

Chapter IX

Diamond Trade by the Dutch East India Company in Seventeenth-Century India

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For centuries, India has been famous for diamonds because they were mined only in the subcontinent and in Borneo. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the first diamond deposits outside of these two regions were discovered in Brazil. While the jewel has attracted many people, researchers have focused on the mining and trading of raw stones.¹ As for the early modern trade in diamonds, a number of studies have been made on the activities of European private traders, such as Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and Jaques de Coutre.² From the sixteenth century, many

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¹ For information on mining, see Ramesh Chandra Sharma, "The Diamond Mines of the Deccan during the Second-Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 44 (1983): 234–250; Kanakalatha Mukund, "Mining in South India in the 17th and 18th Centuries," *Indica* 28 (1991): 13–26; and Ishrat Alam, "Diamond Mining and Trade in South India in the Seventeenth Century," *The Medieval History Journal* 3 (2000): 291–310.

² Their published travelogues are as follows: Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India by Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Baron of Aubonne*, trans. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1925; reprint, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995); Jaques de Coutre, *Aziatische omzwervingen; het leven van Jaques de Coutre, een Brugs diamanthandelaar 1591–1627*, trans. and ed. Johan Verberckmoes and Eddy Stols (Berchem: EPO, 1988). There are also several articles about their careers and travels: Annette Frémont, "Adventures of Some Frenchmen in India in the 17th Century," in *The French in India: From Diamond Traders to Sanskrit Scholars*, ed. Rose Vincent, trans. Latika Padgaonkar (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1990); George Winuius, "The Life of Jaques de Coutre: A Prime Source Emerges from the Shades," *Itinerario* 9 (1985): 137–144 and "Jewel Trading in Portuguese India in the 16 and 17 Centuries," *Indica* 25 (1988): 15–34; B. N. Teensma, "Jacques de Coutre as jewel merchant in India," *Moyen Orient & Océan Indien* 7 (1990): 59–71; B. N. Teensma, *De politieke en economische ideeën van de Bruggeling: Jacques de Coutre (1575–1640), alsmede enige tekstkritiek* (Leiden, 1994); Teotonio R. de Souza, "A New Account of the Diamond Mines of the Deccan," in *Mediaeval Deccan History: Commemoration Volume in Honour of Purshottam Mahadeo Joshi*, ed. A. R. Kulkarni, M. A. Nayeem, and T. R. de Souza (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1996).

European jewelers and merchants came to the Portuguese India to trade diamonds and other jewels. In particular, individual merchants in Goa acted as brokers and bought stones for their business partners in Lisbon.

Another topic of study over the past decades is the English merchants who ran a diamond business in Madras, especially since the latter half of the seventeenth century. Among these English traders, Gedalia Yogev and W. J. Fischel emphasized the role of the Portuguese Jewish migrants in London who were involved in the diamond trade in the 1660s more actively than before.³ Søren Mentz, on the other hand, claims in his recent book that English imports of diamonds, though they were considerably smaller than those of the Portuguese, started prior to 1660, in other words, before the arrival of the Portuguese Jews.⁴ Whether they were Jews or not, private English merchants with their bases in Madras and/or London engaged in the diamond trade in India to make a profit. On the other hand, of course, the English East India Company (EIC) had tried to secure a monopoly on diamond imports into England in the first stage of their trading activities in Asia. However, it was only for a very short period that the EIC endeavored to buy diamonds through its agents. After 1625, the company permitted its servants in the East and the officers of the East India ships to carry on diamond trades.⁵ In addition, it institutionalized private imports of diamonds at the beginning of the 1660s.⁶

Turning to the Dutch trade, the Dutch East India Company (VOC; the Company) was involved longer and deeper in an attempt to keep its monopoly on the diamonds imported to its home country and purchased the stones continuously. But in the existing studies, the VOC's diamond trade has been almost neglected. Tapan Raychaudhuri's *Jan Company in Coromandel 1605–1690* has been, for decades, the only published study with useful information, but even this book devotes just three pages to the subject.⁷ More recently, Ishrat Alam overviewed the Dutch diamond trade with using just limited published sources.⁸ This is, to be sure, not enough when we consider the importance of Amsterdam as the center of the diamond industry and business in Europe since the end of the sixteenth

³ W. J. Fischel, "The Jewish Merchant-Colony in Madras (Fort St. George) during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Contribution to the Economic and Social History of the Jews in India," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of Orient* 3, no. 2 (1960): 175–195; Gedalia Yogev, *Diamonds and Coral, Anglo-Dutch Jews and Eighteenth Century Trade* (New York: Leicester University Press, 1978).

⁴ Søren Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work: Madras and the City of London 1660–1740* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2005), 116.

⁵ Yogev, 82.

⁶ Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work*, 111.

⁷ Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605–1690* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 171–173.

⁸ Alam, 304–310.

century. The Amsterdam diamond industry started developing when the Jewish gem traders and diamond cutters emigrated from Antwerp and Lisbon.⁹ Then, where did they procure their raw stones? As these immigrants were usually involved in this business before moving to Amsterdam, it is easy to understand that they kept their connections with Lisbon, which was an important entry point for raw Indian diamonds into Europe. However, these immigrants could obtain more stones in/via Amsterdam as this city's diamond business developed. According to Lenzen, the Amsterdam rough-diamond market appeared in the 1640s at the latest, as an outcome of the activities of the Dutch in India, and it furthered the development of the local diamond mills.¹⁰

This paper is intended as an investigation of the diamond trade by the VOC in the seventeenth century. It is often pointed out that the trade in diamonds and other jewels did not fit the monopolistic and organized style of business by the East India Companies. But the VOC was, as mentioned, very interested in diamonds in India and in purchasing them, especially in the first half of the seventeenth century. Here, we will begin by surveying the trend of the Company's diamond trade. In addition, from Dutch archival sources, we will present information about the changing situation of the Indian diamond trade, mining, and social conditions around the mines over many years. This information is available because the Dutch factors stationed at the factories in India wrote and sent reports and letters regularly. Even when they could not purchase any stones, they often provided some information about them, including, for example, the activities of their rival merchants and the trends in the Indian market. This means that we will be able to fill the gap in the existing studies that are mainly based on the sporadic travelogues, especially by de Coutre (who spent about thirty years in India from the 1590s to the early 1620s), William Methwold (a factor of the EIC in the early 1620s), and Tavernier (a renowned French diamond merchant who visited the Indian mines in the mid-seventeenth century). Since the VOC was eager to buy diamonds prior to the 1660s, focusing here on the Dutch business will be useful in showing the situation before the active participation of English private traders.

