket of challenges facing the EIC, Child remained the central architect in the company’s dealings with the VOC. The very day that the Court of Committees honored the passing of his administration to the new Governor,

⁸⁴ Account of Charles Sweeting at Batavia, 17 September 1682, TNA CO/77/14 f. 67v.

⁸⁵ *Heren* XVII to the Governor-General and Raad, 23 June 1683, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 f. 112v.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Arnout van Citters to the States General, 4 May/24 April 1693, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5913 [unfoliated].

⁸⁸ Court of Committees, 25 April 1683, IOR/B/37 f. 135r-136r.

Sir John Banks, and his Deputy, Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, one of the first things that the new leaders did was depute Child to a “secret committee,” comprising only themselves and Child, to manage “the affairs relating to Bantam.”⁸⁹ Insulated even from the other Committees, this group would work “with all privacy,” and their first order of business was to identify an agent, who would be employed by the EIC to go to Holland and to negotiate with the *Heren XVII*.⁹⁰

Pursuant to Child’s petitions, the Crown government drafted a memorial, summarizing the company’s reports of the events at Banten, and granted it to the care of the EIC.⁹¹ Otherwise, Charles II granted full authority to the Company to negotiate a binding agreement with the VOC. The Crown had empowered Child and the secretive EIC subcommittee on Banten to select, hire, and commission a representative to deal directly with the VOC, in order to settle the loss claims and legal disputes emerging from the English accounts.⁹² While Thomas Chudleigh, the English ambassador at The Hague, would facilitate the EIC agent’s arrival and movements at The Hague, the companies’ representatives would negotiate wholly parallel to the two state governments’ discussions and political agreements.⁹³

The EIC subcommittee selected Sir Jean [the English wrote “John”] Chardin. The son of a Parisian Huguenot gem merchant, before the age of thirty, Chardin had already accrued a decade of travel in Persia, furnishing Shah Abbas and his successor Suleiman III with jewels.⁹⁴ During the 1670s, while expanding his business into South Asia and authoring his first texts on Persia for European readers, Chardin served as one of Suleiman’s translators.⁹⁵ Returning to Europe in 1680, Chardin emigrated to England, joining the burgeoning Huguenot community,

⁸⁹ Court of Committees, 23 April 1683, IOR/B/37 f. 135v.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ The King’s Memorial sent unto Holland, [April 1683], TNA CO/77/14 f. 129r-131v.

⁹² Court of Committees, 4 May 1683, IOR/B/37 f. 138r.

⁹³ Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaederigh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 30 June 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

⁹⁴ Amanda Eurich, “Chardin, Sir John (1643-1712),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), online edition [accessed 14 September 2014].

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

and immediately attracting the interest of the EIC, to which he was granted membership in 1682,⁹⁶ and the Royal Society, to which he was elected in 1682.⁹⁷ He kept his East Indies market contacts active, particularly trading in precious stones, which he paid the EIC to carry back on company leased ships. Indeed, Chardin's reoccurring requests prompted the Committees to pass a resolution allowing non-English merchants to carry goods on EIC vessels.⁹⁸

Emphasizing their autonomy over the Banten negotiations, Child, Banks, and Sambrooke developed Chardin's instructions in secret, delivering them in a closed meeting at the East India House.⁹⁹ The resulting contract with Chardin was similar to the commission given to Sir George Downing during the Cochin negotiations of the 1660s. They paid him a salary and granted him "full power and authority... to treat, adjust, and conclude all accompts and reckonings for losses, damages, and injuries sustained by us at Bantam."¹⁰⁰ The Company directed him to manage its affairs "with all privacy," reporting only to the EIC subcommittee.¹⁰¹ When he arrived in Holland in mid-May, Chardin came armed with the Crown's memorial,¹⁰² and on 1 June, he presented Charles' narrative before the States General, as Van Dam and members of the Heren looked on.¹⁰³

Like the EIC, The VOC's leaders selected a small group of their own to deal with Chardin: *bewindhebbers* who had significant personal experience working with Child and the EIC. The commission included veterans of the 1674 negotiation in London: Pieter van Dam, Simon van de Blocquery, and Coenraad van Beuningen, a newly-elected *bewindhebber*, and

⁹⁶ Court of Committees, 30 August 1682, IOR/B/37 f. 28v-30r.

⁹⁷ Charles also knighted Chardin in April 1681, Eurich, "Chardin, Sir John (1643-1712)."

⁹⁸ Court of Committees, 24 May 1682, IOR/B/37 f. 9r-9v.

⁹⁹ EIC Commission for Sir Jean Chardin, 4 May 1683, TNA CO/77/14 f. 133r.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*; Court of Committees, 4 May 1683, IOR/B/37 f. 138r.

¹⁰² The Earl of Sunderland to Thomas Chudleigh, 27 April 1683, TNA CO/77/14 f. 124r.

¹⁰³ Pieter van Dam to the States General, 2 June 1683, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5741.

formerly the Republic's chief diplomat in London.¹⁰⁴ Chardin first met with the *Heren's* representatives on 23 May.¹⁰⁵ As the EIC's agent, he showed "an absolute desire" to work between the companies beyond the oversight of the state, bringing in Chudleigh and the States General only when an agreement had been reached.¹⁰⁶

The meetings between Chardin and the *Heren's* deputies continued through early July. Chardin focused his arguments on the VOC's exclusive contracts, rights of conquest, and possession of ports and fortifications.¹⁰⁷ He also informed the *Heren* that the Committees intended to send a new fleet to Banten in August, and that the EIC expected to reconstitute their factory there in the safety and prosperity afforded to merchants under the law of nations.¹⁰⁸ Van Dam and the *bewindhebbers*, however, responded to Chardin with a new position. They understood well the English complaints, Van Dam claimed, but the EIC agent was delivering them to the wrong audience. The English had intervened in a civil war at Banten, taking on the risks of such a decision, just as the Dutch had. Ageng Tirtayasa's loss thus put the English Company at the mercy of his victorious son, Haji. According to the *Heren*, Sultan Haji was safe in his palace, and English re-entry to Bantan could only be granted by him, as sovereign.¹⁰⁹

To make this argument, the *Heren* drew from the depth of inter-company discourse established since the 1650s. It would be December of 1683 before the *Heren* would receive Speelman's report from his commanders at Banten,¹¹⁰ but relying fully on the English accounts, the VOC simply turned one of the Committees' core arguments back against them. When

¹⁰⁴ Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaedingh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 30 June 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated]; After exiting his diplomatic role in London, Van Beuningen was elected as a *bewindhebber* in 1681, Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*, 147.

¹⁰⁵ Sir John Chardin to Governor Banks, 23 May 1683, TNA CO/77/14 f. 136r.

¹⁰⁶ Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaedingh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 30 June 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁰⁷ Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaedingh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 3 July 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Extract uit het Rapport by den Commandeur Francoys Tack schriftelyck overgegeven aen d' Heer Generael Speelman den 20 Juny 1682, 21 December 1683, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5741 [unfoliated].

Rijkloff Van Goens invaded Cochin in 1662, Sir George Downing had argued stridently that only the regional sovereign, the Raja, could determine bans and admittance to trade.¹¹¹ Now that the Committees, themselves, had followed Child's plan to build out their Southeast Asian trade through directly intervening to support Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's war effort, they, themselves, were at the mercy of the victorious sovereign.¹¹² Focusing on the sovereignty of the non-European monarch allowed the *Heren* to deny any "exclusive contract" with the sultan, and to claim that, if the English ships did arrive in Banten, officials of the two companies would work to "maintain a good intelligence" between the EIC and VOC, and to assist the English company "against all violence."¹¹³

As they received reports from Chardin on the progress of the talks, the EIC's subcommittee on Banten grew frustrated that Van Dam and the *Heren* seemed to be drawing the English agent further away from hard agreements of compensation and reinstatement at Banten, and more towards debates of law.¹¹⁴ According to Chardin, the *Heren* suggested another joint commission to settle the issue. The Committees did not reject this idea.¹¹⁵ What concerned them was Chardin's reliance on spoken discourse, and the lack of any written statements from the *Heren*. For more than three decades, the Committees had bound the VOC to their own advancement, in Asia and in Europe, by engaging the *Heren* in written legal and commercial debate. Written records were transferable across contexts, and the Committees could, and did, use Pieter van Dam's written submissions in arguments, not only with the Dutch, but also with their own English government, and with other European and non-European governments and

¹¹¹ See Section 3.2.

¹¹² Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaedingh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 3 July 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Governor Banks to Sir John Chardin, 6 June 1683, IOR/H/42 f. 380-381.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*; Verbael gehouden van het gebesoigneerde vande Heeren Commissarisen vande Vergaedingh vande Seventiene met de Heer Ridder Chardin, 8 July 1683, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

trading organizations.¹¹⁶ Thus, Banks commanded that Chardin could not leave the Netherlands without “an answer in writing” to the English claims.¹¹⁷

While he waited for written responses from the *Heren*, on 18 June 1683, Chardin wrote to Governor Banks with a bold plan to leverage the Banten incident in order to finally achieve the “agreement & union” between the companies that had eluded the Committees since the Thomsons had taken over the company in 1652.¹¹⁸ The VOC was eager to appease the English, Chardin argued. Van Beuningen and the other *bewindhebbers* had begun to turn their concern towards reducing the burgeoning costs of the company’s military operations in Asia. A sustained war and occupation of Banten was thus out of the question, as it would “consume more than all the intended profit of Bantam can bring.”¹¹⁹ While the VOC representatives had left The Hague for “five or six days” to negotiate options with their chambers, Chardin urged the Governor to take advantage of the pause.

As Chardin witnessed Van Dam and Van Beuningen calculate their engagements with the English company in relationship to the broader strategy of the VOC, the EIC agent urged Banks to “prevail upon Sir Josiah to come hither,” as he “has the whole project & design of our Company in his head.”¹²⁰ It was Child who was developing the EIC’s next move, and he, alone, could match the Dutch *Advocaat*. Chardin argued that Child could thus “conclude a good treaty” with the Dutch and “put our Company at rest at the Dutch side.”¹²¹ Rather than seeking to wrap up the losses of a failed and risky venture into Southeast Asian politics, Chardin argued that, if Child came over, he could, in fact, expand his vision, “to take possession of Bantam, if intend to

¹¹⁶ See, for example, the Committees’ use of Maetsuycker’s discourse with Skinner during the Cochin debate, Section 3.2; The use of Van Dam’s Cochin arguments in the 1668 treaty debates, Section 4.1.

¹¹⁷ Governor Banks to Sir John Chardin, 6 June 1683, IOR/H/42 f. 380-381.

