

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**The Evolutionary Empire:
Demystifying State Formation in Mughal
South Asia 1556-1707**

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Economic History of the London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London

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Declaration

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Abstract

This doctoral thesis studies how conflicts affected state formation in the Mughal empire. Specifically, it shows that the precarious relationship between the state and powerful elites (*Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*) led the state to adopt policies which prioritised local governance and empowered the elite. The administrative skills of this elite incentivised the state to adopt a state-building strategy of conciliation and cooperation. High costs of conflict made these elites increasingly valuable to the state because of their effectiveness at administering at lower costs. As the costs and nature of conflicts changed over time, the state adapted to these challenges by ‘localising’ the structure of administration.

Where recent literature on Mughal state has been more qualitative, I adopt a relatively more quantitative approach to measuring the effects of conflict on state development over time. By building or digitising new datasets of Mughal conflicts and government officials, I map the empire’s institutional transformation and identify critical periods of structural change. I supplement the statistical findings with case-study analysis and anecdotal evidence to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms involved. I compare patterns of development to other Asian empires to highlight the divergent paths of development within the continent.

This thesis bridges and contributes towards two literatures which have not engaged with one another methodologically: 1) debates on the development of precolonial India and 2) the role of conflicts on the state capacity of early modern states. Whilst both literatures have increasingly stressed the importance of high information costs in influencing the management of elite intermediaries in early modern states, how conflict pressures influenced state policies in Mughal India have yet to be explored fully. My findings challenge literature that has argued the state’s structure was centralised and static in the seventeenth century. The findings instead demonstrate a dynamic evolution of the empire over the period. The findings additionally highlight the importance of local cultures, institutions and environments in influencing paths of state formation.

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Table of Contents

DECLARATION	2
ABSTRACT	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
NOTES ON CITATIONS	8
GLOSSARY OF PERSIAN WORDS	9
INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS	11
<hr/>	
BACKGROUND OF THE MUGHAL STATE	15
TAXATION IN THE EMPIRE	17
STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION OF TAX COLLECTION	22
BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW:	29
MUGHAL HISTORIOGRAPHY DEBATES	30
STATE CAPACITY LITERATURE	41
METHODS, SOURCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS:	53
OUTLINE OF THE THESIS:	55
CHAPTER 1 - THE MUGHAL CONFLICT DATABASE: A GUIDE TO COMPILATION AND USAGE	58
<hr/>	
INTRODUCTION	58
SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY	61
SECTION 2.1: CLASSIFYING THE DATA	64
SECTION 2.1.1 DEFINITIONS OF CONFLICT TYPE	65
SECTION 2.1.2: CLASSIFICATION OF CLASS REBELLION	67
SECTION 2.1.3: THE RANK SIZE METRIC	69
SECTION 2.2: RECORDING THE DATA	71
SECTION 2.2.1: SOFTWARE CHOICES	71
SECTION 2.2.2: DESCRIPTION OF TABLES	73
SECTION 3: SOURCES	77
SECTION 3.1: TRANSLATIONS	77
SECTION 3.2: ASSUMPTIONS MADE WHEN COMPILING THE DATABASE	80
SECTION 3.3: INTERPRETING THE DATA	82
SECTION 3.4: WHICH OFFICIAL HISTORIES?	83
SECTION 3.5: SOURCE COVERAGE	90
SECTION 4: DATABASE OVERVIEW:	91
CHAPTER 2 - EXPLAINING REBEL FORGIVENESS AND STATE CAPACITY	95
<hr/>	
I - INTRODUCTION	95
II - LITERATURE REVIEW	97
III BACKGROUND OF THE MUGHAL STATE	99
IV METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES	100
V – REBELLION FORGIVENESS IN THE DATA AND SOURCES	101

VI – FORGIVENESS AS COST MANAGEMENT	110
VII CREDIBLE FORGIVENESS – THE RISK OF RETURNING TO THE STATE	114
VIII - STATISTICAL EVIDENCE	119
IX – CASE STUDIES	125
CASE 1: NAZAR MUHAMMAD KHAN’S RETURN TO TRIBUTARY RULE (1646)	125
CASE 2: BHIM NARAYAN’S REBELLION IN KUTCH BIHAR (1660-1662) - LOCAL LOYALTIES AND THE HIGH COSTS OF CENTRALISED RULE	126
CASE 3: MILITARY SKILLS OF INTERMEDIARIES – RAJPUTS, ZAMINDARS AND SIDI YAQUT	128
CASE 4: CHAMPAT BUNDELA, ABU’L HASAN, TAHAWAR KAHN - REBEL NON-FORGIVENESS	132
CASE 5: REBEL BARGAINING POWER AND NEGOTIATION	135
CASE 6: AGHAR KHAN - LABOUR MARKET	138
X. CONCLUSION AND WIDER IMPLICATIONS	143

CHAPTER 3 - CONFLICT, CLIMATE AND STATE CAPACITY **145**

INTRODUCTION	145
II CHANGES IN CONFLICT PATTERNS OVER THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	148
III SYSTEMIC EXPLANATIONS OF THE CRISIS	158
IV CLIMATE AS A CONTRIBUTING INSTIGATOR OF REBELLION	166
V STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND STATE RESPONSE	174
RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT	182
VI CONCLUSION	184

CHAPTER 4 - THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES IN STATE FORMATION (1574-1658) **186**

INTRODUCTION	186
II. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW	189
III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES	195
IV. NUMBERS AND SALARIES OF STATE OFFICIALS	202
IV - I ESTIMATING TRENDS IN TOTAL SALARY EXPENDITURES	202
IV - II ESTIMATING TRENDS IN AVERAGE SALARIES OF OFFICIALS	206
IV-III SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS	211
V. CONFLICT AND LOCALISATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY	212
V - I RELATIONSHIP WITH CONFLICT AND STATE FORMATION	212
V - II POLITICAL AND FISCAL PATTERNS OF CENTRALISATION	221
V – III SUMMARY	233
VI. CONCLUSION	234

CHAPTER 5 - GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AND CONFLICT INCENTIVES: AN ASIAN DIVERGENCE **238**

INTRODUCTION	238
II. INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISONS OF REBELLIOUS ELITES	240
III. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY	244
IV. COMPARISONS OF STATE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	248
V. MONITORING, INFORMATION AND BARGAINING POWER OF ELITES	251
VI. CONCLUSION	260

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION – STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF EMPIRE IN THE MUGHAL GOLDEN AGE	261
<hr/>	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	269
<hr/>	
PRIMARY SOURCES	269
SECONDARY LITERATURE	270
APPENDICES	287
<hr/>	
APPENDIX 1.A TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY MUGHAL HISTORIES	287
APPENDIX 1.B MUGHAL CONFLICT DATABASE CONFLICT LIST	289
APPENDIX 2.A TABLE OF REBELS	309
APPENDIX 3.A GRAPHS FROM CLIMATE HISTORY LITERATURE INDICATING PERIODS OF ABNORMAL CLIMATE	329
APPENDIX 3.B REBELLION RANKING EXPLANATION	331
APPENDIX 3.C FAMINES PER PROVINCE CALCULATIONS	332
APPENDIX 4.A SALARY BANDS AND SOCIAL CLASSES	333
APPENDIX 4.B SALARY CLASS BANDS COMPARED	336
APPENDIX 4.C SAWAR TRENDS RELATIVE TO ZAT TRENDS	337
APPENDIX 4.D CATEGORISATION OF VARIABLES	338
APPENDIX 4.E TOTAL AND AVERAGE SALARIES WITHOUT CHANGES IN SALARY SCALES	339
APPENDIX 4.G SALARIES EXCLUDING SMALLER ZATS (LESS THAN 1000)	340
APPENDIX 4.H SALARIES FOR YEARS IN DECADES WITH THE MOST DATAPPOINTS	341
APPENDIX 4.I CONFLICT INTENSITY BY PROVINCE ACROSS TIME	343

Notes on Citations

This thesis uses the Chicago Manual Style 17th Edition Footnote Citations for Referencing. This means that block quotes longer than five lines do not have quotation marks around them, though they can be identified by the quotes being single spaced and indented within the text. For the same reason, 'ibid' is not used for consecutive citations from the same text.

As many of the contemporary Mughal writers had the same last name (e.g. Khan), shortened citations for Mughal primary sources will give the full name of the author.

At times it is necessary to cite a footnote within a translation or an article. When footnotes within a secondary text are cited, the number of the footnote is given in the form "page number"n"footnote number." For example, if citing the 2nd footnote on the 14th page, the citation would be: 14n2.

Glossary of Persian Words

Glossary of common Mughal terms and their broad meaning in English. This does not cover all the Persian words used in this dissertation but many of them. The English meanings of the words are simplified explanations, where there is often more nuance which cannot be included for the sake of brevity.

<i>Persian Word</i>	English Meaning (Simplified)
<i>Amin</i>	Land Surveyor/ Revenue Assessor
<i>Azardasht</i>	petition
<i>Bakhshi</i>	Military Paymaster and intelligence manager
<i>Chaudhri</i>	Semi-hereditary parganah level official. Often involved in revenue collection
<i>Darogha</i>	Superintendent
<i>Diwan</i>	Revenue officer
<i>farman</i>	Emperor's edict
<i>Faujdar</i>	Sub-provincial governor
<i>fitna</i>	Literally sedition, however Andre wink uses it to describe the process of reincorporation
<i>Gaveti</i>	Resident peasant (i.e. non migratory)
<i>Hakim</i>	judge
<i>hasil</i>	Revenue collected
<i>Ijarah</i>	Revenue farming
<i>Jagir</i>	Revenue Assignment rights (i.e. right to collect revenue). Usually as part of salaries for the Mansabdars
<i>Jagirdar</i>	Holder of Jagirs
<i>Jama'</i>	Revenue assessed
<i>Karori</i>	Local Revenue Collector
<i>khalisa</i>	Crown land (funds the imperial household)
<i>Khudkasht</i>	Self-cultivated
<i>Kotwal</i>	Local Police, usually head of a town
<i>Kufia Navis</i>	Secret News Reporter
<i>Mahal</i>	Unit for revenue purposes. Same as Parganah
<i>Mansab</i>	'Rank' or 'Office' of official
<i>Mansabdar</i>	An official with a rank. Can have civil or military role.
<i>Mufti</i>	Religious theologian

<i>Persian Word</i>	English Meaning (Simplified)
<i>Muqqaddam</i>	Village Headman
<i>Pahi</i>	Migrating peasant
<i>Paibaqi</i>	Jagir land not assigned to a <i>jagirdar</i>
<i>Parganah</i>	Sub-sub provincial district
<i>piyada</i>	footman
<i>Qanungo</i>	Parganah level revenue officer
<i>Qasba</i>	town
<i>Qazi</i>	Judge
<i>Qiledar</i>	Fort commander
<i>Ryat / ryot</i>	‘Subject,’ often means peasant
<i>Sadr</i>	Religious Official
<i>Sarkar</i>	Sub-provincial district
<i>Sawar</i>	Military Contingent rank of official (part of the Mansab Rank)
<i>Subah</i>	Province
<i>Subahdar</i>	Provincial governor
<i>Thanedar</i>	Sub-sub provincial governor
<i>Waqia Navis</i>	News Reporter
<i>Watan jagir</i>	Hereditary jagir – usually given to Chief Zamindars
<i>Zamindar</i>	Wide group of local elites with a claim to the revenue, though not always a part of the administration. Involved in tax collecting but could also be called for military duty. Usually with more local and hereditary rights.
<i>Zat</i>	Status and salary rank of official (part of the Mansab Rank)

Introduction to the Thesis

In the last several years, the global comparative state capacity literature on the nature and development of early modern states has expanded considerably, especially with regard to our understanding of states outside of North-West Europe.¹ Despite this, the Mughal South Asian state (also referred to as empire)² remains unexplored within the larger debates on role of the state in early modern economic development, and the institutional response of governments to internal challenges. This thesis aims to fill this gap. Specifically, it aims to study the effect of conflicts on the development of state capacity through an analysis of rebellions faced by the empire between 1556-1707, the most centralised period of the dynasty. The state formation literature has increasingly highlighted the significance of information costs, transaction costs and conflict in influencing the institutional development of governments, and the Mughal empire provides a fascinating case study of the ways in which early modern states adapted to local constraints and broader exogenous challenges.³

The paradox evident in Mughal state formation patterns especially provide fresh insight into and provoke reconsideration of some of the conventional ideas in the state formation literature, such as whether states which were more centralised or ‘constrained’

¹ A discussion of this literature is given below in the State Capacity Literature review. A few examples of recent literature on state capacity outside of Europe are: Tomas Larsson. “The Strong and the Weak: Ups and Downs of State Capacity in Southeast Asia.” *Asian Politics & Policy* 5, no. 3 (2013): 337–358; Yuping Ni, and Martin Uebele. “Size and Structure of Disaster Relief When State Capacity Is Limited: China’s 1823 Flood.” *Australian Economic History review* 59, no. 1 (2019): 24–54; Kenneth Kalu, Nnamdi Oliver, Oliver Nnamdi Okafor, and Xiaohua Lin. “Strengthening State Capacity in Africa: Lessons from the Washington Versus Beijing Consensus.” *Journal of public affairs* 1, No. 1 (2022).

² Also referred to as the empire for clarity, as it fits Motyl’s definition which is given as follows: “Empires, then, are structurally centralized political systems within which core states and elites dominate peripheral societies, serve as intermediaries for their significant interactions, and channel resource flows from the periphery to the core and back to the periphery. As structured systems, empires need not have emperors, ideologies, and exploitative relationships to be empires; by the same token, non empires may have these features without being empires.” Quote is given in: Yale H. Ferguson “Approaches to Defining ‘Empire’ and Characterizing United States Influence in the Contemporary World.” *International Studies Perspectives* 9, no. 3 (2008): 275

³ This debate is outlined in more detail below in the section on the state capacity literature in more detail. A few of recent (and perhaps more modern) articles as examples are: Debin Ma and Jared Rubin. “The Paradox of Power: Principal-Agent Problems and Administrative Capacity in Imperial China (and Other Absolutist Regimes)” *Journal of Comparative Economics*. [Online] 47 (2), 277–294. (2019); Karthik Muralidharan, Jishnu Das, Alaka Holla, and Aakash Mohpal. “The Fiscal Cost of Weak Governance: Evidence from Teacher Absence in India.” *Journal of Public Economics* 145, no. 145 (2017): 116–135; Martin Lodge, and Kai Wegrich. *The Problem-Solving Capacity of the Modern State: Governance Challenges and Administrative Capacities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014; Dana Georgeta Alexandru, and Beata Guziejewska. “Administrative Capacity as a Constraint to Fiscal Decentralization. The Case of Romania and Poland.” *Comparative economic research. Central and Eastern Europe* 23, no. 1 (2020): 127–143.

were more likely to experience higher economic growth.⁴ The patterns of state formation evident from the sources and literature tends to give a contradictory picture with regard to whether the state was strengthening and centralising or declining and decentralising over the seventeenth century. The empire's rapid expansion both in terms of geographic scale and the number of officials it employed juxtaposes against the numerous and growing internal conflicts the state faced and the financial and political crisis it endured, raising questions of the state's structural form and the causes of decline.⁵ The patterns are even more obscured by the rapid decentralisation of the state in the early eighteenth century immediately after a period some historians have characterised as the state's most centralised.⁶

By studying the state's institutional constraints and how they transformed over time, this thesis attempts to better understand the factors which affected the empire's state formation over time. Specifically, the thesis studies the relationship between the state and the administrative elite it relied on for governance (which from this point are referred to as 'intermediaries') through mapping the conflicts the empire faced. The analysis shows how the diversity within the subcontinent (with regards to geography, culture and environment) led the state to adopt conciliatory governance policies towards the administrative elites within the empire. In this way, this thesis presents a different understanding of the evolution of the state over the seventeenth century, where previous literature has attributed a rise in conflicts in the period to the state's institutional design.⁷ My findings instead indicate that the state itself transformed and adapted to exogenous factors like conflict costs, climate, and the pre-existing diversity of cultures on the subcontinent.

This doctoral dissertation brings together two literatures which have covered similar themes and discussions with relations to the state, though do not share common methodologies. These are the Mughal economic history literature, which has remained

⁴ This is discussed in the section of the state capacity section below. For a discussion of these debates, see: Choon Hwee Koh. "The Ottoman Postmaster: Contractors, Communication and Early Modern State Formation." *Past & present* 251, no. 1 (2021): 113–152.

⁵ The literature on the structure of the empire is given below in the section on Mughal historiography debates. Both the crisis and growth of the empire are outlined by Athar Ali in: Athar Ali, *The Apparatus of Empire: Awards of Ranks, Offices, and Titles to the Mughal Nobility, 1574-1658*. Aligarh: Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, 1985; Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb*. New rev. ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁶ A discussion of historians who have made this claim is given below in the section on Mughal Historiography Debates.

⁷ This is discussed in more detail in the section on Mughal historiography debates.

relatively insulated from comparative historiography on state formation,⁸ and the state capacity literature which has conversely become more comparative.⁹ In both literatures, the understanding of states has transformed from perceiving governments as naturally efficient and ‘extractive’ to recognising the limitations to the state’s ability in enforcing rules or raising revenue, especially with respect to the challenges of managing elites.¹⁰ Methodologically, however, the literatures have approached the study of the state very differently, where the Mughal economic historiography has become increasingly more qualitative in its approach and has seldom employed the conceptual frameworks now commonly used in state capacity literature. Particularly, where studies on other Asian empires, like the Ottoman and Qing Chinese empires, have employed well-suited and innovative quantitative methods to measure state development,¹¹ the same techniques have yet to be employed for precolonial India.

By constructing a new dataset of major conflicts within the Mughal empire, as well as digitising and analysing larger datasets on administrative intermediaries within the state, this thesis provides new insights on the nature and evolution of the Mughal empire. Essentially, this thesis provides a large quantitative assessment of the central state’s development over time. This facilitates a detailed analysis on the transformation of the Mughal state over the course of the seventeenth century. I am able to map the rapid evolution of the empire with new detail than has been possible in previous literature. Through comparisons with other early modern empires, especially with that of the early modern Chinese and Ottoman states, the thesis brings the Mughal empire into wider debates on the impact of conflict on long-term development and the role of administrative intermediaries in institutional development of empires.

