War, Factionalism, and Civil-Military Tension:
The Madras Army and the Company State in the Carnatic, 1767-1777

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

This study explores how the Madras Army and its officers helped to shape the East India Company's developing state in the Carnatic during the late 1760s and 1770s, and in particular it draws attention to their critical role during a period of factionalism and flux. It focuses on the First Anglo-Mysore War (1767-1769), and highlights how the war's conduct and outcome were decisively shaped by the tensions arising from ambiguities and personal agendas that marked civil-military relations. It then proceeds to analyze the 1776 coup at Madras, in which a faction of the governing Council ousted the Governor, George, Lord Pigot (1719-1777), by drawing on the support of key officers in the Madras Army, and then considers the coup's aftermath. Both the war and the coup are excellent examples through which civil-military relations can be illuminated. This study is primarily grounded in archival research in the British Library and National Library of Scotland, and employs civil-military theory in its analysis. Civil-military relations were particularly challenging in India under the Company Raj, due in large part to the complicated nature of the EIC's relationship with Parliament and the British Crown (including the British Army and the Royal Navy) as well at the inherent hybridity of the Anglo-Indian 'Company State.' Nevertheless, this uniqueness, combined with scholarly neglect of the Madras Army in general and the events of the 1760s and 1770s in the Carnatic in particular, make it an ideal subject for an exploration of civil-military relations, military institutions, and military culture. It is clear from the findings of this study that the military – and particularly the officer corps of the Madras Army – played a prominent role in the factional disputes in the Madras Presidency during the period in question. The military, however, was never as monolithic or as praetorian as some abstract theories might otherwise suggest, for officers, individually as well as collectively, often aligned themselves with civilian actors due to overlapping financial or political interests.

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In the 1760s and 1770s the British East India Company (EIC) was in the process of transforming itself from a trade-focused commercial enterprise into a taxation-focused landholding quasi-state within the broader British Empire. Scholars continue to debate the impact of the Company's victory at Plassey in 1757 and argue over whether the changes resulting from the EIC's expanded political power and territorial revenue in Bengal were truly revolutionary or part of a longer evolutionary process. It is clear, however, that the Company was changing at the time and in the decades that followed. One aspect of this period of flux was the massive expansion of the EIC armies in the Bengal and Madras Presidencies. This was largely from the training of *sepoys* (from Persian *sipahi*), as Indian infantrymen drilled and equipped in the manner of contemporary European line infantry were called, during the Carnatic Wars (1744-1763). Another notable characteristic of this period was the acquisitive tendencies of EIC officials, both civil and military, who engaged in private trade and predatory lending to augment their salaries. Although this rapaciousness was certainly not unique to the period or to the EIC, the personal wealth acquired by many EIC servants returning to Britain, commonly known as 'nabobs,' and resulting rumours and scandals occasioned comment and opprobrium. A legitimate fear that the allure of such wealth might lead individual Company officials to privilege their own pecuniary interests above that of the Company (and Britain) led to attempts at administrative reform seeking to curb employees' private commercial activities. These reforms, originating from fears within both the Company's governing Court of Directors at the EIC's home offices in Leadenhall Street in London and Parliament at Westminster, would exacerbate factionalism and internal struggles in

the EIC that would last for decades. The Company army would play a significant part in these struggles.

This study seeks to elucidate the place of the EIC Army within the Company's developing state structure during this period of factionalism and flux with an emphasis on civil-military relations. However, owing to the sheer size of the Company Army and the EIC's dominions it has been necessary to limit its scope to the Madras Presidency from the late 1760s to the mid-1770s and to focus on two specific events. Initially conceived as a narrow study of civil-military tensions during the First Anglo-Mysore War (1767-1769), this thesis now encompasses not only the events of the conflict itself but also those of the succeeding decade of factional strife at Madras. The study culminates with the events and aftermath of the 1776 coup at Madras, in which a faction of the governing Council ousted the Company's appointed Governor George, Lord Pigot (1719-1777) with the aid of Madras Army officers. Both the war and the coup are fitting examples through which to explore civil-military relations, owing to a consensus that Madras's civilian leadership had mishandled the war and that this in turn helped set the stage for a coup. This analysis will be both enriched and complicated by the intricacy of the EIC's relationship with Parliament and the British Crown, as well at the inherent hybridity of the Anglo-Indian 'Company State.' Nevertheless, this uniqueness, combined with scholarly neglect of the Madras Army in general and the events of the 1760s and 1770s in the Carnatic in particular, make it an ideal subject for scholars interested in various aspects of civil-military relations, military institutions, and military culture.

It is clear from the findings of this study that the Madras Army officer corps played a prominent role in the factional disputes in the Carnatic during the period in question. The military, however, was never monolithic in its relationship with the civilian elite. Despite acting

as a united bloc when the interests of the officer corps were challenged, differing and often competing interests within the officer corps led to individual officers having disparate factional loyalties. Moreover, these loyalties were multipolar and malleable over time. An example of such malleability discussed below is the division among Madras Army officers over Colonel John Wood's suitability as a commander during the First Anglo-Mysore War, and the same officer corps' support of him during a subsequent court martial where Madras's civilian leadership sought to shift blame for the EIC's defeat onto Wood. An example of multipolar loyalty, this time from the 1776 coup, is Sir Robert Fletcher's strong assertions of military prerogative while simultaneously supporting the civilian faction aligned with the creditors of the Nawab against Lord Pigot. It also seems clear that financial self-interest as well as career aspirations played a significant role in determining loyalties, although abstract concepts like 'honour' and community were also important. Corporate and institutional alignments also played a role.

In seeking to illustrate the role of the Madras Army in the factionalism of the time, this study extends our understanding of the place of the army in the EIC temporally to a largely neglected interlude between the close of Carnatic Wars in the early 1760s and the political transformations of the 1780s. Furthermore, it also widens the scope of such analyses geographically and institutionally, as most studies of both the Company Army and factionalism among EIC servants have focused on the Bengal Presidency to the exclusion of Madras and Bombay. Beyond addressing this imbalance as far as Madras is concerned, this discussion will also explore the overlooked First Anglo-Mysore War at greater length and in greater depth than any scholarly study since John William Fortescue discussed it in the second volume of his *A History of the British Army* (1910). In doing so, it will address the political and historical biases

of Fortescue and his predecessors and consider how this has affected our historical understanding of the era and of the Company army. In addressing the 1776 coup at Madras, factionalism and the military's place in the Company state will be explored more directly, leading to conclusions that discuss the place of civil-military analysis in studies of the 18th century. In addition to addressing this overlooked period in civil-military studies this study will take the unique position of the EIC Army and the imperial context of the events into account.

While at times engaging with political theory, the methodology of this study is largely grounded in the historical tradition and focuses on archival sources. It primarily relies on the extensive and very thorough records of the EIC and the correspondence of its servants. As a result the multiplicity of South Indian languages did not pose a problem, English being the language of administration and public record in the Company. The same is of course true of the British parliamentary and judicial records utilized alongside the EIC ones. Of course, in relying solely on English-language sources one risks perpetuating the biases of Company servants regarding any Indians involved, and as a result one must remain aware of such issues during research. In both topic and form it is indebted to earlier historical efforts incorporating civil-military topics like Hew Strachan's *The Politics of the British Army* (1997) and Douglas Peers's *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in Early Nineteenth century India* (1995).[1]

Among the archival sources utilized in this study are the India Office Records and Private Papers and the Orme Collection at the British Library. Sources from these collections are varied, and those that have proven useful include but are not limited to Madras Council proceedings, the

[1]See Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), and Douglas Peers, *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in Early Nineteenth century India* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995).

Council's correspondence with the Court of Directors and the other presidencies, letters between the Council and officers in the field during the First Anglo-Mysore War, military orderly books written while on campaign, and various private and public letters from and between EIC servants. Some relevant political pamphlets, Parliamentary speeches, and Acts of Parliament dating to the period have also been cited, as have documents from the December 1779 trial of the leading figures in the 1776 coup at the Court of King's Bench, which are now held by the National Library of Scotland. Where possible collections of published primary sources have also been utilized, with Henry Davison Love's (1852-1924) *Vestiges of Old Madras* (1913) and various collections of the writings of Edmund Burke (1730-1797) having proven particularly useful. This variety of sources, when combined with a critical approach to the historiography, helps to place some of the older, often-politicized and largely narrative-based treatments of the First Anglo-Mysore War and the 1776 Madras Coup in the secondary literature in context.

1.2 Historiography

The historiographies of empires and transnational entities like the EIC are by their very geopolitical diversity more complicated than those of straightforward national or regional historical traditions. Moreover, the influence of postcolonial and subaltern studies on the historiography of the Indian subcontinent, 20th century scholarly biases against military history (which is sometimes stereotyped as populist and/or unscholarly), and the interdisciplinary nature of civil-military studies, only serve to complicate the relevant scholarly background even further. Acknowledging these realities, the introduction seeks to situate this study in only the most

relevant historical and theoretical traditions and debates, addressing historiography before turning to civil military relations.[2]

Before turning to those works specifically relevant to this study it is necessary to acknowledge its debt to many works specifically focused on the EIC as a whole (as distinct from the historiography of its army) in a variety of contexts. In addition to the contributions of those works elucidated in more detail below, the influential works of C.A. Bayly and Burton Stein on the Company and economy, society, and politics in India have proven useful, for their discussion of the establishment of Company rule in India over time and their focus on cooperation between EIC servants and Indian elites. Although *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (1988) has been useful for reference, among Bayly's work *Empire and Information* (1996) has proven helpful for its discussion of administrative hybridity and its potential pitfalls in late 18th and 19th century India. However, Stein's focus on South India, and particularly his work of pre- and early-colonial politics in the region have been especially useful to this study, with *Vijayanagara* (1989) providing useful historical background and *Thomas Munro* (1989) serving as a model for South Indian colonial history writing.[3]

[2]For general discussions of military history and the scholarly and popular assumptions surrounding it see Tami Davis Biddle and Robert M. Citino, 'The Role of Military History in the Contemporary Academy,' Society For Military History White Papers (30 November 2014): 1-7.
[3]Robert J. Frykenberg, 'India to 1856,' *The Oxford History of the British* Empire, vol. 5, Ed. Robin W. Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 206-207. See C.A. Bayly *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) and C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). See also Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985 [Or. pub. 1980]), Burton Stein, *Thomas Munro: The Origins of the Colonial State and His Vision of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 [Or. pub. 1989]). Chapter 2 of this dissertation presents the historical background of 18th century South India, and in the process engages with the major relevant works in the region's historiography. See bibliography for a full list of consulted works. For a good general overview of historiography of the EIC up to 2009 see Philip J. Stern, 'History and Historiography of the English East India Company: Past, Present, and Future!' *History Compass* 7, no. 4 (2009), 1146-1180.

Turning to Britain, the works of scholars including Lucy Sutherland and Huw Bowen on the relationship between the EIC and British politics in the 18th century have also proven helpful. Sutherland's *The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics* (1952) laid the groundwork for subsequent studies of Parliament's involvement with the EIC in the period, while also helpfully discussing the 1776 coup and the political activities of some of the key players involved directly. Bowen addresses the same topic in more recent works including *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics 1757-1773* (1991) and *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (2006). Bowen focuses more directly on the situation in India than Sutherland while simultaneously asserting the centrality of India and the EIC in late-18th century British politics. This argument contrasts sharply with the older Atlanticist emphasis on the American Colonies' central role in Britain's 'Imperial Problem' during the period as described in the works of Lewis Namier. Namier has effectively argued that British victory in the Seven Years War had a transformative effect on British politics, not least due to the national debt of £140,000,000 acquired during the war. It was his view that efforts to repay this debt and maintain the new British territories not only contributed to the American push for autonomy (and eventually independence), but also shifted loyalties within Parliament and altered domestic policies. Sutherland and Bowen's works show later 18th century Britain's imperial crisis to be broader than Namier's conception, with grants and loans to Parliament from the EIC, their periodic interruption due to unrest in India, and a growing 'India interest' in the House of Commons playing a significant role in British politics. The addition of this Indian dimension serves more to balance and nuance Namier's 'Imperial Problem' than to refute it.[4]

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[4]See Lucy Sutherland, *The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), Huw Bowen *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics 1757-1773* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1991) and Huw Bowen *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). In addition to voluminous writing on the political

Furthermore, in addition to Douglas Peers's related but more military-focused work discussed later, publications on ideology, Company culture, and Company servants' perceptions of the EIC have also been enlightening. Among these Sudipta Sen's *Distant Sovereignty: National Imperialism and the Origins of British India* (2002) discusses India's role in developing British nationalism. It has been useful both for elucidating the constitutional vagueness on which Company rule in India was founded, and by pointing out that it was partly justified and sustained by EIC officials' adherence to Mughal norms and the integration of the Company into Mughal institutions in what Philip J. Stern terms 'a hybrid or composite sovereignty.' In a similar vein Robert Travers's work has been helpful in discussing how the growing EIC territorial establishment in later 18th century India sought to buttress its rule intellectually by portraying the Company as adhering to 'ancient constitutions' in India, stressing a continuity in traditions of rule despite obvious changes and accommodations. Moreover, despite his focus on Bengal, Travers's arguments are just as applicable to the Carnatic in a broad sense and treat the reasoning behind EIC servants' deference to Indian rulers (which had been criticized by some early military historians pushing narratives of imperial conquest) with nuance.[5]

events of his own time, Lewis Namier (1888-1960) was a highly influential historian of 18th century British politics in the early 20th century best known for *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1973), *England in the Age of the American Revolution*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1974), and for his role in advocating for (and later contributing to and editing) *The History of Parliament* series. His work was a great influence on Sutherland and subsequent scholars of 18th century politics. John Brooke et al, eds., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1754-1790*, (London: History of Parliament Trust, 1964). Philp J. Stern, 'History and Historiography,' 1149, 1153-1154. See Also Michael S. Fisher, *The Politics of the British Annexation of India* (Oxford University Press, 1994).

[5]See Sudipta Sen, *Distant Sovereignty: National Imperialism and the Origins of British India* (London: Routledge, 2002), Philip J. Stern, *The Company State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 208. See also Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteen-Century India: The British In Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Robert Travers, 'The Eighteenth Century in Indian History: A Review Essay', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 40/3 (2007): 492–508. For an early historical criticism of accommodating Mughal rulers and institutions see Chapter 3, Section 4 and Mark Wilks, *Historical Sketches of the South of India: In an Attempt to Trace the History of Mysoor*, vol. ii (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817), ii., 55-56.

Although India and the EIC both loom large in any broad study of the 18th century British Empire, they are often viewed as a separate or secondary entity by scholars focusing on periods prior to the 1770s. This is especially true among those who focus on the Empire in North America and the Atlantic World. This distinction is in addition to a further one, namely, the separation of British history and the history of the British Empire. This separation dates from the Victorian period at the latest and remained prevalent into the 20th century. In addition to these general scholarly tendencies to compartmentalize and specialize, this cordoning-off of the EIC is in part a result of the continued utility of dividing the history of British colonialism and global trade into a First and Second British Empire. Dating to the 19th century, this division traditionally hinges around the British defeat in the American War of Independence (1775-1783). In this formula, the First Empire (1583/4-1783) was characterized by global oceanic trade, settler colonies in North America, a plantation economy based on slavery in the Caribbean and the southern Thirteen Colonies, and a scattering of small trading posts in Asia. Conversely, the Second Empire (1783-1997) was initially more territorial (though still commercial) and took the form of retreat and consolidation in the Americas, the expansion of territorial dominion in India (and later Africa and Southeast Asia), and new settler colonies in Oceania (and to a lesser degree in South and East Africa).[6]

Because of this division broad scholarship addressing the First British Empire 'as a whole' until fairly recently tended to focus on the Atlantic. This is in part due to the lasting

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[6]P.J. Marshall and C.A. Bayly have contributed to useful surveys of the scholarship of the First and Second British Empires to the *Oxford History of the British Empire*. See P.J. Marshall, 'The First British Empire,' *The Oxford History of the British* Empire, vol. 5, Ed. Robin W. Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and C.A. Bayly, 'The Second British Empire,' *The Oxford History of the British* Empire, vol. 5, Ed. Robin W. Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Philip J. Stern, 'History and Historiography,' 1149. Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Green, 'The Present State of Atlantic History,' *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal,* eds. Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5-6.

influence of the early 20th century ‘Imperial School’ of American colonial historians who emphasized connections between the Thirteen Colonies and Britain prior to, during, and after American Independence. This Atlantic paradigm established by ‘Imperial School’ historians like Charles M. Andrews and Lawrence Gipson lasted after their personal influence waned, affecting scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic. The Atlantic imperial paradigm was both challenged and re-evaluated by the subsequent development of formal ‘Atlantic history’ in the United States during the 1960s, reinforcing American influence in the field. With the rise of area studies many works addressing the topic were published, with Philip D. Curtin’s *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (1969), Ian Steele’s *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (1981) and D.W. Meinig’s *Atlantic America, 1492-1800* (1986) among the seminal works in the field. Historians focusing on the American colonies, Canada, and the Caribbean within the British Empire have continued to be key figures in Atlantic history both within and outside more traditional fields like ‘imperial’ or ‘colonial’ history. Some of the strongest proponents of Atlantic history in the last three decades have been scholars of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade like Paul Gilroy, author of *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993), and Philip D. Morgan and Trevor Burnard, both of whom contributed to the anthology *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (2009). Moreover, works of economic, intellectual, and political history stressing the Anglo-American ‘special relationship’ have also contributed to the perpetuation of the Atlantic paradigm, with David Armitage’s *Greater Britain, 1516-1776: Essays in Atlantic History* (2004) and his edited anthology with

Michael Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (2002), being among the most significant recent contributions.[7]

In contrast to these narratives of transoceanic empire and imperial discontinuity Brendan Simms's emphasis on British political and military engagement with continental Europe in his narrative of the First British Empire in *Three Victories and a Defeat* (2007) has provided a helpful continental/Eurocentric critique of global and imperial narratives of 18th century Britain and its empire.[8] Moreover, the Atlantic-centrism of First British Empire narratives, at least as they are popularly perceived, is clearly evident in that they place the beginning of the period of territorial expansion in Asia after the First Empire and more than a quarter-century after the Battle of Plassey (1757), with the focus of this study situated in the interim. Conversely, India and Company-centric historical narratives have moved past emphasizing Plassey or its aftermath as a turning point, instead focusing on the importance of alliances and political accommodation and a more evolutionary transformation of the EIC. From a political and institutional perspective Philip J. Stern's *The Company State* (2011) has helped to challenge this dichotomy as it applies to the Company by discussing the EIC as an early modern landholding state prior to the so-called 'Plassey Revolution.' In doing so he situates the Company within early modern conceptions of a

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[7]Marshall, 'The First British Empire,' 48-49. Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Greene, 'The Present State of Atlantic History,' *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal,* eds. Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 3-34. See Philip D. Curtain, The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), Ian Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), and D.W. Meinig, *Atlantic America, 1492-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). See also Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993) and Trevor Burnard, 'The British Atlantic,' *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, eds. Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Greene (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 111-136. See also David Armitage, *Greater Britain, 1516-1776: Essays in Atlantic History* (London: Routledge, 2004) and David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (London: Macmillan, 2002).

[8]See Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2007). John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 141.

state. Stern emphasizes the Company's use of military force to protect its trade and those with whom it trades, its limited territorial extent, and its eventual assumption of offices, revenue grants, and obligations within the existing Mughal tributary system. He stresses the importance of these grants and titles from the Mughals alongside charters from the British Crown in the EIC's justification of its sovereignty and compares the Company's acquisition and exercise of these rights within its dominion to an early modern manorial lord.[9]

Situated as it is in the 1760s and 1770s, the focus of this dissertation is during a period of transformation not only for the East India Company but for the British Empire as a whole.[10] This is most obvious in the global context of the First and Third Carnatic Wars discussed in Chapter 2, which from a European perspective were among the colonial theatres of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years War (1756-1763) respectively. The global nature of these conflicts, particularly the latter, have led some scholars to characterize them as the first true 'world wars.' Furthermore, this imperial context is evident in this study's exploration of the Court of Directors and Parliament's anxieties over the excesses and factionalism of self-interested EIC servants in India. The First Anglo-Mysore War and the 1776 Madras coup figure prominently in this anxiety as it relates to the Carnatic. Parliamentary and judicial reactions to the latter clearly show the influence of the unfolding American Revolution on British imperial unease.[11] In its exploration of the imperial, global and transregional contexts,

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[9]Phillip J. Stern, 'History and Historiography,' 1149, 1151. Jeremy Black, *Beyond the Military Revolution: War in the Seventeenth-century World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 29, 122. Some scholars have also posited third and fourth British Empires, with the former beginning with the growth and political development of the settler dominions in the later 19th century and the later being a pivot to Africa and Southeast Asia following the Second World War, independence and partition on the Subcontinent, and increased autonomy among the dominions. Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 72. See also Stern, *The Company State,* 24, 208-209, 211-212.
[10]P.J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India and America c. 1750-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 377-378.
[11]See Chapter 4, Section 5.

this study has relied on the efforts of a variety of scholars, including Daniel Baugh's work on the Seven Years War. Additionally, Richard Bourke's work on the political and intellectual life of the Irish MP and noted orator Edmund Burke has been helpful due to Burke's criticism of the EIC in the wake of the 1776 coup. Similarly, Norman S. Poser's legal and political biography of William Murray, Lord Mansfield (then Lord Chief Justice), has been useful due to his involvement in the trial of the coup plotters.[12] By applying these domestic British perspectives to the Madras establishment and its army in the 18th century, this dissertation will broaden our understanding of the political connections and interplay between the British in India and EIC and government institutions in Britain at the time.

One prominent historian with a deep knowledge of 18th century British India who has also engaged with the history of the Atlantic World in a British imperial context is P.J. Marshall. One of the most significant figures in the field of Company history, his transregional interests are evident not only in his early work on the writings of Edmund Burke and his more recently edited volume on the 18th century for *The Oxford History of the British Empire* (1998), but also his *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India and America c. 1750-1783* (2005). Directly addressing the temporal focus of this study in a global context, Marshall concludes that 'The succession of the thirteen colonies, coinciding with the consolidation of empire in India, dramatically shifted the balance between British and non-British peoples within the Empire.'[13] This observation not only illustrates the interconnectivity of the Atlantic and Indian worlds within the British Empire, but also points to the importance of India within the Empire in the

[12]See Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War, 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (Harlow: Pearson, 2011) See also Richard Bourke, *Empire and Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015). See also Norman Poser, *Lord Mansfield: Justice in the Age of Reason* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).
[13]Marshall, *Making and Unmaking,* 377.

latter half of the 18th century when both the Company and the Empire as a whole were in a state of flux. It is unsurprising that in such an environment the Company would come under increased Parliamentary and public scrutiny in the 1760s and especially the 1770s.

Marshall argues that in certain ways the EIC and its territorial revenues came to act as a surrogate for Britain's lost American colonies from the 1770s onward, noting that the Company was more willing to pay for its own defense and surrender its autonomy than the American colonists. The potential threat to stability within this alternative source of wealth posed by the 1776 Madras Coup, while Britain was at war in America, no doubt contributed to the British government's swift and stern reaction at home. This was part of a broader trend of increased Parliamentary intervention in EIC affairs during the period which resulted from the EIC's position as one of the chief creditors of the British national debt. As such, any threat to the Company's solvency, or any action which could result in a significant decrease in revenue, was seen not only as a threat to the EIC itself but as a threat to British national interest.[14]

However, in line with a general scholarly focus on north India that will be addressed at length in Chapter 2, Marshall's work on the EIC primarily addresses the British in Bengal. Nevertheless, it has also been of use for this dissertation. His work on the private trade of Company servants in Bengal in *East Indian Fortunes* (1976), together with Ian Bruce Watson's broader *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India 1659-1760* (1980), opened a whole new aspect of the 18th century EIC to scholarly analysis. In highlighting the importance of private trade in the period, Marshall and Watson also address factionalism among the EIC

[14]John Brewer makes a similar observation in *The Sinews of Power* (1990), noting the importance of the EIC and other chartered entities like the Bank of England as holders of the national debt, and asserts that 'the EIC had an enduring influence on British politics.' John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power,* 136, 170. Marshall, *Making and Unmaking,* 270-271. Bowen, *Business of Empire*, 43-44.

officials involved, identifying similar problems to those occurring at Madras around the same time. Although other works have addressed factionalism, private trade, and other paths to personal enrichment in the Carnatic during this period, this work's civil-military focus will add to the literature on the topic from a unique perspective.[15]

Despite his general focus on Bengal, in *The Making and Unmaking of Empires* Marshall also specifically (if briefly) addresses the changes occurring in the Madras Presidency during the 1760s and 1770s. Noting the EIC's fraught relationship with the Nawab of the Carnatic (Arcot), the Company's struggles with their French counterpart and the resulting transformation of the Madras Army, Marshall discusses the subsequent conflicts with the regional powers in South India. Moreover, unlike other scholars, Marshall does not neglect to address the First Anglo-Mysore War entirely, although he does so in less than two pages.[16] He is followed in this by G.J. Bryant, who also passes over the war in a handful of pages when discussing broader topics, though admittedly his two accounts explore it in more depth than any other recent scholarly efforts.[17] Both of these authors also address the topic of the 1776 Madras coup, though again not at any great length. The paucity of recently published works on these events, with the First Anglo-Mysore War lacking a monograph-length treatment and the coup which ousted Lord Pigot having been addressed at length in only one, is a noticeable gap in the historical literature during this pivotal period. It is also for this reason that the exception regarding the coup, Sudip Bhattacharya's *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot* (2013), has proven particularly helpful for this

[15]See P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British In Bengal in the Eighteenth century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) and Ian Bruce Watson*, Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India 1659-1760* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980).
[16]Marshall, *Making and Unmaking*,138-146.
[17]G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1784: A Grand Strategic Interpretation* (Woodbridge: Bowdell Press, 2013), 195-196, 203-208. See also G.J. Bryant, 'British Logistics and the Conduct of the Carnatic Wars (1746-1783),' *War in History* 11 no. 3 (2004): 292-298.

dissertation. Additionally, an article by Jim Philips discussing the Carnatic under the Nawab as a Mughal successor-state has been useful for its exploration of Carnatic revenue collection and the Nawab's army. This study seeks to provide historians interested in the EIC army in this period with a more focused, thorough, and up-to-date account of these events than is currently available.[18]

The decided lack of up-to-date scholarly treatments of the First Anglo-Mysore War necessitates some discussion of the older scholarly work on the topic. Although 19th and early 20th century historians have discussed the First Anglo-Mysore War, it has been largely overlooked since. There are numerous reasons for this in comparison to the subsequent wars between the EIC and Mysore. Firstly, it appeared to be a relatively minor conflict compared to those against the French which had preceded it in the Carnatic. Secondly, even among conflicts between Britain and Indian powers, the First Anglo-Mysore War ended indecisively, especially when compared to the conquest of Bengal. Thirdly, the first Anglo-Mysore War could not be readily fit into the narrative of imperial conquest which was then emerging. If anything, this war was more of an embarrassment to the more jingoistic British historians. And lastly, compared to later conflicts, no regular British Army regiments were involved, nor were there any recognizable Royal Officers with independent commands, thereby excluding the conflict from the interest of regimental historians and the biographers of 'great commanders' like Robert Clive or Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington.[19]

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[18]Marshall, *Making and Unmaking*, 233-234. Bryant, *Emergence*, 212-215. See Sudip Bhattacharya, *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013). Jim Philips, 'A Successor to the Moguls: The Nawab of the Carnatic and the East India Company, 1763-1785,' *International History Review* 7 no. 3 (August 1985): 164-189.

[19]Though regimental histories seem somewhat antiquated today military biographies remain popular. A good example of the latter, which discusses the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799) in thoughtful detail, is Huw Davies's *Wellington's Wars: The Making of a Military Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012). Raymond

As is the case with much military history, early military historians of the British in India tended to be amateurs. These writers had often spent time in India either in the military or civil services, and were writing for a broad (for the time) public audience who shared their own antiquarian and orientalist interests. Furthermore, some of these works were overtly political, with retired soldiers and administrators often trying to influence policy, advance their own interests, support their friends and family, or criticize their enemies. The books of Robert Orme (1728-1801), Mark Wilks (c. 1760-1831), George Bruce Malleson (1825-1898), Lewin Bentham Bowring (1824-1910), and Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall (1835-1911) used in this study are all notable examples of such works. By contrast post-1960s historians addressing the First Anglo-Mysore War tend to be professionally-trained, university-educated historians with graduate degrees who for the most part write for an academic audience. The differences in approach between these two groups also reflect their audiences and educational backgrounds. The earlier historians favoured narrative histories of campaigns and military minutia, while the latter generally took such narratives for granted and were increasingly less comfortable with imperialist, nationalist, and orientalist conceits. This shift to a more analytical approach coincided with the historical profession's move away from political and military history in the mid-20th century. Many were drawn by the development of 'war and society' as an accepted topic within military history.[20]

Callaghan, *The East Indian Company and Army Reform, 1783-1798* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), ix.

[20]See Orme, Robert, *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the year 1745*, vol. 1, 4th ed. (Madras: Athenaeum Press, 1861) < https://archive.org/stream/historyofmilitar01ormeuoft#page/n3/mode/2up> [Accessed 3 September 2017]. See also Mark Wilks *Historical Sketches of the South of India: In an Attempt to Trace the History of Mysoor* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817), George Bruce Malleson, *The Decisive Battles of India: From 1746-1849 Inclusive* (London: W.H. Allen and Company, 1883), and Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India*, 5th ed. (New York: Howard Ferig, 1968).

Interestingly, the last historian to provide a comprehensive campaign narrative of the First Anglo-Mysore War was neither a retired 'India hand' like his predecessors nor a modern academic. Sir John William Fortescue (1859-1933) is best known for his oft-mentioned, but today seemingly seldom read, *A History of the British Army* (1899-1930, 13 volumes) which despite its title also discusses the military activities of the East India Company, including the First Anglo-Mysore War and the 1776 Madras Coup. An armchair general from an aristocratic family, Fortescue's histories, while detailed, well-researched, and monumental in size, are quite coloured by the author's biases. These notably include what Brian Bond describes as a 'partisan commitment to defending the army against political interference and incompetence.'[21] And although this anti-Parliamentary bias was in part due to Fortescue's political anxieties during his own lifetime, he seemingly saw such a stance as a natural response to his reading of British military history, including that of the 18th century (his favoured period). Brian Bond and Hew Strachan, among others, have pointed out Fortescue's obvious historical and civil-military narrative-building resulting from these biases. And as we shall see, even in the First Anglo-Mysore War, a conflict with minimal involvement on the parts of both the British Army and Parliament, Fortescue's pro-army and anti-civilian sentiments shine through. Indeed, by addressing Fortescue's work on such a seemingly distant topic this study will help to illuminate and address his civil-military biases while consciously trying to avoid perpetuating them.[22]

It is necessary to note here that Fortescue and his 19th century predecessors unabashedly utilize orientalist and racialist conceits, particularly in their treatment of prominent Indian leaders

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[21]Bond, Brian, 'Fortescue, Sir John William,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biograph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/101033213/John-Fortescue> [accessed 28 August 2016].

[22]For Fortescue's discussion of the First Anglo-Mysore War and the 1776 Madras Coup see John William Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan & Company, 1899), 111-135, 428-430. Strachan, *British Army*, 6. Bond, 'Fortescue, Sir John William.'

like Haidar Ali and the Nawab of the Carnatic, Muhammad Ali. Malleson's writing is especially odious for its racialist overtones, particularly in his characterizations of the Nawab as a treacherous, incompetent, and unmanly 'Oriental Despot.' And although Malleson is the worst example of such unbalanced treatment of the Nawab, similar portrayals are ubiquitous among the 19th century authors and Fortescue. These orientalist characterizations of a devious and unscrupulous Nawabs began in Muhammad Ali's own lifetime and are perhaps then most evident in Edmund Burke's writings, with his passages on the former being among his most florid. This study has attempted to account for the orientalist and racialist excesses of these older authors while still utilizing their campaign narratives. If anything, the necessity of having to do so reinforces the need for an updated account of the First Anglo-Mysore War.[23]

In addition to these antiquated, campaign-centric narratives and the more general imperial and EIC histories discussed above, this dissertation seeks to situate itself within the military historiography of the British in India generally, and that of the EIC Army specifically. In addressing the topic of histories dedicated solely to British arms in India, Raymond Callaghan noted that

> Apart from the Mutiny, which continues to attract the attention of writers both scholarly and popular, books on the Indian Army seem to fall into two distinct categories: largely unread official and regimental histories, and the reminiscences of retired Indian Army officers. Many titles in both categories have long been out of print, and all are largely neglected. It is hard to explain historians' lack of interest in the Indian Army, except upon the assumption that it is of little importance compared to other areas awaiting investigation.[24]

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[23]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 215-216. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, 48. For a good example of Burke's characterization of Muhammad Ali see Edmund Burke, 'Speech on the Nawab of Arcot's Debts' [28 February 1785], *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke,* ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 478-552. See also James Mill, *The History of British India,* vol iii., ed. H. H. Wilson, 5th ed. (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1968), 331 333-334, and Lewin Bentham Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, and the Struggle with the Musalman Powers of the South* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I, 1883), 50.
[24]Callaghan, *Army Reform*, ix.

Though things have changed since Callaghan made this observation in 1972, and it would not be fair to call the armies of the Company Raj a relatively neglected topic generally, the history of the EIC's armies during the 18th century remains under-explored. This is even more the case for the Madras and Bombay Armies in comparison to the relatively well-researched Bengal Army. The necessity of relying on Fortescue and 19th century historians for campaign narratives of the First Anglo-Mysore War is clear evidence of this neglect.

Indeed, most monographs on the topic not only focus on Bengal, but also on a later period than the 1760s and 1770s. This is the case with both Callaghan's *The East India Company and Army Reform 1783-1798* (1972) and Douglas Peers's *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in Early Nineteenth Century India* (1995), both of which have provided useful analyses from political (and in the case of the latter also cultural-institutional) perspectives but nonetheless do not address the period in question. Conversely, Kaushik Roy's *War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849* (2011) and the above-discussed G.J. Bryant's *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1748: A Grand Strategic Perspective* (2013) have addressed the EIC Army in the period in question, but are broader and have focused on other topics including social and cultural history, institutional hybridity, and grand strategy. Roy's work in particular compares the relative military capabilities of the EIC and its Indian rivals and provides perspective by critiquing antiquated assertions of overwhelming British military superiority. Roy's discussions of the formidable military capabilities of Mysore and the Marathas (Chapters Four and Five respectively) have been particularly useful to this study.[25]

[25]See Raymond Callaghan, *The East Indian Company and Army Reform, 1783-1798* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972) and Kaushik Roy, *War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

In terms of broader works of military history that have been helpful, Bruce Lenman's *Britain's Colonial Wars 1688-1783* (2001) is of note. Lenman's research extends beyond imperial military history to warfare in Europe and provides a useful imperial perspective in his discussion of colonial wars in India and the growth of the EIC's military power, illustrating a different focus than narratives of global conflicts like the War of the Austrian Succession or Seven Years War. John Guy's classic *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army 1714-63* (1985) has also proven immensely valuable, in particular for its discussion of the various sources of revenue available to British Army officers in 18th century Europe. This information has been essential to this study, both for general comparison with the means of personal enrichment available to EIC Army officers at the time, and for discussion of the Court Martial of Colonel John Wood.[26]

Taken together these monographs provide a strong scholarly background and show the need for more study of the EIC armies in the transformational period of the 1760s and 1770s. This study fills this temporal niche while addressing the topic of the Madras Army's place in the emerging Company-state in the Carnatic during the period. By doing so it will engage with two of the most significant discussions among military historians in the 20th and 21st centuries: Namely, the so-called 'military revolution debate' on the transformation of armies and states in the early modern era, and the ongoing discussion of civil-military relations and its relevance to 18th century history.

1.3 The Military Revolution and Civil-Military Relations

[26]See Bruce Lenman, *Britain's Colonial Wars 1688-1783* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), and Alan J. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army 1714-1763* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).

Since Michael Robert's seminal 1955 lecture on 'The Military Revolution: 1560-1660,' the idea of an early modern military revolution has been one of the most significant topics of debate among military historians. Initially developed by Roberts to describe transformations in how Sweden's army fought and operated during the late 16th through to the mid-17th centuries, the Military Revolution came to be treated as a Europe-wide phenomenon in which gunpowder small arms were adopted in tandem with linear infantry tactics. Other common features attributed the 'revolution' by scholars include the use of combined arms tactics, developments in artillery and fortifications, the growth of European armies, and the development of modern state structures and taxation systems to support and finance these armies. Of the broader range of perspectives on the topic that have emerged (especially since the 1990s), perhaps the most interesting questions spring from criticisms of the Eurocentrism of the concept and seek to find comparable military revolutions elsewhere in the world, o,r at the very least, explain why a European style military revolution did not occur in a given state or region.[27] Building on the earlier work of William H. McNeill and others, scholars including Geoffrey Parker and Jeremy Black argues over when exactly the military revolution occurred and the specific impact it had on European imperialism, with Black persuasively arguing that the revolutionary period was between 1660 and 1710 and that large-scale European colonial expansion in Asia only occurred after this period. Others including Kenneth Chase and Peter Lorge seek to identify military revolutions in Asia both before and after the arrival of Europeans. In addition to debating the specific roles of Europeans and Asians (and European and Asian technology and techniques) in these Asian military revolutions, the focus of the debate has shifted as technologically and

[27]Clifford J. Rogers, 'The Military Revolution in History and Historiography,' *The Military Revolution Debate: Reading on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995): 2-8. Stephen Morillo and Michael F. Pavkovic, *What is Military History?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006): 90-92.

geographically determinist arguments have declined in favour of cultural explanations. These arguments often point out that the introduction of the same technology to different regions did not always have the same political, social, and military effects, and emphasize the importance of political and military traditions in how (and to what extent) cannons, small arms, and foreign tactics were adopted and adapted to local realities.[28]

Chapter 2 of this dissertation addresses the military revolution in a specifically Anglo-Indian context, discussing the idea of hybridity in the emerging Company-state in the Carnatic. Additionally, it characterizes the composite state formed by the alliance of the EIC's Madras Presidency and the Nawab of the Carnatic (a regional Indian ruler) as a 'fiscal-military state,' in part drawing on John Brewer's earlier exploration of the British 'fiscal-military state' in the same period. The fiscal-military state is a concept derived from the military revolution debate and originates in the argument that changes in the size, composition, and equipment of armies necessitated fiscal reforms. This in turnled to the development of 'modern' states in Europe. This characterization of the Carnatic hybrid state as 'fiscal-military' illustrates the importance of the military to a Company and region in flux – particularly in relation to the army's role in revenue collection. In applying this to the Madras establishment and the Nawab, this study builds on the recent work of Douglas Peers and Kaushik Roy, with the former having discussed fiscal militarism and hybridity in Mysore and Bengal during the period and both having discussed it in

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[28]See Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society Since A.D. 1000* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), Jeremy Black, 'A Military Revolution? A 1660-1792 Perspective,' *The Military Revolution Debate: Reading on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995) and Jeremy Black, *Beyond the Military Revolution: War in the Seventeenth-century World* (New York: Macmillan, 2011). See also Kenneth Chase, *Firearms: A Global History to 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) and Peter Lorge, *The Asian Military Revolution: From Gunpowder to the Bomb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Morillo and Pavkovic, *Military History*, 79-80, 90.

relation to the Company interaction with local Indian authorities more generally. By utilizing concepts from the military revolution debate in relation to the Carnatic, this dissertation adds to sparse literature on the topic in 18th century India. Analysis of the army's place within the Madras establishment, however, will not be limited to its role in necessitating and sustaining revenue collection.[29]

The topic of civil-military relations first arose as a field of study among political scientists, sociologists, and historians in the post-Second World War United States, with Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* (1957) being the first significant work in the field. As a result it is unsurprising that the focus of the topic, particularly among prominent American scholars during the Cold War era like Morris Janowitz and Bernard Brodie, was the United States, its influential (and usually European) allies, and its enemies during the 20th century, or at most Western countries during the 'modern era.'[30] These historical and geographic limitations are unsurprising, as it has been argued that the possibility of a distinction between civil and military authority in the West was only present with the decline of feudalism and the rise of the modern nation-state, and more particularly with the rise of constitutional and representative forms of government and 'modern' officer corps in the 19th century. Huntington observes that while 'It is possible to speak of the issues of civilian control, militarism, and the military mind as

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[29]For more general discussion of the 'fiscal-military state' in the context of the 'military revolution' see Michael Duffy, *The Military Revolution and the State, 1500-1800* (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1980) and Christopher Stoors, ed., *The Fiscal Military State in 18th century Europe* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009). For discussion of it in relation to 17th and 18th century Britain in particular see John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990). See also Douglas Peers, 'Military Revolution and State Formation Reconsidered: Mir Qasim, Haidar Ali, and the Transition to Colonial Rule in the 1760s,' *Chinese and Indian Warfare: From the Classical Age to 1870*, eds. Peter Lorge and Kaushik Roy (London: Routledge, 2014), 302-323 and Kaushik Roy, 'The Hybrid Military Establishment of the East India Company in South Asia, 1750-1849,' *Journal of Global History* (2011) 6, 195-218.
[30]See Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1964), and Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1973).

existing prior to 1800... the fundamental transformation in the first part of the nineteenth century makes it relatively profitless to go back before that time in search of light on modern problems.'[31]

Historians, understandably, do not necessarily share this view, but it is a powerful reminder that political concepts and paradigms are not universally applicable. As such, both theorists and historians of civil-military relations have had to be careful when using terms like 'modern,' 'professional,' and 'civilian control' in their pre-19th century work, with the formers' consideration of such terms in the 18th century and the early modern era often amounting to little more than introductory background meant to differentiate the 'before time' from the 'proper' field for civil-military theory. Nevertheless, despite the temporal issues surrounding such concepts, it is possible to discuss 18th century civil-military relations on its own terms so long as one acknowledges the vagueness of any such a distinction at the time.

Britain, having played a prominent role in 19th and 20th century 'Great Power' politics, has unsurprisingly had its civil-military relations discussed by many prominent theorists – perhaps more often than those of any other major power save the United States and Germany/Prussia (both of which Britain is frequently contrasted with). Nonetheless, such analyses seldom focused on civil-military relations on the imperial periphery, and 18th century British India has remained beyond both the geographic and temporal scope of most civil-military theorists.[32]

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[31] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 19-20.

[32] For discussion of the events in this chapter in the context of 'grand strategy' and 'Great Power' politics see G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1784* (Woodbridge: Bowdell Press, 2013).

That is not to say, however, that 18th century British civil-military relations have not been discussed by political scientists at all. Indeed, Huntington himself discusses the topic at some length (though in a European context) in Chapter 2 of *The Soldier and the State*, a text that has arguably retained its usefulness for statesmen, scholars and defense professionals and received far less criticism than much of his controversial and more politically-charged later work. In this chapter Huntington discusses military officers in early modern European armies prior to the development of 'professionalism,' contrasting 'professional' officers with their aristocratic and mercenary predecessors. Describing the 18th century British officer corps as conforming to an aristocratic model, he goes on to point out how the divided authority of Crown and Parliament in the period complicated civil-military relations and politicized (or allowed the politicization of) the British Army. Additionally, Huntington sees the aristocracy's monopolization of officer positions through the purchase system as an impediment to professionalism, though scholars like Hew Strachan and P.E. Razzell have challenged the centrality of purchase (and its abolition's effect on the officer corps' social composition). These ideas have been useful when applied to the EIC armies in the period, where civilian authority was perhaps even more fractured than in Britain itself and where purchase was not a factor.[33]

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[33]Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 19-58 [36]. For discussion regarding the utility of *The Soldier and the State* today from a military perspective see Suzanne C. Nielson, 'American civil–military relations today: the continuing relevance of Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*,' *International Affairs* (20 March 2012), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41428611>. For a more critical discussion of the text's utility that asserts that the continued 'usefulness' of *The Soldier and the State* to the American military is in part political see Thomas C. Bruneau, 'Impediments to the accurate conceptualization of civil-military relations,' *The Routledge Handbook of Civil-Military Relations*, eds. Thomas C. Bruneau et al (London: Routledge, 2013): 13-19. Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996) is perhaps the best example of Huntington's problematic later work which has been criticized by scholars in a number of fields from a variety of different angles too large to discuss in detail here. Strachan, *British Army*, 11, 20-21, 37-39, 198-199. P.E. Razzell, 'Social Origins of Officers in the Indian and British Home Army, 1758-1962,' *British Journal of Sociology* 14, no. 3 (1963): 248-260. Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 46-48.

In addition to Huntington, the works of Amos Perlmutter and his concept of 'praetorianism' have also proven analytically useful to this study. In Perlmutter's conception, politically active 'praetorian officers', who view the army, not unlike Fortescue, as the defender of the nation and/or state and consequently are often suspicious of civilian authorities. He additionally argues that 'praetorianism' arises in states with weak civilian institutions, often during or after wars or periods of transition and internal strife. These characteristics, along with the propensity of 'praetorian' militaries to engage in factional politics and orchestrate coups, makes Perlmutter's analysis useful for application to the Madras Army officer corps in the period leading up to the 1776 coup. Additionally, the work of Huntington and Perlmutter, and that of other civil-military theorists, has provided some illustrative comparisons. The work of historians writing on civil-military relations, however, has proven somewhat more useful to this study.[34]

Two historians have proven particularly useful in this regard, with the first among them being Hew Strachan, author of *The Politics of the British Army.* This book has proven immensely useful for the purposes of this study, as Strachan, despite largely focusing on the 19th and 20th centuries, does push his analysis of Britain's army back into the 17th and 18th centuries in his early chapters. Moreover, he also addresses British India, and even the EIC Army, directly on multiple occasions, though always in the context of Britain and the Empire. In doing so he also discusses the alleged 'professionalism' of EIC officers in relation to their British Army counterparts, although he acknowledges that the application of the term to 18th century officers remains problematic. Additionally, Strachan engages with civil-military theory at times and has

[34]Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times: On Professionals, Praetorians, and Revolutionary Soldiers* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977), 12-13. See also Amos Perlmutter, 'The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities,' *Comparative Politics* 1, No. 3 (April 1969), pp. 382-404.

helped to place it in context and has also proven useful historiographically through his critique of Fortescue's histories.[35]

The second historian who has proven useful from a civil-military perspective, whose work is more relevant to a study of British India, is Douglas Peers, whose book *Between Mars and Mammon* focuses on the Company Raj during the early 19th century. Although the text post-dates the period of focus for this study, it has been extremely helpful as a guide to analysis and to the function of the EIC Army within the Company state generally. Indeed, its utility in part is a result of this temporal difference, as it offers a point of comparison for EIC civil-military relations during the 1760s and 1770s, in some instances illustrating differences (as with the level of control exercised over the Presidencies) and at others marked continuities (as with militarism and hybridity). However, it has also been useful in numerous other ways, not least in Peers's development of the concept of 'Anglo-Indian Militarism' and his elucidation of the broad elision of civil and military authority during the period.[36]

Utilizing these studies this dissertation applies concepts from civil-military relations to the Madras Army in the 1760s and 1770s while noting the inherent issues surrounding such application. In doing so it will seek to build on the work of Peers and Strachan through original research on a period and locale previously overlooked in civil military-analysis. Although references to civil-military relations will occur throughout this work, it will leave a broader discussion of theoretical concepts to the conclusion where it will also identify further avenues of study.

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[35]Strachan, *British Army*, 2, 6, 17-18, 20-21, 26, 74-118.
[36]Peers, *Mars and Mammon*, 1-12, 45-50, 54-55, 65-67.

Chapter Two: Historical Background

2.1 Introduction

> The facts of Mughal decline and political subdivision are irrefutable, but the conclusion that what then emerged was a general collapse of political authority and a descent into uncontrolled violence and endemic warfare, verging on anarchy, has been questioned… In some areas, it is argued, Mughal rule was replaced by regional authorities capable of establishing a stable order. Of the areas where the East India Company traded, this was most marked in Bengal.[37]
>
> P.J. Marshall,
> *The Oxford History of the British Empire*

While this quotation succinctly relates the situation on the subcontinent prior to the EIC's transformation into a politico-military power in the mid-18th century, it also demonstrates a common geographic bias in the academic literature in which dynamic Mughal successor states like Bengal attract more scholarly attention than areas considered to be relative backwaters. This Bengal-centrism in the study of British India, which is prominent in both Indian and foreign scholarship, is in part the product of historical developments.