Considering the ever-changing places where the VOC obtained many stones, the seventeenth century diamond trade by the Company falls roughly into four phases: (1) from the beginning of the Dutch Asian trade to around 1620 when a

⁹ Although it is usually acknowledged that the diamond industry shifted from Antwerp, especially after it fell to the Spanish in 1585, Godehard Lenzen emphasizes the role of the immigrants from Lisbon, too. He says, "the Amsterdam diamond trade, of a world-wide reputation down to our own days, originated as a Jewish refugee trade during the last few decades of the sixteenth century, with far stronger roots in Lisbon than in Antwerp." Godehard Lenzen, *The History of Diamond Production and the Diamond Trade*, trans. F. Bradley (New York: Barrie and Jenkins, 1970), 86–90.

¹⁰ Lenzen, 89.

new mine was discovered near Kollur; (2) from about 1620 to around 1640, when diamonds from the Coromandel Coast, including those from the new mine, attracted the most attention; (3) from about 1640 to around 1660, when the Company purchased the stones from both Coromandel and Surat; and (4) the declining period after the 1660s. I would like to examine each of these four phases more closely in the following discussion. In addition to the VOC's trade, I will mention several significant points affecting it, such as the activities of the other merchants competing with the Company and the political situation around the mines. Those who governed the mines, including kings and local governors, were always trying to control not only the areas with the mines but also mining and trading activities. As mines were usually located inland and were rather remote from the great trading centers, such as the capitals of dynasties or local governments and major port towns, the trade in diamonds was closely related to the development of the routes connecting the mines and market places. Here, however, the argument will be mainly limited to the problems about the supply side, that is, in the context of Indian history. Problems about demand, such as orders from the Netherlands or market conditions in Europe, could naturally affect the orders of the Company, but a detailed study of this point lies outside the scope of this paper. The situation in Borneo, the only place with diamond mines outside of India in those days, will not be treated in detail either.

1. Borneo Diamonds and Pilot Surveys in the Indian Mines (before 1620)

Before 1620, the VOC purchased hardly any diamond in India. Instead, the Company mainly obtained its stones from Sukadana, the diamond-trading center in Borneo. As early as on the first VOC voyage to Asia, one of the Company's ship sent to Sukadana brought back a small amount of stones in 1604.¹¹ In the first half of the 1610s, the Company purchased four hundred to five hundred carats of stones every year through a factory established in Sukadana. However, the VOC was in competition with the EIC for diamonds from Borneo. In 1615, the Dutch company began to collect more information about Indian diamonds with the aim of entering the trade there.¹²

¹¹ J. K. J. de Jonge, ed., *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost-Indië* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1862–1909), vol. 3, 23.

¹² The EIC also paid attention to the diamonds from Borneo and established a factory at Sukadana. However, the EIC did not have enough capital to compete with the VOC. Bruce P. Lenman, "The East India Company and the Trade in Non-Metallic Precious Materials from Sir Thomas Roe to Diamond Pitt," in *The Worlds of the East India Company*, ed. H. V. Bowen, Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2002), 101–102.

In seventeenth-century India, three dynasties were famous for their diamond mines: the Qutb Shahis of Golkonda, the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, and the Vijayanagar Empire. As for diamonds in the territory of Vijayanagar, Willem den Dorst, the *opperkoopman* (senior factor) on the Coromandel Coast, left a report of his pilot survey.¹³ In this report dated December 14, 1615, he notes that the diamonds were mined in two villages called “Bannagannapely” (Banganapalle) and “Cottocotto” (Cottacote)¹⁴ and collected in “Chingier” (Gingee), the capital of the *Nāyaka* of Gingee. The stones were purchased not only by merchants of Gingee and Vellore in the territory of Vijayanagar but also by factors of merchants of Bijapur, Goa, and other places, all rather far from the mining area.

According to den Dorst, stones were usually brought to Gingee and Vellore, but “now, because of the war, most [of the stones were] in Chingier (Gingee).” He adds that the distinguished merchants of Vellore came to live in Gingee with their families in order to confirm their trades. This shows that political and social situation caused by the war had an effect on the activities of merchants. The movements of the merchants also suggest that the main trading routes may have changed at that time. The war deteriorated conditions in the town of Vellore and along the travel routes to reach it to the extent that commercial activities were suspended. Although the serious influences of the war had not yet reached Gingee at the time den Dorst wrote his report, it seems that the VOC could not proceed with their purchase of diamonds in this region because confusion soon spread over the territory of Vijayanagar.¹⁵

¹³ OBP 1061, 90–91; Pieter van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, ed. F. W. Stapel, vol. 2, bk. 2 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1932), 174–176.

¹⁴ Banganapalle is also referred to by Earl Marshal: The Earl Marshal, “A Description of the Diamond-mines, as it was presented by the Right Honourable, the Earl Marshal of England, to the R. Society,” *Philosophical Transactions* 12 (1677): 907–917; R. C. Sharma, 240; Alam, 293. As to the location, see Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire: Political and Economic Maps with Detailed Notes, Bibliography and Index* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), sheet 16B. According to Maclean’s *Manual*, it is at latitude 15° 19’ north and longitude 78° 17’ east while Cottacote is at latitude 15° 19’ north and longitude 78° 54’ east. C. D. Maclean, ed., *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency: In Illustration of the Records of Government & the Yearly Administration Reports*, 3 vols. (Madras: the Superintendent, Government Press, 1885–1893; repr., New Delhi: Asian Educational Service, 1987–1990), vol. 3, 110, 250. This region has been known to have diamond mines and it is said even in the late nineteenth century that, “Considerable tracts of the diamond conglomerate, the “Bunganapully conglomerate,” of the Geological Surveyors, have been left untried as yet by the native miners.” Maclean, vol. 1, 309.