⁸ This insulation is recognised by the scholarship and is discussed in more detail below in the sections on the Background of the Mughal State and the Mughal Historiography Debates. See also: C. A. Bayly, "State and Economy in India over Seven Hundred Years." *The Economic History Review* 38, no. 4 (1985): 583-96. Alam and Subrahmanyam discuss this debate in: Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam Subrahmanyam, Sanjay "Introduction" in *The Mughal State 1526-1750* edited by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 168-210.

⁹ See footnote 1, and also: Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla and Patrick K. O’Brien, and Francisco. Comín Comín. *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

¹⁰ The changes in the literature will be explored further below.

¹¹ This is further elaborated below in the section on the State Capacity literature. Two examples of studies which have engaged in such methodologies are here: Qiang Chen, "Climate Shocks, State Capacity and Peasant Uprisings in North China During 25-1911 Ce." *Economica* (London) 82, no. 326 (2015): 295-318; Kivanç Karaman, and Şevket Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspective, 1500-1914." *The Journal of Economic history* 70, no. 3 (2010): 593-629.

The thesis draws particular attention to the transformative role of elite intermediaries, known broadly as *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars*,¹² in managing the state. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, state capacity for the purposes of this thesis is in reference to administrative capacity of the state or intermediaries as opposed to purely fiscal capacity or an ability to raise tax revenue (as discussed in the literature review). Building on Avner Greif's definition and adapting to the Mughal context,¹³ administrative capacity here refers to the ability of an intermediary to govern effectively either through their skills or knowledge base or from their influence with local population. The ambit of rule being both geographically and culturally heterogenous, the Mughal central government was very reliant on these elites. Yet whilst these elites were both important administrators for the state, they were also rivals for tax revenue and authority.¹⁴ The state's relationships with these groups is therefore a good measure of the changing nature of government and its response to the challenges it faced. As I argue in my analysis, the administrative capacity of these elites made intermediaries efficient in their administration of their localities. High administrative capacity of these intermediaries incentivised the state to co-opt these elites and allow them greater autonomy in administration. This also made it difficult for the empire to control the elites, as they were well aware of their value to the state's administration. As the nature of conflicts in the empire changed in the seventeenth century, so did the structure of the economy and the state's response in dealing with larger conflicts. The state became increasingly reliant on more localised officials who were able to bridge information costs of governance whilst maintaining flexibility. These ideas will be elaborated fully in the thesis chapters below.

The remainder of this introduction provides essential information for understanding the institutional structure of the empire, the debates the thesis contributes to and the approach it adopts. It will first provide a general background to the Mughal state, with specific attention to the taxation structure and the role of intermediaries. It will then outline each of the two literatures to which this thesis will contribute, identifying gaps and areas of debate. Finally, it will briefly discuss the methodological

¹² Descriptors of these intermediaries will be given below in the section on the structure and administration of tax collection.

¹³ "Administrative capacity can be considered the ability implement or counteract policy choices of the government, including the ability of raising taxes and managing local regions efficiently." In Avner Greif. "The Impact of Administrative Power on Political and Economic Developments: Toward a Political Economy of Implementation." in *Institutions and Economic Performance*, E. Helpman (Ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008, 1

¹⁴ For an example, see: Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast. *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 18-21

approaches adopted in this thesis, especially with reference to the choice sources used, and outline the broad arguments within each chapter.

Background of the Mughal State

Prior to a description of the state, it is necessary to outline how earlier research has segmented time periods of the study of South Asian empires. Although founded in 1526, the Mughal empire is considered to have centralised and formalised its structure between 1556-1580, after the emperor Akbar ascended to the throne.¹⁵ As such, the one hundred and fifty years between 1556-1707 are thought to be the strongest and most centralised of the dynasty.¹⁶ After 1707, the year denoted by the end of the emperor Aurangzeb's reign, the central government weakened and the state rapidly decentralised over the course of the early eighteenth century, creating a power vacuum filled first by provincial and regional governments and then eventually by the Maratha state, the British East India Company (EIC) and the British Raj respectively.¹⁷ Mughal historians have therefore often treated the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries within the empire as a period distinct from later points,¹⁸ an approach which is similarly adopted within this thesis for reasons of scope, although the findings indicate a less static form of governance in the seventeenth century. For the period between 1556-1707, which I refer to in this thesis as the Mughal 'golden age,' the nature and development of the Mughal empire has been debated rigorously. As will be discussed below, many of these debates revolve around the structure of Mughal institutions and their effectiveness in raising revenue, fostering economic growth and its ability to enforce laws and policies affectively.¹⁹

Over the course of the hundred and fifty years of study, the empire expanded rapidly both in terms of size of the government as well as in expansion of its territories. Initially conquering the core North Indian provinces previously in control of the Delhi Sultanate and the Sur Dynasty, the empire would eventually conquer provinces further South within the subcontinent, first as Vassal States and then as fully integrated

¹⁵ Richards, J. F. (1993) *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 58; Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 14-16, 57-9

¹⁶ Bayly, C. A. "State and Economy," 583; Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 14-16,

¹⁷ Bayly, C. A. "State and Economy in India," 583

¹⁸ Bayly, C. A. "State and Economy in India" 583

¹⁹ See the section below on the Mughal historiography.

provinces within the empire.²⁰ At its full extent in 1707, the empire consisted of what is now most of modern-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and parts of Afghanistan.²¹ However, the degree of direct control across regions was not the same. The empire was highly differentiated in terms of its geography and ethnic composition,²² a factor which this thesis will argue highly influenced the forms of government adopted by the state across provinces. The Mughal empire was the last of a number of Muslim empires which governed India, however the Timurid Mughal government itself made a number of institutional innovations to rule a highly diverse population as an ethnic minority.²³ The state style was one very much of assimilation and integration, where there is little doubt the empire quickly became part and parcel of the Indian ethnic diversity, if nothing else by through a number of inter-ethnic marriages that made the emperors themselves descendants of different ethnic groups.²⁴ The best examples of this are the religious and philosophical innovations of the emperor Akbar and his administration, where he attempted in his reign to institute a single form of religion that would make more cohesive the diverse cultures of the state,²⁵ and the promotion of *Sulh-i-Kul* (meaning universal peace) which espoused a doctrine of tolerance.²⁶ As is argued in Chapter 4, whilst Central Asians and Iranis always comprised the majority of the state central employees, more local ethnic groups were consistently a large and growing minority within the government. Thus, whilst Islam and Islamic law remained an important influential factor in state governance decisions, the institutional form and policies of government suggest pragmatism and pre-existing local institutions were a greater influence on Mughal governance practices.

²⁰ Satish Chandra. *Essays on Medieval Indian History*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005, 236-8

²¹ This is evident when comparing Mughal borders with current state boundaries. See: Irfan Habib and Aligarh Muslim University. *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire: Political and Economic Maps with Detailed Notes Bibliography and Index* Repr. with corrections 1986 ed. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

²² Richard Eaton. *India in the Persianate Age 1000-1765*. Oakland California: University of California Press. 2019, 242

²³ Alam, Muzaffar. "The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics." *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998): 322-4

²⁴ Richard Eaton Maxwell. *India in the Persianate Age*, 220, 239

²⁵ This religion is referred to as the *Din al Ilahi* or 'Divine Faith,' and it is noteworthy that his efforts were rejected by more orthodox elements of the government. See: Roy Choudhury, "Akbar (In the Light of the 'Din-i-Ilahi')." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 3 (1939): 1073-97..

²⁶ For more information about these philosophies, see: Jos Gommans, Said Reza Huseini,; Azfar Moin, "Neoplatonism and the Pax Mongolica in the Making of Sulh-i Kull. A View from Akbar's Millennial History." *Modern Asian Studies* 56, no. 3 (2022): Athar Ali "Sul-i-Kul and the Religious Ideas of Akbar." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 41 (1980): 326-39.

Taxation in the Empire

During Akbar's reign, the government established a complex system of taxation which was heterogenous and based on the location and community groups being taxed.²⁷ Within the core North Indian provinces of the empire, however, there was perhaps a relatively greater standardisation within the system of revenue collection.²⁸ Being a largely agrarian empire, the Mughal state derived the majority of its income from agricultural taxes levied on the peasantry of the empire. John F Richards suggests that 90 percent of tax revenues were collected from land taxes, the remaining 10 percent from customs duties and taxes on merchants.²⁹ More recent research from Sumit Guha has suggested that towards the end of the seventeenth century the percentage of taxation from trade was in fact much larger at least within the Maratha state (46 percent),³⁰ though even then regularly assess land taxes remained an important part of the administration's income (at least 34 percent).³¹ The land taxation system adopted by the empire is most commonly known as the *Zabt* system, where the empire first regularly assessed the extent of production (*jama*) and established tax rates and actual collection (*hasi*) based on the type of crop and the regions of assessment known as *dastur*-circles.³²

As the predominant tax payers for the state, at least for the earlier periods of the dynasty, it is worth discussing what the role and condition of the peasantry was in the seventeenth century. Taxes were mostly collected in cash from the peasantry, meaning the state required peasants to sell grain on the market in order to pay taxes to the state.³³ Taxes were expected to be individually assessed for each peasant,³⁴ though there also were

²⁷ Sudev Sheth. "Revenue Farming Reconsidered: Tenurial Rights and Tenurial Duties in Early Modern India, Ca. 1556-1818." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61, no. 5-6 (2018): 878-919

²⁸ Irfan Habib *The Agrarian System of Mughal India (1526-1707)*. 2nd rev. ed. Delhi, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 259-60

²⁹ This has been disputed more recently by Sumit Guha who has argued a greater portion of taxes from commercial sources than originally suggested. Richards Fiscal system: Sumit Guha., 2015. "Rethinking the Economy of Mughal India: Lateral Perspectives". *Journal of the economic and social history of the Orient*, 58(4), pp. 413

³⁰ Sumit Guha, "Rethinking," 566

³¹ It is worth pointing out that there were likely differences between the Mughal and Maratha sources of incomes, where the chronicler Khafi Khan wrote that the Marathas charged 3-4 times the Mughal rate on export taxes or protection. See: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab ul Lubab*, trans. Syed Moinul Haq Karachi: Pakistan Historical Soc, 1975. 508

³² *Zabt* literally translates to seizure and confiscation and has been referred to as the system of taxation and escheat within the Mughal empire. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 240 n18

³³ The trimetallic currency system adopted by the Mughals is generally considered to have been quite pervasive and accessible across the empire, with no debasement over the period. Irfan Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalistic Development in the Economy of Mughal India." *The Journal of Economic History* 29, no. 1 (1969): 32-78. Shireen Moosvi, "Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation: The Agrarian Crisis," 1658-70. *Studies in History*. 1985;1(1):45-55.

³⁴ Habib, *Agrarian system*, 271

community payments made to officials which were not individual.³⁵ In many instances, precolonial rights to land could be formed on the basis of communities, clans and kinships which made the alienability of land as a saleable property more complex and harder to implement though possible and likely increasing in the seventeenth century.³⁶ Although the income and wealth inequality between the peasantry and elites was large, the wealth and income of the peasantry itself was also highly stratified.³⁷ Despite European travellers from the period believing the emperor was the ultimate owner of all the land,³⁸ by and large there is wide agreement within the literature that the peasantry often owned their own plots of land and peasant property rights were well respected.³⁹ Though some lands were self-cultivated (known as *khudkash*) and wealthier peasantry like the village headmen (*Muqaddams*) hired labour for collecting the harvest,⁴⁰ there were also landless peasants who lived as tenants.⁴¹

Differentiations both within and between communities and caste groups were highly evident, especially with respect to the ownership of land.⁴² There is little uniformity of the nature of property rights and their distribution in the seventeenth century. For instance, Irfan Habib gives an example of a situation where in 1641 in a village of Ajmer, 55 cultivators out of 114 had one or two bullocks each, and 25 had more than three each.⁴³ In another example of two villages from Lahore in 1697-8, however, he notes that out of 280 peasants 73 were exempt from taxes (due to an inability to pay),⁴⁴ 13 had possessions worth more than Rs. 2500, 35 with possessions worth more than Rs. 50 and 137 with possessions worth less than Rs. 50.⁴⁵ These examples give a very different picture of the wealth inequalities of the peasantry across the seventeenth century and between regions. The structure of villages and rights of peasants also was continually in flux during the

³⁵ R. P. Rana, *Rebels to Rulers: The Rise of Jat Power in Medieval India C.1665-1735*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors: Distributed in South Asia by Foundation Books. 2006 87

³⁶ Tirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of India, 1857-1947*. 3rd ed. New Delhi; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 27

³⁷ Irfan Habib "The Peasant in Indian History." *Social Scientist (New Delhi)* 11, no. 3 (1983): 21-64; 40

³⁸ Grover, B R. *Land Rights, Landed Hierarchy and Village Community During the Mughal Age*, edited by Amrita Grover, Dr. Anju Grover Chaudhary and J. C. Dua, (New Delhi: Originals, 2005):, 3

³⁹ Grover, B R. *Land Rights*, 2-6

⁴⁰ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 137,

⁴¹ Rana is less clear as to the percentage of the population who were landless, though given *pahis* are estimated to have consisted of 19 percent and *gavetis* 76 percent, it seems likely these were not many. This also likely varied by regions. See: R P, *Rana Rebels to Rulers*. 41-3

⁴² R P Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 41

⁴³ He provides similar evidence for high distributions of ploughs in 1665. See: Irfan Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 139

⁴⁴ They were exempt either because they were "minors, affected by illness, physically handicapped, mentally deficient or absent" See: *Irfan Habib, Agrarian Systems*, 138

⁴⁵ Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 138

seventeenth century,⁴⁶ and evolved over time as the need for and use of migratory cultivators increased.⁴⁷ For instance, in a study on Jat villages in the seventeenth century, R. P. Rana considers that 19 percent of cultivators were *pahi*, meaning they would travel from village to village searching for the best opportunities, and these peasants were often taxed 33 percent compared to the 50 percent tax rate on the *gavetis* (meaning the resident cultivators).⁴⁸

The rate of taxation paid by the peasantry has been debated in the literature, where the Aligarh school has historically maintained that the peasantry would pay between half to two thirds of the *jama'* (assessed cultivation).⁴⁹ Others have maintained that the rates of one-half of the produce were a maximum of what could be alienated from the peasantry as opposed to the standard adopted, and the actual collection of the state was much lower due to tax remissions, resistance and high monitoring costs.⁵⁰ What is clear in the sources, and well recognised in the literature is that the state encouraged cultivation of new land as much as possible.⁵¹ Tax remissions to *Zamindars* and peasants for newly cultivated lands as well as state loans and removal of oppressive administrators were common means of encouraging peasant cultivation.⁵² The methods of tax collection across and within provinces were not homogenous, though crop-sharing tended to be the preferred mechanism of collection.⁵³

Villages and village communities could often be differentiated as one of two types: *Zamindari* villages where taxes were collected by local elites known as *Zamindars*,⁵⁴ or *Raiyati* villages which were collected by the state or deposited peasants themselves).⁵⁵ A full discussion of the role and nature of the *Zamindari* right is given in more detail in the following section, however here it is worth mentioning that although *Zamindar* rights to the land were hereditary and saleable, they were not in most cases landlords in the same way as they would become during British rule.⁵⁶ The *Zamindars* had the responsibility of

⁴⁶ Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 17, 27-52

⁴⁷ B. R. Grover. "Presidential Address." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 37 (1976): 143-78. 154

⁴⁸ Approximate percentages of each group are given in footnote 40 of this chapter. For the citation, see: Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 42-43; For a description of the Gavetis, see: Grover, "Presidential Address," 154

⁴⁹ Shireen Moosvi. *The Economy of the Mughal Empire, C. 1595 : A Statistical Study*. Revised and Enlarged ed. 2015; 109

⁵⁰ Roy, *The Economic History*, 29

⁵¹ Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 294

⁵² S.P. Gupta. "The 'Agrarian Crisis' of Mughal empire and Agrarian Conditions in the Jaipur region (c.1650 -1750)." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 54 (1993): 327

⁵³ Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 271-83

⁵⁴ A description of these elites is given in detail in the next section

⁵⁵ Grover, *Land Rights*, 104

⁵⁶ Roy, Tirthankar. *The Economic History*, 39

collecting the taxes of their localities and they kept a portion of these revenues as payment, but the peasantry were the owners of the land and the payers of taxes. *Zamindars* could, of course, own their own land for which they could have tenants or hire cultivators,⁵⁷ however this was separate from the *Zamindari* right itself (discussed in more detail in the next section).

The extent of cultivation varied substantially between and within provinces, though overall the picture of the Mughal state is one of relative land abundance. In Moosvi's study of the *Ain I Akbari*, she estimates that gross cultivation in 1595 was approximately 50 percent what it would become in 1910.⁵⁸ Certain regions were more likely to have a higher rate of cultivation, especially in the core provinces of the empire. For example, the extent of cultivation as a percentage of 1910 levels are estimates to have been around 98.29 percent in Agra, approximately 75 percent of the lower and middle Doab, and about half in central Uttar Pradesh (U.P.).⁵⁹ Conversely, in Rohilkhand the percentage of cultivation in 1910 terms was only 27 percent.⁶⁰ Of course, the variation could also be substantial within provinces. For example, whilst the *Sarkar* of Surat had a cultivation of 88 percent of what was cultivated in 1910, Champaner only had 28.54 percent, although both were in the province of Gujarat.⁶¹ Cultivation, often concentrated in certain tracts and regions, was more likely to be found around urban areas. The state would consistently try to increase total cultivation with incentives for the peasantry and *Zamindars*, and it is likely cultivation did increase over the course of the seventeenth century, though not to the levels eventually reached in 1910. As is discussed in more detail in chapter 3, the relative land abundance made peasants especially valuable, and competition between holders of rights to revenue to encourage peasants to enter their land. Although the Mughals tried to restrict peasant movement, the sources indicate such policies were not as successful as the state hoped.⁶²

Although the core regions of the empire loosely followed the system of taxation outlined above, the reality was that the empire's system of administration was highly

⁵⁷ Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 44

⁵⁸ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 50

⁵⁹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 51

⁶⁰ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 65

⁶¹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 58

⁶² Irfan Habib. "North India." Chapter. In *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, edited by Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, 1:235–49. *The Cambridge Economic History of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. 246

diverse and varied according to local needs.⁶³ For example, village communities⁶⁴ usually had their own systems of assessment and boards of governance.⁶⁵ Similarly, in a *Taalūqa* village,⁶⁶ as opposed to a *Raiyati* village, the *Zamindar* did not directly control assessments which were handled by the revenue officials.⁶⁷ The state often found itself very reliant on local administrators, especially *Zamindars*, who knew the regions and customs better which affected the tax efficiency of the state (a point which is explored in greater detail within Chapter 2). Moreover, whilst the agrarian system was the dominant system of taxation, there are indications that a substantial number of tribes and communities engaged in pastoral as opposed to settled agriculture, especially Afghan tribes in northern regions, who in one instance paid taxes in sheep.⁶⁸ Tribal communities additionally were very common across the subcontinent, where at times the literature has made little distinction between the traditional caste peasant groups and the tribal communities who had very different relationships with the state.⁶⁹ It is also worth noting that many regions of the empire, especially that of the ‘chief *Zamindars* and the Deccan Vassal States, did not formally engage in the Mughal taxation system but paid regular tribute to the state, leaving the administration of their domains entirely in their own hands.