¹¹⁸ Sir John Chardin to Governor Banks, 8/18 June 1683, IOR/H/42 f. 381-382.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 382.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 381-382.

have the fort, or leave it to the young king.”¹²²

There was not time enough to mobilize Child, however, before Ambassador Van Citters, himself, intervened in the English Company’s strategy. The Dutch envoy submitted a lengthy memorandum of his own to Charles II, in which he narrated the negotiations, recognizing how the direct exchanges between the VOC leaders and the EIC agent at The Hague represented an autonomy “contrary to custom.”¹²³ While the VOC had acted “according to equity, and the mutual convenience which ought to regulate all things between good friends,”¹²⁴ Van Citters insisted that the Committees had abruptly shifted the EIC’s approach to that relationship. Child, Banks and Sambrooke, it seems, had taken Chardin’s suggestions to heart. Recognizing the clear advantage enjoyed by the VOC in having Van Dam and the *Heren* at The Hague, the Committees sought to continue the negotiations in London, where they could rely on the architects of their own company’s long-range plan.¹²⁵ Chardin had broken off the talks, insisting to “carry to England whatsoever the Holland Company should propose... that they would give order to treat thereupon at London.”¹²⁶ The Committees had thus suspended all negotiations until commissioners of both companies could meet in London.¹²⁷

Though not invoking Child by name, Van Citters mentioned that the *Heren* had become aware that, in London, the Committees would generate a barrage of claims against the VOC as part of a design, not only to regain access to Banten, but also to take hold of the sultan’s fortifications and exert sovereignty over the town of Banten, itself.¹²⁸ Van Citters assured the king, that, in the interim before a mutual summit could be convened in London, the VOC would design a senior commission as well as a robust catalogue of counter-claims, making themselves

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Arnout van Citters, A Memoriall of the Dutch Ambassador to the King at Windsor, 26/16 June 1684, IOR/H/42 f. 405.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 407; Sir John Chardin to Governor Banks, 8/18 June 1683, IOR/H/42 f. 381-382.

¹²⁶ Van Citters, A Memoriall of the Dutch Ambassador, 407.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 407-408.

“the plaintiffs” against any aggrandizing attacks from the Committees.¹²⁹

5.3 Josiah Child, The VOC, and The English Company Sovereign

In the interim before the companies’ commission would convene in the spring of 1685 in London, Josiah Child unfurled a wholly new strategy for his company. In the wake of the EIC’s failed merchant initiative in the Malay Archipelago, Child focused on advancing the English company as a colonizer in South Asia. While historian Steven Pincus has recently linked this plan to debates of political economy in England,¹³⁰ Child had actually tied this new initiative directly to his previous failure at Banten. He began with a methodical lobbying campaign, designed to convince Crown officials that the *Heren* now threatened the company’s burgeoning trade in the Mughal Empire, as well. Writing to Secretary of State Middleton, Child argued that, as Governor-General Speelman directed waves of European troops away from Ceylon and toward the archipelagos of Southeast Asia, the next logical step for the Dutch, following the trading networks of Banten, would be to shut the English out of Bengal and the Coromandel Coast.¹³¹ Child’s reasoning traced a geography of commerce shared by both companies. With 1682 clear in his mind, Child assured the Secretary that, without the proper counter from the English, the Dutch could overtake the entire trade within two years, “as easily as they did this last year from the South Seas.”¹³²

To answer this challenge, Child had come to a hard realization: the English merchant was dead in Southeast Asia. After the defeat of his plan to reinvigorate the EIC’s commercial network from Banten, for Child, the future of the company laid in the Mughal Empire. With the surging European interest in calicos and South Asian products, he argued that Bengal, alone,

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 408.

¹³⁰ Pincus, *1688: the First Modern Revolution*, 378-381.

¹³¹ Sir Josiah Child to the Secretary of State, 1 September 1683, BL Add MS 41822 f. 25r.

¹³² *Ibid.*

promised “more worth then all the rest of India.”¹³³ Explicitly leveraging his extensive experience with the Dutch, Child urged Secretary Middleton that there was but one way to block Speelman’s military conquests from metastasizing into the English Company’s promising future in South Asia: to counter the Dutch with forces of their own.¹³⁴

Child argued that the Committees must raise an English conqueror in the English merchant’s place, and overtake the network of forts and castles that the VOC had built to exert sovereignty over key arteries of commerce. The EIC was prepared, Child argued, to outfit a fleet of twenty warships to “right ourselves upon Batavia.”¹³⁵ This would be a company fleet, not an imperial operation of the English military state. And while he “did not expect to live to see the return of the cost,” Child reasoned that the benefit of controlling the East Indies trade would far outweigh the expense.¹³⁶ In order to most effectively move the English Company forward, Child proposed to replicate, not reinvent, the VOC’s pattern of conquest and commerce in Southeast Asia. He advocated pairing this shift with a move to map the EIC’s future directly onto the Dutch Company’s strategy in Europe, as well. Just as it was “the principle of that people to give good words... in Europe, but never part with any thing... in India,” Child argued that “the best way” would be to continue to “give the Ambassador [Van Citters] good words,” while plotting the expansion of a martial colonial network into Southeast Asia.¹³⁷

While the English Company would bear the burden of this aggressive expansion, Child cautioned the Secretary that this dramatic advancement of English policy in the East Indies would require a concomitant shift in the relationship between company and state in England. Drawing directly from his popular 1668 study of Dutch political economy, *Brief Observations Concerning Trade and Interest of Money*, Child argued that, in order to emulate the Dutch in the East Indies,

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 25v.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

the institutions of English political economy would have to more closely align with those that had proven so successful in supporting the VOC. First and foremost, this meant laying to rest the ever-shifting pattern of relations between the Stuart Crown and the EIC, and it required the state to prioritize the protection of the English company. “The Dutch will lay their commonwealth at stake to accomplish the mighty conquest of the entire trade of India,” Child claimed.¹³⁸ As a first move in this direction, the Crown could indicate its support of the EIC’s proposed colonial expansion, sending “5 or 6 frigates to follow our Fleet.”¹³⁹

Most scholars who have studied the EIC during this period are united in their recognition of Child as the author of the company’s ideological shift towards one of conquest and colonial governance in the 1680s.¹⁴⁰ Steven Pincus drew upon Child’s personal relationships with the king and with Tory politicians to claim that the EIC leader served as a conduit for Tory political economy; which he identifies as focused on the value of land, versus the labor and trade-based Whig political economy.¹⁴¹ Citing to the above correspondence with Lord Middleton, Pincus argues that Child grafted Tory political economy onto the English East Indies trade, convinced that “commerce depended on imperial landed possessions” and that “trade was a zero-sum game.”¹⁴²

Child’s proposals, however, seem more the products of three decades of inter-company debate, rather than exemplars of domestic political economy. The proposals aligned with Chardin’s energetic recommendations for a militarized EIC. Having served as an advisor at the Persian Court, and having travelled extensively within both the English and Dutch companies, the French diamond merchant offered his opinion from a career of close analysis and personal

¹³⁸ Sir Josiah Child to the Secretary of State, 1 September 1683, BL Add MS 41822 f. 25r-25v.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 25v.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 116-117; Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 380-382; One notable contrast to this view comes from the work of Philip Stern, who maintains that civic and military governance, normally associated with states, were core elements of the EIC’s charter, Stern, *The Company-State*, 10-14.

¹⁴¹ Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 373-373, 380-381.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 380.

experience of the dynamics of East Indian, and not English, political economy.¹⁴³ Child's proposals also harmonized with Sweeting's report. The Banten factor witnessed firsthand the advantages that naval strength, and not landed military power, brought to the VOC's dominance in the Southeast Asian spice markets such as Banten.

Beyond Sweeting, who remained in the East Indies, Child's ideas also aligned with the perspective of the company's most experienced Southeast Asian administrator, William Mainstone. In fact, Child had recently brought Mainstone out of retirement to lead negotiations with the Ageng Tirtayasa's 1682 embassy. Mainstone originally entered the Company's service in 1656 as a key figure in the Thomson brothers' overhaul of the English company, designed to match VOC standards of commerce and governance.¹⁴⁴ Leveraging his facility with Dutch language and commerce, Mainstone first served as the EIC's agent at Batavia, and in 1659 authored a comprehensive proposal for the Committees in terms closely aligned with those, which Child presented to Secretary Middleton in 1683.¹⁴⁵ Mainstone advocated the dispatch of an armed fleet to overtake Batavia, the seat of a colonial network, which, the factor assured, was far frailer than the Dutch would let on. English naval might would secure the EIC's future, Mainstone had assured the Committees in the wake of the First Anglo-Dutch War: "when we are strongest we may do what we please, while they are, they will."¹⁴⁶

While Child was an active and influential participant in English domestic political debate, his push for the militarization of a colonial network clearly linked to an established pattern of competitive emulation of VOC practices. This realization has far-reaching implications beyond the historiography of the companies, however. If, with his links between government and the restructuring of the EIC, Child played a key role in the birth of modern capitalist systems, then it is important to understand that key elements of the policies which he espoused and implemented

¹⁴³ Eurich, "Chardin, Sir John (1643-1712)."

¹⁴⁴ See Section 2.3.

¹⁴⁵ William Mainstone to the Governor of the Company, 12 March 1659, IOR/G/21/3/3 f. 64r-64v.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

drew from a well-established inter-company dialogue, related to, but separate from, the discourses of governance within the English and Dutch states. Such an understanding also represents an important step in the revision of the dominant nationalized historiographies of state formation and economic institutional history,¹⁴⁷ which also serve as the historical foundation for the modern social scientific fields of global politics and economics.

While they continued to process incoming reports from Asia, through late 1684, the *Heren* also prepared for the Banten summit with the English in London. Just as they had in 1654 and 1674, the States selected four arbitrators for the commission to determine damages for each company,¹⁴⁸ and the VOC selected a panel of four “instructors” to serve as a delegation and to advise the States’ representatives. Following the pattern of every East India summit since 1654, the companies’ delegations would, in fact, drive the negotiations. The *Heren* professed their “respect” for their republic’s delegation, but also dispatched four of their most senior *bewindhebbers*, all with extensive experience in previous Anglo-Dutch negotiations—particularly Salomon van de Blocquery, who had served on the company’s panel for the 1674 Anglo-Dutch treaty.¹⁴⁹ While Van Dam remained in Holland during this summit, he and Van Citters exchanged

¹⁴⁷ Key works within the historiography of the English financial revolution and the formation of the modern fiscal-military state include: P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England* (London: Macmillan, 1967); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Routledge, 1989); Douglas North and Barry Weingast, “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Journal of Economic History* 49 (1989): 803-832; Carruthers, *City of Capital*; Larry Neal, *The Rise of Financial Capitalism: International Capital Markets in the Age of Reason* (New York: CUP, 1993); And the Dutch historiography, which seeks to displace the English, claiming Europe’s formative financial revolution as a pillar of the Dutch “Golden Age,” a century before the English adoption of the same: Gelderblom and Jonker, “Completing a Financial Revolution;” Gelderblom, *Cities of Commerce*; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*; Petram, *De Bakermat van de Beurs*.