In determining why Bengal and the north eclipse the south in so much scholarship, one must take note of the fact that Bengal had become a more populous and economically dynamic region of India than the South by the 18th century. This arose in part from the relative decline of textile production in South India, which in turn was a result of the growth of textile production in Bengal. This in turn was because of Bengal's larger population leading to cheaper labour costs and cheaper production overall, with the shift beginning in the mid-17th century. Textiles had been a staple export in India and critical component of the subcontinental and Indian Ocean trade networks since ancient times, and only became more important with the arrival of European traders in the early modern period. This shift of the centre of production to the northeast had

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[37]P.J. Marshall, 'The British in Asia: Trade to Dominion, 1700-1765,' *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. ii., eds. P.J. Marshall et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 495.

potentially dramatic effects on the South Indian economy. Naturally fertile and in an advantageous position for inland trade and communications up and down the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers, Bengal and its neighbours in the northeast occupied a more advantageous position economically. Moreover, unlike Southern India, Bengal was spared the worst of the devastation brought about by incessant warfare in the Deccan and further south as the Mughal Empire's central authorities lost control over these areas in the early 18th century. This was at least in part due to Bengal's relative distance from the Maratha center of power, with Maratha expeditions against Bengal only becoming a threat in the1740s.[38] However, in the long term these advantages also proved to be something of a liability for Bengal's rulers. The region's wealth inevitably attracted the attention of European trading companies who by mid-century increasingly resorted to the use of force to maintain and expand their trade and land revenues. All these economic and political factors contributed to the growing focus on Bengal, and Calcutta in particular, as the centre of British power in India after the battles of Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764). Moreover, the maintenance of Bengal as the centre of British India has had a lasting impact on scholarship even after Independence, leading Douglas Peers and Nandini Gooptu to assert that many scholars implicitly characterizes the situation in Bengal and the Gangetic plain as an India norm.[39]

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[38]Stewart Gordon, *The Marathas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 132-133.
[39]David Washbrook, while confident regarding this shift in textile production is cautious about claiming that the South Indian economy was in decline in this period considering the limited sources available. Nevertheless, he asserts that changes in production, demographic shifts, and warfare had enough of an impact to at the very least curb economic growth. David Washbrook, 'Colonialism, Globalization and the Economy of South-East India, c.1700-1900' (2004), paper presented at 2nd Global Economic History Network Conference, Irvine California, 5-7, 19. David Washbrook, 'Merchants, Markets, and Commerce in early Modern South India,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010) 266-289 [278]. See also R. Crill, *Textiles from India: The Global Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See also Douglas Peers and Nandini Gooptu, 'Introduction,' eds., *India and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2.

In addition to the geographic, economic, and political factors discussed above, cultural and ideological elements have also contributed to this historical bias. Ideological factors range from imperialist characterizations of the British as heirs to the North Indian Mughal Empire, through racialist portrayals of northern Indians as superior to Southerners and the concept of the so-called 'Martial Races,' to post-independence characterizations of South India as backward and conservative. Cultural factors at play in this bias are varied, but notably include the reality of cultural differences between southern and northern India, perhaps best exemplified by the persistent influence of linguistic differences.[40]

Because of their shared Indo-European linguistic heritage, many European and North American scholars find it easier to learn and therefore engage with source materials in the Indo-Aryan languages of North India than the Dravidian languages of the South. This is true for both modern North Indian languages like Hindi/Urdu and Bengali, but also of classical languages like Pali and Sanskrit, with serious scholarly interest in the latter language among Europeans antiquarians, linguists, and orientalists developing as early at the 18th century. Sir William Jones (1746-1794), who founded the Asiatic Society in 1784, is a notable early example.[41] And though some of these languages, as well as specific forms of Persian, were used by elites and administrators in the south well into the 19th century, they were always more widespread in the north. Moreover, the multiplicity of languages in South India still complicates scholarship today,

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[40]Imperial and triumphalist (and racialist) narratives are as ubiquitous among 19th and early 20th century British historians as nationalist and social ones are among early post-independence Indian scholars, with the former evident in the campaign historians cited in Chapter 3. For discussion of the so-called 'Martial Races' see Heather Streets-Salter, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (New York: Palgrave, 2004). For discussion of pro-Northern and anti-Southern biases in Indian historiography see Noboru Korashima, 'Preface,' *A Concise History of South India: Issues and Interpretations* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014).
[41]For a thorough discussion of Jones and the early history of European study of North Indian languages see Chapter 2 of Thomas R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1997), 28-29 [Chapter 2, 28-61].

as does the lack of institutions for studying these languages in depth outside of India. Moreover, the relatively broader range of English-language primary sources relevant to the North resulting from the politico-economic factors discussed above and the paucity of relevant pre-colonial South Indian sources in any language also played a role. When combined these factors indirectly led both contemporary (outside) observers and historians to focus on the Bengal Presidency in the same way that historians of nation-states often focus on the area around the national capital or other core regions. The resulting Bengal-centric secondary literature and the influence of one generation of scholars upon the next has perpetuated this bias.[42]

19th and 20th century historical grand narratives and theories also played a role in these developments, particularly relating to teleological interpretations of history. From triumphalist histories of conquest and utilitarian critics, through 'great man' biographical focus on figures such as Clive and Hastings, orientalists, and racial theorists, to the proponents of the 'civilizing mission' and Marxist history, Western scholars have with few exceptions largely focused on the North. Setbacks in the south may have contributed to this as the campaigns fought in the 1760s and 1770s do not easily fit into British triumphalist, nationalist, and 'great man' narratives. The Madras Army's defeat in the First Anglo-Mysore War, as discussed below in Chapter Three, is an excellent example of such a defeat. Furthermore, the politically fragmented nature of early modern South India after the decline and disintegration of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the fact that Vijayanagara was a 'segmentary state' while it existed, means that fewer administrative records are available. Early modern South India the region does not fit easily into popular Western scholarly conceptions of state patterns like the 'Gunpowder

[42]Richard M. Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761: Eight Indian Lives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008 [Or. pub. 2005]), 1-2. Washbrook, 'Economy of South-East India,' 1.

Empire' model of Marshall G.S. Hodgson and William H. McNeill discussed previously. Applied to Mughal North India as well as to the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Persia, the 'Gunpowder Empire' hypothesis argues that the advent of cannon and small arms technology led to politico-military expansion, consolidation, and transformation. The diffused, segmentary nature of Vijayanagara and the lack of any single dominant state in the South after its decline has complicated historical study and hampered scholarship.[43]

In terms of indigenous or Indian-based historiography, ranging from Mughal chroniclers, through the Bengal Renaissance, to nationalist, post-colonial and subaltern studies, the scholarly literature has also tended to focus on North India. Again, this is unsurprising considering political and demographic realities including the North's larger population. Moreover, all of this is not to say that peninsular India has been completely ignored by scholars. Indeed, this chapter and that preceding attest to the literature on the region as it relates to political history, with John F. Richards work on the Mughal Empire's southern periphery, Stewart Gordon's on the Marathas, Burton Stein's on Vijayanagara, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam's on South Indian politics in the period all having proven useful. Nevertheless, despite some clear steps forward in the last forty years, it is hard to dispute David Washbrook's assertion in 1976 that the lack of scholarly work on the South 'represents a vast gap on the historical map of India.'[44]

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[43]For discussion of Vijayanagara and the concept of the 'segmentary state' see Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985 [Or. pub. 1980]), 21-23, 266-268, 272-274, 280-282, 366-367. Washbrook, 'Merchants, Markets,' 271-272.See Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 [Or. pub. 1989]) and Douglas E. Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2011) for thorough explorations of these topics.

[44]Though Sanjay Subrahmanyam's work on South India and the EIC extents far beyond political history to economic, cultural, and intellectual discussions, for the purposes of this study his political work has been most useful. See Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions: Making Polities in Early Modern South India* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001). David Washbrook, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 7. Peers and Gooptu, 'Introduction,' 2.

2.2 South India on the Mughal Periphery

By the late 17th century the Mughal Empire had incorporated much of North India for more than a century and a half, with its territories reaching from Afghanistan and the borders of Safavid Persia in the west to Bengal in the east, and from Central Asia in the north to the Deccan and the Carnatic in the south. Although their hold on the Deccan was weaker and more recently established, Mughal political culture would have a lasting effect on the geopolitics of the region, influencing both the internal systems of administration and the external interactions of many of the states in the region including former Mughal provinces and their rivals. As one of the three great 'Gunpowder Empires,' Mughal success rested on a revolution in military tactics which integrated mobile horse archers and heavy cavalry with early modern artillery. Though musketeers were also employed in increasing numbers over time, due to the prevalence and effectiveness of bow-armed cavalry in Mughal warfare, they never became as ubiquitous in the armies of the Mughal Empire as they were in 16th and 17th century Europe and Sengoku Japan (c. 1467-1603).[45]

The forms of Mughal administration and political culture which would remain influential into the period discussed in this work were only really established during the long reign of Akbar (1542-1605). The system of rule he established administratively diffuse, with extensive powers delegated to regional governors. It was, however, highly centralized ideologically, with political legitimacy, authority, and rights to land and revenue resting in the person of the Emperor. In the

[45]See Jos Gommans, *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and the High Road to Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2002). Washbrook, 'Merchants, Markets,' 271-272. Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (Oxford: Routledge, 2004), 69, 207-209. Kenneth Chase, *Firearms: A Global History to 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 206.

18th century the persistent centrality of the figure of the emperor contributed to the continued maintenance of weak and puppet emperors long after they had lost real political and military power. Indians and Europeans alike continued to seek revenue assignments and grants of office from the emperor to legitimize their *de facto* territorial control and political power. However, in Akbar's time the system functioned well, 'rest[ing],' as it did, 'upon active central control over an essentially decentralized fiscal structure.[46]

To maintain this degree of control Akbar broke with the feudal-style *iqta'* system of medieval Muslim South- and Central Asia, whereby subordinates were granted rights to land in return for administrative and military service. He instead implemented what came to be known as the *jagirdari* system which only granted his nobles temporary rights to land revenues (*jagirs*) commensurate with the importance and level of responsibility of the offices they currently held. It is important to note that in theory at least, it was only the revenue to which they were entitled and not the land. As a result, if a noble failed to perform their duties to Akbar's satisfaction he could reassign them to an office with lower prestige and/or reduce the value of the land granted to them. This system allowed the Emperor to reassign his nobles' offices and revenue rights even when they upheld their responsibilities as a means of counteracting the development of permanent rights to land/revenue and hereditary offices by preventing them from developing local centers of power and regional loyalties.[47]

Though this system would break down in the early 18th century with the consequence that regional power centers would develop around powerful Mughal magnates, the importance of

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[46] John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 56, 58-59,
[47]The terms *jagir*, *jagirdar*, *jagirdari*, and associated terms like *mansabdar* pre-date Akbar's reforms and are associated with the medieval *iqta* system, but there is a modern scholarly distinction between the two land grant systems. Richards, *Mughal Empire*, 58-68.

offices and revenue rights assigned by the Emperor would continue well into the period of British dominance. And as shall be seen, the shortcomings of the Mughal revenue assignment system would play a part alongside dynastic warfare in the unravelling of the Empire in the wake of Emperor Aurangzeb's (1618-1707, r. 1658-1707) southern conquests.

The Mughal Empire reached its greatest territorial extent during the reign of Aurangzeb, with the conquests of the Deccan Sultanates of Bijapur (1685) and Golkonda (1687) and subsequent campaigns against the Marathas (1689-1698), which pushed the empire as far south as the fort of Gingee in the Central Carnatic. This resulted in the creation of four new *subahs* (provinces) in the empire. Aurangzeb played an integral role in this expansion both as Viceroy of the Deccan under his father Shah Jahan (1592-1666, r. 1628-1658) and through a series of military campaigns conducted during his own long reign, notably including those mentioned above. However, the emergence of the Marathas in Central and Southern India was to prove a significant threat to the Empire's integrity throughout Aurangzeb's reign. His hold on the South was never as secure as it was in the northern plains. Moreover, he never conquered Mysore, Madurai, or the far southwest. The succession dispute following his death, when combined with multiple invasions from the northwest and the devolution of political authority to regional governors, would signal an end to the dynamic period of Mughal rule. Aurangzeb's reign represented the high-water mark of the Empire in territorial and military terms.[48]

There are many theories which have been advanced to account for the decline of central authority in the Mughal Empire. Simplistic analyses commenced with contemporary chroniclers

[48]For a full discussion of Aurangzeb's campaigns in South India see Chapter 8 of Richards, *Mughal Empire*, 220-252. For the campaigns as they relate to Golconda see John F. Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 52-74. Gommans, *Mughal Warfare,* 42, 193-196. Peter Lorge, *The Asian Military Revolution: From Gunpowder to the Bomb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 144-145.

and continue to this day, ranging from accusations of decadence and moral decay among the elite, through European criticism of the political and military excesses of an 'oriental despotism,' to Hindu-nationalist narratives focusing on the destabilizing effect of the rise of the Marathas and characterizing their campaigns as wars of liberation against a 'foreign,' Islamic dynasty. Historical analyses have become more nuanced over time, with the prevailing theories among scholars in both India and the West integrating political, cultural, and socio-economic causes. 20th century Marxist economic analyses exemplified by the works of Irfan Habib became influential and their impact on the topic is felt to this day in scholars' focus on economic factors and the concept of a 'Mughal agrarian crisis' resulting from an insufficient number of *jagirs* for an expanded pool of administrator-aristocrats in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. However, most modern theories assert that some combination of economic, political, social, and (increasingly) cultural and environmental factors were at play.[49]

A persuasive explanation dating to the 1960s is that increased factionalism among the Mughal aristocracy was the primary cause, sometimes advanced with the proviso that this was the result of the rapid expansion of the senior nobility during Aurangzeb's reign, when the number of high officers in the imperial administration (*amirs* and *mansabdars*) nearly doubled.[50] This assertion echoes the commentary of contemporary chroniclers in its focus on the ill-effects of an expanded aristocracy and also utilizes numerous other primary sources, and builds on Habib's 'Mughal agrarian crisis.' Proponents of this theory include Satish Chandra and M. Athar Ali, who argue that the increase in size of the aristocracy was not accompanied by a

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[49]See 'The Agrarian Crisis of the Mughal Empire,' Chapter 9 of Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of the Mughal Empire, 1556-1707*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 [1st pub. 1963]). See also Irfan Habib, 'The Agrarian Causes of the Fall of the Mughal Empire,' *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. Meena Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 23-52. See also Gordon, *The Marathas,* 1-3, 5-7.
[50]John F. Richards, 'The Imperial Crisis in the Deccan,' *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. Meena Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 53.

corresponding increase in revenue sources to pay them and their military followers. They further point out that the expansion itself resulted from Aurangzeb's military adventurism, particularly his southern campaigns, during which he brought a considerable portion of the region's elites into the Mughal fold but never consolidated his hold on the South. The resulting paucity of *jagirs* to sustain the expanded nobilityled to resentment of the Southerners by the more established aristocracy from the North and infighting ensued.[51]

An alternative theory was advanced by John F. Richards in the 1970s. He both challenged and built on Satish Chandra and M. Athar Ali's arguments, shifted the focus, and asserted that the lack of internal and external security in the South played a greater role. He contends that Aurangzeb's failure to protect his nobles' southern *jagirs* from raiding by the Marathas, Nayaks, Gonds, Bedars and other regional warrior groups in the newly acquired southern territories was the primary factor. This resulted from the Emperor's inability to establish lasting political ties with the above-mentioned groups' *zamindars* (hereditary landlords) and other powerful magnates. Richards also asserts that Aurangzeb's desire for further conquests in the Marathas territories led to 'under-administration and over-exploitation' of the *subahs* (provinces) of Bijapur and Golconda in the Deccan, and served to draw away the military men needed to protect and administer these territories effectively. As the focus of the imperial elite shifted to North-Central India during the struggle for power after the death of Aurangzeb this security vacuum became the norm. Local civil and military officials came to see themselves as isolated. As a result, these officials, like their counterparts in Awadh, Bengal, and the Punjab along the

[51]See Satish Chandra, *Essays in Medieval Indian Economic History* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1987), and Satish Chandra, 'The Jagirdari Crisis: A Fresh Look,' *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. Meena Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 13-22. See also M. Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), and M. Athar Ali, 'The Passing of the Empire: The Mughal Case,' *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. Meena Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 128-140.

Empire's Northern and Eastern periphery, became increasingly self-reliant. They simultaneously started withholding more and more of their revenue from the central authorities and were unwilling to risk their own military resources to achieve the goals of the imperial center. At the same time raids by competing southern warrior elites increased in the Deccan, and the administrators and local elites were often willing to come to terms with the raiders instead of risking their own position. In short, Richards argues that the breakdown of central authority was a matter of political-administrative, as opposed to purely socio-economic, failure. However, he does not dispute the challenges that arose from Aurangzeb's southern conquests in triggering this deterioration.[52]

Subsequent scholars incorporated the above approaches into their analysis, but also began to challenge the narrative of decline itself. In *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India* (1986) Muzaffar Alam argues that while decentralization did occur within the Mughal state system in the first half of the 18th century, this fracturing of authority gave rise to several politically, economically, and culturally dynamic regional powers centered around increasingly powerful former Mughal governors. In his view these administrators-turned-rulers, while certainly independent actors by mid-century, nevertheless for the most part retained titles of authority derived from the Mughal system and continued to view themselves and their subordinates as part of an overarching Mughal polity. Although Alam focuses on Awadh and the Punjab, this interpretation has been applied by others throughout the subcontinent and is equally applicable to the politico-military history of the Deccan and Carnatic in the 18th century. Indeed, the Maratha Confederacy and Hyderabad emerged as two of the most powerful regional polities. They became two of the five powers who would vie for dominance in Southern India in the latter half

[52]Richards, 'The Imperial Crisis,' 53-55, 58-59, 63, 77. Richards, *Golconda*, 236-263.

of the century, the other three being the Kingdom of Mysore on the Mughal Empire's southern periphery and the emerging hybrid-states of the French and English East India Companies.[53]

2.3 The Major Polities of Mid-18th Century South India

Aurangzeb's push into the Deccan not only had a transformative effect on the Mughal Empire, but also on the South Indian territories beyond its borders. David Washbrook asserts that the Empire's expansion southward, the subsequent contraction of Imperial authority, and the century of warfare in the resulting power vacuum drastically altered the military and military-related occupations in the region.[54] The effect of this was significant enough to reshape the regional economy, not only among soldiers but also in the craft and service industries that catered to their needs. Washbrook himself points out the huge role played by service-sector camp followers of the various armies active in the 18th century South Indian economy, and notes that of soldiers themselves, citing Dirk Kolff's assertion that there were 250,000 professional cavalrymen active in peninsular India in the latter-half of the 18th century. Understandably the Mughal invasion also had an enormous impact on the states of South India politically, with large-scale, centralized states beginning to coalesce in the region for the first time in centuries. Building on Kolff's work, Washbrook notes that further reactions to the Mughal invasion included larger – and increasingly more 'professional' – armies and stronger states with more sophisticated and increasingly coercive revenue systems. These developments, which allowed these states to intervene more directly in their own economies (to, for example, foster specific industries or

[53]See Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and Punjab, 1707-1748,* 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013 [Or. pub. 1986]).
[54]Washbrook, 'Economy of South-East India,' 23-24, 26-27.

impose profitable monopolies), would set the stage for the fiscal-militarism of Mysore and the Carnatic-EIC hybrid state in the latter half of the 18th century.[55]

The Marathas

According to Stewart Gordon, the Marathas emerged as a linguistic and cultural group distinct from other Marathi-speakers in the domains of the Bahmani Sultanate (1327-1527) and its successor states. These included the Deccan Sultanates (the territories of which roughly correspond with the Mughal *subahs* of Golconda and Bijapur), and broadly correspond to the modern Indian state of Maharashtra. Though largely agrarian in occupation, in contrast to other groups Maratha identity was not based on caste, as members of the group came from several distinct but related castes. Lacking strong linguistic and caste identity, the Marathas owed their distinction from other Marathi-speakers in the period to their military service under the Sultanates and the privileges that came with it. They were able to fill this niche due in part to the relatively few Muslim political and military elites in the sultanates, and because much of the traditional, and relatively higher caste (*kshatriya*) Hindu military elite of the region had fled further south in the wake of their defeat by the Bahmani – eventually going on to play a role in the founding of the Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1646). Over time 'Maratha' came to be associated with the local warrior chiefs of Maharashtra, their bands of mounted warriors, and their families. Maratha unity, both amongst themselves and with other Marathi-speakers, was aided not only by a shared language and religion but also by the largely agrarian nature of

[55]See Dirk Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput, and Sepoy: The Ethnohistory of the Military Labour Market of Hindustan, 1450-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002 [Or. pub. 1990]). C.A. Bayly has termed state use of these increased coercive capacities 'Asian Mercantilism'. See C.A. Bayly, *India and the Making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Maharashtra, which had fewer castes and less concrete caste divisions than elsewhere on the subcontinent (especially in the north).[56]

The growing power of the Marathas beginning in the late 17th century had played a critical role in the eclipse of the Mughal Empire as a centralized state, with the Marathas eventually becoming the premier military power in central India in the power vacuum that resulted from imperial disintegration. The early successes of the Marathas under Shivaji Bhonsle (c. 1627/1630-1680) correspond with Aurangzeb's expansion into the South and played a key role in both frustrating and perpetuating Mughal military ambitions in the region. In this way the emergence of the Marathas had a destabilizing effect in the region.[57]

Shivaji, like so many other key players in the Deccan, began his political and military career as a commander in the service of another state, in this case the Sultanate of Bijapur. He led a Maratha rebellion against the Sultanate while still a teenager in the 1640s, and after several victories against his erstwhile employers he established a small Maratha state in the northwest of Peninsular India in the 1750s, roughly encompassing the coastal plain of modern Maharashtra (the Konkan) excluding the European enclaves, a small area of the nearby Deccan plateau (within Desh), and a strip of the Western Ghats separating the two. The harsh terrain of the Ghats, when combined with the effective use of hill forts and light cavalry, made the Marathas a highly effective fighting force able to raid widely and withstand successive Bijapuri and Mughal invasions.[58]

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[56]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 13-18, 35, 53-54. Barbara N. Ramusack, *The Indian Princes and their States,* online ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008 [or. pub. 2004]), 27. Eaton, *Social History*, 122-123, 154, 187-191, 200. See Footnote 3.
[57]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 59, 72-76, 92-93.
[58]Michael N. Pearson, 'Shivaji and the Decline of the Mughal Empire,' *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. Meena Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 91. Gordon, *The Marathas*, 12, 37, 44-46, 59-65.

The Maratha emphasis on light cavalry to the relative exclusion of infantry and to an even greater extent artillery in this period, made them much more mobile than their Mughal counterparts, who retained their heavy cavalry, infantry, and artillery trains despite their long supply lines while fighting in the Deccan. This difference gave the Marathas greater mobility, though their lack of cannons prevented them from conducting effective siege operations and their rapid speed of advance forced them to break free of supply lines and forage from the countryside, often alienating the local populace. The Mughals, on the other hand, though better able to conduct sieges and possessing more disciplined soldiers, had to maintain long, vulnerable supply lines, and had to pay their forces in cash in an impoverished, hostile country. The fact that the Marathas were defending their own territories whenever the Mughals attacked them compensated for this disadvantage somewhat, as they did not need to conduct sieges often. Moreover, the Maratha focus on raiding, as opposed to capturing and holding territory, when operating outside of their homelands in this period, meant that sieges were largely unnecessary for their offensive operations as well.[59]

In addition to these military advantages Shivaji began to consolidate his control of his core territories quite quickly, forming them into something like a state by focusing on raiding outside them to the exclusion of further territorial aggrandizement. The wealth secured in the raids paid for further operations and solidified the military power of the nascent Maratha state. As a result, when the Marathas were defeated by the Mughals, as at Purandar (1665), they were

[59]See Stewart Gordon, 'Zones Of Military Entrepreneurship In India, 1500-1700,' *Marathas, Marauders, and State Formation in Eighteenth-Century India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Gordon, *The Marathas*, 75.

able to endure.[60] Addressing the settlement between Shivaji and the Mughals after the battle, Gordon argues that

> While the Mughals resumed all of Shivaji's lands, leaving him only the twelve forts, the Treaty of Purandar was not a surrender of Shivaji to Mughal imperial might, but the result of extended negotiation which reflected the power realities of Maharashtra and [the Mughal commander] Jai Singh's overall strategy for the conquest of Bijapur and Golconda.[61]

Shivaji and his successors' abilities to repulse Mughal invasions and raid their enemies' territories with relative impunity seems to have damaged the prestige of the Mughal Emperor and Empire. It also exposed the deficiencies in the Mughal regional administrative system even before the death of Aurangzeb. Added to this was the mythic character of Shivaji himself, who after the Battle of Purandar had been brought to the Emperor's court. There he was initially received as an honoured guest before being treacherously imprisoned. Shivaji subsequently escaped back to his own territories and continued to fight the Mughals.

Despite some military setbacks, and repeated and not always successful Mughal attempts to integrate the Marathas more fully into their Empire, the Maratha polities would remain independent powers into the 19th century. Their greatest period of military expansion occurred in the first half of the 18th century, during the reign of Shahu (1682-1749, r. 1708-1749). Although Shivaji had been crowned *Chatrapati* (roughly a high-king or emperor) of the Marathas in 1674 and his descendants had succeeded him as leaders of the Empire, by the time of his grandson Shahu the Maratha military and state were increasingly in the hands of a succession of powerful chief ministers called *peshwas*. The *peshwas* became the power behind the throne and de facto leaders of the Maratha Empire prior to its fracturing. Although Balaji Vishwanath (1662-1720)

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[60]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 74, 76, 78, 80-90. Pearson, 'Shivaji,' 91. For details regarding Shivaji's administration see A.R. Kulkarni, *Maharashtra in the Age of Shivaji* (Pune: R.J. Deshmukh, 1969).
[61]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 74.

had greatly increased the power of the office during his own tenure as *peshwa*, it was in 1720 when the office passed to his son Baji Rao (1700-1740) at the young age of twenty that it became hereditary and the family's hold on it was cemented. In the next two decades Baji Rao would greatly expand the Maratha Empire's territories, especially in North and Central India.[62]

However, as the Maratha Empire expanded it also began to decentralize. Though the *peshwa* remained the preeminent Maratha leader, by the mid-18th century the expanded polity began to facture into a confederacy of regional dynastic leaders with their own political agendas. At different times this resulted in, at best uncoordinated military and political policy, and at worst in internecine conflict. The *peshwa* lost further control and prestige after the Maratha defeat at the hands of the Afghans and their allies at the Third Battle of Panipat (1761), which halted their expansion into Northern India.[63]

Consequently, the Marathas were perhaps the most formidable military power on the subcontinent in the wake of Mughal devolution, but they were increasingly disunited. Moreover, the defeat of the Marathas, like the defeats that Shivaji had inflicted on the Mughals in the previous century, showed that they were not invincible and encouraged their enemies to take advantage of these divisions in the Maratha Empire. One emerging power that benefitted from this internal division was the EIC, who was able to secure and maintain their holdings in and around Bengal in part because the Marathas were either engaged with the Afghans or fighting among themselves. Furthermore, in the Deccan, victims of Maratha invasions, including the Nizam and his French allies as well as Haidar Ali of Mysore, sought to exploit this situation.[64]

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[62]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 81, 87-90, 107-110, 114-131, 137. Kaushik Roy, *War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849* (New York: Routledge, 2011): 95-102, 128.
[63]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 139, 152-158. Roy, *War, Culture and Society*, 95, 102-106.
[64]Gordon, *The Marathas*, 130, 144-146, 158-159. Roy, *War, Culture and Society*, 71-72, 105-106.

The Nawab of the Carnatic and the Company authorities at Madras would also benefit from this geopolitical fluidity, as it allowed them some respite from invasion and a chance to re-establish their authority. Nevertheless, the Marathas would continue to have a strong influence on Carnatic politics as enemies of Mysore and Hyderabad and potential allies of the EIC. The Marathas also remained the distant suzerains of Thanjavur, a kingdom in the Southern Carnatic ruled by a Maratha dynasty.[65]

The Nizams of Hyderabad

If any state in the 18th century Deccan illustrates the continuities of Mughal political culture it is certainly Hyderabad. The same process of devolution of political authority, which saw the establishment of powerful, *de facto* independent, and semi-sovereign states like Bengal and Awadh in northern India, is evident in the rise of the Nizams of Hyderabad. A family of Mughal administrators, they would parlay their extensive powers as governors on the imperial periphery into autonomy as the Imperial center waned. Controlling a large state in the Deccan centred around the city of Hyderabad, the Nizams were the nominal overlords of all South India in the Mughal political system, owing to their vice-regal status as *Subadars* (governors or viceroys) of the Deccan. This title, however, did not always translate into real-world political authority. Some outlying territories within the Nizams' own political orbit spun off into distinct, autonomous polities, with some even going so far as to challenge the authority of Hyderabad and seek

[65]G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1784* (Woodbridge: Bowdell Press, 2013): 191.

territorial and political aggrandizement at the Nizams' expense as Muhammad Ali would in the Carnatic Wars.[66]

The founder of Hyderabad as a semi-autonomous political entity has customarily been identified as Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan Siddiqi Bayafandi (1671-1748), also known by his titles Asaf Jah (commonly used in place of his personal name), Chin Qilich Khan, and Nizam-ul-Mulk, the latter of which would become the title applied to his heirs as *Subadars* of the Deccan. Born to a powerful family in the Mughal aristocracy, he rose through the Empire's military and administrative ranks rapidly during Aurangzeb's reign due to family connections and his skill as a soldier. Following the death of the Emperor, Asaf Jah served as Viceroy of the Deccan for an extended period between 1713 and 1721, allowing him to develop strong connections with the local elite during a period of civil war when imperial authority was in decline. Having already played the role of a 'kingmaker' in the tumultuous decade after Aurangzeb's death, a victory over rival Mughal generals secured him the position of *Vizier* (prime or chief minister) at the Imperial Court in 1722. However, Asaf Jah's attempts at administrative and fiscal reform were resented by powerful factions at the Mughal court, and in 1724 he resigned and returned to the Deccan, ignoring orders that had instead directed him to Awadh to serve as governor.[67]

Retaking the position of *subadar* in a short but brutal war with his erstwhile successor, Asaf Jah went on to secure his territories and create a patrimony for his heirs. Confronted by Mughal forces seeking to reimpose imperial authority, the first Nizam allied with the Marathas against his sovereign and gained a victory which solidified his position in the Deccan. However,

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[66]Marshall, 'Trade to Dominion,' 496. Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 25-26. See Chapter 2, Section 4 regarding the Carnatic Wars.

[67]Richards, *Golconda*, 264, 275-276, 293-299. Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 25. William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, vol. i, ed. Jadunath Sarkar (Calcutta: Sarkar and Sons, 1922), 41, 269-271, 328. William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, vol. 2, ed. Jadunath Sarkar (Calcutta: Sarkar and Sons, 1922), 106-107, 131-137.

he was always careful to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor, with Hyderabad notably continuing to mint coins and have Friday Prayers read in the Emperor's name until the 1857 Rebellion. Moreover, Asaf Jah would continue to participate in North Indian politics and came to the aid of the Mughal Emperor on multiple occasions, notably joining his forces with those of Emperor Muhammad Shah (1702-1748, r. 1719-1748) in the ill-fated 1738 campaign against Nader Shah's (1688-1747, r. 1736-1747) invading Persian army.[68]

Cooperation with the Marathas was not the normal strategy for Asaf Jah or his successor, with raiding and outright warfare between the two rival polities being perennial occurrences in the early to mid-18th century. Maratha raids into Hyderabad's territories occurred throughout Asaf Jah's reign and continued after his death in 1748. Due to their frequent inability to defeat the Marathas in the field, Asaf Jah and his sons were often forced to pay *chauth*, a form of tribute imposed on areas nominally under Mughal rule but nonetheless within the Marathas' sphere of influence. Failure to pay *chauth* usually resulted in a Maratha invasion, leading some to claim that by the by mid-century the Nizams were little more than tributaries of the Marathas. This description, however, is clearly a simplification of the complex tributary and alliance systems of late-Mughal India, where overlapping polities and spheres of influence were the norm among both Indian and European actors.[69]

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[68]Richards, *Golconda*, 298-299. Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 25. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, vol. 2, 148, 242, 252, 353. See Michael Axworthy, *Sword of Persia: Nader Shah, from Tribal Warrior to Conquering Tyrant* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009).

[69]Irvine, *Later Mughals*, vol. ii, 252, 303-305. Gordon, *The Marathas*, 76-77, 109-110. Bryant, *Emergence*, 62. Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 26-27. See also Stewart Gordon, 'Legitimacy and Loyalty in Some Successor States of the Eighteenth Century,' *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*, ed. John Richards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). Washbrook discusses the economic importance of armies on the march as centers of trade and services and recognizes the multi-directional nature of military tribute in early modern South India, characterizing it in economic terms as a form of 'non-market' exchange. Washbrook, 'Merchants, Markets,' 266-267, 276.

One area where competition between the Nizam and the Marathas occurred beyond Asaf Jah's immediate domain was the Carnatic, to the south of Hyderabad and east of Mysore along the Coromandel Coast. Though under the Nizam's nominal authority, from the late 1690s this territory had been ruled by the Nawabs of the Carnatic. In addition to repeated Maratha invasions, the area was a focus of European trade in the Deccan, and the representatives of the English and French East India Companies would become significant players in the region's politics by the middle of the 18th century. Indeed, the death of Asaf Jah in 1748 and subsequent disputes between his successors, combined with simultaneous disputes over the office of Nawab of the Carnatic, would be significant events in the period of unrest known the Carnatic Wars (1744-1763) which will be discussed at length below.[70]

The Kingdom of Mysore

Mysore was not a significant military or political power in the Deccan prior to the mid-18th century. The founding of Mysore is traditionally dated to 1399, when it supposedly was a minor vassal state of the Vijayanagara Empire of South India. But substantial evidence for the nascent state does not exist until the Empire was in decline in the 16th century. In this period the state began to expand, often at the expense of a declining Vijayanagara, and while Mysore's rulers continued to acknowledge Vijayanagara's supremacy, at least formally, by the early 17th century they had ceased to send tribute to their nominal overlord.[71]

[70]Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 25-26. Bryant, *Emergence*, 49-51, 54-55, 62.
[71]Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions*, 67-68. Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 28, 30. Stein, *Vijayanagara*, 69, 82, 132-135, 146. Suryanath U. Kamath, *A Concise History of Karnataka: From Pre-Historic Times to the Present* (Bangalore: Jupiter Books, 2001), 227. See also Burton Stein, *Peasant, State and Society in Medieval South India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985 [Or. pub, 1980]). N. S. Ramachandriah, *Mysore* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1972),

Mysore was historically ruled by the Wadiyar (Wodeyar) Dynasty. A series of dynamic rulers defended Mysore from the advances of the Deccan Sultanates – and later the Marathas and Mughals – while continuing to expand their own territory throughout the 17th century. This process culminated with the reign of Devaraja Wadiyar II (1645-1704, r. 1673-1704), commonly referred to as Chikka Devaraja. A contemporary of Aurangzeb and Shivaji, Chikka Devaraja more than tripled the size of Mysore, pushing its boundaries further north into the Deccan and south and east to the Baramahal and Salem at the edge of the Carnatic. This southward expansion was in part a result of the rise of the Marathas and the Mughals' push south, which limited Chikka Devaraja's ability to expand northward. Instead, he sought an alliance with Aurangzeb, who recognized the Raja of Mysore and gave him gifts.[72]

However, Mysore had several weaknesses which would have disastrous effects for Chikka Devaraja's heirs. Firstly, these expansions were in part made possible only with the support of allies, and, therefore, Mysore's hold on its new territories was tenuous. This was complicated by the fact that Mysore may have formally become a tributary of the Mughals at this point, though the exact nature of this relationship remains somewhat nebulous. Additionally, in a similar development to that discussed above which rendered the later Maratha *chatrapatis* little more than puppets of the *peshwas*, the Wadiyar Maharajas came under the sway of the powerful Kalale family of ministers and military leaders starting in the 1730s. With the Wadiyars eventually being little more than figureheads, power in Mysore came into the hands of two high offices, those of the *Dalavay* (prime minister) and the *Sarvadhikari* (chief minister), at the time

[72]Subrahmanyam argues that the Wadiyars were tributary subjects of the Mughals at this point, though Suryanath U. Kamath disputes this. Ramachandriah asserts that the two polities were allies but does not comment further. The fact that the Mughals advanced as far south as Gingee – in the Carnatic but on Mysore's border – suggests they had come to some arrangement, though the exact nature of it remains a matter of discussion. Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions*, 64, 68-71. Kamath, *Karnataka*, 228-229. Stein, *Vijayanagara*, 82. Ramachandriah, *Mysore,* 46-48.

occupied by the cousins Nanjaraja and Devaraja (d. 1758), who were relatives of the royal family, respectively.[73]

Hailing from an old aristocratic family, Nanjaraja and Devaraja would rule Mysore in all but name for the next three decades, leading to the normalization of puppet maharajas in the state by the 1750s. However, the most significant consequence of their seizure of power was the rise of Haidar Ali, initially as a military commander and protégé of Nanjaraja. Ultimately, their seizure of power established a paradigm for rule by non-Wadiyars that would ease the transition from rule by a long-established Hindu dynasty to that of a Muslim military family.[74]

Haidar Ali came from a North Indian military family that had sought their fortunes in the Deccan for several generations. Although his ancestry and exact date of birth are topics of continued dispute, it is known that his father, Fath Muhammad (1704-1725), had been born at Kolar, and is said to have served in the forces of the Rajas of Mysore as well as the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Subadar of Sira. Although Haidar's youth is not well documented in the historical record, both he and his brothers entered military service while young. He first saw military action at the 1749 siege of Deonhalli, serving as a volunteer under his brother, another military subordinate of Nanjaraja. At the siege he distinguished himself both in terms of bravery and intellect, playing a critical role in capturing the fortress, and subsequently gaining his first command guarding its principal gate.[75]

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[73]Ram Chandra Rao, *Memoirs of Hyder and Tippoo*, trans. Charles Philip Brown (Madras [Chennai]: Simkins and Company, 1849), 5. Kamath, *Karnataka*, 230. Ramachandriah, *Mysore*, 48. The Kalale family lost power for a brief time before the rise of Devaraja in the 1720s Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions*, 73, 83.

[74]Rao, *Memoirs of Hyder and Tippoo*, 5. Kamath, *Karnataka*, 230. Ramachandriah, *Mysore*, 48. Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions*, 73, 83.

[75]George Bruce Malleson, *The Decisive Battles of India: From 1746-1849 Inclusive* (London: W.H. Allen and Company, 1883): 211-213. Lewin Bentham Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan,* 12-13. Douglas Peers, 'Military Revolution and State Formation Reconsidered: Mir Qasim, Haidar Ali, and the Transition to Colonial Rule in the 1760s,' *Chinese and Indian Warfare: From the Classical Age to 1870*, eds. Peter Lorge and Kaushik Roy (London: Routledge, 2014), 315.

Haidar saw action against the Marathas and sided with the French in the Carnatic Wars, invading the Carnatic and investing Tiruchirappalli (Trinchinopoly) with the French Commander-in-Chief's blessing (the latter having promised Haider all of the Southern Carnatic should he succeed). Though he failed, Haidar's desire to seize the Carnatic and his subsequent occupation of the Nawab's fortress of Dindigal would begin a lifelong mutual rivalry with Muhammad Ali.[76]

His forces and influence growing, in 1758 Haidar took advantage of a political crisis to increase his power and popularity. Following the death of Devaraja and a subsequent military mutiny over back pay, Haidar found himself in a position to mediate a settlement between the soldiers and the government while simultaneously positioning troops loyal to him at key points, including the fortress-capital of Srirangapatna (Seringapatam). At the same time, he demonstrated his effectiveness as a military leader by forcing an invading Maratha force out of Mysore. For these services to the state he was rewarded by the figurehead Wadiyar Raja and Nanjaraja, now replacing his brother as chief minister in his own right but increasingly becoming a figurehead himself under Haidar's control. Indeed, Haidar soon forced Nanjaraja into retirement as part of a 1761 *coup d'état* that made Haidar the ruler of Mysore in all but name.[77]

At this point, and just prior to the outbreak of the First Anglo-Mysore War in 1767, Haidar was relatively secure in his position as *de facto* ruler of Mysore. He took advantage of his situation to set about conquering surrounding territories including Bednore, Bellari, and much of

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[76]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 213-214. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 315. Irfan Habib, *Confronting Colonialism: Resistance and Modernization under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan* (Delhi: Tulika, 1999): xx. Bryant, *Emergence*, 191. For documentary evidence of Haidar's continued disregard for Nawab Muhammad Ali more than a decade later see Advices from Madras, Negotiations for Peace with Hyder Ali, 8 March 1769, IOR/H/101 (pp. 237-244), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

[77]Ramusack, *Indian* Princes, 30. Kamath, *Karnataka*, 232. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 214-216. Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 1640-1800, vol. ii (London: John Murray, 1913), 596. Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 1640-1800, vol. iii (London: John Murray, 1913), 48, 189, 222.

the Malabar Coast. By 1766 his position in the Southern Deccan had been consolidated, with the Marathas and the EIC representing the only real threats to his power. An attempt by factions in Mysore to oust Haidar from power and restore the Wadiyars to direct rule in 1766 led Haidar to take direct control of the Raja's household and estates. This further alienated the Marathas, some of whom had supported the rebellion. Moreover, they had already proven themselves formidable opponents by smashing Haidar's forces in the previous campaign season. This continued rivalry with the Marathas would play a significant role in precipitating the First Anglo-Mysore War.[78]

2.4 The French and English in the Deccan

The transformation of the English East India Company from a company of merchants into a fiscal-military state was largely the result of Anglo-French rivalry in the Carnatic in the mid-18th century. With the seizure of Bengal in the 1750s the locus of Company power on the Indian Subcontinent shifted away from Madras to Calcutta, but throughout the later 18th century the Carnatic remained an important theatre of operations for the East India Company, owing to the numerous trading factories they had scattered up and down the coast.

The Company's forces had their origin in the small militias and garrisons in India during the 17th century. Then, the EIC's military forces had been largely defensive in nature. Although there were instances of both directors in London and Company servants in India advocating for more aggressive interventions in India polities, especially after Charles II (1630-1685, r. 1660-1685)'s new *Charter of 1661* authorized the EIC to use force against their 'country' enemies, these were exceptions to the norm. Instead, Company policy remained focused on potentially

[78]Ramusack, *Indian Princes*, 30-31. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 215. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 47. Ramachandriah, *Mysore*, 53.

profitable commercial operations right into the 1740s, and against both the costly expansion of their military forces and the more muscular approach to Indian geopolitics that would come to accompany such a move. Indeed, as we shall see, the Company's attempts to limit the aggressive policies of their officials in India would continue throughout the period addressed by this study. However, regardless of this stated policy the same period would also see the establishment of a series of Company hybrid fiscal-military states controlling immense territories on the subcontinent.[79]

The military conflicts with the French that would come to be known as the Carnatic Wars (1744-1763) resulted from a combination of Indian and European political factors and fuelled increasing politicization and militarization within the French and English East India Companies. Moreover, each of the individual Carnatic Wars led to specific changes within the overall evolution of the civil-military establishment in the Madras Presidency. Nevertheless, despite the transformative effects of these inter-European conflicts in India, it is important to emphasize that wars with Indian powers were far more common. As Bryant points out this is made evident by the Councillors of Calcutta and Madras discussing the resurgent Marathas as the primary threat to stability in the 1740s, and by orders from the Directors for EIC settlements to reinforce their landward, as opposed to seaward, fortifications. With modern European navies operating in the Indian Ocean the construction of seaward fortifications was costly, but since 'country' powers were viewed as the main threat at the time (and again after the early 1760s) such expenses were deemed wasteful by London directors seeking lucrative dividends. Indeed, as late as August 15th, 1746, less than a month before the successful French attack on Madras, the Directors sent a letter

[79]For discussion of the hybridity in the 18th century Carnatic fiscal military states see Chapter 2, Section 2.6 below. Bryant, *Emergence*, 2-6, 9-10. T.A. Heathcote, *The Military in British India: The Development of British Land Forces in South Asia, 1600*-1947 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 21-25.

rejecting the military engineer and chief gunner Joseph Smith's proposal to improve Fort Saint George's seaward defense, stating that '[They could not] see any necessity for them.'[80]

The *Compagnie française pour le commerce des Indes orientales* (CIO) had been created in 1664 to challenge Dutch and English dominance of the East India trade. It was however controlled by the French Crown to a greater extent than its rivals who enjoyed more political autonomy. This was partly a result of the French Crown's absolutist tendencies and the King's maintaining a strong interest in CIO stock, but also because most other investors – at least initially – were court nobles as opposed to urban merchants as was the case in England and the Netherlands. Several factors contributed to this difference, notably including a lack of enthusiasm for the CIO among French merchants, the absence of overseas traders in landlocked Paris (where the company initially had its headquarters), and French merchants trading with the Middle East via the Mediterranean not wishing to see their own trade undercut. Several setbacks, including a failed scheme to colonize Madagascar, hindered the CIO's initial growth, but by the 18th century it had merged with several other French trading monopolies and established factories in India. It was not until the onset of the War of the Austrian Succession (1739/40-1748) in Europe and the Americas, however, that the EIC and CIO were drawn into European military conflicts.[81]

Both companies had little interest in military conflict at this point and as discussed above raised armies primarily to defend themselves from hostile country powers. Moreover, they had

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[80]The Company to Fort Saint George, 15 August 1746, in Love, *Vestiges*, 348, 349-352. Changing defense priorities in the coming decades account for the EIC's greater expenditure on the seaward defenses of the new Fort William in Calcutta, built after the Company victory at Plassey between 1758 and 1781 at a cost of £2 million. Although the strategic value of the new fort remained a matter of debate, its construction is illustrative of how the French continued to be viewed as a threat even after the Carnatic Wars. Bryant, *Emergence*, 35-36, 112, 156-157.

[81]Heathcote, *The Military in British* India, 24-27. Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 103-105, 108-109, 111-112. Douglas Peers, *India under Colonial Rule: 1700-1885* (Harlow: Pearson, 2006), 24-25.

been expressly forbidden from engaging in armed conflict with one another on Indian soil by Mughal authorities, including the Nawab of the Carnatic Anwar ud-din Khan (1672-1749, r. 1744-1749). As a result, it is not surprising that regular naval forces and not the armies of trading companies were the first to spread the European conflict to South Asia. Following the outbreak of hostilities in 1745, a Royal Navy squadron was dispatched to India and arrived the following summer. Their arrival led the French settlements to scramble to improve their seaward fortifications against attack. However, on this occasion, the EIC leadership at Madras successfully persuaded the naval commanders to obey the Nawab's directives against his territories becoming the site of any conflict between European rivals. Denied the opportunity to attack French settlements, the Royal Navy instead focused on plundering French shipping and gaining control of Indian Ocean sea lanes.[82]

The CIO Governor-General, Joseph-Francois Dupleix (1697-1763, gov. 1742-1754) had fewer doubts about pursuing French national interests in wartime than his British counterparts and seized the opportunity to improve the French position in the Carnatic. He quickly augmented his European soldiers by recruiting several thousand Indian soldiers into CIO service. Utilizing this expanded force, Dupleix orchestrated a series of political and military maneuvers which eventually led to Madras being besieged and captured in September of 1746. Although the town and fortress would be returned to the EIC with the treaty that ended what came to be called the First Carnatic War (1744-1748), the impact of the war on both sides, and on South India more broadly, would be significant.[83]

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[82]Heathcote, *The Military in British India*, 25. James P. Lawford, *Britain's Army in India: From its Origins to the Conquest of Bengal* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978), 68-85. Furber, *Rival Empires*, 147-148.L

[83]Bruce Lenman, *Britain's Colonial Wars 1688-1783* (Harlow: Pearson, 2001), 92-95. The Pondicherry garrison had around 3000 sepoys along with 1800 European soldiers (including *topasses* of mixed Indo-Portuguese descent) at the time of the First Carnatic War. Bryant, *Emergence, 43.*

Perhaps the most significant consequence of the First Carnatic War for the British was that it introduced the possibility of large scale armed conflict as a means of advancing corporate and national interests at the expense of other European trading companies in India. Furthermore, French forces' success on the battlefield against the army of Anwar ud-din, who had attempted to claim Madras from its French captors, demonstrated the effectiveness of musket-armed infantry trained in European drill and supported by modern artillery against much larger, cavalry-dominated Indian armies. Thirdly, the war confirmed that when the rival European Companies became involved in conflicts between Britain and France the consequences for their own positions in India could be existential, drastically raising the stakes of armed conflict. This, combined with the shock of the temporary loss of Fort Saint George, galvanized the British military establishment in the Madras Presidency and led figures such as Major-General Stringer Lawrence (1697-1775), the EIC's senior military commander in the Carnatic, to call, with little initial success, for the reform and expansion of the EIC's forces. Initially sent to them by the Crown, Lawrence would come to be regarded as the father of the Madras Army.[84]

Despite the end of the War of the Austrian Succession in Europe and the Atlantic world in 1748, peace did not last long in India where the EIC and CIO continued to maneuver for political and commercial advantages. The background and initial causes of the Second Carnatic War (1749-1754) predated direct European involvement and were the result of two dynastic disputes. The first was a succession dispute between Nasir Jang (1712-1750, r. 1748-1750) and Muzaffar Jang (r. 1750-1751), a son and grandson of the first Nizam of Hyderabad, Asaf Jah. The second was between Anwar ud-din Khan and Husayn Dost Khan (d. 1752), commonly known as Chanda Sahib, over the title of Nawab of the Carnatic. Seeing a chance to continue to

[84]Heathcote, *The Military in British India,* 26. Lenman, *Colonial Wars*, 93-94, 96.

expand CIO influence in the Deccan despite the official end of hostilities between France and Britain, Dupleix sought to manipulate these conflicts to put pro-French contenders into both positions.[85]

In return for Dupleix's support, which included the service of CIO forces with his army, Chanda Sahib (with Muzaffar Jang's approval) granted the French rights to collect revenue from various parcels of land in the Carnatic, including those up till then held by the EIC around Madras. The French alliance quickly defeated and killed Anwar ud-din Khan near Ambur, and soon captured the Nawab's capital at Arcot. Because of these French successes and the threat they posed to Company revenues, the EIC entered the conflict on the side of Muhammad Ali Khan Wallahjah (1717-1795, r. 1749-1795), son and heir of the late Anwar ud-din Khan. Fighting centred around Muhammad Ali's centre of power in the Southern Carnatic at Tiruchirappalli, with both sides cobbling together alliances with various military actors in the region including Mysore, Thanjavur, and the Marathas. Local animosity toward the French, the Company training their own sepoys in the same manner as Dupleix, and the EIC's greater fiscal resources shifted the momentum of the war against the French decisively, especially after Robert Clive's capture of Arcot in August of 1751. French forces in the Carnatic surrendered the following June. Despite these setbacks in the Carnatic, in Hyderabad Muzaffar Jang had succeeded to the Deccan vice-regal throne with French support. However, not long after he was betrayed by his own soldiers and killed in battle, only to be replaced by his uncle Salabat Jang (1718-1762, r. 1751-1762). Equally pro-French, Salabat Jang would maintain a considerable CIO force under the French commander Charles-Joseph Patissier, Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau (1718-

[85]Bryant, *Emergence*, 49-50. Furber, *Rival Empires*, 146-147 Lenman, *Colonial Wars*, 96-97.