⁶³ A good discussion of the different types of peasant land rights can be found in: Roy, *The Economic History*, 27

⁶⁴ B R Grover has noted the difficulty of defining a village community and the debates in the literature on their nature (including whether they even really existed), though Irfan Habib describes them as a “network of caste divisions and customary service or barter relationships.” Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 145. For Grover’s description, See: Grover, *Land Rights*, 29-56.

⁶⁵ Grover, *Land Rights*, 29-65.

⁶⁶ B R Grover gives an outline of these differences in the article, however generally *Taluq* means pertaining to and *taaluqa* refers to Zamindari: B. R. Grover “Nature of Dehat-I-Taaluqa (Zamindari Villages) and the Evolution of the Taaluqdari System During the Mughal Age.” *The Indian Economic and Social History review* 2, no. 3 (1965): 259–288.

⁶⁷ Grover, *Land Rights*, 104

⁶⁸ Habib, Irfan. “Evolution Of The Afghan Tribal System.”. 34 *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 62 (2001): 300–308.

⁶⁹ Chetan Singh, “Conformity and conflict: Tribes and the ‘Agrarian System’” in Alam, Muzaffar, and Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. *The Mughal State, 1526-1750*. Oxford in Indian Readings. Themes in Indian History. Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. , 427-9

Structure and Administration of Tax Collection

A defining feature of the revenue administration in the Mughal state was the existence of numerous types of administrative officials who could claim a share of the revenue or a role in the tax collection infrastructure of the empire. As these officials are also a central focus of this thesis,⁷⁰ it is worth engaging in a more detailed discussion on the administrative structure of the empire and the role of the elites. The state system of tax collection was very large, highly stratified and, like diversity of peasant property rights and income levels, very heterogenous. With the possible exception of the *Mansabdars*, each subgroup of the hierarchy of tax collection could have multiple overlapping layers with regards to their ambits of responsibility.⁷¹ In theory, the state documents of administrative forms provide very clear contractual instructions for the roles of the administrators, albeit even these descriptions had ambiguity in terms of ambit of responsibilities.⁷² This detailed outline of administrative roles has in part played in the perception of a neatly defined structural organisation of the state. In practice, the nature and responsibilities of intermediaries could be quite differentiated and ambiguous, especially for those administrators closest to dealing with the peasantry.

The State, Jagirdars and Mansabdars

At the top of the hierarchy, rights to revenue collection were differentiated by three types according to the eventual recipient of the revenue collected from the property. The first type was the *Khalisa* lands, which was revenue collected for the central government treasury, and accounted for between 24-33 percent of the total assessed land in Akbar's time, though likely grew over the seventeenth century.⁷³ The revenue of these lands was used to pay for the expenditure of the imperial household and central government payments such as the standing army. The second type were *jagir* lands which were allocated as revenue assignments for *jagirdars* (meaning holders of *jagirs*), who gained the right to collect revenue in lieu of a less common cash salary.⁷⁴ *jagir* lands accounted

⁷⁰ These are the elites mentioned in the introduction.

⁷¹ Even here, Mansabdars could have several roles of administration. Chetan Singh, "The Structure of Administration" in Bhargava, Meena. 2014. *The decline of the Mughal Empire*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press., 149

⁷² John F. Richards, *Document Forms for Official Orders of Appointment in the Mughal Empire*: Translation, Notes and Text, (Cambridge: E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1986), 38

⁷³ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 199; On the Increase in *Khalisa* Lands, see: Athar Ali, M. *The Mughal Nobility*, 74

⁷⁴ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 74

for 67-76 percent of the total land administration.⁷⁵ There were additionally lands allocated towards charitable grants called *Inam* land, where the revenue would be assigned for educational or religious grants, though these were a small portion of the total.⁷⁶

The *jagir* system bares many similarities to tax-farming institutions adopted in European states like France,⁷⁷ though strictly the system might be differentiated on the basis that revenues belonged entirely to the *jagirdar*. More traditional conceptions of revenue farming or leasing, called *ijara*, did exist and were used largely by elites;⁷⁸ however we know little about the prevalence of *ijaras*, except that they grew in number in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁷⁹ The *jagirdar* system might additionally be differentiated from the *Iqta* system adopted by other Islamic empires (including the Delhi Sultanate) by the non-hereditary nature of the rights and the frequent rotation of *jagirs* between administrators.⁸⁰ The ultimate owner and distributor of *jagirs* was the emperor, where the property right returned to the state upon the death or retirement of the holder, or could be confiscated or reduced as a form of punishment to state officials.⁸¹ In practice, of course, a large number of the *jagirs* would be passed onto the sons or other family members of a loyal *jagirdar*,⁸² although the frequent rotation of *jagirs* prevented any nobles developing an attachment or vested interest to a specific *jagir*.⁸³ The exception to this were the *Watan jagirs* which were hereditary within a family and most commonly awarded to the *Zamindars* of the state.⁸⁴ The collection of revenue of *jagirs* was the responsibility of the *jagirdars* who owned the right to it, however this was monitored by the state to avoid excessive taxation.

⁷⁵ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 199

⁷⁶ Habib, *Agrarian system*, 358; Moosvi, 157

⁷⁷ Eliana Balla and Noel D Johnson. "Fiscal Crisis and Institutional Change in the Ottoman Empire and France." *The Journal of Economic History* 69, no. 3 (2009): 812

⁷⁸ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 83; Banga, Indu. "Agrarian System of Ranjit Singh." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 36 (1975): 321–25

⁷⁹ Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, xxiii; Gupta, "The 'Agrarian Crisis,'"

⁸⁰ Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi. "Iqta System Under The Lodis." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 24 (1961): 147; Bal Krishan. "'Padshah, Jagir, And Jagirdar' — A Re-Examination Of The Mughal 'Jagirdari' System During The Reign Of Akbar." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 65 (2004): 381. It should be worth noting the difference between *Iqta* and *jagir* is perhaps more in practice than in form where hereditary nature of *iqtas* of the Delhi Sultanate were more an eventual practice. Mughal officials used the term *Iqta* often to refer to *jagirs*, though these were not hereditary. For discussion on the differences: Richards, *the Mughal Empire*, 66.:

⁸¹ Habib, *The Agrarian system* 298-316

⁸² Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 63-4

⁸³ Habib, *the Agrarian System*, 301

⁸⁴ Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 79

The majority of recipients of *jagir* lands were the *Mansabdars* of the empire, who were ranked nobles appointed by state, where the term ‘*Mansab*’ literally means ‘rank’ or ‘office.’⁸⁵ *Jagirs* encompassed the equivalent of *Mansabdar* salaries (*tankhwah*), which could be paid in cash, although this was a less common alternative.⁸⁶ In exchange for their *jagirs*, *Mansabdars* were expected to provide both military and civil services to the empire when called upon and were required to maintain armed military contingents of a quality and size consistent with their rank.⁸⁷ For this reason, their ranks were divided into two components: the *Zat* rank which reflected the salary of the official, and the *Sawar* rank which reflected the military requirements. The ranking system of the *Mansabdars* did change over the course of the period of study, and a more detailed discussion of the nuances of these changes can be found in Chapter 4 which maps the administrative structure of the government. Not all *Mansabdars* were expected to take on administrative roles in the empire, though those who did were accorded positions consistent with their rank within the nobility.⁸⁸ The remuneration received by the administrators, however, could vary depending on their skillsets and the locations they were posted (discussed further in Chapter 4). Although the Mughal state had a central army, the *Mansabdars* were the mainstay of the state’s military apparatus. Unlike other Islamic empires, including the preceding Delhi Sultanate, the Mughals did not use a slave army as part of its forces.⁸⁹ Instead, *Mansabdars* and their retinue often consisted of troops largely of their own ethnicity, or recruited from a vibrant military market.⁹⁰

Several of the administrative appointments of *Mansabdars* were related to the system of tax collection or governance, and stratified according to rank and level of administration. Although the number and variety of these officials makes it difficult to provide a complete list in a short space, a discussion of a few of the officials can give an idea of the structure of the state. At the top of the hierarchy at the provincial level were the *Subahadars* (provincial governors), below which were the provincial *Diwans* (chief fiscal officers), where the former held more military power, and the latter was more of an

⁸⁵ Richards writes that only *Mansabdars* could hold *jagirs*, however there were a number of *Zamindars* who also held *jagir* rights, and charitable lands were also given as *jagirs*. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 67. Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 299

⁸⁶ Habib, *The Agrarian system* 299

⁸⁷ Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 39

⁸⁸ Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 85

⁸⁹ Although even the Delhi Sultanate the system was different to the Mamluks in Egypt. See: Jackson, P. (1990). “The Mamlūk institution in early Muslim India.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, 122(2), 340-358.

⁹⁰ Dirk Kolff, “The Polity and the Peasantry” in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. Kolff. New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2001, 339

administrative role in which the official audited revenue collection and kept accounts.⁹¹ After the *Subahs* (provinces), the empire's administration was divided further into the *Sarkars* (sub provincial districts) and then *Parganahs* or *Mahals*.⁹² At the *Sarkar* level, the sub-provincial governor was the *Faujdar*, and there existed a separate *Diwan* who was expected to report to the Provincial *Diwan*.⁹³ At the *Parganah* level there were numerous officials involved in the revenue collection administration, many of which had overlapping roles and jurisdictions some of which were hereditary in nature. The *Karori* and the *Chaudhri*, for example, both had the responsibility of collecting revenues, and the *Qanungo* was the hereditary keeper of revenue accounts.⁹⁴ Not every *Mahal* or *Parganah* would have each type of official, and conversely at times the roles could be combined so the same person could hold multiple appointments like that of *Amin* and *Faujdar*.⁹⁵ Except at the provincial level, the ambit of control of the lower level officials could vary as well, where some *Faujdar*s administered multiple *Sarkars*.⁹⁶ There also existed more distinctive roles of administration related to more specific land structures, like the *Qiledars* who commanded specific forts and the *Darogha-i-peshkash* (superintendent of tribute) whose role was to collect *peshkash* (gifts or tributes).⁹⁷ Of course, not all administrative roles were related directly to tax collection system. The *Bakhshis* (military commanders) of the provinces and central government, for instance, were in charge of assigning *Mansabs* and pay to the *Mansabdars*. In the urban centres, there existed a hierarchical judicial system comprising of *Qazis* (judges), *Muftis* (theologian of Muslim Law) and the *Sadr* (supervisor of revenue and cash grants).⁹⁸ These officials played a role in revenue assignments and judicial decisions regarding disputes.

The Zamindars

The second group of intermediaries fundamental to the Mughal tax collection regime were the *Zamindars*. The term *Zamindar*, literally meaning 'landholder,' denotes a very wide group of intermediaries with different connotations, however they were often considered

⁹¹ Singh, "The Structure" 148

⁹² Habib, *Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, introduction

⁹³ Singh, "The Structure," 148

⁹⁴ Ali, *Apparatus of Empire*, xxv; Richards, *Document Forms*, 48

⁹⁵ Singh, "The Structure," 149

⁹⁶ Singh, "The Structure," 148

⁹⁷ For definitions and a glossary of other terms, see: Ali, *Apparatus of Empire*, xxv

⁹⁸ Ali, *Apparatus of Empire*, xxv; Richards, *Document Forms*, 48

subordinate to the *Mansabdars* (with the exception of the high-ranking *Rajas*).⁹⁹ These individuals, often with a close relationship with the peasantry of their localities, could be as powerful as a petty ruler with a large army of his own; simply a somewhat wealthier peasant with the right to collect tax; or the head of tribe with relative equality between members.¹⁰⁰ At times, the roles of *Zamindars* overlapped with that of the lower level state officials, where *Zamindars* could be appointed as *Chaudhris* and *Karoris*.¹⁰¹ Despite sometimes being described as proprietors of the land (i.e. referred to as *malik* or *malkiyat*), *Zamindars* were not owners of the land but had a right to collect revenue.¹⁰² The *Zamindar* class preceded the establishment of the Mughal state, where conquest of new territories often involved defeating or incorporating the *Zamindars* of the land. However, the Mughals adopted the role as part of the state administrative system, where the emperor reserved the right to take away or award the title.¹⁰³ The right was generally hereditary and often within families or clans, although it also appears to have been saleable.¹⁰⁴

Despite Mughal incorporation and conciliation of the *Zamindars*, in some ways this class of elites can be considered distinct from the empire. Unlike the *Mansabdars*, *Zamindars* were spread across the subcontinent, and not simply under Mughal jurisdiction.¹⁰⁵ They could be part of the revenue administration on Mughal territories as well as the territories of rival states, or even independent. Only some *Zamindars* received *jagirs* (sometimes over and above the *Watan jagirs*) and *Mansab* ranks.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, as a group the *Zamindars* were both essential to the state's administration, but also known to be recalcitrant and reluctant to paying taxes.¹⁰⁷ The connection of the *Zamindars* to their localities and the peasants that lived there also differentiated them in some way from the *Mansabdars*, the latter of whom are often depicted in the literature as being a part and parcel of the state machinery.¹⁰⁸ Whilst the *Mansabdars* have been depicted in the literature as rapaciously extractive and growing in number, the *Zamindars* conversely have traditionally seen as a group increasingly repressed by the state, except when joining with the peasantry in rebellion.¹⁰⁹ Yet to describe the *Zamindars* as champions of peasant

⁹⁹ Hasan, Nurul S. "Zamindars Under the Mughals" in *The Mughal State 1526-1750* edited by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 284

¹⁰⁰ Hasan, *Zamindars*, 284

¹⁰¹ Grover, *Land Rights*, 106;

¹⁰² Grover, *Land Rights*, 117

¹⁰³ Grover, *Land Rights*, 11

¹⁰⁴ Grover, *Land Rights*, 106

¹⁰⁵ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, 170

¹⁰⁶ Hasan, "Zamindars", 287

¹⁰⁷ Hasan, "Zamindars", 291

¹⁰⁸ See the discussion on the *jagir* crisis in the next section.

¹⁰⁹ See, for example: Richards, J. F. "The Imperial Crisis in the Deccan." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 87

interests would be misleading. Like the *Mansabdars*, the *Zamindars* claimed a share of the revenue and could be known to tax the peasantry excessively, which was a consistent concern of the central government.¹¹⁰ They were then competitors for the state revenue, which was often the cause of their rebellion against the state or *jagirdars*.¹¹¹ One of the larger debates in the state capacity literature of the empire has been regarding the distribution of the tax revenues between the *Mansabdars*, *Zamindars* and the State over time, and is discussed in more detail in the following section.¹¹²

According to Nurul S. Hasan, there were broadly three types of *Zamindars*.¹¹³ The first were autonomous chieftains who were hereditary minor rulers of their land with semiautonomous powers. These were more like Vassal States of the empire¹¹⁴ that were expected to pay regular tribute to the state; however the Mughals incorporated many of these chieftains into the administrative system of the empire by awarding them *Mansabs* and *Watan jagirs*. The emperors additionally adopted a system of ‘paramountcy’ which meant the title of *Raja* or *Zamindar* for these chiefs became one awarded by the emperor as opposed to a hereditary right.¹¹⁵ The second type of *Zamindars* were the intermediary *Zamindars*, who were revenue collectors for the state or the *jagirdars*, receiving 2.5-10 percent of the revenue in the process.¹¹⁶ These *Zamindars* were more likely to be a part of the state administrative system, and could even be given appointments of *Chaudhri* and *Qanungos* at the lower end of the administrative spectrum, with some also becoming recipients of *Watan jagirs*.¹¹⁷ Finally, the primary *Zamindars* were those closest to the peasantry, often owning their own land and participating themselves in cultivation. The latter two types of *Zamindars* could be found spread across the empire in various capacities.

Deccan Vassal States

Lastly, it is worth briefly discussing the role of the southern Deccan Sultanates states of Ahdmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda. These smaller yet powerful Muslim kingdoms eventually became first Vassal States and were then incorporated into the

¹¹⁰ Gupta, SP. “The ‘Agrarian Crisis’ 327

¹¹¹ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 297

¹¹² Guha, “Rethinking,” 2015

¹¹³ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 285

¹¹⁴ Deccan Sultanates described in the next subsection of this section.

