From Camp to Port: Mughal Warfare and the economy of Coromandel, 1682-1707

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Conclusion

Aurangzeb’s southern campaigns: Moment of transformation

The key to Mughal success was the integration of the booming littorals with the heartland of the empire. This dissertation focuses on the economic impact of the last great Mughal campaign for expansion, which exemplifies the coast–interior connection of the Mughal Empire: Aurangzeb’s southern campaigns. Aurangzeb’s experience of serving twice as an administrator in the Deccan played a substantial part in his decision as a ruler to annex Golconda, Bijapur and the Konkan, with their rich agriculture and their Indian Ocean trading conduits. Gujarat, with its principal port Surat, had been a part of the Mughal Empire since the 1570s, and, as explained in the introductory chapter, annexation of Golconda would have given the Mughals access to an overland commercial axis which connected two of the major ports in the seventeenth–century Indian Ocean world, Surat and Masulipatnam, via Hyderabad. Had Aurangzeb succeeded, the southern Mughal campaigns under him would have rated as a spectacular high point in Mughal history. The Mughals had limited success in defeating the Marathas, and consolidation of Mughal authority in Golconda remained weak after its annexation into the Mughal Empire. However, the 25 years of Mughal military campaigns in the Deccan and South India were not marked by decline. As Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 show, there were differences in the impact of the wars in northern, central and southern Coromandel. This dissertation concludes that Aurangzeb’s southern campaigns marked a moment of transformation rather than decline.

Result of the campaigns: Reorientation of economic centres in Coromandel

Weakening of Masulipatnam as the entrepot of northern Coromandel

Part I developed the hypothesis that Masulipatnam was highly sensitive to imperial crisis and asserted that this hypothesis was confirmed in the context of Aurangzeb’s southern campaigns. This assertion was evidenced in Part II, Chapter 4. The Masulipatnam–Hyderabad–Surat axis of commercial operations was weakened by not only recurring Mughal and Maratha military operations in the west of the Deccan, but also a decline in Mughal administrative control over the province of Golconda after 1700.

VOC correspondence during the Mughal wars reveals that this effect could be felt from the early 1680s onwards through phenomena such as the reluctance of some of the Persian nobility in Golconda to send their merchandise to Persia via Surat because the region to the west of Golconda had been affected by the wars. By 1688, Dutch reports spoke of the mass depopulation in the province of Golconda and the flight of merchants from Masulipatnam that the region had experienced due to the Mughal siege and subsequent annexation. However, the firman granted by Aurangzeb to the VOC revealed Mughal efforts to resettle the war–devastated lands of northern Coromandel. As noted in Chapter 4, John F. Richards’ analysis of revenue administration in Mughal Golconda showed that in the 1690s, particularly from 1692 to 1697, the Mughals successfully restored ties of the state administration with the fertile parts of Telangana and worked the salt mines near the coast in Masulipatnam. The

province remained an important source of grains to Aurangzeb's camp in the west of the Deccan and managed to finance its own administration.

But the connections which the Mughals established between Hyderabad and the deltas in northern Coromandel were fragile and susceptible to being snapped the very moment any political unrest broke out. This became apparent after 1700 when a decline in public order and Mughal administrative control in Golconda coincided with attacks on the province by the Marathas and the Berads, and the success of bandits in closing off highways. VOC correspondence seems to concur with this view of deterioration in the fortunes of Golconda–Masulipatnam. Their reports point out that in the early eighteenth century caravans encountered severe difficulties when attempting to traverse along the Surat–Hyderabad–Masulipatnam axis due to disturbances in the region to the west of Golconda and the operations of Pappadu and Riza Khan. VOC directors in Masulipatnam warned their successors of the volatile conditions in Golconda due to a lack of central rule that had been affecting VOC trade, and bemoaned Aurangzeb's preoccupation with wars in the west of the Deccan when he could have been strengthening Mughal control over Golconda–Masulipatnam.