1785) and grant the French the revenues of the Northern Circars between the Carnatic and Bengal.[86]

The Second Carnatic War marked the first instance of both the CIO and EIC intervening decisively in South Indian 'country' politics as major players. This, and the reliance which their respective allies had on the Companies' European-trained infantry, meant that the theatre of operations for Company forces was greatly expanded from the First Carnatic War. Consequently, both Companies' militaries expanded as well, though initially there was resistance to this within the EIC. The war eventually encompassed the whole of the Carnatic and to a lesser degree the domains of Hyderabad to the North. However, the conflict notably excluded the possibility of either company directly attacking the other's settlements on the Coromandel Coast, as their nations were formally at peace in Europe. As a result, the conflict was contained, with both sides seeking to extend their influence, with Dupleix notably stretching his resources too thin. This led in the end to the conflict that proved favourable to Muhammad Ali and the EIC because it triggered the sacking of Dupleix in August of 1754.[87]

In part due to their desire to mask their continued participation in what were ostensibly their allies' wars, the CIO and EIC came to use alliances with Indian states, which paid for the service of either company's soldiers, to pursue their own agendas militarily whilst ostensibly acting as disinterested military contractors. This had the added benefit of the companies being able to demand payment for their military support while still pursuing their own interest. It was at this time that Muhammad Ali, who by the end of the conflict was established as the Nawab of

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[86]Lawford, *Britain's Army in India*, 101-102. Bryant, *Emergence*, 51, 54-55. Subrahmanyam, *Penumbral Visions*, 18-19, 178, 180. Lenman, *Colonial Wars*, 97-99.
[87]Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War, 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (Harlow: Pearson, 2011), 67-71. Bryant, *Emergence*, 48-49, 55. For discussion of the Seven Years War in global context from the French perspective see Frederick Quinn, *The French Overseas Empire* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2001).

the Carnatic, began to accumulate massive debts to the EIC and to private financiers including, notably, many individual Company servants. This situation was aggravated by the necessity of making a frequent display of military force to coerce revenues from the Carnatic, which in this instance meant that the Nawab had to pay the EIC for their forces to collect the revenues needed to pay the Company. The debts of the Nawab would become a significant political issue both in the Carnatic and in London in the coming decades.[88]

Many of the maneuverings in the Second Carnatic War, which G.J. Bryant describes as 'a positional war,' meaning operations with the goal of controlling territory (as opposed to achieving a decisive victory in the Clausewitzian sense), were made with the intent of securing revenue and denying it to the opposing side. The EIC and Nawab's success in capturing revenue generating territories during the conflict, when combined with the EIC's relatively greater revenue at the beginning of the war, delivered the allies a victory. This was despite the CIO initially having around double the military forces of their English rivals and receiving reinforcements from Europe more frequently. This experience of fighting a campaign in an expanded theatre and the necessity of expanding to assist in revenue collection transformed what would become known as the Madras Army from a purely defensive force into a field army capable of extended operations. It was at this point that Stringer Lawrence began to reorganize the EIC's army, creating a field artillery corps and forming the infantry into seven battalions.[89]

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[88]Some of the consequences of the Nawab's debt will be discussed at length in Chapter Four, below. For an exploration of the Nawab's state-building efforts and problems with revenue see Jim Philips, 'A Successor to the Moguls: The Nawab of the Carnatic and the East India Company, 1763-1785,' *International History Review* 7 no. 3 (August 1985): 164-189.

[89]It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a full narrative of the events of the Second Carnatic War, but a detailed account is available in Chapters 5 through 9 of James P. Lawford's *Britain's Army in India*. See Lawford, *Britain's Army in India,* 86-171. Heathcote, *Military in British India*, 27. Bryant, *Emergence*, 51, 52-53, 62. Philips, 'A Successor,' 367, 373-377.

The Third Carnatic War (1756-1763), concurrent with the Seven Years War (1756-1763) in Europe and North America, marked a return to the Crown-supported, potentially-existential warfare between the EIC and CIO of the First Carnatic War, but combined with the Indian allies and broader theatre of operations of the Second Carnatic War. Upon receipt of rumours of war in Europe, and even after confirming the commencement of hostilities, neither company was in any hurry to launch hostilities. In the case of the French, this was in part due to having over-extended themselves in the previous war, but the dismissal of the expansionist Dupleix also no doubt played a role. The English at Madras, however, were also quite cautious, particularly as they had only recently sent a considerable portion of their forces northward with Robert Clive (1725-1774), who had earned distinction at the Siege of Arcot during the previous war, to restore the Company's position in Bengal. The Nawab of Bengal, Siraj ud-Doulah (1733-1757, r. 1756-1757) had captured Fort William in Calcutta and ousted the EIC. Clive, having persuaded several of the Nawab's subordinates to betray him at an opportune moment, won a decisive victory at Plassey on June 23rd, 1757 and secured Bengal for the Company. Subsequent developments would make Bengal the center of British power in India, though the struggle with the French remained concentrated in the Carnatic.[90]

The year-and-a-half long period of relative inaction in the Carnatic ended with the arrival of French reinforcements under the command of the new Commander-in-Chief, Thomas Arthur, Comte de Lally (1702-1766), at Pondicherry in May of 1758. Seeking to bring about a decisive end to the conflict, Lally marched on Madras and besieged the city from December 1758 to February 1759. However, due to insufficient naval support and logistic and fiscal strain he could not sustain the siege and following his withdrawal the momentum passed to British forces. The

[90]Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 70-71, 282-297, 462-463. Bryant, *Emergence*, 74-75, 113-119, 138-142.

French army having retreated and divided, the conflict evolved into another one of 'positional warfare,' characterized by marches, countermarches, and the defense and capture of strategic strongpoints. This lasted until January 22nd, 1760, when a combined EIC-Royal force under Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783) decisively defeated the French near Vandavasi (Wandiwash). This victory crippled the French militarily in the Carnatic. When combined with a lengthy mopping-up campaign and the subsequent capture of Pondicherry a little under a year later, the CIO ceased to pose a direct threat to EIC ascendency until the later 1770s, though the perceived threat of the French remained potent. Indeed, fear of the French naval forces at Mauritius's ability to conduct an amphibious attack was a factor in EIC strategic decision making throughout the 18th century. Moreover, the mere possibility of the French (or Russians) establishing a lasting protectorate or sphere of influence in the Middle East was a potentially existential threat to the Empire in India from the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars well into the 19th century and led to numerous British interventions in the region. All subsequent threats to the Company in India during the 18th century would come from 'country' powers or the French acting in concert with them. As the French were not major players in South India during the 1760s and 1770s their involvement in India at the time is not directly relevant to this study.[91]

The legacy of the Third Carnatic War, as the final episode in the struggle with the French, is more complicated and significant than those of the proceeding conflicts. The most significant consequence of the war was the preeminent position in which it placed the EIC among European companies in India, but this position was just as much, if not more so, a result of contemporary

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[91]Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 462-483. Lawford again provides a detailed account of the Third Carnatic War in Chapters 13 through 16 of *Britain's Army in India.* See Lawford, *Britain's Army in India,* 217-276. Robert Fletcher to Robert Orme, 12 February 1772, Orme OV 30 (pp. 161-164 [162]), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 73. For discussion of British intervention in the Middle East in response to this perceived threat see Edward Ingram, *In Defense of British India: Great Britain in the Middle East 1775-1842* (London: Cass, 1984).

Company victories against a ‘country’ power in Bengal. The above-mentioned contest at Plassey and a subsequent engagement at Buxar (22 October 1764) would secure EIC power in Bengal and give the Company (and its venal servants) control of extensive land revenues. In addition to securing Bengal for the EIC, the victory at Buxar was a crushing victory over the Mughal armies of Delhi and Awadh, and made the Company the paramount military power in the North Indian Gangetic Plain. Moreover, although the transformative effect of these battles has historically been exaggerated, they ensured a comparatively greater hands-on role for Company officials not only in revenue collection, but also in political administration in Bengal compared to the byzantine, counterproductive arrangement with the Nawab in the Carnatic. Revenues from Bengal would help finance Company operations in Madras and elsewhere in the coming decades, particularly during wartime.[92]

One consequence of the Third Carnatic War that was not novel, but bears reiteration, was the continued charging of the costs of the war to the Nawab, Muhammad Ali, whose lands and titles the EIC was ostensibly defending despite the increasingly prominent role of the Madras Council in the administration of the Carnatic. Moreover, Company soldiers continued to fill an essential role in revenue collection in the Nawabs’ domain, continuing the cycle of dependence and debt which began in the previous conflict. The Nawab’s debt and creditors would play a significant role in events throughout the 1760s and 1770s.[93]

In military terms one of the most significant consequences of the Third Carnatic War was the reform and expansion of the Company’s already enlarged sepoy corps. Although the Company’s greater revenue was a major factor in their victory, the superior training of EIC

[92]See Chapter 2, Section 2.6, below. Lawford, *Britain’s Army in India*, 212-216, 313-317. Stern, *The Company State*, 207-208.
[93]See Chapters 2 and 3. Bryant, *Emergence*, 106.

sepoys vis-à-vis their numerically-superior OIC counterparts also played a role in the later stages of the war. Portions of Stringer Lawrence's proposed reforms including the assignment of European sergeants as drill instructors and the adoption of European-style uniforms by the sepoy units had been put into place by 1753, with standardized arms being phased in gradually from that point. Subsequent reforms included the restructuring of what would become the Madras Army's sepoy companies into larger battalions of 600-900 men apiece, reducing the number and independence of *subadars* (in this instance meaning Indian officers holding Company commissions, distinct from the Mughal governors of the same name) to strengthen and simplify the hierarchy of command. These reforms also included a restructuring of the officer corps, with three European EIC officers (usually captains) overseeing the sepoy corps as a whole with the help of an Indian commandant superior to the *subadars*. In addition to this each battalion was commanded by two British subalterns (usually lieutenants) with the assistance of one Indian *subadar* and three European sergeant-majors.[94]

This inclusion of European junior officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) led to a marked improvement in drill and discipline, which was noted by commanders at the time who had previously had little regard for the sepoy units led only by Indian officers. Bryant cites multiple officers' disregard for the Company's Indian soldiers prior to reforms and their surprise and pleasure at the sepoys' performance in battle and on the march after their implementation.[95]

[94]Heathcote, *Military in British India*, 29-30. Over time more European officers were incorporated into the sepoy battalions, ostensibly to improve discipline. For discussion of the development of sepoy forces within the EIC Army see G.J. Bryant, 'Indigenous Mercenaries in the Service of European Imperialists: The Case of the Sepoys in the Early British Indian Army, 1750-1800,' *War in History* 7, no. 1 (2000): 2-28 [17-22].

[95]Heathcote, *Military in British India*, 29-30. Bryant, *Emergence*, 96-97. Eyre Coote to Fort Saint George, 6 March 1760, P/D/43, p. 233.

The low expectations of the sepoys seen in these observations shows the bigotry and disregard with which many British EIC officers regarded their Indian subordinates at the time. However, the fact that despite this they recognized the military capabilities of the 'transformed' sepoy battalions gives the lie to the myth of intrinsically - 'superior' European soldiers in the works of 19th and 20th century historians of India. Having acquired more than a decade of military experience in the Third Carnatic War and numerous smaller conflicts in the 1760s, the Company sepoys who fought in the First Anglo-Mysore War were as well-trained and capable as their European counterparts. They hadthe added advantage of suffering less wastage from tropical diseases and alcohol abuse, both perennial problems among the EIC's European soldiery.[96]

2.5 The EIC in the Carnatic in the 1760s

Although the Seven Years War lasted until 1763, major hostilities in the Carnatic ended with the surrender of Pondicherry in 1761. The French ended up retaining the settlement in the Treaty of Paris (1763). However, it was at least initially to remain shorn of its fortifications. The French naval squadron at Mauritius, able to land forces in Bengal or on either coast of Peninsular India, still posed a threat but French power in the Deccan was greatly reduced and largely confined to half-hearted intrigues with 'country' powers. As a result, the three Indian polities

[96]The topic of military orientalism in Western history has been addressed at length by Patrick Porter in *Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). Kaushik Roy, 'The Armed Expansion of the English East India Company: 1740s-1849,' *A Military History of South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Age*, eds. Daniel P. Marston and Chandar S. Sundaram (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008): 4-5.

discussed above became the main potential threats to EIC commercial and political dominance in the Carnatic.[97]

Luckily for the EIC none of these powers were able to intervene in the Carnatic in the early 1760s. After his attempt to secure the Southern Carnatic for Mysore in the Third Carnatic War failed, Haidar Ali became preoccupied with securing his hold on power in Mysore, and subsequently focused his energies on invasions of the Malabar Coast and the Maratha territories to his north. He was able to do this in part because the Marathas had been weakened by their defeat at Panipat in January of 1761. However, the temporary halt the battle brought to Maratha expansion in Northern India would eventually led them, as the decade wore on, to refocus their attention on the South in general – and Mysore and Hyderabad in particular. At the same time Hyderabad was undergoing yet another dynastic struggle, with Nizam Ali (1734-1803, r. 1762-1803), otherwise known as Asaf Jah II and the fourth son of his namesake, eventually emerging as the victor. Consequently, none of these powers posed an immediate threat to the Carnatic until the late 1760s, by which time the Company had managed to assert more control over the region.[98]

It was the necessity of asserting such control that required the continued maintenance of a larger standing army by the Madras Presidency in the 1760s. This was because both the EIC and the Nawab considered his own soldiers to be too unreliable to collect revenue and garrison strongpoints throughout the Carnatic. This reliance on Company forces for which he had to pay perpetuated and compounded the Nawab's debts and led to the establishment of a hybrid yet ultimately untenable EIC-Carnatic fiscal-military state. Moreover, it accounts for much of the

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[97]Bryant, *Emergence*, 187-189.
[98]Gordon, *The Marathas,* 151-153. Bryant, *Emergence*, 193, 199-200.

expansion of the sepoy corps in this period. The military experience of the EIC sepoys in the early and mid-1760s no doubt contributed to their effectiveness in the First Anglo-Mysore War at the end of the decade.[99]

In addition to the Nawab's continued indebtedness, the rapidity with which the Madras Army spread itself out to conduct revenue collection and secure the Carnatic frontier had another deleterious effect – rebellion. In addition to the fractiousness of the region its sheer size complicated revenue collection, with such duties in the extreme north and south of the Carnatic usually being delegated to powerful subordinates. Although the Nawab had previously delegated these roles to his brothers, they had unfortunately rarely paid him his proper due. As a result, the Madras Council, looking to capitalize on increased revenue and fund the Nawab's debt, established a new 'collectorship' in the South to be managed by one of their own Indian officers, Muhammad Yusuf Khan (1725-1764). A proven battlefield officer in the Carnatic Wars, the EIC establishment considered him more reliable than the Nawab's brothers. His political ambition, however, was to prove equal to his military talent. Having established himself at Madurai and initially forwarding his revenue as directed, by late 1762 Yusuf Khan was retaining it and raising his own troops. The following year he rebelled openly, and it took two years, and two years' worth of Carnatic revenue, to suppress him.[100]

Having ended French influence in the Carnatic only to face a rebellion by one of their own officers, one would think that the EIC leadership at Madras would wish to avoid conflict with country powers by the late 1760s, but this was not to be the case. The strategic position, rich

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[99]See Chapter 2, Section 6, below.
[100]Lawford, *Britain's Army in India*, 277-290. For an EIC officer who participated in the suppression of the rebellion's recollection of events see Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 13 March 1768, Orme OV 64 (pp. 9-18), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bryant, *Emergence*, 197-198. See also Chapter 2, Section 2.6, below.

revenues, and quality textiles of the cotton producing Northern Circars would lead the Company into an ill-conceived alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad. This alliance, together with the avarice of Madras officials and the Nawab's ambition would set the stage for the EIC's entry into the First Anglo-Mysore War.

2.6 The Carnatic Fiscal-Military State

Having placed the key military and political players in the Carnatic during the 1760s and 1770s in context and provided both historical background and a survey of the general literature on the topic, we can now turn to some preliminary analysis. This transformation of the Company from a largely mercantile organization into a fiscal-military state based on land revenues has been discussed by Kaushik Roy in terms of the military revolution debate and Anglo-Indian hybridity. That this transformation occurred alongside similar developments in Indian polities at the same time, Mysore not least among them, has also been discussed by scholars including Douglas Peers. The following section will place the EIC-Carnatic fiscal-military state, as both a regional subdivision of the EIC establishment in India (the Madras Presidency) and as a hybrid colonial state incorporating Indian systems and institutions (namely, the Nawab's rule in the Carnatic), within the context of this discussion.

The EIC's politico-military situation in the Carnatic during the mid-18th century was unique both compared to the other Company presidencies and in relation to previous and subsequent systems of military governance under the Company Raj. The differences with earlier periods are evident in the rapid expansion of the Madras and Bengal Armies in this period. This had resulted from military confrontations with the French and various Indian states and the

subsequent acquisition of territory that required pacification.[101] Although a sizeable civil administration for managing these holdings would develop in the ensuing decades, its expansion would lag behind that of the military for assorted reasons. These include the exigencies of war prioritizing military development, Company administrators' reluctance to accommodate the EIC's shift from a trading company to a landholding quasi-state, and the maintenance of puppet and semi-puppet Indian rulers as 'legitimate' heads of state in both the Carnatic and Bengal.[102]

Addressing the Company Raj in the early 19th century, Douglas Peers notes the continued preponderance of the military in India and its tendency to influence policy, usually pushing it in the direction of aggressive military expansion, often against the better judgment of civilian leaders. This paradigm began in the mid-18th century with the expansion of the Madras Army during the Carnatic Wars discussed above, and clearly demonstrates that endemic warfare resulted in increased military power. The perceived necessity of maintaining ruling partners also played a role. In Muhammad Ali's case, his refusal to let the Company directly take over revenue collection hampered the growth of a civil bureaucracy, as effective taxation was and is one of the primary functions of Company bureaucrats. This situation was further exacerbated by the fact that a display of force remained necessary to collect taxes in the Carnatic even after the Carnatic Wars, making the military the primary organ of the EIC involved in revenue collection and

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[101]Between 1749 and 1778 EIC forces in all three presidencies rose from only about 3000 to approximately 67,000 men according to scholarly estimates, with the vast majority of soldiers being sepoys in infantry battalions. Expansion of the officer corps naturally kept pace, and the number of European infantry battalions also grew. See Table 1.1. of Kaushik Roy, 'Armed Expansion,' 4. See also Raymond Callaghan, *The East India Company and Army Reform, 1783-1798* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 6-7 [Note 4]. Chen Tzoref-Ashkenazi, 'German Auxiliary Troops in the British and Dutch East India Companies.' *Transnational Soldiers: Foreign Military Enlistment in the Modern Era*. eds Nir Arielli et al (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), 39.

[102]Douglas Peers, *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in Early Nineteenth Century India* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995), 18 66. G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India, 1600-1784: A Grand Strategic Interpretation* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2013), 190, 193-194. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 7-8. Alfred Comyn Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India* (London: John Murray, 1894), 157. Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, 179-180.

thereby granting them an institutional stake in the Nawab's continued rule on top of some officers' considerable personal interests in his debt.[103]

Moreover, the military would remain a dominant force in the Company Raj, despite Parliament and the Company's imposition of numerous checks on the military's political influence in the ensuing decades.[104] This dichotomy in terms of military and civilian-administrative development is characteristic of the 'strong army, weak state' paradigm of civil-military relations, a situation commonly leading not only to soldiers involving themselves in politics generally, but particularly to coups, militarism, and military adventurism.[105] However, this oppositional model, while theoretically useful, does not account for the political realities of 18th century India and the cultural and administrative overlap of the civilian and military spheres within the EIC's dominions. Taking a more nuanced historical approach, Peers describes the continued political prominence of the military in India by the early 19th century, even after the establishment of a substantial civilian administration, as an ideology of 'Anglo-Indian Militarism.' According to Peers this ideology was influenced by a British 'assumption that Indian society was inherently militarized' and by the 19th century this view was broadly accepted by both the military and the civilian administration in India. He is supported in this by Hew

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[103]Bryant, *Emergence*, 190, 193-194. J.R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth Century England* (London: Hutchinson, 1977), 100. Stephen G. Ellis, 'The Revival of Crown Government,' *The Making of the British Isles: The State of Britain and Ireland 1450-1660* (Harlow: Pearson, 2007), 64. Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 66.

[104]Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 50, 66. For discussion of these checks on military power in the decades after this study's focus see Raymond Callaghan, *The East Indian Company and Army Reform, 1783-1798* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

[105]Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 99, 124. Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times: On Professionals, Praetorians, and Revolutionary Soldiers* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977), 69-71. Amos Perlmutter, 'The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities,' *Comparative Politics* 1, No. 3 (April 1969), 1.

Strachan, who discusses the civil-military tensions in 19th century British India in the context of the British Army and the Empire.[106]

Contemporary differences are most clear when considering the Bombay Presidency which, hemmed in by the Marathas until the Second and Third Anglo-Maratha Wars of the early 19th century, held little territory beyond its few factories and therefore had little need to maintain a large military force. As a result, a comparison with the larger Bengal Presidency in the wealthy, fertile, and populous Northeast of the subcontinent is more useful for the purposes of this study.

Although the EIC conquest of Bengal has been well studied and the development of a hybrid fiscal-military state there has been thoroughly discussed by scholars including Douglas Peers and Kaushik Roy, for comparison's sake a summary will suffice here.[107] After the defeat of Siraj ud-Daulah, Nawab of Bengal at the Battle of Plassey by EIC forces under Robert Clive, Bengal came under nominal Company control. However, as in the Carnatic, the EIC sought to exercise control through an Indian ruler, in this case Mir Jaffar (c. 1691-1765, r 1757-1760 and 1763-1765), erstwhile commander of the Nawab's forces who had critically betrayed ud-Daulah at Plassey. Indirect rule like this helped maintain a degree of legitimacy and at the time it made more sense from a fiscal perspective for the government to remain in Indian hands. Consequentially, Mir Jaffar ruled as Nawab of Bengal for three years. He utilized military support from the Company, for which he was expected to pay handsomely, in a manner similar to the EIC's relationship with Muhammad Ali in the Carnatic. However, unlike the Nawab of the Carnatic, Mir Jaffar was unable to secure loans to meet the financial demands of the Company,

[106]Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 45-46. Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 77-79

[107]See Douglas Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 302-323 and Kaushik Roy, 'The Hybrid Military Establishment of the East India Company in South Asia, 1750-1849,' *Journal of Global History* (2011) 6, 195-218.

and after it was discovered that he had been conspiring with the Dutch to eject the EIC from Bengal he was deposed and replaced by his son-in-law, Mir Qasim (d. 1777, r. 1760-1763).[108]

Superficially mirroring the actions of his predecessor, Mir Qasim, though initially able to place his government on a sound fiscal-military footing, eventually faced pressures for gifts in land, revenue, and cash payment both to the Company itself and to individual EIC servants as repayment for supporting his rule. This led to revenue shortages and Company encroachment on his authority. In his analysis of Mir Qasim's attempts to achieve a degree of fiscal-military independence from the EIC, Peers discusses the concept of a 'hybrid fiscal-military establishment,' an idea he and others have also applied to the Company itself. Kaushik Roy states that the 'Acquisition and proper management of the animal, human, mineral, and financial resources of South Asia… [in addition to] technology, proved crucial in the encounters between the British and the indigenous powers.'[109] This idea, at least as Roy characterizes it, is a challenge to the prevailing notion within the military revolution debate that the advantage given to Europeans by their military technology and infantry tactics alone, when imported to South Asia, was enough for the British to quickly dominate the Subcontinent. In this assertion he is supported by Jeremy Black's criticism of Clifford J. Rogers and Geoffrey Parker's characterizations of the international effects of the military revolution. Roy goes on to point out that

> Indigenous collaborators/partners also played a crucial role in the EIC's army, which was the principal instrument for confronting the big Indian powers from the middle of the Eighteenth [century] onwards… [while] the indigenous powers failed to blend traditional

[108]Muhammad Ali's above-mentioned debts were in large part a result of the necessity of paying the EIC for its military support. Love, *Vestiges,* ii, 476, 508. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 307-308.
[109]Roy, 'Hybrid Military Establishment,' 198. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 308.

> Indian and early modern Western elements in their armies… [because of] their state structure[s].[110]

Roy elaborates on this assertion, arguing that post-Mughal Indian states were 'multilayered…' 'fluid, nebulous structures' which lacked developed bureaucracies and centralized power, and relied on the devolution of both political and military power to component entities. Politically these component entities took the form of smaller subject kingdoms, while militarily power devolved onto *sirdars,* who were warrior chiefs or aristocratic warlords with their own military retinues. Though a necessary element of this system, *sirdars*' commonly-held desire to increase their own military power, and thereby secure greater wealth and political power themselves, was fundamentally at odds with centralization and the establishment of a state monopoly of force.[111]

Although Roy acknowledges attempts by Indian states like Mysore and the Sikh Empire in the Punjab to develop an EIC-style fiscal-military system themselves, Peers discusses them in far more detail in relation to Mysore and Bengal, acknowledging the effectiveness of Haidar Ali's reforms and the shortcomings of those effected by Mir Qasim. This unfavourable comparison notwithstanding, Mir Qasim's policies, though ultimately resulting in his ousting, were far more effective in fiscal-military terms than those of Muhammad Ali in the Carnatic.[112]

This in large part resulted from differences in exploitable revenues. Even prior to the EIC's domination of either region, the domains of the Nawabs of Bengal had been richer than those of the Carnatic, and decades of conflict with the French, Marathas, and Mysore for the latter had done much to diminish the region's potential revenue. Moreover, there was little sense

[110]Roy, 'Hybrid Military Establishment,' 198. Jeremy Black, 'A Military Revolution? A 1660-1792 Perspective,' *The Military Revolution Debate: Reading on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995), 97, 101, 103-107, 110-111.
[111]The exact meaning of Persian term *sirdar* has changed with time, but in an 18th century Indian context generally refers to various types of military aristocrats. Roy, 'Hybrid Military Establishment,' 196, 213-217.
[112]Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 303-304. Philips, 'A Successor,' 368, 386, 388-389.

of loyalty to the Nawab among the local and regional leaders in the Carnatic, with Muhammad Ali frequently having to secure their submission through military force. This, combined with a relatively more devolved political structure and Muhammad Ali's greater debts to the Company for their military assistance (which were already significant by the early 1760s) placed him in a far worse financial position than Mir Qasim. Indeed, by 1777 future Madras Governor Thomas Rumbold (1736-1791, Gov. 1777-1780), estimated the Nawab of the Carnatic's debt to be 63 lakh (6,300,000) of pagodas (roughly £2.52 million at the time), though Henry Davison Love points out that a mere two years later it was estimated to be only 35 lakh (3,500,000, roughly £1.4 million). As a result of his relatively more secure financial situation, the Nawab of Bengal was able to reform his administration and foster a better relationship with local bankers and lenders to raise revenues capable of supporting a large army and funding the modernization of a portion of it. However, he did have to contend with some serious military shortcomings.[113]

Peers, citing Thomas Rumbold, highlights the fact that Mir Qasim, though an able politician, lacked the military acumen possessed by Haidar Ali of Mysore. Alongside his closer proximity to the EIC and its forces, this shortcoming played a role in the ultimate failure of his reform attempts. On the other hand, the Nawab of the Carnatic was neither a distinguished military commander nor an able administrator.[114] He was, however, at least a capable-enough politician to exploit divisions in the Company leadership and was able to bend the Madras Council to his will on multiple occasions. Historians critical of Muhammad Ali generally tend to

[113]As Rumbold, like many of his contemporaries, took his time in office as an opportunity to secure his own fortune he may not be the most reliable source for these numbers. Willem Kuiters, 'Rumbold, Sir Thomas, first baronet (1736-1791),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-24270?rskey=jYzvDI&result=1#archiveEdition> [accessed 10 May 2018]. Love, *Vestiges,* iii, 189. See also Chapter 4, below. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 309-311. Philips, 'A Successor,' 368, 375-378

[114]Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 303-304. Thomas Rumbold to Richard Smith, 3 February 1764, MSS EUR OV 21/25 OIOC. Love, *Vestiges,* iii, 189.

either overlook his political acumen or stereotype it as oriental deviousness, but David Washbrook has pointed out that

> Given his [North Indian] origins and the turbulence of the times, it was remarkable that he should have established a state in south India at all, still less one which survived for fifty years and imprinted itself on cultural memory for very much longer… Muhammad Ali's rare survival owed much to his shrewd manipulation of the English company's administration.[115]

Furthermore, when one considers the Nawab's dependence on European loans it becomes more understandable why Muhammad Ali was never able to achieve a greater degree of military independence from the Company.[116] Peers further points out that Mir Qasim was more reluctant than Haidar to dispense with the norms of Mughal 'political culture' and adopt a more unified, pragmatic approach. This may in part be because Haidar, though Muslim himself and from a family of North Indian extraction, had spent his life in the south and ruled a hitherto Hindu-dominated state on the very edge of Mughal authority even at its greatest extent. Again, Muhammad Ali made similar mistakes to Mir Qasim in terms of political institutions. The Carnatic *darbar* and government was modelled on those of Muslim North Indian courts, especially that of the Mughal Emperor, with some South Indian additions, and like Mir Qasim he was either unwilling or unable to break with these traditions. In addition to actual government institutions this imitation included other elements of Mughal court culture like the collection and patronage of the arts, the construction of palaces and gardens, and the purchase and breeding of fine horses among other pursuits. This conspicuous consumption, combined with substantial gifts to subordinates, had a significant impact on the Nawab's treasury. Worse still, Muhammad Ali made the additional error of largely maintaining Mughal military norms in his own forces, resulting in a large yet outmoded and militarily ineffective army, the expense of which

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[115]David Washbrook, 'Muhammad Ali Khan Wallahjah (c. 1717-1795),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/63545> [Accessed 13 June 2017].
[116]Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 303-304. Philips, 'A Successor,' 375-379.

nonetheless compounded his debts, making him ever more dependent on the British fiscally and militarily as time went on.[117]

Mir Qasim initially had a political advantage over Muhammad Ali, and he quickly took steps to secure his own power and limit Company influence upon him and his administration. This included moving his capital inland and away from Calcutta and dismissing European military officers in his employ with strong connections to the EIC. Moreover, despite an initial reliance on EIC troops for pacification, Mir Qasim did not depend as much upon them as Muhammad Ali. As a result, he accumulated less debt while simultaneously establishing greater independence from the Company. However, this did not translate to lasting security, with Peers observing that one of Mir Qasim's critical political mistakes was the fact that he had only purchased the loyalty of half of the Calcutta Council, perhaps due to fiscal constraints. This led to resentment among the other Councillors and encouraged factionalism because the Nawab could not rely on the support of a majority among the leading EIC servants in Bengal. This illustrates a perennial problem in patronage systems that was also an issue in the Carnatic, namely, there are never enough opportunities or pay-offs to satisfy everyone.[118]

Such a situation would have been familiar to the Nawab of the Carnatic, who by the mid-1770s had taken pains to ensure the cooperation of as much of the Madras Council as possible. Muhammad Ali required the majority's support for his claim to Thanjavur, a claim which eventually led to the 1776 coup discussed in Chapter 4. This task was eased by the fact that since

[117]Sanjay Subrahmanyam, in examining military aspects of Mysore's finances before the rise of Haidar Ali, asserts that with the Mughals and Marathas pressing into the Deccan, Mysore had become a Mughal vassal by the turn of the 18th century. Nevertheless, Mysore retained a great degree of independence by playing the Mughals and Marathas off one another and exploiting rivalries among the Mughal's deputies – a policy Haidar Ali would successfully replicate for a time. Subrahmanyam*, Penumbral Visions,* 68-71. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 304. *Vestiges*, iii, 192, 611-612. Natasha Eaton, 'The Art of Colonial Despotism: Portraits, Politics, and Empire in South India, 1750-1795,' *Cultural Critique* 70, no. 1 (2008), pp. 63-93 [70]. Philips, 'A Successor,' 383.
[118]Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 308. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 142, 169-170, 188.

the Second Carnatic War both the EIC and private individuals – including many Madras Councillors, EIC army officers, and other influential Company servants, had been lending funds to the Nawab at very high interest rates, and, therefore, it was in their own interest to support his ambitions as increased revenues could fund his debts to them.[119]

The fact that a debt scheme on the scale of that in the Carnatic did not exist in Bengal is worth noting. In addition to the Bengal's greater wealth, the Mughal Emperor had granted the EIC the *diwani* (right to collect taxes) in Bengal after Plassey, which greatly increased the power and penetration of the Company in Bengal. Nevertheless the Bengali nawabs initially retained considerable autonomous revenues of their own. The Bengali Nawabs' relatively stronger position in part accounts for Mir Jaffar and Mir Qasim's lack of influence on the Bengal Council compared to the co-dependency which at times strengthened Muhammad Ali's leverage in Madras. Tthe EIC leadership in Bengal were able to depose their 'puppet' rulers more easily, but in the short term this also gave these rulers more latitude to pursue their own agendas. Ultimately the situation in Bengal after the Battle of Buxar, with Mir Jaffar restored as a puppet with further limits on his independence and effective power, and revenue collection firmly in the hands of the Company, would prove to be a sounder arrangement in fiscal-military terms than the situation in the Carnatic.

The Nawab of the Carnatic and Madras Council's interdependence resulted from shared interest in revenue expansion to fund the formers' debt and was expressed in the use of military force both internally in the form of coerced revenue extraction and externally in the form of expansionist wars with neighbouring states. Muhammad Ali came to power in the Carnatic because of the Second Carnatic War discussed above. During his reign the Company

[119]Philips, 'A Successor,' 379-380. See Chapter 4, below.

subsequently defended the Nawab's territory in the Third Carnatic War (1756-1763), the First (1767-1769), Second (1780-1784), and Third (1790-1792) Anglo-Mysore Wars, and in multiple small border skirmishes in addition to conducting invasions of Thanjavur in 1771 and 1773. In this manner the EIC and Muhammad Ali played into each others' ambitions, perpetuating the latter's rivalry with Haidar Ali and his desire to supplant the Nizam of Hyderabad as *Subadar* of the Deccan, the nominal overlord of South India in the Mughal political system.[120] And while the Company ultimately paid a great price in blood and treasure for fostering these ambitions, it was in their interest to curb the power of Mysore and the Marathas in South India and it goes without saying that individual councillors and the other creditors of the Nawab, the chief among them being the sometime EIC engineer and architect Paul Benfield (1741-1810), profited greatly from these activities. Moreover, the Nawab was aided in this by the preponderance of military officers in the EIC establishment at Madras, as members of any military or security service often support continued war (or emphasize the threat of war) as an excuse to expand as institutions and attain promotions and prestige individually, not to mention the potential for private gain in the form of plunder.[121]

The Nawab's private debts to individual Company servants had a further crippling fiscal impact on the Madras Presidency, in that it discouraged revenue collection innovations like those introduced in Bengal. Councillors, civil administrators, and military officers with personal interest in the Nawab's debts had little incentive to see the Company take on direct revenue collection in the Carnatic. The Company had received the right to do so in the Chingleput district

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[120]Love, *Vestiges,* iii, 169-170, 48, 68, 189. Philips, 'A Successor,' 367, 373-378. See Chapter 4, below.
[121]P.J. Marshall, 'Benfield, Paul (1741-1810),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/2092> [accessed 13 June 2017]. Philips, 'A Successor,' 379. Robert Fletcher to Robert Orme, 12 February 1772, Orme OV 30 (pp. 161-164 [162]), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Andreas Heinemann-Grüder, 'Patterns of Civil-Military Relations: Patronage and Clientelism,' *Security and Peace* 29, no 4. (2011), 44-45.

around Madras in 1763, had temporarily done so for all of the Carnatic during the Seven Years War, and would do so again in sizable portions of the Carnatic in the wake of the Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-1784). However, these exceptions aside, the Nawab's creditors were not keen to take taxation out of Muhammad Ali's hands and risk losing their own source of profit.[122] Indeed, it is a testament to their greed and general disregard for the EIC's welfare that they did not even think to adopt the above-mentioned temporary fix during the First Anglo-Mysore War – the latter stages of which represented an existential crisis for the Presidency equal to that of the Seven Years War. Moreover, G. J. Bryant argues that 'Unlike in Bengal, the Company could not expect to net great sums of money from such a seizure, for the Carnatic was a poorer country, deep in debt to the Company, while the cost of defending it effectively was potentially greater.[123] Furthermore, he points out that Muhammad Ali's recognition as the legitimate Nawab of the Carnatic in the Treaty of Paris (1763) by both the British and French would severely frustrate any effort to 'legitimately' marginalize or depose him and either seek the *diwani* from the Mughal Emperor or seize direct control. This situation complicated any solution to the Carnatic hybrid fiscal-military state's fiscal woes along the lines of the post-Buxar EIC establishment in Bengal.[124]

Despite this confluence of interests and the relative security of his rule, the Nawab was unwilling to modernize his own military forces to support his ambitions despite multiple attempts by the EIC leadership in the Carnatic to persuade him to do so. A compromise was eventually reached whereby the Nawab would support the cost of several battalions of sepoys

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[122]David Washbrook, 'Muhammad Ali Khan Wallahjah (c. 1717-1795).' Bryant, *Emergence*, 190. Love, *Vestiges,* ii, 567.
[123]Bryant, *Emergence*, 190, 193
[124]This had previously been pointed out by Mark Wilks (c. 1760-1831), a retired EIC officer, administrator, and historian in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. Mark Wilks, *Historical Sketches of the South of India: In an Attempt to Trace the History of Mysoor*, vol. II (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817), 1-2. Bryant, *Emergence*, 194.

under Company command. This settlement notwithstanding, the Nawab persisted in maintaining his own army in an antiquated form, including a large component of antiquated, ill-trained, and poorly equipped infantry. EIC leaders urged the Nawab on several occasions to disband all or part of his army to alleviate the fiscal strain of contributing funds to two parallel military structures but to no avail.[125]

Though they would complain of the Nawab not providing quality cavalry or developing an effective military force of his own throughout his reign, the Madras civil and military leadership conversely had understandable concerns regarding the development of any significant military force in the Carnatic outside the EIC's direct control. These concerns were indeed understandable, especially when one considers the case of Muhammad Yusuf Khan's rebellion.[126]

The Yusuf Khan fiasco began because of the Nawab's fiscal needs, with the 'collectorship' of Madura under the former's control initially set up in the late 1750s as a means of better handling taxation in the south of the Carnatic. It is also worth noting that this delegation of administrative authority to a military commander with broad powers and a mandate for taxation was similar to the role played by *sirdars* since the Mughal era, as pointed out by Roy, only on a larger scale, showing that hybridization indeed flowed both ways.[127] Although he had served with the Nawab and the EIC during the Second Carnatic War, and distinguished himself as an independent commander, Yusuf Khan quickly showed that he could not be relied upon as a loyal subordinate contractor, and by Spring of 1762 he was attempting to build up his own power

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[125]Madras Council to Caillaud, MSCM, 20 November 1765, BL, P/251/53, p. 1002. Philips, 'A Successor,' 382-383. Bryant, *Emergence*, 195-196.
[126]Colonel Joseph Smith to Madras Council, MSCM, 10 July 1767, BL, P/251/58, p. 535. Bryant, *Emergence*, 202. Philips, 'A Successor,' 382-383.
[127]Roy, 'Hybrid Military Establishment,' 213-215.

base. He raised and trained his own forces along European lines, employed European mercenaries as officers, and received fiscal and logistical support from Thanjavur and the Dutch at Nagapattinam (Negapatam). In essence he was attempting to create his own hybrid fiscal-military state. The following year he challenged the Nawab and EIC militarily and it took two years to subdue him. As a result, the Company was thereafter reluctant to employ Indian officers, especially in independent commands, and were wary of devolving military power to the Nawab and his commanders.[128]

Consequentially, parallel militaries, one functional and under EIC control and the other one largely semi-ceremonial under the Nawab, became the norm in the Carnatic in the 1760s and 1770s. This binary fiscal-military state combined all the expenses of a modern hybrid military establishment along the lines described by Kaushik Roy with the fragmented state and revenue structures the same decries, resulting in a fiscally wasteful and militarily ineffective arrangement. To make matters worse, institutional overlap led to confusion over jurisdiction, with Bryant noting that

> Effective day-to-day liaison between the Nawab's and Company's civilian and military officers out in the country was undermined by the indistinct demarcation of authority between them, further vitiated by clashing self-interest, mutual suspicions and cultural misunderstandings. This was especially the case in the area of land revenue collection, where military menaces were invariably necessary to secure compliance from the taxpayers; and the Company's forces would frequently be called in to perform this role.[129]

The environment in which this system developed makes it a uniquely Indian hybrid state structure akin to the contemporaneous developments discussed by Peers in Mysore and particularly Bengal. However, the Carnatic's greater degree of sustained fiscal-military parallelism that resulted from the Nawab's continued maintenance of his own armed forces is

[128]Lawford, *Britain's Army in India*, 277-290.
[129]Bryant, *Emergence*, 194.

both internally unique and uniquely ineffective among the EIC presidencies at the time. Fiscal inefficiency resulting from this parallelism, combined with corruption, profit-seeking self-interest, and the relative weakness of the civilian administration discussed above, would result in problems characteristic of a – in this case relatively – strong army and a weak state, including military adventurism (in the form of the First Anglo-Mysore War and the expeditions against Thanjavur for example), political instability, and a military-backed coup. Jim Philips described the Nawab's polity in the Carnatic as a failed Mughal successor state. However, in light of its hybridity and its failure to fiscally sustain its own military operations it is perhaps better to classify the Carnatic-Company state in the 1760s and 1770s as a failed fiscal-military state.[130]

[130]Philips, 'A Successor,' 389.

Chapter Three: 'A Protracted and Inglorious War'

3.1 Introduction

> There is, I think, no other instance in our history of so close, minute, and persistent interference of civilians with military operations as is recorded in this campaign; and yet the soldiers went near to achieve great triumphs in the face of these obstacles…[and]…the behaviour of both officers and men in most trying circumstances was beyond praise... [and as] to Smith himself his only fault as a man seems to have been excess of good temper and of diffidence, which prompted him to obey too readily, even for evil, the orders of incompetent superiors. A more masterful man might have borne down the Council of Madras by sheer force of character; a less disciplined man might have ended their rule by violence. Smith did neither of these things.[131]
>
> - John William Fortescue,
> *A History of the British Army*

Fortescue's description of the First Anglo-Mysore War tells the reader as much about the author's agenda as a military historian as it does about the war itself. Hew Strachan, in *The Politics of the British Army* (1997), singles out Fortescue for his consistent championing of the British Army as noble and apolitical while being highly critical of Parliament for interfering in military affairs. Indeed, Strachan further observes that for Fortescue 'the House of Commons had not protected the constitution and the political liberties that [it] enshrined, but had constantly threatened them.' Strachan goes on to point out that Fortescue's views on the subject were hardly marginal and were shared by many of the historian's contemporaries among the British Army's officer corps in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Strachan's work calls into question the traditional Whig narrative of an apolitical regular British Army though he only addresses the EIC Army tangentially.[132]

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[131] John W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, vol. iii (London: Macmillan & Company, 1899), 134.
[132] Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 5-7.

However, in his opinions regarding the First Anglo-Mysore War, Fortescue's opprobrium stretched beyond Parliament and toward civilian interference in military matters in general, as Parliament had less to do with this conflict directly than it would in the subsequent Anglo-Mysore Wars, all of which would involve Royal regiments. The fact that Fortescue paid attention to the First Anglo-Mysore War at all is somewhat surprising and may in part have resulted from a desire to use the clear tensions between the Madras Presidency's civilian and military leadership didactically within his own narrative of civilian overreach. These tensions, and the obvious ill-effects that several instances of civilian overreach had on the course of the conflict, made this war a perfect case study to support Fortescue's views regarding military independence. These circumstances also make the First Anglo-Mysore War an ideal subject for this study of EIC civil-military relations, though one must always bear Fortescue's biases in mind, corroborate his assertions with reference to relevant primary sources, and consider alternative explanations.

Before turning to the course of the conflict it is necessary to introduce Colonel (later Brigadier-General) Joseph Smith (1732-33/1790), who was the Madras Army's Commander-in-Chief for most of the war. Smith was the son of a father of the same name, who had himself served in the EIC Army as an officer of engineers and the 'gunner' (meaning the chief officer of artillery) at Madras. His father died in Company service on the first day of the French Siege of Madras (7-9 September 1746) due to 'fatigue' (possibly a cardiac arrest) resulting from the siege. His son joined the army in 1749 and was described in the September 'Muster Roll' as 'One ensign, a very promising youth.' The younger Smith subsequently distinguished himself as a junior officer during the Carnatic Wars, rising to the rank of captain in 1754 and proving himself as a capable independent commander with his defense of Tiruchirappalli three years later. He served under George Monson and Eyre Coote in the Carnatic Wars in 1760 and was made a

major in September of that year, later commanding a brigade at the Siege of Pondicherry (September 1760 – January 1761). Having established a reputation for himself, Smith left India and stayed in England from 1763 to 1766, thereafter returning to a developing crisis in the Deccan having been newly promoted to the rank of colonel.[133] He served with distinction during the war and into the 1770s.