¹¹⁵ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 287

¹¹⁶ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 292

¹¹⁷ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 293,

Mughal empire through conquest, though at different points in times over the period of study.¹¹⁸ These kingdoms had their own administrations and personnel and viewed the Mughal government antagonistically;¹¹⁹ however, they were subject to Mughal oversight and expected to ally with Mughals after being forced to agree to terms after military losses against the Mughals in 1636.¹²⁰ For instance, they were expected to lend military assistance to the Mughals in the latter's conquest of Deccan forts, and the Mughals could control the Sultanates' foreign policy.¹²¹ These states were also expected to pay large amounts of annual tribute to the Mughal empire, failure of which could instigate a military invasion, although often only after long periods of non-payment.¹²² The Deccan sultanates were also more relatively powerful than other tributary states, and would try to expand their territory at expense of the Mughal empire, not unlike the Safavid state. They could additionally compete with one another, or ally against the Mughal state, sometimes funding rebellious groups.¹²³

Summary of the Empire's Structure

Having outlined the broad structure of administration of the empire, the diversity and complexity of the Mughal taxation system is apparent. For the purposes of this thesis, there are three main take-aways regarding the administrative structure worth noting. The first is the clear heterogeneity and broad definitions which are attributed to the various roles of intermediaries, matching the complexity of layered property rights to land across the continent. The Mughal administrative system was very much tailored to the localities and communities which they governed, and the variety of institutions adopted, especially at the local level, reflect this. The system of governance was one of relative flexibility and responsiveness to local needs. The second important take-way is the implications of the multi-layered administrative system for monitoring costs. It was difficult for the state to keep track of all officials in every level, which made illegal cesses on the peasantry difficult to control. This has been identified as one of the reasons the empire adopted systems to try and mitigate the principal agent problem, such as having

¹¹⁸ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 52, 225-252

¹¹⁹ Roy S Fischel. *Local States in an Imperial World : Identity, Society and Politics in the Early Modern Deccan*. 2020, 90

¹²⁰ Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 70

¹²¹ Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 214

¹²² Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 214

¹²³ An example of this is provided in chapter 2 within the case studies section (see the case study on Mughal non-forgiveness)

overlapping roles of responsibility for administrators so that they would compete with and monitor each other. The state additionally employed a number of *Waqia Navis* (news reporters) and *Kufia Navis* (secret news reporters) to keep tabs on the many elites. Even then, intermediaries and the peasantry often proved difficult to monitor and control and the state often found itself accepting less revenue than charged. Moreover, the majority of the revenue was distributed amongst the intermediaries within the state, where Moosvi estimates that 81.76 percent of the *jama* was alienated to the *Mansabdars*.¹²⁴ The final takeaway is the clear potential for conflict and competition between the various intermediary groups. All intermediaries claimed some form of share of the revenue, whether legally or illegally, and the ambiguous remits of responsibility and high costs of monitoring gave opportunities for armed conflict either between the intermediaries themselves or between the administrators and the state. This was not just between class groups like the *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars*, but within them, where infighting between *Mansabdars* during *jagir* transfers, or among *Zamindars* for the tracts of land, were not uncommon.¹²⁵

Background and Literature Review:

The two broader literatures to which this thesis contributes are the Mughal economic history literature and studies of state capacity, specifically debates about the role of conflict and intermediary management in the development of early modern states. To provide a sense of the different ways in which these historiographies have developed, both the literatures are discussed separately. This should provide an overview of the larger debates within the field relating to the topic of this thesis. More specific topic-relevant debates are discussed in greater detail within the individual chapters. Through the thesis, the debates within each of the literatures are combined to bridge the gap between these debates.

¹²⁴ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 204

¹²⁵ Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 310

Mughal Historiography Debates

In the Mughal economic history literature, debates regarding the nature of the state have largely revolved around the degree of centralisation related to the structure outlined above. Part of the debate revolves around two questions: how or if state institutions affected economic development, and the causes or timing of imperial decline. As the outline of these debates have been provided in earlier publications multiple times, the outline below will focus primarily on relevant literature. Particularly, it will focus on debates regarding the role of intermediaries within these broader arguments. Literature relating to the personalities of the emperor, ethnic religious conflict, and technology and culture, are less relevant to this thesis and have also been broadly dismissed in the wider historiography.¹²⁶

The nature and structure of the Mughal economy has been an interest of scholars since the seventeenth century itself, where European travellers like Francois Bernier and British imperial administrators like Elliot Dowson mused on the impact of the state on the economy and the condition of the peasantry.¹²⁷ The first modern study of the Mughal agrarian system, however, is often considered to be Moreland's *The Agrarian System of Moslem India*, published in 1939, which depicted the empire as a centralised state with a large claim on land taxes.¹²⁸ From Moreland's interpretation of a centralised and systemic state was derived what is known commonly as the 'Aligarh school' of Indian economic history, which included a series of publications from highly esteemed authors like Irfan Habib,¹²⁹ Nurul S Hasan,¹³⁰ Satish Chandra,¹³¹ Athar Ali,¹³² Shireen Moosvi¹³³ among others.¹³⁴ The theoretical framework put forward by this school in the 1960s, and especially by Irfan Habib, presented the view of the Mughal state as a highly structured and centralised. The belief of these scholars was that the *Zabt* system of tax collection was

¹²⁶ This, of course, relates to the literature which has attempted to explain the decline of the empire in terms of its. For a discussion of its dismissal, see: David A Washbrook. "Progress and Problems: South Asian Economic and Social History C. 1720-1860." *Modern Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (1988): 57. A theory of cultural failure related to the poor technological development of the empire is given by Athar Ali in: Athar Ali, "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case." *Modern Asian Studies* 9, no. 3 (1975): 385-96.

¹²⁷ Meena Bhargava. "Introduction" in *The decline of the Mughal Empire*, ed. By Meena Bhargava, New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press (2014), xvii-xviii

¹²⁸ W. H. Moreland. *The Agrarian System of Moslem India : A Historical Essay with Appendices*. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1929.

¹²⁹ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian Systems*,

¹³⁰ Hasan, *Zamindars*,

¹³¹ Satish Chandra, "The *Jagirdari* Crisis: A Fresh Look" in Bhargava, Meena. 2014. *The decline of the Mughal Empire*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press., 13-22

¹³² Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*,

¹³³ Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy*,

¹³⁴ Sumit Guha notes as much in: Guha, "Rethinking," 538.

largely enforced across the main provinces of the empire with a high degree of centralisation.¹³⁵ Although rejecting the existence of feudalism or an Asiatic Mode of Production in the Mughal period, Habib's framework was highly influenced by Marxist ideas regarding the extraction of taxes from the peasantry and concentration of wealth among the elite *Mansabdars*.¹³⁶ This concentration of wealth in urban centres at the expense of rural development is seen by Habib as an indicator of the potential for capitalistic development, where the elite's conspicuous consumption fuelled trade and the production of artisan goods.¹³⁷ The *Zamindars*, in contrast, are seen as a class relegated to tax collection for the state with a relatively much smaller share of the revenue.¹³⁸

One of the most commendable qualities in the work of Aligarh scholars is the degree of detail in their analysis and their application of quantitative methods. Shireen Moosvi's study of the *Ain I Akbari*¹³⁹ presents a snapshot of the economy as reflected in the Mughal text. Her analysis shows that a high concentration of state revenues went to the payment of the *Mansabdars*, where only 10 percent of the revenue collection went to the *Zamindars* in most of the North Indian provinces (except Gujarat which had 25 percent).¹⁴⁰ Athar Ali's study of the Mughal Nobility provides an in-depth perspective of the complexity and size of the state during Aurangzeb's reign.¹⁴¹ More recent literature has yet to engage with source material with the same depth or similar methodologies. Yet, the framework presented is relatively static over the course of the period of study, where it is assumed the degree of centralisation achieved under Akbar's reign persisted and strengthened through seventeenth century, and Aurangzeb especially maintained the "steel-frame" like structure.¹⁴²

The Aligarh school scholars have by in large explained the decline of the Mughal empire in the early eighteenth century¹⁴³ in terms of a failure in the systemic structure of the state, where Tapan Raychaudhri perhaps conveys this best in his claim that the state

¹³⁵ Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 233-4; B R Gover, *Land Rights*, 56

¹³⁶ Irfan Habib. *Essays in Indian History : Towards a Marxist Perception*. New Delhi: Tulika, 1998; Habib, Irfan. "Problems of Marxist Historiography." *Social Scientist* 16, no. 12 (1988): 3-13

¹³⁷ Habib "Potentialities," 60, 77

¹³⁸ Habib "Potentialities," 104

¹³⁹ A detailed contemporary text on the Mughal economic and political structure in 1595. See: Abū al-Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, trans. D. C. Phillott, H. Blochmann, H. S. Jarrett, Jadu Nath. Sarkar, D. C. (Douglas Craven) Phillott, H. (Henry) Blochmann, and H. S. (Henry Sullivan) Jarrett. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1993.

¹⁴⁰ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 178

¹⁴¹ Ali *The Mughal Nobility*

¹⁴² Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility* xviii

¹⁴³ This decline has been discussed above

“collapsed under the weight of its own contradictions.”¹⁴⁴ The structure of the empire and its need to support the demands of the elite are seen as a primary cause of the state’s decline. The Aligarh school and Moreland have therefore offered variations on a systemic explanation of state decline most commonly referred to as the ‘*jagir* crisis’.¹⁴⁵ To summarise briefly, this theory suggests it was the *jagirdar* system which encouraged oppression of the peasantry. For instance, Irfan Habib argues the rotation of *jagirs* encouraged *Mansabdars* to tax the peasantry excessively because they would not have to deal with the long-term consequences once they were appointed somewhere else.¹⁴⁶ Athar Ali has conversely argued that it was the Deccan wars and the incorporation of elites from the South which overburdened the state system, where the limited availability of *jagirs* generated factionalism among the elite and eventually culminated in a political crisis.¹⁴⁷

R P Rana and Irfan Habib have additionally provided evidence for a growing agrarian crisis in the seventeenth century.¹⁴⁸ They contend this crisis resulted from an increased tax burden on the peasantry which drove the peasantry to mass revolts. The *Zamindars* are considered to have played a key role in both the participation and organisation of peasant revolts. Their involvement is also seen to be a limiting factor as well, where Irfan Habib contends divisions of peasantry among *Zamindars* and caste groups might have prevented the formation of a common identity among the peasantry.¹⁴⁹ Starting from the middle of emperor Aurangzeb’s reign, the Aligarh view posits that there was a rapid decline of the state as well as the economy through the 18th century.¹⁵⁰

The Aligarh school has been, and very remains, a foundational and influential scholarship in debates on Mughal India. However, since the early 1970s, their perception of the state as an extractive machine¹⁵¹ has since been criticised and modified by a wider scholarship. Whilst John F Richards, for instance, also considered the Mughal state to be highly centralised, he does not consider the state to have undergone any form of crisis in the seventeenth century, citing the growing revenues of the state over the period.

¹⁴⁴ Raychaudhuri, Tapan, “The State and the Economy”, in *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, edited by Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, 1: *The Cambridge Economic History of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, 172

¹⁴⁵ An outline of the literatures is given in: Bhargava, “Introduction,” xxiii

¹⁴⁶ Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 367

¹⁴⁷ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 93

¹⁴⁸ R. P. Rana, "Agrarian Revolts in Northern India during the Late 17th and Early 18th Century." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 18, no. 3-4 (1981): 287-325. Irfan. Habib, “Forms of Class Struggle” in Habib, Irfan. *Essays in Indian History : Towards a Marxist Perception*. New Delhi: Tulika, 1998

¹⁴⁹ See discussion at the beginning of Chapter 5

¹⁵⁰ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, 405

¹⁵¹ The metaphor is taken from: Irfan Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 316

Although acknowledging there was a *jagir* crisis in the final decades of emperor Aurangzeb's reign, Richards argues the crisis was a consequence of a misallocation of resources in the state at the very end of the seventeenth century as opposed to a consequence of the state's institutional form.¹⁵² Richards also disagreed that the Mughal empire had a negative impact on rural development, instead arguing the state helped the economy and trade to prosper.

Stephen Blake has taken issue with the Aligarh School's conception of the state as a hierarchical bureaucracy, arguing instead that the empire can be described more like a patrimonial bureaucratic empire. Blake argues the *Mansabdars* were directly loyal to the emperor and the appointment of offices in government were arbitrarily assigned regardless of the skills and knowledge of the officials, where a Weberian bureaucracy conversely requires greater loyalty of officials to an office as opposed to a patron.¹⁵³ Thus, Blake differentiates the Mughal state structure from what he considers the more bureaucratic British Raj.¹⁵⁴ Like Irfan Habib,¹⁵⁵ he argues the wealth and activity of the state was still concentrated in the urban centres and among the elites who remained the driving force of the economy, where merchants and artisans were attached to the elites.¹⁵⁶ Drawing on Blake's understanding of the relationship between the emperor and the elites, Pearson has argued that it was not a *jagirdar* crisis which led to the dissolution of the state but the disaffection of *Mansabdars* who no longer were loyal to an empire facing multiple challenges in the South.¹⁵⁷ Rejecting Ali's contention on the lack of availability of *jagirs*, Pearson suggests the decline can be explained by the elites' loss of confidence in the state following increased conflicts in the south and greater instability.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam and others have criticised Blake's formulation of the Mughal state for the little attention paid to the role of the merchants, artisans and trade in the economy which connected the state to local populations.¹⁵⁸ Consequently, the literature's role of local merchants and trade in the development or transformation of the state has grown considerably. In contrast to Pearson, Karen Leonard suggested it was not the *Mansabdars* themselves but the loss of financiers which once supported the state that

¹⁵² Richards, "The Imperial Crisis." 255

¹⁵³ Stephen P. Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 39, no. 1 (1979): 86

¹⁵⁴ Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire," 86

¹⁵⁵ Irfan Habib, "Potentialities", 54, 61

¹⁵⁶ Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire," 94

¹⁵⁷ M. N. Pearson, M. N. "Shivaji and the Decline of the Mughal Empire." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (1976): 221-35.

¹⁵⁸ Sanjay Subrahmanyam. "The Mughal state—Structure or Process? Reflections on Recent Western Historiography." *The Indian Economic And Social History Review* 29, no. 3 (1992): 307-10

led to its dissolution.¹⁵⁹ Richards has strongly criticised Leonard's theory to argue there is no evidence of the empire relying on financial support.¹⁶⁰ Other historians, however, have noted what they believe to be a growing commercialisation of the economy, especially in the eighteenth century. C. A. Bayly argues that rather than a 'black' century of anarchy, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of a new elite which consisted of an intermediary class of merchants and service gentry which formed an important service relationship between the regional state and the peasantry.¹⁶¹ He attributes this rise to the break-down of revenue transfers from *Zamindars* to the central government and a greater connection between peasantry, merchants and local magnates based on the demands for security. This idea of an increasingly commercialised state has been adopted more widely in the scholarship, where David Washbrook notes an increasing farming out or privatisation of fiscal administrations to commercial and scribal groups within the empire during the seventeenth century.¹⁶² Sanjay Subrahmanyam has suggested commercial expansion can be traced to earlier in the seventeenth century, noting an increase in the use of *hundis*, an indigenous financial instrument similar to a bill of exchange, in the seventeenth century.¹⁶³ The growth of this group is seen not only as an important conduit for regional prosperity but also for the British East India Company's eventual colonisation, where the co-option of local intermediaries was key and the commercial prosperity attracted colonial interests.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, what Washbrook identifies as the difference between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, was the existence in the former of a competitive market environment that empowered the peasantry and encouraged investment in irrigation to increase the productivity of cultivation.¹⁶⁵ He goes on to argue growth in population density and the state control of property rights reduced this competition in the nineteenth century.

Part of the commercialisation story is related to a subset of the historiography focused on the decentralisation of the state in the eighteenth century, where provinces governed more independently from the central government and developed deeper

¹⁵⁹ Karen Leonard, "The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 151–67.

¹⁶⁰ John F Richards, "Mughal State Finance and the Premodern World Economy." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23, no. 2 (1981): 285–308.

¹⁶¹ C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, 77, 88, 558

¹⁶² Washbrook, "Progress and Problems," 70, 78

¹⁶³ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Introduction", in Subrahmanyam, ed, *Money and the market in India*, Delhi, 1993

¹⁶⁴ D. Ludden, "World Economy and Village India, 1600-1900: Exploring the Agrarian History of Capitalism." In S. Bose (Ed.), *South Asia and World Capitalism*. (pp. 159-77). Oxford University Press. (1990)

¹⁶⁵ Washbrook, "Progress and Problems" 87-8

relationships with local populations. Philip Calkin argued that along with the emergence of a commercial elite, the eighteenth century witnessed the strengthening of the *Zamindar* class in Bengal.¹⁶⁶ He argues that while the productivity of the land was increasing, the revenue sent to the central state did not increase, indicating that the *Zamindars* were becoming richer at the expense of the central government. In a broader study, Muzaffar Alam argued the eighteenth century saw a decentralisation and crisis of the central Mughal empire, but concurrently a strengthening of regional governments which developed closer connections with the local populations.¹⁶⁷ Frank Perlin also sees the eighteenth century as one with a disaggregation of society, where it was the ethnically heterogeneous 'centres' among the Indian elites that developed.¹⁶⁸

A large and growing subsection of the literature has increasingly focused on the connection between the state and localities. Leading to the development of what Farhat Hasan has referred to as the 'Process School',¹⁶⁹ Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam challenged the centralised narrative of the state to argue the Mughal state should not be seen as a structure but a process of development over time.¹⁷⁰ Criticising centralised (or highly decentralised) interpretations of the state, they highlight the important interactions between the state and the localities where state formation was a negotiation between localities. They argue the Mughal empire was evolving between 1570-1730 and did not reach 'perfection' in 1600. In their view, the *Zabt* system was not as uniformly applied across the subcontinent as has been implied by the Aligarh school, but rather forms of tax assessment were highly differentiated in all regions.¹⁷¹ They criticised the Aligarh schools over focus on centralised state sources and contemporary European observations and instead call for the use of more localised sources to better understand the Mughal state.¹⁷² and the collection of articles in their edited collection are designed to reflect the development of the historiography. In their text, they pose a question regarding the nature of the state and its effect on the economy which has since

¹⁶⁶ Philip B. Calkins, "The Formation of a Regionally Oriented Ruling Group in Bengal, 1700–1740." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 29, no. 4 (1970): 799-806.

¹⁶⁷ Alam, Muzaffar. *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and Punjab, 1707-1748*. Second ed. Oxford India Perennials The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India. 2013.

¹⁶⁸ Frank Perlin, "State Formation Reconsidered: Part Two." *Modern Asian Studies* 19, no. 3 (1985): 433; Frank Perlin, "The Problem of the Eighteenth Century," in PJ Marshall (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, 54

¹⁶⁹ Hasan, Farhat. *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, C. 1572-1730*. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 2004: 61.

¹⁷⁰ Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 2

¹⁷¹ Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 15-16,

¹⁷² Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 29-31, 3

been reposed: was the empire a leviathan,¹⁷³ or a paper tiger? The question essentially asking whether the empire was an “Inexorable instrument of political and fiscal centralisation,” or a mere “carapace,”¹⁷⁴ the latter an suggesting the state was far more constrained against the powers and wishes of local populations and especially the *Zamindars*. They additionally note a greater social change within the Mughal state over time, where they argue the state developed into a ‘paper empire’ as its record keeping and administrative abilities increased.¹⁷⁵

Several historians have adopted perspectives aligned with the ‘process’ school formations. These studies have tended to analyse conflict and conquest as a way of interpreting the relationship between the state and elites. To move away from an over-reliance of centralised sources, a substantial scholarship has developed with a greater focus on local and regional sources. For example, Chetan Singh’s study on administrative structures in Punjab similarly notes a clear connection between *Mansabdar* appointments and regional congruence, suggesting local regional knowledge was a factor in state appointments.¹⁷⁶ Richard Eaton has noted the respect Mughal officials gave local laws and customs, citing one incident where, although the shiqdar agreed that the acts of the perpetrating criminal were not against Muslim law, the emperor had given his word that Bengalis would “live under their own laws and customs.”¹⁷⁷

Andre Wink, Stewart Gordon and Sumit Guha have researched the connection between the state and locality through studies of more local Maratha sources. Andre Wink’s breaks away from Eurocentric conceptions of state formation by analysing of the role of *fitna* (meaning sedition or rebellion) in Islamic governance, which he involves the cooption and conciliation of local elites. He writes:

Although it cannot be denied that the sovereign put certain limits to the power of *Zamindars* generally, it appears nevertheless that sovereignty should not be seen, with regard to the *Zamindars*, as simply the result of a brutal imposition of force majeure. Here too conflict and *fitna* played the key role. If we can say that an empire existed, it ‘existed’ on the local level; and while Mughal expansion shows itself to the external observer as primarily the extension of centralised Muslim power, the process of expansion - political as well as agricultural - raised the stakes of conflict everywhere and set the dynamic of

¹⁷³ Although this does not seem to be stated explicitly, it likely referred to the work of Thomas Hobbes who saw the state as a solution to anarchy: Thomas Hobbes, and Michael. Oakshott. *Leviathan, or, The Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civil*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946.