The textile industry of the Godavari delta was also affected by the weakening of Masulipatnam's overland axis. VOC correspondence shows that cotton became expensive because of an increase in transportation costs and general insecurity. When the Dutch speak of textile production in northern Coromandel post–1687, they mainly refer to their factories in Palakollu and Draksharama. Although the Dutch point to the presence of weaving population in Rajahmundry in the Godvari delta around 1707, we rarely come across Dutch surveys of weaving villages in the Godavari delta between 1687 and 1713. This is possible evidence for an increased VOC focus on acquiring control over textile production in Palakollu and Draksharama.

The changes in the role of Masulipatnam as a port – from primary exporter of textiles in the Indian Ocean to a port on the network of coastal trade in Coromandel – affected its stature as an entrepot in Bay of Bengal, and this trend was reflected in the decline of international arrivals and departures. Masulipatnam retrograded to a coastal centre that mainly traded with Bengal, Orissa and other parts of Coromandel, especially Madras. Chapter 2 demonstrated that Pulicat underwent a similar process after the decline of Vijayanagara, which was marked by a loss of eminence in the Indian Ocean and survival as a coastal centre. In other words, Masulipatnam was no longer an entrepot that connected the subcontinent to the ocean, but a port on the network of coastal trade between Coromandel and Bengal. Another feature of this reorientation in Masulipatnam's fortunes was the migration of big merchants from the port. Persian shipowners began to leave in the 1680s, and in the same period Armenian merchants moved to Madras.

As explained in the introductory chapter, by the end of the southern campaigns, both Aurangzeb and the VOC director at Masulipatnam were writing about the damage the wars

had caused. Their words conveyed the image of a region in severe distress; they spoke of the miserable condition of the peasantry, and of how political instability had made roads insecure and conducting commerce difficult.

A shift to the south in Coromandel

If Aurangzeb's Deccan campaigns debilitated the Masulipatnam–Hyderabad–Surat axis, they also caused another significant shift: the rise of the port cities of southern Coromandel. The siege of Gingee had caused disturbances in the textile–weaving hinterland of ports in central Coromandel, but economic connections in the Kaveri delta remained stable, at least in comparison to the north.

In terms of transformation, the Mughal wars marked the genesis of a significant process in Coromandel: a shift to the south. This refers to the rise of southern port cities, which became magnets attracting economic produce for export around the Indian Ocean. Commodity flows along the Nagapatnam–Malabar–Ceylon axis remained more stable and lesser affected by the wars compared to Masulipatnam. The production line of textiles remained stable in southern Coromandel compared to the north during the Mughal campaigns because of two reasons. One, as Dutch sources point out in Chapter 5, the Kaveri delta continued to be a producer of textiles and the VOC's source of cotton, the dry south–eastern part of Tamil Nadu in Tirunelveli and Madurai, was way beyond the radius of Mughal military action. Two, the low incidence of Mughal campaigns in the Kaveri delta during the 1690s compared to central Coromandel along with good rice harvests helped the VOC (and other textile merchants) keep weavers tied to the villages. So, the threat of vulnerability from wars was less compared to the north. Dutch trade with Malabar and Ceylon also persisted during the decades of war. Local Mughal officials were involved in the trade with these regions, while indigenous merchants from Porto Novo and Nagore were active in the trade with South–East Asia. All of this would not have been possible without the good rice harvests that provided food security to weaving groups and traders in the Kaveri delta and helped the region remain a rice–surplus zone during the wars. The availability of rice induced people to move from northern and central Coromandel to the Kaveri delta during the 1680s and 1690s. The rise of the port cities of southern Coromandel was a very significant effect of Aurangzeb's campaigns.

Part I presented the hypothesis that during their campaigns in the Deccan and South India the Mughals attempted to incorporate the European settlements in the workings of the empire for the purposes of supporting military operations. Although European settlements could also serve as havens for non–combatants fleeing the ruination caused by wars, the settlements could not escape the negative impact of wars because their network of commodity flows was reliant on the port's overland connections. Despite prices of textiles remaining high during wars, Nagapatnam would fare better than regions to its north because of greater food security and connections with Malabar and Ceylon. Chapter 5 demonstrates that this hypothesis holds good in the context of Aurangzeb's southern campaigns.

Aurangzeb's reinstatement of the VOC and the EIC in central Coromandel revealed the demands of his southern campaigns. As sources of provisions, the European ports along this stretch of coast were important for Mughal success, and Chapter 5 points out that both the Dutch and the English provided the Mughals with military assistance during the siege of Gingee.