¹⁴⁸ The four state representatives were Anthony Heinsius of Delft, Isaacq vanden Heuvel from Amsterdam, Cornelis Terestein van Halewyn from the Court of Holland, and Adriaan van Borssels vander Hooge of Holland’s Hoge Raad; Extract uit het Register der Resolutien vande Hoog Mogende Heeren Staten Generaal, 26 September 1684, NA 1.10.10 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁴⁹ The four representatives were: Gerard Hoofd of Amsterdam; Jacob van Hoorn of Vlissingen; as well as Salomon van de Blocquery and Adriaen Paets of Rotterdam; *Heren XVII to the States General*, 11 December 1684, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr 5741 [unfoliated].

frequent correspondence.¹⁵⁰ Newly elected member of the *Heren*, Coenraad van Beuningen, joined Van Dam in most of these missives, leveraging his own expertise as the Republic's chief diplomat, and representative of the VOC's interests at the Anglo-Dutch negotiations at Breda in 1667, and, subsequently, at the Stuart Court.¹⁵¹ The *Advocaat* implored Van Citters to keep a close watch over the preparations for the English commission, reporting back to the *Heren* what the composition of the English delegation would be.¹⁵²

Perhaps reflecting Van Citters's own understanding of the significant control that the VOC wielded over the negotiation of East Indies issues in the States General and in the provincial governments by the 1680s, the ambassador highlighted the influence that the EIC held over the coalescing delegation in London. On 1 October 1684, the Court of Committees discussed a recent Privy Council meeting, in which the Dutch ambassador informed James II, who assumed the throne after his older brother Charles' death on 6 February 1685,¹⁵³ of the States' intention to dispatch commissioners to London in early 1685 "to treat about the affairs of Bantam."¹⁵⁴ Rather than assign any state representatives of his own, Charles referred the entire process to the Committees, "leaving it to the East India Company to nominate whom they thought fit to treat with the said Commissioners," and guaranteeing his approval as a formality of their selection.¹⁵⁵ As "commissioners on the Company's behalf," the Committees selected Sir Josiah Child, then the EIC's Deputy Governor and soon to be reelected as Governor; Sir Joseph Ashe, Governor; the Earle of Berkeley, Sir Benjamin Bathurst, Sir Jeremy Sambrooke and Joseph Herne—all of them

¹⁵⁰ Van Citters' correspondence file contains a significant quantity of these letters, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38; The Heren also consulted Van Citters on their own selection of commissioners, Pieter van Dam, Salomon van de Blocquery and [illegible] to Arnout van Citters, 22 September 1684, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁵¹ For example, Coenraad van Beuningen, Gerard Hooft, and Pieter van Dam to Arnout van Citters, 2 February 1685, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁵² Pieter van Dam to Arnout van Citters, 12 December 1684, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated]; Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC to the States General, 11 December 1684, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁵³ Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship*, 118-119.

¹⁵⁴ Court of Committees, 1 October 1684, IOR/B/38 f. 53v.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

leading Committees; and the Duke of Beaufort, a close confidant of Charles II, Josiah Child's in-law, and a major shareholder in the EIC.¹⁵⁶

While the Committees certainly recruited influential members of government, the king's deferral also fits into the English state's recognition of the company's authority in East India issues: a consistent pattern that began with the Thomson brothers' lobbying of Oliver Cromwell in 1652.¹⁵⁷ Child may have leveraged a particular set of relationships that he cultivated within the Stuart Court, and even a particular political ideology, but since the mid-century, successive Committees consistently sought to use the evolving relationship between the EIC and the VOC to pry away from the state greater autonomy over the governance of the East Indies trade.

Following the death of Charles II, Ambassador Van Citters's correspondence with Van Dam and Van Beuningen revealed that the new king, James II, had approved that talks would go forward "without a formal concert" of state commissioners, and the delegates of each company would engage in written communication.¹⁵⁸ The VOC dispatched their delegation, along with an introduction and credentials directed to the Committees,¹⁵⁹ and the arrival of the VOC commissioners was announced in the Court of Committees on 13 May 1685. The Committees wasted no time, immediately ordering their commission to draw up their damage claims relating to Banten, "to treat with the Dutch Commissioners thereupon."¹⁶⁰

5.4 1685: Culmination and Unraveling of the Companies' Relationship

During the seven months that followed, a collection of leaders from both East India Companies would engage in the most intensive, comprehensive, and animated legal and commercial debate in the companies' shared history. The content and structure of the talks

¹⁵⁶ Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 372.

¹⁵⁷ See Section 2.1.

¹⁵⁸ Coenraad van Beuningen to Arnout van Citters, 6 February 1685, NA 1.10.19 Inv. Nr. 38 [unfoliated].

¹⁵⁹ Credentials of the Dutch Commissioners, 23 March 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Court of Committees, 13 May 1685, IOR/B/38 f. 108v.

evinced a significant autonomy from the authority of either state. The representatives of the *Heren* and the Committees dealt directly with each other, negotiating within a shared terminology and body of commercial and legal theory that had accumulated in the companies' debates over the previous thirty years. The 1685 talks moved quickly to a wide-reaching legal and commercial debate, encompassing the issues of exclusive contracts, sovereignty, commerce and conflict that had undergirded the Anglo-Dutch discourse on the East Indies trade from the first Anglo-Dutch War in Europe, through the Banten debates between Skinner and Maetsuycker in 1658, the Malabar siege in the mid-1660s, the 1667 Peace of Breda, the Third Anglo-Dutch War, and the maritime treaty of 1674.

After thirty years of emulating each other—each forming their own strategies in response to the other's actions—the two company boards now directly competed within shared strategies of governance and goals in the East Indies trade. And it was in the 1685 commission—at the closest point of this alignment—that the fracturing of the inter-company relationship and the diverging trajectories of the two companies would be suddenly initiated.

Through June of 1685, as the EIC commissioners presented their damage claims against the VOC, they also authored a new history of engagement with the Dutch company, crafted a new legal profile, and charted a new future for the EIC in Asia—publicly launching the plan, which Child had already privately presented to the Secretary of State. Completely disavowing three decades of EIC claims to the rights of the merchant, the Committees argued that the EIC factory network in Southeast Asia, anchored at Banten, was just like that of the Dutch: the infrastructure of a colonial sovereign. All previous arbitration submissions of the English Company had read like mercantile insurance claims: listing goods, cargoes and ships lost to the VOC's military

belligerence.¹⁶¹ Pieter van Dam and the *Heren* had responded to such complaints with a consistent line of argument, first invoked by Grotius in 1613: comparative investment. Colonial government was a costly business, and since Jan Pietersz. Coen had first begun to build Batavia as an East Indian military and commercial hub in 1619, the Dutch justification for barring English access had rested on the reasoning that to the victor went the spoils. If the Dutch Company invested the money, ships, and men into fortifying factories, subduing rivals, and securing waterways, then the VOC alone should reap the benefits—in the form of exclusive trading rights and sovereign claims to arteries of commerce.¹⁶² As the VOC’s factory network and military operations ballooned throughout the second half of the seventeenth century, the *Heren* continued to advance this argument through the negotiations over Banten in the 1650s,¹⁶³ Cochin and Malabar in the 1660s,¹⁶⁴ and throughout East and South Asia in the 1670s.¹⁶⁵

In 1685, however, Child and the Committees sought to upend the pattern of inter-company negotiations by claiming the same rights for the English company at Banten. Rather than denying the significant supply of arms and cannon that the EIC had judiciously funneled into the hands of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa for the previous three decades, the Committees argued that the fortress in the heart of Banten, now occupied by Sultan Haji and guarded by files of VOC soldiers, had, itself, been “built with the English East India Company’s money” and for the Company’s use to secure its trade.¹⁶⁶ Since the EIC had invested the money in constructing and outfitting the fortress, and since the English and Dutch were not at war in 1682, the Committees demanded that the fort be returned to the EIC so that the English Company could maintain its

¹⁶¹ See Chapter 2 for Banten; Chapter 3 for Malabar, and specifically Cochin; and Chapter 3 for more general claims against the VOC.

¹⁶² See Sections 1.3 and 1.4.

¹⁶³ See Section 2.4.

¹⁶⁴ See Section 3.2.

¹⁶⁵ See Section 4.1.

¹⁶⁶ The English Commissioners’ Paper, 10 June 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 22.

garrison.¹⁶⁷

As historians have recognized the EIC's turn toward a colonial proprietor in the East Indies, this focus has almost exclusively fallen on the development of Bombay and Madras, and the martial engagement with the Mughal Empire during the late 1680s.¹⁶⁸ However, the Committees grafted the VOC's own blend of political and commercial strategies onto the English arguments, maintaining that the VOC's attack on Cochin in the 1660s, designed to secure the greatest Malabar pepper ports for the Dutch Company, had convinced the English of the "absolute necessity" of securing control over part of the pepper trade in the other major East Indian pepper market of Java. Further emphasizing the companies' position at Banten as a military installation, designed to exert power over nearby trading circuits, and not just the warehouse of a merchant, the Committees had recognized that, as with the Dutch fortress at Batavia, this goal "cannot be done without a strong English garrison in the South Seas & at no place so well as at Bantam."¹⁶⁹

Perhaps implying that the transition from the claims of a merchant to those of a sovereign were still in process, the English commissioners continued their argument with the presentation of damage claims, quantifying their alleged investment in "their" Banten fort. Listings for lost cargo, vessels, and pepper were dwarfed by the claims for the fortress and factory (£20,000), and the debts owed by the sultan, including those for armaments and construction (£50,000).¹⁷⁰ Again invoking the VOC's own logic with regards to the entitlements owed from military investment, the single largest claim was against future profits, denied the EIC by the Dutch company. Banten had been built as the commercial and military hub for a new English network linking Java's

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Watson, *Foundation for Empire*, 39-42; Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia*, 49-52; Marshall, "The English in Asia to 1700," 278-282; Søren Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work: Madras and the City of London, 1660-1740* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2005); Philip Stern does examine the EIC's aspirations for a fortified settlement and the Company's relations with the French in Siam, Stern, *The Company-State*, 76-80.