¹⁷⁴ Alam and Subrahmanyam, “Introduction,” 2, 25

¹⁷⁵ Alam and Subrahmanyam, “Introduction,” 2, 31

¹⁷⁶ Singh, “The Structure,” 145

¹⁷⁷ Richard Eaton, and American Council of Learned Societies. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. Reprint 2019. ed. Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies ; 17. 1993, 181

fitna moving in the opposite direction. The eighteenth century in this way abundantly demonstrates that it is possible to see the entire fabric of vested gentry rights and privileges, although at odds with generalised and uniform royal taxation, as but an extension of sovereign power. Elements of such a view have already been advanced somewhat piece-meal for smaller states in medieval South India. Mughal historiography however is still dominated by the conception of a unitary, despotic and parasitic state of a composition superimposed on a by themselves were peripatetic noble 'fatally divided' gentry, the *Zamindars*, who incapable of creating an empire.¹⁷⁸

Wink further sees *fitna* as a continuous feature of state formation on the subcontinent through both the Mughal and Maratha empires, and different to European conceptions of territoriality as being a prime determinant of sovereignty. Stewart Gordon similarly shows Maratha state expansion was a slow process and comparable to the Mughals, where "any larger political entity had to be built up out of negotiations with hundreds of *Zamindars*, village headmen and indigenous revenue officials,"¹⁷⁹ More recently, Sumit Guha has directly criticised the Aligarh scholars' estimates of state revenues for taking Mughal central statistics at face value. He notes how the actual variations in land yields relative to assessments would vary considerably creating opportunities for local officials to profit legally or illegally.¹⁸⁰ His examination of Maratha sources also indicate that the actual amount remitted to the state were much lower than the Aligarh school contends as the state was forced to negotiate with *Zamindars* who could become recalcitrant, and a greater share of Maratha revenues in the late 17th century came from commercial sources. As such, he questions the extent of the discontinuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth century presented in the literature.¹⁸¹

Studies on the military market and development within the state have similarly found greater congruence with the 'process' narrative. Dirk Kolff presents an illuminating analysis of the vibrant military labour market in India, noting the impact and participation of an armed peasantry on state development.¹⁸² Peasantry skilled in archery

¹⁷⁸ Andre Wink, "Sovereignty and universal dominion in South Asia." *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*. 1984;21(3): 286; Andree Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India : Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth-century Maratha Svarājya*. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications ; No.36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. 381-2

¹⁷⁹ Stewart Gordon, "The Slow Conquest: Administrative Integration of Malwa into the Maratha Empire" in ed. Bhargava, Meena. 2014. *The decline of the Mughal Empire*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 225

¹⁸⁰ Guha, "Rethinking." 548

¹⁸¹ Guha, "Rethinking." 560

¹⁸² Dirk H. A. Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput, and Sepoy : The Ethnohistory of the Military Labour Market in Hindustan, 1450-1850*. First Paperback ed. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications ; No. 43. 2002. See also Richards comments on Kolffs work in: Richards, John. "Warriors and the State in Early Modern India." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47, no. 3 (2004): 390-400.

or different forms of martial arts could play a significant role in bolstering *Zamindar* forces and were difficult to subdue. In fact, contrary to literature which has argued for the superior technology European weapons, multiple contemporary European observations suggest Indian production and use of armaments were considered relatively better.¹⁸³ In 1510, a Portuguese viceroy noted that Goan gunsmiths had become “our masters in artillery and the making of cannons and guns, which they make of iron here in Goa and are better than the German ones.”¹⁸⁴ European accounts similarly attest to the limitations of artillery relative to Mughal archers in the fifteenth century.¹⁸⁵ Despite this, indigenous forces tended to prefer using skilled, labour intensive methods of engaging in battle which they found more effective than using arms, though innovations in gunpowder technology persisted.¹⁸⁶ Kolff notes significant continuity between the seventeenth century and the dependence of military markets on local actors, citing “territory and manpower were also crucial to the seventh century king Harsha. But no king really achieved a monopoly of treasure, man-power and territory.”¹⁸⁷ Douglas Streusand has pushed back against the ‘gun-powder empire’ narrative put forward by Marshall P Hodgson, which argued Islamic states’ centralisation was predicated on their adoption of gunpowder weapons.¹⁸⁸ Douglas Streusand notes the military superiority of the Mughals relative to their opponents in the subcontinent was quite limited, incentivising bargaining with enemies as opposed to conquest. Although focusing on eighteenth century battles of the Afghan Durrani empire against the East India Company, Joss Gommans notes the innovation and adaptability of Indian armies and their reliance on intermediaries relative to centralised British armed forces.¹⁸⁹ Pratay Nath has shown how the climate and ecology in India made the Mughal

¹⁸³ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Parker’s views have perhaps evolved with his new co-authored work with Sanjay Subrahmanyam which recognised this divergence in technological development is not as stark as once claimed. See: Geoffrey Parker and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Arms and the Asian: Revisiting European Firearms and Their Place in Early Modern Asia,” *Revista de Cultura (Macau)* 26 (2008): 32.

¹⁸⁴ Richard Eaton, Maxwell, and Phillip B Wagoner. “Warfare on the Deccan Plateau, 1450-1600: A Military Revolution in Early Modern India?” *Journal of World History* 25, no. 1 (2014): 17.

¹⁸⁵ Iqtidar Alam Khan, “The Use of Cannon and Musket in India: AD 1442-1526” in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. Kolff. New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2001, 339

¹⁸⁶ Eaton, “Warfare,” 21, 29

¹⁸⁷ This joins a chorus of scholarship which has criticised Weber’s definition of a state which includes ‘a monopoly of violence.’ See: Kolff, “Naukar,” 196

¹⁸⁸ Douglas Streusand, “The Process of Expansion” in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. Kolff. New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2001, 348

¹⁸⁹ Jos. Gommans, “Indian Warfare and Afghan innovation During the Eighteenth century” in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2001.

military system highly flexible and responsive to the environment, more explicitly supporting the Process school of thought.¹⁹⁰

Most recently, the work of Munis Faruqui and Farhat Hasan have championed a more dynamic perspective of the Mughal state in the seventeenth century. Munis has argued the Mughal princes played a significant role in state formation, where their negotiation with and conciliation of local elites during dynastic struggles made them legitimate rulers in the eyes of the wider public.¹⁹¹ Munis considers the princes to have been a crucial pillar for effective rule, where their decline in power created a vacuum for new leadership from regional elites. He additionally argues Mughal legitimacy was partially founded by Akbar's self-positioning as a more diverse 'Hindustani' government relative to his brother Mirza Hakim's 'central Asian' powerbase.¹⁹² His analysis is perhaps different from older literature which drew a sharper line between the roles of the *Mansabdars* and the *Zamindars* within the state apparatus. Farhat Hasan presents a powerful argument rejecting interpretations of the state as either 'strong and vigorous' or 'weak and ineffectual' and suggesting it was both.¹⁹³ Reflecting on the paradox of the Mughal state, Hasan notes the following:

Since the political system required a continuous partaking of shares' in sovereignty in favour of the local powerholders, the Mughal state was continually undermined by its own beneficiaries. Consequently, the local expansion of sovereignty entailed a search for more and more allies, leading, but the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, to the steady incorporation of the middling merchants and the local service gentry in the system of rule. This led to a structural change in the system of rule. There was now a greater reliance of the state on the local corporate bodies of merchants, at the expense of the strength of interpersonal relations, as the basis of rule... One consequence of this localisation of sovereignty, this regular involvement of the state in local power relations, was that the state as a political unit could not afford a bounded form or a stable, steady, structure. The political structure was characterised by change and instability.¹⁹⁴

Thus, Hasan perceives an evolving state which naturally engaged increasingly with local communities as a consequence of its expansion. Hasan has further developed this

¹⁹⁰ Pratyay Nath, *Climate of Conquest : War, Environment, and Empire in Mughal North India*. First ed. Oxford Scholarship Online. 2019, 54, 272

¹⁹¹ Munis D. Faruqui, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504–1719*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 325

¹⁹² Faruqui, *Princes*, 137, 141, 160, 171-4

¹⁹³ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 127

¹⁹⁴ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 127

perspective in his latest book, which stresses the continual development of a relationship between the state and local groups. He notes that whilst conflicts and disputes were normally resolved through local laws between communities, the state created a legal and cultural space that gave locals optionality between jurisdictions and created a dialogue between the state and local communities. The reaction and perceptions of the wider community in turn affected political discourse on the role of government in the management of the economy.¹⁹⁵

Although the wider literature has evolved considerably from the Aligarh school theories outlined at the start of this section, many proponents of the school continue to push back against revisionist literature. Athar Ali perhaps provides the most vocal criticisms, stating the following:

The whole question of the decline of the Mughal empire has been recently clouded by the debate on the nature of that empire... The argument they [Frank Perlin and Burton Stein] adopt would practically rule out the entire official and semi-official records of any government as admissible evidence for political and institutional history. It seems to me that while Persian documentation of the Mughal empire must be subjected, piece by piece, to such criticism as is to be applied to all historical evidence, it cannot be condemned as a class. The picture of the Mughal Empire that it offers, as of a centralised system, with due depiction also of factors and circumstances opposed to such centralisation, is a fairly credible one. It will be seen that in the present book too both sides of the picture are given emphasis, though my evidence comes overwhelmingly from the large store of Persian documentation. Whether this is a more reasonable way of reconstructing history than the one of preceding from Perlin's theory of *watan* or Wink's of *Fitna* is the cornerstone of Indian polity, I leave the reader to judge.¹⁹⁶

Thus, Ali criticises the revisionist schools for ignoring the large corpus of central state sources and relying instead on more local interpretations of the state. The former, in his view, are a better indication of the nature and structure of the economy.

Based on the outline of the literature, there are three broad patterns of debate evident within the historiography. The first is the focus on the relationship between the central state and the local economy, where the literature has debated the direction of influence of governance and the role of intermediaries within the broader system. Was the state highly controlled and influenced by the central government and the *Mansabdars*,

¹⁹⁵ Farhat Hasan, *Paper, Performance and the State: social change and political culture in mughal india*. Cambridge University Press, 2021. 54-55

¹⁹⁶ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, xxv

or did the *Zamindars*, peasantry and merchant groups retain a greater share of power and control? Secondly, there is a question of the timing and process of changes. Was the state centralised or decentralised through the dynasty, or was there a transition and when would this have occurred? Along with chronology of development within the dynasty, there is a question of continuation beyond the seventeenth century, especially with respect to comparisons with British colonial rule. Thirdly, there is the question of the relationship between the state and economic development. Did the empire harm, encourage or have no effect on economic development within the region? Was there an economic decline in the eighteenth century or increasing prosperity, and if the latter, was this due to an absence of the state or in consequence of its policies? These questions bare strong similarities to wider debates in the state capacity literature discussed in the next section, yet the approach in the Mughal historiography has been quite different. It would be misleading to suggest the Mughal literature has not engaged in wider state formation debates at all as Mughal historians tend to make comparisons especially with the Ottoman and Safavid states.¹⁹⁷ Yet the majority of literature on the Mughal empire has become very qualitative, and methodologies employed for the examination of other Asian states has changed considerably to take into consideration the unique institutional and environmental challenges these states faced. The following section will discuss this further.

State Capacity Literature

Relatively independently to the Mughal historiography has been the development of a large sub-field in economic history concerned with the causes and process of state formation.¹⁹⁸ Although arguably older than the Mughal historiography itself, this literature has expanded and transformed considerably over the last thirty years, and especially in the last decade. Like the Mughal debates, the main concerns relate to the centralisation of states, their ability to raise revenue or enforce the law and the relationship between the state and long run economic growth. However, the methodologies, terminologies and framework employed are substantially different,

¹⁹⁷ Munis Faruqi, for example, compares the Mughal empire to formulations of Karen Barkley's understanding of the Ottoman state. See: Faruqi, *Princes*, 322

¹⁹⁸ Tirthankar Roy has noted that "some strands of Marxism aside, economic history of India has tended to be self-absorbed and insular." Although this view is attributed to 20th century historiography, I find it equally applies to much of the precolonial history. See: Tirthankar Roy, "The Rise and Fall of Indian Economic History 1920-2013." *Economic History of Developing Regions* 29, no. 1 (2014): 34

though useful for advancing our understanding of the state. Given the breadth of the field, I focus primarily on more recent literature concerning topics related to this thesis, namely the relationship between conflict and economic growth, and the role of administrative intermediaries in state development especially within Asian empires.

Since its inception, a primary concern of the state development literature has been the role of the state in fostering economic growth and long-run development.¹⁹⁹ Where formerly it was once assumed states were naturally effective, it is now widely recognised that not all states are equally capable of raising revenues and enforcing laws.²⁰⁰ Those states with a greater ability to enforce their policies and laws or encourage investments are considered to be better at fostering economic growth. The capacity of states to enforce laws and raise revenues is therefore something that needs to be developed, and scholarship has tried to understand what the determinants are for this development.²⁰¹ Although the term has had several iterations within the literature, state capacity can broadly be defined as “the ability of a state to collect taxes, enforced law and order, and provide public goods.”²⁰² The concept can be further subdivided into legal capacity, which refers to the state’s ability to enforce its rules on its territory, and fiscal capacity, which refers to the state’s ability to raise revenue, usually in the form of taxes.

The relationship between measures of state capacity and economic growth is now widely acknowledged, yet the literature has debated the paths to fiscal modernisation and the types of government forms which are better for growth.²⁰³ In the European experience, where state capacity is considered to have had the most rapid growth trajectory in the last 500 years, competitive warfare between fragmented regimes has been a significant

¹⁹⁹ See, for instance, the work of nineteenth century scholars on the role of the state in development: Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective : A Book of Essays*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 2011; W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth : A Non-communist Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3rd ed. 1991.

²⁰⁰ See, for instance, the following articles: P. Osafo-Kwaako, and J. A. Robinson, “Political centralization in pre-colonial Africa.” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 41 (2013): 6-21; Olivier Accominotti, Marc Flandreau, and Riad Rezzik, “The spread of empire: Clio and the measurement of colonial borrowing costs,” *Economic History Review* 64 (2011): 385-407.

²⁰¹ Noel D Johnson and Mark Koyama. "States and Economic Growth: Capacity and Constraints." *Explorations in Economic History* 64 (2017): 1; Philip Hoffman, “What do states do? Politics and Economic History” in *Journal of Economic History*, 75 no 2 (2015), 305-6

²⁰² Johnson and Koyama. "States and Economic Growth," 2

²⁰³ Daron Acemoglu and James A Robinson, *Why Nations Fail : The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. London: Profile, 2012; Mark Dincecco, and Gabriel Katz. "State Capacity and Long-run Economic Performance." *The Economic Journal (London)* 126, no. 590 (2016): 189-218; North and Weingast, *Violence*,

incentive for fiscal centralisation.²⁰⁴ Once feudal and decentralised,²⁰⁵ the need to raise revenues for wars incentivised European states to centralise their tax administrations and increase their revenues. Relevantly, the ‘quest for glory’ of the ruling elite based on Machiavellian principles is considered to have incentivised them to engage in conflict regularly without having to bear the brunt of losses in these contests.²⁰⁶ The drive to raise revenue is argued to have incentivised investment in new technologies and increased public good provision as a factor of bargaining between the central state and rural elite.²⁰⁷ A number of scholars have now begun to recognise there is not a single path to state capacity development, though have argued there are factors which could influence whether conflict would have a positive or negative effect on state formation.²⁰⁸ For example, Karaman and Pamuk have found that warfare in “‘authoritarian’ regimes in more rural economies and representative regimes in more urban economies” were more likely to lead to fiscal capacity development. Their work highlights that pre-existing economic structures mattered for the development of state capacity.²⁰⁹ Gennaioli and Voth have questioned why state capacity development only gained momentum after 1500 in Europe and argue it is because the costs of engaging in warfare increased substantially with the introduction of gunpowder and larger professional armies.²¹⁰ They additionally find frequent warfare is associated with lower levels of state building, especially if a polity is more fragmented.²¹¹ Besley and Persson have also found that internal conflict relative to external conflict can reduce state investment in public good provision and disincentivise state building.²¹²

Modelling the state as innately self-interested and predatory, a consensus view began to emerge in the latter half of the 20th century. This view assumes that a

²⁰⁴ See, for instance: Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*. Studies in Social Discontinuity. Cambridge, Mass., USA: B. Blackwell, 1990; Karaman, K. Kivanç, and Şevket Pamuk. "Different Paths to the Modern State in Europe: The Interaction Between Warfare, Economic Structure, and Political Regime." *The American Political Science Review* 107, no. 3 (2013): 603-26; Dincecco, Mark. *Political Transformations and Public Finances*. Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

²⁰⁵ Douglass C North and Thomas Robert Paul. *The Rise of the Western World: a New Economic History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, 26-7

²⁰⁶ Hoffman, "What do states do?," 316-6

²⁰⁷ Phillip Hoffman, *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* Princeton University Press, 2015, 67

²⁰⁸ S. R. Epstein, *Freedom and Growth : The Rise of States and Markets in Europe, 1300-1750*. 1st ed. Routledge Explorations in Economic History Ser. 2000, 171

²⁰⁹ Karaman and Pamuk, "Different Paths,"

²¹⁰ Nico Voigtländer and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Gifts of Mars: Warfare and Europe's Early Rise to Riches." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27, no. 4 (2013): 173

²¹¹ Voigtlander and Voth, "Gifts of Mars," 29

²¹² Timothy Besley and Torsten Persson. "Wars and State Capacity." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 6, no. 2/3 (2008): 522-30.

constrained state²¹³ would be better able to raise revenue and foster economic growth. Specifically, the view was that democracies with parliaments and constitutions relative to autocracies were more likely to foster economic growth. Mancur Olson, for instance, described the state as a ‘stationary bandit’ which engaged in public good provision and protection of the peasantry only as a mechanism of maximising its own tax revenue, arguing dictatorships were more likely to encourage capital flight.²¹⁴ North and Weingast considered the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England and the formation of parliament to be a watershed moment in English fiscal development, where constraints on the monarch lowered the risk of government default and allowed it to borrow at a lower rate of interest.²¹⁵ Credible commitment, where the state was either motivationally incentivised or imperatively coerced and constrained to honour its commitments, created limitations to state confiscation of citizen wealth and became a key determinant of state capacity development.²¹⁶ Thus, the North-western experience of economic development and democratisation has within this literature been argued to be unique and differentiated from the rest of the world.