The introductory chapter examines John F. Richards' argument that the rise of Pulicat, Madras and Nagapatnam was associated with the assurance of security during and after Aurangzeb's southern campaigns: non–combatants were attracted by the protection that these walled European enclaves could offer in times of unrest. This dissertation argues that this feature was by no means unique, and Part I shows that fort towns often combined their defensive function with a commercial, market function – as testified to by the suffix *kottai* for towns in Tamil Nadu and the European settlements in Coromandel that had been allowed to fortify themselves since the early seventeenth century. Part I also shows that the weavers saw the VOC as a new patron among the many foreign and indigenous merchant groups who operated in South India.

Chapter 5 shows how the siege of Gingee and the accompanying unrest in central Coromandel adversely affected the hinterland of ports such as Pulicat and Sadraspatnam. Textile production in this region remained irregular because both ports found it difficult to supply cloth to Nagapatnam. Villages to the west and south–west of Pulicat supplied textiles to several ports in central Coromandel: Pulicat, Madras, San Thomé and Sadraspatnam. The VOC were aware that if this producing hinterland was threatened by war and political instability, the ports would find it difficult to act as outlets for locally produced cloth. The Dutch trading company concluded after the siege of Gingee that the hinterland of ports in central Coromandel had been put to waste by the wars and that it would take a long time for the economic centres in this region to recover from the effects of war. It is therefore difficult to establish a causal connection between Aurangzeb's southern campaigns and the rise of European enclaves, at least for Pulicat, in the eighteenth century.

Notwithstanding a rise in prices of textiles, as bemoaned by the VOC, which was common to Masulipatnam, Pulicat and Nagapatnam during the 1690s and 1700s, it is extremely tricky to speak of the region as a whole considering the differences in the impact of Aurangzeb's southern campaigns across northern, central and southern Coromandel. In this context, we encounter an extensive web of connections (east–west and north–south) of varying scales. In terms of east–west connections, the long–term aftermath of the campaigns told most on Masulipatnam, a regional entrepot, whose maritime–overland links were weakened by wars and political instability, especially after 1700, but the textile industry could function on a reduced scale. Pulicat, as a Dutch relay station of central Coromandel, was put to waste by the siege of Gingee and found it very hard to provide a steady output of textiles during the 1690s. Nagapatnam's east–west connections– supplying textiles for the maritime

trade of the VOC and commerce with Malabar – remained largely unaffected by the campaigns.

The picture becomes more vibrant if we look at the north–south connections in Coromandel. Firstly, coastal trading networks from Orissa to Ceylon remained resilient during the southern campaigns; as we have noted in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, coastal crafts plied regularly between Orissa, Masulipatnam and Madras, and between the Kaveri delta and Ceylon. The coastal trade between Orissa, northern Coromandel and central Coromandel, we may argue, paralleled the south–eastern movement of Mughal armies from the west of the Deccan to central Coromandel in the late seventeenth century. Although coastal trade, in general, withstood the aleatoric lifecycles of ports in Coromandel, its importance and propensity to produce profits would have increased manifold in a time when the presence of Mughal armies and Aurangzeb's camp created demand for food products among both combatants and non–combatants. Secondly, we must also consider the north–south connections that the Mughals tried to establish by linking the heartland of the empire with the coasts, as reflected in the terms at which Aurangzeb reinstated the VOC in Masulipatnam and Pulicat. More dynamic was the role of Mughal commanders like Daud Khan Panni who sought to counter the effects of the siege of Gingee in central Coromandel and strengthen his military–fiscal resources by leasing out ports to European companies (in our case the VOC) to organize textile production. As we have noted in Chapter 5, the Hyderabad Karnatik (which corresponded with a large part of central Coromandel) became a separate revenue unit following the conquest of Golconda and the revenue collected was to be directly transported to Aurangabad in the west of the Deccan. Daud Khan Panni's active role in trying to promote maritime commerce in central Coromandel comes into sharp relief in the light of this administrative arrangement as well as his intentions to develop Arcot as an independent state after the death of Aurangzeb. Thirdly, while in the north the VOC strove to acquire greater control over textile production at centres like Palakollu and Draksharama but did not explore new avenues for expanding investment, they tried to be more assertive in the south by organizing new markets– although success in such efforts was limited. So, the picture was quite varied from the north to the south.