It is also necessary to introduce the EIC's civilian leadership in the Carnatic before moving on. The primary governing institution of the Madras Presidency at the time was the Madras Council which met at Fort Saint George. The Council was the supreme decision-making body within the presidency and prior to the Prime Minister, Lord North's (1732-1792, P.M. 1770-1782) *Regulating Act of 1773* was broadly independent though ultimately answerable to the Court of Directors in London. After 1773 it would be made subordinate to the Governor-General and his Supreme Council at Calcutta in Bengal.[134] The Madras Council itself was composed of a variable number of men (usually somewhere between 10 and 20 in this period) who held prominent positions within the presidency including prominent administrators at Madras or the Company's other factories on the Coromandel Coast, high-ranking Madras Army officers, and leading private merchants in Madras.[135] There was an order of precedence for Council members,

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[133]Henry Davison Love's *Vestiges of Old Madras* (1913) was not discussed at length in the historiography section of this study because it is primarily concerned with the history of the city of Madras itself and its inhabitants. As such, it is by the author's own admission not concerned with military campaigns except tangentially and has proven of somewhat limited use for this chapter. Nevertheless, its quotations of, and direct references to primary sources have been useful, in this chapter and elsewhere. Love provides two different dates for Smith's enlistment in the second volume of *Vestiges of Old Madras*, with the earlier date in a reproduction of a muster role and the latter in his own note. See 'Muster Roll Madras Garrison, September 1, 1746,' and other entries in Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 1640-1800, vol. ii (London: John Murray, 1913), 346, 352, 358, 363, 511 [Note 2], 596 [incl. Note 1]. Bryant accepts the latter date, but his cited sources are vague, and the issue requires clarification. G.J. Bryant, 'Smith, Joseph (1732/3–1790),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25872, accessed 22 July 2016].
[134]*East India Company Act, 1773*, *Archives of Empire*, vol. 1, eds. Mia Carter et al (London: Duke University Press, 2003), 31-39.
[135]Of the presidents of other factories sitting on the Madras Council, that of Fort Saint David (Cuddalore) is most commonly mentioned.

with the first member usually appointed by the Court of Directors and serving as the president of the council and the executive authority in the Madras Presidency. Decisions were reached by majority vote with the president casting the deciding vote in case of a tie. The relative power of the president to act without the consent of the majority was constitutionally vague and would be a topic of intense debate in this period including during Lord Pigot's second term in office. Factionalism among councillors was endemic in this period. The Nawab and his creditors, many of whom were Councillors, were very influential. Prominent Councillors discussed in this chapter include Robert Palk and Charles Bourchier (who served as President one after the other), Joseph Smith, John Call, and George Mackay.[136]

Turning back to the conflict, for the purposes of this study we shall divide the course of the First Anglo-Mysore War into four distinct phases, each of which illustrates instances of tension between the Madras Council and the leaders of their field army. Although subsequent phases of the conflict better illustrate the Presidency's operational and logistic incompetence, it was during the first stage of the conflict in the spring of 1767 that the Council's unreasonable elevation of its own political ambitions above the politico-military realities its forces found themselves in is most clear. In addition to forcing the EIC into a war against its own interests and, as will be seen, to its ultimate disadvantage, this disconnect between aspirations and reality among the civilian leadership would undermine the geopolitical aims of the war. Moreover, in so doing they would also place their frontier forces in an unnecessarily dangerous situation, all despite the misgivings of their newly-appointed commander-in-chief. During this phase of the

[136]See Chapter Four, below. Love provides a sample chart of Madras Councillors which shows their order of precedence and administrative positions dated to December of 1764. Although the size and composition of councils varied, it serves as a good example. Love, *Vestiges,* ii, 437-438 [chart], 594-596.

war Smith's forces accompanied those of the Nizam of Hyderabad into Mysore, only to have the Nizam switch sides and leave his erstwhile allies exposed, with little option but to retreat.

The second phase of the war began once Joseph Smith was able to extricate his forces from Mysore and turn to defending the Carnatic. Though it encompassed two significant tactical victories on Smith's part in August and September of 1767, this phase is characterized largely by the Madras Army's chronic lack of supplies and transportation because of the ponderous nature of the army and its camp followers. The Army also had to contend with insufficient preparedness and the venal actions by the Council and Nawab of the Carnatic. These problems were, in turn, exacerbated by the cumbersome nature of EIC armies and their attendant camp followers in the period. These logistic failures would cripple the army's ability to maneuver effectively in the field, and further strain relations between Smith and the Council.

The third phase of the war began with Haidar Ali's withdrawal of his army over the Eastern Ghats in December of 1767. This was necessary to suppress a rebellion in his Western dominions, and allowed the Madras Army to advance into Mysore once again. However, supply and transport challenges continued, and civil-military relations were soured still further by the Council's imposition on Smith of two Field Deputies. Additionally, the Council's new aim to conquer Mysore outright and annex its territory to the Carnatic illustrates their ill-informed ambition and poor grasp of military realities.

The final phase of the conflict, beginning with Smith's recall and Colonel John Wood's assumption of command in November of 1768, illustrates the Council's inconsistency and the operational danger of shuffling through military commanders to find a more politically pliant officer. Moreover, the ensuing invasion of the Carnatic by Haidar Ali demonstrates both the Nawab and Madras government's lack of preparation, just as their initial failure to come to peace

terms illustrates their political division and inflexibility. Continued insufficient logistic arrangements in this terminal phase of the war would result in criticism not only from Smith, but from much of the Madras Army officer corps.

Analysis of the campaign will be followed by a discussion of Colonel Wood's court martial in 1769 for his actions during the war. This court martial, and the Madras Army officer corps' reaction to it, will illustrate both the rift between the Company's civil and military servants in the Carnatic at the time and the corporate consciousness of the EIC officers in the face of it. It will be followed by concluding remarks on the actions of Smith and the Council during the conflict and the consequences of the war for the Carnatic and the EIC.

3.2 Ambition and Credulity

On November 13th, 1766 Colonel John Caillaud (1726-1812) concluded a treaty with the Nizam of Hyderabad which, in return for the *Subadar* confirming EIC control of the Northern Circars (Sarkars), put a Company force at the Nizam's disposal for any future war against Mysore, at this point presumably in conjunction with the Marathas who frequently invaded Haidar Ali's dominions.[137] This position departed from the anti-Maratha policy which Clive had promulgated, though G.J Bryant has argued that Clive and the Directors had overestimated the threat posed by the Marathas in this period. Furthermore, in a private letter to Joseph Smith sent upon his assuming command of the Madras Army the then Governor of Bengal, Harry Verelst (1734-1785, gov. 1767-1769) was very critical of the offensive alliance with Hyderabad, correctly

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[137]G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1784* (Woodbridge: Bowdell Press, 2013): 201-202. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 594. Fort Saint George Proceedings, 11 and 14 August 1766., IOR/P/251/57 (pp. 216-224), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. A copy of the treaty, signed and ratified by the Council and the Nawab, was enclosed in a letter from the Council, to Smith which he was to deliver to the Nizam, dated December 10th, 1766. Fort Saint George to Joseph Smith, 10 December 1766, Orme OV 76 (pp. 4-14), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

predicting that it would result in a costly war the EIC could ill afford.[138] Having laid the groundwork for the conflict with this treaty, Caillaud promptly retired from Company service and returned to England in 1767 just prior to the First Anglo-Mysore War.[139]

Prior to Caillaud's retirement, Smith, now a Colonel but not yet commander-in-chief, returned to India in September of 1766 and was immediately dispatched to Hyderabad to take command of the auxiliary force of 200 European infantry, three sepoy battalions, and an artillery company established by the treaty with the intention that he would coordinate operations with the Nizam against Mysore.[140] At this time Mysore had once again been invaded by the Marathas, and the Nizam, the Nawab of the Carnatic, and the Madras Council all saw this as an opportunity to enhance their own positions in the Deccan vis-à-vis the growing might of Haidar Ali. G.J. Bryant, remarking on the Council's motives for entering the conflict, notes that

> Their undeclared aim… was to acquire territory from Haidar on behalf of Mohamed Ali to expand his revenues, thus enabling him to pay off his debts to the Company, incurred in financing the recent war, but also to its servants who had privately loaned him money on very advantageous terms (to them). In this they ignored the Director's orders not to get into any aggressive wars.[141]

The decision to go to war would neither be the first nor the last action taken by the Madras Council due to the avarice of the Nawab's creditors, many of whom sat on the Council. Bryant points out that at least one member of the Madras Army officer corps criticized the decision to

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[138]Mark Wilks, *Historical Sketches of the South of India: In an Attempt to Trace the History of Mysoor*, vol. II (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817), ii., 4-5. T. H. Bowyer, 'Caillaud, John (1726–1812)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/4334, accessed 5 Aug 2017]. Harry Verelst to Joseph Smith, 16 February 1767, Orme OV 76 (p. 31), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

[139]Bowyer, 'Caillaud, John (1726–1812).' Court of Directors to Fort Saint George, 12 May 1768, IOR/E/4/864 (p. 342), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. G.J. Bryant, 'Asymmetric Warfare: The British Experience in Eighteenth-Century India.' *The Journal of Military History* 68 No. 2 (April 2004): 437.

[140]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 5.

[141]One can assume from context that the 'recent war' Bryant is referring to here is the Third Carnatic War (1756-1763), which formed the South Asian part of the global conflict widely known as the Seven Years War. Bryant, *Emergence*, 192.

act against Haidar as it was at the very least premature, even though conflict may have been inevitable in the long run. In any case, EIC servants in India routinely ignored the London-based Court of Directors' injunctions against offensive wars, so the First Anglo-Mysore War was not an anomaly in this regard.[142]

The formidable Maratha army that marched south to challenge Haidar's control of Mysore was led by the *Peshwa* himself, Madhav Rao (1745-1772, r. 1761-1772), with his invasion force supplemented by those of the Nizam of Hyderabad and his English allies who advanced independently from the east. Haidar, fearing his northern neighbours' power, utilized 'scorched-earth' tactics against the Marathas at the outset of the war, including relocating the border territories' population and livestock, flooding agricultural flatlands to impede the Marathas' march, and supposedly even poisoning wells. Wilks sees Haidar's reluctance to engage the large Maratha army as a sound decision, and generally has a higher and more realistic opinion of the Marathas' military effectiveness in this period than subsequent historians in the 19th century. Wilks's opinion is supported today by that of Stewart Gordon, who points out that when he finally did give battle to the Marathas in 1771 Haidar was handily defeated by the *Peshwa*'s forces.[143]

In any case these delays bought the Mysoreans time to negotiate, and despite initial setbacks the Peshwa was eventually induced – through means of a considerable tribute of 36 lakh of rupees – to agree to a separate peace with Haidar, leaving the Nizam and his English allies as the only enemies in the field. When discussing the outbreak of the First Anglo-Mysore War,

[142]Bryant, *Emergence*. 202-203. Philips, 'A Successor,' 377. Huw Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 8, 205-206. Colonel Campbell to Fort Saint George, 11 July 1766., IOR/P/251/56 (p. 444), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[143]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 8-10, 14. Lewin Bentham Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, and the Struggle with the Musalman Powers of the South* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I, 1883): 47-48. Stewart Gordon, *The Marathas, 1600-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008 [orig. pub. 1993]), 158.

Wilks argues that the Madras authorities were used – not entirely against their will – by Muhammad Ali and the Nizam, stating that 'the English were about to engage in the contest, in the exclusive character of dupes.'[144] While this characterization of 'the English' as innocent dupes is overstated, at least as far as the obviously complicit Madras Council is concerned, it does accurately convey their subservience to the interests of the Nawab and his creditors, and dramatically presages the Nizam's subsequent betrayal. However, it also perpetuates orientalist tropes, casting the Nizam and Nawab as sinister and devious villains, and is therefore suspect, especially when one considers the ulterior motives of the Councillors involved.

Having taken up command of EIC forces in the Nizam's domains and established himself as Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army after Caillaud's retirement, Joseph Smith quickly became suspicious of his ally's intentions as they advanced into Haidar's territories. Despite Smith being the most experienced British commander in South India when he wrote the Council of his suspicions of the Nizam's betrayal, they nevertheless did not appear to take his concern seriously based on the reply he received on January 6th, 1767. They were aware of Haidar's overtures to the Nizam with offers of a treaty of friendship by early January at the latest.[145] Moreover, Fortescue points out that even at this early point the civil authorities and their military advisers at Madras, notably Colonel Sir John Call (1732-1801) – the Madras Presidency's chief engineer, Captain of the Corps of Engineers, and the only officer other than Smith also serving as a Councillor – were interfering directly in field operations, and had made the grievous mistake of making little further arrangement for supply other than to trust the assurance of the demonstrably unreliable Muhammad Ali that he would take care of everything. Indeed, the historian and

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[144]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 7. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 48.
[145]Robert Palk to Joseph Smith, 6 January 1767, Orme OV 76 (pp. 21-22), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

archivist S.C. Hill argues in his index of the *Orme Collection* that Smith's correspondence '… shows pretty plainly how intolerable was the interference of Col. Call, as the favoured advisor of the Council, in the affairs of the army in the field.'[146]

By March 9th, 1767 Joseph Smith's men and the Nizam's forces had converged at the Tungabhadra River. Smith wrote to the Council, expressing realistic concerns that the Marathas might reach a separate agreement with Haidar. Shortly thereafter, on March 24th Smith and the Nizam received intelligence indicating that Haidar had indeed rendered *chauth* to the Marathas and that conflict between the two had ceased. At this point Wilks suspects that the Nizam, as the Company's only ally in the conflict, knowingly continued the war in the hope of receiving tribute from Haidar in exchange for an end to hostilities. Any hope for a profitable settlement the Nizam may have entertained would make sense for two reasons. Firstly, as *Subadar* of the Deccan the Nizam could justifiably – if only nominally – see himself as Haidar's suzerain in the Mughal political hierarchy and as deserving of tribute, with this simultaneously giving Haidar a face-saving justification for rendering such tribute. Secondly, Haidar had already offered tribute to secure the Nizam's neutrality, but the Nizam had declined, possibly hoping for a larger settlement. However, with the Marathas now out of the picture, Haidar hoped to induce the Nizam to betray his Company allies outright and side with him against them.[147]

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[146]Fortescue, vol. iii, 115. Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 24 February 1769, Orme OV 10 (pp. 111-153), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. S.C. Hill, *Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages Belonging to the Library of the India Office,* vol. II, part I, *The Orme Collection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1916), 10 [Entry 12]. D.L. Prior, 'Call, Sir John, first baronet (1732-1801),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn., Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/
Article/4393. Accessed 22 July 2016].
[147]Robert Palk to Joseph Smith, 6 January 1767, Ibid. Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, March 1767, Orme XI (pp. 3039-3044), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 14-15.

By May 3rd, 1767 Joseph Smith appears to have requested more direct discussion with the Madras Council on relations with the Nizam at this early stage, with the Council sending Governor Charles Bourchier (d. 1810, gov. Jan 1767 – Jan 1770) to his camp 'to relieve him of a portion of his political cares.'[148] From a civil-military perspective Smith may have been waffling on military independence and unity of command at this point, and could have been uncomfortable acting as a political player in his own right and taking on a more active role like Clive, Coote, and Caillaud before him. It is important to remember that soldiers frequently took on political roles in the EIC at this time, especially in matters of diplomacy, and that Smith's reluctance to do so makes him an outlier. As we shall see, despite this reluctance and Caillaud's example of political miscalculation in the treaty with the Nizam, Smith would eventually come to resent civilians taking a more active role in the conflict.

On the same day (May 3rd, 1767) Smith wrote to the Council regarding his suspicion of the Nizam. He noted that upon crossing Mysore's frontier the Nizam treated it as friendly territory by not reconnoitring his surroundings or foraging for supplies, making Smith wary and leading him to suggest they consider preparing against a Mysore-Hyderabad joint invasion.[149] According to Fortescue,

> The Council replied by making all movements of troops against such an invasion dependent upon the **consent of a civil commissioner. A few days later Smith, having open proof of Nizam Ali's hostile designs, withdrew his force toward his own frontier, whereupon the council insisted that three battalions, with their six battalion guns, should be left as a guard of honour with this open enemy [the Nizam]. It was only by** exhibition of *unusual chivalry* on Nizam Ali's part that this detachment was allowed to withdraw unmolested just before he turned his arms without concealment against Smith.[150] [my emphasis]

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[148]Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, March 1767, ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 16 (Note).
[149]Joseph Smith to Robert Orme [Fragment], [January 1767?], Orme OV 197 (pp. 115-117), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 17.
[150]Fortescue, vol. iii, 115. See also Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 21.

Fortescue's qualification of the Nizam's chivalry as 'unusual' is another instance of orientalist caricature on his part, implying that the Nizam was usually an underhanded and bloodthirsty tyrant. However, his criticism of the Council's orders here seems justified from a military perspective even when on takes his pro-military inclinations into account.

Wilks also views this decision on the part of the Council as a risky mistake which he describes as 'contrary to every principle of military prudence [and] political dignity.'[151] Furthermore, he decries the role played by Bourchier at Smith's camp, as the former remained open to negotiation and according to Wilks was quite susceptible to the Nizam's agents' stalling and deceptions. Finally, Wilks is critical of the Council as well, as they discounted Smith's suspicions of an alliance between Haidar and the Nizam. Moreover, they acquiesced to the latter's request to leave a body of Company troops and several field pieces at his camp as a token of good will, thereby forcing Smith to divide his forces in the face of the enemy despite his inhibitions. In this manner the Council demonstrated their military incompetence and unwillingness to leave vital matters of command to Smith's discretion, placing greater importance on the feelings of the Nizam than the welfare of their own soldiers. In the end the Company was only saved from the embarrassing loss of three battalions by the generosity of the Nizam and Smith's skill as a commander.[152]

Having accepted Haidar's offer of tribute, on May 11th, 1767 Maratha forces finally began to withdraw from Mysorean territory, retreating northward toward their own dominions. In addition to affording them the usual substantial remuneration for their invasion along with no further losses, such a move made sense in terms of weather, as May is alternatively hot and

[151]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 18.
[152]Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, March 1767, Orme XI (pp. 3039-3044), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 17-18.

stormy in the high Deccan. Conversely June, July, and August are comparatively calm, cool, and cloudy on the plateau, especially compared to the heat of the coastal plains of the Carnatic in summer.[153] Taking this into consideration, the Marathas' decision to remove themselves from the conflict at this time was as sensible as the Company's entrance into and continuation of the war would prove foolish.

The Nizam's resentment of his erstwhile British allies in the opening stages of the first Anglo-Mysore War likely stemmed from their *de facto* control of the five Northern Circars north of Madras that had been seized from the French in 1759 but were nonetheless nominally under Hyderabad's dominion. This situation was further aggravated by the formal granting of these territories to the English by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam (1728-1806, r. 1759-1806), without first consulting the Nizam.[154] When combined with a strong and justified distrust of the English it may not have been surprising to informed observers that the Nizam betrayed his allies for an alliance with Haider Ali. Indeed, the 19th century writer Lewin Bentham Bowring (1824-1910, comm. 1862-1870), a retired civil servant and former Chief Commissioner of the British Administration in Mysore (1831-1881) who was quite familiar with the region and its history, moves beyond this. Clearly not immune to Western prejudices despite this familiarity, Bowring asserts that the Nizam actively deceived the civil authorities at Madras as a means of buying Haidar time to prepare his invasion, though he also makes no mention of Smith anticipating the betrayal. It is, however, impossible to know the Nizam's thoughts on this matter and Bowring's

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[153]Gordon, *Marathas*, 158. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 16-17.
[154]Francis Forde to Bengal Select Committee, 14 June 1759, Orme OV 292 (pp. 71-72), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Alfred Comyn Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India* (London: John Murray, 1894), 166. Bryant, *Emergence*, 201-202.

argument says more about his biases as a late 19th century British administrator and historian than it does about the Nizam's actual motivations.[155]

Smith's retreat from the Nizam's camp, and the subsequent egress of the three battalions he had been forced to leave behind represents the conclusion of the first stage of the war. After this withdrawal Smith conducted an abortive siege of Krishnagiri, a fortified town under the Nizam's control, the capture of which he hoped would strengthen the Carnatic frontier. However, this proved untenable as the Company's enemies joined forces, and Smith and his advance troops withdrew to the frontier in time for him take command of all forces there, just as the Nizam and Haidar were marching towards them.[156]

Early historians like Wilks, as well as later ones like Fortescue, are critical of the Madras Council's motivations for entering the war and for their ambitious and potentially self-serving pursuit of territorial aggrandizement as a means of funding the Nawab's debts through revenue grants. Additionally, they decry the civilian leaders for not heeding Smith's warnings, and for trusting to the Nizam's loyalty instead of listening to their own Commander-in-Chief. This credulity itself may have been a product of their ambition and hubris, and both ambition and credulity would continue to hinder operations throughout the war. However, even when their assertions are borne out by the facts, one must always remain aware of the potential biases of military historians regarding civilian leaders, especially when these historians themselves are serving or retired military officers.[157]

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[155]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 49.
[156]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 22-23.
[157]Strachan, *British Army*, 5-7. This problem is often exacerbated when civilian leaders discussed by military historians do not conform to a given military historians' own political values and ideology. Although all historians have ideological biases, they are perhaps more noticeable among military historians, especially to other academics, due to the former group's ideological positions often being further to the right of the political spectrum than their fellow academics. For a study of this phenomenon among American military historians see Jeffrey Kimball, 'The Influence of Ideology on Interpretive Disagreement: A Report on a Survey of Diplomatic, Military, and Peace Historians on the Causes of 20th Century U.S. Wars,' *History Teacher* 17, no. 3 (1984): 355-383.

3.3 Tactical Successes, Logistic Failures

In his opening description of the second phase of the war Fortescue describes the Madras Council as '...irresponsible strategists designing a campaign with imperfect maps of an unexplored territory.'[158] Despite the inherent Eurocentrism of describing 18th century South India as 'unexplored,' evidence of geographic ignorance is abundant throughout the campaign, with the Council's erroneous assumption that the pass at Singarapettai was the only means for an army as large as Haider's to pass through the Eastern Ghats being the most obvious example. Following the Council's assumption Joseph Smith sealed the pass to defend the Carnatic in the summer of 1767 only to be circumvented by Haider's army advancing through another route. Smith, however, was operating in the dark just as much as the Council, and Fortescue's attempt to blame them for the EIC's general ignorance of the South Indian interior's geography is illustrative of prejudices against the civilians. In any case, even if the Company had possessed more accurate knowledge of the terrain it may not have made a difference, with Bryant pointing out that the EIC did not have the military resources at the time to effectively seal all the passes into the Carnatic.[159]

The situation was made worse by the fact that neither the Company nor the Nawab had set up magazines to supply the Madras Army, despite having said they would.[160] Perhaps even more egregious was the Council's order to Joseph Smith to give some of his supplies to the Nizam's forces a mere three days before the latter invaded the Carnatic alongside his new ally, Haidar. These orders were issued to and followed by Smith despite his suspicions regarding the

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[158]Fortescue, vol. iii, 115.
[159]Colonel Smith to Fort Saint George, 10 July 1767, IOR/P/251/58 (p. 535), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 116-117. Bryant, *Emergence*, 202.
[160]Fortescue, vol. iii, 116.

Nizam and the dire need of the EIC's own soldiers. Addressing the invasion, Wilks quotes a subsequent letter from Smith to Clive, in which the former – possibly engaging in apologetics – states that 'Although it was as plain as noon day to every person (except the Council) that they were preparing to enter the Carnatic jointly, no measures were taken to establish magazines of provisions in proper places, nor any steps to supply our army in time of need.'[161]

Actual hostilities opened on August 25th, 1767 with Haider's cavalry driving off and capturing most of the Company's transport bullocks. This disaster was immediately compounded when Mysore destroyed one third of the EIC's Indian auxiliary cavalry sent out to collect the animals and pushing the remainder of the Company's horse back into the camp, causing general confusion. The loss of these bullocks exacerbated the strain on supply which already existed due to insufficient provisions and 'inefficient equipment,' and prevented the army from moving until August 28th. At the same time smaller raiding forces dispersed throughout the Carnatic, with some in the coming months ranging as far as the vicinity of Madras itself.[162]

At the same time Haidar besieged the EIC-occupied fortress of Kavaripattinam south of Krishnagiri and captured it with heavy loses the following day after a strong defence by three companies of sepoys under Captain McKain. As this occurred a relief force under Colonel John Wood was advancing toward Smith's position with the intention of joining forces and confronting the allies' army directly. Wilks points out Haidar's error in failing to use his superior mobility to cut off Wood's corps, which was moving from Tiruchirappalli, from Smith near the pass at Changem (Changama) despite being aware of its advance when it was still ten days away. Furthermore, he speculates that Haidar, despite his strong defensive position near

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[161]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 23.
[162]Fort Saint George to the Company, 8 October 1767, IOR/P/336/69, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 596-597. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 25.

Kavaripattinam, may have expected Smith to rashly attack him before being joined by these reinforcements. Haidar would soon learn that such actions were quite uncharacteristic of so cautious a commander as Smith, though the same would not be true of all his subordinates.[163]

Having overcome the transport difficulties discussed above, Smith finally reached Changem on August 30th, 1767. Seeing how Smith and Wood's forces were converging, and how Haidar had done nothing so far to stop such a juncture, Nizam Ali grew impatient and complained to his ally of his inactivity. In doing so he implied that if Haidar did not deliver results soon he could easily withdraw from the conflict and realign with the EIC, demonstrating the mutability of alliances in 18th century South India where tribute payments and concessions – as opposed to costly outright conquest – were often the main objectives of military operations. This point seems to have been lost on Western military historians until recent decades, as they focused on Clausewitzian 'decisive' battles and the capture of territories.[164]

As a result of pressure from the Nizam, Haidar moved in pursuit of Joseph Smith's army, using his cavalry and rockets to harass the Company forces rear and flanks as they approached the pass. Haidar no doubt hoped to crush Smith and secure a quick victory against a numerically inferior enemy before the latter could join with Wood. [165]

Although accounts of the Battle of Changem (3 September 1767) among the secondary sources vary in length and detail, they all agree on the basic facts which are confirmed by the available primary sources. Bowring's account, for example, brushes over Changem in a single sentence and in general is shorter and less detailed than others. Malleson's and Lyall's accounts,

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[163]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 25, 26.
[164]See Ian F.W. Becket, *A Guide to British Military History: The Subject and the Sources* (Barnsly, South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Military, 2016), 15-16. Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009
[165]Wilks give a concise description of the early Mysorean rocket in the footnote on page 27, comparing it unfavourably with Congreve rocket and not mentioning the influence the former had upon the latter. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 26-27.

while less terse, are nonetheless still quite brief, and one must be careful with the former as he is very prone to racialist and triumphalist assumptions. Wilks and Fortescue's descriptions of the battle and the events that followed it, conversely, are quite detailed and very useful for modern scholars alongside the primary sources.[166]

In describing Smith's order of march before Changem, Wilks points out that the Nawab's cavalry, far from fulfilling the traditional role of providing a defence and reconnaissance screen for the column, advanced behind a full battalion of sepoys and just before the baggage with two more sepoy battalions on either flank. The main body of the army marched behind them, sheltering both the supplies and the Carnatic horse from Haidar's cavalry. This positioning is indicative of the uselessness and unreliability of Muhammad Ali's poorly motivated and chronically under-paid troops, who even on a march away from the enemy were not trusted on their own.[167]

Seizing the initiative, Haidar and the Nizam occupied a small village and adjoining hill as a strong point controlling movement out of the pass. However, they were quickly driven out by the bayonet charge of a sepoy corps. Upon seeing Haidar's massing infantry approach, the commander of the vanguard brought up another corps from the main army to relieve him in occupying the hill before resuming the advance. Wilks asserts that this action was critical to Smith's victory at Changem, as it provided Smith with a strong point to anchor his left flank. Nonetheless, Haidar and the Nizam's forces continued to harass the column as it advanced.[168]

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[166]'Journal and Orderly Book of Brigadier General-General Joseph Smith,' 2-4 September 1767, Orme OV 215 (pp. 29-38), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. For a map of the battlefield see 'Plan of the Battle of Changama,' Orme OV 215 (pp. 28-29), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 49.
[167]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 2-4 September 1767, ibid. Advices from Madras, Letter from Joseph Smith, 3 October 1767, IOR/H/99 (pp. 57-66), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 28. Philips, 'A Successor,' 383.
[168]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 2-4 September 1767, ibid. Advices from Madras, Letter from Joseph Smith, Ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 28-29.

When Smith learned of the vanguard's situation he hastened the main force's advance, quickly joining the end of his column of march to the corps on the hill and turning them in line to face the enemy. His troops showed their discipline and training in this maneuver as they were already under enemy fire. Seeing the strong disposition of Smith's forces, Haidar belatedly attempted to recapture the hill from Smith with several massed charges but was beaten back with heavy losses. As a result, the allied armies contented themselves with directing musket and artillery fire upon the EIC lines and harassing Smith's rear guard until it joined up with the main army. Once this formation had joined his right flank, Smith called for a general advance against Haidar and the Nizam which quickly routed their forces, though their cavalry did manage to plunder Smith's baggage – critically seizing much of his stores of rice.[169]

Once again short of supplies, Smith was immediately forced to withdraw toward Tiruvannamalai, force-marching his army for 27 hours so that they reached their destination late the following day. This quick and orderly withdrawal once again demonstrates the discipline of the Madras soldiery, just as Smith's competence and leadership abilities are evident in his tactical victory despite long odds. Furthermore, both Smith and his men's success is doubly impressive when one considers Haider's military abilities, the quality of the Mysorean troops they were fighting, the bad terrain, lack of food, insufficient and unreliable cavalry auxiliaries, and their lack of rest both before and after the battle.[170]

When the EIC Army arrived at Tiruvannamalai on August 4th, they found that the promised food and supplies had not arrived, and that only a small cache of Company arms and

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[169]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 2-4 September 1767, ibid. Advices from Madras, Letter from Joseph Smith, Ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 29-30.
[170]Joseph Smith to John Call, 8 October 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 29-32), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. 'Journal and Orderly Book,' 2-4 September 1767, ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 30. Fortescue, vol. iii, 117-118.

equipment sent from Madras had been prepared for them. This forced Smith and his soldiers to supply themselves from the surrounding villages, securing only enough food for a few days. As a result, when Haidar failed to prevent Wood's corps from joining the army at Tiruvannamalai on September 8th, 1767 despite the Mysoreans' advantage in mobility, the reinforcements' arrival only increased the logistic strain on Smith's command. Indeed, the supply situation was so dire that it led to the rare desertion of an officer, Lieutenant Hitchcock, who went over to Haider and on suspicion of being a spy or saboteur was imprisoned and subsequently died in captivity.[171]

Prior to the Battle of Tiruvannamalai (26 September 1767), Smith requested permission to withdraw his troops into cantonments due to lack of supplies and the imminent monsoon season. The Madras Council, however, refused to allow him to do so, forcing him to repeatedly and dangerously divide his forces to acquire supplies while Haider's cavalry plundered the territory deep into the Carnatic. The most significant example of these risks occurred on September 8th, when Smith left his sick, wounded, and baggage at Tiruvannamalai for more than a week and set out to acquire food from neighbouring villages. Luckily for the men left behind, the allies failed to attack the camp while he was away, and Smith returned in force on September 14th to see the enemy withdrawing six miles to the northwest.[172]

The following day, with all his detachments gathered, Smith attempted to attack the allies. It is likely that he was trying to strike a decisive blow while he had sufficient supplies and take advantage of potentially weak defences at the new enemy camp. But on arrival he found their position sheltered by boggy, impassable ground and soon withdrew to his camp. As a result of

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[171]Joseph Smith to John Call, Ibid. Fortescue, vol. iii, 118. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 30-31.
[172]In his narrative of the First Anglo-Mysore War Fortescue does not mention the impact that the monsoon had on the campaign from a tactical perspective for the latter, though he mentions it later when Smith put his forces into cantonment for remainder of the rainy season. See Chapter 3, Section 2.4. Joseph Smith to John Call, Ibid. Advices from Madras, Letter from Joseph Smith, 16 September 1767, IOR/H/99 (pp. 27-28), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 117-121 [118]. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 31-32.

the failed attack, and with his army starving, Smith was again forced to move east in search of food.[173]

In discussing the situation at Tiruvannamalai, Wilks is highly critical of the Madras Council for not properly arranging the supply of their forces in the field, but he also points out that they were correct in not allowing Smith to put his troops into cantonment despite the lack of supplies. As shall be seen below, this assertion is supported by how easily Haidar took advantage of Smith's withdrawal after the battle. For their part Haidar and the Nizam, aware of Smith's dire situation, simply decided to harass his foragers and any movement of his forces with their light cavalry. They would only attack him when he was eventually forced to withdraw, saving their best soldiers for the task. However, in the meantime, Smith, unbeknownst to his enemies, had received several convoys of troops and supplies from the east and discovered several small caches of food with which to provision his army for a brief time. In the meantime, Wilks asserts that the allies blamed each other for their defeat at Changem. The Nizam, impatient for plunder and hearing of EIC movements toward his own territories to the northeast, pressed Haidar to attack Smith despite their strong position and ability to wait the British out.[174]

On September 26th, 1767 the allies finally advanced on Smith with a column taking up a well-defended position facing the EIC forces across swampy ground. They commenced a bombardment with 16 heavy guns positioned with a column in front of their forces. It was Haidar's hope that Smith would advance his forces toward the column, and into the swamp and to trap them there. Smith soon discovered the obstacle and turning his forces to the right sought to move around the swamp, noting a small hill that he suspected must indicate its terminus. What he did not know was that the allies' main force was hidden behind this hill. Haidar and Nizam

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[173]Advices from Madras, Letter from Joseph Smith, Ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 31-32.
[174]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 31-33, 34, 50, 53.

commenced an immediate pursuit of the EIC forces, perhaps thinking that Smith was moving away from them and not towards them. As a result, both sides were quite surprised when their advanced parties blundered into each other on the northern flank of the hill. Captain Cooke, who was first to encounter the enemy at the hill, immediately saw the necessity of seizing the high ground as an anchor to their line's left flank. He reacted quickly and secured the summit with his corps, pushing their enemies down the hill. Cooke consolidated his position with reinforcements and then moved to seize a cluster of large rocks to the right of the hill from a large force of the allies. They succeeded in dislodging the enemy after a fierce resistance and thereby further strengthened Smith's left, allowing him to extend his line to the north opposite the enemy to the west.[175]

Haidar deployed his cavalry in front of the third of his artillery he could manage to move into position in a timely manner (around 33 out of 100 guns) and kept his masses of infantry as a reserve behind it. Having secured the abovementioned strong points and deployed his forces, Smith and his men repulsed several massed cavalry attacks on his flanks with their own artillery. After this the Company infantry advanced slowly, with their own 31 light field cannons first taking the enemy guns out of commission, and then turning on Haidar's cavalry as the infantry moved incrementally forward from one strong position to another. With Haidar and the Nizam's horse quickly dissolving into disordered flight, Smith pushed his infantry forward more quickly with his artillery at the front.[176]

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[175]'Journal and Orderly Book of Brigadier General-General Joseph Smith,' 26 September 1767, Orme OV 215 (pp. 38-43), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. For a map of the battlefield see 'Plan of the Battle near Trinomaly,' Orme OV 215 (pp. 38-39), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 119-120. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 33-36.

[176]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 26 September 1767, ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 36-37. Fortescue, vol. iii, 119-120.

Seemingly aware of the dire situation he was in as soon as Smith's forces rounded the hill, Haidar withdrew what artillery he could and requested that the Nizam do the same and screen a retreat with his cavalry. The Nizam, however, refused, thinking they could still win the day, and Haider temporarily stopped his withdrawal. As the advance of Smith's men continued, Haidar resumed the retreat, which was orderly until the Company infantry drew near, at which point his own infantry fled. The Nizam's army – including the women of his household travelling on elephants – fled in a more disorderly manner. At nightfall Smith's forces occupied all the ground previously held by the enemy.[177]

Smith could not pursue his opponents due to his lack of cavalry, though he did try to press home his temporary advantage. Around midnight on the night after the battle Smith attempted to mount a surprise attack on Haidar's withdrawing troops. However, a trusted guide employed by the British, who was really in Haidar's pay, intentionally misled the attack force of grenadiers under Major Fitzgerald, first into a swamp and then in circles. This led to most of Haidar's army escaping unmolested. The following day, as Smith continued the pursuit, he captured a number of enemy artillery pieces, for the most part those of the Nizam. After a night and another day of marching, however, Smith was compelled to give up the chase for want of food to provision the army, thereby losing a chance to capitalize on his success.[178] Considering Haidar and the Nizam's advantage in mobility, the Madras Army's lack of cavalry also no doubt played a role in the ineffectiveness of Smith's pursuit.[179]

[177]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 26 September 1767, ibid. Fort Saint George to the Company, 8 October 1767, IOR/P/336/69, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 37-38. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 596-597 [Note 3].
[178]'Journal and Orderly Book,' 26 September 1767, ibid. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 39-40. Fortescue, vol. iii, 120-121. Bryant, *Emergence*, 195-196.
[179]For further discussion on the effect that this lack of cavalry had on Madras Army logistics and operations.

Hearing of his father's defeat, Tipu Sultan and his forces withdrew from the Carnatic into their own country, though he had been within sight of Madras. Wilks criticizes this decision on Tipu's part, calling it 'in exact opposition to the conduct which true military policy would have instructed them to pursue.'[180] The withdrawal of Mysore and Hyderabad's forces from the Carnatic gave Smith the opportunity to put his men into cantonment for the remainder of the monsoon and return to Madras himself to address his grievances to the Council. However, this would also create an opportunity for Haidar after his defeat to seize the initiative.[181]

Smith's successes at Changem and Tiruvannamalai clearly demonstrate that the Madras Army was an effective fighting force and Smith a capable battlefield commander. Moreover, his conduct on the march, including coping with the Council's failure to anticipate the invasion, poor intelligence regarding the pass at Singarapettai, and their failure to provide effective supply and transport, show a high degree of operational acumen. Moreover, his troops were successful on the battlefield despite forced marches while harassed by the enemy, insufficient supplies, and the necessity of foraging is indicative of good discipline, morale, and training. The performance of both the sepoys and European soldiers speaks not only to their training and discipline, but also to the leadership of their officers, so it is hard to blame anyone in the Army for the campaign's indecisiveness.

Fortescue, again showing his anti-civilian tendencies, argues that Smith's failure to capitalize on this success was not Smith's fault, and that had he been

> Properly supplied with transport and with cavalry he certainly would have pushed his advantages much further; and that the success [at Tiruvannamalai] was not one of the great victories of India was due not to any failing in Smith, but to the imbecility, and worse, of the Council of Madras.[182]

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[180]Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 596-597. Fort Saint George to the Company, 8 October 1767, IOR/P/336/69, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 40.
[181]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 40.
[182]Fortescue, vol. iii, 121.

While Fortescue's pro-military biases are such that his pronouncements on civil-military matters should always be called into question, in this particular case the historical record agrees with his analysis. Though direct discussion of the Army and Council's relationship was limited in this section, it was necessary to discuss Smith's and his forces successes despite the lack of support from the Madras Presidency's civilian leadership at this early stage in the war. The fact that a lack of supply and transport arrangements hobbled the army and nullified whatever advantage they had gained through victory at Tiruvannamalai no doubt contributed to officers' antipathy toward the Council.

3.4 Interference and Ignorance

> The campaign was very ill managed from Madras ; the commanding officer [Smith] was hampered by 'field deputies' to superintend his movements, and by roguish contractors ; while the Marathas took the opportunity of making a plundering tour in the Carnatic.[183]
>
> - Alfred Comyn Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India*

Though Lyall's summation of the Madras Council's conduct during the war is persuasive, he fails to point out that in reality the Field Deputy and the 'roguish contractor' of whom he complained was the same person, namely, Councillor and former mayor of Madras George Mackay.[184] Of all of the Councillors who played a part in the debacle that is the First Anglo-Mysore War, Mackay's role was uniquely damaging, and will be discussed later in this chapter. Nevertheless, the blame was not his alone. Indeed, as early as October 8th, 1767, mere weeks after his victory at Tiruvannamalai, Smith was compelled to write a letter to the other man who would be appointed a Field Deputy, the Council's favourite military advisor, the chief engineer

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[183]Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167.
[184]Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 505, 619.

Sir John Call, complaining of the latter's unfair criticism of the conduct of the army under Smith's command.[185]

The letter is a reply to two letters from Call, one which 'lately' came on 17 September 1767 and a later one which 'came to hand this day,' that had been sent on 4 October 1767. Its contents exemplify Smith's general frustration with his communications with the Council, with the commander stating that

> There is something so very extraordinary in both those epistles that I cannot help being displeased, and amazed, at the tenor of them. The uncertainty you were in with regard to my situation might create some uneasiness, but as to my wants, to what purpose should I communicate them when I had so long before been convinced of your inability to supply, everything [rested] within our selves, and to complain was only to give an additional uneasiness where no remedy [could] be expected.[186]

Smith's seeming reluctance to communicate with his civilian superiors and their military advisor for fear of creating 'uneasiness' among the Councillors shows his justifiable defensiveness, as it is clear that at least some of the Council were concerned about his failure to capitalize on his tactical successes and to make progress against Haidar in general. Additionally, there is a degree of animosity in his letter, which is understandable considering the Council's criticism of his actions combined with their failure to furnish the army with supplies.

Smith's animosity is directed at the Council and Call as an advisor of the Council, instead of at Call as a fellow military officer. Nevertheless, Call is a representative example of the politicization and factionalism of Madras Army officers in the period. His political and advisory role at Madras is all the more interesting considering it was unlikely for him to ever assume prominent command positions as an engineer, denying him the possibility of wealth and prestige

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[185]Joseph Smith to John Call, 8 October 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 29-32), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Prior, 'Call, Sir John, first baronet (1732-1801).'
[186]Joseph Smith to John Call, 8 October 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 29-32), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

achieved through victory and plunder. Indeed, Call seemed aware of these limitations and had taken steps to secure himself after his eventual retirement. Having become one of the main creditors of the Nawab, Call became an agent after his return to England for his fellow creditors. He became a key proponent of the so-called 'Arcot Interest' as a Member of Parliament from 1784 until his death in 1801, and a close associate of fellow engineer and creditor Paul Benfield (1741-1810) – a man notorious for his unscrupulousness even in comparison to his fellow 'nabobs.'[187]

Smith goes on to describe the army's transport problems in detail, writing

> Have I not your letters by me now which expressly declares not a carriage, or a draught bullock, could be had for love or money at Madras? That the several expeditions fitted out from Fort St. George, [Vellore?], Arcot, & c. had drained those places of all their cattle. From whence then were we to derive those supplys, which we so greatly stood in need of? Write and all your wants shall be furnished. How? From Heaven? What [illegible] your telling me of orders sent to this, and that place about rice, to be beat out, and every other necessary article for the army, which way are we to get at it? [Where's] the bullocks, and other materials for conveying it? Ever since I've had the honour, for pleasure I cannot call it, to command your army we have never had a days provisions with it, except from hand to mouth, the fatal consequence attending such neglects, [we] might have experienced very severely, when with the [Nizam]. All this I wrote often enough, but to little purpose.[188]

Smith's evident anger and frustration here shows that his reluctance to write was not merely a matter of avoiding 'uneasiness' among the councillors, but the result of their calls for him to write with his requirements and their repeated failures to meet his requests. Indeed, Smith in part may have addressed his complaints to Call in the hope of a fellow military officer being more sympathetic. In such a situation, where expectations of support from the civilian government are chronically unmet, military actors often begin to take more direct control of supply and revenue

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[187]Benfield will be discussed at length in Chapter 4. P.J. Marshall, 'Benfield, Paul (1741-1810),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/2092, accessed 13 June 2017]. Philips, 'A Successor,' 379.
[188]Joseph Smith to John Call, 8 October 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 29-32), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

sources, often at the expense of civil authorities. This situation and others like it, combined with the necessity of using the military for revenue collection in the Carnatic (a necessity which pre-dated the EIC-Carnatic hybrid administration and was endemic throughout India) may have contributed to the trend of military politicization in later 18th century British India.[189]

In addition to hampering the supply situation, the Council's directives may have begun to have a negative impact on campaign operations by this point, though again it is necessary to consider the biases of historians. In one notable instance, Fortescue blames the Council for the operationally unsound distribution of monsoon season cantonments, both too far from Tiruchirappalli (150 miles minimum) and too exposed to Haider's attacks, assuming without showing evidence that Smith would not likely have made such an error himself. In this instance Fortescue appears to be either unaware of or unwilling to acknowledge the Council's previous wisdom in refusing to allow Smith to put his troops into cantonment before the battle at Tiruvannamalai. Considering the relatively detailed nature of Fortescue's account of the conflict in general, and the fact that he had mentioned the Council's refusal in his own narrative a couple of pages earlier, it is clear that he is advancing a pro-military/anti-civilian narrative. While it would be a stretch to accuse him of distorting facts, he does appear to be selective in his focus and commentary, and his analysis must be viewed with a skeptic's eye.[190]

Wilks does not blame the Council for the distribution of cantonments as does Fortescue. Wilks instead theorizes that Haidar deduced from Smith's inaction during October that he had placed his men into cantonments for the rainy season (roughly October to December), and upon discovering how widely dispersed they were, Haider figured that he could manage a significant strike before EIC forces could effectively concentrate against him. As a result, he captured

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[189]See Chapter 2, Sections 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 for discussion of the Madras Army and Carnatic revenue collection
[190]Joseph Smith to John Call, Ibid. Fortescue, vol. iii, 117-121. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 32.

Tirrupattur and Vaniyambadi with little resistance on November 5th and 7th respectively, before advancing to Ambur (Amboor).

Haidar's army arrived at Ambur on November 10th, 1767 and over the next five days reduced the lower fort's defences to the extent that Captain Calvert and the defenders were forced to withdraw to the more defensible upper fort, with Calvert in the process unmasking a conspiracy by the Nawab's garrison commander to hand over the fort to Haidar. Consequently, Calvert imprisoned the commander and his officers and disarmed his troops, using them thereafter as labourers, and held the fort effectively for almost a month until relief arrived.[191] This incident illustrates the unreliability of Muhammad Ali's forces, which was no doubt a symptom of his fiscal woes.

Learning of Haidar's movements, Smith realized soon after placing his forces into cantonment that he would have to reassemble them, but again there was insufficient logistic support for him to move quickly. Wilks stresses the Nawab's role in this, stating that

> The silly ambition of Muhammad Ali to be the object of all expectations, and to be considered as every thing while capable of nothing useful; the poisonous influence which procured not confidence, for that was impossible, but the semblance of confidence, in the performance of his promises, contrary to the universal experience of his whole conduct, prevented the formation of a plain, practical, independent system of supply; and there is reason to infer, that a secret jealousy of [Smith] tended still farther to disperse the efforts which ought to have been concentrated.[192]

As it would be nearly impossible today to find conclusive evidence supporting Wilks's assertion that the Nawab intentionally deceived and under-supplied his English allies' forces out of jealousy toward their commander, this statement cannot be taken seriously. This singling out of the Nawab and the emphasis on his treachery and jealousy illustrates orientalist assumptions in Wilks's narrative, despite his relative closeness to the events in temporal and geographic terms

[191]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 43-45. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 50. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 217-218.
[192]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 47-48.

when compared with the other campaign historians. Wilks was following Orme's lead in this characterization, and subsequent campaign historians perpetuated this orientalist treatment of the Nawab's character along similar lines. This remains a problem today and an updated biography of Muhammad Ali utilizing both Indian and British sources would be a boon for historians of the period.[193]

Having consolidated his forces as quickly as possible, Smith arrived with the majority of Madras's field forces at Ambur on December 7th, 1767, and on the following day he sighted Haidar's army at Vaniyambadi. Haider's forces were arranged for battle as a delaying tactic to allow the Nizam's army and his own artillery to withdraw with the only interesting event of the encounter being the defection of Haidar's small force of European cavalry to the EIC. This defection shows that fluid military loyalties were not confined to Indian soldiers and armies in South India, especially among Europeans in the service of Indian rulers. After Haidar's retreat Smith was once again prevented from pursuing him by a lack of supplies. Moreover, Smith was soon joined by Colonel Wood and his forces. It is not clear whether Haider was unwilling or unable to prevent their unification, or simply unconcerned.[194]

On December 14th Haidar sent his heavy artillery and his son Tipu back toward Mysore and increased his raids on his enemies' supplies to cover his retreat. At this point, for unknown reasons and at considerable risk to himself, Haidar himself attacked one Company supply convoy, in person and leading from the front of a cavalry charge. His bravery, however, nearly

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[193][cite campaign historians]

[194]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 48-49. Shelford Bidwell's *Swords for Hire* (1971), though dated, discusses European mercenary service with Indian rulers at length and clearly illustrates the fluidity of military loyalties in 18th and early 19th century India. Unfortunately, like most scholars Bidwell does not address the First Anglo-Mysore War directly. Shelford Bidwell, *Swords for Hire: European Mercenaries in 18th Century India* (London: John Murray, 1971). Donald Campbell to Robert Orme, 'Amboor, Vaniambaddy, Tripatore, Cavaripatam, Pass of Charmaull, Pass of Pedanaiguedurgum. Description of all these places by Donald Campbell during the Mysore War,'1767-1768, Orme OV 65 (pp. 123-128), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

cost him his life. Smith surmised that Haidar might plan to raid his lines of communication and therefore secretly reinforced the expected single battalion with two field guns, two grenadier companies, and an additional sepoy battalion.[195] Bowring argues that Haidar's failure to deny Smith's main army its supplies – in conjunction with the Nizam's growing desire to abandon the war – led Haidar to withdraw his forces and cease active hostilities for a time. However, he makes no mention of the role Smith played in bringing this about by predicting Haidar's designs and accordingly reinforcing the supply column. Instead, Bowring characterizes Haidar's attack as 'desperate' and focuses on the Nizam's treachery, denying Smith agency in the matter.[196]

By late November an EIC expeditionary force from Bengal had reached the Northern Circars and was pressing into the Nizam's territories as it made its way toward Hyderabad from the northeast. As a result, in early December the Nizam initiated secret discussions with Smith regarding a separate peace, as he feared both for his capital and that the distrustful Haidar would discover his communications with their erstwhile enemy and act against him. Haidar quickly discovered these discussions and he brought up the subject openly with the Nizam and allowed him to separate his remaining forces without conflict from his own, with the break being affected on December 18th, the same day the Nizam openly began negotiations with Smith. By the end of the year Haidar had largely retreated from the East, leaving a small cavalry force to reconnoitre Smith's movements and make raids on his supplies where possible. In turn he ascended the Eastern Ghats to the Deccan with his main army moving westward, and around the same time Smith was again forced to fall back towards Madras because of a lack of supplies.[197]

[195]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 50-52. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 50-51.
[196]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 50-51.
[197]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 50, 52-53. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597.