The credible commitment narrative has been both challenged and made more nuanced by a growing body of literature.²¹⁷ Patrick O’Brien, for instance, has argued that rather than being constrained, European states were far more able to choose and enforce their policies without repercussion. He has argued the centralisation of power within the governments allowed these regimes to bypass internal constraints and “penetrate deeply into local economies for purposes of taxation and obtain access through loans and credits to the incomes, wealth, and expenditures of the populations over which they claimed sovereignty.”²¹⁸

Others have similarly noted that tax revenues, as opposed to government borrowing, were a much larger and growing component of state revenues in European

²¹³ This concept is explained further below in this paragraph.

²¹⁴ Mancur Olson, “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development.” *The American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (1993): 567-76; Daron Acemoglu. *Democracy Does Cause Growth*. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2014.

²¹⁵ Douglass C North and Barry R. Weingast. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England.” *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989): 803–32.

²¹⁶ Douglass C. North, “Institutions and Credible Commitment.” *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics (JITE) / Zeitschrift Für Die Gesamte Staatswissenschaft* 149, no. 1 (1993): 13

²¹⁷ See for instance; Pranab Bardhan, “State and Development: The Need for a Reappraisal of the Current Literature.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 54, no. 3 (2016): 862–92; Hoffman 2015, “What do States do?”; Epstein “Freedom and Growth,”

²¹⁸ Patrick O’Brien, “The Nature and Historical Evolution of an Exceptional Fiscal State and Its Possible Significance for the Precocious Commercialization and Industrialization of the British Economy from Cromwell to Nelson.” *The Economic History Review*, vol. 64, no. 2, 2011: 416

states.²¹⁹ Yet, often tax farming regimes relied on intermediaries to administer tax collection, and these intermediaries retained a portion of revenue and exercised some autonomy in their jurisdictions. Overcoming the principle-agent problem of governance related to monitoring elites and coercing or incentivising tax compliance has become a greater concern of recent literature, and is the focus of this thesis as well. Avner Greif, for instance, has argued that rather than constitutionalism, the balance of powers and between administrative intermediaries necessary for the functioning of the state was more important for long term growth.²²⁰ He has theorised a stabilisation of the relationship would reduce violence within the state, thereby increasing investor confidence. Alejandra Irigoin and Regina Grafe have argued that whilst constraining strong states did increase power in some regions of Europe, other states conversely needed to increase their coercive power to increase revenues.²²¹ In another paper they question the revenue maximising incentives of government, and make the case that the early modern Spanish empire did not aim to maximise revenues but aggrandizement, therefore the state allowed ‘jurisdictional fragmentation’ which meant the relative autonomy of localities. They point out citizens and elites within the fragmented jurisdictions were still very much invested in central state governance because it gave them influence on state policies.²²² The bargaining power of regional elites or the citizenry vis-à-vis the state has therefore come to be seen as an important determinant of long-term economic development.

The debate on the determinants of state capacity has since expanded to include regimes outside of Europe, and much of this expanded research has focused on Asian empires which are seen to be the most likely comparators to the European experience. Tax data for non-European precolonial states has often been less widely available, however scholars have found innovative and often interdisciplinary methods of measuring state development without the need for tax records.²²³ The relative lower state capacity

²¹⁹ Timothy Besley and Persson Torsten. "The Origins of State Capacity: Property Rights, Taxation, and Politics." *The American Economic Review* 99, no. 4 (2009): 1210; Karaman and Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances"

²²⁰ Avner Greif, "The Impact of Administrative Power on Political and Economic Developments: Toward a Political Economy of Implementation." in *Institutions and Economic Performance*, E. Helpman (Ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2008, 1

²²¹ Alejandra Irigoin and Regina Grafe, "Bounded Leviathan: Fiscal constraints and financial development in the Early Modern Hispanic World," in ed. *Questioning Credible Commitment* Edited by D'Maris Coffman (Illinois: University of Cambridge: 2013)

²²² Regina Grafe, and Alejandra Irigoin "A Stakeholder Empire: The Political Economy of Spanish Imperial Rule in America." *The Economic History Review* 65, no. 2 (2012): 637

²²³ These techniques have especially been employed in African economic history. The following literature discusses these new methods: Mohammed Saleh, "A new economic history of the Middle East and North

across most non-European states has been widely recognised in the literature,²²⁴ and much of the scholarship attempts to explain apparent state capacity differences between Eastern and Western Eurasia in what is now a subset of the Great Divergence debate.²²⁵ Many of the models attempting to explain Asian state development have drawn on the European experience of state formation, where they perceive pre-industrial Asian governments to have been unconstrained relative to their democratic European counterparts.²²⁶ For instance, Dincecco and Wang have argued the geographic scale of the premodern Chinese state limited elites' ability to escape the government relative to the elites in a more fragmented European continent, a phenomenon they further argue had the effect of reducing elite bargaining power and constraints on the central government in China.²²⁷ For medieval Islamic empires, Blaydes and Chaney have argued the Mamluk system of adopting slave armies reduced the bargaining power of elites within these empires relative to feudal regimes in Europe, thus preventing the formation of "growth inducing" institutions.²²⁸ Faizal Ahmed concurs with their findings and argues that Muslim conquests and Mamluk institutions centralised the regions they conquered. He further argues this historical introduction of institutional forms had persistent effects in preventing democracies developing. In his conclusion, he gives modern day Pakistan (which was a part of the Mughal empire) as a region which often "revert[s] back to dictatorship"²²⁹

As Frankema and Booth have noted, however, models of Asian and African development which are drawn from the European experience often do not reflect on the

Africa (MENA) region." *Economics of Transition* 25 (2017): 149-163; Frankema, Ewout "The Biogeographic Roots of World Inequality. Animals, Disease and Human Settlement Patterns in Africa and the Americas before 1492." *World Development* 70 (2015), 274–285; Johan Fourie, "Cliometrics in South Africa." *Tydskrif Vir Studies in Ekonomie En Ekonometrie* 42, no. 2 (2018): 1-135; Saleh, Mohammed. "The Middle East: Decline and Resurgence in West Asia," in Stephen Broadberry and Kyoji Fukau, eds, *Cambridge Economic History of the Modern World, Volume 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021): chapter 8.

²²⁴ See, for instance: Prasannan Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not : Global Economic Divergence, 1600-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011: 263-269

²²⁵ The term is coined by Kenneth Pomeranz in his seminal work which was a catalyst for the growth of literature in this field. See: Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

²²⁶ Patrick O'Brien, "Fiscal, Financial and Monetary Foundations for the Formation of Nation States in the West Compared to Imperial States in the East C.1415-c.1839." *Journal of Chinese Economic and Business Studies* 11, no. 3 (2013): 161-68

²²⁷ Mark Dincecco and Yuhua Wang. "Violent Conflict and Political Development Over the Long Run: China Versus Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21, no. 1 (2018): 341-58.

²²⁸ Lisa Blaydes and Eric Chaney. "The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian West and the Muslim World before 1500 CE." *The American Political Science Review* 107, no. 1 (2013): 16-34.

²²⁹ Faisal Z. Ahmed, "Muslim Conquest and Institutional Formation." *Explorations in Economic History* 81 (2021): 101400

historical realities of these states.²³⁰ As in the Mughal economic history literature, ‘bottom up’ factors as opposed to ‘top down’ determinants such as the form of government are now considered to have had a greater impact on state capacity development. For these economies, which were often largely dependent on ‘information intensive’ land taxes, the costs of monitoring and coercion could be prohibitively high, which could have incentivised institutional adaptations in the forms of precolonial government.²³¹ The variety of tax structures adopted by British governments across colonies attests to the importance of local and environmental factors in determining economic policies and institutional form.²³² Of course, this is not to suggest government strategies and plans played no role in influencing long term development, however exogenous factors related to local environment, existing cultural or institutional structures had a significant role in the types of tax structures and administrations which were adopted.

Popular resistance especially seems to have been a substantial hindrance to a pre-modern developing state’s ability to enact development plans. Once considered relatively peaceful compared to the European continent,²³³ there is now a wider recognition of the high number of internal conflicts that were prevalent in Asian states. These internal conflicts had a negative effect on state capacity relative to external conflicts because they reduced incentives to invest in public good provision.²³⁴ Tax revolts especially incentivised pre-colonial and colonial governments to avoid over-taxing or coercing citizens who could then rise up in revolt, resulting in lower fiscal state capacity.²³⁵ Where rulers did attempt large modernisation programmes to compete with Western economies, they often risked

²³⁰ Ewout Frankema and Anne Booth. *Fiscal Capacity and the Colonial State in Asia and Africa, C.1850–1960*. Cambridge Studies in Economic History. Second Series. Cambridge University Press, 2019, 11.

²³¹ Frankema and Booth, *Fiscal Capacity*, 25

²³² Gardner, Leigh, and Tirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of Colonialism*. Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2020: 189; Jutta Bolt and Leigh Gardner. “How Africans Shaped British Colonial Institutions: Evidence from Local Taxation.” *The Journal of economic history* 80, no. 4 (2020): 1189–1223. Evidence from Local Taxation.” *Journal of Economic History* 80 (2020): 1189-1223; Marlous Van Waijenburg. “Financing the African colonial state: the revenue imperative and forced labor.” *Journal of Economic History* 78 (2018): 40-80.

²³³ Whilst recognising the high levels of warfare in India, Hoffman argues India did not have preconditions for warfare because the spending on warfare was not high. See: Hoffman, *Why did Europe*, 86

²³⁴ Bishnupriya Gupta, Debin Ma and Tirthankar Roy, “States and Development: Early Modern India, China, and the Great Divergence” in *Economic History of Warfare and State Formation* edited by Jari Eloranta, Eric Golson, Andrei Markevich and Nikolaus Wolf (Singapore: Springer, 2016). 51-73

²³⁵ Leigh Gardner, *Taxing Colonial Africa: The Political Economy of British Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Ali Coskun Tuncer, “Foreign debt and colonization in Egypt and Tunisia (1862-82),” in Pierre Penet and Juan Flores Zendejas (eds), *Sovereign Debt Diplomacies: Rethinking Sovereign Debt from Colonial Empires to Hegemony* (Oxford, 2021); Scott, James C., *The Moral Economy of the Peasant Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976; Deng, Gang. *The Premodern Chinese Economy: Structural Equilibrium and Capitalist Sterility*. Routledge Explorations in Economic History ;. 1999. 13; Sevet Pamuk, “The Evolution Of Fiscal Institutions In The Ottoman Empire” Yun-Casalilla, Bartolomé., Patrick K. O’Brien, and Francisco. Comín Comín. *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012: 311

being overthrown.²³⁶ Resistance was not necessarily limited to acts of violence but could include tax-evasion and protest, where the citizens could escape the state by moving to regions which were relatively more difficult for the state to coerce them (like in mountainous regions).²³⁷ Local elites often involved in administration and tax collection could also take advantage of the high monitoring costs of governance by embezzling revenue,²³⁸ having the effect of making monitoring costs very high. Cultural and ethnic heterogeneity of populations equally could limit state centralisation by limiting the ability of populations to form broad-based and inclusive institutions.²³⁹ However a strand of the literature has conversely argued the opposite. For example, Rebecca Simson has found that “ethnically polarized societies favour ethnically inclusive settlements,”²⁴⁰ indicating there is a greater incentive for governments form inclusive institutions when ruling a diverse population.

In light of these parameters, how has state capacity development in large Asian empires been modelled? Although this thesis is not primarily concerned with the Great Divergence debate itself, often literature on Asian empires have been framed in the context of these debates. From the perspective of the ‘California school,’²⁴¹ in the early modern period the Chinese, Mughal and Ottoman empires were on par with European states in terms of living standards, technological and commercial development, however these economies are considered to have eventually fallen behind economically in the last few centuries.²⁴² In explaining their declines, it is often argued in the literature that institutional sclerosis and an inability to adapt to competitive modernisation challenges of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are what led to the dissolution of these states.²⁴³

²³⁶ Tuncer gives examples in: Tuncer, “Foreign Debt,”

²³⁷ Scott, James C, *The Art of Not Being Governed : An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. Yale Agrarian Studies. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009: 234-7

²³⁸ Patrick O’Brien, “Afterword,” in Yun-Casalilla, Bartolomé, Patrick K O’Brien, and Francisco Comín Comín. *The Rise of Fiscal States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 452.

²³⁹ O’Brien, “Afterword.” 453; Balla and Johnson, “Fiscal Crisis,” 829

²⁴⁰ Simson, Rebecca. “Ethnic (in)equality in the public services of Kenya and Uganda.” *African Affairs* 118 (2019): 99

²⁴¹ It is worth noting this literature has largely focused on China more than any other Asian state. A description of the school is given in: Vries, Peer. “The California School and Beyond: How to Study the Great Divergence?: The California School and Beyond.” *History compass* 8, no. 7 (2010): 732–3.

²⁴² A variety of reasons from population growth to discovery of New World silver are given. For examples of literature on this, see: Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*; Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient : Global Economy in the Asian Age*. 1st ed. 1998; Jones, E. L., *Growth Recurring Economic Change in World History*. ACLS Humanities E-Book. Oxford : New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1993; Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich*

²⁴³ See, for instance: Ma, Debin. "Why Japan, Not China, Was the First to Develop in East Asia: Lessons from Sericulture, 1850–1937." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 52, no. 2 (2004): 369-94.; Pamuk, “The Evolution of Fiscal Institutions,” 325

At the same time, European models of state development do not fit these states.²⁴⁴ The problems facing our understanding of state formation in these empires is perhaps best put by David Washbrook regarding his observations for the South Asian subcontinent:

Economic historians of South Asia (as indeed of China) have been inclined to describe the situation as one of an 'equilibrium trap'. But it is hard to see what precisely was trapped when production so clearly was capable of expansion. It might as well be said that the motor industry in the West has been in an equilibrium trap for the last one hundred and twenty years since no major breakthrough has followed the invention of the internal combustion engine. Obviously, the ghost of Europe haunts these concepts and what is really being asked is why did South Asia not undergo the particular types of change then transforming European technology. But if historical change is the result of specific causation, it is difficult to think why South Asia (and the rest of human society) should be expected to have undergone precisely the same history as Europe.²⁴⁵

More suitable models and frameworks which take into consideration the unique institutional forms of government have now been developed for these empires.²⁴⁶ In most of these models, the centralisation or decentralisation of power and tax revenue (with respect to the relative power of local elites and central governments) are considered important restraints to long term development

Perhaps the Ottoman experience of state formation was the most comparable to Europe given its geographical proximity, consistent warfare with European powers and the adoption of comparable institutions and technologies. Yet there are significant differences recognised within the scholarship. Sevket Pamuk has argued the Ottoman empire exhibited substantial flexibility in its administration relative to European states. However, political and fiscal decentralisation of the empire in the seventeenth century led to divergence in state revenues between the empire and European states.²⁴⁷ Specifically the Ayans, local elites who often took private tax farming rights, expanded in power and number.²⁴⁸ Conversely, in the nineteenth century there was an increase in centralisation of state revenues by decreasing the power of Ayan families.

²⁴⁴ This is noted by scholars of European state formation. For instance, see: Genaiolli and Voth, "Gifts From Mars," 31

²⁴⁵ Washbrook, "Progress and Problems," 78-9

²⁴⁶ Discussed in the next few paragraphs.

²⁴⁷ Karaman and Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances," 614

²⁴⁸ Ariel Salzman, "An Ancien Régime Revisited: "Privatization" and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire." *Politics & Society* 21, no. 4 (1993): 400-401

Balla and Johnson have argued that whilst the Ottoman privatised tax farming methods were comparable to France, the lack of the development of a unified body like the ‘Company of General Farms’ which represented collective elite interests in France meant there were few constraints on the state.²⁴⁹ They argue it was not the inefficiency of the Ottoman system, but in fact its flexibility which led to its decline as the state was able to arbitrarily confiscate revenue assignments from the elites and therefore was unconstrained. Arslantas et al. have instead argued that there existed a ‘political Laffer curve’ for extraction of revenues, where the state wanted to restrict elite predation of the peasantry to prevent peasant revolt, but also needed to ensure there was enough revenue to fight war. As such, there were better and worse rates of confiscation depending on the situation of the empire.²⁵⁰ Arslantas has argued elsewhere that the confiscation system adopted by the ottomans allowed for ‘controlled decentralisation,’ where whilst the state was fiscally and politically decentralised the government was able to control its elites through the threat of confiscation.²⁵¹ Choon Kwee Ho has challenged the view that centralisation is correlated with state capacity development, arguing instead a more decentralised collaborative framework between central government and contracted elites allowed the Ottoman state to improve its monitoring ability and its administrative capacity.²⁵² Rather than the empowerment of local government officials being a hindrance to state capacity development, she argues the expansion improved it. Her ideas are explored and tested more strategically in Chapter 4 which shows a similar decentralisation of the state within the Mughal empire during the seventeenth century.

The Qing government presents a different institutional model to the Ottoman case, though there are interesting comparisons with the Mughal empire which are explored in Chapter 5. Although politically centralised as local governments retained a higher share of the revenue, the early modern Chinese empire was economically decentralised. Per-capita tax revenue of the empire was very low and remained stagnant or falling over the dynasty despite a rapidly growing population.²⁵³ It was not until the mid-eighteenth century after the Opium wars against England and France that a modernisation movement and an attempt at fiscal reform began, however institutional rigidities related

²⁴⁹ Balla and Johnson, "Fiscal Crisis," 838-9

²⁵⁰ Yasin Arslantaş, Antoine Pietri and Vahabi Mehrdad.. "State predation in historical perspective: The case of ottoman müsader practice during 1695–1839. *Public Choice*, 182(3-4) (2020):, 417-442.