Chapters 4 and 5 pointed out that during Aurangzeb's southern campaigns agriculture suffered from both natural and man–made factors. Given the varied impact that the southern campaigns had on agriculture across the littoral, it is difficult to speak of a general climate crisis in Coromandel in the late seventeenth century despite poor monsoons on multiple occasions. As we had noted in the introduction to the thesis, a crucial factor was the ability or otherwise of states and societies to adjust to vagaries of climate. In the context of northern Coromandel, except 1685–1687 when an El Nino episode coincided with Mughal siege of Golconda, we do not find large–scale depopulation caused by poor monsoons and famines. In fact, the establishment of Mughal rule restored agricultural production in the province which helped Hyderabad supply grains to Aurangzeb's camp in the 1690s. Agricultural productivity dwindled in Golconda after 1700 more due to a decline in public order causing

an increase in Maratha attacks than due to the vagaries of monsoon. In central Coromandel, agriculture was mainly affected by Mughal–Maratha clashes during the siege of Gingee (1689–1698) rather than poor monsoons. By 1692–1693 the cultivated area had significantly shrunk due to the movement of troops and often stocks of rice coming from inland villages to the central Coromandel ports were seized by the Mughals and Marathas. This created a shortage of food in the region. To secure food and fodder, the Mughals depended on a long and vulnerable supply line from the north; they raided the Kaveri delta thrice (1691, 1694 and 1697) for supplies and bought provisions that were brought to central Coromandel ports (Pulicat and Madras) by coastal crafts from Bengal and Orissa. Finally, food security remained relatively high in southern Coromandel (the Kaveri delta and Tanjore) compared to northern Coromandel. The region was a source of food grains for the Mughals and merchants from the north in the 1690s, and it attracted migrants from the north. During the period that this dissertation has studied, southern Coromandel experienced poor rainfall thrice– 1698, 1705 and 1710. However, on none of these occasions the VOC reported depopulation in the Kaveri delta due to starvation. The only occasion when they did so was during a rebellion in Tanjore in 1710 when peasants had died and lands could not be cultivated. So, most probably during poor monsoons southern Coromandel survived on stocks of rice from previous years.

Thus, even in seasons of poor monsoon during Aurangzeb's southern campigns the long coastline of Coromandel ensured food security by transporting food grains from surplus to deficit regions (mostly from southern Coromandel to northern Coromandel) and by means of the coastal trade in provisions from Bengal and Orissa to Coromandel, especially for the Mughal army during the siege of Gingee. We may fairly safely assume that the two monsoons of the Coromandel Coast also perhaps helped in preventing a total failure of rains in a year. In this regard we may point out, on the basis of evidence from the VOC correspondence in Chapters 4 and 5, that the years of poor monsoon in northern Coromandel (1693 and 1695) did not coincide with the years of poor monsoon in southern Coromandel (1698, 1705 and 1708). So, despite the reduction in agricultural area caused by Maratha attacks in northern Coromandel after 1700 and in central Coromandel caused by movement of troops during the siege of Gingee, and poor monsoons on a few occasions, it is tricky to speak of a general crisis in climate in Coromandel during Aurangzeb's southern campigns– except in 1685–1687 when the failure of rains was followed by the Mughal siege of Golconda, a terrible famine and flood.

In the context of the performance of the VOC, it would be worthwhile to revisit the idea of a decline in its position in Coromandel that begun in the late seventeenth century. As we had discussed in the section on historiography in the introduction to this dissertation, Sinnappah Arasaratnam, George Winius and Markus Vink speak of a decline of the VOC mainly because of two reasons: one, the destabilising effects of the Mughal wars on the VOC's export and import trade in Coromandel; and two, changes in consumer tastes in Europe that transformed the VOC from a spice merchant to a cloth merchant. While European markets developed a craze for Indian textiles, Japan, the primary source of bullions in Asia that the VOC needed for the textile trade of Coromandel, increasingly restricted the outflow of gold

and silver in the second half of the eighteenth century. So, the company had to invest the bullions in the best manner possible and although it is not clear the role that Aurangzeb's southern campaigns had played in shaping their decisions, by the eighteenth century the VOC decided to prioritise Bengal (another major producer of textiles) over Coromandel in its South Asian operations.