The Council's failure to provide sufficient supplies and persistent reliance on the unreliable Nawab to supply them continued to undermine the war effort in late 1767 and early 1768. This prevented Smith, despite having concentrated his and Wood's forces before him in December, from attacking Haider. Indeed, Smith was only able to extricate his army from this untenable situation as a result of the Nizam's withdrawal from the war and the distraction of a revolt in Haider's territories on the Malabar Coast, which was aided by a Company force from Bombay.[198] This is made evident in a letter from Smith to Bourchier dated to January 8th, 1768, in which he again complains that although the army itself is in good shape and ready to fight, it cannot pursue the enemy due to the chronic lack of supplies.[199]

After Haidar's withdrawal, the Madras Council directed Wood and Smith to recapture all strongholds captured by Haidar. From there they were to advance into Mysore. Smith then proceeded to capture Mulbagal, Kolar, and Hosur.[200] Bowring points out that the

> The Madras Government was apparently of [the] opinion that a successful advance might be made on Bangalore [Bengaluru],[201] and perhaps on Seringapatam [Srirangapatna] itself... [however] the long period of inaction which intervened enabled Haidar to return from his distant expedition to Bangalore and to confront the English before any further steps had been taken.[202]

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[198]Fortescue, vol. iii, 122-123.
[199]Joseph Smith to Charles Bourchier, 8 January 1768, Orme OV 10 (pp. 33-39), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Duplicate available at Orme OV 64 (pp. 1-7), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[200]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 51-52.
[201]Bengaluru, a city in Mysore and major administrative center under Haidar Ali.
[202]It is possible that Bowring meant to write 'Mangalore' (Mangaluru) instead of Bangalore (Bangluru) in the second instance in this quotation. This would make more sense considering he was alluding to Haidar's Malabar campaign. Bengaluru is a city in what was then eastern Mysore, which served as major administrative center under Haidar Ali. Srirangapatna, deeper into Mysore, was Haidar Ali's chief fortress, another administrative center, and also his de facto capital. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 52.

Moreover, it appears that the commanders of the EIC forces were not as confident in their ability to advance on and capture the city, with their dire supply situation and lack of an effective means of countering Haidar's cavalry no doubt playing a role.[203]

Fortescue, for once not engaging in anti-civilian polemic, recognized the Council's logic in directing Smith into Mysore itself as a bold and potentially decisive strategic move, but also saw the logistic difficulties inherent in such an operation. Smith also recognized these problems and proposed to instead capture the fortified strongpoints in the fertile Baramahal region between two ranges of the Eastern Ghats and secure it as a supply base before advancing further. Ultimately, the Council decided on a compromise plan, which saw Smith in command of a larger force of about 9000 men advancing toward Bengaluru and Srirangapatna, while Wood took a detached force of 5000 to secure the Baramahal.[204] By compromising, not committing fully to either plan, and drastically dividing their forces despite the difficulty of communications in such rough terrain and the possibility of their forces being defeated piecemeal, the Council ultimately undermined the possibility of either operation succeeding in the long term. Furthermore, the decision to divide their forces while on the offensive made the more politically pliable Colonel Wood a critical commander in the war. It was at this point that Wood began to demonstrate the incompetence that would characterize his actions through the remainder of the war. Despite some successes at this point, Wood notably made the same mistake regarding passes in the Ghats as the Council had earlier, with Haider outmanoeuvring him by advancing through an unguarded and unwatched pass in February of 1768.[205]

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[203]See pages 18-19 [Chapter 3, Section 3.4] for further discussion cavalry and the ill effects of its absence in the Madras Army during the war. For Joseph Smith's opinion on the matter (also discussed below) see Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 13 March 1768, Orme OV 64 (pp. 9-18), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 54.
[204]Fortescue, vol. iii, 124 [Note 1]. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 225-226.
[205]Fortescue, vol. iii, 124-125. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218.

That month the Nizam's emissary arrived at Smith's camp to formalize Hyderabad's withdrawal from the conflict and begin a rapprochement with the EIC.[206] Smith received the emissary somewhat coldly owing to Hyderabad's earlier betrayal of the Company, saying that a negotiated peace was beyond his power and instructing him to treat with the Council at Madras. Moreover, Smith refused to personally visit the Nizam's camp when invited. Nor would he conduct the Nizam to Madras himself, and instead sent Captain Fitzgerald, a subordinate lacking the formal dignity of the Commander-in-Chief, to do so. Despite these insults a treaty by ratified by both sides – and the Nawab – on February 23rd, 1768.[207] This disregard for an enemy ruler was undiplomatic and earned Smith more anger from the Council, who 'disapproved this mark of condescension on the part of their commander-in-chief.'[208] And as sympathetic as Smith may be at times in this civil-military contest, on this point the Council was correct, with Smith's treatment of the Nizam appearing foolish to historians and contemporaries alike. Smith, however, appeared not to have learned this lesson, as he treated Haidar similarly when the Mysorean general proposed a peace around the same time. The consequence of this second instance of ill-advised condescension were even more significant, with Haidar taking Smith's deferral to his civilian superiors as a subtle rejection. Viewed in retrospect this lost opportunity for peace – however temporary – was perhaps Smith's greatest blunder during the war.[209]

Conversely, Wilks is also very critical of how the Council handled the treaty with the Nizam, in part because of the way the Nawab was able to insinuate his ambitions into it. However, he also critiqued the submissive attitude of the government, especially their continued

[206]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218.
[207]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 54. Advices from Bengal, Treaty Between Madras and Subah Nizam Ali, 24 March 1768, IOR/H/99 (pp. 133, 137-143), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[208]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 54.
[209]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 54.

recognition of the Nizam as their superior and themselves as mere tributaries holding the rights to land revenues, stating that

> It is difficult to contemplate without indignation, the government of Madras, under circumstances which imposed no *visible* necessity for departing from the dignified tone with which they had opened the negotiation, resuming their groveling positions of tributary dependents for the [C]ircars, and with a ludicrous mixture of arrogance and humility proclaiming Hydar Naick a rebel and usurper, and declaring their determination to conquer and retain his territories, with the concurrence of Nizam Ali; who, on the condition of receiving a further tribute of seven lacs of rupees, graciously ceded his claim to the territory, which he neither possessed, nor had the most distant hope of ever possessing... while the Company relinquished, without condition, the important hold which had been obtained for them by the efforts of the troops from Bengal; and Nizam Ali returned to his capital, with abundant cause for self-gratulation, on the address which had relieved his complicated embarrassments.[210]

Having served during the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799) and subsequently as British Resident at the restored Wodeyar Court in Mysore, Wilks should have been more familiar with the political realities and power dynamics of South India, though he fails to show it here. His statement demonstrates a potentially ideological disagreement with the Council's desire to maintain the legitimacy of their position in India within the Mughal power structure by acknowledging the Nizam's superior position as a viceroy, betraying Wilks's own biases toward the Council and the Nawab. Indeed, this bias can be viewed as part of a larger debate in the late 18th and 19th centuries over whether it was better to maintain the norms of Indian's supposed 'ancient traditions' of rule and justice subordinate to the British or to impose a British-style system of rule more directly.[211]

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[210]Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 55-56.

[211]Both sides of this debate took a paternalistic view of Indian society, history, and politics and the division was simply an expression the participants divergent, but equally imperialistic, worldviews. For discussions of the ideological debate on Company rule in this period see Chapter One of Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1, 15, 17, 20-27. See also Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteen-Century India: The British In Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

During the time that the treaty with the Nizam was being negotiated and the fortresses along the border were being recaptured, Haidar Ali had suppressed the rebellion in his own dominions and was on his way to re-engage with the Madras Army. As the focus of this study is the civil-military dysfunction of the Madras Presidency during the war, we shall pass over the course of the Malabar Rebellion of 1767-1768 lightly, as the forces of the Bombay Presidency were most intimately involved in this particular episode. Addressing the concurrent civil-military tensions in the Bombay establishment, while an interesting avenue of research, is beyond the scope of this study.

Haidar's previously-mentioned withdrawal westward was necessitated by this rebellion, which itself had been encouraged by the EIC. Bombay had sent an amphibious force to attack Mysore's small navy and seize key fortresses on the coast. Despite succeeding in these initial endeavours, the Company forces dispatched to the Malabar Coast were insufficient to garrison the captured fortresses in the long term, let alone conduct field operations in the interior.[212] Moreover, considering the difficulties of crossing the Deccan and the well-established insufficient logistic support coming from Madras and Arcot, it was impossible for Smith to come to the aid of Bombay's forces in a timely manner. As a result, the rebellion amounted to little more than a distraction.

By January 20th, 1768 Haidar and his forces arrived at Bengaluru in central Mysore on their way to the Malabar Coast. After resupplying, collecting reinforcements, and seeing to the defences of the eastern frontier, Haidar arrived with his main army outside Company-occupied Mangaluru, the main fortified city of his Western holdings, in early May. The outnumbered Bombay Army soldiers occupying the city, after offering a brief resistance, abandoned it – along

[212]Fortescue, vol. iii, 123. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 57-59. Advices from Bombay, Madras to Bombay, 12 December 1767, IOR/H/99 (pp. 105-108), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

with their sick, wounded, and artillery pieces – and fled by sea. As a result of the loss of this stronghold, the Bombay Army abandoned the Malabar Coast. Haidar's reconquest of Malabar was so quick and effective that he was able to travel back over the Western Ghats before the monsoon and in time to confront Smith and the Madras Army.[213]

Despite the Nizam's withdrawal from the war and the Company's territorial gains during Haidar's absence in the West, supply problems had persisted during the interlude, and on March 13th, 1768 Smith wrote the Council regarding his concerns. He again complained of the lack of a proper logistics and supply system for his army and the Council's failure to remedy the situation. Furthermore, he also criticized the absence of cavalry forces, though he approved the Council's proposal to raise 200 European cavalry, stating that

> [He did] not forget that when your whole force on this Coast was collected to chastise the Usurper, Issouf Cawn [Yussuf Khan], notwithstanding they had no bodys [sic] of Horse or other Enemy to encounter in the Field, yet what difficulties were they not drove to both for Provisions and Stores. The want of the latter occasioned great delays in their operations, and were it not for the treachery of his Soldiers, its not impossible but he might still have maintained his pretentions to those countries. The Man you are acting against [Haider Ali] is by no means inferior either in courage, abilities, or treasure.[214]

This statement, in addition to demonstrating the high regard Smith had for Haidar as a commander, shows that the Madras Army's lack of effective cavalry forces was a persistent issue that predated the First Anglo-Mysore War, and about which the Council had done little to remedy the situation. Regardless of its inadequate size, the proposal to raise a European cavalry force, shows that they were at least beginning to take the issue seriously.

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[213]Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, 8 August 1768, Orme OV 10 (pp. 51-62), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 58-60. Fortescue, vol. iii, 123. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218-219.

[214]Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 13 March 1768, Orme OV 64 (pp. 9-18), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

This lack of cavalry was a chronic issue for EIC forces in all three presidencies, and would continue through the 19th century, affecting both Company and Royal forces. Although a small unit of European cavalry had been raised during the First Carnatic War, it was disbanded when hostilities ceased, and the Company came to rely on Indian light cavalry provided by local allies. This system, while cost-effective in peacetime, often left the EIC exposed at the outbreak of any conflict. By the late 1760s Clive had begun to integrate small irregular cavalry units into the Bengal Army's sepoy regiment as supporting troops, but the continued insolvency of the Nawab of the Carnatic (enabled and perpetuated by his creditors) prevented the Madras Army from similarly innovating despite the Council's calls for the Nawab to create an effective cavalry force.[215]

As Bryant points out, insufficient cavalry would remain an issue for the Madras Army into the 1780s, with the result that it was as hard for the army to defend EIC territory from raiders or force Mysore's troops to give battle in the Second Anglo-Mysore War as it had been in the first. In the First Anglo-Mysore War this keenly felt deficit was partially alleviated at times through the use of the Nawab's cavalry, allied Marathas, or horsemen hired from Thanjavur, but the issue was never properly resolved while the conflict lasted. Bryant further observes that the Madras Army's lack of cavalry had two significant consequences in wartime, the first being the enemy's ability to pillage the Carnatic countryside at will and the second being EIC commanders' inability to bring the enemy to battle on their own terms. The First Anglo-Mysore War makes it clear that in addition to these factors, insufficient cavalry also complicated supply and communications. Steps to remedy this situation would continue through the 1770s and into

[215]Fort Saint George to John Caillaud, 20 November 1765, IOR/P/251/53 (p. 1002), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bryant, *Emergence*, 45, 49, 183, 195. Kaushik Roy, *War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 51-51. For discussion of the Nawab's military see Chapter 2, Section 6, above. For discussion of the Nawab and his creditors see Chapter 4, below.

the 1780s, with two small bodies of regular Indian light cavalry raised in the Carnatic by 1778 at the latest and a full regiment established in 1785.[216]

In the Spring of 1768 the Madras Council took steps to intervene directly in Smith's command on an unprecedented scale. On 3 May 1768, the Council, in Fortescue's words, 'proceeded to outdo itself in imbecility' by interfering in Smith's operations even more directly through the imposition of civilian 'Field Deputies' (accompanied by the Nawab) who were to 'advise' Smith on military matters, particularly supply.[217] Although Fortescue's anti-civilian biases are once again evident here, he is not alone in stridently condemning this action, which threatened to undermine Smith's unity of command. Tellingly, it is at this point that Lewin Bentham Bowring (who as a former civil-servant in India writes with a more political focus and largely lacks Fortescue's pro-military bias) begins to criticize the Madras Council. Bowring makes note of the interference of the Field Deputies dispatched to join Smith and their insistence that the Nawab, who was in part to blame for the logistic failures of 1767, be included in much of the decision-making process regarding revenue and supply.[218] However, it is also important to note that this imposition occurred only after Smith had mishandled negotiations with the Nizam and Haidar, possibly contributing to the Council's lack of confidence in him. Nevertheless, according to Fortescue

> The object of this measure becomes clearer when it is explained that one of these individuals held the [private] contract for victualling the European troops and furnishing the army with transport, a venture wherein every member of the Council, the Governor only excepted, possessed a [personal financial] interest.[219]

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[216]Bryant, *Emergence*, 195-196, 283. Roy, *War, Culture and Society*, 52. See also Archibald Campbell, *Horse Drill and Manoeuvers for the Native Cavalry on the Coast of Coromandel* (Madras: Charles Ford, 1778).
[217]Fortescue, vol. iii, 125-126.
[218]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 52.
[219]This indicates that Smith himself, as a member of the Council, had an interest in this as well. No doubt this resulted from his stake in the Nawab's continued rule. Fortescue, vol. iii, 125. Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167.

To confuse matters even further, the multiple appointments of George Mackay, placed him as Smith's civilian superior (as deputy of the Council), military advisor, and otherwise equal (though he was below Smith in order of precedence on the Council). This complicated the chain of command and undermined the distinction between civilian and military prerogatives.[220] The other Field Deputy was the abovementioned Sir John Call who had already interfered with Smith's command on multiple occasions. Call was to continue to second-guess Smith's decisions and undermine the commander's authority during his time in the field.[221]

Fortescue and Bowring were not the only historians who singled out the imposition of the Field Deputies for scorn. It is unsurprising that Malleson, considering he was a retired colonel, is in the pro-military camp when considering what today would be called civil-military relations, noting from the start of his analysis the importance of unity of command in far more assertive terms than Fortescue. This is most notable in his assertion that '[Haidar] possessed one great advantage, that he fought for one hand, and that hand his own. His enemies were animated by four interests, all really opposed the one to the other,' these being [1] Marathas, [2] the Nizam, [3] the Nawab of the Carnatic, and [4] the Company.[222] After buying off the first opponent with land concessions and inducing the second to betray his allies and join him, Haidar was left with only two – but the division of command between the Nawab and the EIC would nonetheless be critical to the course of the conflict, if not quite as critical as the division within the Company leadership itself.

On June 8th, 1768 Col. Donald Campbell captured Venkatagirikota, thereby opening the pass from Vellore for supplies and an easy route further into Mysore. Smith, joining Campbell on

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[220]Fortescue, vol. iii, 125-126. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 505, 619.
[221]Prior, 'Call, Sir John, first baronet (1732-1801).' Hill, *Orme Catalogue,* 10 [Entry 12].
[222]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 216.

June 28th, took the village of Bagalur and continued to march toward Hosur en route to Bengaluru. On July 11th Smith seized control of the town with the army, halting due to the Nawab's illness and a lack of supplies. The main army would be further delayed waiting for the arrival of Wood's column marching up from the Baramahal and the imminent arrival of Maratha allies under the command of Murari Rao Ghorpade (1699-1779) – a Maratha general who had previously occupied Tiruchirappalli in the Carnatic during the 1740s.[223]

Though the *Peshwa* had withdrawn from the conflict in the previous year, the devolved nature of political authority within the Maratha confederacy at the time meant that powerful clans (including the Ghorpade, who were related to Shivaji and the Bhonsles) took independent political action when they saw fit. Murari Rao, as governor of Sandur just north of Mysore, was as a result more involved in South Indian politics than his peers in the Confederacy and had previously intervened in the Carnatic Wars. The arrival of the Maratha forces on August 4th may have appeared as a boon to Smith. Considering the EIC commander's chronic lack of cavalry and Haidar's resulting ability to outmaneuver the Madras Army and attack its communication and supply lines, the presence of an allied force of mobile Maratha horsemen could have solved this problem for Smith. Indeed, allied Indian cavalry had been effectively utilized alongside Company forces in exactly this manner during the Carnatic Wars. Nevertheless, the lack of logistic support was such that Smith was compelled to write to the Council again on August 8th complaining of his situation.[224]

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[223]Any of the vague reference to Campbell in the campaign narratives is likely Colonel Donald Campbell, who had a separate command near Venkatagirikota in June of 1768. Fortescue, vol. iii, 126. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 219.
[224]For a brief explanation of the Marathas and their political system see Chapter 2, Section 2.3 of this study. Joseph Smith to Charles Bourchier, 8 August 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 51-62), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 52. Wilkinson, *Cromwell to Wellington*, 185. Gordon, *Marathas*, 25-27, 95-99, 106. Bryant, 'Asymmetric Warfare,' 435. See also G. J. Bryant, 'The Cavalry Problem in the Early British Indian Army, 1750-1785', *War in History* 2, no 1. (1995), 6.

On August 22nd, 1768 Haidar launched an ineffectual attack on Murari Rao's camp, near Smith's position, but following its failure decided to withdraw eastward and attack Wood's column which had again separated from Smith.[225] At this point two fortuitous events occurred which could have won the campaign for the EIC. Firstly, by September 2nd the Nawab's condition had worsened to the point that he was forced to withdraw to Kolar, with Smith covering his retreat with an advance on Malur. And though this development was in itself not beneficial, and indeed the need to supply an escort reduced Smith's forces, the fact that the Field Deputies withdrew with the Nawab meant that Smith regained full operational control of his army in the field.[226] On September 5th Smith, taking full advantage of his newfound liberty, predicted that Haidar was aware of Wood's movements and would seek to destroy the smaller force before it could unite with the main army. As a result, he abandoned his baggage train and immediately set off to unite his forces with Wood's as soon as possible. Successfully following Haider despite the latter's attempts to mask his movements, Smith managed to surprise his opponent. Haidar presumed he would remain at Malur. But for a mistake by Wood, Smith could have brought Haidar to battle and crushed him now that he had the aid of Maratha light cavalry.[227]

Haidar had arranged to ambush Wood and his men as they passed through a defile on their march toward the main army. Haidar's movements were hidden from Wood by hilly terrain, and with his superior mobility and better knowledge of the country he could easily have come upon the column unawares. Unfortunately for Haidar, the same terrain also masked Smith's advance, meaning that he had no knowledge of the main army's movement as it marched from

[225]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 220. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 52.
[226]Fortescue, vol. iii, 127.
[227]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 220.

Malur. Moreover, Haidar may have presumed that had Smith advanced the Colonel could not have caught up with him due to the slow pace of the Company Army's baggage train. Smith's army's improved maneuverability when operating free of his baggage and camp followers prefigures Arthur Wellesley (the future Duke of Wellington)'s later successes in the early 19th century. However, Smith's logistical woes and lack of cavalry made this improvement a temporary one where the latter's reforms were decisive.[228]

Smith managed to both reconnoitre Haidar and Wood's positions and get a message through to Wood explaining the situation, and was preparing to crush the Mysorean army between the two Company forces. Unfortunately, on receiving the message from Smith and presumably before reading it, Wood ordered his men to fire their muskets in salute of the imminent arrival of a superior officer (Joseph Smith), alerting Haidar to their location and that something was amiss, causing him to withdraw immediately.[229] Fortescue, imagining Smith's frustration at this setback and emphasizing his own pro-military sentiments, summarizes his 1768 campaign experience, stating that

> He had started on a campaign so much hampered by the Madras Council that it seemed impossible for him to snatch victory from it; and yet by sheer sagacity he had divined the enemy's schemes, and had improvised on the spur of the moment a counterstroke so unexpected that it could hardly have failed to ensure him a great victory. He vented his chagrin upon Wood in such terms as provoked that officer to resign his command; but the great opportunity was gone forever.[230]

At this point Haidar, having been twice beaten in the field by Smith and outwitted by him during maneuvers multiple times, again made peace overtures to the Company. Bowring asserts

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[228]For thorough and up-to-date discussion of logistic innovations and Wellington's campaigns in India see Chapters 2 and 3 of Huw J. Davies, *Wellington's Wars: The Making of a Military Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012). See also Huw J. Davies, 'Wellington's First Command: The Political and Military Campaign Against Dhoondiah Vagh, February to September 1800,' *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 5 (2010): 1081-1113. Fortescue, vol. iii, 127.

[229]Fortescue, vol. iii, 127-128. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 221.

[230]Fortescue, vol. iii, 128.

that Haidar's continued anxiety over possibly losing Bangaluru played a role in his decision to offer terms to the EIC at this point, which included territorial concessions to the Company. He was, however, careful to pointedly not mention Muhammad Ali and addressed himself directly to the EIC. Despite the generosity of these concessions, and the sense accepting them made from a military perspective when one considers the EIC forces' precarious supply arrangements and Madras's fiscal situation, his offer of peace was rejected. In Bowring's words, 'His offers fell far short of the demands of the Madras delegates, who not only called for the cessation of a large territory to their own Government, but also for the payment of tribute to the Nizam,' as the *subadar* of the Deccan and Haidar's nominal overlord.[231] Haidar, less willing to submit to the norms of the Mughal tributary system than the EIC (who were desperate to justify their position in the Carnatic within said system), balked at these demands. Negotiations broke down, having only served to give Haidar time to put down a rebellion in his northern territories by reconciling with his brother-in-law.[232]

In late September the interference of the Field Deputies again put the course of the entire campaign in jeopardy, when they replaced the EIC garrison of the fort at Mulbagal, which sat astride Smith's lines of communication, with a company of the Nawab's infantry, whose commanding officer with little urging defected to Haider. They compounded this error by reinstating Wood, who Fortescue describes as 'a favourite of the deputies,' to his independent command on October 3rd, 1768, and sending him to retake the fortress. While Wood was besieging the fortress, Haidar advanced to its relief and quickly drew the incompetent officer and most of his men into a trap from which they were only saved by the ingenious intervention of a

[231]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53.
[232]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 221. Fortescue, vol. iii, 128. Advices from Madras, Chance of Peace with Haidar Ali, 15 October 1768, IOR/H/100 (pp. 225-230), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

junior officer, Captain Brooke. Brooke, having been left to guard the baggage with a pair of field guns and four sepoy companies, saw that Wood had been surrounded. He moved his forces to the crest of a hill on Haidar's flank, opened fire, and had his men cheer Smith's name. Thinking that the main army had arrived, Haidar's troops were distracted. Though Haidar quickly saw through the ruse and resumed his attack on the reinvigorated EIC forces it had been enough to delay their destruction. Haidar withdrew following the actual arrival of Smith with the main army on October 7th.[233]

This episode was emphasized by Fortescue and the 19th century campaign historians in a manner consistent with modern studies of orientalism. The trope of a general's name inspiring fear amongst his enemies is something impossible for historians to objectively prove with the sources available in this case, but Fortescue and Malleson nonetheless focused on this aspect of the incident. Considering the fact that it was a white man's name inspiring fear among Indian soldiers, their emphasis has obvious racialist overtones. Furthermore, the emphasis they place on Haidar quickly seeing through the ruse makes him an 'exception that proves the rule' in their narrative. This portrayal of Haidar emphasizing him as exceptionally discerning, in contrast to his men, is in line with their characterization of him through other orientalist tropes including the 'noble savage' (often emphasizing his illiteracy) and the 'oriental despot.'[234]

Turning back to civil-military analysis, Fortescue and Bowring, while noting Wood's incompetence in this incident, unfairly – if unsurprisingly – place the ultimate blame for the

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[233]'An account by Captain Mathews of the Attack of the Fort Rock of Malawagul and Col. Wood's battle with Hyder,' Orme OV 64 (pp. 19-27), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. October 1768, Letter from Madras [from F. Brown], 23 February 1769, Orme OV 71 (pp. 1-40), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 128-130. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 222-223. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 54. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 227-228.
[234]Letter from Madras [from F. Brown], ibid. Fortescue, vol. iii, 128-130. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 222-223. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 54. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 227-228. For discussion of orientalism in its military context see Patrick Porter's *Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, 5-15.

Mulbagal debacle at the feet of the Field Deputies. Bowring condemns the delegates for withdrawing EIC troops from Mulbagal in the commander-in-chief's absence and blames them in part for the resulting loss of the fortress through treachery and the dire situation Wood found himself in when he went to recover it. Moreover, in addition to similar condemnations, Fortescue asserts that Wood's 'actions proved his unfitness for command.'[235]

By October 14th, 1768 Smith was in pursuit of Haider's army deep in Mysorean territory, with the Colonel dividing his forces into two columns in an unsuccessful attempt to entrap him. Supply problems continued, and he was unable either to catch Haidar's army or prevent it from harassing his own, again due to want of cavalry. Once again complaints to the Council got him nothing, though considering the chronic nature of these issues it seems like there was little they could do. It was at this point, citing his failure to catch Haidar that the Council recalled Smith to Madras, and the Nawab and Field Deputies with him. This left Wood in overall command of their field forces. Smith would subsequently write a defence of his actions to the Council, criticizing the Councillors and the Field Deputies for interfering in his command. He particularly criticized them for forcing the army deeper into enemy territory and stating that he '… was ever against entering this part of the Mysore Country.' And though his complaints were civil, he made it clear that he thought they had cost him a great victory.[236]

This phase of the war clearly illustrates the ambitions of the Madras councillors and their consequences. This is most evident in their unrealistic plan to conquer Mysore, which was made worse by the fact that the Councillors were fully aware that the army was suffering from serious

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[235]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53-54. Fortescue, vol. iii, 130.

[236]Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 19 November 1768, Orme OV 64 (pp. 51-55), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 130-31. George Bruce Malleson, *The Decisive Battles of India: From 1746-1849 Inclusive* (London: W.H. Allen and Company, 1883): 223. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597.

supply and transport issues when they concocted the scheme. These factors alone would have been enough to widen the rift between the Madras Presidency's civil and military servants. However, direct civilian interference in military operations, the imposition of the Field Deputies on Smith, and the subsequent recall of the Commander-in-Chief all served to further aggravate and alienate at least some of the Madras Army's officers. As we shall see, during and after the closing phase of the war a number of officers would take steps to defend their individual and corporate interests.

3.5 Inconsistency, Incompetence, and Invasion

In addressing the motives behind Smith's recall and replacement, Malleson derisively describes Wood as 'a fair specimen of that class [of people] which succeeds, on the strength of vigorous self-assertion and small successes, in establishing a great reputation,' who through these methods gained the confidence of the Council and was viewed by them erroneously as a superior or at least more desirable commander than the less assertive Smith.[237] Bowring, increasingly critical of the Council in the later parts of his account, agrees with Malleson and decries the Madras government's treatment of Smith, stating that '[they] had expected him, with insufficient means, in men, ammunition, and provisions, to accomplish the impossible... [and that] the futile result was really owing to their own fatuity, want of prescience, and unreasonable confidence in the aid to be rendered by Muhammad Ali.' Moreover, he echoes the sentiment that the Councillors had compounding their complicity in their own defeat by choosing this particular time to recall Smith to Madras. This denied their forces of the most experienced field commander in the Presidency.

[237]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 223-224.

Malleson's civil-military biases aside, it cannot be ignored that Smith's removal from command coincided with significant military setbacks for the EIC.[238]

Once Smith and a large body of escorting soldiers left the front lines for Madras, Haider immediately seized the opportunity and besieged Hosur. Attempting to relieve the siege,

> Wood advanced to its relief by way of Baglur, a few miles distant [from the fortress], leaving there his heavy guns and baggage in charge of Captain Alexander, who commanded a regiment of Muhammad Ali's force. But meanwhile Haidar, relinquishing temporarily the siege of Hosur, got between Wood and Baglur, which place he attacked, and... succeeded in carrying off Wood's heavy guns and ammunition.[239]

Haidar was able to do this as Wood had abandoned his baggage and guns on November 17th, 1768 to attempt a surprise night attack. Due to a delayed march he had instead arrived at the fortress well after daybreak on November 18th and was easily outmanoeuvred by Haider. The Mysoreans took the opportunity to slaughter the Company forces' camp followers and seize the army's supplies (including 2000 draught bullocks), along with two heavy guns.[240]

This incident not only marked the second time Haidar had enticed Wood into a trap with a besieged fortress and then outmanoeuvred him, but also illustrates Wood's foolishness in having left his supplies guarded solely by the Nawab's unreliable soldiers. However, it should be noted that the alternative of committing a more capable force of Company sepoys to guard duty when they could be needed in battle was also no doubt unappealing. Although they put up a 'gallant resistance,' as Bowring puts it, it is hard to see why any commander would trust the Nawab's men with so critical a role so soon after they had been shown to be unreliable at the capitulation of Mulbagal. Moreover, in the subsequent engagement Wood and his forces were only saved from complete destruction by the depletion of Haidar's ammunition and the arrival of a relief

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[238]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55.
[239]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55.
[240]Fortescue, vol. iii, 131. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 225.

force under Major Fitzgerald, marking the second time a subordinate had averted a disaster resulting from Wood's folly.[241]

One day before the battle, on November 21st, 1768 Wood withdrew towards Kolar to resupply, and was continually harassed by Haider's forces. The following evening, Haidar's army surprised Wood's forces as they camped near Nallur. Haidar engaged them through the night, and only ceased attacking when a relief force under Major Fitzgerald arrived around noon the next day. Fitzgerald on hearing of the army's peril on November 22nd, had force-marched every available soldier he could find with all the supplies they could carry and just barely saved Wood's forces, who were running out of ammunition. Moreover, they were only saved because of confusion on Haidar's part, as he mistook Fitzgerald's column for a hypothetical larger force commanded by Colonel Smith just as he had at Mulbagal.[242]

At this point Fitzgerald wrote a letter to Smith regarding the horrible condition of the army and the untenable position in which Wood had put them. Smith subsequently wrote to the Council on November 28th, complaining of the appointment of Wood, and calling it a mistake considering the latter's mismanagement of the forces under his command. As a result of these complaints and his consistent failures, Wood was recalled to Madras and replaced by Colonel Lang. However, recalling Wood did nothing to improve the army's supply situation or mitigate Haidar's advantage in mobility. As a result, Haider consistently outmanoeuvred EIC forces under Colonel Lang and after a brief campaign in the Baramahal which ejected Company garrisons from the strongholds they had taken there, Haider burst into the Carnatic[243]

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[241]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53-55.
[242]See Chapter 3, Section 3.4. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 225-226. Fortescue, vol. iii, 131-132.
[243]Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 28 November 1768, Orme OV 10 (pp. 91-110), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Fortescue, vol. iii, 132-133. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 226-229. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55-56. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 228.

In November of 1768 Haidar sent a preliminary invasion force of fresh levies into the Carnatic, where they encountered little resistance from the off-balance and outmanoeuvred EIC forces. The Mysoreans advanced rapidly, overrunning the defended passes of the Eastern Ghats and quickly advancing toward Tiruchirappalli. Outpacing both Colonel Lang and a separate force of 5000 men under Fitzgerald, by early September Haidar followed his advanced raiders down through the Ghats via a different pass with his main army.[244]

The rapidity and decisiveness of Haidar's thrust into the Carnatic is hard to overstate, with Malleson comparing Haidar's advance to Napoleon's speedy occupation of Prussia after Jena-Auerstadt (1806). In an engagement pointedly overlooked by Fortescue, Haidar's army completely overwhelmed and slaughtered a force led by Captain Nixon, who was initially under the impression that he was engaging a much smaller force and not the main Mysorean army. With over 12,000 horse and a large body of infantry under his command, Haider easily bested Nixon in one of the most crushing defeats of EIC forces by an Indian power in the South. Although we can never know Fortescue's reasoning for omitting this engagement, one does wonder if the reason is that it does not fit easily into his narrative of an otherwise capable Madras Army being undermined by the Presidency's civilian leaders. By January of 1769 he was advancing on Madras, and the Council sued for peace.[245]

After these setbacks the Madras Council made peace overtures to Haidar, but once again as Bowring notes the influence of the Nawab on the many Councillors who were his personal creditors undermined the negotiations. This was because Haidar once again would not make

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[244]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 56. Fortescue, vol. iii, 132-133. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 227.
[245]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 227-228. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 56. [dates] Advices from Madras, Negotiations for Peace with Hyder Ali, 8 March 1769, IOR/H/101 (pp. 237-244), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

treaties with his despised rival, despite Haider's desire for a profitable friendship with the EIC.[246] Interestingly, Haidar had requested Smith to be the Company negotiator, but Smith was sent to the Army instead, resuming command on February 11th, 1769. Negotiations broke down and hostilities resumed on 6 March 1769.[247] Smith regrouped a much-diminished force at Chettupattu and subsequently maneuvered against Haider, and nearly succeeded in bringing him to battle on multiple occasions but ultimately failed.[248]

This inability to engage the enemy again resulted from logistic failures, even though at this point the Madras Army was operating close to its supply base in the Carnatic and not further afield. Proximity to Madras also meant that communications in themselves should not have been difficult, meaning that the army's inability to counter the Mysorean cavalry may again have been the critical factor. This continued incapacity, however, did give rise to one of the most interesting documents in the First Anglo-Mysore War in terms of EIC military logistics.

Most likely tiring of the Council's failure to address his personal complaints regarding the state of the army's draught bullocks, Smith wrote another letter to the Council on the topic on February 24th, 1769. It was written in reply to a letter from the Madras Council dated December 21st, 1768, with the response delayed by '... a number of intervening circumstances' in Smith's own words.[249] These 'intervening circumstances,' at least in part, seem to have been of Smith's own making, as the letter also enclosed individual letters from thirty of his subordinate officers

[246]Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 57. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 229. Advices from Madras, Negotiations for Peace with Hyder Ali, Ibid.
[247]Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 229. Advices from Madras, Negotiations for Peace with Hyder Ali, Ibid.
[248]Interestingly, Bowring's narrative does not mention Smith at all after his recall. Fortescue, vol. iii, 133. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55-58. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597.
[249]The British Library's Orme Collection contains original and duplicate copies of these letters in OV 10 (pp. 111-153) and OV 64 (pp. 71-133) respectively. Though this study has made use of both versions during transcription, it will favour the original manuscripts (OV 10) in citation, except in instances where the legibility of a copy by Orme (OV 64) is notably superior, as in this instance. Hill, *Orme Catalogue*, 10. Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 24 February 1769, Orme OV 64 (pp. 71-73), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

collected over the intervening period which attested to the poor conditions of the Army's bullocks and his inability to move his forces while still supplying them off the land.[250]

In the first letter enclosed in the collection, one artillery officer expresses incredulity that anyone could question the poor condition of the Army's draught animals, stating

> That there has often with reason been complaints of the draught bullocks is so notorious a fact that I am much surprised to hear any [who] would say to the contrary. Of this I am certain, that there is not an artillery [officer] that has been in the field the last campaign that has often been obliged to [exert] his utmost endeavours to keep his brigade of guns up, and with as little success, as it has occasioned frequent halts. I am certain that at an average the army has seldom marched at above 2 1/2 miles in one hour, and often not above 2.[251]

He then went on to admonish the Council for not providing sufficient financial support for the suppliers to replace the lost animals, and also directly criticized Colonel Wood's conduct during the most recent campaign.[252] In a subsequent letter Henry Melvill, another artillery officer, acknowledges Smith's request for a letter, and affirms that he would testify to its truth under oath, indicating that the collection may have been intended as a defense of Smith and the officer's conduct during the war should such prove necessary.[253] Melvill went on to attest that in the previous two campaigns the Army's marches had been chronically delayed as a result of the scarcity and low-quality of the draught bullocks, further elaborating on the Company's failure to supply sufficient funds for their care, and even noting

> … I am assured from my servants that six months ago I could have had a great number of excellent bullocks but their price was so great, that considering the risques I was liable of running, [I] did not think it prudent to purchase them. Further I believe that were proper encouragement given that the army (altho[ugh] the Company is a good deal [distressed?] at present) might be well supplied and before I conclude [I] cannot help remarking what you must be well acquainted with. Many a long days [sic] hard work I have had, beside

[250]Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 24 February 1769, Orme OV 64 (pp. 71-133), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[251]Anonymous to Joseph Smith, 5 January 1769, Orme OV 10, (p. 115), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[252]Anonymous to Joseph Smith, Ibid.
[253]Henry Melvill to Joseph Smith, 6 January 1769, Orme OV 10, (p. 116), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

> many imminent risques of my life that I have run, entirely from our having bad cattle to run our guns.[254]

In addition to demonstrating the want of draught bullocks and the logistical failures of the Madras administration, these two letters demonstrate the particular difficulties faced by the artillery during the conflict.

Melvill's willingness to give his opinion and confirm it under oath was echoed by other officers, including Captain John Kennedy, who went on to assert that the funds provided to account for the loss of animals and to pay for the Indian bullock drivers employed by the Madras Army were also insufficient, asking whether

> … any reasonable man [can] imagine that a person can afford to pay 10 *pagodas* for a good bullock and only receive [five *pagodas* 40 lakh] of diem for his labourer, besides of killed or lost in the service, no allowance made to the owner. I further declare I do not remember to have past [sic] a single day last campaign without hearing some complaints, more or less, concerning the draught cattle.[255]

Other officers echoed the sentiments expressed by those above, with some further elaborating on the operational consequences of the poor quality of the bullocks and the insufficiency of the fiscal resources assigned to furnish, maintain, and drive the animals. Furthermore, at least one officer noted, their enemy had no such issues with his supply arrangements.[256]

This collection of letters illustrates that Smith was not alone in his criticism of the inadequacy of the Council and Nawab's logistic arrangements. It also serves as an example of a group of Madras Army officers confronting their civilian superiors as a corporate unit. Though one can only speculate as to the motivations for Smith and his fellow officers taking such collective action – beyond their chronic, self-evident disgust with the logistical situation – some

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[254]Henry Melvill to Joseph Smith, Ibid.
[255]John Kennedy to Joseph Smith, 11 January 1769, Orme OV 10, (p. 117), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[256]Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 24 February 1769, Orme OV 64 (pp. 71-133), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. I. Desdians [?] to Joseph Smith, 16 January 1769, Orme OV 10, (p. 118), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

hypotheses can be made when one considers the dating of the letters. With the war clearly entering a terminal phase in Haidar's favour by the New Year, and with initial negotiations for peace on his terms beginning in January and lasting through to early March of 1769, it seems clear that the letters were likely intended as documentary justifications for Smith, the officer corps, and indeed the whole army's conduct during the war. They were perhaps written specifically to serve as evidence in any formal or informal post-war inquiry into their wartime actions. This view is supported by the fact that many of the letters are dated in early and mid-January, after Haidar's invasion of the Carnatic and during the ongoing, and eventually inconclusive, first round of peace negotiations. Furthermore, officers' assurances to Smith that they would affirm the truth of the contents of their letters under oath lends credence to the idea that they were intended to defend the Madras military establishment's conduct during the war.[257]

Taking this into consideration, this collection of letters can be viewed as an 'insurance policy' for the career-minded and honour-conscious EIC officers who did not wish to see their military records tarnished, and which could be used in appeals to the distant Court of Directors should these military men face censure from the civilian authorities at Madras. Finally, in the long term the letters can be read as an appeal to posterity, justifying what at that point must have appeared an almost inevitable defeat at the hands of Haidar Ali, and laying the blame for it at feet other than their own. And though not all of the officer corps may have been so conscious of their 'place in history,' Smith at least seems to have been when one considers his ongoing communications with Robert Orme, who by the late 1760shad become employed by the East India Company as its historian and archivist,, having published the well-received first volume of *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the year 1745* in

[257]Henry Melvill to Joseph Smith, Ibid. John Kennedy to Joseph Smith, Ibid.

August of 1763. Considering Orme was also quite close with Sir John Call, it is a shame that he never published anything which addressed the First-Anglo-Mysore War.[258]

All these possible motivations behind the letters lead to two additional observations relating to civil-military relations. Firstly, that the Madras Army's officer corps, in acting as a bloc to defend their own collective interests, exhibited a high degree of corporate consciousness. Secondly, and perhaps more than anything else, the perceived necessity of writing and collecting these letters at this point in the conflict clearly illustrates the high level of antipathy that had developed between various factions of EIC servants in the Carnatic at the time. While it may be tempting to join Fortescue in characterizing this factionalism as a purely civil-military dispute, this does not appear to be the case, especially when one considers the faction formed by the Nawab's creditors and the events of the 1770s.[259]

Returning to the course of the conflict, on March 29th, 1769 Haidar, seeking to bring a swift end to the conflict while he had the advantage, took a small force of 6000 cavalry along with 200 infantry on a three and a half day forced march of 130 miles and arrived at the gates of Madras. He set up his headquarters at Saint Thomas's Mount (San Thome, Mylapore), the usual site of a Company garrison and a mere five miles from Fort Saint George.[260] From there he dictated his demands, forcing the Company to accept a peace on his surprisingly moderate terms.

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[258]For online access see Robert Orme, *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the year 1745*, vol. 1, 4th Ed. (Madras: Athenaeum Press, 1861), < https://archive.org/stream/historyofmilitar01 ormeuoft#page/n3/mode/2up> [Accessed 3 September 2017]. For information regarding Orme's historical narrative-building and his relationships with the Company and other EIC servants see A. Sinha Raja Tamita Delgoda, ''Nabob, Historian, and Orientalist' Robert Orme: The Life and Career of an East India Company Servant (1728-1801),' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3 (2), no. 3 (1992): 363-376.
[259]See Chapter 4, below.
[260]Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597-598.

These included the mutual restoration of lost lands and a binding bilateral offensive-defensive treaty which Haidar hoped would secure EIC support against the Marathas.[261]

Though the Council was no doubt pleased by the surprising lightness of these demands, their actions in precipitating their own defeat had humiliated the Madras Army, Joseph Smith, and the EIC. It is of note, however, that although Smith was denied victory and would not gain the broad recognition of his countrymen, he had earned the respect of his enemy, with Haidar praising Smith on multiple occasions. Moreover, these sentiments may not have been confined simply to Mysore's ruler, with Bowring alluding to an unnamed French source, which discusses a supposed French-Mysorean caricature portraying a standing Smith angrily breaking his sword in two while holding the Treaty of Madras.[262] He was nonetheless treated more respectfully by the artist than the Council, who were shown grovelling at Haidar's knees in the same depiction. For Smith's part the respect seems to have been mutual, with the Colonel writing favourably of Haidar as a worthy opponent of good character. Moreover, Smith's distaste for the unreliability of certain powerful Council members would not end with the close of hostilities.[263]

3.6 The Case of Colonel John Wood

One of the lesser known narrative accounts of the First Anglo-Mysore War is contained within Sir Charles Allen Lawson's (1838-1915) *Memories of Madras* (1905), an anthology of short

[261]Fortescue, vol. iii, 133. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 230. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 57. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 230-231. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597-599. Advices from Madras, Treaty Between Hyder Ali and Madras Council, 3 April 1769, IOR/H/101 (pp. 329-334), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Advices from Madras, Treaty with Hyder Ali, 25 September 1769, IOR/H/102 (pp. 95-98), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

[262]Bowring's source remains unclear. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 58 [Footnote 1].

[263]Joseph Smith to Court of Directors, [dates?], Orme OV 64 (pp. 31-47), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, 2 February 1770, Orme OV 10 (pp. 169-179), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Joseph Smith to Robert Orme, 29 January 1771, Orme OV 10 (pp. 193-220), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

essays on historical persons connected to British Madras. A journalist and fellow at the University of Madras, Lawson originally wrote the essays contained in this work for the *The Madras Mail*, an English-language evening daily newspaper he had co-founded in 1868 to compete with his erstwhile employer, *The Madras Times.* Like many of his contemporaries, his general interests were broad and largely antiquarian, but unlike some of those discussed above his focus was not exclusively military. Moreover, his work appears to be well grounded in source materials then held at the British Museum and India Office and now available at the British Library, though unfortunately he does not cite his sources directly.[264] It is for these reasons, and its very specific focus on one officer in the First Anglo-Mysore War, that 'A Court Martial' is of interest, as the focus of the essay is the abovementioned Colonel John Wood, whose exploits and transgressions were mentioned in passing above.

Wood's noteworthy activities during the war began on a propitious note, with him in command of the first line during Smith's victory at Tiruvannamalai, where he earned his superior's praise for his conduct.[265] He followed this initial success with a short series of victories while commanding an independent force in the Baramahal, capturing several fortresses and strategically positioned towns in early 1768. These early actions, however, were not universally praiseworthy, though Lawson portrays them as such, perhaps in the service of

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[264]Lawson notes in the preface to his book that it '… contains glimpses of men and things of former days in Madras, that were obtained by delving into the archives of the British Museum and the India Office. The British Museum moved its manuscript holdings relating to India to the British Library in 1973. The British Government would subsequently hand the India Office Records over to the British Library in 1982. Lawson refers directly to the correspondence of the Madras Military Committee during the war and the proceedings of the Court Martial itself, available in 'Miscellaneous Papers Collected by Thomas Wilks.' Charles Allen Lawson, *Memories of Madras* (London: Swan, Sonneschein, & Co., 1905), vi. 'Museum Library and Archives,' *British Museum*, <http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/libraries_and_archives.aspx> (accessed 1 November 2017). 'India Office Records: History and Scope,' *British Library*, <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp /findhelpregion/asia/india/indiaofficerecords/indiaofficescope/indiaofficehistoryscope.html> (accessed 1 November 2017). Relevant India Office Records are cited below.
[265]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 225.

creating a tragic narrative. He pointedly ignores some of Wood's errors at this early stage, including Haidar outmaneuvering him and advancing through an easily secured pass Wood had left unwatched in February of 1768.[266] Nevertheless, Wood did have some noteworthy achievements in this period. Centring his operations around Salem and then advancing to Erode in the Summer, Wood successfully outmaneuvered Haider on several occasions, including the rescue of multiple supply columns targeted by Mysorean forces and the capture of several more fortresses, significantly including Coimbatore in July. He followed these successes with the prudent action of resting his exhausted forces for three weeks. Interestingly, Fortescue does not mention these accomplishments in his account of Wood, perhaps as they would undermine his characterization of the Colonel as the Council's 'cat's paw' in his Smith-centric civil-military narrative.[267]

It was these conspicuous successes in Smith's absence which earned Wood the appreciation of the Madras Council, who wrote to him at this point. It is worth noting, however, that all these successes occurred at first while Haidar was in the course of withdrawing to address the Malabar Rebellion, and then later during his absence from the Madras Army's theatre of operations (the Eastern Ghats). Additionally, aside from the enemy's absence, the condition of the Army had not improved, with Wood echoing Smith's complaints over insufficient logistic arrangements in his letters to Madras, with the added issue of his troops' pay being in arrears.[268]

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[266]Fortescue, vol. iii, 124-125, 130-131. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218, 223.
[267]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 225-226. For a complete account of Wood's actions during the war, as compiled by Orme, see 'Sketch of Colonel Wood's Conduct in the during the War with Hyder Ally Khan, from the 5th October 1767 to the 7th April 1773, Extracted from the Madras Records,' Orme OV 40 (pp. 5-121), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. See also Orme OV 34 and OV 35 for complete records of the Court Martial. European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[268]John Wood to John Call, 5 May 1768, Orme OV 309 (pp. 5-10), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

Moreover, Wood himself became worried by the consequences of these successes, pointing out his concern over weakening his field forces to garrison the captured forts and towns in a letter dated to June of 1768.[269]

At this point, Wood himself began to worry of his own unfitness for command owing to increasing ill health, which he addressed in his communications with Madras. In one letter dated to August 11th, 1768 Wood even expressed his exasperation with the service and a desire to retire.[270] The Council, nevertheless, insisted that he was essential to operations and even questioned the truth of his claims of indisposition, hoping that he would play a key part in a decisive defeat of Haidar and the capture of Bangaluru by the end of 1768. In this manner they appealed to Wood's ambition and sense of duty to keep him in the field despite his misgivings. It was during this period, in early September of 1768, that Colonel Smith, anticipating Haidar's actions, could have encircled and brought to battle the Mysorean Army had Wood – in command of a separate force – not heedlessly ordered his men to salute Smith's messenger with their guns. In this instance, Lawson again chose to overlook a critical error on Wood's part that would contribute to his fellow officers' disregard.[271]

Despite any misgivings which they may have had, Wood retained the support of at least the majority on the Council and still held an independent command in early October when his forces, while besieging Mulbagal, were attacked by Haidar's main army.[272] The ensuing battle – discussed above - was to prove the beginning of Wood's prolonged downfall. Barely escaping

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[269]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 226. Fortescue, vol. iii, 123. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 57-60. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 218-219. John Wood to [probably John Call], 7 June 1768, Orme OV 309 (pp. 17-19), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[270]John Wood to [probably John Call], 11 August 1768, Orme OV 309 (pp. 31-24), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[271]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 227. Fortescue, vol. iii, 127-128. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 220-221.
[272]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 227. Wilks, *Historical Sketches*, ii., 59-60.

from total defeat through the timely intervention of his subordinate Captain Brooke, Wood was initially praised by the Council for his success in fending off Haidar despite only narrowly avoiding disaster. As a result, Wood was placed in overall command of the army after Smith left for Madras on November 14th. However, on receiving Smith and Major Fitzgerald's assessments of Wood's conduct, at least some Councillor's opinions of him began to shift.[273]

By the time Fitzgerald wrote his letter to Smith, Wood had bungled the subsequent operation discussed above where his forces were only saved by the Major's timely intervention, and he and his men were now in the course of a disastrous retreat.[274] In the letter Fitzgerald questioned Wood's integrity and abilities and asserted that the Colonel had 'disheartened' and mistreated the sepoys under his command. He further argued that Wood had been slow to act to the point of squandering opportunities to engage the enemy. He was also accused of wasting ammunition. This latter accusation of squandering of valuable resources is particularly serious in a conflict as plagued by supply and transport problems as the First Anglo-Mysore War. As discussed above, Smith passed these criticisms with his own added on to the Madras Council in a letter dated November 28th, 1768. Wood was recalled by the Council soon afterward.[275] The brevity of Wood's second period in overall command was perhaps its only virtue.