¹⁵ The war described in den Dorst’s report is a succession war in the court of Vijayanagar. The struggle for the throne of the Empire started with the nomination of Sri Ranga, a nephew of Venkata Deva Raya II (1586–1614), and the ensuing death of the latter.

In September 1615, the VOC sent Leonard Wolff, an *opperkoopman* of Pulicat, to Bijapur for the purpose of securing the right to trade in diamonds from the Sultan. However, this attempt ended in failure due to Wolff's embezzlement and he was sent back to Banten.¹⁶ Then, Pieter Gillisz van Ravesteijn was dispatched to replace him, together with a diamond polisher who had a deep knowledge of stones, but they did not succeed in entering the local diamond trade.

As for the diamonds in Golkonda, as far as we know now, the VOC did not send anyone at least in the 1610s on a mission to investigate the possibility of trading, unlike in the two other states. However, this Sultanate was also famous for its rich mines. De Coutre says the mines of "Langapur, Ramanacota, Peli, Duaneguti, Marmur, Gotual, Costaconda and the new mine" existed in the Golkonda territory.¹⁷ According to Sanjay Subrahmanyam, in the early seventeenth century, diamonds were mined near Udayagiri in the Golkonda territory and regularly purchased by merchants from Burhanpur, Surat, Dabhol, and Goa. The trade of these merchants with Golkonda was made possible by the integration of the Krishna and Godavari delta regions with Golkonda and Hyderabad between 1570 and 1600.¹⁸

Although Sri Ranga Deva Raya II was the rightful successor, several great nobles in the court, especially Jagga Raya, supported a putative son of one of the queens of Venkata, who was Jagga Raya's sister. Jagga Raya, having his own estate to the east of Chandragiri, did not give any real power of the State to Sri Ranga, and soon after his coronation, the new emperor was imprisoned with his family and killed by Jagga Raya's brother. Consequently, Prince Rama, a son of Sri Ranga and the only survivor among his family, became the sole rightful successor. Yachama Nayaka, having successfully rescued Rama from imprisonment with his father, supported him and challenged Jagga Raya. Although his army was distinctly smaller, Yachama triumphed in the battle, and successfully secured the throne for Rama Deva Raya (1615–1633). However, Jagga Raya did not accept his defeat and, making a coalition against Yachama and the Emperor, involved the whole state in the war. Disorders continued and confusion spread even after the death of Jagga Raya in 1617. For the reign of Sri Ranga Deva Raya II and Rama Deva Raya, see M. H. Rama Sharma, *The History of the Vijayanagar Empire*, vol. 2, *The Last Phase: Decline and Disappearance (1569–1679)*, ed. M. H. Gopal (Bombay: Popular Prakshan, 1980), chapters 4 and 5 (pp. 126–199).

¹⁶ Jan Pieterszoon Coen, *Bescheiden omtrent zijn bedrijf in Indië*, vol. 7, ed. W. Ph. Coolhaas (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1919–1953), 95–96; OBP 1061, 185r–v is the report, submitted by Wolff, about the opportunity to purchase diamonds in Balaghat. This short and rather general remark on the diamond trade seems to contain a piece of information collected during his own career as an individual diamond trader at Goa, but his report was finally judged as false by other Company factors, such as Pieter Gielisz van Ravesteijn and Samuel Kindt, the president of the Coromandel Coast of those days. OBP 1061, 186–188.

¹⁷ De Coutre, 194.

¹⁸ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500–1650* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 80.

In the latter half of the 1610s, the Dutch attempts to purchase Indian diamonds did not make any progress beyond collecting information because of the successive wars and conflicts. In 1619, it was reported from Vishakapatnam that there was little probability of obtaining diamonds from Gingee.¹⁹ On the other hand, they could get more stones from Sukadana because English trading activities around this area declined in these days. Consequently, in 1620, more than one thousand carats of stones from Sukadana were sent to Holland.²⁰

2. The New Mine of Kollur and the Diamond Trade in Golkonda (ca. 1620–1640)

The great turning point for the VOC diamond trade in India came when the Company learned of the discovery of a new mine in Golkonda. William Methwold, who was then the EIC's Principal of the Coromandel Coast and later became the President of Surat, left a travelogue about his journey to this mine.²¹ He was accompanied by two Dutch men: Andries Soury, the vice-governor of the Coromandel Coast in those days, and Adolff Thomasz, a former Company employee freed from the service in July 1620. Soury's report from Masulipatnam, which is dated February 29, 1621, informs us that the mine was found about fifteen to eighteen months before and that more than 700 carats of diamonds were sent to Jacatra.²² In addition, 1,788 carats of stones were sent from Masulipatnam in May 1621.²³ Since that time, the Dutch paid more attention to diamonds in India and tried to purchase more stones.

This new mine, which is usually known as that of Kollur near the River Krishna (or Kistna), is described by Tavernier a few decades later.²⁴ Methwold does not mention the name of the mine, but he says that it was "situated at the foot of a great mountayne, not farre from a river called Christena [Kistna]."²⁵ On the other hand, the VOC General Letter in January 1621 says, "Near a village named Bamimganne Pully, lying at about three days' journey inland from Masulipatan,

¹⁹ Coen, vol. 7, 470.

²⁰ Coen, vol. 1, 510, 572.

²¹ W. H. Moreland, ed., *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1931), 30–32.

²² OBP 1073, 156–159; Om Prakash, trans. and ed., *The Dutch Factories in India 1617–1623: A Collection of Dutch East India Company Documents Pertaining to India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1984), 147–149.

²³ OBP 1073, 169–170v; Coen, vol. 7, 748; Prakash, *The Dutch Factories 1617–1623*, 162.

²⁴ Tavernier, vol. 2, 56.

²⁵ Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, 33.

a new diamond mine was discovered, which yields so much profit.”²⁶ It seems that the Dutch here confused the new mine near the River Krishna with one of the above-mentioned mines near Banganapalle, about which they were informed by den Dorst in 1615. However, the newly discovered mine should be at Kollur because Soury, the first VOC visitor and reporter of the mine, traveled together with Methwold.