²⁵¹ Yasin Arslantaş,. "Making Sense of Müsadere Practice, State Confiscation of Elite Wealth, in the Ottoman Empire, circa 1453–1839." *History Compass* 17, no. 6 (2019).

²⁵² Koh, "The Ottoman Postmaster" 251

²⁵³ Albert Feuerwerker, "The State and the Economy in Late Imperial China." *Theory and Society* 13, no. 3 (1984):, 306; Wang, Yeh-chien. *Land Taxation in Imperial China, 1750-1911*. Harvard East Asian Series: Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973, 81-3, 131

to an unwilling gentry meant these attempts were less effective.²⁵⁴ Like the Mughal empire, large internal peasant rebellions limited state capacity development by incentivising the state to limit taxation.²⁵⁵ Given the importance internal conflict has been given in models of pre-modern Chinese state development and the similarities of these states in their structure, models of the premodern Chinese empire provide a good framework and comparator for understanding Mughal South Asian development (see Chapter 1 and 5).

What does the literature have to say for state development in Mughal South Asia? Despite being one of the largest and more prosperous economies of the early modern age,²⁵⁶ the nature and development of the Mughal state has received surprisingly little attention in the state capacity literature. That said, a consensus view has emerged that the fiscal capacity of the Mughal empire was not as great as the British Raj, where the use and development of global financial markets made the Raj less reliant on land taxes as a source of state revenue. Even then the British colonial state had limited success in fostering economic growth in India.²⁵⁷

Within the field of global economic history, it is in comparative literature where some discussion of the Mughal empire can be found. Much of this literature has tended to adopt the ‘process’ school thoughts on the state’s development. For instance, although he does not focus on the Mughal state structure in much detail, Parthasarathi writes:

“the Mughal state was a loose imperial layer of authority that sat on top of the diverse forms of local power... the state derived its political power and collected its revenues through a process of complex bargaining and negotiation with pre-existing power holders.”²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ Ma, "Why Japan, Not China"; Deng, Hanzhi. "The Merit of Misfortune: Taiping Rebellion and the Rise of Indirect Taxation in Modern China, 1850s-1900s." *London School of Economics and Political Science Working Paper*, 2021.

²⁵⁵ A few literatures which have drawn on rebellions include: Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, 363; Kenneth S. Chan, 2008. "Foreign Trade, Commercial Policies And The Political Economy Of The Song And Ming Dynasties Of China," *Australian Economic History Review*, Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand, vol. 48(1), pages 68-90

²⁵⁶ See discussions on Indian cotton exports and silver imports in: Alka Raman. "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization: Evidence of Comparative Learning in the British Cotton Industry in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *The Economic History Review* 75, no. 2 (2022): 447-74; Frank, "ReOrient" 91-2, 158-160

²⁵⁷ John F Richards, "Fiscal States in Mughal and British India" in Yun-Casalilla, Bartolomé, Patrick K O'Brien, and Francisco Comín Comín. *The Rise of Fiscal States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 452; Tirthankar Roy, "State Capacity and the Economic History of Colonial India." *Australian Economic History Review* 59, no. 1 (2019): 98

²⁵⁸ Parthasarathi, "Why Europe Grew Rich?" 56

He goes on to suggest that this decentralisation and military fiscalism within the state led to economic and technological development:

Because of this political contestation, Indian forms of military fiscalism, in which rulers rationalised and expanded revenue systems with the goal of building up military power, propelled the development of states and economies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The pressure to amass greater military capacities, a prerequisite for political success in the competitive Indian world, gave rise to innovations in administration, including incipient state bureaucracies, fiscal rationalisation, standardisation [etc]... All of these required heavy state expenditures. To meet these new financial demands, states also promoted the economic development of their realms, including support for the expansion of agriculture, which will be examined shortly. Military fiscalism also led to technological innovation, especially in the domain of armaments manufacture..²⁵⁹

Thus, Parthasarathi suggests conflict was an important driver of state capacity development within the subcontinent, where newly empowered local elites competed with one another. There have been few studies which have looked at the effects of conflict on precolonial South Asian development with the state capacity framework, though two recent articles show progress in this field. Dincecco et al for instance have found that incidence of precolonial warfare between the years 1000-1757 can explain modern patterns of development measured by 'light intensity' data.²⁶⁰ In a working paper, Ticku et al. have argued Muslim dynasties between the years 1192-1720 were more likely to engage in the desecration of Hindu Temples during battles, indicating a desire to diminish rivals' authority as opposed to Islamic iconoclasm was the driving factor of these acts.²⁶¹ Both studies, however, treat the (roughly) seven-hundred year periods holistically, and institutional nuances within and between dynasties are not really explored. As discussed in Chapter 1, the methodology adopted by this thesis is more designed to give a detailed central state perspective of conflicts in the empire.

Outside of the state capacity literature, within the debates on wages and living standards, there have emerged very interesting new trends regarding the start of the divergence in wages in India and England which speak to some of the broader patterns identified in this dissertation. These papers indicate wages and per-capita GDP in India

²⁵⁹ Parthasarathi, "Why Europe Grew Rich?," 57

²⁶⁰ Mark Dincecco, James Fenske, Anil Menon, and Shivaji Mukherjee. "Pre-Colonial Warfare and Long-Run Development in India." *The Economic Journal (London)* 132, no. 643 (2022): 981-1010.

²⁶¹ This paper has yet to be published: Rohit Ticku. Shrivastava, Anand and Iyer Sriya. "Holy Wars? Temple Desecrations in Medieval India" Working Paper: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2907505

began declining within the latter half of the seventeenth century,²⁶² however Indian wages in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century were very high and comparable to England. Jan Lucassen et al. have suggested the role of the Mughal and Sur dynasties might explain these relatively higher wages during earlier periods of the dynasty.²⁶³ Although explaining wage patterns is not the aim of this thesis, a more in-depth accounting of the state's structure and development over time can perhaps shed some light on these trends.

Methods, Sources and Contributions:

By studying the effect of conflict on the state capacity development in Mughal South Asia, this thesis makes a contribution both to our understanding of the economic history of India as well as a broader understanding of the factors which affected the development of Asian empires. The thesis adopts a mixed methods approach involving both qualitative and quantitative analysis; however, the primary contribution comes from the development of new time-series databases which allow us to map the chronological development and scale of changes within the Mughal state over time. As has been noted in the most recent edition of Moosvi's *The Economy of the Mughal Empire*, since its original publication in 1987, "statistical analysis had not really been applied to Indian economic history before the latter half of the nineteenth century."²⁶⁴ Whilst this statement is now less true with the more recent publication of new research on wages and estimations of GDP per capita,²⁶⁵ it remains accurate for studies on the state. Where conventional data on GDP growth or tax revenues are lacking before 1700,²⁶⁶ I draw on different innovative methods of measuring state development which have been used by scholarship on the Ottoman and Qing empires.

²⁶² Pim De Zwart, and Jan Lucassen. "Poverty or Prosperity in Northern India? New Evidence on Real Wages, 1590s–1870s." *The Economic History Review* 73, no. 3 (2020): 644-67; Stephen Broadberry, Johann Custodis, and Bishnupriya Gupta. "India and the Great Divergence: An Anglo-Indian Comparison of GDP per Capita, 1600–1871." *Explorations in Economic History* 55 (2015): 58-75.

²⁶³ Lucassen, Jan, and Radhika Seshan. 2022. *Wage Earners in India 1500-1900 Regional Approaches in an International Context*. New Delhi: Sage Publications Pvt Ltd.

²⁶⁴ Moosvi, *The Economy*, abstract of online text

²⁶⁵ I say "less true" because even in more recent publications which use long time series, the data on the sixteenth and seventeenth century is less consistent and reliable than later periods. See: Zwart and Lucassen, "Poverty and Prosperity,"; Broadberry, Custodis and Gupta "India and the Great Divergence,"

²⁶⁶ Shireen Moosvi. "Economic Change In The Seventeenth Century: A Quantitative Approach." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 54 (1993): 278-86; Richards, "Fiscal States,"

The first dataset is the Mughal Conflict dataset created using contemporary state histories and providing a detailed view of conflict from the state perspective. As the method of developing the database is relatively complex and the database is essential for each subsequent chapter of the thesis, chapter 1 discusses its value and method of compilation in detail. In chapter 4, I use a second dataset which is digitization of Athar Ali's Apparatus of empire, a record of 10,735 government appointments between 1570-1658. By tracking the administrative structure and wages of *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*, the former whose salary payments consisted of the bulk of Mughal state expenditure, I can study how state spending changed over the course of the empire. As I detail in the respective chapters, both databases and methods of compilation are inspired by and used in a way comparable to studies on the premodern Chinese and Ottoman empires. Consequently, I am able to draw on literature on these states to compare development patterns over time.

Although I incorporate local studies and sources in my work, my thesis primarily draws on central state documents and histories. Process school scholars seem to have somewhat avoided the use of centralised state histories as representing a 'Mughal-centric' perspective.²⁶⁷ I would contend these sources themselves demonstrate the Mughal government recognised the importance of local elites for the administrative management of the empire, and the connection between the central and local governments was closer than has been broadly suggested. My studies often draw from the chroniclers' perspectives of contemporary events, showing their views on the policies they adopt and the consequences of them.

There are three broad contributions to the thesis which have not been addressed in the literature outlined above. Firstly, this thesis provides a measured chronological account of the development of the state between 1556-1707, where previous literature has struggled to quantify the changes in state over this period. The analysis demonstrates there were substantial changes in the economy and the state in the seventeenth century, largely driven by exogenous climate events. The second contribution is the employment of a comparative framework adopted from the state capacity field which allow us to better understand differences in the patterns of state development across Asian empires. Throughout the thesis, and especially in Chapter 6, the differences in experiences (or perhaps historiographies) of Asian empires highlights the diversity in challenges of these states despite similarly structured central governments. State formation was just as

²⁶⁷ Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction"

much a consequence of local 'bottom up' challenges as much as 'top-down' implications. The duality of the state which Farhat Hasan has noted as both 'weak' and 'strong' is especially evident in this analysis. Lastly, the thesis provides a more nuanced perspective on the effect of conflict on state development. It highlights the difference in state responses to internal conflict between empires and also within the state. Noting a distinct difference in the nature and scale of conflicts in the latter half of the seventeenth century, the findings indicate that not all internal conflicts (like wars) should be treated homogeneously. As the scale of conflicts and local power-structures of the Mughal empire evolved, so too did the state.

Outline of the Thesis:

This thesis consists of five chapters, each presenting a different aspect of the state's management of intermediaries and response to large conflicts in the empire over time. The focus in these chapters, unless stated otherwise, is the administrative capacity of the intermediaries and how this influenced government strategies. To provide ease of reading and avoidance of over cross-referencing, each chapter is presented as a stand-alone article with its own literature review, abstract and explanation of methodologies employed. This might lead to some degree of repetition if not reiteration of the more important aspects of Mughal state capacity development outlined in the introduction, emphasising the key findings and contributions of each section.

The first chapter of the thesis outlines the methodology used to develop the Mughal Conflict Dataset, which provides a detailed account of the major conflicts faced by the state between 1556-1707. Due to the nature of the available sources and in order to capture the most detail possible, the methods used to compile the Mughal conflict dataset is different to what has been used for alternative datasets more prevalent in the wider literature. In this chapter, I make the case that the method used to compile the Mughal conflict dataset allows more insight than alternative conflict datasets and is more suitable for the study of the Persianate empire. The following four substantive chapters provide insight into an essential aspect of the state's development.

Chapter two studies the state's unusual practice of forgiving rebellious *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars* for their essential administrative capacity, highlighting how

the high internal cost structures within the state influenced the empire to adopt a cooperative approach to governance which involved negotiating with skilled administrators. The chapter highlights the bargaining power of the elite intermediaries which constrained Mughal government predation. However, comparing with studies on other Asian states, my study notes that it is not just ‘maximisation of rule’²⁶⁸ which is a significant driver of state rebel forgiveness but efficiency and cost-saving benefits of engaging with skilled groups. Information costs and skillsets of governing a heterogenous population increased the bargaining power of elites incentivising the government to adopt a cooperative approach.

The third chapter provides a re-examination of the agrarian crises of the seventeenth century within the empire. It uses the Mughal conflict dataset to map the growth of rebellions within the empire, paying especial attention to increased peasant involvement in rebellions. It shows the timing of the crisis indicates the crisis began earlier than some of the older literature has suggested and that adverse climate was a contributing if not instigating factor in peasant participation within rebellions. The chapter reflects on the nature of the conflicts and their impact on state capacity (both fiscal and legal), where there is greater evidence of tax resistance, plunder and reduced security in the latter half of the seventeenth century which can be related to the destabilising effects of the agrarian crisis. The larger effect of the crisis was therefore to restructure the relationship between the state and local intermediaries which competed for peasant loyalty.

The fourth chapter studies changes in the administrative structure and salary bills of the state using a newly digitized dataset of 10,735 government officials between the periods of 1574-1658 (and an additional though limited extension of officials between the periods of 1658-1707). In doing so, the paper examines a period in Mughal history between Akbar and Aurangzeb’s reign less explored in the literature.²⁶⁹ The chapter shows a significant expansion in the Mughal state in terms of the number of officials employed, however there is a stagnation in the total salary bill of *Mansabdars*. The patterns can be attributed to the employment of more lower level officials at a lower salary than earlier periods. The correlation between these patterns and the prevalence of conflict indicate that a higher intensity of conflict incentivised a greater localisation of the state to bridge

²⁶⁸ Referring to the state’s aim to maximise longevity over revenues. Discussed further in Chapter 2

²⁶⁹ Alam, Muzaffar, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and Wolfram Mallison. “L’État Moghol et Sa Fiscalité: XVIe-XVIIIe Siècles.” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 49, no. 1 (1994): 195

information costs, where lower level officials administering over smaller parcels of land would increase effective administrative capacity as there were more officials by land

The last chapter compares the patterns of development of the administrative structure of the Mughal government to that of the Qing Chinese empire, to provide a comparative analysis of the role of intermediaries in the formation of these states. Recognising that both states faced high levels of internal conflict and fairly similar institutional structures, the chapter notes very different responses of governments to these challenges. My analysis suggests that the apparent higher bargaining power of Mughal elites in consequence of information gaps and higher conflict levels in the South Asian state incentivised the Mughal empire to increase its administrative capacity whereas the Qing state did not have the same incentives (at least to the same degree). The chapter also highlights the significant role conflict played in precipitating state capacity development, comparing different patterns in development.

Collectively, the chapters of this thesis tell the story of a dynamic state in the seventeenth century influenced by the many internal conflict pressures it faced and its relationship with administrative elites and the peasantry. The state's institutions were equally shaped by exogenous climate, geography and pre-existing local institutions, which forced the state to adapt to these constraints. Conflict was especially an influencing factor in state expansion and institutional reforms, where they likely instigated the increased 'localisation' of administration and the development of the administrative capacity of the state.

Chapter 1 - The Mughal Conflict Database: A Guide to Compilation and Usage

Abstract: The study of precolonial states, especially within the global South, has been affected by lacking available data. This problem is compounded by issues of changing historical boundaries and debates regarding the existence of a state. This paper introduces the Mughal Conflict Dataset, which is a newly constructed database on centralised conflicts of the Mughal state. The methods used for developing this database provides a clearer and more centralised picture of state development than previous conflict datasets have done. This paper outlines precisely how the database has been compiled and the value of using such a database for understanding the history of economic development in developing regions, especially in Islamic empires.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, conflict has increasingly been seen as an important determinant of preindustrial state development, although an understanding of the ways in which conflicts affect state capacity have evolved over time. In earlier literature on the topic, the work of Charles Tilly, Douglas North and Phillip Hoffman had focused on role of external conflict in incentivising early modern European states to invest in improving fiscal capacity and warfare technology.²⁷⁰ More recent literature by scholars like Timothy Besley, Torsten Pearson, Mark Dincecco and Yuhua Wang have focused on the difference in effects of external and internal conflict, the latter having a negative effect on the development of state fiscal capacity.²⁷¹ As the literature has expanded it has increasingly explored the effects of conflict and state development in other regions of the world, although the scholarship has tended to focus on the effects on premodern China more than other regions.²⁷² Few comparative studies have looked at the impact of conflict on development in precolonial India, where poor data availability has limited insight into the development of the region.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Tilly, *Coercion*; North and Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment"; Hoffman, *Why Did Europe*

²⁷¹ Besley and Persson, "Wars and State Capacity"; Dincecco and Wang, "Violent Conflict"; Chan, "Foreign Trade,"; Gardner, "Taxing Colonial Africa"; Gupta, Ma and Roy, "States and Development."

²⁷² This is partly because of good data availability for the premodern Chinese state, though also can be attributed to focus on the Great Divergence debate: See: Pomeranz, "The Great Divergence," ; Frankema and Booth, "Fiscal Capacity," 11

²⁷³ Two recent articles which have focused on this were discussed in the state capacity section of the introduction.

In the Mughal economic history literature, it is well recognised that conflict was a frequent occurrence in the empire during this thesis' period of study. The nature and impact of rebellions has been the focus of many well-regarded scholars in the field, although much of analysis is of a literature several decades old.²⁷⁴ Despite its recognition of the important role conflicts have played in determining state actions, the literature lacks quantitative analysis of how conflicts developed over the duration of the empire and the impact this would have had on state development. As will be discussed below, this is partly a consequence of the difficulty of recording conflicts for a region where sovereignty is layered and sources are inconsistently available across regions. One of the biggest challenges to studying Mughal South Asia is the lack of a dataset that spans the length of the dynasty from 1556 to 1707.²⁷⁵ This has usually necessitated a more static or limited form of analysis, because longer term trends have been difficult to gauge. Even where scholars have compiled some records of where and when conflicts occurred, these are usually very limited in their geographical and temporal scope, making it difficult to develop a holistic picture of conflict in the empire.²⁷⁶ In consequence, whilst much of the literature recognises the importance of conflict in the development of the state, the scholarship has struggled to develop a macro-picture of how conflicts developed over time.