¹⁶⁹ The English Commissioners' Paper, 10 June 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 22.

¹⁷⁰ The English Commissioners' Paper, 24 June 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 26-27.

pepper markets with England, China, and the South China Sea. Embedded in the £100,000 calculation for the loss of the alleged English commercial-military regime anchored at Banten, was an effort to make the VOC pay for the construction of that same regime. Formerly presented to Secretary of State Middleton as an unprecedented military expedition to be funded at the EIC's expense, listed among the English Company's demands from the VOC was "the charge of a fleet of 23 sail of great ships proposed for the recovery of Bantam."¹⁷¹ Not only had the Committees re-written history to claim that, for the previous three decades, they had consistently built a rival colonial network to the Dutch, but they would, at the same time, seek to have the Dutch company pay for the construction of an actual colonial hub at Banten.

The VOC's delegates, who had been selected by the *Heren* specifically for their experience with the history of English merchant claims against the Dutch "conqueror" in Asia, were clearly confused by the Committees' total reversal of the English Company's well established arguments. The VOC representatives knew of no way that the EIC's claims "could be expected to be understood literally."¹⁷² For the previous decades, the Dutch commissioners argued, the EIC had maintained "a house, and residence, without having had there, or pretended to any right or territory."¹⁷³ Directly targeting the discordance between the EIC's claim to the fortress, and its requirement that the Dutch also pay for Child's plan to establish a colonial infrastructure on Java, the VOC's representatives concluded that it was "unconceivable with what appearance of justice, it [EIC] can pretend to that which it never possessed."¹⁷⁴ Directly attacking the claims of Child and the Committees, the *Heren*'s representatives retorted that it was "not to be comprehended to demand more than it hath lost vizt. the City and fort of Bantam instead [of] a house."¹⁷⁵ In a complete reversal of roles, the Dutch commissioners claimed that they,

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, f. 29.

¹⁷² The Dutch Commissioners' Paper, 13 October 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 53.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

themselves, lived as merchants under the sultan and, like the English, maintained “only a bare residence, without any right of Territory or authority, which is entirely inherent in the person of the King [sultan].”¹⁷⁶ Should the English have a problem with the status of their trade at Banten, the Dutch commissioners suggested they consult the sultan.¹⁷⁷

Having made the initial case that the EIC had, at least since the 1660s, developed a claim of sovereignty at Banten, Deputy Governor Child, along with Bathurst and Sambrooke, expanded upon their Anglo-Dutch commercial ideology for the East Indies trade. Over the previous decade, the trends of Eurasian commerce had shifted in the EIC’s favor, as South Asian textiles and goods had become the preference of European consumers. Eminent historian of Eurasian trade, Holden Furber, summarized the literature to label this trend, “the craze for calicoes,”¹⁷⁸ and English and Dutch scholars, alike, cite this market shift as the crucial development that initiated the EIC’s rise and the VOC’s relative stasis.¹⁷⁹ In their retort to the VOC, the Committees claimed that the *Heren* were well aware of the market shifts destabilizing the balance of commerce in the East Indies, and they argued that the Banten siege represented the *Raad*’s efforts to reverse these trends. The EIC had leveraged the growing market for South Asian commodities to compete with the Dutch in the market for calicos on Java, “the principal clothing of the Javans.”¹⁸⁰ The VOC’s support of Sultan Haji, the Committees urged, was thus a calculation to lock the English and other Europeans out of that immensely profitable market.¹⁸¹

Banten was, the EIC commissioners argued, just a single example of the VOC’s defensive play to manipulate the dynamics of the Anglo-Dutch East Indies trade, which were, after three decades, “certainly known” between the companies, blending military strength with

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 79.

¹⁷⁹ Boxer, *Jan Compagnie in Japan, 1600-1850*, 59-61; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 329-331; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 126.

¹⁸⁰ The English Commissioners’ Paper, 2 December 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 100.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

commercial capability, and “throwing the gauntlet to all.”¹⁸² The English had gained on the Dutch in South Asia and in the Western Indian Ocean.¹⁸³ In the VOC’s efforts to shut the English out of Makassar and Japan, the Committees urged that the Dutch were systematically targeting English competition in an effort to take hold of the key nodes of intra-Asian trade, thus “engrossing the whole trade of India.”¹⁸⁴ Moreover, the English commissioners cast Child’s plan to send an armada of at least twenty warships into Southeast Asian waters as a direct counter to the VOC’s policy. It was the only possible recourse to the Dutch claims of sovereignty over key commercial hubs and sea lanes: “that any European nation, that is considerable in naval power in India, may by their shipping take some advantage upon the greatest native prince of India.”¹⁸⁵ So much for the virtues of the diplomatic company merchant!

In maneuvering their company’s legal, political, and commercial ideology toward the Dutch claims of sovereignty and conquest, the Committees also developed a new line of rhetorical attack against the VOC. In the EIC’s past claims, the law of nations had provided protections for the neutral merchant, and burdened the VOC’s efforts to control access to maritime commerce. For decades, the Committees had explained the Dutch superiority in size and scale as gains reaped through conquest, while the EIC hewed to the profile of the peaceful merchant. But now embracing a common colonial goal with the *Heren*, Child and the Committees had to generate a new attack on the VOC: corruption. The Dutch were bad colonists, reaping spectacular gains through immoral and barbaric colonial practices. At Bombay and Madras, the EIC designed to follow the “paths of moderation and mildness.” But in their quest to “engross the whole trade of the East Indies,” the VOC had turned the South Seas into “the ocean of

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, f. 102.

¹⁸³ “Our trade is not yet much inferior to theirs, bating only the spice & Japan trades,” *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁸⁴ The English Commissioners’ Paper, 2 December 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 102.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

innocent blood.”¹⁸⁶ Such inflammatory language was unprecedented in the companies’ negotiations, and matched in Anglo-Dutch political dialogue only by the English Amboyna pamphlets of the 1620s and 1650s, condemning the murder of Englishman by VOC agents.¹⁸⁷ But in the 1685 talks, the EIC commissioners doubled-down on their contrast of the English and Dutch East India Companies’ relations with non-Europeans, charging that “in the progress of their too well-known methods” the Dutch had “killed thousands of Indians, for one that ever died by the English hands.”¹⁸⁸ If the English were to be faulted at all, the Committees maintained, it was in the “great (if not too great) moderation” that the EIC had shown in response to the barbaric violence of their Dutch counterparts.¹⁸⁹ With their proposed colonial expansion into Southeast Asia, however, the English could offer “timely remedy” to the “ill methods” of Batavia.¹⁹⁰

The VOC’s commissioners recoiled at the violent accusations. Since the 1650s, the *bewindhebbers* had grown accustomed to exchanges that were built on methodical and direct legal and commercial arguments. But by 1685, the *Heren* had noted a significant shift in tone of EIC communications ever since Child took hold of the English Company’s Anglo-Dutch policy. In response to the escalating rhetoric of the English commissioners’ earlier arguments, the representatives of the VOC had scoffed that they were “desirous not to engage in a fight of calumnies, from which the Conqueror can reap nothing but shame and confusion.”¹⁹¹ But when the Committees remained resolute in their scathing recrimination of the VOC’s murderous and “ill” colonial methods, casting the Dutch company as a corrupted version of the “moderate” EIC, the *Heren* had enough. They could not stomach the Committees’ “reproaches and invectives,” and they openly mocked the EIC’s claims.¹⁹² While the Committees had described the violence

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 101.

¹⁸⁷ See Section 2.1.

¹⁸⁸ The English Commissioners’ Paper, 2 December 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 101.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Paper of the Dutch Commissioners, 19 November 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 88.

¹⁹² Paper of the Dutch Commissioners, 3 December 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 108.

of the VOC's policies "in the most outrageous manner in the World," the representatives of the *Heren* found the Committees' professed principals of "mildness and moderation" laughable.¹⁹³ They again dismissed the Committees' damage claims as pure fiction, and completely contrary to the "Laws Natural and Civil," which the two directorates had established over the previous three decades of debates: "As if...only an old building could give them any Right of Propriety and Lordship over the City and Fort of Bantam."¹⁹⁴ The *Heren* would not allow the Committees to build a new future for the EIC by crudely rewriting the companies' shared history.

While the talks fell apart, straying further from the issues and more towards anger and resentment, Child and his counterparts escalated the inter-company exchange to its breaking point. The Committees did not stop at their external attacks on the VOC's practices. Invoking their close observation of the arguments of political economy that had animated the Dutch Company's internal debates over the balance of colonial expansion versus profitable trade, the Committees alleged that members of the *Heren* had, themselves, recognized this barbaric cancer corrupting the VOC. Dragging Pieter van Dam to the center of the companies' negotiations, the English commissioners invoked the *Advocaat* by name, charging that he was really more affiliated with the moderate English colonial mind. In contrast to the rest of the VOC, "we have good thoughts" of Van Dam, the Committees claimed.¹⁹⁵ But in the compliment was also the dagger, as the Committees sought to paint the VOC as an unstable organization, which had lost control over its officials. Citing the *Advocaat*'s preliminary correspondence with the Committees regarding Banten, EIC officials Child, Sambrooke, and Bathurst alleged that the chief administrator of the VOC had publically criticized Batavia's leaders in their zealous empire building in Southeast Asia. In the confidence of his correspondence with the Committees, Van

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 109.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Dam “did so frankly condemn those ill practices of Speelmans.”¹⁹⁶

For Van Dam, the primary Dutch interlocutor with the English Company, the Committees’ attack represented an intrusion and embarrassment that he simply could not bear. The furious *Advocaat* flatly denied their coloring of his communications. He responded that the missive in question, lost from the records of either company, fell in line with the VOC’s initial responses to the Banten affair, at a time when the *Heren* still had no information from their own officials. Any preliminary and apologetic comments regarding Speelman’s behavior were “grounded only upon a supp[osition] of things which he had heard,” the facts of which conflicted with the VOC’s subsequent reports from Java.¹⁹⁷ The Dutch commissioners conveyed the *Advocaat*’s astonishment and rage. Van Dam was “in no way satisfied with the proceedings of the English gentleman,” and he accused the Committees of libel, charging them to print the letter in full, rather than “putting his name ... in so odious a manner.”¹⁹⁸

That was the final exchange between the two directorates, and the Committees’ strategy of aggressively attacking the VOC’s governance—to the point of a personal assault on Van Dam in order to expose fissures within the Dutch Company’s leadership—fatally severed the relationship that had, for three decades, consistently bound the two directorates in the competitive construction of their companies. Representatives of the Privy Counsel and of the States General took over the negotiations, which unraveled as the EIC’s claims at Banten blended with other mercantile claims against the Dutch,¹⁹⁹ and the tumultuous reign of the new king, James II,

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Paper of the Dutch Commissioners, 3 December 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 111.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ While state “deciders” had originally been designated by both governments to arbitrate the two companies’ claims, the representatives of the two directorates had been granted the opportunity to negotiate the Banten issues on their own, Dutch Commissioners’ Paper, 13 October 1685, IOR/G/21/8 f. 52; Declaration of the Bewindhebers of the VOC to the States General, undated, IOR/G/21/8 [unfoliated]; By 1687, the EIC’s claims against the Dutch had ballooned to include issues in Persia, on the Malabar Coast, and on the Coromandel Coast, Resolution of the Heren XVII, 2 October 1687, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 154 [unfoliated].

destabilized English politics.²⁰⁰

The 1685 talks severed the durable circuit of dialogue between the two directorates in Europe. In Asia, the English would never recover their factory at Banten, and the EIC would, for at least the next century, operate as a diminished competitor to the VOC in the South Seas. The Committees' reorganization of the EIC to be a constitutional and operational competitor of the VOC would, however, exert enormous influence over the diverging trajectories of the two companies. The EIC developed a new geopolitical model, focusing on continued colonial development in South Asia, and confounding the Dutch, whose administration remained centered on Southeast Asian nodes of commerce.