The discovery of a fairly large and rich mine at Kollur naturally attracted many people to this region.²⁷ According to Methwold, “...rumour thereof being blazed, jewellers of all the neighbouring nations resorted to the place, and some store of diamonds began to be dispersed and exposed to sale.”²⁸ The VOC also expected that there would be no shortage of diamonds there.²⁹ In reality, however, it soon became difficult for them to buy raw stones steadily at a reasonable price. As early as August 1621, Soury at Masulipatnam wrote that the Sultan of Golkonda had ordered the closure of the new diamond mine, leading the price of stones up by thirty-five percent.³⁰ Subsequently in October 1621, he reports that very few stones had been sent to Masulipatnam from the Kollur mine.³¹ In the Dutch letters, the Golkonda Sultan closed the mine because he feared his neighboring states, the Mughals and the Bijapuris. In particular, it is repeatedly reported that the Sultan was deeply concerned about a Mughal ambassador staying in Golkonda then.³² The ambassador, Qāḍī ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, “was sent in order to demand the revenue from the diamond mine for His Majesty Selim Schia [Salīm Shāh, the Mughal Emperor Jahāngīr]. However, [he] has been sent back by the King of Golkonda with such decent gifts. They gave more than sixteen ponds of diamonds, made up of the collected stones from twelve to forty-five–fifty carats. In addition, [they gave]

²⁶ Coen, vol. 1, 611.

²⁷ As for the number of people working there, Methwold says, “there worke not daily fewer then 30,000 soules,” while Soury’s report (Feb. 29, 1621) says that more than 20,000 men worked every day (Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, 31; OBP 1073, 156r). According to Tavernier, nearly 60,000 people were working in the mid-seventeenth century. Tavernier, vol. 2, 59.

²⁸ Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, 31.

²⁹ Coen, vol. 1, 611.

³⁰ OBP 1073, 170–171v; Prakash, *The Dutch Factories 1617–1623*, 166–167.

³¹ OBP 1074, 286–287; Prakash, *The Dutch Factories 1617–1623*, 180–181.

³² Since the beginning of the century, the Mughals had tried to extend their power into this region and fought with Malik ‘Ambar (the *wazīr* of the Sultanate of Ahmadnagar), and Bijapur and Golkonda were involved in the war. When a temporary cease-fire had been agreed on between the Mughals and the Deccani Sultanates in May 1621, the Mughals claimed a greater amount of reparations from Golkonda than the other two Sultanates. B. G. Tamaskar, *The Life and Work of Malik Ambar* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1978), 77–117; H. K. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1974), 388–392.

millions of ducats and more than eighty elephants, on which [the ambassador] went back to his Emperor.”³³ Although he left Golkonda in April 1622, it took some time before the mine was actually opened. Nevertheless, hearing the possibility of resuming mining, people were already on their way to the area.³⁴

Even during the period that the Kollur mine was closed, the VOC tried to continue purchasing diamonds, though the prices rose until they doubled. After the mine was reopened at the beginning of 1623, the Dutch exported the stones for a while. In March 1624, 1,561 carats were sent from the Coromandel Coast to Batavia.³⁵ In the following two years, however, it was more difficult to obtain many stones because mining was declared a royal monopoly and no merchants were allowed to purchase them in the mining area.³⁶ This policy was abolished in 1626 and the purchase of diamonds was again allowed, but even though the prices had dropped a little they were still at a high level such that the VOC could not buy the raw stones as it wanted.³⁷

In the first half of the 1630s, the diamond trade on the Coromandel Coast was very limited, because of the social unrest caused by the famine and wars. While in the south, civil war reemerged among the Vijayanagar princes and courtiers in 1630,³⁸ in the north, Shāh Jahān, the new Mughal emperor, marched to conquer the Sultanate of Ahmadnagar that same year. The latter’s last fort, Daulatabad, was captured in 1633. As for the other two Deccani Sultanates, Shāh Jahān ordered his governor of Orissa to advance into the Andhra territory and capture it, while part of his army attacked the Bijapuris. Finally in 1635, the emperor sent ultimatums in the form of imperial *farmāns* to Bijapur and to Golkonda. In May 1636, both Sultanates accepted Mughal suzerainty and signed the *Inqiyād Nāma* or the “Deed of Submission”; this meant the end of the independent status of the two Deccani Sultanates.³⁹

Even under the above-mentioned chaotic situation, the VOC continued its efforts to purchase diamonds in this area. From around 1630, the Company focused on another mine called “Erregonde Palim” (or just “Palem,” “Palam,” etc.)

³³ OBP 1076, 402v.

³⁴ Coen, vol. 7, 1065.

³⁵ Coen, vol. 7, 1095; C. Heeres et al., eds., *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts-India, 1624–1682* [henceforth: *DR*] (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1887–1931), 1624–29, 33.

³⁶ OBP 1085, 217r.

³⁷ OBP 1090, 248v, 250v; *GM*, vol. 1, 206; Coen, vol. 7, 1178, 1184, 1346, 1447, 1761.

³⁸ Raychaudhuri says that the king, Rama Deva Raya, died in May 1630. On the other hand, Rama Sharma suggests that “Rama Deva Raya was spoken of again as reigning from Penukonda in July 1633” after being held captive for a few years. Soon afterwards, however, his reign came to an end. Raychaudhuri, 41–42; Rama Sharma, 157–170.