Contrary to this, Jos Gommans (also discussed in the historiography section of the introduction) argues it is more interesting to explain the why of VOC's continuity in Coromandel in the eighteenth century, rather than its decline. Despite the eighteenth century being marked by more occurences of El Nino with failure of rains and more political instability compared to the preceding century, the Dutch miracle in Coromandel was a result of two reasons: one, the VOC acquired control over production process of textiles across Coromandel, especially in villages whose ownership they had been effectively conferred– Palakollu, Contera, Draksharama, Golepalam and Godavaram in northern Coromandel– and a number of villages around Nagapatnam; and two, the good relations that the VOC forged with portfolio–capitalists like Shaikh Abd al–Qadir on the Pearl Fisheries Coast who helped the Dutch tide over difficult times like wars and political instability. While the VOC lost control over the production process in the north in the eighteenth century, it acquired control over the same in the south thanks to rivalries between the kingdoms of Tanjore, Madurai and Ramnad.

In this respect, as we have noted in Chapter 4, the performance of the VOC in Palakollu and Draksharama pointed out the extent to which they could succeed in controlling the production of textiles in the 1690s and 1700s. The Dutch had little control over external factors like prices of cotton (dependent on agricultural conditions in cotton growing areas and general security or the lack of it along routes of transport) and public order, but this dissertation concludes that they were reasonably successful in controlling internal factors like organising textile production. Firstly, this was reflected in the population census from Golepalam in 1692 which showed how the VOC had kept different occupational groups tied to the village. Secondly, the comparatively better performance of Draksharama in relation to Palakollu was mainly due to the more number of weavers who resided there. Thirdly, although the Dutch could not explore new avenues of investing in textile production in northern Coromandel in the late seventeenth century and had to encounter an increasingly unstable political milieu after 1700, their continued operations from Palakollu and Draksharama demonstrated that the real problem with northern Coromandel's textile industry was not a reduction in its vitality, but poor management of the region by the Mughals. However, as we had noted in Chapter 4, the share of northern Coromandel in VOC's export trade of textiles from Coromandel did indeed lessen in the early eighteenth century. In this respect, we can at least point to the years 1711 and 1712 when northern Coromandel's share of the textiles exported from Coromandel stood at 21 per cent and 18 per cent respectively. Finally, contrary to Arasaratnam's formulation, there was not a general decline of VOC factories in Coromandel. Although Pulicat and its hinterland had been devastated by

the siege of Gingee, Mughal wars and political instability had been less disruptive in southern Coromandel, where the resilience of Nagapatnam's maritime–overland connections question the idea of a general decline of VOC factories in Coromandel.

In his study of the eighteenth–century South Indian economy focusing on the textile industry, Prasannan Parthasarathi argues that weavers enjoyed a good degree of autonomy and had a strong position in the economic and political order of South India. The high demand for South Indian cloth (in the Indian Ocean and Europe) translated into a high demand for the services of weavers and placed them in a strong bargaining position vis–à–vis the textile merchants, European companies and states. Evidence for strong autonomy of weavers was reflected in their tendency to cancel contracts made with one European company by returning the advance they had been paid and entering into contract with another company for the lure of more money. As a result of this, the European companies had to match each other in terms of cash advances. Parthasarathi proffers evidence from the records of the EIC in this respect: in 1694, the EIC's textile merchants in Vishakhapatnam appealed to the company for advances of money to keep the weavers engaged in work, otherwise the VOC would employ them; and in 1697, the EIC's merchants in Madras argued in similar terms that weavers must be supplied with money if they had to be kept away from working for others. Migration was integral to survival strategies of weavers, especially during wars, droughts and famines, and the threat of migration was also an important bargaining point for weavers in their conflicts with merchants and states. Since weavers could lead to an increase in state revenues, they were welcomed by states throughout South India.[1]