At the very same time as Child's aggressive colonial plan took shape, the *Heren* engaged in a dramatic reformation of their own. Central architects of the VOC's three-and-a-half decade relationship with the Committees now applied this experience to overhaul the Dutch Company's management. While the EIC sought to build a colonial profile in the VOC's image, Van Dam, Van Beuningen, Hudde, and Van de Blocquery sought to return their organization to the basic operations of a merchant. Languishing under the burgeoning costs of colonial administration, prominent members of the *Heren* rejected the costly aggressions of Speelman, recognizing models for institutional reform in the very historical arguments that the Committees now shunned.

5.5 Diverging Empires: The Legacy of a Relationship

As Josiah Child finished out his term as Deputy Governor in early 1686, and then reassumed the office of Governor through 1688, he led the EIC toward a significant investment in

²⁰⁰ A devout Roman Catholic, when James succeeded his brother to the throne, he instituted a "high profile Court Catholicism" and fanned the flames of factionalism among his ministers by removing his brother's allies and creating a Catholic council of advisors to rival the Privy Council, Marshall, *The Age of Factionalism*, 136-138, 144; These actions, along with proroguing Parliament, led to a brief detent among the rival Whig and Tory parties, as both sought to unite in protection of English Protestant government, Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship*, 148.

building a military-colonial structure in South Asia. Employing the same vigor and confidence that had animated his previous efforts to bolster the EIC's merchant profile in Southeast Asia, Child maintained the VOC as the benchmark for this new English organization. In a treatise published in 1689, he publicly proclaimed the new East India Company regime in Asia, designed to "courageously defend English Dominion and Interest in India."²⁰¹ The joint-stock had reached an unprecedented subscription, doubling during the Banten embassy.²⁰² And the Company was strengthened with a reconfirmed charter "with the same Powers and Authorities, as the Dutch East-India Company have from their Sovereigns."²⁰³ "Beyond what it was in any former Age," Child proclaimed the EIC's transformation toward the commercial capacity of the VOC, dispatching waves of at least ten ships to and from Bombay and Fort St. George at Madras, carrying cargoes worth hundreds of thousands of pounds.²⁰⁴

The timing could not have better advantaged the English Company to develop a colonial network in South Asia. The political instability in the Mughal Empire, with Emperor Aurangzeb moving armies throughout the subcontinent to consolidate his political control,²⁰⁵ made the Company's trading hubs attractive alternatives to Mughal and Golkondan ports. In 1687, James II issued a charter incorporating the city of Madras, developing civic offices, including a "mayor, recorder, sheriffs, aldermen, and courts of law and admiralty."²⁰⁶ While Bombay experienced significant setbacks, including a mutiny in 1683-1684 and an invasion by Mughal mercenary forces during 1689 and 1690, the Committees had finally realized their goal of an entrepot in

²⁰¹ Josiah Child, *A Supplement, 1689. To a former treatise, concerning the East-India trade, printed 1681* (London, 1689), 1.

²⁰² Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 91.

²⁰³ Child, *A Supplement*, 1-2.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 3-7.

²⁰⁵ Rapport door Rijckloff van Goens de Jonge, Commandeur over de Retuur Vloot, 18 October 1681, NA 1.01.02 Inv. Nr. 5740 [unfoliated]; Thomas Rolt and Council at Surat to the East India Company in London, 18 November 1679, IOR/E/3/40 f. 173-176; Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 227-233.

²⁰⁶ Court of Committees, 19 October 1687, IOR/B/39 f. 61r; Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, 378; Bombay had received its civic charter from Charles II in 1669, Charter granted to the Governor and Company of Merchants of London, Trading into the East-Indies, Relating to the Island of Bombay, 27 March 1669, in *Charters Relating to the East India Company from 1600 to 1761*, ed. John Shaw (Madras: R. Hill, 1887), 47-56; Stern, *The Company-State*, 23.

Gujarat: a dream first articulated during the First Anglo-Dutch War and formalized in that city's 1669 Charter.²⁰⁷ The Committees also moved the EIC headquarters for the Western Indian Ocean from Surat to the "Bombay Presidency."²⁰⁸ By the turn of the century, the EIC government of Madras was estimated to rule over 100,000 citizens,²⁰⁹ and Child estimated that Bombay had grown from an outpost of 4,000 families to a metropolis of at least 50,000 households.²¹⁰ While Child's numbers may not have been accurate, they were clearly meant to impress the English public with the scale of the EIC's colonial administration.²¹¹

The EIC's South Asian geographic focus also reflected the company's shifting commercial priorities. Pepper remained an important commodity, and, in the wake of the VOC's consolidation of Java, the EIC had shifted leadership in this trade to a factory at Bengkulu, on Sumatra.²¹² By 1688, however, cotton piece goods from India represented at least half of the EIC's re-export business to the markets of Europe and the Atlantic.²¹³ And Bombay, Madras, and, after 1699, Calcutta in Bengal,²¹⁴ grew as the three governing hubs, or "Presidencies," of the EIC's system. Each administered a network of tributary factories, sea lanes, and diplomatic relationships with regional sovereigns.

Contextualizing this development within the EIC, a significant intellectual and legal historiography has traced the circulating ideologies of imperial governance, which fueled English colonial development in the British Isles, the Atlantic World, and India.²¹⁵ Only one historian has

²⁰⁷ John Spiller at Isfahan to the East India Company in London, 10 April 1654, IOR/E/3/24 f. 38v; Stern, *The Company-State*, 23.

²⁰⁸ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 90.

²⁰⁹ Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India* (New York: CUP, 1998), 148.

²¹⁰ Child, *A Supplement*, 7-8.

²¹¹ Contemporaries' estimates of London's population fell between 76,000 and 148,000 during the 1690s, Vanessa Harding, "The Population of London, 1550-1700: A Review of the Published Evidence," *The London Journal* 15, no. 2 (1990), 112.

²¹² Consultation of the Council at Bencoolen, November 1686, IOR/G/35/2 f. 5r-7r.

²¹³ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 92.

²¹⁴ London to Bengal, 20 December 1699, IOR/E/3/93 f. 249.

²¹⁵ Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*; Games, *The Web of Empire*, 81-116, 147-180; Jane Ohlmeyer, "'Civilizing of those Rude Partes': Colonization within Britain and Ireland, 1580s-1640s,"

recently investigated how, in their aggressive establishment of colonial institutions during the 1680s and 1690s, the English sought to improve upon well-established Dutch methods of governance (among others) in order to counter rising costs, attract more merchants, and promote commerce.²¹⁶ The Committees explicitly envisioned their company's hierarchical presidency system of factories in the image of the VOC's "regency" system, which coordinated the Dutch factory network from the principal administrative and trading hubs of Colombo and Batavia.²¹⁷

The English efforts soon faced many of the same challenges that confronted the Dutch, however. The Committees, like the *Heren* before them, began to fret over the "mighty charge we are at to advance the English Interest and make this Company a formidable martial government in India."²¹⁸ To counter the cost, the Committees ordered the Presidency Councils to implement a rigorous system of taxes and duties, as the Dutch did at Batavia. It was "the Dutch wisdom in that respect" that was "the cause of all their Sovereign Dominion in India."²¹⁹

Through such commands, it becomes clear that the Committees viewed the VOC's power over sea lanes and control over fortified settlements as stemming from a self-sustaining system of management and finance. Therefore, EIC leaders were also to adopt the Dutch Company's financial structure;²²⁰ redouble their efforts to block interlopers, as the Dutch did;²²¹ and keep their factory reports in the same manner as the Dutch.²²² The only areas in which factors were instructed to tweak Dutch approaches were in relations with non-European merchants and in the compensation and care of their own employees. The rigorous VOC restrictions had gained a

in *Oxford History of the British Empire Vol I: The Origins of Empire*, ed. Nicholas Canny (New York: OUP, 2001), 124-146.

²¹⁶ Stern, *The Company-State*, 84.

²¹⁷ London to Bombay General & Council, 6 January 1688, IOR/E/3/91 f. 250r; Charles Zinzan and Council at Bombay to the East India Company in London, 9 May 1685, IOR/E/3/45 f. 59v.

²¹⁸ London to Fort St. George, 9 June 1686, IOR/E/3/91 f. 70v.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*; London to Surat, 3 February 1687, IOR/E/3/91 f. 131v.

²²⁰ London to Bombay, 14 July 1686, IOR/E/3/91 f. 80v.

²²¹ London to Surat, 26 March 1686, IOR/E/3/91 f. 57v.