³⁹ Sherwani, 433–438.

instead of the mine of Kollur.⁴⁰ According to the report from Masulipatnam dated November 25, 1630, the *opperkoopman* Hendrick de Witte, bought diamonds of 327 3/4 *mangelins* for about 9,500 pagodas at the mine.⁴¹ It was “a place where most Banjaennen (*baniyās*) from Goa come to buy their diamonds,” and many rich merchants lived there. “The Neick (*nāyaka*) of this region” was independent in fact, and it seems that he was regarded as one of the vassals or leaseholders by the Golkonda Sultan.⁴²

It was not easy to obtain good quality diamonds at a reasonable price, even from Erragondapalem. In order to proceed with their purchases, the VOC factors on the Coromandel Coast emphasized sending “a good *diamandt kender* (diamond expert)” to the mine.⁴³ In 1634, Balthasar van Daelen who “seems to have a fairly good knowledge about them [diamonds]” arrived at Masulipatnam and was dispatched to the mine of Erragondapalem with the *koopman*, Claes Cornelisz.⁴⁴ They actually bought and brought back 1,266 1/8 *mangelins* of stones in 1636, but most of them were very small. This is because “shortly before their visit, a caffel of benjaen [*qāfila* (namely caravan) of *baniyās*] had left, and it is said that they could have carried away more than one hundred thousand pagodas of stones, probably to sell most of them in Goa.”⁴⁵ At the end of 1636, the VOC at Batavia obtained 2,680 11/16 *mangelins* of diamonds (for about fl. 45,566), among which 2,614 7/8 *mangelins* (including those bought at the mine and in Masulipatnam and Petapuli) were sent from Masulipatnam in September.⁴⁶

In the next year, it is reported that Erragondapalem was attacked and

⁴⁰ Later, Pieter de Lange calls this mine “Erregoudepalem” or “Erregoude Palem.” Van Dam, 178; *DR 1663*, 369; it might be identified as Erragondapalem (“Yerragondapollem” seen on Maclean, vol. 3, 476). A number of mines were found in this region. Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, sheet 15B.

⁴¹ *Mangelin* is a unit of weight for diamonds. A *mangelin* is equivalent to about a carat, though it has some variations. For example, Tavernier says at the mines of Ramallakota a *mangelin* is equal to 1 3/4 carats, while in the Sultanates of Golkonda and Bijapur it is 1 3/8. Tavernier, vol. 2, 98–99.

⁴² OBP 1100, 140v–141r.

⁴³ OBP 1105, 184r; OBP 1109, 301r.

⁴⁴ OBP 1113, 325v, 330r; OBP 1119, 1096.

⁴⁵ OBP 1119, 1101. Van Daelen passed away soon after coming back from the mine. The factors in Masulipatnam suspected that he had bought diamonds privately and entrusted some of them to Roeland Crape, who was then in the service of the Danish East India Company at Tranquebar, but Crape asserted that van Daelen had only asked him to give a message to his wife. OBP 1119, 1117–1118. He returned to Denmark on Nov. 30, 1636. Coen, vol. 7, 1828; *GM*, vol. 1, 186, footnote 2; Om Prakash, trans., annot., and ed., *The Dutch Factories in India 1624–1627: A Collection of Dutch East India Company Documents Pertaining to India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2007), 96, footnote 3.

⁴⁶ *GM*, vol. 1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1906), 565; OBP 1119, 1152.

devastated by the Sultan of Golkonda who coveted a large and beautiful diamond of the *nāyaka*. No stones were brought for sale because the inhabitants escaped and the merchants left for fear of battles.⁴⁷ The Sultan who took control of the region suspended mining for a short period and only 335 1/8 *mangelins* (or 461 7/16 carats) of diamonds were received in Batavia in 1637. That year, the VOC bought diamonds from Sukadana in order to meet demand.⁴⁸ Mining at Erragondapalem was soon allowed again and local merchants went to buy stones there, even though the VOC factors on the Coromandel Coast complained of the high prices and the lack of money that prevented them from purchasing stones profitably.⁴⁹ However, toward the end of the 1630, they expected the trade conditions to improve. Another *diamant kender* named Pieter Lems was sent to Masulipatnam in April 1638 to engage in the purchase of diamonds.⁵⁰

Between 1620 and around 1640, the mines in the northeastern part of Deccan were the main source of diamonds for the VOC. The famous mine of Kollur was not far from Masulipatnam, the principal port of the Sultanate of Golkonda, where the Dutch had their factory since 1606. Erragondapalem was also taken under the control of the Golkonda Sultan, as mentioned above. In this period, Masulipatnam was the export center of diamonds from India for the VOC. Although there were rich diamond deposits in the hinterlands, it was difficult for the Company to obtain stones on a regular basis. The trade was often affected by economic, social, and political conditions, for example, the high prices of the stones, the activities of their competitors, the social unrest caused by wars, and the ruler's policy on mining. The diamond experts' knowledge was regarded as beneficial during a purchase because getting stones of quality at a reasonable price was always an issue.

3. Northward Trend: Diamonds Exported from Coromandel and Surat (1640–1660)

In the early 1640s, the Dutch diamond trade in India still remained sluggish. But demand in the European markets recovered after a short slump⁵¹ and the orders for diamonds came to the Coromandel factories. Arent Gardenijs, the *gouverneur* (governor) at Pulicat, knew that the directors were not pleased with the stagnant procurement of diamonds and with his complaint about the shortage of capital. In 1642, it seems that he made a great effort to obtain stones, including those for

⁴⁷ OBP 1122, 673v–674r.

⁴⁸ *GM*, vol. 1, 625–626, 629; Alam, 306–307.

⁴⁹ OBP 1127, 214r–v.

⁵⁰ OBP 1127, 200v.

⁵¹ Raychaudhuri, 172.

6,903 pagodas sent in February.⁵² He sent a *diamant slijper* (diamond polisher) to Masulipatnam in case the purchases proceeded further.⁵³ At the end of that same year, they exported to the Netherlands from Batavia 5,457 pieces of diamonds weighing 4,845 carats that had been purchased in Masulipatnam for about fl. 86,000.⁵⁴

However, Masulipatnam and other factories along the Coromandel Coast were no longer the most important providers to the VOC. In 1642, 4,829 pieces of diamonds from Sukadana (1,261 7/8 carats) were bought at fl. 12,818 3/4. The price was cheaper than those from Coromandel.⁵⁵ In March 1643, diamonds from Sukadana for 2,500 reals were purchased at Batavia and more were expected to be bought at more reasonable pieces.⁵⁶ In addition to Sukadana, which had provided certain quantities of stones for years, Surat attracted more attention than before. In December 1643, the return fleet left Batavia with raw diamonds worth about fl. 100,000, consisting of fl. 42,000 from the Coast, fl. 37,000 from Sukkadana, and fl. 21,000 from Surat.⁵⁷ In 1643, the VOC made a contract with Shāntīdās Jawāharī, a Jain merchant of Ahmadabad who was known as a famous jewel dealer, to supply diamonds from the mines in Golkonda.⁵⁸ From that year, the Dutch ships from Surat often carried diamonds to Batavia among other items such as indigo, yarns, and a variety of textiles.⁵⁹

Considering the location, diamond exports from Surat seem to have been less convenient for the VOC than from Masulipatnam and the other Coromandel ports. Surat was definitely the most important port in the Mughal territory and had close links with Ahmadabad, the capital of the *ṣūba* (province) of Gujarat, which was one of the centers of industry, commerce, and trade in the empire from 1573 when Akbar annexed the city. In addition, the jewelry trade and industry occupied an

⁵² OBP 1135, 366v–367r; OBP 1138, 712v, 730v, 739r, 786v.