Wood's departure from the battlefield during the closing months of the war also marks his erasure from the published narratives of the conflict save in retrospect. His career thereafter is discussed only in brief snippets within the literature excepting Lawson's relatively lengthy,

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[273]See Chapter 3, Section 3.4, above. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 227-228. Fortescue, vol. iii, 128-130. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 222-223. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 54. Letter from Madras [from F. Brown], 23 February 1769, Orme OV 71 (pp. 1-40), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[274]Fortescue, vol. iii, 131-132. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 53-56. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 225-226.
[275]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 228. Malleson, *Decisive Battles*, 226. Bowring, *Haidar Ali*, 55-56. Fortescue, vol. iii, 132. Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 228. Joseph Smith to Fort Saint George, 28 November 1768, Orme OV 10 (pp. 91-110), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

though, as discussed above, far from thorough account. Lawson passes over the initial investigation of Wood's conduct entirely and moves on immediately to his Court Martial. Ostensibly a result of Wood's failings as a commander, in reality the trial represented an attempt by the Madras Council to impose greater control over the military in the context of a greater political and institutional struggle within the EIC. In this manner the trial became a politicized pageant of sorts, similar to the earlier and more famous Court Martial of Royal Navy Admiral John Byng (c. 1704-1759), which itself had become the centre of a political debate over the navy and the empire.[276] In those proceedings a litany of charges, some relevant to Wood's tactical and operational shortcomings and others less so, were made. The nine charges, listed as a whole to illustrate their scope, were

> [M]isappropriation of public stores and provisions; misappropriation of public monies; wilful neglect of duty in not laying up, or causing to be laid up, stores of grain and provisions in forts captured from the enemy; 'being interested in the grain and necessaries of life brought to the [camp] bazaar'; 'doing, causing, or permitting violence to persons who brought provisions to the camp'; 'permitting or licensing pernicious spirits, called Parriar Arrack, to be publicly distilled and sold in the camp, and receiving a large consideration for such permission, thereby encouraging or conniving at drunkenness, contrary to good military discipline'; neglecting 'to act in conformity to the advice and opinion of his Commanding Officer signified to him by repeated messages on a day named, thereby exposing his detachment, contrary to good order and military discipline, by which neglect the rear division sustained a considerable loss'; for 'unadvisedly, indiscreetly, and contrary to the custom of war, exposing the detachment or part of the detachment under his command, to be overpowered by the enemy…' and lastly for 'having in many instances, and at sundry times, whilst he had the charge and command of the Army, from the 4th November to the 5th December, 1768, by his measures and conduct, unadvisedly, indiscreetly, unlike an officer, against the maxims of war in India, and contrary to good order and military discipline suffered the enemy to gain many and signal advantages, and neglecting himself to take those advantages of the

[276] Records of the inquiry into Wood's conduct are available at the British Library. See 'Wood, Colonel John, Enquiry into conduct during command of Coimbatore Country and Result,' [dates?], IOR/E/4/864 (p. 617-618) and IOR/E/865 (p. 127-134), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. For specific complaints regarding Wood's 'commercial activities' see 'Wood, Colonel John, Complaints Respecting Army Contracts Confirmed by, [dates?], IOR/E/864 (P. 1081), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. See also Sarah Kinkel, 'Saving Admiral Byng: imperial debates, military governance and popular politics at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War,' *Journal for Maritime Research* 13, no. 1 (2011): 3-19.

enemy which the nature and circumstances of the two Armies enables him to have done.[277]

Interestingly, though Smith had forwarded Fitzgerald's complaints against Wood to the Council and added his own criticisms, he was reluctant to criticize his subordinate directly in the Court Martial, citing it as inappropriate considering that he was Wood's commanding officer and had not seen fit to punish him himself during the events. Moreover, Smith seems keen to avoid impugning Wood's honour, with the Judge Advocate, Colonel Stone, personally concurring and eventually making it clear that the court was not questioning Wood's 'courage or resolution.'[278] One can only speculate as to why Smith did not wish to see Wood dishonoured, though he may have wanted to avoid setting a precedent which would allow the Council to condemn other officers (including himself) in this manner.

Although Fitzgerald maintained his previous accusations against Wood, many junior officers called as witnesses challenged his accusations. They particularly disagreed with his assertions that the army was dispirited under Wood and that the Colonel had been reluctant to give battle. Perhaps they did not wish to see their own honour as officers tarnished or they may have been friends of Wood seeking to protect him. Alternatively, even if Wood was incompetent that does not mean that he was a coward, as he could have had legitimate reasons to avoid giving battle. As a result of these testimonies, the lack of evidence regarding some charges, and the fact that having an interest in bazaar good, licensing alcohol sales in camp, and many of the other 'commercial activities' with which he was charged were common practices in EIC forces at the time, Wood was eventually acquitted of all charges on December 8th, 1769.[279] The Madras

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[277]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 229-230. 'A General Court Martial, Colonel Donald Campbell, President,' Orme OV 34 (p. 55), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[278]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 231.
[279]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 231-233. 'Sketch of Colonel Wood's Conduct in the during the War with Hyder Ally Khan, from the 5th October 1767 to the 7th April 1773, Extracted from the Madras Records,' Orme OV 40 (p.

Council did not accept these rulings and asked the Court Martial to reconsider them, but this request was refused. In response the Council stated that 'the whole Corps of Officers seemed to have felt that the emoluments, advantages, and honours of them all had been attacked in the person of Colonel Wood.'[280] As a result of this the Madras government did not view the findings of the Court Martial seriously and refused to reinstate Wood for his misconduct during the war on their own authority, citing extreme circumstances as a justification in their appeal to Leadenhall Street.[281]

The Council received the Court of Directors' reply in March of 1771, when in their letter they stated that they saw no improper motives present in the ruling of the Court Martial. Moreover, they criticized the Council for not leading by example, citing George Mackay's unwillingness to appear at the proceedings to be examined until he was forced to do so, and further observing that 'With ill grace, therefore, could the Council complain of the want of proper subordination in our Military servants, and suffer, uncensured, one of their own Board to trifle with a Court established by Law, and in His Majesty's name.'[282] The Directors also censured the Council for excluding Smith from their deliberations on his subordinate's dismissal, and criticized them for insinuating that the Commander-in-Chief could not be trusted with the matter despite Smith's well-established 'inflexible integrity.' Finally, the Directors rejected the

85), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Robert Fletcher to Robert Orme, 12 February 1772, Orme OV 30 (pp. 161-164 [162]), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 62 [Note 1], 73 [Note 2]. For scholarship addressing military officers' 'commercial activities' in the 18th Century, albeit with a focus on the British Army rather than the EIC's, see Alan J. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-1763* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985.

[280]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 233.

[281]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 233-234.

[282]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 234-235.

Council's assertion that the verdict of the Court Martial had been motivated by a contest over the relative power of the civilian and military establishments at Madras, stating that

> However unwilling we are to return to the subject which has occasioned such altercation amongst our Servants, we cannot avoid taking notice of the plea of our Governor and Council that the contest relative to Colonel Wood was virtually between the Civil and Military power; and we must observe that there appears no proof of such an assertion, nor are we referred to one fact in support thereof.[283]

The Court of Directors elaborated that no civil-military contest had been mentioned in dispatches from Madras previous to the Court Martial's verdict and rejected the civilian leadership's claims due to lack of evidence. Furthermore, the Directors ordered the Council to reinstate Wood and award him his arrears in pay, though this did not occur until 1773, one year before Colonel Wood's death.[284]

The Madras Army officer corps' general refusal to cooperate with the Council in punishing one of their own indicates that some sort of corporate identity may have been developing at the time. Moreover, it illustrates that this identity came into being, as they so often do, because of conflicting goals with another group – namely the civilian authorities at Madras. In this instance, the goals of the officer corps in defending Wood seem to have included not only defending his honour as a fellow officer, but also defending the various means through which officers augmented their income while on campaign.

This dualistic explanation, however, breaks down when one considers the individuals involved in the dispute. In Fortescue and his predecessor's characterizations, Wood is the 'creature' of the Council, with whom the 'legitimate' commander in chief – Smith – was replaced

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[283]Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, 235-236. Court of Directors to Fort Saint George, 22 March 1771, IOR/E/4/865, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[284]Court of Directors to Fort Saint George, ibid. See 'Wood, Colonel John, Home remittance on account of estate of, instructions respecting,' [1773?], IOR/E/4/886 (p. 175), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

contrary to military practice and to the detriment of the EIC's fortunes in the First Anglo-Mysore War. Nevertheless, it was Smith and the officer corps that, after initially criticizing Wood, came to his defense when Wood's erstwhile allies on the Council sought to use him as a scapegoat for the Company's disgrace. This fact, when combined with the military officer, John Call's alignment with the Council vis-à-vis Smith, illustrates that factionalism at Madras in the late 1760s and early 1770s cannot be clearly delineated along civil-military lines, and that factions and factional loyalties were malleable and dependant on the situation.

While the historical record indicates that the Council's criticism of Wood's failures as a tactical and operational commander are sound, the fact that the charges of the Court Martial went beyond these matters is indicative of several additional motives in this dispute. Firstly, in the 'commercial' charges of Wood having an interest in the bazaar, or licensing the production of alcohol in the camp, Madras's civilian leaders were attacking significant sources of income for the officer corps. While such an attack could be justified today by claiming that such actions were 'unprofessional' or 'unmilitary,' they were the norm in EIC forces in the period and can be seen at the very least as an attempt to curb commercial activity among officers and at most as a political act in an ongoing factional struggle, or potentially both. Periodic attempts to both constrain the financial and commercial actions by officers and curb factionalism resulting from commercial interests among Company Servants (both civil and military) were the norm in this period and shall be discussed further in the following chapter.[285]

It seems clear that these charges were meant to place the blame for the EIC's defeat in the First Anglo-Mysore War on Colonel Wood in particular, and the army in general. The subsequent

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[285]See Chapter 4, below, for discussing of factionalism at Madras in relation to the 1776 coup. See Guy, *Oeconomy*, 88-115 [Chapter 4]. See also P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

charges against Wood of having failed to stock occupied strongpoints with sufficient supplies of ammunition and food make this abundantly clear when one considers Smith, Wood, and other officers' complaints throughout the war that the civilian leadership was not furnishing the army with sufficient supplies or transport bullocks. Furthermore, this is made even clearer by the reluctance of George Mackay to appear before the Court Martial. As a field deputy, the holder of the transport contract for the war, and a party with interest in the Nawab's debts, he can be seen to be partially liable in three different ways for the logistic failures of the war, so his reluctance is understandable. Nevertheless, it is important to also remember the critical role the Company's lack of cavalry assuredly played in the army's supply situation during the war and question the biases and prejudices of historians like Fortescue who pointedly choose not to dwell on the issue.

Conclusions

> Nor was it until the country had been overrun by the Mysore cavalry close up to the outskirts of Madras, and the finances of the Company considerably deranged, that a protracted and inglorious was ended in 1769 by a treaty with Hyder Ali… The revenues of Madras would have been completely exhausted, if they had not been supplemented liberally, during the campaign from Bengal…[286]

While Haidar's successes and the fact that he could dictate terms to his opponents no doubt dealt a blow to the EIC Army' prestige, the Council's fiscal mismanagement of the conflict potentially did more damage in contributing to increased factionalism at both the EIC headquarters at Leadenhall Street and among Company servants in India. As discussed above, it was clear that Madras would have exhausted its own sources of income and been forced to come to terms with Mysore more quickly had the Bengal Presidency not aided them financially throughout the later phases of the war. It is important, however, not to overstate this as if it were not something of a

[286]Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167.

norm, as the Madras Presidency's commercial operations had not been profitable since the expansion of their military began in the 1740s, with some Directors even referring to their holdings in the Carnatic as merely a bulwark to defend Bengal against the French in 1769 as the First Anglo-Mysore War drew to a close.[287] Nevertheless, the Company's leadership and shareholders were understandably displeased with this misuse of financial resources which could be better spent on profitable endeavours, with Lyall noting that

> … the London Directors were exceedingly displeased at discovering that the money on which they relied for commercial investments in India, and for accommodating His Majesty's Ministers with treasury loans at home, had been dissipated in these barren operations, with no other profit than a practical lesson in the ways of Oriental statecraft and the value of Eastern allies.[288]

These recriminations, which led to attempts to place the blame on others such as Colonel Wood, would only add to the factional tensions in the Carnatic.

From the perspective of campaign analysis, who is to blame for the mismanagement of the war appears to be less clear than Fortescue and his predecessors would have liked it to be. Though the deleterious effects of the supply situation are a matter of fact, the causes of the situation clearly cannot be laid entirely at the feet of the Council and Nawab's avarice. Indeed, as discussed above, the Madras Army's lack of cavalry no doubt played just as significant a role. Attempts from London to address these problems in the wake of the conflict would have significant consequences for the Madras Presidency by heightening factional tensions, but these will be addressed in the following chapter.

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[287]Court of Directors to Fort Saint George, 17 March 1769, IOR/E/4/864 (p.670), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167. Bryant, *Emergence*, 187, 189. For discussion of Company politics and factionalism in London, which is beyond the scope of this study, see Huw. Bowen, *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics 1757-1773* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). See also Huw. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East Indian Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and Lucy Sutherland, *The East India Company in 18th Century Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).
[288]Lyall, *Rise and Expansion*, 167.

Also of interest here is the evidence of corporate interest among the Madras Army officer corps, and that it came about as a result of the mismanagement of the war by civilian officials. Indeed, the evidence itself emerged due to conflicting interests with the civil establishment, though as discussed above this was merely one facet of an ongoing struggle where goals and loyalties frequently shifted. In this specific instance chronic aggravation over the lack of supplies and draught bullocks led to collective letter-writing on the topic by officers, perhaps in part as a pre-emptive defense against post-war scapegoating. Similarly, the Council's attempt to attack officers' secondary emoluments and place the blame for the EIC's defeat on the shoulders of Colonel Wood during his Court Martial led the officer corps to testify in Wood's favour, despite some of them – including Smith – being aware of his deficiencies as a commander.

These instances of civilian mismanagement, combined with resentment over repeated interference in operations, the imposition on Field Deputies, and other instances of institutional overreach would have a lasting impact on how both the military and the Court of Directors would view the civil establishment at Madras. It is, therefore, something of an irony that attempts on the part of Councillor's to avoid reform and maintain the status quo in the 1770s would be aided by military overreach in its most extreme form – a coup. This convergence of civil and military interests against a common enemy, after an event as trying as the First Anglo-Mysore War, is indicative of the shifting factions at Madras in this period.

Chapter Four: A 'Most Dangerous Example'

4.1 Introduction

The 1776 coup at Madras occurred in a period of political and military transformation for the East India Company (EIC). At the time the Company was transitioning from a commercial entity into a landholding quasi-state, its armed forces were expanding rapidly, and its position on the subcontinent was being challenged by dynamic Indian powers. Moreover, the EIC leadership in London was struggling to control its in-country servants and Parliament was increasingly anxious over the state of the Britain's emerging empire in South Asia. The 1776 Madras Coup, perhaps more than any contemporary event, illustrates the divisions within this system during a momentous period of Anglo-Indian history.

In examining these divisions and their consequences, this chapter will explore the civil-military situation in the Carnatic in detail and identify immediate and background factors which precipitated the coup. It will also illuminate the events as they unfolded and explain why the parties involved escaped serious punishment. Additionally, it will seek to situate these questions within broader British Indian and Imperial frameworks, asking whether the coup truly was exceptional or just one instance of indiscipline and instability among many.

Among the primary sources utilized are the India Office Records and Private Papers and the Orme Collection at the British Library, as well as contemporary political pamphlets and Parliamentary speeches relating to the coup. This chapter also incorporates documents from the December 1779 trial of the leading figures in the coup at the Court of King's Bench, which are now held by the National Library of Scotland. Compared to the narrative or otherwise brief

treatments of the coup in other works, close reading of these varied documents utilizing perspectives from the theoretical literature on civil-military relations, combined with a critical examination of the relevant military historiography and political theory, provides a new perspective on the 1776 Coup.[289]

The resulting picture of the Madras Presidency in the 1770s is one of civil-military division, overlapping jurisdictions, and – most significantly – factionalism among the Company leadership. It also clearly illustrates the far-reaching effects of pecuniary self-interest among EIC servants, often to the detriment of political stability and military effectiveness – a topic P.J. Marshall explored in Bengal in *East Indian Fortunes,* but which has not yet been discussed in similar depth in relation to Madras. This was perhaps most notably the case with the 1776 Coup itself, which occurred when one faction of the Madras Council, with the backing of the then-dominant faction in the EIC Court of Directors, threatened the financial interests of another faction, which consequently resorted to force to maintain their position.[290] Moreover, differing reactions to the coup from the EIC leadership, the Court of King's Bench, and Parliament illustrate divisions in London over the state of affairs in the Carnatic – with these divisions in part accounting for the light punishment imposed on the chief perpetrators.

Following his discussion of the East India Company (EIC) army's embarrassing defeat in the First Anglo-Mysore War (1767-1769), Fortescue laid the blame at the feet of the Company's civilian leadership in the Carnatic. He stated that 'The corruption in the Civil Service of Madras

[289]See Chapter 1, Section 3, above, for a brief discussion of the relevant civil-military literature, both historical and theoretical.

[290]Factionalism in the EIC Court of Directors was endemic from the 1760s onward. However, it is largely beyond the scope of this study. For a good explanation of this factionalism with relevant statistics and explanations of 'corrupt' practices like 'vote-splitting' see Huw Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 58-63, 93-94.

had already borne evil fruit, but the axe was not yet laid at the root of the tree, and there was to come to maturity a crop even worse than had yet been gathered.'[291] In addition to illustrating Fortescue's well established pro-military biases, this assertion sidesteps the role that the quality of Mysore's soldiery – particularly their cavalry – and arms had played, as well as the military and administrative acumen of their leader Haidar Ali (c. 1720-1782). This omission is illustrative of a tendency among historians prior to the 1960s in which they downplayed the successes of Indian rulers and commanders or attributed their successes to 'negative' and stereotypical traits like ferocity or fanaticism. However, in terms of the EIC's civil-military tensions Fortescue's diagnosis is as correct as his grim foreshadowing is appropriate.[292]

Fortescue is also guilty of anachronism in his application of the term corruption to Council members using their positions for their own financial self-interest. As established in previous chapters this practice was the norm in the 18th century among governments and administrations, and EIC servants, whether civil or military, were no exception. It is worth noting, however, that whatever the institutional norm was within the EIC, the practices of wealthy 'nabobs' returning from India were perceived to be corrupt by many of their contemporaries outside the Company. As Huw Bowen notes, after 1757 the EIC became a matter of wide public discourse and members of the literate public had strong but divided opinions on it. Many of those who saw it as corrupt also saw it as dangerous, questioning the legitimacy of the Company's sovereignty, criticizing its servants for misrule, and fearing the effect that its

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[291]John William Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, vol. ii (London: Macmillan & Co., 1899), 136. Brian Bond, 'Fortescue, Sir John William' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biograph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/101033213/John-Fortescue> [accessed 28 August 2016].
[292]For discussion of the First Anglo-Mysore War see Chapter 3, above. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 5-6. For discussion of military historian's cultural and racial biases in an Asian context see Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

patronage network was having in Britain. This topic has been explored by Nicholas Dirks in *The Scandal of Empire* (2008).[293]

What made this specific instance of ‘corrupt’ personal enrichment notable was not only how long it persisted, but also the division it caused and the damage it did to the effective administration of the Carnatic. The ‘corruption’ to which Fortescue alluded has its roots in the fact that since the Carnatic Wars, many of the members of the Madras Council had significant personal interest in the debts of the Nawab of the Carnatic, Muhammad Ali Khan Wallahjah (1717-1795), to whom they and others had lent money at exorbitant interest rates, and whose influence, ambition, and jealousy of Haidar had contributed to the outbreak of hostilities in 1767. The EIC itself had also lent money to the Nawab, as had many of its servants in India beyond the Madras Council, including Company Army officers and Royal officers seconded to the Company. He had also taken money from Indian money-lenders as well as private traders and other European creditors present in India.

Perhaps the most notable example of the latter is Paul Benfield, an ex-EIC engineer and architect who played a shadowy but critical role in the events to be discussed in this chapter. Benfield and a handful of other speculators collected funds from a large number of investors in and around the Carnatic to loan to the Nawab, with P.J. Marshall pointing out that as many as half of the Madras Army’s officers may have invested their savings with Benfield by the mid-1770s. The outsized influence he had on the Nawab and his fellow creditors, combined with role

[293]Bowen, *Business of Empire*, 7, 11-14. See Nicholas Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008). See also Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British* Constitution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

he played in 1776 Coup, led P.J. Marshall to describe him as 'the most unscrupulous of the British 'nabobs.''[294]

The outsized political influence of Muhammad Ali through his debt was worsened in times of war by an insufficiently robust logistics system undermined by the personal greed of individual Madras Councillors.[295] In 1771, less than two years after the conclusion of the First Anglo-Mysore War, the Nawab put pressure on the Council to improve his position through military force, this time in an attempt to extort money from the wealthy Raja of Thanjavur, Thulaji Bhonsle (1738-1784). Brigadier General Joseph Smith (1732/3-1790) – the EIC Commander-in-Chief in the Carnatic whose operations had been so undermined by the Madras Council and the Nawab during the war that he was unable to capitalize upon two significant tactical victories that could have ended the war in the Company's favour – laid siege to the city on November 15th, 1771. However, an agreement to pay the Nawab was reached before the siege could be concluded. Less than two years later, however, Muhammad Ali shrewdly took advantage of infighting in the Maratha Confederacy, the Raja's distant kinsmen and protectors, to again persuade the Madras Presidency to invade Thanjavur on his behalf, with Smith capturing the city by assault on this occasion in 1773. Control of the city and region was subsequently handed over to the Nawab, who granted much of the associated revenues to his British creditors.[296]

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[294]P.J. Marshall, 'Benfield, Paul (1741-1810),' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/2092> [Accessed 13 June 2017]. Marshall, *Making and Unmaking*, 234, 236-237.
[295]See Chapter 3.
[296]See Chapter 2, Section 3 for information of the Marathas. K.R. Subramanian, *The Maratha Rajas of Thanjavur* (Madras [Chennai], 1928), 60-62. Fortescue, vol. ii. 117-119, 121, 138-139. Joseph Smith to John Call, 8 October 1767, Orme OV 10 (pp. 29-32), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

In addition to serving as Muhammad Ali's creditor, Benfield had previously lent money at usurious interest rates to the Raja of Thanjavur. Despite the wealth of Thanjavur, Thulaji required this loan to pay-off costs incurred during the abovementioned 1771 invasion by Company forces. However, Benfield subsequently double-crossed him in 1773 and instead lent money to the Nawab, who himself repaid Benfield by assigning him revenues from newly-captured territory in Thanjavur. As a result, the Court of Directors' attempt to restore the Raja to his domain and secure his revenues for him earned Benfield's enmity, with the latter subsequently becoming one of the instigators of the plot to oust the new governor of Madras.[297]

The EIC Court of Directors in London, angered by the Madras Council's collusion with the Nawab in the seizure of Thanjavur, recalled Governor Alexander Wynch (1721-1781) and replaced him with Lord Pigot (1719-1777). Pigot, who had previously served as governor from 1755-1763, was instructed to restore the Raja of Thanjavur to his domain and revenues. He promptly set about the business of doing so upon his arrival in India despite the protests of Muhammad Ali. As the Nawab's creditors on the Council feared any measure that would pose a threat to their own private profit, most of the Madras leadership was against such actions despite Pigot's clear directives from the Court of Directors. This discontent turned to open revolt, with the majority of Council members approving the arrest and imprisonment of Pigot. They managed to get the military on side, likely in part due to many officers having invested in the Nawab's debt through Benfield, with Brigadier General James Stuart (d. 1793) later recalling to his brother that the conspiracy to arrest Pigot and take control of Madras and its government

[297]Marshall, 'Benfield, Paul,' Ibid. Philips, 'A Successor,' 379.

involved around 50 people, military and civilian, by the time it began on the 24th of August, 1776.[298]

The chief conspirators among the military officers were Colonel Sir Robert Fletcher, Commander-in-Chief in the Carnatic (who was also 3rd on the Madras Council) and the abovementioned Sir James Stuart, then a Colonel. Stuart took over command on an interim basis during Fletcher's indisposition due to advanced tuberculosis and replaced him permanently after Fletcher's departure and death. Notable subordinates who played a key role included Lieutenant-Colonel James Eidingtoun and Captain Arthur Lysaght who along with Stuart took Lord Pigot into custody, and Major Matthew Horne, at whose house the governor was confined to for a time. Captain Barclay also played a role, alongside Stuart and Eidingtoun, in taking the Madras Councillor (and supporter of Lord Pigot) Claude Russel into custody as he tried to raise the garrison against the coup plotters.[299]

Pigot's imprisonment in Horne's villa outside of Madras and later at the Company's garden house was comparatively comfortable, but to his captor's great embarrassment he died while in captivity, having become sick and refusing to avoid the afternoon sun while gardening. By then the Directors had moved to force the restoration of Pigot and depose the Councillors who had staged the coup, but it was too late for the governor. The four primary civilian conspirators, though convicted when brought to trial, escaped harsh punishment and were released after paying fines of one thousand pounds each. Moreover, Stuart had a military career

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[298]Fortescue, vol. ii, 429-430. Marshall, *Making and Unmaking*, 236. Andrew Stuart, *A Letter to the Directors of the Honourable East India Company: The Conduct of Brigadier-General James Stuart at Madras* [December 1777], National Library of Scotland, 15, 22.

[299]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 15, 22. Love, *Vestiges,* iii, [Fletcher] 99-100, 119, [Stuart] 86-87, 90, 97-99, [Eidingtoun] 92, 98, [Lysaght] 92, 99, 115, [Horne] 88, 92, 99. Sudip Bhattacharya, *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), 253. J.A. Cannon, 'Fletcher, Sir Robert [c. 1738-76], of Ballinasloe, co. Roscommon and Lindertis, Angus,' *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, ed. L. Namier, J. Brooke, 1964. <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/fletcher-sir-robert-1738-76#footnoteref8_7ghkj3w>. [Accessed 4 January 2017].

that survived the aftermath of the coup despite a lengthy suspension and trial before a court martial for his involvement. The remaining plotters received no substantial punishment.[300]

Coups are quite rare in British military history, and the 1776 coup at Madras (only the second in the history of the presidency, and far better documented than an earlier one in the 17th century) presents scholars with evidence of a set of institutional deficiencies and a series of events illuminating civil-military relations in the Carnatic under EIC rule. This study will analyze the factors contributing to the coup, the coup itself, and its aftermath through the lens of civil-military relations theory and history, basing its analysis on the institutionalist approaches of Samuel Huntington and Amos Perlmutter and more modern studies of the EIC's military and political culture. As such it will take a more focused and critical, and less narrative-heavy approach than Sudip Bhattacharya's *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot* (2013).[301]

4.2 Madras Civil-Military Relations: 1769-1775

> There is, I think, no other instance in our history of so close, minute, and persistent interference of civilians with military operations as is recorded in this campaign; and yet the soldiers went near to achieve great triumphs in the face of these obstacles... the behaviour of both officers and men in most trying circumstances was beyond praise... [and as] to Smith himself his only fault as a man seems to have been excess of good temper and of diffidence, which prompted him to obey too readily, even for evil, the orders of incompetent superiors. A more masterful man might have borne down the

[300]William Murray [1st Earl of Mansfield and Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench], *The King against Stratton, &c.: The Earl of Mansfield's Charge to the Jury…* (20 December 1779), Court of King's Bench (1779), Advocates Library, National Library of Scotland, pp. 8. Fortescue, vol. ii, 430, 479. 'Horne, Colonel Matthew, Order for trial of, by Court Martial rescinded,' [date?], IOR/E/869 (p. 548), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. 'Lysaght, Arthur, Orders respecting, if acquitted by Court Martial,' [date?], IOR/E/4/868 (pp. 359-360), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

[301]Sudip Bhattacharya's *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot* (2013) provides, as of 2017, the most up-to-date monograph-length account of the 1776 Coup. Although the text does not focus specifically on the 1776 coup and would be more useful to scholars with the addition of thorough annotation, it is nonetheless useful for providing a comprehensive and very readable narrative of events at Madras, good background information on pervious rebellions at Bombay and in the Carnatic, and a well-sourced bibliography. See Footnote 7 for bibliographic information. Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 1640-1800, vol. i (London: John Murray, 1913), 224-229. Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 263-264.

> Council of Madras by sheer force of character; a less disciplined man might have ended their rule by violence. Smith did neither of these things.[302]
>
> - John William Fortescue,
> *A History of the British Army*

Beyond the Madras civilian leadership's refusal to acknowledge the advice of their own military experts during the first Anglo-Mysore War, the civil-military situation in the Carnatic was further agitated by their words and actions in its aftermath, with mutual recriminations leading to a breakdown in civil-military cohesion that lasted for years, and no doubt contributed to the tense situation when Lord Pigot arrived on the scene in 1775. Additionally, it is worth noting that the increased size and power of the military in the Carnatic, as discussed above, may have compelled civilian leaders to assert their authority over their military counterparts in a manner more strident than they previously would have thought necessary.[303]

The EIC's unique civil-military situation at that time not only stems from its position as a trading company managing an army, but also from the variety of military services its civilian administration interacted with (and the direct interaction of those military services with one another). Where most European nation-states of the 18th century contented themselves with a geographical-based division of forces between an army and a navy (sometimes with a subordinate marine corps) and most contemporary Indian polities – which for the most part lacked navies - maintained devolved military structures as discussed above, the EIC administrative quasi-state not only managed its own centralized army and naval forces, but also cooperated with the British Army and Royal Navy. Furthermore, specifically in the Madras Presidency during the mid to late 18th century, it also had to contend with the parallel military institutions of the Nawab, those of other client kingdoms like Thanjavur, and those of Indian

[302]Fortescue, II, 134.

[303]G.J. Bryant, *The Emergence of British Power in India 1600-1784* (Woodbridge: Bowdell Press, 2013), 208.

allies beyond the EIC's direct oversight but nevertheless within their sphere of influence (Hyderabad being a good example at the time).[304]

From the perspective of civil-military relations theory, this situation of parallelism and devolution within a developing colonial garrison state can be compared with that of 20th and 21st century national security states with armies, navies, police, and paramilitary forces all operating within a – admittedly more centralized – state and sharing in its monopoly of force, and all while simultaneously competing with one another for fiscal and personnel resources. The similarities extend beyond the presence of parallel security institutions or armies competing for limited political power and resources, as highly coercive systems of revenue collection and political factionalism have been the norm in many illiberal national security states as they were in the 18th century Carnatic. Considering the Company Raj's reliance on force to sustain their rule in India, as noted above, comparisons with today's security states are best made with constitutionally weak, unfree regimes as opposed to liberal or even illiberal democracies. Andreas Heinemann-Grüder describes the civil-military situation in such states succinctly, stating that:

> On the one hand the security services represent a unitary, highly centralized, vertically integrated structure, where functional divisions are distributed among security ministries and state agencies, and where major operating and strategic decisions are formulated and controlled by the chief executive (the president) and transmitted to subordinates, corresponding thus to a vertical and unitary model of hierarchy. On the other hand, security forces perform a wide range of roles with a high degree of autonomy, *while competing against one another*, particularly in extracting and controlling resources, thus rather resembling a model of fragmentation.[305] [my emphasis]

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[304]The problem of applying 20th century notions of civil-military division to the 18th century, where the distinction was not as pronounced, is addressed in Chapter 1, Section 3. Additionally, the topic of the Carnatic as a hybrid fiscal military state is discussed in Chapter 2, Section 6. The most notable exceptions to Indian polities' lack of navies in the 18th century were the naval forces of the Marathas and Mysore on the Malabar Coast. Such forces could develop there in part due to the limited British naval presence relative to that off of the Coromandel Coast and Bengal at the time. For a detailed scholarly discussion of this topic see Phillip MacDougall, *Naval Resistance to Britain's Growing Power in India, 1660-1800: The Saffron Banner and the Tiger of Mysore* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014). Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 46-47. For general discussion of Mysore, the Marathas, and Hyderabad in this period see Chapter 2, Section 3, above.
[305]Heinemann-Grüder, 'Patterns,' 244. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 82.

In theory ultimate authority within the Madras Presidency, while previously more nebulous, had come to be vested in the British Crown through the *Regulating Act of 1773*.[306] In practice, however, it was exercised through different institutions, with that of the EIC flowing from its shareholders, through Court of Directors in London, to the President and Council at Fort Saint George, and from them to the EIC Army's officers and men. Parallel to this was the authority of the British Crown and nation, embodied by the 'King-in-Parliament' and exercised through the governing ministry, and their military representatives in India – most commonly British Army or Royal Navy officers.

A desire for a more absolute form of rule and strengthened Crown authority developed in this period and is most evident after the succession of George III (1738-1820, r. 1760-1820). This expansion of royal prerogative was at times more strident than much of the broader ruling elite would have wished and led to parliamentary (especially among the Rockingham Whigs and their supporters), intellectual, and – admittedly, limited – popular anxiety over the erosion of 'English liberties' during the mid-18th century..

Assertions of Royal prerogative were more evident in military than civil matters due to the monarch's position within the British constitutional tradition, and its ability to be asserted more broadly in the Empire than domestically due to the lack of sufficiently representative and responsible institutions outside of Britain itself. This, in part, accounts for the great resentment of Hanoverian policies in the Thirteen Colonies that would eventually lead to revolution but effects were felt throughout the empire.[307] Moreover, military and imperial postings played a prominent

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[306] *East India Company Act, 1773*, *Archives of Empire*, vol. 1, eds. Mia Carter et al (London: Duke University Press, 2003), 31-39. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 41.

[307] Robert Harris, 'Hanover and the Public Sphere,' *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837*, eds. Brendan Simms et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 184, 188-189, 208-209. Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 536-

role within the Royal patronage network, with many parliamentarians fearing that such patronage would play a role in the development of a 'Hanoverian Tyranny.' Such fears impacted Carnatic civil-military relations in that critics of such developments in Britain supported the continuation of Company rule in India and the independence of the EIC armies so that the Crown could not add the Company's substantial administrative and military patronage network to its own. Huntington, addressing the 18th century British situation generally, characterizes this contest as a struggle between two civilian groups – Crown and Parliament – for control of the military. The inclusion of the EIC leadership, both in and out of country, as additional civilian blocs vying for control further complicates matters when considering colonial India prior to the mid-19th century. And although modern theorists and historians would see this dualistic characterization as naïve and overly simplistic, the reality of factionalism within both groups and cooperation between distinct factions across the Crown-Parliament divide only serve to further complicate the civil-military landscape in 18th century Britain and its empire.[308]

Perhaps the most obvious expression of Crown and Ministerial authority over Company affairs in this period was the office of Governor-General of Bengal, established by the abovementioned *Regulating Act*, which also established a Supreme Court for British India, established decision making by majority vote in the governing Council, gave the Governor-General a casting vote in case of a tie, and attempted to curb the prevalence of bribery by prohibiting the acceptance of 'gifts' from Indians by EIC civil, military, and judicial officials.[309] However, from a military standpoint the periodic appointment of Commanders-in-Chief East

538, 543-645, 551-553, 582, 584. Bryant, *Emergence*, 25. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 23-24, 28, 76-77.

[308]Bourke, *Empire*, 328, 360, 366. Bryant, *Emergence*, 25. Bowen, *Business of Empire*, 11-12. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 81. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 7, 23-24.

[309]*East India Company Act, 1773*, Ibid.

Indies for land forces was just as significant and would somewhat alleviate this fragmentation of authority, though it would remain a problem into the 19th century. At this time the men holding this office were usually British Army officers with Royal commissions who had transferred into Company service, yet nonetheless retained their royal commissions as well as their position in the British Army officer corps' hierarchy. These men, and lower ranking Royal officers who had transferred into EIC forces, legally held seniority over Company officers of equivalent rank, a source of significant resentment among the latter. Moreover, Royal officers, with their divided loyalties, were a source of anxiety for the Company leadership. Robert Clive noted this and advised the EIC always to have Company officers of higher rank present in India.[310] Additionally, as a group Royal officers in India seem to have seen themselves as beyond the authority of the EIC's civilian leaders by virtue of their Royal commissions.

An earlier dispute between Colonel John Adlercron (d. 1766) and Governor Pigot during the latter's first term in office clearly illustrates this. At the time of Adlercron's arrival, the Court of Directors issued orders to the Madras authorities to maintain amicable relations with the newly arrived Adlercron and his subordinates, stating that

> Colonel Adlercron [has been] appointed by His Majesty Commander in Chief, and you are to treat all the Officers of His Majesty's Forces in a Gentleman like and Friendly manner, and take the utmost care to promote and Cultivate a good understanding and Harmony between the King's and our own Troops, as the general good of the Service depends so greatly thereupon.[311]

Despite these injunctions from the Company, relations between Adlercron and the Madras Council quickly soured over the relative authorities of the Council and the Commander-in-Chief. In one notable instance Adlercron initially refused to dispatch any Royal forces on the 1756

[310]Robert Clive to Richard Smith, 28 March 1766, Orme OV 222 (p. 130), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.
[311]'The Company to Fort Saint George,' 2 March 1755, in Love, *Vestiges*, ii., 447.

expedition to Bengal because the Council wished to give the overall command to Clive, a Company officer. Ostensibly they wished to do so because Clive had more experience fighting in India, but Pigot and the Council also may have had misgivings about placing an expeditionary force of Company troops under a Royal officer who because of distance would be beyond the oversight of the Council. Although Adlercron eventually consented to three companies of Royal troops accompanying the expedition, they would do so without him accompanying them. Moreover, in a direct snub to the Company, they were to act as marines under the command of the accompanying Royal Navy forces, and not under Clive's command. The dispute slowed the dispatch of the expedition, and in John P. Lawford's estimation showed Adlercron to be 'petty and small-minded.'[312] Nevertheless, Royal officers' awareness and maintenance of their privileged position vis-à-vis Company officers, and the latter group's resentment of the former, is evidence of a degree of corporate consciousness on both sides, and would persist until Company forces were subsumed into the British Army in the wake of the Indian Rebellion of 1857.[313]

After the period in question, the Commander-in-Chief East Indies became a regularly-appointed position, though the extent of the authority of the officer holding it, as well as that of the subordinate commanders-in-chief for the presidencies of Madras and Bombay (already regular appointments themselves by the 1760s), was still open to debate as a result of continued ambiguity in the chain of command into the early 19th century. Moreover, the lack of any administration and communication infrastructure directly subordinate to the position limited the

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[312]James P. Lawford, *Britain's Army in India: From its Origins to the Conquest of Bengal* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).

[313]Philip J. Stern, *The Company State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 198. Bryant, *Emergence*, 78, 104. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 79-80.

effectiveness of its control beyond Bengal, with the EIC neglecting to establish a separate Military Department in London until 1807.[314]

The Royal Navy would continue to stand somewhat outside of this integrated British-EIC Indian civil-military structure, and as such was sometimes utilized by the government in Westminster to both monitor and circumvent the EIC's chief servants, especially when their foreign policy agendas were at odds. Additionally, as Nawab of the Carnatic, Muhammad Ali would seek to exploit divisions between the Company and their servants, and between the same servants and the ministry for his and his creditors' own ends. Conflicting military and foreign policy objectives and competition for revenue would impact the military in terms of dictating when to go to war and with whom, as well as introducing differing military objectives once wars began (as in the First Anglo-Mysore War). They would lead to factionalism in the Madras Council (especially whenever new governors were appointed). As we shall see, this confused and fragmented civil-military situation played a role in the tensions leading to the 1776 coup.

In the wake of the First Anglo-Mysore War, this situation was exacerbated by the return of the haughty and ill-tempered General Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783) to Madras in 1769, this time with an appointment from the Court of Directors as Commander-in-Chief in India, and with a mandate to reform and standardize Company military forces. However, his disagreeable personality and the intransigence of the Governor and Council when faced with outside interference undermined his efforts. This in part resulted from the fact that Coote was a British Army officer and had not climbed through the lower ranks of the EIC officer corps, and even with his Company appointment and Indian experience he was likely seen as a spy for the Ministry by the officials in India. His assertion of broad military independence as Commander-

[314]Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 48-52. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 7-8 [Note 5].

in-Chief led to a stalemate on reforms in Council.[315] The basis for the dispute between Coote and the Council was more over his powers as Commander-in-Chief than the reforms themselves. While Coote claimed absolute authority over all forces and military matters in India as his prerogative, this was not made clear in the wording of his commission. Moreover, the civilian Governors in India were similarly titled as commanders-in-chief of their respective garrisons as a means of giving them a degree of control over their own forces, and they used this to challenge his authority in a manner similar to Pigot's subsequent challenge to Fletcher. Eventually Coote, after moving on to Calcutta where he was equally unwelcome, returning to England. He had failed to implement meaningful military reform and further soured civil-military relations in the Carnatic.[316] For his part, Madras Governor Josias De Pre (1721-1780), in a letter to the retired Company servant and historian of early British India Robert Orme (1728-1801), expressed his view of Coote, stating that:

> [The Company] send us out an Officer, as Commander in Chief who, when he was in India before, Quarrelled continually with both Presidencies where he served. They raise his Ideas of his own Importance, give him *undefined powers*, and here he comes, sets himself above Controul [sic], quarrels with Us, and throws everything into confusion.[317] (my emphasis)

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[315]Colonel Stuart, who will be discussed at length later, is an interesting case as like Eyre Coote he held a King's commission in addition to his EIC commission, by the time of the coup both at the rank of lieutenant-colonel. See Chapter 4, Section 6. Andrew Stuart, 'A Letter to the Directors of the Honourable East India Company: The Conduct of Brigadier-General James Stuart at Madras' [December 1777], National Library of Scotland,' 48-49. E.W. Sheppard, *Coote Bahadur: A Life of Lieutenant-General Sir Eyre Coote, K.B.* (London: Werner Laurie, 1956), 100-103. *G*. J. Bryant, 'Coote, Sir Eyre,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view /printable/6243> (Accessed 3 June 2016).

[316]Sheppard, *Coote Bahadur*, 100-101. Bryant, 'Coote,' Ibid. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 41-42. Bryant, *Emergence*, 208-209.

[317]Du Pre succeeded Bourchier as governor, with a term lasting from 1770 through 1773. Josias du Pre to Robert Orme, 4 October 1770, Orme OV 30 (pp. 153-156), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. [317] Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 599. Sinharaja Tammita-Delgoda, 'Orme, Robert,' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eds. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/printable/20833 (Accessed 28 February 2016).

Beyond the attestation of Coote's well known self-importance and argumentative nature, of note here is Du Pre's objection to 'undefined' official powers, an issue caused by constitutional vagueness, which would continue throughout the period and would be utilized by civilians challenging military authority and (as we shall see in Sir Robert Fletcher's disputes with Lord Pigot) vice versa. This vagueness is one type of a variety of dangerous 'constitutional deficiencies,' as Huntington calls them, that represent a significant problem in civil-military relations and have often resulted in military leaders finding justifications for circumventing civilian authority, especially in 'strong army, weak state' situations. Such vagueness was common in the 18th century, when the civil-military paradigm had not yet taken on the dualistic form with which 20th century theorists are familiar. This is evident in both Britain itself and the EIC's India territories in the period, with serving officers frequently being elected to Parliament in the former and serving in administrative roles or on governing councils in the latter (as they did elsewhere in the empire).[318]

Constitutional vagueness like this, ubiquitous as it was in the 18th century, contributed to political factionalism. As we shall see this would occur at Madras during the coup, with the two opposing factions claiming justification for their actions partly based on their own interpretations of Madras's often-vague constitution and traditions. The inclusion of provisions aimed at preserving amicable civil-military relations, such as the Governor's position as commander-in-chief of the Fort Saint George garrison, is in line with what Huntington calls 'civilian control

[318]A classic example of the 'strong army, weak state' relationship in civil-military theory is that between the Empire of Japan's civilian government and their powerful Army and Navy. Both Huntington and Perlmutter show how these armed services, from the Meiji Era onward, consistently exploited both obviously-engineered and seemingly accidental deficiencies in the Meiji Constitution (1889) – which was itself largely based on the writings of German constitutional theorists – like this to accrue political power and not only circumvent, but outright dominate the country's civilian leadership by the Showa Era. Perlmutter characterizes this situation in Japan as one of the best examples of the strong army, weak state paradigm prior to 1945, and even goes so far as to name his chapter on the subject 'Japan: Soldiers Without a State.' Huntington, *The Soldier and the State,* 82-83, 99, 124. Perlmutter, *Military and Politics,* 69-71. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 2, 26-27, 75-77.

through constitutional form,' though this form of control is usually simply a result of the specific constitutional form simply happening to be in the interest of the most powerful group within a given polity. Moreover, though such control has historically usually applied to a democracy in this case it would be to the mercantile oligarchy of the top EIC servants in the Carnatic. Factionalism within this group would contribute to civil-military tensions throughout this period.[319]

A perplexing aspect of Coote's time in the Carnatic is the fact that significant reform may have been possible at this point had chance not intervened, as he was supposed to have been joined by three civilian commissioners from the Court of Directors led by the former Governor of Bengal, and currently an EIC Director and Member of Parliament, Henry Vansittart (1732-1770), who had been given a broad mandate to curb corruption among Company servants. Unfortunately, the ship carrying the delegation was lost at sea with all aboard off the coast of Mozambique. Without civilian counterparts of equal authority to support him and mitigate the vagueness of his own mandate, the Council could simply ignore Coote's efforts. This happenstance occurrence stymying the directives of Leadenhall Street presents a clear example of constitutional deficiencies at work at Madras.[320]

Attempts like this to insert Crown and ministerial authority into India were in part a result of ongoing Parliamentary anxiety over the near constant state of war in the EIC's dominions. The Company's shift from a commercial to a territorial regime beginning in the 1740s was the primary issue contributing to these anxieties. By the closing months of the First Anglo-Mysore War, Parliamentary scrutiny had understandably become even more intense, with events in South

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[319]Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 80, 82-83. Bhattacharya, 208, 210.
[320]Ainslie T. Embree, 'Vansittart, Henry,' in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, eds. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/28103 (Accessed 28 January 2017).