²²² London to Pryaman, 25 November 1685, IOR/E/3/91 f. 11r.

reputation for “injustice to their neighbors & cruelty to their own people.”²²³ In an effort to attract greater business, the English were to find “a golden mean” between policies of leniency and rigor.²²⁴

To Fort St. George, the Committees dispatched a thirty-year-old book containing Dutch “methods” of commerce and governance, which the EIC directors had “digested” in the previous decades of negotiations with the *Heren*.²²⁵ It was on stolen and seized Dutch manuals and instructions such as these that past Committees had relied in their legal discourses with the *Heren*, and in their design of new commercial and diplomatic strategies, such as the push to enter China and the Japanese market.²²⁶ The *Heren* and the *Raad* had responded to such English strategies with revisions in their own policies, and the Committees acknowledged this in their instructions to Fort St. George, that “since that time they have much bettered their constitutions & refined their politics.”²²⁷

While rebuilding the EIC with components from their shared past with the VOC, in the late 1680s, Josiah Child, and the new Governor at Bombay, John Child (no relation), launched an initiative that would confirm a clear divergence in the geopolitical strategies of the two companies. In 1689, the EIC declared war on the Mughal Empire. In Bengal, the English officials had, since the mid-1680s, alleged that their company had suffered under systemic extortion and abuse by the regional governors of Aurangzeb’s administration.²²⁸ Confronting the Empire, while Aurangzeb was mired in conflict with the Marathas, and occupying both Bijapur and Golkonda, was a risk. Aurangzeb maintained a standing army that dwarfed any force that Europe had seen. And Mughal forces fought with weaponry and arms that rivaled those of any

²²³ London to Bombay, 14 July 1686, IOR/E/3/91 f. 80v.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ London to Fort St. George, 28 September 1687, IOR/E/3/91 f. 213r.

²²⁶ See Section 4.3.

²²⁷ London to Fort St. George, 28 September 1687, IOR/E/3/91 f. 213r.

²²⁸ Court of Committees to Bengal, 14 January 1686, IOR/E/3/91 f. 34v.

European military.²²⁹ The EIC was not seeking a fortified settlement in Bengal, but rather sought a new, more favorable, grant of rights and protections (*farman*) from the Emperor. Such a move would serve as a statement of English supremacy to other Europeans.²³⁰ The war, however, proved a grave miscalculation for John and Josiah Child. The fort at Bombay, itself, was besieged and severely damaged by the Mughal mercenary navy.²³¹

While the conflict did end with John Child receiving a new *farman*, in return for sizeable indemnity payments from the company,²³² VOC officials regarded the EIC's hostilities against the Emperor as completely incomprehensible. The Dutch *Raad* at Surat had written of their suffering, with the English, under a fickle Mughal governor.²³³ But attacking the Empire upended the political and economic logic that had formed the bedrock of the companies' relationship for the previous four decades. Leading up to the Mughal siege of Bombay, the *Raad* reported to the *Heren* that John Child and the English Company had grown "very insolent and bold" in their actions, "seizing muslim ships" and claiming sovereignty over the shipping lanes of the Western Indian Ocean.²³⁴ These activities ran completely counter to the reverence with which both companies had treated the strict regulations of Mughal officials in the past. Dutch leaders also worried that the fear stirred up among Gujarati merchants would severely harm Dutch trade.²³⁵ VOC factors fought the image "that we were one with the English, to ruine the subordinates of the great king Aurangzeb," hoping to salvage Dutch commerce.²³⁶ Once war did break out, the Surat Council reported to Batavia on the Mughal siege of Bombay,²³⁷ and their concerns proved

²²⁹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 57, 68-69, 165-184.

²³⁰ Stern, *The Company-State*, 122-124.

²³¹ [Cpt. James Hilton], "Diary Book 1690," 15 February 1689-22 June 1690, IOR/G/3/3/3 f. 1-45.

²³² Stern, *The Company-State*, 123-125.

²³³ Raad at Surat to the Heren XVII at Middelburgh, 24 January 1689, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1448 f. 404r-413v.

²³⁴ Generale Missive vanden Gouverneur Generael en de Raden van Indien, 27 December 1688, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1441 f. 335v-336r.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ VOC Council at Surat to Heren XVII at Middelburgh, 24 January 1689, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1448 f. 405.

²³⁷ Surat Council to Batavia, 14 May 1689, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1464 f. 467r-468r.

well-founded, “on account of English conflicts with the Mughal, our trade there [in Surat] is blocked.”²³⁸ And after the Bombay siege, Dutch officials praised “the appearance of Peace” between the EIC and the Mughal Empire, hoping that the VOC’s trade would finally return to normal.²³⁹

While the Committees held up Dutch governance institutions as models for the reorganization of their own company, the EIC’s expansion into the massive states of South Asia did represent a fundamental divergence from the strategies of the *Heren* and the *Raad*, which focused on consolidating Dutch colonial presence across the small archipelagic kingdoms of Southeast Asia.²⁴⁰ Beyond Ceylon, the *Raad* concentrated on strengthening their colonial development among the island trade networks of the Malay Archipelago, establishing a thalassocracy over key trading nodes and sea lanes, rather than engaging in the politics of the vast and diverse Persian and Mughal Empires.²⁴¹ The *Heren* affirmed a strategy of force to tamp down the rebellions that had sprung up among the non-European populations in Southeast Asian port cities, like Ambon, Makassar, and Jambi, over which the VOC’s flag now flew.²⁴²

Unlike the EIC’s engagement with the Mughal Empire, however, the VOC’s military strategy focused on applying surgical force—quick naval strikes and small, targeted military garrisons—to maintain control over a precise network of individual commercial markets and trading lanes.²⁴³ The *Heren* closely studied the *generale missiven* from Batavia, focusing on what they referred to as their desired “monopolie” over specific commodities. In practice, this meant exerting enough leverage over producers and sovereigns to maintain consistent prices for core commodities, such as pepper and tin. They also sought to coordinate prices across markets,

²³⁸ Hendrik Adriaen van Rheeede tot Drackenstein to the Heren XVII, 23 December 1689, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1477 f. 44v-45r.

²³⁹ Hr. Van Helsdingen at Surat to Hendrik Adriaen van Rheeede tot Drackenstein, 28 December 1689, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 1479 f. 5r-5v.

²⁴⁰ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 79-89.

²⁴¹ Heren XVII to Batavia, 22 June 1683, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 f. 82r-85r.

²⁴² *Ibid.*; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, 85-87.

²⁴³ Heren XVII to Batavia, 24 June 1684, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 f. 165r-170r.

exploiting arbitrage opportunities: buying cheap in one market and selling dear in another.²⁴⁴

While Josiah Child and the Committees engineered designs for territorial dominance, the *Heren* commissioned a new class of armed Eastindiamen ships to sail along the VOC's sea lanes, and to ride in their ports. The flagship of this fleet would be named to memorialize their final entrepot conquest: *The Bantam*.²⁴⁵

Just as the Committees had heralded a new future for the EIC in response to Dutch policies, during the 1680s and 1690s, the diverging commercial and political relationship with the English also inspired a dramatic expansion plan among the *Heren*.²⁴⁶ The same commercial trends on which Child sought to capitalize also forced the *Heren* to realign their business and governance models. The Shogunate's 1668 decision to close off the export of silver forced the *Heren* to rely on the Dutch Atlantic trade with the Spanish Empire for the bulk of their bullion. But this move also dramatically reduced Japanese consumption of goods from Java, Bengal and the Coromandel Coast, unraveling the "sophisticated and profitable Asian trade" which had long been the envy of the English.²⁴⁷ In its commerce, the Dutch Company now became increasingly dependent upon the Eurasian trade that formed the core business of the EIC—shipping East Indian goods back to Amsterdam for re-export across Europe and the Atlantic. And while the VOC would still outstrip the English in raw commercial volume until the 1740s,²⁴⁸ the European market was turning toward textiles and goods sourced from Bengal and Gujarat,²⁴⁹ "where the Dutch lacked garrisons and which were remote from the centers of Dutch political power."²⁵⁰

As historians have not acknowledged the ways in which Pieter van Dam incorporated the

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ Heren XVII to Batavia, 29 November 1683, NA 1.04.02 Inv. Nr. 321 f. 143v.

²⁴⁶ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 333.

²⁴⁷ De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 435.

²⁴⁸ Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 331-332.

²⁴⁹ Niels Steensgaard, "The Growth and Composition of the Long-Distance Trade of England and the Dutch Republic before 1750," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires*, edited by J.D. Tracy (New York: CUP, 1990), 123-128; Marshall, "The English in Asia," 279.

²⁵⁰ In the mid-seventeenth century, spices accounted for more than two-thirds of the VOC's imports to Europe. By 1700, spices only represented twenty-three percent of total value of merchandise sold, Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 335-336.

English Company as a key consideration in his influential encapsulation of the colonial debate in 1662,²⁵¹ so too have Femme Gaastra and Dutch economic historians not focused on the influential role of the EIC in the *bewindhebbers*' reinvigoration of this debate in the 1680s.²⁵² Between 1680 and 1685, it was the specific *bewindhebbers* who had previously driven the VOC's dealings with the English Company, including Coenraad van Beuningen, Johannes Hudde, Salomon van de Blocquerie and Pieter van Dam, who leveraged this experience to launch an aggressive initiative to reform the financial operations of the VOC.²⁵³ They also sought to raise dividends for an increasingly disgruntled shareholder population and to reduce corruption among company employees.²⁵⁴ The leading historical analyst of this effort, Femme Gaastra, describes how Van Beuningen led the *Heren*'s commission "with boundless energy" in the development of plans for financial and political reform.²⁵⁵

After months of excruciating study of the company's account books, Van Beuningen returned with recommendations that exhibited strong echoes of Van Dam's own memo from 1662, weighing the costs of colonial development against the balance sheet of the merchant.²⁵⁶ Van Beuningen argued that the costs were simply too great at the militarized colonial factories, including Malabar, Makassar, Ceylon and Malakka.²⁵⁷ Setting forth the example of the Portuguese *Estado* which had "conquered many cities, but ultimately perished," Van Beuningen argued for a return to the profile of the merchant. He proposed sweeping austerity measures, including significant reductions in staff and wages, as well as tighter controls over shipping, the personal trade of company officials and directors, and the operations of the smaller chambers of

²⁵¹ See Section 3.2.

²⁵² Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 448.

²⁵³ Extract from the Resolutions of the Heren XVII, 1688, NA 1.10.48 Inv. Nr. 4 [unfoliated].

²⁵⁴ De Vries and Van der Woude summarize these three goals without contextualizing the *bewindhebbers* participating, De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 448.

²⁵⁵ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*, 147.

²⁵⁶ See Section 3.2; Indeed, the Commission for "Redres" pored over the company's records of the so-called "colonies debate" since its inception, with Jan Pietersz. Coen's first memoranda urging the Heren to invest in a colonial infrastructure, Jan Pietersz. Coen to the Heren XVII, 30 November 1615, NA 1.10.48 Inv. Nr. 4 [unfoliated].