⁵³ OBP 1138, 713r.

⁵⁴ *GM*, vol. 2 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 168.

⁵⁵ *GM*, vol. 2, 168, 181.

⁵⁶ *GM*, vol. 2, 199.

⁵⁷ *GM*, vol. 2, 200. At that time, however, Batavia was also informed that the diamonds from Sukadana had been sold in the Netherlands at a loss.

⁵⁸ *DR 1643–1644*, 181; H. van Santen, “De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in Gujarat en Hidustan, 1620–1660” (Ph.D. diss., Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1982), 31; As for the life and career of Shāntīdās, see following studies: M. S. Commissariat, *A History of Gujarat: With a Survey of Its Monuments and Inscriptions*, vol. 2, *The Mughal Period from 1573 to 1758* (Bombay, 1957); Kondō Osamu, *Mugaru-chō Indoshi no kenkyū* [Studies in the history of Mughal India] (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2003), 145–177; Makrand Mehta, *Indian Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Historical Perspective: With Special Reference to Shroffs of Gujarat: 17th to 19th Centuries* (Delhi: Academic Foundation, 1991), 91–113.

⁵⁹ *GM*, vol. 2, 250, 290, 336, 765.

important place in the city.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, if the diamonds came from the mines in Golkonda, then why did the Dutch Company purchase the ones carried all the way to Surat, although they had factories on the Coromandel Coast, for example, the one in Masulipatnam, which were located much closer to the mining area?

Here, we have to inquire, to some extent, into the state of affairs around the mines. For years, the two sultanates of Bijapur and of Golkonda were aiming to take the rich Karnatak region to their south, which had a number of diamond mines. Bijapur was the one who took the first step into the region earlier, but the Golkonda army made a greater impact on the Erragondapalem mine and the VOC diamond trade. In 1642, Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd Ardīstānī, the able *sar-khayl* (Director of Revenue [literally, “head of cavalry”]), and the other generals of Golkonda advanced southward into the Karnatak region with an army of forty thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and artillery. His army successfully overran the coastal regions of the Nellore plains to the north of Pulicat. The Sultan was so pleased with his success that he presented Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd with robes of honor and the title of *mīr jumla* (Minister of Finance [literally, “prince of the sum”]). When Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd left for the Golkonda court, the Vijayanagar army recovered some of the conquered area, including Udayagiri, one of the important forts located on the borderland of the two states. The Golkonda forces suffered a temporary setback during the short absence of Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd. However, he came back to the battlefield soon. After the second capture of the Udayagiri fort in early 1645, he advanced westward and annexed a number of fortresses.⁶¹

During the second Karnatak campaign of Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd, Erragondapalem was involved in conflicts between Vijayanagar and Golkonda. The Golkonda army of four thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry proceeded and triumphed there in March 1645.⁶² At the end of April, the *Nāyaka* of Erragondapalem sent about eight thousand–ten thousand infantry to join the Golkonda troops, but the Vijayanagar army secretly approached the brother of the *Nāyaka* who commanded the infantry, and persuaded him to come over to the other side. When the brother joined Vijayanagar, the Golkonda army was filled with dismay and retired toward the coastal region for a while.⁶³ After making temporary peace with Vijayanagar, Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd “decided to march to the mountains of Erregonde Palen with the whole Golkonda army, reinforced with about four thousand Bijapuri horsemen” in order to complete the conquest there. He could capture “the town Deddenael,

⁶⁰ Mehta, 93–97. As for the economic importance of Ahmadabad, see B. G. Gokhale, “Ahmadabad in the 17th Century,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of Orient* 12, no. 2 (1969): 187–197; Kondō, 126–129.

⁶¹ Sherwani, 455–459; Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, *The Life of Mir Jumla: The General of Aurangzeb*, 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Rajesh Publications, 1979), 32–38.

⁶² OBP 1156, 349v.

⁶³ OBP 1156, 241r.

the *Nāyaka*'s resident place and [that is] reputed as a never defeated fortress" while facing little resistance because the *Nāyaka* was thrown off his horse and died before the armies clashed. The *Nāyaka*'s sons and their mother who had escaped to a high mountain negotiated with Mīr Muḥammad Sa'īd by presenting a great sum of pagodas.⁶⁴ Then, "the mother of the perished nejcx of Palem (*Nāyaka* of Erragondapalem) was accorded with the above-mentioned Mr. Miersumela (*Mīr Jumla*) that the eldest son succeeded to the former estate of his father, provided that Sercheil (*sar-khayl*) had confirmed the necessity."⁶⁵

What had caused these events around the diamond mining and trading in Golkonda? Of course, the war brought chaos to Erragondapalem and affected the diamond production and the business of merchants. It became unsafe to go to the mine and most residents escaped from the region. In March 1645, the VOC factors in Masulipatnam reported, "since the last purchase, not [even] a stone has been brought for sale."⁶⁶

In addition to these direct effects, we now know that Erragondapalem was taken under the influence of Mīr Muḥammad Sa'īd, whose interest in diamonds has often been pointed out.⁶⁷ Several contemporary European travelers tell of his great wealth, including a large amount of diamonds.⁶⁸ In particular, Tavernier visited him in Gandikota and saw "five small bags full of diamonds, and each bag contained about as many as one could hold in the hand."⁶⁹ The Dutch letter from Masulipatnam in February 1651 indicated his power on Erragondapalem. It also says that no diamonds had come to them so far but "most [stones] are falling into his hand." Then it seems that he sold them to "Mooren (Muslims) and Armeniers (Armenians)" to bring the diamonds to Turkey.⁷⁰ We have other evidence, to a lesser extent, supporting his influence on the Erragondapalem mine. Pieter de Lange writes in his 1663 report on diamond mines that Erragondapalem "is situated around the famous fortress of Gendicotte (Gandikota) but, according to the Benjanen (*baniyās*) in Coeloer (Kollur), [it] fell into great decay for these seven or

⁶⁴ OBP 1157, 759v–760v.