In the context of this dissertation, evidence from the VOC archives corroborates the largely autonomous and strong position of weavers in the economy of South India. The threat of weavers responding to other buyers was present for the VOC from the early seventeenth century itself. To begin with, the VOC had induced weavers producing cloth for the markets in Java and Malaya to settle in Tirupapuliyur. As we have noted in Chapter 2, this threat was reflected in the terms of the contract that the Dutch entered with the Aravidu king: weavers and dyers who had agreed to weave and dye cloth for the VOC were obliged to do so and if they failed in this the Dutch factor in Pulicat could imprison them. The VOC were also aware of the threat of migration and so the contract had another clause which requested the king to return those workers who had run away from Pulicat to the Dutch. And, as we have noted in Chapter 3, the contracts that the VOC entered with weavers in villages of the Kaveri delta in the 1660s similarly prohibited weavers from weaving cloth for any other merchant and if they produced cloth for other merchants it would be forfeited by the VOC. This was mainly a reflection of the strong position of weavers who could always respond to other buyers if offered better pay; migration of weaving groups could also help ensure buoyancy and

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[1] Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*: 22, 26, 28–30.

strength of the textile industry, especially in times of war, as Chapter 5 points out with regard to the Kaveri delta in the 1690s.

Around 1800, Prasannan Parthasarathi argues, cotton cultivation in South India was largely concentrated in the interior, but the major weaving centres were located at the coast. The cotton trade went from its production centres in the Deccan to the weaving centres along the coastline of the Godavari and Krishna river deltas (Andhra Pradesh) and in the northern Tamil country. Cotton was carried by *banjaras* from its growing regions in the west of the Deccan to the Andhra Coast. Trade routes of cotton extended southwards from the Maratha country north of the Krishna and from the Raichur region through Mysore and Bellary (modern–day Karnataka) to Nellore (at the border between Andhra and Tamil country, produced textiles for South–East Asian markets, Chapter 2) and Walajapet, a major cotton market in central Coromandel. However, the southward trade from the Deccan to the northern Tamil country was bigger than its Andhra counterpart, as is evidenced by the forms of trade: it was not organised or financed by *banjaras*, but by large–scale merchants who resided in the Deccan. Further south from Madras and the Kaveri delta were the main centres of cotton cultivation in the Tamil country: Coimbatore (to the north–west of the Kaveri delta), Madurai, Ramnad, Dindigul and Tirunelveli. The last three of these centres supplied the south–eastern coast. Merchants from Tanjore annually bought cotton from here and transported it to Nagore.[2] From this information we can conclude that: one, the major connecting links of the textile industry in Coromandel had survived the wars and political reshuffling of the eighteenth century, partly because best quality cotton that was used for weaving textiles for export only grew in specific areas; two, the density of weaving settlements was greatest in the Tamil country; and three, the port–cities in this area had fared better than their counterparts in the north.

The port–hinterland connections that Prasannan Parthasarathi's work demonstrates for the late eighteenth century are also very much in evidence here with respect to the seventeenth century. This dissertation has examined the links connecting the cotton–producing region in the west of the Deccan, the weaving centres in the Godavari delta and export of textiles from Masulipatnam; and the links connecting Mysore plateau, Tirunelveli, the Kaveri delta and exports from Nagapatnam. Finally, we noted the shift towards southern Coromandel in the aftermath of Aurangzeb's southern campaigns: Chapter 5 shows the presence of weavers in southern Coromandel who had migrated from the north and had been integrated in the weaving population of the villages in the Kaveri delta. Although there is a gap of about a century in the temporal points of evidence provided by this dissertation and Parthasarathi's work, it could reasonably be asserted that Prasannan Parthasarathi's conclusions about the textile industry in late eighteenth–century South India resonate at least in part with the conclusions of this dissertation with respect to the economy of Coromandel

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[2] Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*: 67–71.

in the late–seventeenth and early–eighteenth century, in the aftermath of Aurangzeb's campaigns. In this context, we mainly allude to the shift towards southern Coromandel.