²⁵⁷ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*, 150.

the VOC.²⁵⁸

Like Child, Van Beuningen drew his proposals from the companies' history of negotiations and mutual observation. But the energetic *bewindhebber* sought to push his organization in the opposite direction of Child's colonial aspirations. In such peace times as the early 1680s, Van Beuningen argued, the VOC must strive to reduce its military costs, "following the example" of the English Company. Van Beuningen extolled the successes of the EIC's merchant profile, focusing on reducing unnecessary charges, and on the efficiency of English shipping, and their reduction of "unnecessary days in port."²⁵⁹ In subsequent memoranda to the company, Van Beuningen moved the historical relationship with the EIC even closer to the core of his reasoning. Reflecting on the inter-company debates of the previous four decades, Van Beuningen asked whether the supposed commercial "advantages" derived from the VOC's ballooning expenditures on the military installations, ships, and manpower of the "conqueror" had actually proven their value.²⁶⁰ During the same period, and within the same regions, the EIC had invested a comparatively miniscule amount in military and colonial infrastructure. However, Van Beuningen urged, even "without those advantages" the EIC had nonetheless developed a "far greater distribution" of trade.²⁶¹ His own Dutch Company should revise its approach to the East Indies trade in accordance with the English example, Van Beuningen concluded, "reducing the costs" of colonial administration and focusing on "increasing the profits" of commerce.²⁶²

Rather than heeding the commission's conclusions, and internalizing the lessons from the prior inter-company relationship to shed the burdens of the colonist in favor of the profits of the merchant, the Amsterdam *bewindhebbers* decided to take the company in the direction that Child had steered the EIC. The *Heren's* solution to the mounting unfavorable trends of the East Indies

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ Coenraad van Beuningen to Johannes Hudde, 27 May 1688, NA 1.10.48 Inv. Nr. 5 [unfoliated].

²⁶⁰ Considerations of Coenraad van Beuningen, [undated], NA 1.10.48 Inv. Nr. 5 [unfoliated].

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *Ibid.*

trade was to further expand the exact colonial policies, which Child sought to emulate at Bombay and Madras. The VOC had long maintained toll and pass systems around Batavia. But with their intra-Asian commercial model in tatters, the *Heren* now sought out new sources of income that would be more consistent and not reliant upon the vicissitudes of commodities pricing. Around their central hub in Southeast Asia, the *Heren* and the *Raad* began to impose a tax and pass regime governing access to, and trade within, the key commercial arteries and harbors of the greater Malay Archipelago.²⁶³ Exerting control over the hundreds of island chains throughout this complex southeastern corner of the Indian Ocean required an enormous increase in manpower. Thus, by 1720, the VOC doubled the number of employees annually dispatched from the Netherlands to Asia during the mid-seventeenth century.²⁶⁴ This, of course, only added to the VOC's ballooning deficit, initiated by the colonial ambitions of Maetsuycker and Van Goes, as well as by Speelman's ravenous military campaigns. While the Japanese circuit of specie and consumption had continued, the VOC could service its debts in Asia, which by 1681 reached nearly 7.75 million guilders. But by 1690, the VOC owed non-European brokers more than 11 million guilders.²⁶⁵ Even with the admittedly rudimentary and incomplete financial accounting of the *Raad* and the *Heren*, economic historians argue that from the 1680s, on through the eighteenth century, the VOC operated at a tremendous net loss, estimated to be at least one million guilders per annum.²⁶⁶

5.6 Conclusion

The 1680s witnessed the unraveling of the inter-company relationship that had consistently shaped the East Indies trade since the middle of the seventeenth century. Banten, the issue that had first ignited enduring debates between the companies in the 1650s, served as the

²⁶³ De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 443-447.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 437.

²⁶⁵ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC*, 206.

²⁶⁶ De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 435.

primary conduit for this final wave of company negotiations. And the arguments in which EIC and VOC leaders engaged encapsulated fundamental changes within both companies. First seeking to bolster their operations as a peaceful merchant organization to compete against the Dutch in Southeast Asia, new Governor Josiah Child and the Committees would ultimately abandon this plan to invest in colonial aspirations in South Asia. Through the same negotiations, we can also track fundamental changes in the VOC's history, as the *Heren* and the *Raad* refocused on their core business in Southeast Asia and brought the internal "colony debate" to a conclusion.

Historians have generated a well-developed literature for this period in both companies' histories, linking the late-seventeenth-century shifts in the English and Dutch East Indies trade to the greater historiography of the development of empire, nation-states, and capitalism. However, scholars have approached this history almost exclusively from nationalized perspectives, overlooking the powerful role of the inter-company relationship in these historical processes. As this chapter has shown, the legacy of the arguments and negotiations that linked both companies from 1652 through 1685, deeply influenced the initiatives introduced in the late 1680s. The VOC's claims of conquest and sovereignty rang through the Committees' own plans for the EIC presidency system. And one model of trade and governance that drove Van Beuningen's Commission of Redress was based in the EIC merchant's rights of free access to trade. In building their future strategies and institutional structures, both companies relied upon the arguments that the EIC and VOC officials had refined in more than three decades of negotiations that linked Amsterdam, London, Banten, and Surat in a common circuit of discourse.

CONCLUSION

The questions at the core of this dissertation were inspired by a desire to understand the history of our complex, rapidly changing, global society. Specifically, this dissertation seeks to explore the historical role of multinational corporations in global governance. Combining social scientific approaches with the methods and historiography of early modern history, this study examines how the ideas and institutions of political economy developed in global corporate communities of the past.

The preceding chapters argue that, at the very birth of “Westphalian” state sovereignty and international relations, the English and Dutch East India Companies developed a shared system of governance, commerce, and law, which existed independent of, but related to, the direct authority of European states. Dominant historical narratives understand the policies of the seventeenth-century East India Companies as having been driven by the politics of Europe. The evidence and arguments put forth in this dissertation contradict this perspective, demonstrating instead that the debates, strategies, and operations generated between the two companies actually exerted significant influence over key moments in the evolution of the European international system. Not always aligned with the agendas of their home states, the companies frequently shared a perspective on the European wars, treaty negotiations, and political debates of the seventeenth century.

The structure of the dissertation, itself, offers an argument presenting an alternative approach to the dominant, linear historiographical narrative, which recognizes consistent competition between the VOC and its weaker English sibling. The study periodizes the relationship between the companies, recognizing two distinct eras. Chapter 1 examines how, between the late sixteenth century and 1650, the companies’ dealings were characterized by strong state control and the lack of any sustained debate or communication between company officials. The Anglo-Dutch “union” of East India interests in 1619, in fact, confirmed the

divergent ideologies, constitutions, and commercial and political capabilities that guided the trade of the two organizations. Chapter 1 further argues that the 1623 “Amboyna” crisis inaugurated a quarter-century of alienation between the companies.

The 1650s marked a watershed in this relationship. In the early years of that decade, a tight-knit group of prominent overseas merchants, possessing extensive experience with and having closely studied Dutch East and West India ventures, took control of the leadership of the EIC. Chapter 2 argues that these new Committees initiated a key turning point in the companies’ relationship. They set in motion a strategy to link the English and Dutch East India Companies in direct negotiation, to establish permanent communication between the *Heren* and the Committees, and to restructure the EIC in the constitutional and operational image of the VOC. When the *Heren* responded in kind, they catalyzed a new relationship between the two companies.

The next three chapters trace the thirty-year history of this relationship, mapping the development of a common discourse over the shared rights of the companies under the law of nations; the growing priority with which each company observed, emulated, and translated the other’s policies and practices; and the assembly of a common set of institutions and goals for the East Indies trade. While both Companies also engaged with the Portuguese, Danish, and French East India organizations, EIC and VOC officials actively distinguished these relationships from the intellectual and programmatic dynamics between their companies. Moments of conflict in the East Indies, as well as inter-company summits and international treaty processes in Europe, served as critical points of negotiation between the companies. The reactions of EIC and VOC officials to, and participation in, these events signaled a common goal to gain greater autonomy from European state politics in the management of the East Indies trade.

The robust debates that linked the two companies ended once the Committees closely aligned their arguments for expansion with those advanced by the VOC. In 1685, once the EIC

sought the rights of sovereign jurisdiction at Banten and Bombay, the Committees could no longer contend against the legitimacy of the VOC's claims for the same. Thus, they impugned the Dutch, not for wrongfully claiming sovereign rights, but for claiming a corrupted form of sovereignty. With this turn, the debate collapsed. But the institutions and arguments at the core of the companies' relationship since the 1650s, echoed powerfully through significant internal efforts to reorganize both companies.

Drawing together disparate methodologies, the dissertation employs approaches from early modern intellectual, political, and legal history, as well as New Institutional Economics. In addition, the project relies upon the historical conceptualization of legal pluralism, and the emerging constructs of global organizational studies and political science. The dissertation draws together these approaches in order to assess a wide range of archival sources and to position its arguments historiographically. In its resulting approaches and conclusions, the project contributes interventions to these methodological fields.

Focusing on the relationship between the companies, rather than on the EIC and the VOC, individually, the study introduces a new perspective to the literature of the East India Companies, which is still dominated by nationalized historical perspectives. While acknowledging the important relationships that both companies maintained with other European and non-European organizations, the dissertation concentrates on the arguments, institutions, and priorities that formed a dynamic between the EIC and the VOC, which officials of both companies explicitly distinguished from their dealings with other rivals and partners. Taking this perspective, major policy shifts, violent campaigns, and commercial decisions no longer appear as clear edicts from the European boardroom, or state council chamber. Rather, they can be recognized as products of a relationship that entwined the companies, both in Europe and in Asia. The preceding chapters further analyze how key moments in the histories of both companies, as

well as significant events in English, Dutch, and European political history, were deeply affected by this transoceanic, inter-company system.

In their analysis of the key early modern political ideas of commerce and governance, intellectual historians continue to map the evolution of political thought through the works of major theorists, and political economy remains a concept largely employed to conceptualize the ideologies of commerce and politics within competing states. This study considered the working documents of merchants, companies, and state officials as sources through which to understand the functioning principles that guided the relationship between two global corporations. It develops an understanding of how corporate competition, itself, could generate political economy that rivaled, and deeply affected, the formation of state politics and markets.

The debates explored here have also relied heavily on the political thought of Grotius, as well as the theorists with whom he engaged (particularly Selden and Vitoria). During the past two decades, political historians, including Van Ittersum, Borschberg, and Tuck, have developed powerful approaches for contextualizing Grotius's influential theories in the context of his employment with the VOC and the limitations of his actual knowledge of the East Indies trade.¹ Those studies have initiated important reorientations in the interpretation of Grotius's works. This dissertation moves one step further, demonstrating how EIC and VOC officials debated competing interpretations of Grotian theories, and how these interpretations evolved over forty years of competition and emulation in the East Indies trade.