⁶⁵ DR 1644–1645, 362.

⁶⁶ OBP 1156, 350v.

⁶⁷ Sarkar, 76–77; Sherwani, 473; Subrahmanyam, 323–326.

⁶⁸ Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656–1668*, trans. Archibald Constable, 2nd ed., revised by Vincent A. Smith (1934; repr., Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1994), 16–17; Srengnanath Sen, ed., *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri* (New Delhi: The National Archives of India, 1949), 144–145; Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor, or Mogul India 1653–1708*, trans. William Irvine, vol. 1 (1907; repr., New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1981), 223.

⁶⁹ Tavernier, vol. 1, 230. Gandikota was a hill-fortress famous as impregnable. Mīr Muḥammad Sa'īd occupied this fortress of strategic importance in 1650 and made it the chief town of his considerable conquests. Sarkar, 48–51; Sherwani, 441, 459.

⁷⁰ OBP 1184, 313v.

eight years, not so much by the shortage of stones as by the decline in [the number of] merchants, who had lived there before, and of the native miners, who wanted to escape from the severe reign.”⁷¹ This suggests that there was an important change in the administration of the region in the mid-1650s. It almost coincides with when Mīr Muḥammad Sa‘īd left Golkonda and served the Mughals. Assuming that he was the one who supported the diamond business in Erragondapalem, we can say that the fact that he left from Deccan might have contributed to its decline as well. If Mīr Muḥammad Sa‘īd ran the diamond business and sold stones to Muslim and Armenian merchants, as reported in the above Dutch letter, it is possible that the merchants established business relationships with him. Then, they could send or carry the diamonds to Surat, Ahmadabad, and the other towns in the north—in addition to the other markets in India—using the inland trade network of local merchants.

The diamonds exported from Surat might have come from mines other than Golkonda or south India. As for the location of the diamond mines in the northern part of India, there are several accounts of mines in Bengal.⁷² But it is doubtful whether they produced a considerable amount of stones regularly during the period under consideration. According to Tavernier, they had found diamonds in the River Koel, but “a long time has elapsed since anything has been obtained in this river on account of the wars.”⁷³ In his report in 1663, Pieter de Lange says that people did not visit the Bengal mine because of “the unhealthy weather” and “bad administration,” but “sometimes a certain quantity [of stones] was brought from there up to Agra and Dilly (Delhi), as well as to Suratte (Surat), and they were good in [terms of] beauty.”⁷⁴ The account by the Earl Marshal of England also says that there were diamond mines in Bengal. He adds, however, that little or no commerce was admitted there, and digging diamonds was either forbidden or allowed only privately.⁷⁵ Since all of these accounts suggest that Bengali mines were not for open trade in the latter half of the seventeenth century, it seems reasonable to suppose that the diamonds exported from Surat also came from the south.

In the 1640s and 1650s, the VOC continued to obtain diamonds from Surat while it was much more difficult to purchase in Coromandel. This fact shows they bought some stones brought to Surat by the local merchants. The influence of

⁷¹ Van Dam, 178. Pieter de Lange was then the *secunde* (second) of Pulicat. For his career, see *GM*, vol. 3 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), 588, footnote 3.

⁷² For the discussion by V. Ball about the diamond mines of Bengal, see Tavernier, vol. 2, 354–359.

⁷³ Tavernier, vol. 2, 65–67.

⁷⁴ Van Dam, 177.

⁷⁵ The Earl Marshal, “A Description of the Diamond-mines, as It was Presented by the Right Honourable, the Earl Marshal of England, to the R. Society,” *Philosophical Transactions* 12 (1677): 907–917.

Mīr Muḥammad Saʿīd on the diamond business mentioned earlier is one of the possible reasons of this northward trend of diamonds. Besides, it may be an impact of getting a closer connection between Deccan and the Mughal territory since the Deccan states accepted the *Inqiyād Nāma* in 1636, though we have little space for a detailed examination here.⁷⁶ The Portuguese and local merchants from Goa also bought a large number of raw stones from Golkonda. In 1641, the ten-year truce was signed between the Portuguese King and the United Provinces in Europe, and the armistice was published in November 1644 in Goa. Then the merchants from Goa resumed purchases of large quantities of diamonds in Golkonda after the slowdown in their trade to Europe since the late 1630s.⁷⁷ The purchase by the merchants from various places pushed up the prices and made the VOC's trades more difficult. In 1651, only 417 carats (197 pieces) could be bought in Coromandel.⁷⁸ In 1652, the VOC was to spend fl. 100,000 to procure raw stones from Coromandel, but it took more time to fulfill the petition from the Netherlands because the prices had just declined to the previous level.⁷⁹ Still in the 1650s, the VOC factories in Coromandel could not send as many diamonds as they used to. They sent no diamonds to Batavia in 1657. Purchases by Armenians reportedly pushed up prices by 40 percent.⁸⁰

4. Decline of the VOC Diamond Trade (after 1660)

In the 1660s, demand for diamonds in Europe rose steadily. The stones from the Coromandel Coast sold at a gross profit of 166 1/2 percent in 1661–1662, while the supplies from Surat yielded 118 percent profit.⁸¹ This shows that the Coromandel diamonds were more profitable than those from Surat. In these years, the VOC ships

⁷⁶ As to the coins in Golkonda, for example, when the sultanate became a tributary of the Mughals, the Sultan of Golkonda was forced to strike Mughal silver rupees, while the standard coin of Golkonda had been that of the indigenous pre-Muslim kingdoms, the gold pagoda or *hun*. At the same time, not only the Sultan but also his *ḥavāldārs* were required to submit a *pīshkash* (tribute) to the Mughal Emperor. Sherwani, 436–437, 466–470. Iftikhar Ahmad Ghauri, “Local Government under the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golconda-Haidarabad,” *Islamic Culture* 51 (1977): 58. While the tributary relationship promoted assimilation of the economy of the Deccan Sultanate with that of the Empire, the process was rather slow. According to J. F. Richards, “Right up to the Mughal conquest the monetary system of Golconda remained firmly based on gold.” J. F. Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 135.