Clearly, then, Aurangzeb's southern campaigns ushered in a moment of transformation. They caused significant shifts in Coromandel's economy and were marked by a waning of Mughal authority in the province of Golconda. This was primarily a case of poor management of the region after 1700, because in the 1690s Mughal administration had been successful in restoring agricultural production in Telangana and working the salt mines near Masulipatnam. In their assessments of the impact of the siege of Gingee in central and southern Coromandel, the VOC contrasted this period of temporary peace and stability in northern Coromandel with the disturbances in central Coromandel. But after 1700, Mughal authority in Golconda went into a sharp decline that was accompanied by the enervation of Masulipatnam's overland axis. The decline of public order was reflected in the failure of Mughals to counter Maratha raids on Hyderabad and success of bandits in obstructing highways. The VOC alluded to this poor management of the region by the Mughals when they lamented that Aurangzeb's energies were focused on conquering the Marathas instead of consolidating Golconda.

The keenness of the Mughals to reinstate the European companies in Coromandel was an expression of their intention of promoting maritime trade from the coastal outlets controlled by these companies. Their strategy sought to stabilize the regional economies that fed these ports, helping them to recover from the impact of the campaigns and provide the Mughals with military provisions and financial resources to compensate for the costs of war. Most importantly, the impact of military campaigns was heterogeneous across Coromandel. While northern Coromandel saw the weakening of Masulipatnam as a premier regional entrepot, the wars were less devastating in southern Coromandel because of greater food security, which attracted merchants and weavers to settle there and contribute to the emergence of ports in this part of the Coromandel. In 1712 or thereabouts, the VOC in Nagapatnam concluded that political instability had not affected southern Coromandel as badly as it had affected northern Coromandel.

The years following Aurangzeb's death and the coronation of Bahadur Shah I as the new Mughal emperor (1707–1713) witnessed a debilitation of Mughal authority in the Deccan. The governor of Hyderabad gradually became increasingly independent of Mughal control and the Marathas, too, grew in strength. The introductory chapter points to the growing consensus that, rather than decline, eighteenth–century India witnessed impressive economic growth and strong regional states.[3] In the Deccan and South India, the 1720s were the early years of a definitive Maratha expansion under Baji Rao I and consolidation of power by Nizam–ul–Mulk Asaf Jah in Hyderabad. By the second half of the eighteenth century,

[3] Seema Alavi, 'Introduction', in: *The Eighteenth Century in India,* ed. Seema Alavi (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002): 1–56.

western and eastern Deccan had come to be divided between the Marathas and the state of Hyderabad, ruled by the Asaf Jahis. Down south, the state of Arcot allied itself with the EIC and emerged as a strong player in regional politics; Mysore started its own impressive expansion in the 1760s. In this respect, we may reiterate a point mentioned in Chapter 4 about the long–term aftermath of Aurangzeb's military campaigns in northern Coromandel: only a comparative analysis of the relationship between warfare and economy with regard to the Maratha state and Asaf Jahi Hyderabad in the eighteenth century can help us understand to what extent there was a shift of economic gravity from the east of the Deccan to the west.

This dissertation has opened a research agenda for studying the relationship between warfare and economy in early–modern South Asia in the context of the expansion of the Mughal Empire in South India in the late seventeenth century. It has also demonstrated the potential of using the archives of the VOC in researching the relationship between warfare and the economy of South Asia. Further research to understand this relationship in the context of Aurangzeb's southern campaigns should focus on financial credit as a crucial component of military logistics and an integral element of warfare in South Asia. Constraints of time did not allow this dissertation to study the issue of credit at length. On this matter, Karen Leonard has pointed out the shift in the eighteenth century of the weight of the great banking firms from the Mughals to other powers such as the Marathas, the Nizams of Hyderabad and the EIC. Aurangzeb's failure to protect Surat's banking firms against repeated Maratha raids in the 1660s prompted the beginnings of this move, and around 1702 bankers refused Aurangzeb's request for interest–free loans to pay arrears for his troops in the Deccan. Wars also offered the bankers opportunities to expand their investments.[4] Researching the factor of credit and its role in Aurangzeb's southern campaigns would help nuance this study of the economic impact of Mughal wars in Coromandel.

[4] Leonard, 'The "Great Firm" Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire': 159–161.