In addition to the methods of intellectual and political historians, the arguments at the core of this dissertation also engage with the models of economic historians. New Institutional Economics provides conceptual scaffolding for capitalist systems of exchange, finance, and law. And recent efforts have developed effective lenses through which to assess the complexity of cross-cultural trade in the early modern period. These studies, however, tend to focus on a single

¹ Van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle*; Borschberg, "Grotius, Maritime Intra-Asian Trade and the Portuguese Estado da Índia;" Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, particularly 78-108.

religious diaspora, family network, or commercial community, and to trace that organization's engagement with other cultures and institutions.² The questions driving this dissertation focus on a corporate community that was defined by an array of cultural norms, religious practices, and social affiliations. The resulting arguments thus contribute a model for understanding how different early modern corporations could create a community, which integrated the instructions of its constituents and their partners into a common discourse of law, commerce, and governance.

Along with theories of political argument and knowledge transference, as well as the conceptual structures of institutions, the dissertation drew significant inspiration from the field of legal pluralism. One of the path-breaking scholars in this field, Lauren Benton, has crafted an influential approach, focusing on the interactions between overlapping global legal regimes, understood as "patterns of structuring multiple legal authorities,"³ which advanced competing imperial and national sovereignties.⁴ This approach conceptualizes the early modern world as a complex mosaic of jurisdictions, the sovereignties of which were in constant flux. As global regimes, themselves, the English and Dutch East India Companies, and corporations in general, fit quite well into this model.⁵

However, the dissertation's analysis of the relationship between the two companies adds a critical new level of complexity to this approach, arguing that the Anglo-Dutch corporate community can be envisioned as a global organization unto itself. Built upon the shared political structures, business models, and geographic reach of the companies, this inter-company organization can be understood as floating above the crisscrossing local, national, and imperial jurisdictions of the early modern world. Driven by the companies' debates, partnerships, and

² Among them, Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, particularly 177-223; Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*, particularly 166-201.

³ Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, 3.

⁴ Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, 1-39; Ross and Stern, "Reconstructing Early Modern Notions of Legal Pluralism," 109-142; Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," 48-71.

⁵ Philip Stern, "'Bundles of Hyphens': Corporations as Legal Communities in the Early Modern British Empire," in *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500-1850*, edited by Richard Ross and Lauren Benton (New York: NYU Press, 2013), 21-48.

strategies—occurring simultaneously across the Indian Ocean World, Europe, and the Atlantic—this organization developed in relationship with, but separate from state regimes. While achieving this status, it injected significant influence into the formation of national and imperial concepts of sovereignty and commerce.

Tracing these discussions and arguments across sprawling networks of communication and governance required a new approach to archival work, and significant exploration of, and training in, the developing fields of digital humanities and database design. Victoria Szabo has generated compelling methods for the adaptation of relational database and data visualization technology—traditionally reserved for quantitative and scientific research—to the complex archival work of international historical projects.⁶ While humanist fields still struggle to reconcile the advancement of digital projects with the established demands of scholarly output, this project has sought to offer a demonstration of how a digital humanities project and traditional historical scholarship can work in service to each other. Utilizing the cutting-edge technologies of DevonThink software, the author architected a database to organize the historical research and facilitate the formation of the arguments at the core of this dissertation. Increasing trends of digitization among archives has made historical documents and data far more accessible to historians across the globe. Now facing the challenge of navigating this volume of sources, and a wide array of cataloguing styles, however, historians will increasingly benefit from the use of powerful organizational tools emerging from relational database technology.

Beyond historical and digital methods, however, this dissertation also presents a strong case for historical study within the fields of contemporary international relations, multinational business, and organizational management. Leading exponents of realist foreign policy, perhaps most notably Henry Kissinger, still recognize the “uniqueness of European order,” initiated in

⁶ Victoria Szabo, “Transforming Art History Research with Database Analytics: Visualizing Art Markets,” *Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America*, Vol. 31, no. 2 (September 2012), 158-175.

1648 at Westphalia, and subsequently evolved into a “world order” of sovereign states.⁷ And scholars of foreign policy and business, alike, have reinforced this perspective, declaring the second decade of the twenty-first century a period of resurging “deglobalization,” ushering in a return of the supremacy of national frameworks for economy and politics.⁸

The efficacy of international organizations like the U.N. and the W.T.O. may very well face increasing challenges, but there is significant debate over how best to conceptualize the key brokers of institutional change, political and economic governance, and international law. In fact, leading scholar of international relations, Anne-Marie Slaughter, has recently joined with historians of political thought to call for a departure from the state-centered “Westphalian” model of politics.⁹ Social scientists have responded, as well, generating networked models of governance and influence, which highlight the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) as critical non-state actors in global political economy.¹⁰

While the dissertation does not equate the debates over the contemporary world with the dynamics of the seventeenth-century East Indies trade, it does suggest a significant value for the study of history, and the application of historical methods, among scholars of global business and

⁷ Kissinger, *World Order*, 11-40.

⁸ Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (London: Zed, 2004); Pieter A.G. van Bergeijk, *On the Brink of Deglobalization: An Alternative Perspective on the Causes of the World Trade Collapse* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2010); Joseph Nye, “Military Deglobalization?,” *Foreign Policy* 112 (Jan/Feb 2001), 82-83; In a recent interview, leading business historian, Geoffrey Jones, declared that “we are in a deglobalization period,” Sapna Agarwal, “We are in a deglobalization period: Business Historian Geoffrey G. Jones,” *Live Mint*, February 26, 2017, accessed February 26, 2017, <http://www.livemint.com/Companies/tKamdGDvvyCt8Smn39TQMK/We-are-in-a-deglobalization-period-Business-historian-Geoff.html>.

⁹ Slaughter, *The Network and the Web*; Keene fundamentally questioned the historical existence of this order, Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society*; At the turn of the century, a number of prominent theoretical studies developed conceptual frameworks for a new twenty-first-century world order, Lyons and Mastanduno, eds., *Beyond Westphalia? State Sovereignty and International Intervention*; David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); John Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays in International Internationalization* (London Routledge, 1998).

¹⁰ Büthe and Mattli, *The New Global Rulers*; Saskia Sassen has also developed a theory tracing how our contemporary global system still operates on institutions originally developed within, and for, the nation-state, Saskia Sassen: *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), particularly 401-424; Sassen has since pivoted to focus on issues similar to those discussed by Büthe and Mattli, theorizing the power of MNCs in global order: Sassen, *Losing Control?: Sovereignty in the Age of Globalization*.

politics. In business scholarship, investigations of the role of corporations in global economy are dominated by case studies of contemporary firms and events, and they favor quantitative analysis of profitability, firm control, and market leverage. This has produced a binary understanding of competitive and collaborative relationships between institutions,¹¹ which obscures the complexity and fluidity of the global economy. Focused largely on economic outcome, much of this research cannot capture the nuanced strategies of MNCs, synchronizing political policy with economic demands and cross-cultural encounter.

Recently, however, business ecosystems theorists have opened new perspectives on the inter-institutional relationships between firms, and the blending of competitive and cooperative strategy.¹² Linking the study of business with the increasing engagement between Eastern and Western cultures, an important leader in this conversation, Ming-Jer Chen, has called for a new focus on the importance of cross-cultural dynamics in organization studies.¹³ Chen joins a growing chorus of scholars who have pushed for the greater intervention of qualitative analysis in studies of organizational management, ecosystems theory, and corporate strategy. History—a field with social scientific methodologies that, nonetheless, prioritizes complex contextual analysis—has begun to attract business scholars searching for alternative perspectives on the challenges of global strategic management.¹⁴

¹¹ Ming-Jer Chen and Danny Miller provide an excellent overview of this voluminous, core literature of organization studies, Ming-Jer Chen and Danny Miller, “Reconceptualizing Competitive Dynamics: A Multidimensional Framework,” *Strategic Management Journal* (2015) 36, 758-775.

¹² *Ibid.*; Gideon Markman, Peter Gianiodis, and Ann Buchholtz, “Factor-Market Rivalry,” *Academy of Management Review* 34, no. 3 (2009), 423-441; Ranjay Gulati, et al., “Meta-Organization Design: Rethinking Design in Interorganizational and Community Contexts,” *Strategic Management Journal* 33 (2012), 571-576; Rahul Kapoor and Jun Mahn Lee, “Coordinating and Competing in Ecosystems: How Organizational Forms Shape New Technology Investments,” *Strategic Management Journal* 34 (2013), 274-296.

¹³ Ming-Jer Chen, “Becoming Ambicultural: A Personal Quest, and Aspiration for Organizations,” *Academy of Management Review* 39 (2014): 119-137.

¹⁴ Alfred Kieser, “Why Organization Theory Needs Historical Analyses – and How This Should be Performed,” *Organization Science* 5 (1994), 608–620; M.N. Zald, “Organization Studies as Scientific and Humanistic Enterprise: Toward a Reconceptualization of the Foundations of the Field,” *Organization Science* 4 (1993), 513–28; Peter Clark & Michael Rowlinson, “The Treatment of History in Organization Studies: Towards an ‘Historic Turn’?,” *Business History* 46, no. 3 (2004), 331-352.

This dissertation provides historical depth to dynamics understood as “new” or “emerging” in the contemporary world. It demonstrates that complex company-state relations and fluid corporate strategy were just as prominent in emerging seventeenth-century global systems as they are critical elements of today’s global economy. The forensic analysis of historical records also allows historians to recognize organizational actors’ complex understanding of the relationship between competition and collaboration; to introduce new models and observations of corporate behavior in complex institutional ecosystems; and to develop a more nuanced understanding of cross-cultural encounter. In a world in which the balance of power increasingly sways away from the West, cross-cultural engagement remains a key priority and a central challenge within global business and politics. In Europe, and across the Indian Ocean basin, the legacy—physical, institutional, and intellectual—of the East India Companies’ seventeenth-century relationship remains,¹⁵ making this history, itself, critical to a better understanding of our world.

¹⁵ A central tenet of postcolonial studies, exemplified in Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Ritu Birla, *Stages of Capital: Law, Culture, and Market Governance in Late Colonial India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009); Arjun Appadurai, ed., *Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Ann Stoler, *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra’s Plantation Belt, 1870-1979* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Ann Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

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BIOGRAPHY

Andrew Van Horn Ruoss was born in the United States in 1987. After graduating from the Tatnall School in Delaware, he attended Middlebury College, from which he earned a B.A. in History with a minor in Germanic Languages. At Middlebury, he was awarded the Osher Senior Thesis Prize for the best senior thesis in History. In 2014, he earned his M.A. in History from Duke University. During his dissertation research and writing, he was supported by grants and fellowships from the Social Science Research Council, the Fulbright Commission, the Mellon Foundation, the North American Conference on British Studies, the Council for European Studies, and the Duke University Graduate School.