⁷⁷ Raychaudhuri, 172.

⁷⁸ *GM*, vol. 2, 561.

⁷⁹ *GM*, vol. 2, 598–599; Raychaudhuri, 172.

⁸⁰ *GM*, vol. 3, 201; Alam, 308.

⁸¹ Raychaudhuri, 173.

from Surat came to Batavia with cargoes that included diamonds, but subsequently the purchases in Surat were discontinued.⁸² Pieter de Lange said in his 1663 report that the Company would be able to obtain diamonds on the Coromandel Coast at cheaper prices than in Surat because “the Surat merchants have to be burdened with various unavoidable expenses” such as exchange losses when changing rupees into pagodas after coming to the mines.⁸³ In September 1664, the Company’s ships left Batavia for Surat with orders stipulating, “The purchase of diamonds should be conducted only on Coromandel and that in Surat should be stopped.”⁸⁴ Shāntīdās Jawāharī, the Ahmadabad jeweler under contract with the VOC for supplying diamonds sent from Surat, had passed away around the end of the 1650s.⁸⁵

As for the procurement of diamonds on the Coromandel Coast, however, the VOC had to confront difficulties, especially the increasing purchases by private merchants based on Madras. In 1660, the EIC formally legalized private imports of diamonds, which had already been taking place.⁸⁶ Since then, more English merchants bought up the raw stones in India. The Dutch sources tell us how briskly the English purchased diamonds and how much their business affected the VOC’s trade. As early as 1661, the prices of stones on the Coromandel Coast reportedly remained rather high, but the English, who showed great zeal in pursuit of the stones, “seized all [the pieces], whether [they were] dirty or beautiful.”⁸⁷ In March 1663, de Lange, then an *opperkoopman*, was sent to the mines in Golkonda with 2,500 pagodas at the direction of the *gouverneur* of Coromandel, Laurence Pit, because no stones had been brought to Pulicat due to the purchases by the English. But the attempt to buy stones was in vain. Soon afterwards, knowing the English intention to send a ship with a considerable amount of reals “for the purchase of all sorts of diamonds” in Golkonda, the Dutch factors in Coromandel decided to spend 10,000–12,000 old pagodas for such stones, “but [they could] not [complete] before the English ships left and their purchase was done.”⁸⁸ In addition, they say the prices of diamonds were increasing 30–35 percent.⁸⁹

The turnabout of the EIC and consequent vigorous investment by the English merchants affected not only the VOC diamond trade but also the destination of

⁸² *DR 1661*, 152, 201; *DR 1663*, 453; *GM*, vol. 3, 435.

⁸³ Van Dam, 177; Alam, 309–310.

⁸⁴ *DR 1664*, 351.

⁸⁵ It is not known exactly when he died. As for the discussion of the date, see Kondō, 172, 177 note 42.

⁸⁶ In 1650, the EIC gave official permission to ship-owners and the ships’ officers to import diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones from India. Yogeve, 82–83; Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work*, 116–117.

⁸⁷ *DR 1661*, 128.

⁸⁸ *DR 1663*, 566.

⁸⁹ *DR 1663*, 586.

diamonds from mines. De Lange wrote that from the beginning of October 1662, 191,000 pagodas worth of diamonds had been sent to various places, namely 70,000 pagodas to Goa, 80,000 to Surat, 18,000 to Masulipatnam, and 23,000 to Madraspatnam.⁹⁰ This suggests that Madras had emerged as an important market for diamonds. Consequently, Dutch reportedly could not obtain any stones in Pulicat or Masulipatnam because few pieces were for sale.⁹¹

In 1670–1671, several ships carried cargos, including diamonds, from Coromandel to Batavia.⁹² In the beginning of 1674, there were 2,139 pieces of diamonds in Batavia, which were bought on Coromandel in 1672, but subsequently procurement ceased.⁹³ This cessation was a result of the death of two diamond experts, van Cloon and Bruynzeel, and a shortage of capital.⁹⁴ In the 1670s, the VOC's diamond trade was dwindling. Then in March 1683, private diamond trade was formerly legalized.⁹⁵ Although the Company did not completely abandon the direct import of diamonds from India, its trade no longer had any significance in the eighteenth century.⁹⁶

Given its history, the VOC's diamond trade in India started around 1620 and continued as a Company monopoly for about half a century. However, the Company often suffered unstable procurement because of changing social and political situations around the mines. It had to compete against rival merchants, such as those from Goa, Surat, and other Indian market towns and later the English in Madras. The diamond trade was, as with other trading in luxury goods, a speculative business. The diamond experts engaged in purchasing raw stones were helpful in evading risk to some extent, but, at the same time, those with enough knowledge bear the possibility of getting involved in private trade.⁹⁷ The price fluctuations were another problem. In particular, when the raw stones were too expensive, the VOC's factors in India had to carefully consider how much capital they could spend for diamonds, and they often suspended purchases. From this viewpoint, the VOC's diamond trade in India was necessarily diminishing after the 1660s when the English private merchants started to buy more raw stones, leading to higher prices. However fascinating diamonds were, the Company and its factors did not face an easy task in trying to purchase the stones in India.

⁹⁰ Van Dam, 176.

⁹¹ *DR 1663*, 489.

⁹² *DR 1670–1671*, 176, 195, 202, 456.

⁹³ *GM*, vol. 3, 908.

⁹⁴ *GM*, vol. 3, 945.

⁹⁵ Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1988), 227.

⁹⁶ Yogev, 284 note 8.

⁹⁷ For example, see note 45. As space is limited, further investigation of this topic remains to be done.

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