India attracting more and more criticism. Opposition MPs including Edmund Burke (1729-1797) were becoming increasingly concerned for the future of the British Empire in Asia and began to take an interest in Company affairs. It was at this point that parliamentarians who were not shareholders or EIC servants, with little or no interest of their own in the EIC, first began to explore the developing situation in the Carnatic in depth. They were soon to discover that the EIC entered the First Anglo-Mysore War due to the ambition of a foreign ruler – the Nawab – and the avarice of Company servants in India with little but disdain for the pronouncements of their erstwhile masters in Leadenhall Street.[321]

An alternative military avenue through which the Crown and ministry simultaneously attempted to intervene directly in Carnatic affairs was the Royal Navy. As a result of ex-EIC employee Sir John Macpherson's (c. 1745-1821) pleas on behalf of the Nawab – who sought Royal protection from the Company's pressure– in 1769 the Crown sent the Commander of the Royal Navy's East Indies station, Admiral Sir John Lindsey (1737-1788), to Muhammad Ali as a minister plenipotentiary. But as Du Pre and his subordinates refused to cooperate with him his negotiating position became untenable and he was soon recalled at the request of the Court of Directors, only to be replaced by another naval officer, Admiral Sir Robert Harland (1715-1784), in September of 1772.[322] Policy differences between the Madras Council and naval plenipotentiaries would continue under Harland and his successors, with the Nawab's attempts to gain favour with the latter evident in his bestowal of honours upon both Lindsey and Harland.

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[321]This shift by the EIC from a commercial to an expansionist focus, in addition to being noted by contemporaries like Clive, is attested over time and was observed by even early historians addressing the period. 156-158. Bourke, *Empire*, 329, 345, 352-353.

[322]Josias du Pre to Robert Orme, Ibid. Bhattacharya, 177-178. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 47. Paul J. deGategno, 'Macpherson, Sir John, first baronet (c. 1745-1821),' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed., <http://www.ocforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/17730>. Accessed 22 July 2016.

This was not the first dispute between Royal Navy officers and the Company, and as we shall see it was not the last.[323]

The Royal Navy occupies an interesting and unique position in the web of civil-military relationships in the Carnatic, just as it has historically in British civil-military relations. It is a truism of civil-military relations that at least as far as coups and coercion are concerned, navies are generally less of a threat to civilian rule than armies, as they are usually widely dispersed and their domestic bases of power and potential for internal force projection are generally confined to the littoral.[324] This, combined with the significantly greater cost involved in raising a navy quickly whenever war broke out, led some states in the early modern era to establish peacetime standing navies and to prefer them to large standing armies, as the later were more politically dangerous and less costly to raise when needed.[325] Perhaps no country has historically embraced this notion as wholeheartedly as Britain, with 18th century critics particularly decrying the

[323]Earlier examples notably include Admiral Edward Boscawen (1711-1751)'s appointment as overall commander of both army and naval forces on the Coromandel Coast for operations against Pondicherry during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748)/First Carnatic War. Fortescue notes that this innovative, unified operational command was the result of lessons learned from the disastrous results of the division of terrestrial and maritime command in the amphibious operations of the Cartagena Campaign (1741) in Spanish New Grenada (now Columbia). Fortescue, iii, 187-189, 191. S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar, 'Some Madras Monuments,' *Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume* [1939] (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1994), 70. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 48-50.

[324]Exceptions to this rule do exist, including the Spithead and Nore Royal Navy mutinies which had a political character (1797). The Royal Indian Navy Mutiny (1947), though initially over work conditions, took on a nationalist and anti-British character and was supported by the Indian Communist Party, though it never gained the support of the Congress Party or the Muslim League. Other notable 20th century examples include the politically active role taken by Russian sailors in the early 20th century – notably in the Kronstadt Mutinies/Rebellions (1904, 1917, 1921) – and the role played by Imperial Japanese Navy militarists in the early Showa Period (1926-1989) – notably during the 'May 25th Incident' (1932) which culminated in the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi (1855-1932). These cases show that both naval officers and regular sailors could take violent political action, and that military elements subscribing to both radical and conservative causes have done so. For a scholarly exploration of the Spithead and Nore Rebellions see Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall, *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2011).

[325]In addition to early modern Britain, this was evident in the Netherlands and in some Baltic navies. Jan Glete has effectively argued that the technological costs and the necessity of maritime expertise among naval officers and men led to an early military revolution which gradually transformed late medieval squadrons into late-17th century battlefleets, with the increased expense leading to taxation reforms and state development in Europe. See Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650: Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe* (London: Routledge, 1999).

expansion of the peacetime army under the Hanoverians as unnecessary and a potential instrument of tyranny, while characterizing a strong navy as the ideal means of defending their island realm. The House of Hanover's early use of military force in Britain both directly during the Jacobite Rebellions of 1715 and subsequently as shows of force to dissuade rebellious activity in London, Oxford, and elsewhere no doubt contributed to these sentiments.[326]

Brendan Simms discusses the tensions between Britain's continental and imperial politico-military agendas in the 18th century and the subsequent historiography of the topic at length in *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (2007). Though he challenges the traditional characterization of 17-20th century Britain as a latter-day thalassocracy and focuses on the country's political and military engagement in Europe throughout the work (including significant expansion of the Army, notably under Whig parliamentary leadership), he nonetheless acknowledges the place the Royal Navy had in the minds of many Britons of the time and their aversion to a standing army.[327]

Even though the Royal Navy and naval patronage would come to play a significant role in Crown and Parliamentary politics, in historical context the widespread appeal of this view at the time makes sense when one considers that Oliver Cromwell, the New Model Army, and the tyranny of the Protectorate occurred little more than a century prior to the events discussed in this work. Because of these misgivings, until the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) the British Army remained small – and even during the wars its growth was controlled – and numerous Parliamentary attempts were made to limit its political power and patronage network.[328]

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[326]Alan Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-1763* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 5-6. Harris, 'Hanover,' 188. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 109, 154. Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 48-49.
[327]Simms, *Three Victories,* 75, 104-105, 222-223, 259 327-328.
[328]Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline*, 3-5.

Although direct military intervention by the Crown in South India had occurred prior to the 1st Anglo-Mysore War, and Royal regiments and officers would come to play a critical role in the region later in the 18th century, from the time of the conflict through to the aftermath of the 1776 Coup the Royal Navy represented the only significant Crown military force in or around the Carnatic, and as such the political actions of their officers are worth considering.

A notable early example of naval interference in the period in question is Commodore Lindsey's insistence at the behest of the Nawab in 1770 that Madras commit its forces to another war with Haidar Ali. This was not long after a fiscally and militarily exhausting war and the peace treaty the latter had imposed on the Council, and despite the military alliance and provisions for mutual defence with Mysore the treaty had established. Considering the small account this proposal took of the political and military situation of the Carnatic at the time, and the fact that it violated the wishes of the Ministry and Leadenhall Street, it is no wonder that the Company's servants opposed Lindsey. Taking these Naval interventions into consideration, G.J. Bryant asserts that the government's attempts to insert Royal Navy officers into Madras politics were not only an attempt to play an active role in relations with country powers, but also to investigate the Company's relationship with the Nawab and to 'determine the responsibility for the war of 1767-9.' When one considers their conduct during the war and their ongoing dubious financial dealings with the Nawab, the Council understandably resented this intrusion into their affairs, and complained that it undermined their military authority. Notwithstanding this point, the Ministry could easily have argued that the Company had done more damage to its military reputation by its own actions during the war than Lindsey's intervention ever could have.

Nevertheless, the Navy would remain a small put significant player in the civil-military structure of the Carnatic and would play a role in the events of the coup of 1776.[329]

In addition to the Madras establishment's resentment of naval interference in their domain, there was also strong inter-service rivalry as is so often the case in military history. One instance where this is evident is in a 1772 letter from Sir Robert Fletcher to Orme, in which he reveals not only his resentment of the minister plenipotentiary (at that time, still Lindsey) intervening in Company affairs, but also his disdain for the naval presence in the region. He questions the usefulness of a mere four ships-of-the-line against the French squadron at Mauritius in the event of a war, arguing that such a small fleet could easily be avoided when attempting to land forces on the long Coromandel Coast, and asserts 'that four [more] Battalions of Sepoys wou'd [sic] be a better Security.'[330] Such rivalry can be seen as an expression of corporate identity, which Huntington sees as part of a profession's tendency to '… protect itself against outsiders who would claim professional competence because of achievements or attributes in other fields,' with the case in dispute here being whether naval or military force could more effectively fend off a French attack.[331] However, it goes without saying that such an expansion of the army and the new commands that would result would also no doubt improve the career opportunities of an ambitious officer like Fletcher. Careerism is just as much a motivation as any rivalry based on corporate identity. Such attitudes are far from unique to the Company Raj and persist to this day, with inter-service rivalries in national security states often following a similar model, where competition for resources and access to state leaders is considered a zero-

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[329]Josias du Pre to Robert Orme, Ibid. John Lindsay to Robert Orme, 1 September 1770, Orme OV 30 (pp. 141-144), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bryant, *Emergence*, 209. Bhattacharya, 178. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 598-599.
[330]Robert Fletcher to Robert Orme, 12 February 1772, Orme OV 30 (pp. 161-164 [162]), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 73.
[331]Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 10.

sum game where personal advancement is as much at stake as corporate expansion and prestige. One can understand the civil-military predicament of the Presidency's civilian leadership, with their subordinate Company forces looking out for their own interests while Royal Navy and British Army officers appointed from above seek to interfere with and undermine the policies of the Madras Government.[332]

In addition to the tension between Royal officers and the Company discussed above, the EIC Directors found themselves under increasing pressure from Parliament to reform their management in India and curb factionalism among the Proprietors and Directors in London. This pressure came in multiple forms, including proposals for breaking the EIC's monopoly, There were threats raised in Parliament to constrain the annual dividend (which could also simply have been a 'money grab') and MPs also made noises that that conquered territories – and therefore revenue – belonged to the Crown. The government however did not show much interest in asserting such rights.[333] One petition to end the monopoly was submitted to Parliament from 'the inhabitants of Ilminster' and considered on December 16th, 1768, but after a brief discussion the motion to bring up the petition was rejected. It is notable that Henry Vansittart, at the time MP for Reading, played a significant part in this discussion, as he was concurrently serving as an EIC director and had previously served as the second Governor of Bengal.[334] Moreover, after the First Anglo-Mysore War, the Court of Directors also seems to have looked less favourably on Madras's civilian leadership. This is understandable, considering how they had undermined their own military experts, and this led some to believe that Leadenhall Street's favour had shifted toward the military leadership, and with the enlarged army taking advantage of this to act against

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[332]Heinemann-Grüder, 'Patterns,' 244-45.
[333]Bourke, *Empire*, 351-352. Bryant, *Emergence*, 160-161.
[334]Henry Cavendish, *Cavendish Debates of the House of Commons*, I, ed. J. Wright (London: Longman & co., 1841), pp. 105-106.

their in-country civilian masters in pursuit of their own interests.[335] An extensive general debate on this topic was held in the House of Commons on February 27th, 1769 when the Prime Minister, Lord North, introduced a motion regarding Company revenues and obligations to the Crown. In return for continuing the Company's payments of £400,000 per annum to the government for a further five years, regulating the EIC's annual dividend during that time, and fixing the interest rate for future loans to the government from the Company at two percent per annum, this motion allowed the Company to continue to hold its lands and revenues in India. And though the motion passed, the debate spoke to both stakeholder and public anxiety over the precarious position of the EIC at the time, with the editor of the *Cavendish Parliamentary Debates* noting in the margins how Company stocks' value fell by 60% in the coming months due to the 'bad news' from the subcontinent as the First Anglo-Mysore War came to a close. The Company in London's acknowledgment of a more active political role for the military can be construed as indicative of their concern for what might later be described as Anglo-Indian militarism.[336]

This lack of both Company and Parliamentary confidence in the Madras Council's leadership, with attempts made by Du Pre at fiscal and military restraint in the wake of the First Anglo-Mysore War notwithstanding, was shown to be well founded by the Nawab and his creditors' easy manipulation of the Madras authorities which resulted in the subsequent invasions of Thanjavur.[337] Brigadier General Joseph Smith seems to have played a strange role in this

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[335]Bryant, *Emergence*, 210. Cavendish, *Debates*, 251, 262, 266.

[336]For discussion of Peers's idea of Anglo-Indian militarism see Chapter 1, Section 3, above. See also Douglas Peers, *Between Mars and Mammon: Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in India 1819-1835* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995). Cavendish, *Debates*, 251-266 [251, 262, 266]. Travers notes that as the value of Company stock slipped 1769, panic over lost profits due to events in Madras contributed to the Directors' push for increased oversight of revenue collection in Bengal. Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteen-Century India: The British In Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 77. See also Bowen, *Business of Empire,* 58. Bourke, *Empire*, 355-356.

[337]For discussion of Du Pre's attempted restraint, see Chapter 4, Section 3, below. Bryant, *Emergence*, 214.

interlude before his retirement. He was generally well regarded by his officers and men, but he also did not antagonize the civilian leadership as Coote had and Fletcher would. Because of this he appears in the historical narrative of the 1760s-1770s as a force for stability and order in the Carnatic, at least in part due to his largely apolitical stance. This sheen of propriety is, however, somewhat tarnished by Smith's command of both invasions of Thanjavur. Furthermore, he surely knew of the Nawab and Council's fiscal motivations. He also had previously received a gift from the Nawab for his services, and in 1775 was awarded an annual pension of 3750 pagodas by the same, though allegedly he never received it.[338]

The uniqueness of the civil-military situation in the Carnatic in the 1770s is in part due to the sustained parallelism and fiscal-military hybridity discussed above. This resulted from the constitutional deficiencies discussed previously and the multiple civil-military hierarchies in place to exercise control, both of which were aggravated by the great distance between Madras and London and the considerable time it took for news of events to travel between them. The multipolar nature of politico-military authority both as it was exercised in the Carnatic and in the divisions between Parliament and Leadenhall Street in London contributed to inter-service rivalries in the Carnatic, and complicated civilian control of the military in the Madras Presidency.

4.3 Civil-Military Antagonism, 1775-1776

The situation worsened when Sir Robert Fletcher (c. 1738-1776) replaced Smith following the latter's second retirement as Commander-in-Chief in the Carnatic, simultaneously also replacing Smith as third in the order of precedence of the Madras Council on October 16th,

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[338]For discussion of civil-military theory and the issues surrounding 'professionalism' and 'modernity' see Chapter 1, Section 3. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 620. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 2, 65, 396. FSGC, 25 May 1770, BL, IOR/P/336/73.

1775. One can only speculate that civil-military relations in the region may never have become so acrimonious had the well-regarded, amiable and somewhat more politically pliable Smith not retired.[339]

A career officer with a checkered past, Fletcher had initially been a writer for the EIC at Madras in 1757, but like many others in those turbulent times he soon transferred to the Company's military service. While a lieutenant Fletcher was dismissed from Company service, reportedly for 'writing an insolent letter to the Government,' though the exact meaning of this is vague, and Eyre Coote soon brought Fletcher back into EIC army service.[340] Having briefly returned to Britain in 1763 and been knighted for gallantry, his record of indiscipline continued with his return to the subcontinent, this time to Bengal. In one notable example from 1765, Fletcher violated orders not to record sensitive EIC information, in this case details of military operations, in letters to non-servants, and he was reprimanded for this by the Court of Directors. Furthermore, the same letter discusses an occasion when, upon assuming a temporary command, Fletcher acted rashly. The Directors ascribed to his 'ardent desire of effecting something that might give him an éclat before he should be obliged to yield the command to another, a spirit very laudable when tempered with prudence, but most dangerous to our affairs if exerted for the sole purpose of gaining reputation or wealth.'[341] This latter episode, along with his acceptance of a 'present' of one lakh of rupees from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II (1728-1806) in the same year, shows Fletcher's acquisitive and self-aggrandizing tendencies.[342]

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[339]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 74-75.
[340]C.S. Srinivasachari, ed., *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 491 [Note 5]. J.A. Cannon, 'Fletcher,' Ibid.
[341]Ct. to FW, 19 February 1766, *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], ed. C.S. Srinivasachari, Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 153, 161. Cannon, 'Fletcher,' Ibid.
[342]P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British In Bengal in the Eighteenth century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 177, 208-213. Robert Clive to Robert Fletcher, 6 August 1765, NLW, Clive MSS., 219, pp. 77.

Despite favour from the Council and a rapid series of promotions (Major in 1764 and Lieutenant-Colonel only a year later), Fletcher was once again dismissed from service by a court martial while in Bengal. This resulted from his participation in the abortive mutiny against Clive over the withdrawal of *batta*, a form of additional pay initially intended as a field allowance or compensation for men serving beyond the province's borders and/or during wartime, but which had come to be taken for granted by the Bengal Army. However, despite these repeated transgressions he was again reinstated and transferred to Madras.[343]

In the Carnatic Sir Robert Fletcher's assertions of military prerogative did not begin with his animosity towards Lord Pigot. Indeed, he had frequently argued with Governor Du Pre over military independence while briefly serving as Commander-in-Chief during the latter's term in office. One issue which no doubt came up considering Fletcher's experiences in Bengal was Du Pre's withdrawal of *batta* from the Madras Army as a cost-saving measure in the wake of the First Anglo-Mysore War, but there were others issues as well. On the occasion of his promotion to this command in 1772, Fletcher made his intentions clear in a letter to Orme, expressing distaste for Du Pre's domination of the Madras government and excitedly requesting that Orme use his influence to 'get [him] a King's Commission as Commander in Chief,' presumably to establish a better position (similar to though less broadly empowered than that held by Eyre Coote in 1769-1771) from which he could challenge the Governor's authority in military

[343]FW to Ct., 26 November 1764, *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], ed. C.S. Srinivasachari, Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 275 [54]. Ct. to FW, 17 May 1766, *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], ed. C.S. Srinivasachari, Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 177 [44]. FW to Ct., 6 September 1766, *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], ed. C.S. Srinivasachari, Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 429 [30]. FW to Ct., 28 November 1766, *Fort William – India House Correspondence*, vol. IV [1764-1766], ed. C.S. Srinivasachari, Indian Records Series (Delhi: Civil Lines, 1962), 454 [86]. Cannon, 'Fletcher,' Ibid. Love, *Vestiges*, iii., 73. Bhattacharya, 179-182. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline*, 102-167.

matters.[344] Though he did not receive a King's commission, his challenges to Du Pre continued nonetheless and culminated with the Governor dismissing him from the Council, calling Smith back to resume command, and all but exiling Fletcher to Trinchinopoly, from whence the volatile officer withdrew to England for a time, ostensibly to fulfil his Parliamentary duties. Within two years, however, he would return to the Carnatic and again take up command of all EIC forces on the Coromandel Coast.[345]

As a friend of Clive, Pigot may have been aware of Fletcher's record of insubordination and penchant for combativeness, and perhaps this was why he at first treated him with deference on military matters. This even extended to the primary reason behind Pigot's appointment, as the Governor initially left the military aspects of the hand-over of Thanjavur to Fletcher, with the latter cooperating in this as far as it benefitted the military, particularly by approving the Raja's contribution of funds to support an EIC garrison in Thanjavur. This deference, however, would quickly evaporate as Fletcher began to show his alignment with Benfield and the Nawab's other creditors[346]

Having hitherto received tacit support for his actions regarding the Raja's restoration, Pigot first ran into significant opposition in Council on March 25th, 1776, when attempting to organize an expedition in force to Thanjavur. Although Mackay and Jourdan objected to some earlier resolutions, the first opposition that is interesting from a civil-military perspective occurred when they, along with Sir Robert Fletcher, objected to a resolution brought forward by

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[344]Sir Robert Fletcher's charges against Mr. Dupre, 1763, IOR/H/84 (pp 9-10), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, iii., 73-74. See Chapter 4, Section 2 regarding Coote. Robert Fletcher to Robert Orme, 30 September 1772, Orme OV 30 (pp. 193-194), European Language Manuscripts, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Bryant, *Emergence*, 211, 214.

[345]Smith resumed his position as Commander-in-Chief from 1773-1775. Sir Robert Fletcher's charges, ibid. Fortescue, II, 137-139. Love, *Vestiges*, iii., 74, 66. K.R.D. Subramanian, *Maratha Rajas,* 61-62. J.A. Cannon, 'Fletcher,' Ibid.

[346]Alexander Dalrymple to the Court of Directors [Alexandria, 19 January 1777], National Library of Scotland, 2. Bhattacharya, 204.

Pigot. In it the Governor asserted that his constitutionally vague position as Commander-in-Chief of the Madras garrison (an appointment held by all EIC presidency governors) also made him the commander of all Company forces stationed at any fort or town throughout the Presidency. Fletcher, seeing this as a direct attack on his position as Commander-in-Chief, and therefore an affront to military prerogative, asserted that this resolution ran contrary to the constitution and traditions of Madras and its army. However, Fletcher also likely had financial and indeed venal motives for objecting to the resolution, as did his colleagues Jourdan and Mackay.[347] Bhattacharya points out that in 1771 the Company had prohibited active military officers from making loans to Indian princes, stating that '[the] Directors were aware that it was a very great temptation for the commanding officer, when offered very high rates of interest, to lend money against lands that lay within the range of his guns or the limits of his command.' Nevertheless, both Fletcher's actions and words show that he was at the very least aware of his colleagues' interest in the Nawab's debt, and along with several other Council members may even have accepted bribes from Muhammad Ali. Nevertheless, at this early stage Pigot still had the support of the majority in Council and the resolution carried.[348]

Mackay outlined his objections to the now-passed resolution on March 29th, 1776. Mackay argued for a deputation of Councillors to be sent with Pigot to Thanjavur and to have a part in any decisions made while there, likely in an attempt to place as many members with interest in the Nawab's debts within it as possible as a means of securing their revenues. He also stated that it would be proper to send Fletcher along in command of the expedition's military component and objected to Pigot's attempt to take on the powers of a commander-in-chief, possibly as a means of hindering Pigot's ability to enforce his directives militarily in Thanjavur

[347]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 65, 100, 224.
[348]Dalrymple, Alexandria, 5. Bhattacharya, 225-226, 231. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 224.

but also seemingly as a matter of principle. Bhattacharya states that in Mackay's opinion, the Governor's role as commander-in-chief of the Fort St. George garrison was a 'complimentary' one, owing to the fact that a military commander-in-chief was also always appointed. He goes on to point out that despite this fact, in reality '[t]he Company of course was itself unclear about the delineations of command' – as discussed above a not uncommon problem in 18th century civil-military relations. Bhattacharya also notes that Jourdan's arguments were for the most part similar to Mackay's.[349]

A similar dispute over the relative powers of the military commander-in-chief and the civilian governor had occurred in 1769 during Eyre Coote's brief and unsuccessful interlude as Commander-in-Chief for India from 1769-1771. Addressing the early 19th century, Peers notes that this debate continued well after the 1770s with different accommodations being reached at each presidency, and discussion focusing on the actual extent of the garrison itself in terms of soldiers and their deployment. Indeed, tensions over this division of power continued into the 20th century, with a dispute between Commander-in-Chief, India Lord Kitchener (1850-1916) and the Viceroy, Lord Curzon (1850-1925, v. 1899-1905) over civilian control of Indian Army transport and logistics eventually leading to the latter's resignation. However, at the time in question Mackay's position in the debate seems not to have been widely supported. Peers also notes that this debate was sometimes sidestepped by the appointment of one man as both Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, an arrangement which occurred most notably during Lord Cornwallis and the Marquess of Hastings's terms in office from 1786-1793 and

[349]See Chapter 4, Section 2, above. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 5. Bhattacharya, 209-210.

1813-1823 respectively. Coote's objection is understandable from a military perspective, considering his authority could thereby be circumvented.[350]

Considering Pigot's still-firm support in Council at this point, Fletcher's brazen opposition may appear somewhat surprising even when one considers his past transgressions. As a result, Bhattacharya speculates that Fletcher's personal dislike of Pigot may have resulted from the latter's friendship with Clive, the man who had previously dismissed Fletcher from the service in Bengal.[351] Moreover, the hesitation of other creditors of the Nawab to strongly oppose Pigot's agenda makes it possible that Fletcher was indeed at this point motivated by professional grievance as the ranking military officer in the Carnatic. Fletcher's lack of hesitation is again demonstrated in his support of Charles Floyer's proposal on June 13th, 1776, that the latter be allowed to abstain from a vote regarding Paul Benfield's claims to land revenues in Thanjavur through the Nawab, as he had only just arrived in India. As Floyer's abstention from this vote would have given Stratton, Fletcher, and Lord Pigot's other opponents the majority, it was in all of their interests to support Floyer's proposal, but none of them openly did so save the combative Fletcher.[352] Additionally, Bryant asserts that Fletcher may have known how tenuous Pigot's support was within the Court of Directors, and may not have acted so brazenly had the new governor had more backing from the Directors, again demonstrating the difficulty of maintaining civilian control of the military in a factionalized, multipolar political environment. He further speculates that Fletcher's ill health may have played a role, considering that as he was suffering from advanced tuberculosis and may have thought he was dying. If this was the case Fletcher

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[350]Dalrymple, Alexandria, 5. See Chapter 4, Section 2, regarding Coote. Peers, *Mars and Mammon*, 66-67. T.A. Heathcote, *The British Field Marshals, 1736-1997: A Biographical Dictionary* (Barnsley: South Yorkshire, 1999), 194. Bhattacharya, 209-210.
[351]Bhattacharya, 226. Cannon, 'Fletcher, Sir Robert,' ibid.
[352]Charles Floyer, *Mr. Floyer's Case in the Late Disputes at Madras* (London, 1779?), ECCO, 5.

could have thought he had nothing to lose by taking a stand, and from a corporate point of view something to gain for the army.[353]

Another interesting possibility is that Fletcher may have in part been acting on a belief that it was his duty to defend the constitution and traditions of Madras. In *Mr. Floyer's Case in the Late Disputes at Madras* (1779?), a document submitted to the Court of King's Bench defending Charles Floyer's (1738-1782) conduct at Madras during Pigot's presidency and the rule of the majority, the author (possibly Floyer himself) argues that as a result of Lord Pigot's actions '… almost every succeeding day produced additional danger to the constitutional rights of the Company's government at Fort Saint George, until it became necessary to restrain the author of such impending evils.'[354] And though this statement is seemingly intended to represent the views of Floyer and the majority generally, the author also goes out of his way to mention Fletcher specifically on multiple occasions, and may have had an interest in preserving the dead officer's reputation. Nonetheless, it is interesting to consider whether Fletcher was acting out of a sense of duty to defend the constitution of Madras, and if so whether this was his duty as a councillor or as a soldier? For if he was motivated by the latter, and if Stuart and his subordinates acted against Lord Pigot for similar reasons, then military involvement in the coup can be characterized as an interventionist 'praetorian' act in the sense developed by Amos Perlmutter, whose own criteria for praetorian actors (military officer, high ranking, and in a society where the state lacks legitimacy and relies on armed force to sustain its rule) fits the military component of the coup plotters perfectly. Such a perception of the military by its own officers as a caretaker of the EIC settlements' constitutions would both indicate a developing corporate identity and be in line with the developing ideology of an Anglo-Indian 'garrison state' as discussed by Peers in

[353]Bryant, *Emergence*, 214. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 80-83. Cannon, 'Fletcher,' Ibid.
[354]Floyer, *Mr. Floyer's Case*, 13.

relation to the early 19th century. Philip Stern has also discussed EIC servants desire to protect their own, and the Company's interests in terms of an ideology of 'corporate sovereignty,' encompassing both civil and military servants and eschewing the ideas of the 'institutional school' of civil-military theory propounded by Perlmutter and Huntington.[355]

Tension between the Governor and Commander-in-Chief continued to grow. Fletcher reiterated his objections to Pigot assuming the command of military troops when in April the Governor signed orders regarding troop dispositions in the Carnatic, which Fletcher saw as an affront not only to himself but also to his subordinate officers. Pigot again offended Fletcher on April 13th, 1776 when he directly ordered Captain Mackenzie and the 6th Sepoy Battalion to protect the Raja's men charged with collecting revenues, circumventing the normal chain of command by ignoring Mackenzie's commanding officer, Colonel Harper. One can speculate that it was in no way incidental that this final act of civilian overreach also involved the revenues of Thanjavur, which were claimed by the Nawab.[356]

Once the majority party began acting openly against Pigot and the Court of Directors' plan, the military actors also began to shed their veneer of neutrality. This is first evident in Fletcher's attempt to replace Colonel Harper and install Colonel James Stuart as commander at Thanjavur at the latter's request, in what was clearly an attempt to gain control of revenue collection in favour of the Nawab's creditors.[357] Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808) – a noted geographer, hydrographer, and Madras Councillor who had benefitted from Pigot's patronage –

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[355]Floyer, *Mr. Floyer's Case,* 5, 13. See Amos Perlmutter, 'The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities,' *Comparative Politics* 1, No. 3 (April 1969), pp. 382-404. Perlmutter, *Military and Politics*, 12-13. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 17-19. Peers, *Mars and Mammon*, 3-4, 7, 45-46. See also Philip J. Stern, *The Company State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[356]Bhattacharya, 217, 222.
[357]William Henry Ashhurst, Justice of the King's Bench, *The King against Stratton: Judgement of the Court* (20 December 1779), pp. 2, Court of King's Bench (1779), Advocates Library, National Library of Scotland. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 27-28. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 119. Bhattacharya, 246, 248.

responded in support of the Governor by asserting that Stuart had disobeyed Fletcher's own orders by asking to assume command at Thanjavur. As a subordinate officer he had no right to decide on his own command, insinuating that his request may have been politically and not militarily motivated. Bhattacharya points out that Stuart's motivation was neither a military nor a political matter, but a personal and financial one, and is supported in this by Dalrymple. Indeed, the latter notes that this change in command would reduce the number of European soldiers under Stuart's command from a battalion at his current post of Vellore, a position of critical importance in the event of war with Mysore, to a mere three companies at the relatively safe posting of Thanjavur, and therefore represented a step-down in importance and prestige.[358]

The appointment of Stuart to Thanjavur ultimately became the tipping point which precipitated the coup, with Pigot taking a stand on the matter in Council on August 19th, 1776 and refusing to appoint Stuart to the command. The next day, the majority on the Council, ignored his objections and proceeded to draft a letter, signed by Councillors George Stratton (c. 1734-1800) and Henry Brooke (1725-1786), ordering Stuart to take the command despite Lord Pigot and the minority's objections. The majority having signed it, Pigot quickly seized the letter before the secretary could add his signature and accused Stratton and Brooke of subverting the government's authority.[359] In response the majority secretly composed a letter of protest, which

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[358]Fletcher was already quite ill at this point, but Dalrymple argues that members of the majority kept him appraised of developments in Council, even asserting that at one point they adjourned specifically to confer with him and seek his opinion regarding the debate over Stuart's appointment to Thanjavur. If true, this illustrates a high degree of influence exercised by Fletcher in Council, especially regarding military matters. Such assertions, however, could simply be an attempt by the author to portray Fletcher as some sort of evil mastermind, with the added benefit of placing control of the conspiracy in the hands of a military officer who being dead, could not testify otherwise, and thereby painting the 'revolution' at Madras as a military coup. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 7-8. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 84, 87, 89-90. Bhattacharya, 248. Andrew S. Cook, 'Dalrymple, Alexander (1737–1808)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy .lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/7044>. [Accessed 13 June 2017]. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 5-6. Perlmutter, *Military and Politics*, 12.

[359]Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 2-3. Mansfield, 'Charge to the Jury,' 4. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 27-28. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 8-9. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 86, 97. Bhattacharya, 249-250.

they circulated among the Councillors through a notary and also sent to Admiral Sir Edward Hughes (c. 1720-1794), then commander of the Royal Navy's East Indies Station. They also delivered the letter to the captain of a departing East Indiaman and distributed it to the military officers of the garrison. A further letter justifying their position was sent to Governor-General Hastings in Bengal. Pigot accused the majority of fomenting military rebellion, suspended all those who had signed the letter from Council, and ordered Fletcher's arrest.[360]

Although President and Council coming to such an impasse was in no way the norm within the EIC at the time, it was not a complete anomaly, and contemporary precedents do exist. Bengal Governor Henry Vansittart had found himself in a similar situation as the increasingly alienated Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim, attempted to levy taxes on all European trade in his domain as a means of increasing his revenue. Attempting to ameliorate both parties' grievances and prevent further crisis, in early 1763 the Governor negotiated a compromise. Under it, the Nawab could tax inland trade but not incoming overseas trade. This seemingly measured compromise, however, was undermined by the fact that the majority of Vansittart's own council had personal fiscal interests in inland trade, and, therefore, did not support the compromise and forced the abrogation of the treaty – ultimately leading to open conflict with Mir Qasim. Had Vansittart ignored the majority's actions, pressed ahead with his agreement with the Nawab of Bengal, and taken steps to limit his opponents' political authority or eject them from Council, it is possible to imagine a similar, near-contemporary coup in Calcutta, but that is mere speculation. The fact that Eyre Coote had given up his command in Bengal and left for England

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[360]Dalrymple argues that Stuart intentionally delayed the arrest of Fletcher so that it would never take place owing to the success of the coup. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 9, 10. Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 2-3. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 4, 27-28. Bhattacharya, 250-251. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 102.

the previous year no doubt contributed to relatively amicable civil-military relations during the crisis in Bengal.[361]

Unfortunately, this was not the case at Madras in the mid-1770s, where the cantankerous Fletcher and the combative Stuart dominated the military establishment. At this point Colonel Stuart seems to have been the key to either faction's success according to Bhattacharya, putting a prominent military man in the same decisive role they so often play in coups and revolutions precipitated by one portion of a factionalized civilian leadership against the other.[362] Though the majority in the governing, largely civilian Council would orchestrate the coup and govern in Pigot's stead after his imprisonment, it was the military (and particularly a small cabal of officers surrounding Stuart)– who would capture and spirit away Pigot, facilitate the ousting of his supporters, and thereby ensure the compliance of the Presidency's civil service, who for the most part saw the seizure of power as illegitimate. As we shall see these actions themselves do not represent a full breakdown of civilian control of the military, but merely a danger inherent in to any polity with factions vying for political authority – namely, that military leadership, or a portion of the military leadership, can shift its loyalty from one civilian group within the polity to another to suit its own ends. The relatively small size of the political and military elites in an 18th century colonial environment (at most 50 senior officers and officials at Madras during the period in question), when combined with the realities of distance from the imperial metropole and the necessity of maintaining rule by force, may make colonial environments more susceptible to such occurrences.[363]

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[361]For discussion of Mir Qasim's relations with the EIC in Bengal see Chapter 2, Section 6, above. E. Stephenson to Richard Smith, December 1763, MSS EUR Orme OV 21/24, OIOC. Peers, 'Military Revolution,' 312-314. Bryant, 'Coote, Sir Eyre.'
[362]Bhattacharya, 251.
[363]Bryant, *Emergence*, 214. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 80.

Fletcher's challenge to Lord Pigot and willingness to play both sides of the developing dispute over Thanjavur to the benefit of the army is indicative of some level of corporate awareness among the EIC officer corps in the Madras Presidency. The fact that his actions were in his own interest in terms of authority as much as that of the officer corps and army constitutionally means that any assertion of a corporate identity in the Madras Army at this time must come with a number of caveats. It is nonetheless somewhat mitigated by Fletcher's increasingly ill health and the likelihood that his career and life would soon be over. Moreover, individual careerism and corporate self-interest need not be mutually exclusive. Governor Pigot's encroachments on military prerogative in the Carnatic serve to demonstrate a degree of military self-awareness as well as an awareness of the politicized, increasingly praetorian nature of the EIC Army officer corps in South India among at least a portion of the Madras establishment's civilian elite.

4.4 Military Complicity, 1776-1777

Stuart showed his allegiance quickly as the coup progressed, with the military playing a critical role in Pigot's ousting. Siding with the majority, Stuart soon received orders from the group, which included his commander-in-chief and immediate military superior, Sir Robert Fletcher. According to Stuart's own recollection, Fletcher instructed him to take temporary command of the army due to his superior's ill health, and to secure for the majority 'possession of the fort house, fortress, and garrison of Fort St. George, and to arrest the person of Lord Pigot the Governor.' He was further specifically and deliberately ordered to take command of the Madras garrison, arguably to protect against a (possibly intentionally) vague 'present danger.'[364]

[364] Fort Saint George to the Company, 24 September 1776, IOR/P/336/81, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 4-5, 64.

In addition to illustrating Fletcher's final step into open military rebellion against the Governor, the specific appointment of Stuart to command of the garrison was an obvious attempt to circumvent Pigot's role as commander-in-chief of the garrison in a manner seemingly acceptable to the EIC army's officers and men in and around Madras, judging by the general lack of military resistance to Stuart assuming command. Moreover, the fact that Fletcher himself sided with the majority may have been enough to sway many officers at this point. Considering what was to come, it is ironic that Pigot had simultaneously ordered Stuart to take command of all EIC forces under Madras's authority, not knowing that the majority was making him a similar offer of authority. The main difference between the two offers was that while the Governor's offer to Stuart was the position of Commander-in-Chief itself, the majority merely offered him a temporary posting in that role during Fletcher's illness. The fact that he chose to support the party whose posting was less immediately advantageous to his career is interesting and was construed as an indication of his decision being based on principle in the arguments of his brother. Yet considering Fletcher's failing health at the time and the fact that Stuart was already appointed as his successor, the offers were essentially the same. Moreover, his decision to side with the majority might have been motivated by his closeness to the interests of the Nawab and his creditors.[365]

Having received these orders Stuart immediately put them into action. Stuart's key role in the coup is such that he and his military associates cannot avoid culpability. Indeed, Andrews Stuart, in his defense of his brother, notes that Stuart, Lieutenant-Colonel James Eidingtoun, Captain Arthur Lysaght, and Major Matthew Horne together planned and carried out the abduction and imprisonment of Lord Pigot. Moreover, Andrew attests, presumably from he and

[365]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 6-7, 63-64.

his brother's correspondence at the time, that James was proud of his conduct during the coup, especially regarding its complete bloodlessness, a result which he argues would not have occurred had Pigot suppressed the majority.[366]

Paul Benfield covertly assisted the plotters, and even made his carriage and a servant available to Stuart to help in the arrest and imprisonment of Lord Pigot. In the evening on August 24th, 1776 Pigot was abducted from his own carriage while riding from the fort to the Company's garden house. Stuart, who was riding with Pigot in the carriage – ostensibly to supper – had his subordinates Eidingtoun and Lysaght approach Pigot from both sides of the carriage with weapons drawn, force him into Benfield's carriage, and with a troop of armed sepoys as escorts spirit him to Horne's house at St. Thomas's Mount where he was to be imprisoned. [367] The majority's account of these events, signed by Stratton, Brooke, Fletcher, Floyer, Palmer, Jourdan, and Mackay was sent to the Court of Directors on 24 September 1776. It singled out Stuart for praise, and notably mentioned that he was given command of both the army and *the garrison of Fort St. George*, the latter normally under the Governor's control, and not only commanded him to arrest Governor Pigot but also 'any other Person Who should obstruct him in the execution of [their] Orders.'[368]

Pigot's supporters, who had intended to dine with the Governor and Stuart that evening, quickly became aware of the Governor's imprisonment. Returning from the garden house to the fort, Claud Russell ordered the Main Guard to stand to arms (one presumes as a means to free the Governor and suppress the coup) only to be accosted by Stuart, Eidingtoun, and one Captain

[366]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 13-15.
[367]Major Horne was the commander of the artillery stationed at St. Thomas's Mount, and it is reasonable to assume that the escort of European artillerymen serving as the escort for Pigot's aborted removal to Chingleput were under his command. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 15.
[368]Fort Saint George to the Company, 24 September 1776, IOR/P/336/81, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. 'Madras to England,' in Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 87-93, 99, 115. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 9-10. Bhattacharya, 252.

Barclay. He was brought before the new rump Council, where now acting-Governor Stratton suspended him from Company service. Andrew Stuart, discussing these events, quotes Russell's deposition to the Coroner's Inquest at length. In the latter's account Captain Adair (?), commander of the Main Guard, was reluctant to call his men to stand to arms despite Russell's pleas. On Stuart's arrival, Russell noted Adair's deference to the wishes of the Colonel, seemingly indicating a regard for the acting Commander-in-Chief's prerogative as of greater authority than that of a Councillor. Russell also claims that some of the grenadiers standing to arms seemed to have acknowledged Russell's authority, but were browbeaten back into line by Stuart. This further illustrates that although some sort of corporate interest was functioning within EIC forces, the army was not completely united in its support of the coup, at least initially. As enlisted men and sepoys, the grenadiers mentioned above likely had their own corporate identity and were not part of the shared identity which bound Stuart and his officers' interests together.[369]

By seizing the duly-appointed civilian governor, neutralizing his supporters, and isolating him in a trusted subordinate's custody, Stuart and his associates were following the classic patterns of a military or military-backed coup. Moreover, in his own recollections Stuart concurred with many of the prevailing views of experts today regarding the conduct of coups, with one notable instance being his insistence that is was necessary for the conspirators to arrest and isolate Pigot before seizing the fortress and rousing the garrison for their actions to succeed. Despite this telling confluence, his brother Andrew Stuart argued that the desire to avoid conflict was Stuart's primary motivation for taking Pigot into custody. Yet Stuart's earlier request to take

[369]Several military officers complicit in the coup are also discussed here, including the hitherto unmentioned Captain Barclay. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 15-18. 'Madras to England,' Ibid. in Love, Vestiges, iii, 88-90, 92, 112. Bhattacharya, 253.

command of Thanjavur, which Pigot had opposed, and his general closeness with the Nawab's creditors on the Council indicate that more personal motives might have been at work. Either way, his choice to seize Pigot outside of the fortress and away from the garrison likely contributed to the success of the coup.[370]

It is worth reiterating here that while the origins of the coup were the grievances of the Nawab's creditors, and by extension the Nawab himself, all the actions which made it directly possible (apart from Benfield furnishing a mode of conveyance) were willingly carried out by EIC army officers. Later that night Stuart and his subordinates' actions were formally acknowledged by Stratton and his Council as having been conducted on their orders, which had been delivered to Stuart on August 23rd, 1776.[371] This clearly shows that the military was not the source of the coup. Nevertheless, it was in Stuart's power as the ranking military officer at Madras (excepting Fletcher, who though complicit in the coup was by this point too sick to take on a direct role) to have prevented it from occurring, and he chose to side with the majority of the Council in usurping power. His justifications for doing so will be discussed at some length later.[372]

Multiple steps were taken to ensure the loyalty of the forces under Stuart to the new Council, including the arrest of the Town Major, Captain Robert Wood. Wood defied Stuart and the Council's orders, supported Pigot throughout the coup, and later carried Pigot's own narrative of events back the Britain.[373] Both Wood's defiance and his arrest are unsurprising

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[370]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 14, 27-28.
[371]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 91. Bhattacharya, 253-254.
[372]See Chapter 4, Section 6.
[373]Please note the distinction between Captain Robert Wood, the Town Major, and Colonel John Wood, who had briefly and disastrously replaced Smith as commander-in-chief during the First Anglo-Mysore War and was subsequently tried and dismissed from service. See Chapter 3, above. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 597. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 73, 97-100, 112. Bhattacharya, 258.

when one considers the role of the Town Major, so named due to the historic practice of referring to Fort Saint George itself as the 'White Town' inhabited by Europeans in contrast to the Indian-inhabited 'Black Town' beyond the fortress walls. The Town Major acted as the military liaison officer between the garrison and the Governor in the context of the latter's position as Commander-in-Chief of all soldiers in the fort – a constitutional position which had been used by Pigot to justify his encroachment on military prerogative and which the majority had been sure to circumvent in their orders to Stuart.[374] Furthermore, this office itself is in a way an illustration of Lord Pigot's interpretation of the Governor's constitutional military powers, as he himself had created the office, despite some resistance from the Court of Directors, during his previous term as Governor.[375] Needless to say, the coup plotters saw a military officer who worked closely with Pigot, was familiar with the men of the garrison, and had the authority to command them independent of the regular chain of command – and therefore of Fletcher, Stuart, and their subordinates – as a significant threat to the success of the coup.

The Madras Army was rewarded with half-*batta* by the rump Council, possibly for their complicity in the coup and/or to secure their loyalty in the aftermath. Bryant notes that this *batta* had previously been paid to its recipients as a matter of course but had been withdrawn by Governor Du Pre in an attempt to limit spending and recoup financial losses after the First Anglo-Mysore War. Such a step, in the wake of a protracted war that culminated in defeat for the EIC forces, may have played a role in alienating the military from Madras's legitimate government. Indeed, in an earlier EIC coup support from the military, albeit then only a small militia, had been secured through similar means by the 17th century rebel Governor of Bombay

[374]Fort Saint George to the Company, 24 September 1776, IOR/P/336/81, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 65, 87-93, 99-100, 115, 224. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 9-10. Bhattacharya, 252.
[375]Fort Saint George Consultation, Madras, 5 July 1756, IOR/P/336/47, Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 509-510.

Richard Keigwin (d. 1690), who cancelled salary cuts made by the previous governor.[376] As an additional means of securing the support of officers, the new Council took steps to expand the Madras Army, thereby enlarging the officer corps and promoting numerous officers to higher, better-paying positions (which often also entailed other lucrative opportunities in addition to salary). These steps, however, do not seem to have ensured the loyalty of the EIC's European soldiers in the mind of the plotters, as they almost immediately ordered the entire European component out of the fort on various duties, presumably so they would not cause unrest.[377]

The reasoning behind this move makes for interesting speculation. By limiting the number of fluent English-speakers moving in and out of the fort the Councillors made it easier to control the flow of information in the critical early days of the coup, but other factors could also have been at play. Nevertheless, seizing the centre of power, securing it from outside, surrounding themselves with loyal soldiers, expelling or imprisoning those of questionable loyalty, and taking steps to control the flow of information are all recognized today as critical first steps in a successful coup.

The Nawab soon also showed his complicity, or at the very least, his approval of Governor Pigot's ousting, by putting a unit of horsemen at the plotters' disposal and stationing them near Major Horne's house, both to guard against Pigot's escape and to relay messages quickly between the house and the fort.[378] Addressing the use of the Nawab's men, Bhattacharya points out that 'This was a curious and unprecedented reversal, for the Nawab's men were clearly more reliable for the new council than European troops,' further demonstrating a potential

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[376]See Chapter 4, Section 3 for a definition of *batta*. Bryant, *Emergence*, 214. Oliver and Ray Strachey, *Keigwin's Rebellion (1683-4): An Episode in the History of Bombay*, vol. 6, Oxford Historical and Literary Studies (Oxford: Clarendon, 1916), 23.
[377]For discussion of officers' other sources of income see Chapter 3, Section 6, above. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 88. Bryant, *Emergence*, 214. Bhattacharya, 255. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline*, 101-110.
[378]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 15. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 101, 105. Bhattacharya, 256-257.

fear of EIC soldiers' loyalty to Governor Pigot. This step led Pigot's supporters to assume, probably correctly, that the Nawab was intimately involved in the whole affair, with Dalrymple pointing out that it was the struggle over his revenues that had precipitated the coup.[379]

The rump Council also quickly showed their true motives and ordered Colonel Harper, the commander of two battalions of sepoys garrisoning Thanjavur, to withdraw as many of his soldiers as he could into the garrison, thereby removing their protection from the Raja's revenue collectors and allowing the Nawab's soldiers and administrators to move in.[380] Harper, having up to this point obeyed Pigot and the Court of Directors' orders regarding Thanjavur, adhered to the chain of command and followed the majority's instructions. Nevertheless, the Council's choice to rely on the Nawab's men seems to have been a sound one, as demonstrated by subsequent events. On the night of August 27th, 1776 soldiers under Eidingtoun arrived on the Council's order's and attempted to remove Pigot from the Mount, ostensibly to the Fortress of Chingleput, where he would be more secure and less able to rouse support. As Pigot, resisting, was brought outside to a carriage, he loudly condemned the Council, Stuart, and Eidingtoun and appealed to a guard of European artillerymen present to either allow him to stay where he was or to take him to Admiral Hughes, where he would seek the protection of the Royal Navy. In this incident one can again see the plotters' anxiety over soldiers' potential loyalty to Pigot, as Eidingtoun, sensing that he might not be able to maintain control of the soldiers, quickly had the men withdraw and allowed Pigot to stay at St. Thomas's Mount. In their own account of events the majority justified their attempt to move Lord Pigot on alleged rumours, transmitted to them by Stuart, of associates of the deposed governor 'tampering with the troops' stationed on the Mount. If this was occurring, it lends credence to their concern over the loyalty of their forces discussed above,

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[379]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 91, 92, 94, 95 112, 113, 116. Bhattacharya, 257.
[380]Bhattacharya, 260.

and regardless of its veracity clearly demonstrates a justifiable paranoia common among many coup plotters. [381]

Turning to another civil-military aspect of the coup, Pigot's request that his appeal be delivered to the Navy was understandable, as earlier that day he had written to Sir Edward Hughes seeking his protection as the King's representative on the Coromandel Coast and the highest ranking military officer present. Hughes subsequently visited Pigot and wrote to the Council demanding the Governor's release into his custody. This frightened the Council into relenting on the planned move to Chingleput and allowing Pigot to stay on at the Mount. They subsequently offered to transfer him to wherever he wished on the Coast – under guard, of course – or to place him on a ship bound for England.[382] For his part Hughes was eager to help Pigot, conferred with him over the next two days, and left a note with Major Horne seeking his guarantee that Pigot would not be removed or handed over to anyone else until his return. This support was no doubt in part a function of military patronage, as Lord Pigot had connections to prominent naval advocates in Parliament. Notably, his younger brother was Vice-Admiral Hugh Pigot (1722-1792), a contemporary of Hughes who would eventually become a full admiral and a Naval Lord.[383]

The Council, however, rebuffed Hughes when he appealed to them to release Pigot into his custody, stating that the admiral could not trusted not to land Pigot elsewhere on the coast,

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[381]Fort Saint George Consultation, Ibid. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 89, 94, 95, 99, 114. Bhattacharya, 260 262.
[382]Fort Saint George Consultation, Ibid. Love, *Vestiges*, ii, 509-510. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 89, 95, 99, 114. Bhattacharya, 263.
[383]Governor-General Hastings's decision to accept the majority's takeover at Madras may in part have resulted from his connection to Laurence Sulivan's faction in the Court of Directors, as Sulivan's clique was the main rival of Pigot's close associate Robert Clive's faction. Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, 101. Bowen, *Business of Empire*, 58. Hastings was concerned enough about Hughes's potential interference in EIC affairs that he sent a copy of his letter to Stratton and the Council to the admiral. Governor-General and Council to Madras [6 October 1776?], ECCO. Lewis Namier, 'Pigot, Hugh (1722-92), of Wychwood Forest, Oxon.,' *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, eds. L. Namier and J. Brooke, 1964. <http://www.historyofparliament online.org/volume/1754-1790/member/pigot-hugh-1722-92> [Accessed 7 May 2017].

from which he could collect armed followers and march on Madras with the intent of ousting them. This was a not entirely unlikely scenario considering Pigot's temper and the threats he had made to the Council following his imprisonment.[384] Admiral Hughes replied that, as he was ordering them to deliver Pigot into his care in the name of the King, they had no right to refuse him. When Stratton again prevaricated, and denied Hughes had the authority to intervene in the Company's government, partly from lack of precedent, the Admiral insinuated that Stratton's words and noncompliance were treasonous, and that Stratton and the Council would face dire consequences. What would have come of this naval support, however, remains unclear, as Governor-General Hastings in Bengal instructed the Royal Navy to cooperate with the new, *de facto* Council. The ineffectiveness of Hughes's attempts to help the Governor once again demonstrate the relative weakness of naval forces as political actors vis-à-vis armies.[385]

Even from his confinement Pigot continued to antagonize Sir Robert Fletcher, who had become severely ill by this point and had applied for permission to travel to the Cape of Good Hope, where it was presumed the milder climate might help his condition. Pigot objected to this claiming he should stay and be held responsible for his actions when the eventual decision came from England, but he was ignored, and Fletcher departed. Pigot's concerns, however, were for nought, as Fletcher died en route at Mauritius on December 24th, 1776. Stuart formally succeeded him as EIC Army Commander-in-Chief in the Carnatic.[386]

Stuart's decision to take part in a political dispute clearly demonstrates that praetorian tendencies existed within at least part of the officer corps of the Madras Army, as does the fact that Pigot had established the position of Town Major in his previous term as Governor to

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[384]Bhattacharya, 261-262, 265-266. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 95-96, 116-117.
[385]Governor-General and Council to Lord Pigot [Calcutta, 1776], ECCO. Governor-General and Council to Madras [6 October 1776?], ECCO. Bhattacharya, 266, 268.
[386]Bhattacharya, 269. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 100-101.

enhance his own control of the Fort Saint George garrison as its Commander-in-Chief. The majority's attempt to circumvent this constitutionally-prescribed military authority in their orders to Stuart show that they were willing to accommodate a politicized army so long as it supported their interests, demonstrating the danger factionalism poses to civilian control. However, Captain Wood's arrest, the removal of European troops from the fortress, and Admiral Hughes intervention in Pigot's favour show that the military (and the Company Army officer corps particularly) though certainly politicized was not fully united in corporate interest.

4.5 Dangerous Precedent, 1777-1780

As Lord Pigot became increasingly ill in March and April of 1777 he was moved from St. Thomas's Mount to the Company Garden House for his health. Stratton's government attempted to conceal this movement so that Pigot's supporters and the public would not have access to him. They posted guards and diverted traffic along the route to this effect. However, the move did not result in any significant improvement and Lord Pigot died soon after on May 11th, 1777.[387]

The verdict of the Court of Directors regarding the coup arrived at Madras several months later on August 31st, 1777. It stated that although Pigot had overstepped his bounds on several occasions, none of these actions would justify his ousting from power under force of arms. Stratton and his Councillors were suspended from the service and ordered to return to England for judgement, while Stuart was interestingly only initially suspended from the service for six months and allowed to remain in India. Pigot would have been immediately reinstated as governor had he not been dead.[388] For their part, Stratton and his government, and their chief military supporter, did not attempt to hold onto power, noting in their defense that they all

[387]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 101, 105-109.
[388]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 103. Bhattacharya, 279-280.

willingly accepted the Directors' orders to step down and return to Britain. In the same document, they also argued that they did not abuse their authority while in power at Madras, though the Raja of Thanjavur, whose lands and revenues were seized, would hardly have agreed.[389]

News of Lord Pigot's death had reached England by January of 1778, and within the month his brother, Admiral Hugh Pigot, had replaced him as MP for Bridgnorth in Parliament. By March of 1779 Stratton had after some trouble secured for himself the position of MP for Callington. After a failed attempt by Pigot's supporters to condemn the actions of the Madras majority in the EIC Court of Directors, it was clear that Parliament would become the main arena for debating the coup.[390]

Admiral Pigot's initial motion on April 16th, 1779 simply addressed the facts that his brother had been arrested under military force, confined, and later died whilst confined. Some MPs with connections to the Company objected to it on principle as an undue government interference in EIC affairs. His second motion addressed the coup itself. More importantly for this study, the same motion also requested that Stuart, Eidingtoun, Horne, and Lysaght all be brought before courts martial for arresting and confining their rightful governor, clearly showing that Parliament was more alarmed by military men interfering in civil governance than the EIC's own leadership had been.[391] This noteworthy difference is consistent with Peers's idea of Anglo-Indian militarism though it predates his focus by decades. A subsequent third motion condemned

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[389] Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 5-6. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 103, 115-116. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 22.
[390] Sutherland, *Politics*, 320-321, 323-325. Bhattacharya, 284. Namier, 'Pigot, Hugh.'
[391] Captain Barclay, who had assisted in the arrest of Claude Russel in the initial stages of the coup was omitted from this request, as his actions did not have a direct impact on Lord Pigot personally. Despite this, and a relative lack of documentation regarding his involvement, he is among the more significant documented conspirators within the Madras Army's officer corps. Mary M. Drummond, 'Stratton, George (?1734-1800), of Great Tew, Oxon.,' *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1754-1790*, eds. L. Namier and J. Brooke, 1964. <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/pigot-hugh-1722-92> [Accessed 7 May 2017]. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 16-18. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 119. Bhattacharya, 285.

Stratton and his Council, called for their prosecution, asked for Company support in this matter, and stressed the unfortunate precedent that letting such actions occur without severe punishment would set. Despite verbal objections from Stratton, these motions passed without opposition.[392]

Admiral Pigot and his associates were aided in this by a growing opinion in Parliament and among the politically literate and interested British groups that the EIC had overstepped its bounds. This was perhaps most obvious among the gentry, who dominated Parliament, and generally looked down on London merchants (a smaller, but significant bloc in Parliament), and resented the wealth of returning EIC servants or 'Nabobs.' However, in Richard Bourke's recent estimation at least 70 MPs were invested in EIC stock by 1764, and while this fact does not mean they all voted as a pro-Company bloc, it does indicate that some MPs shared the EIC's interests. Indeed, Parliamentarians' shares in the EIC and involvement in the Company's management – and this arrangement's influence on British politics – while beyond the scope of this work's analysis – are explored in depth by Huw Bowen in *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics, 1757-1773* (1991). Nevertheless, anti-Company sentiment in Parliament was compounded in the years before the 1776 coup by moral outrage over the Great Bengal Famine of 1770, contributing to a growing resentment of the Company's semi-autonomous empire and patronage network, the latter of which was increasingly seen as a threat to British liberties. Though some MPs resented the vast patronage network that Indian spoils and revenues afforded former Company servants and stakeholders, many feared still more the potential for tyranny such wealth and patronage threatened if the Crown took direct control of the EIC and its dominions. Moreover, there was no reason to believe that the Crown would manage India better thanthe Company. The most eloquent critic of the EIC at this time was undoubtedly Edmund Burke, who

[392]Bhattacharya, 285-286. Drummond, 'Stratton, George.'

as early as 1758 had described the Company as an 'arbiter of kingdoms,' and subsequently questioned the ability of EIC servants – whose prime objective was, ostensibly, to produce a profit for the proprietors – to reliably govern and do justice to the populace under their rule.[393]

Burke was not alone in these sentiments and by the mid-1770s much of the Rockingham Whig faction, of which he was a prominent member, had become increasingly critical of Company servants' political and pecuniary excesses in India. The group was influenced by what Travers terms the 'Indian Whiggism' of their contemporary Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818), a British civil servant of Irish extraction and the most likely author of the 'Letters of Junius,' who also sat on the Supreme Council of Bengal from 1774 to 1780. His conceptualization of India's so-called 'ancient constitutions,' and his argument that the Company and the British state must accommodate and uphold them to sustain the Empire in India, had a lasting impact on Burke (with whom he corresponded irregularly from 1773 onward) and his compatriots. Francis would align with Burke in their unsuccessful attempt at the impeachment of his rival Warren Hastings, which took place between 1788 and 1795. Travers further asserts that these ideas played a role in the push to restore the Raja of Thanjavur to his dominions which brought Lord Pigot, himself an ally of the Rockinghams, back to the Carnatic in 1775.[394]

Richard Bourke asserts that the 1776 coup was a catalytic moment for Edmund Burke which led to increased interest in Indian affairs, and engagement in debates on Indian topics – almost always as a critic of the EIC. In addition to the aforementioned influence of Francis, this

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[393]See Chapter 4, Section 2, above, regarding the fear of Crown power should it gain direct control of the EIC and its patronage network. Bourke, *Empire*, 328, 330, 338, 360, 366. Philips, 'A Successor,' 381. See Huw Bowen *Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics 1757-1773* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1991). For updated discussion of Parliamentarians EIC stock see Bowen*, Business of Empire,* 11-12, 94-96.
[394]Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, 179-180. John Cannon, 'Francis, Sir Philip (1740-1818),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), < http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca /view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10077> [Accessed 10 May 2018].

was no doubt in part due to Burke's associates and his own general interest in India at the time. In his search for information Burke utilized accounts and critiques of British India and the EIC from both personal acquaintances, among them Philip Francis, the economist Adam Smith (1723-1790), and recognized India experts like Robert Orme. Burke ultimately acquired a detailed second-hand understanding of India, the Company, and British Indian policy. [395] This intense interest in part arose from his friendship with the noted pamphleteer William Burke (1728/1730-1798), who had previously engaged in speculation on EIC stock, took a general interest in the EIC, travelled to Madras, and eventually became the British agent of the aggrieved Raja of Thanjavur, Thulaji Bhonsle. Though Burke recognized the reality of endemic factionalism at Madras and that Pigot's personality and approach to governance had not been conducive to cooperation, he felt that it was necessary to punish the coup's perpetrators for their even more transgressive actions. He believed that that this would be a crucial step toward properly subordinating Company servants and preventing further crises in India. Moreover, it would clearly demonstrate that the Nawab and his creditors did not dictate British policy. Accepting the coup's result would have amounted to accepting Company employees' right to ignore the instructions of the Court of Directors. Such a precedent in terms of policy, not to mention indirectly condoning military insurrection, could prove very dangerous.[396]

From the perspective of civil-military relations theory Burke's analysis of the coup is interesting for several reasons. The first among these was his objection to the Carnatic hybrid fiscal-military state discussed above, where he asserted that military institutions funded by the taxation of a largely agrarian population should at the very least ensure the physical security of said population by ensuring peace in the Carnatic instead of working toward mere profit – both

[395]Bourke, *Empire*, 516-519, 522, 524.
[396]Bourke, *Empire*, 333, 519, 521, 526-528.

Company and personal – and the aggrandizement of the despotic Nawab. This first idea was explored most fully in *An Enquiry into the Policy of Making Conquests for the Mahometans in India* (1779) – credited to William Burke, but usually understood to be written with his more famous friend (and possible distant kinsman) – where he argues against the EIC and Britain more broadly supporting the ambition of Muhammad Ali, and particularly singling out the invasions of Thanjavur with Company forces for opprobrium.[397] In this analysis he criticizes the Nawab, his creditors, and the Madras leadership's disregard for the wellbeing of the people of the Carnatic, particularly regarding their exposure to multiple devastating invasions as a result of their policies, and seeks to contrast them negatively with the 'natural rule' of the Raja of Thanjavur, Thulaji. The Burkes' emphasis on 'natural rule' contrasts not only Muhammad Ali's appointment as a Mughal deputy and 'puppet' of the EIC with Thulaji's inherited sovereign rule and local legitimacy, but also the fact that the former was a Muslim 'invader' ruling a largely Hindu populace while the latter reigned over his own seemingly autochthonous co-religionists. This argument betrays an underlying anti-Muslim sentiment and takes a reductionist view of Indian society and politics typical of British accounts of the time. Nonetheless, the Burke's criticism of the hypocrisy and duplicity of the creditors of the Nawab is not without some substance. Moreover, it serves as a strong example of Travers's 'Indian Whiggism' at work nearly a decade prior to the Hasting's impeachment.[398]

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[397]Despite the name most scholars today do not think William was a familial relation of Edmund Burke, or at least not a very close one, though they did refer to each other as 'cousin' at times. William Burke, *An Enquiry into the Policy of Making Counquests for the Mahometans in India, by the British Arms; In Answer to a Pamphlet Entituled 'Considerations on the Conquest of Thanjavur'* (London: J. Dodsley, Pall Mall, 1779), [Section III] 30-44, [Section IV] 44-72, 110, 127, 129. Bourke, *Empire*, 41. Ian Harris, 'Edmund Burke,' *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy,* ed. Edward N. Zalta (2012), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/burke/>. Accessed 10 June 2017. For discussion of the Carnatic fiscal-military state see Chapter 2, Section 6, above.

[398]William Burke, *Counquests*, 17, 47-50, 57-58, 61-66, 70, 109-111, 126, 129-130. Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, 179-180.

Another interesting aspect of Burke's thoughts on the coup is his view on whether a military usurpation of a more-or-less legitimate civil authority could ever be justified. Clearly influenced by the 'social contract' ideas of John Locke (1632-1704), he argues that since EIC authority in India lacked any right to rule beyond that of conquest, it could only maintain itself by military force, and only justifiably so long as it protected its territory and the resident population therein from external and internal violence, and effectively upheld the right to private property. Furthermore, Bourke points out his subject's assertion of the need to place limits on rule by force, stating that

> These liberties could find protection under *unaccountable government* on two conditions: first, where a military government in-the-last-instance was moderated by its exercise through a civil arm; and second, where the due subordination of offices, including the routine subjection of the army to the civil administration was rigorously observed. The revolt against Pigot, however, had subverted the subordination of offices and tipped the balance in favour of the military against civilian government.[399] [my emphasis]

In Burke's analysis, the usurpers of 1776 had merely sought to replace an unaccountable government with an even less accountable one, subject to the whims of a self-aggrandizing 'tyrant,' his greedy creditors, and their equally avaricious, careerist military allies. Therefore, the actions of the majority Councillors lacked legitimacy. Conversely, he initially sympathized with the contemporaneous grievances of the American Thirteen Colonies because they sought to replace a situation of unaccountable government with a more representative, accountable one.

With the support of Burke and the Rockingham Whig faction in Parliament, Stratton and his closest associates on the Council (Henry Brooke, Charles Floyer, and George Mackay) were tried at the Court of King's Bench in December of 1779, and were convicted for insurrection on the 20th of December, with Justice Sir William Henry Ashhurst (1725-1807) echoing Burke's sentiments in terms of the coup setting a 'most dangerous Example.' He went on to state that

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[399]'Unaccountable government' simply meaning non-representative, in a broad sense. Bourke, *Empire*, 525.

although Pigot had overstepped the bounds of propriety with his actions, the defendants' recourse to insurrection had been an even greater transgression. Having been found guilty, the defendants were punished with a fine of £1000 each.[400]

William Murray, Lord Mansfield (1705-1793), the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench's who presided over the Somersett (1772) and Zong (1783) trials that catalyzed British abolitionism, also oversaw the trial of the coup plotters. Putting aside charges of treason as the coup plotters claimed to have been acting in the interests of the Crown and EIC, Mansfield viewed the case against Stratton and the other plotters at its most elemental as a matter of whether they had violated the constitution of Madras by deposing Pigot through military force. This is of great interest from a civil-military perspective as the opinion of a senior figure in the 18th century British judiciary on the subject of a coup. It also provides a glimpse into a member of the British establishment's lingering anxiety over military overreach during the English Civil War (1642-1651). Mansfield interestingly compares Pigot's actions with those of Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), alluding to Colonel Pride's Purge of the House of Commons (1648) in relation to the Governor's dismissal of Stratton and Brooke from Council. This specific action precipitated, and according to the plotters necessitated, the coup. Comparing Pigot's actions to the tyrannical, theocratic-militarist bugbear of 17th century British politics while simultaneously condemning the actions of the Council members and military officers who overthrew his rule demonstrates Lord Mansfield's, and by extension the ruling class in Britain's, serious anxiety over factionalism and overreach among the EIC's in-country servants. This was true for the Judiciary as well as Parliament. Moreover, this is further reinforced by the prosecution citing the

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[400]Mansfield, 'Charge to the Jury,' 8, n. 1. Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 6. Bhattacharya, 294-296.

high-handedness of Warren Hastings and its detrimental impact on affairs in Bengal as a precedent for Pigot's overreach in Council at Madras.[401]

From a civil-military perspective, however, the findings of the court were less ambiguous. Lord Mansfield and the other justices found that Pigot's actions as Governor at no point represented a threat to the lives of the Councillors or military officers involved in the coup. Nevertheless, the accused and their supporters had defended their actions as necessary for self-defence and the preservation of the Madras Presidency, and so Mansfield surmised that the necessity alluded to by the defendants and their supporters must have been 'a civil or state necessity.' This being the case, Mansfield saw the majority and their supporters as guilty of insurrection as they could simply have referred the dispute to a higher authority – namely the 'regular government' in Britain – arguing that the threat to 'society and themselves' posed by Pigot's overreach was insufficiently 'extreme' and 'imminent' for them to take matters into their own hands.[402] Such a formulation rules out a violent coup – military-backed or otherwise – based on necessity except in such circumstances as a war where the British position in Madras itself was threatened by the incompetent or malevolent actions of a civilian leader, and no such conflict existed in the Carnatic in 1776. Interestingly, however, as Mansfield does not rule out the possibility of intervention in the face of an existential threat, he still leaves a loophole for 'praetorian' justifications in future cases. When one considers both Ashhurst's concern over the precedent set by the insurrection and Mansfield's opening for such an action in defense of society, it is easy to see the influence of anxieties arising from the ongoing conflict in the American Colonies in their conclusions.

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[401]Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 2. Mansfield, 'Charge to the Jury,' 5. Bhattacharya, 294.
[402]Mansfield, 'Charge to the Jury,' 6-7.

Parliament's greater concern over military involvement in the 1776 coup compared to the EIC's civilian leadership is indicative of the growing resentment of the EIC, its patronage network, and wealthy 'Nabobs' returning from the subcontinent among the British political classes. It also reflects the public distaste for militarism in post-Cromwellian Britain.[403] The Judiciary's rejection of constitutional justifications for the coup, though strongly condemning the majority and their military supporters taking violent action against the rightful Governor of Madras, nonetheless left open a loophole for military intervention action in the case of an existential threat to the British position in the Carnatic.

4.6 The Case of James Stuart, 1777-1781

One often overlooked topic in the aftermath of the coup is the fate of one of the two primary military conspirators, Sir James Stuart. The other primary military actor in the coup, Sir Robert Fletcher, died prior to the resolution of the dispute, and so a brief exploration of Stuart's career and struggles after the coup is instructive. Though he did not figure in the judicial actions taken against Stratton and the other conspirators in England, Stuart was recognized as a pivotal figure in the coup by EIC and Royal authorities and he was suspended from service initially for six months but ultimately for three years. Stuart himself, with the help of his elder brother Andrew Stuart (1725-1801), the notable lawyer, politician, and fixture of the Scottish Enlightenment, advocated for his rehabilitation within both the EIC and British Army officer corps' hierarchies, with the latter writing a lengthy and well-thought-out defense of his brother.[404] In 'A Letter to the Directors of the Honourable East India Company: The Conduct of Brigadier-General James

[403]Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 21-24, 89-90.
[404]Tristram Clarke, 'Stuart, Andrew (1725-1801), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/26693> [Accessed 13 June 2017].

Stuart at Madras' (1778), Andrew Stuart stressed that his brother was following the orders of both his civil and military superiors. He did this perhaps in an effort to dispel accusations of a military coup and position Fletcher, in contradistinction to his brother, as the primary military antagonist in any such narrative. He also sought to justify his brother's actions within both the civil and military EIC hierarchies.[405]

Quite aware that he was defending his own brother's conduct, Andrew Stuart attempted to establish a degree of impartiality in his account of events through various means, and rather dubiously asserts that James's innocence can be seen 'without partiality or prejudice.' He additionally sought to avoid discussing the dispute over Benfield's claims and the Nawab's debts entirely, stating that 'the merits of [his] Brother's case… stand upon grounds totally separate and distinct from those which have been contested between on the one hand [Lord Pigot], and the majority of [the] Council on the other.' Considering the prevailing sentiments in Parliament and the eventual conclusions of the Court of King's Bench, this was an intelligent approach. It shifted attention away from connections between Stuart and the Nawab or Paul Benfield. Instead, it argued that Stuart's only motive was to follow the orders of the majority in Council and the Commander-in-Chief.[406]

Andrew Stuart argued that after Pigot's first order for Fletcher's arrest in July of 1776, following which the Governor offered Stuart the position of commander-in-chief for the first time, Stuart exercised a great degree of restraint by not only declining the offer but persuading Pigot to withdraw the arrest order and allow Fletcher to continue in his post. While such action can be read as deference to the chain of commander and the practice of promotion by seniority

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[405]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 6, 41, 49.
[406]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 3, 5, 60-61. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 86-87, 97, 99, 119, 224.

rather than purchase in the EIC army, it is hard to construe it as moderation as the author implies.[407] It would have been against Stuart's career interests to alienate his superior officer and potentially also against his own financial interests with respect to the Nawab's debts. Pigot's second order to arrest Fletcher on August 23rd, 1776 was made in conjunction with his general suspension of the majority in Council, and was founded on the basis that as commander-in-chief Fletcher had engaged in 'mutiny and sedition' by supporting the majority and signing their open letter condemning Pigot as Governor.[408] The legitimacy of this action is questionable, considering Fletcher had taken no mutinous action at this point. His active support of the majority against the governor can justifiably be considered a political action unbefitting a military officer, it would not have been considered such at the time, especially when one considers his position on the Madras Council. As such, it is unsurprising that Andrew Stuart based his argument for his brother's moderation on the first offer.[409]

That is not to say, however, that he did not seek to justify the actions of the majority. Andrew Stuart, addressing the escalation of the dispute into a crisis in August of 1776, described it as 'a situation which almost unavoidably produce[d] *the necessity* of resorting to strong and violent measures' [my emphasis] to preserve either party's interpretation of – and place within – the Madras constitution and establishment. Unfortunately for Stuart, Lord Mansfield and the jury would not agree with this argument, with the Lord Chief Justice arguing that Lord Pigot's political overreach did not necessitate such violent action.[410]

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[407]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 4. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 87, 92, 98. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 23-24, 26-27. Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 46-48.
[408]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 4. Ashhurst, *The King v. Stratton*, 3. Dalrymple, Alexandria, 8-9.
[409]Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, 2, 25-26.
[410]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 4. Mansfield, 'Charge to the Jury,' 6-7.

Regarding the actions of his brother during the coup, Andrew Stuart referred to his brother's position during the early stages as 'one of the most delicate and difficult situations that ever fell to the share of any military man … [as] it was impossible for him to be inactive or an idle spectator,' going on to argue that had he not taken action in support of one side or the other Stuart was likely to be punished for his disobedience by whichever faction came to power, and that had he sided with Lord Pigot in suspending the majority he was equally likely to have been suspended and court-martialed for such actions.[411] This argument has the benefit of absolving his brother of decisive agency while simultaneously not directly condemning the actions of Lord Pigot or antagonizing his supporters in England and the EIC Court of Directors.[412]

Andrew Stuart went on to argue that his brother's actions during the coup should simply be understood as a soldier following the orders of his civil and military superiors as he understood them. But in acknowledging that it was ostensibly Stuart's opinion that the orders of the majority in Council and the commander-in-chief took precedence over those of a Governor with only minority support, the author showed that his brother was both acting on a political consideration and that he was of like mind with Fletcher regarding the Commander-in-Chief's military pre-eminence vis-à-vis the Governor. This admission of James Stuart's views on military authority, based upon his correspondence with his brother, is indicative of an incipient corporate identity among EIC Army officers as discussed above, and it is unsurprising that it is most evident in their relations as a corporate body with the Madras Civil authorities.[413]

Andrew Stuart addressed the potential objection that despite these orders it was his brother's decision to side with the majority that secured for them control of Madras. The author

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[411]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 7-8.
[412]Perlmutter, *Military and Politics*, 12-13.
[413]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 6. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 93.

justified, or at least rationalized, this decision to side with the majority on the grounds of constitutional confusion at Madras, where both the Governor and majority had claims to legitimacy and argued that the fact that the Commander-in-Chief had sided with the majority probably influenced Stuart's decision. Such influence on his decision, while merely speculative and from a biased source, would be in-line with both Stuart's focus on his career (in his desire to please a superior officer, though it is worth noting that Fletcher was mortally ill at the time and was unlikely to have any influence on Fletcher's career in the future) and military corporatism (in siding with a fellow officer, and the only soldier on the Council, on the basis of loyalty).[414]

Nonetheless, considering the factionalized situation at Madras, this is not to say that officers acted as a unified block at all times or were uncritical of their superiors, especially when their own careers were at stake. In one example Andrew Stuart, who considering his brother's role in the coup as a subordinate officer had some reason to portray the commander-in-chief in a more favourable light, nonetheless described Fletcher as 'known to have been of a disposition neither timid nor indolent.'[415] An understatement perhaps, but judging from other sources certainly accurate. However, it is telling that such a statement regarding a superior officer was made only after Fletcher's death, when he was no longer able to influence James Stuart's future career and made in circumstances where Stuart's career itself had potentially all but ended.

Engaging in speculation, Andrew Stuart proceeded to defend his brother's decision to side with the majority by hypothesizing that had he sided with Pigot against Fletcher and his civilian associates the loyalty of the EIC army could have been divided, and an armed conflict could have broken out in Madras, though considering the complete lack of open conflict

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[414]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 62-63. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 101.
[415]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 10. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 73, 97, 99.

involved in the majority seizing control this seems unlikely.[416] Indeed, the lack of political action on the part of the men of the garrison, save the few officers discussed above, is itself notable. Nevertheless, Andrew Stuart seems to have been basing his assertions on the convictions of his brother, who further argued that had an armed conflict between the parties broken out in Madras the 'gentlemen' who followed his commands would have done so out of a 'sense of their duty,' presumably to their superiors, the chain of command, and by extension the EIC Army as a whole, or alternatively his interpretation of legitimate EIC and/or British authority.[417]

When one considers how smoothly the coup progressed – the failure of the scheme to move Pigot to Chingleput notwithstanding – it is unsurprising that Stuart did well from it in its immediate aftermath. In addition to becoming acting-, and upon Fletcher's death in December of 1776 formal, Commander-in-Chief in the Carnatic, Stuart assumed command in Thanjavur from February to June of 1777. While there he oversaw the restoration of the Nawab and his creditors' claims to local land revenues. Stuart's actions, and especially the way they prevented bloodshed, were praised not only by the majority in the Madras Council, but also by Governor-General Hastings in a letter dated 18th of September, 1776, clearly illustrating a disconnect between EIC servants and Parliament and the Court of Directors in London.[418] Indeed, this disconnect continued even after the recall of Stratton and his co-conspirators. Acting Governor John Whitehall (gov. 1777-1778, 1780) and the new Madras Council, on the day they assumed office and Stuart was formally suspended, announced that:

> They think it also necessary to observe, with respect to Brigadier-General Stuart, whose situation in the late transactions *was peculiar*, that he showed the same implicit obedience on his part to the authority of the Company, attended on the parade at the reading of the Company's commission of government to the troops,

[416]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 10-13, 32-33.
[417]By 'gentleman' James Stuart presumably means his subordinate officers. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 22.
[418]Stuart, 'Conduct,' 21, 35-36, 38, 43. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 135.

> and was studious, by his whole conduct, to shew [sic] to the officers and soldiers, the proper sense which he entertained of the Company's orders.[419]

Authorities in London took a markedly different view of Stuart's actions. Early news of the coup reached England in March of 1776 and was followed by sensational speculation of what would occur in its wake. Orders for Stuart's suspension, initially for a period of six months, arrived in India in August of 1777 as part of a general letter carried by John Whitehall, and Stuart – to his credit – immediately complied with the orders and relinquished command. Subsequently, orders for Stuart's court-martial were sent to India on July 4th, 1777. Despite these orders, his own demands for justice, and his brother's strenuous advocacy in England, he did not receive his court martial for more than three years.[420]

However, his grievances were not limited simply to his suspension. Andrew Stuart asserts that the appointment of a younger officer, General Sir Hector Munro (1726-1805) to replace his brother as commander-in-chief, the fact that this Royal officer had hitherto held no EIC commission (though he was not new to India), and that he was appointed immediately with the rank of EIC Major-General, 'was, according to military *etiquette*, an additional circumstance of mortification.'[421] Such anger, however, should not be construed as further evidence of inter-service rivalry and EIC corporatism, as Stuart himself was a Royal officer and had only come to India and entered EIC service several years earlier in 1775.[422]

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[419] Governor Whitehall, and the Council at Madras, to the Supreme Council at Bengal (from Minutes of Consultation), 31 August 1777, ECCO. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 54-55.

[420] Stuart, 'Conduct,' 3, 38, 39, 53-54. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 119, 175.

[421] Again, note that Stuart himself also held a Royal commission in addition to his EIC one, but was being passed over for promotion even then. Stuart, 'Conduct,' 39, 48-49. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 76, 93.

[422] E.I. Carlyle, 'Stuart, James, (d. 1793),' rev. Michael Fry, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/26709> [Accessed 22 July 2016].

Stuart would eventually face a court martial in December of 1780. He was honourably acquitted of any wrongdoing, received his arrears in pay, and less than a month later was restored to his position as Commander-in-Chief at Madras. He would initially serve with distinction during the Second Anglo-Mysore War, notably including the loss of a leg to cannon fire at the Battle of Pollilur (10 September 1780). His later life, independent commands, and his feud with Lord McCartney, while certainly interesting, do not concern this study more than to note that he once again rose to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army (1782-1783).[423] This full, if somewhat delayed, rehabilitation serves once more to illustrate the disconnect between the authorities in London and those in India, especially when one considers that it was not an isolated case even as far as the 1776 coup is concerned. This is evident from the fact that orders for Stuart's co-conspirator, Matthew Horne, to be tried by court martial had been rescinded, and that Horne also continued to serve in the EIC army and climb the ranks post-coup, with records showing his promotion to the rank of Brigadier-General in 1785.[424]

James Stuart is a clear example of a politically-involved officer in the Carnatic, demonstrating the civil-military elision that was so common during the 18th century. His brother's account of his actions, based upon Stuart's own recollections, further demonstrate the existence of a corporate identity of sorts – and praetorian interpretations of the army's constitutional duty – which functioned alongside blatant self-interest and careerism, similar to the case of Robert Fletcher discussed above. Furthermore, Stuart's subsequent willing submission to civilian authority upon receiving his suspension orders and his pursuit of redress

[423]'Stuart, Brigadier, General James, Acquittal by Court Martial, and orders respecting restitution of pay and allowance,' 1780, IOR/E/4/867 (p. 25), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. Carlyle, Stuart, James.,' ibid. Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 195. 228 253-56.

[424]'Horne, Colonel Matthew, Order for trial of, by Court Martial rescinded,' [date?], IOR/E/869 (p. 548), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library. 'Promotion of Colonel Matthew Horne to be Brigadier General,' 1785, IOR/H/84 (pp. 587-593), Asian and African Studies Reading Room, British Library.

through legal means, when combined with the abovementioned perceived constitutional role for the army, demonstrates a notable degree of deference to civilian control.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

> It is known that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious and uncertain obedience to any senate or popular authority; and they will least of all yield it to an assembly which is only to have a continuance of two years. The officers must totally lose the characteristic disposition of military men if they see with perfect submission and due admiration the dominion of pleaders; especially when they find that they have a new court to pay to an endless succession of those pleaders, whose military policy, and the genius of whose command (if they should have any), must be as uncertain as their duration is transient.[425]
>
> - Edmund Burke,
>
> *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

Burke, writing in 1790, was addressing the increasing lack of control exercised by the French National Assembly over the previously loyal forces under their command. However, his emphasis of the legislative body's lack of military expertise and the ill-effect of their short terms in office and shifting policy agendas could easily be applied to the relationship between the Court of Directors at home, the Company's leading servants in India, and the EIC officer corps in the Carnatic in the 1770s. The often relatively short terms held by the Company's civilian leadership, both in India and at home, had dangerous consequences. The effects of malleable policy agendas and discontinuity of leadership were such that when a Governor was appointed whose instructions ran counter to the pecuniary self-interest of his fellow Councillors at Madras, the latter saw fit to depose him and were willingly aided in their insurrection by the military leadership.

Having examined the 1776 coup and the state of civil-military relations in the Carnatic during the 1770s more generally, one could characterize the situation as politico-military chaos. If one resists this temptation and looks more closely, however, some definite patterns can be seen

[425]Edmund Burke, *Reflections of the Revolution in France and on Proceedings in Certain Societies in London* (London: J. Dodsley, 1790), 182.

in the civil-military relationship. These include the ‘strong army, weak state’ paradigm and an emerging corporate identity among the officer corps.[426] However, it is important to remember that these disputes were not wholly civil-military in character, but instead a result of the Court of Directors’ attempts to impose control on Company servants in India. These patterns were symptomatic of factionalism and fiscal-military dysfunction. This dysfunction was inherent in the Carnatic hybrid fiscal-military state, which because of insufficient revenues and chronic and self-serving reliance on predatory lending can be viewed as a fiscal-military failure. This dysfunction was aggravated by the multi-polar civil-military hierarchies and lack of constitutional clarity within the Company Raj in general and in the Madras Presidency in particular.

Among the direct consequences of the coup were steps taken by the EIC and the British Government to limit future wars of territorial aggrandizement and Company servants’ abilities to initiate them. These immediate attempts at reform were for the most part failures. One of the most damaging examples was the Directors’ decision to disallow the creation of a ‘war chest’ by any of the presidencies as a means of undermining their offensive military capabilities. This short-sighted measure would ensure that in the event of any war – defensive or aggressive – the army would be as ill-provided for fiscally as it had been in the First Anglo-Mysore War.[427]

More positive long-term consequences of the civil-military dysfunction in the Company Raj include Parliament’s imposition of *The East India Company Act, 1784*, commonly known as ‘Pitt’s India Act’ on the EIC. This act created a Board of Control, including cabinet members, which gave Parliament more control over the Company’s political activities, and strengthened the authority of the Governor-General in Calcutta at the expense of the Governors of Madras and

[426]See Chapter 1, Section 3, above.
[427]Bryant, *Emergence*, 214.

Bombay. These reforms had the effect of limiting Madras's independence and increasing oversight, Another consequence was that it limited Councillors' and officers' ability to pursue their own interests through military means. Understandably this curb on Company servants' independence was not well received.[428]

Another positive reform worth noting was the creation of a Military Secretary to the government at Calcutta in 1796. This officer took direct control of the military departments of ordinance, the paymaster, and the commissariat from the Commander-in-Chief and thereby strengthened the position of the Governor-General, to whom he reported directly. This unification of military departments responsible for pay, supply, and munitions under one official in a chain of command distinct from that of field commanders interestingly occurred during the same time that general-staffs began to develop in Europe, sometimes from commissariats or quartermaster's departments as well, as in Austria.[429]

In addition to these changes in the civil-military situation it is necessary to address the continuities. This study has demonstrated the unique hybrid nature of the Carnatic Company-state in this period. Perhaps its most salient feature is the fact that the Nawab and the EIC establishment at Madras were much more deeply politically and financially entangled with one another than in contemporary Bengal. In Bengal where the Company held the *diwani* they had full control of revenue collection. Moreover, the Nawab's political independence had been much reduced after Mir Qasim's defeat (alongside Mughal and Awadhi forces) at Buxar (1764). In this way there is perhaps greater continuity in the Carnatic than in Bengal in terms of a conceptions

[428]This ill-reception was aggravated by a clause, later removed, which required EIC servants to disclose their personal assets when they returned to Britain. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 40-41, 48-49
[429]Peers, *Mars and Mammon,* 50, 66. Christopher Duffy*, Instrument of War: The Austrian Army in the Seven Years War* (Philadelphia: Emperor's Press [Casemate], 2000), 381.

of corporate sovereignty, with Stern's 17th and early-18th century 'hybrid or composite' system persisting throughout the period in question. This is evident both in the longevity of Muhammad Ali's reign and the influence he exercised on the Madras Council through his creditors (and vice versa). Moreover, this arrangement, which touched on matters as varied as revenue, war, and foreign policy, was a major factor leading to the First Anglo-Mysore War. The Council and Nawab's mutual dependence also contributed to the EIC's defeat in the war and was a cause of the political factionalism that would lead to the 1776 Madras Coup.

Muhammad Ali's continued rule benefitted the military through the role EIC officers and their men played in collecting revenues for the Nawab, which not only necessitated a large army but also supplied a large component of the funds necessary for the same army to operate. Because of this and the Nawab's numerous gifts to high-ranking officers, they were no doubt loath to lose this source of personal and corporate profit. This, combined with his debts to prominent Company servants, past and present, would ensure his position and that of his house for decades. Muhammad Ali would rule until his death in 1795 and the binary fiscal-military state in the Carnatic continued throughout this period, with the Nawab refusing to give up his own antiquated forces despite repeated entreaties from the Company's civil and military leadership to disband or reform them. As Bryant observed

> Madras could not order Muhammad Ali to... substitute their far more effective troops [that were] trained, disciplined, and regularly paid in the European manner for his own substantial but useless 'rabble,' as Company men often described them. Fruitlessly, the Council urged the Nawab to dispense with most of his infantry and concentrate on building up an effective cavalry corps (perhaps commanded by Company officers) that could complement the Company's sepoy infantry in forming a formidable joint force. In consequence, over the next twenty years, especially in wartime, the British were continually frustrated by not having as powerful an army (especially cavalry which was indispensable in the open Carnatic compared to the closed country of Bengal), as could have been supported by the large military budget. And so it exposed the country in

> wartime to debilitating ravaging by enemy horse and made it difficult for the British generals to force a decisive field action on their 'county' opponents.[430]

Military relations with the Nawab of the Carnatic would continue to be a source of continued division and a chronic stumbling block for reformers in the Carnatic.[431]

It is, however, necessary to reiterate the issues the consistent portrayal of the Nawab through orientalist and racialist conceits in the literature. As noted previously, such portrayals began with the Nawab's own contemporaries like Burke and Orme, and were perpetuated by 19th and early 20th century British historians pushing their own imperialist and nationalist narratives. Their characterizations of the Nawab as somehow a sinister and masterfully deceitful schemer on the one hand while simultaneously portraying him as an incompetent, emasculated, and grasping ruler on the other could be read as an archetypal case study of the so-called 'Oriental Despot.' Though it would be hard to reconstruct an accurate picture of Muhammad Ali today, it seems clear that he was neither a mustache-twirling caricature nor a victim of British imperialism wholly lacking agency. Indeed, though the Carnatic-Company fiscal-military state was undoubtedly a failure, Washbrook's assessment of the Nawab as a success in dynastic terms holds water. Washbrook argues that Muhammad Ali had clearly

> … used the pressure of [his] debts to preserve his patrimony for nearly half a century, and, at his demise, still [left] his creditors largely unpaid. This might be regarded as a considerable triumph, albeit of a curious kind.[432]

Unfortunately for such an important figure in 18th century Anglo-Indian history there has been relatively little recent scholarly work on Muhammad Ali and his state-building project, Washbrook and Philips's brief treatments notwithstanding. As noted previously, a study of the

[430]Bryant, *Emergence*, 195-196.
[431]Love, *Vestiges*, iii, 48, 189 225, 227.
[432]David Washbrook, 'Muhammad Ali Khan Wallahjah (c. 1717-1795),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/view/article/63545> [Accessed 13 June 2017].

Nawab of the Carnatic and his state utilizing both English and Indian-language sources would be a welcome addition to the South India historical literature.

Another point of continuity throughout this period was the continued division of Company and Parliamentary authority. Peers describes the general sharing of political authority by the EIC and the British government during the Company Raj as ‘dual government,’ and notes that the increasing presence of Crown military units in India was its most obvious expression by the early 19th century. Additionally, he observes the resulting intrusion of the British Army’s commander-in-chief and his administration at Horse Guards in Westminster into British-Indian politics in this period. This development only served to add another locus of authority into the already divided Anglo-Indian civil-military milieu. Steps were subsequently taken to ensure a sustained unified command, including the regular – as opposed to periodic or *ad hoc* in case of war – appointment of an overall Commander-in-Chief East Indies, though the authority of said position continued to be contested.[433]

Another salient feature of the civil-military situation at Madras in the 1760s and 1770s was the persistence of factionalism, complicating any simple characterization of civil-military relations in this period as a bipolar struggle. The actions of Madras Army officers on several occasions during the First Anglo-Mysore War indicate some form of corporate consciousness among them. This is perhaps most evident in the letters collected by Joseph Smith regarding the despicable condition of the army’s transport bullocks. It is also clearly present in the officers’ objections to John Wood’s court martial following the end of the war. These actions arose because of officers’ grievances against Madras’s civilian leadership during and after the war and

[433]Peers, *Mars and Mammon*, 46-52. Callaghan, *Army Reform*, 41-42.

corporate consciousness was a factor behind these actions. It originated in a desire to protect the Madras Army officer corps' honour, privileges, and revenue, to defend a fellow officer (Wood) from unfair treatment, and to prevent the Army and its officers from being blamed for the EIC's defeat in the war by the civilian authorities.

However, this dissertation's treatment of the 1776 Madras Coup reveals more varied insights into the civil-military situation in the Carnatic. These findings both complement and complicate those evident in the analysis of the First Anglo-Mysore War. Among those that complement the findings discussed above are those related to civil-military relations. The clear evidence of a 'strong army, weak state' paradigm functioning in the Carnatic during the 1770s supports the idea that there was a bloc of corporate interest among Madras Army officers who sometimes sought to exploit the weakness of the local civilian authorities for their own benefit. This situation was exacerbated by the EIC's multi-polar hierarchy of authority, as well as the factionalism that was rife among EIC servants in India. However, the endemic nature of factionalism at Madras in this period also complicates matters. It seems clear, for instance, that although Madras Army officers exploited factionalism to enhance the military's position they also participated in the factional struggles themselves, and not necessarily as a united bloc. Indeed, it seems clear that some the officers involved in the 1776 Madras Coup, including Robert Fletcher and James Stuart, participated at least partly because their own fiscal interests aligned with those of the majority in Council as both groups had interests in the Nawab's debts. If one takes this into account it would be more accurate to describe them as pragmatists than as 'professionals' or 'praetorians.', the two ends of the spectrum favoured by many civil-military relations theorists.

These facts undermine any argument that could be made from this study's findings for a strong corporate identity among Madras Army officers as a motivating factor for participating in the coup. However, this does not necessarily mean such an identity did not exist in the 18th century. Nevertheless, it seems clear from these findings that civil-military antagonism in the Carnatic was merely one aspect of broader, and constantly shifting, factional strife. As a result of this the usefulness of concepts from civil-military theory like professionalism and praetorianism is somewhat limited, and any historical study addressing civil-military relations must take care in how it applies such theories. Even James Stuart's praetorian justifications for his actions (as related by his brother) must be treated with care, as his motivations cannot be taken to reflect those of the officers under his command. Moreover, Stuarts' praetorian claims could simply be an ex post facto fabrication devised to justify his actions and cover more venal motivations.

Factionalism like this is not unique to Madras among the EIC presidencies, nor unique to EIC internal politics in the British Empire during the 18th century. Indeed, the ubiquity of factionalism in this period seems to at least in part be tied to the universality of patronage. This is evident in the events leading up to the 1776 coup, with one faction composed of the Nawab, his creditors, and their patrons and the other of Lord Pigot and his patrons. The problem with these two competing patronage networks is the same as what we can observe in all patronage systems, namely, that there are never enough positions and preferments to satisfy everyone. As a result, individuals become alienated from one group or another and tension grows. What distinguishes Madras from Bengal or Bombay in the 1760s and 1770s, however, is not factional struggles themselves or the perennial problems of patronage, but the severity of the factional struggles. Nowhere else in the 18th century EIC presidencies did one faction oust another through a coup. This may in part be accounted for by the relative scarcity of fiscal resources in the Carnatic, and

the fiscal threat Pigot's reform policies posed to those connected to the Nawab and his creditors. With all of their eggs in the solitary basket of the Nawab's debts, any threat to his revenues was an existential threat to his creditors. This was not the case in Bengal, where private trading and investment opportunities were more plentiful and there was no single investment as potentially profitable as lending to Muhammad Ali.

In terms of further research this study suggests a variety of potential avenues. Among the most obvious options would be a more detailed study of the First Anglo-Mysore War that further tests the existing historical narratives of the topic. Considering the foundation laid by this thesis and the plentiful source materials this dissertation has identified and collected from the British Library's holdings, constructing a comprehensive narrative of the war from the perspective of the EIC would be a relatively simple, if time-consuming, next step. However, any truly exhaustive account of the war would also have to consider the perspective of the Indian states and leaders involved, including those of the Nawab, the Nizam, and the Marathas but especially that of Haidar Ali. Opportunities exist for more focused studies on specific aspects of the First Anglo-Mysore War, notably the logistical challenges of the conflict. An evaluation of the quality and abundance of Haidar's horseman when compared with the Madras Army's general lack of cavalry during the war would also be useful. The topic of the military revolution also presents an interesting opportunity to further explore the hybrid Company-Carnatic polity as a failed fiscal-military state. A study of this subject would expand the literature on developing fiscal-military states in 18th century India to the hitherto largely under-explored Madras Presidency and engage with the ongoing debate on the military revolution in Asia.

Another topic with research potential is that of courts martial in the 18th century Carnatic which could incorporate analyses of Colonel John Wood and Brigadier-General James Stuart's

trials. It would also be able to engage with ongoing discussions of government and EIC reform initiatives, factionalism among Company servants, the politicization of courts martial (and trials in general) in the 18th century British Empire, and EIC and Company Army cultures at the time – not to mention 18th century legal history. Such a study would shed further light on civil-military relations within the EIC's three presidencies in the 18th century. And finally, the topic of John William Fortescue's contributions to British military history is fertile ground for historiographical articles on a variety of topics. A critical survey of his discussion of the EIC Armies throughout his writings would certainly present some fruitful findings, as would a study of his conception of 18th century British civil-military relations. Moreover, a scholarly monograph on Fortescue and his contributions to British military history that considers his political and scholarly biases seems long overdue, though such a project would be a significant and potentially long-term project. Any study of this topic would have to engage with Fortescue's orientalist and militarist assumptions and consider their impact on British military history.

Turbulent times like the 1760s and 1770s can to an extent be considered outliers by historians of South India, the EIC, and the British Empire. The First Anglo-Mysore War stands out as one of the greatest military setbacks for the Company prior to the Rebellion of 1857. Moreover, the 1776 Madras Coup represents the high-water mark of factionalism under the Company Raj. Extreme cases like these often show people and institutions at both their best and worst – in this case often the latter. The picture of the Carnatic revealed by this study is one of institutional flux, inadequacy, and failure that is indicative of a Company and an imperial system in a period of crisis. Like the Madras Army officer corps, the EIC and the British Empire were not monolithic institutions or the single-sided success stories triumphalist historians wished them to be. They are hybrid entities, in constant and sometimes violent struggle and negotiation with

their constituent elements and the world around them. The Madras Presidency in the 1760s and 1770s provides a microcosmic view of the problems inherent in the British Empire as a whole in this period of transformation.

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Appendix: Map

Map 1 | South India c. 1767 | Matthew Jameson Gayford 2018