Inspired by existing datasets on premodern China, this paper introduces a new methodology used for constructing state development data from qualitative historical sources.²⁷⁷ The chapter describes in detail the method used to compile the Mughal conflict database, with especial focus on the importance in using centralised sources and providing classifying rebellions by type. It highlights the challenges involved in creating a dataset for the empire and argues this new methodology can help to overcome challenges of limited data availability, especially for those like the Mughal empire where boundaries

²⁷⁴ Habib, "Forms of Class Struggle," 233-259; Rana, R. P. "Was there an Agrarian Crisis in Mughal North India during the Late-Seventeenth and Early-Eighteenth Centuries?," *Social Scientist* 34, No. 11 (Dec 2006), 18-32; Smith, Wilfred, "Lower-class Uprisings in the Mughal Empire" in *The Mughal State 1526-1750* edited by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 323-347; Wink, *Land and Sovereignty*; Hasan, *State and Locality*, 61..

²⁷⁵ Richards, "Fiscal States,".

²⁷⁶ For Instance, R. P. Rana's *Rebels to Rulers* and Sudhindra Nath Bhattacharyya's *Mughal North-East Frontier Policy* have both included geographically specific conflict timelines for the particular regions they look at. However, these are not centralised so do not give a proper perspective of where most rebellions were occurring. See: Rana, *Rebels to rulers*; Bhattacharyya, Sudhindra Nath. 1998. *A history of Mughal north-east frontier policy: being a study of the political relation of the Mughal Empire with Koch Bihar, Kamrup and Assam*. Guwahati, Delhi: Spectrum Publications.

²⁷⁷ There are multiple conflict datasets developed for premodern China. See for instance: Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, Appendix J p 363; James W. Tong, *Disorder Under Heaven: Collective Violence in the Ming Dynasty* (California: Stanford University Press, 1992); Chen Bijia, Cameron Campbell, Yuxue Ren, and James Lee. "Big Data for the Study of Qing Officialdom: The China Government Employee Database-Qing (CGED-Q)." *The Journal of Chinese History*. 4(Special Issue 2), 2020: 431-460

and the ambit of control of rulers has been questioned, or where the sovereignty of states was layered.²⁷⁸ This method also has the potential to provide substantially more detail than alternative datasets, where the use of centralised sources and relational databases can allow greater access and flexibility with the data. By using conflict data and applying concepts developed from the literature,²⁷⁹ detailed conflict data can provide a reasonable picture of state development over time. For example, data showing the state was engaging and winning in larger wars could be considered indicative of increasing military capacity. The methodology is especially well suited for the large Islamic empires of Asia, as these states often kept centralised contemporary histories.²⁸⁰ The chapter outlines the method used to compile the database, as well as the advantages and limitations of using this methodology. The discussion below highlights the importance of defining conflicts (and actors) for the purposes of studying conflicts. Through this, this chapter highlights the value of this methodology in helping us to understand the relationship between state formation and conflict, a point which is reinforced in subsequent chapters which relies on this data for its analysis. The chapter ends by providing an overview of the data which demonstrates the success of the endeavour. It is hoped that the methods developed here, and the success of these results, help open doors to research on regions which have otherwise been less accessible.

The paper is divided into sections. Section 2 of this chapter outlines the methodologies used for compiling the database, including the types of variables that were collected, the software used, and how the data was organised and classified in order to make conflicts comparable. Section 3 gives a detailed outline of the sources that were used for compiling the database, including how the sources were chosen, how well the sources cover the empire as well as potential problems with the sources regarding assumptions made and biases of the authors. The section also outlines how I try to mitigate potential problems with the data biases or omission, and to what extent I consider these issues to be of concern. Section 4 ends the chapter by giving an overview of how much data was collected from this process, and to what extent this exercise was successful.

²⁷⁸ See: Subrahmanyam, Sanjay, "The Mughal State," 291-321; Herbst, J. States and power in Africa: comparative lessons in authority and control (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), chapter 2

²⁷⁹ The link between expenditure and military capacity is recognised in the literature. See: Adedoyin Babajide., Ahmad Hassan Ahmad, and Simeon Coleman. "Violent Conflicts and State Capacity: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa." *Journal of Government and Economics* 3 (2021): 100019

²⁸⁰ A detailed description of these histories used for compiling the database are given in Section 3.4 and Appendix 1.A of this chapter.

Section 2: Methodology

Although there was a high prevalence of conflicts over the Mughal dynasty,²⁸¹ creating a conflict dataset for studying state formation poses several challenges. Evidence of conflicts is prevalent across sources for the period,²⁸² however the detail of records are not consistent across regions. The Mughals did not keep a systematic record of all rebellions across the conflict, and especially did not record each conflict in the same amount of detail.²⁸³ Moreover, many recorded rebellions have not been described in sufficient detail to definitively differentiate between individual events recorded in multiple sources. Given these difficulties, it would be near impossible to create a comprehensive conflict database that covers all rebellions in the empire. It is additionally a challenge to correctly label and categorise conflicts across a diverse subset of sources.²⁸⁴ Sources often can refer to the same individuals by different names. For instance, one very famous 16th century rebel was referred to as Muzaffar Gujarati as well as Nanu in the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*.²⁸⁵ Conversely, state officials could be referred to simply by their title, which can be problematic when a single title has been held by multiple individuals. For example, after his rebellion against his father Shah Jahan²⁸⁶ (meaning king of the world) was henceforth called *Bedawlat*²⁸⁷ (meaning lack of wealth) within the text. Similarly, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* contains details of at least three different officials given the title of Khan-e-Khanan (meaning king of kings) and referred to only by those titles within the text.²⁸⁸ Consequently, when compiling a conflict database for the region, there is a risk of double counting rebellions, as well as a risk of under-counting rebellions due to lack of data on smaller rebellions. This problem of categorising conflict is compounded by debates on state boundaries and the layered sovereignty which was evident in the precolonial

²⁸¹ See footnote 270

²⁸² For example, Rana has noted multiple rebellions in the *azardashts* (i.e. petitions) of Ajmer archives. See: R P Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 194

²⁸³ This is evident section 2.1.3 below

²⁸⁴ Diverse in terms of how they were recorded and by who they were recorded.

²⁸⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, trans. W. M. Thackston. In *The Jahangirnama: memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*. New York: Freer Gallery of Art, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in association with Oxford University Press 1999: 48, 246, 496

²⁸⁶ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 229

²⁸⁷ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 387

²⁸⁸ Rahmandad is referred to as Khan khanan in page 302, Shajawanath Khan in page 121, and Mahabat Khan in page 431. See: Jahangir, *Tuzuk*,

subcontinent.²⁸⁹ Whilst several studies have used ‘battles’ to measure interstate conflict in precolonial India,²⁹⁰ conflicts in the Mughal empire cannot be as easily placed as being an internal or external conflict. For instance, wars between Deccan Vassal States²⁹¹ can hardly be considered to have involved the Mughal empire directly.

The few existing databases on conflicts in the Indian subcontinent are consequently unsuitable for an in-depth study of the precolonial state. For example, Peter Brecke’s conflict catalogue, which has been used in one study of conflict for the early modern period,²⁹² does not record many of the conflicts that occurred through the empire, and also gives little information on the conflicts which are recorded.²⁹³ Conflict encyclopaedias like Tony Jaques’ *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges: A Guide to 8500 Battles from Antiquity to Present*,²⁹⁴ used in the study by Dincecco et al,²⁹⁵ additionally provides limited information on the relation and importance of any conflict to the Mughal state directly (i.e. it does not consider conflicts from the state perspective). More indigenous databases like R. P. Rana’s list of rebellious *Zamindars* are often restricted to specific provinces and provide little information on the cause or consequence of conflict.²⁹⁶ Significantly, none of these sources allow us to track changes in conflict intensity over time (meaning their size in numbers involved and their significance to the state), which is an important concern for our understanding of state development.

How do we create an objective database that can give a good representation of the major conflicts of the empire as they occurred over time which also allows us to measure the intensity of conflict as it related directly to the Mughal government? The answer lies in finding the right source: something that has been continuously recorded over the duration of the empire and has been recorded close enough to the centre of the empire to ensure an accurate reflection of how important the state considered the rebellion was

²⁸⁹ Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 206; 218-9; Ziegler, Norman P, “Some Notes on Rajput Loyalties during the Mughal period” in in *The Mughal State 1526-1750* edited by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 323-347; Wink, "Sovereignty and Universal Dominion," 265-92

²⁹⁰ See for instance: Dincecco, Fenske, Menon, and Mukherjee. "Pre-Colonial Warfare" 981-1010; Gennaioli and Voth. "Gifts from Mars," 1409-448.

²⁹¹ See Vassal State definition in sections 2.1.1

²⁹² Gupta, Ma and Roy, "States and Development," 51-73

²⁹³ Dincecco, Fenske, Menon, and Mukherjee. "Pre-Colonial Warfare" 981-1010; Peter Brecke, 1999. "Violent Conflicts 1400 A.D. to the Present in Different Regions of the World." Paper presented at the 1999 meeting of the peace science society (international), Ann Arbor, MI, 8–10 October 1999.

²⁹⁴ Tony Jaques and Dennis E Showalter. *Dictionary of Battles and Sieges : A Guide to 8 500 Battles from Antiquity through the Twenty-First Century*. Westport Conn: Greenwood Press. 2007.

²⁹⁵ Dincecco, Fenske, Menon, and Mukherjee. "Pre-Colonial Warfare" 981-1010

²⁹⁶ Rana, *Rebels to rulers*,

relative to its power. Contemporary Mughal state-funded histories²⁹⁷ have many of these qualities and provide a good reflection of the conflicts from the state's perspective. The history of events was written year by year and included a record of the daily life and habits of the emperor as well as the details concerning wars and rebellions through the period. Similar centralised state sources have been used to compile conflict databases for the Chinese state.²⁹⁸

There are several reasons why the use of state histories is especially suitable for this study. Although it is recognised that state-centred sources will be biased towards the state's interpretation of events, in many ways it is precisely that quality which makes these sources ideal. In this study, we are primarily interested in the conflicts that were large enough and significant enough that the state considered them worth writing about. One of the challenges of studying conflicts is gauging the threshold at which an incidence of violence ceases to be a 'small' incident and becomes a substantial one worthy of being considered an uprising. In his rebellion database for premodern Chinese states, for instance, Gang Deng mitigates this problem by recording only rebellions of more than 1000 people.²⁹⁹ For this thesis, the use of state-histories similarly helps to mitigate the issue by assuming that any conflicts mentioned in central state chronicles (even in passing) was significant to the state. Given these histories were written by the highest level central commanders and often monitored by the emperor himself, this is not an unreasonable assumption.³⁰⁰

Another advantage of the state histories is that they provide insight into the state's reaction and understanding of the conflicts it faced. The chronicles often give an outline of what is believed to be the cause of the conflict or what the larger concerns were for the state at that point of time. Moreover, the chroniclers of these histories had used state archives to cite previous records, providing a more holistic perspective than the view of one chronicler alone.³⁰¹ Lastly, whilst concerns of the objectivity of the sources should not be dismissed, the content and use of the chronicles indicate this would not affect the records substantially. The state histories were not widely published and disseminated,

²⁹⁷ These sources are described in detail in section 3.4 below and listed in Appendix 1.A.

²⁹⁸ Chen Bijia, et al. "Big Data," 431-460.

²⁹⁹ Deng, Gang. *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, Appendix J p 363

³⁰⁰ See section 3 of this chapter, especially section 3.2

³⁰¹ For instance, one of the historians, Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, references all the texts he has used when compiling his history (page iv of the *Tabaqat*), and another, Khafi Khan, notes his reliance on state official records for the period where writing of histories was forbidden (page 214 of the *Muntakhab*). See: Ahmad, Nizammuddin. *The Tabaqat-I-Akbari*, Trans. Brajendranath De, The Asiatic Society (1996), Vol II: iv; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 214

where only a handful of hand-written copies were made of each text and given to select members of the court.³⁰² The sensitive nature of the data often included, such as an admission of guilt to orchestrating murder of a high ranking official³⁰³ or criticism of the emperor,³⁰⁴ suggest as much. Moreover, the contemporaneous nature of the information means the chroniclers often contradict themselves based on whether it is the start or end of the rebellion. For instance, a rebel described terribly in one part of the chronicle would be described very differently in another once forgiven.³⁰⁵ Where there are occasions of concern regarding the accuracy of the chroniclers, secondary sources are used to clarify events where they are available. Whilst the histories will likely be biased toward the state, 17th century writers could not have expected the histories to be analysed in this way, therefore any increasing trends in the data can be considered genuine increases objective of any attempts to skew the data.

Section 2.1: Classifying the data

As conflicts can have varying motivations and forms, quantifying them poses methodological challenges. For example, it can be difficult to differentiate a peasant rebellion (i.e. rebellion organised by peasants) from an elite's rebellion (i.e. rebellion involving and organised by elites)³⁰⁶ where multiple actors can be involved in a single conflict.³⁰⁷ For the case of Mughal India, a state which often shared sovereignty with local groups and whose structure relationship with local groups has been highly debated over the years, the issue of conflict definition is more important as views can change depending on perspective.³⁰⁸ Moreover, sources can often be vague regarding what the nature of a

³⁰² See for instance what Jahangir says regarding the Tuzuk I Jahangiri in: Jahangir, *Tuzuk I Jahangiri*, 271, 269.

³⁰³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 32

³⁰⁴ The chronicler describes the emperor's treatment of Mansabdars as 'harsh.' See: Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 528

³⁰⁵ As mentioned above, the prince's title was changed from Shah Jahan (meaning emperor of the world) to Bedawlat (meaning wealthlessness). See: Jahangir, *Tuzuk I Jahangiri*, 387

³⁰⁶ These terms are defined more clearly in Section 2.1.2 of this chapter

³⁰⁷ Dardess, John W., James Bunyan Parsons, Larisa Vasil'evna Simonovskaia, and Li Wen-Chih. "The Late Ming Rebellions: Peasants and Problems of Interpretation." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3, no. 1 (1972): 103-17;

³⁰⁸ Andre Wink provides a discussion of the difficulty with regards to how rebellion terminology is used in Islamic texts: Wink, "Sovereignty and Universal Dominion." 265-92.

For example, whilst Irfan Habib describes the Maratha conflict as a rebellion, Abha Singh and Stewart Gordon see the Maratha state as independent post 1670. See: Stewart Gordon, *The Marathas, 1600-1818*. New Cambridge History of India ; II, 4. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993: 7; Singh, Abha. "Jujhar Singh's Rebellion : A Reappraisal." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 51 (1990): 236;

particular conflict is, making such a conflict difficult to categorise.³⁰⁹ This section will discuss how conflicts have been categorised for this database. Whilst it is recognised that this is not the only method of identifying conflict, these categorisations help the users of the database understand the techniques used for compilation.

Section 2.1.1 Definitions of Conflict Type

With regards to the type of conflict, there are four main types categorised as follows:

War: an external conflict between the Mughal state and a party that was not directly subjugated by the Mughals immediately before the start of the conflict. Usually this refers to conflicts with states outside Mughal boundaries, but occasionally include local rulers in newly conquered territories that have not yet submitted to the empire. Relevantly, the Mughal opponents in these conflicts would not have been paying tax or tribute prior to the conflict. As per succession wars between rebel princes (as opposed to rebellions against an incumbent like a father), for the purposes of this chapter Munis Faruqui's definition is adopted so they are counted as wars. This is so the results are not influenced by these conflicts specifically as many intermediaries would be reincorporated then. It is not the author's view that these should not be considered rebellions entirely.

Rebellion: an internal conflict that was either led by someone who was, immediately before the start of the conflict, a subject of the Mughal empire (i.e. a *Mansabdar*, official *Zamindar* or Peasant within Mughal territory) or lived in an area known to have been under Mughal control at the time. As such, the rebel would have likely been required to pay some form of tax or tribute to the empire before rebelling. Another requirement is the mobilisation or threat of armed forces and violence. Additionally, the conflict must have one of the following attributes:

- a. Can be defined as revolutionary situation: "when two or more blocs make effective, incompatible claims to control the state or to be the state."³¹⁰ Note: this includes when claims are made to part of the state territory as well, such as taking over a province or region.

³⁰⁹ A good example of this is how the text refers to 'landholders.' For more detail, see section 2.1.2 below.

³¹⁰ Tilly, Charles. *European Revolutions, 1492-1992*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1993: 10

b. Can be seen as a tax revolt, meaning the rebels refuse to pay taxes, and where the state has to use or threaten violent force to gain compliance.

Vassal-State: These refer to conflicts with the Deccan Sultanates of Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar and at times the Maratha kingdom.³¹¹ Vassal States were largely independent where they had their own administrations led by non-Mughal royalty. However, these states were not entirely independent from the Mughals as they were expected to pay large amounts of annual tribute. Additionally, they were usually subject to Mughal regulations, where these states had to abide by Mughal policies. Since it is unclear how to differentiate how independent these states were, and therefore if they should be included as wars or rebellions, these conflicts are recorded separately. All of these states were officially conquered and incorporated into the empire by 1700, and the data reflects these changes.

Protest/Riots: These are internal violent events where there was no attempt to take over the state or use of organised armed force against the state. However, they were significant events where large crowds gathered and engaged in petty violence against the state (e.g. stone throwing, blocking pathways), that the state had to send forces to deal with. Those who engaged in these events would be tax-payers.

- a. Protests include where large groups of people gather or act together, usually in urban environments, to appeal against a specific state policy. This can include some violence such as throwing stones or attacking soldiers, but the protesters do not intend to unseat the government.
- b. Riots include incidents of violence between two different groups of people that is unrelated to the government. Like protests, the aim of the rioters is not to unseat the government, however they include some violence and often require government action.

Whether or not an actor was under Mughal control directly immediately before the conflict is determined by the sources, the translators notes and secondary literature that discusses the specific conflict. Where there is some ambiguity but no secondary literature on the topic, some discretion has had to be made based on how events unfold, however

³¹¹ These are discussed in the introduction in the subsection on Deccan Vassal States

such cases are very few as scholars are quite clear of regions of Mughal control over time. In these cases, references have been made in the notes section of the database.

Section 2.1.2: Classification of Class Rebellion

Another aspect worth differentiating is which class group was rebelling over time. In the Mughal economic history literature, there are five groups, or classes, that are most likely to rebel or engage in conflict; the princes, *Mansabdars*, *Zamindars*, soldiers and the peasantry.³¹² For the vast majority of conflicts, the chronicles make it clear which class group rebels belong to, as the historians themselves state if the rebel leader is a *Zamindar*, *Mansabdar* or a peasant. Given the variation of intermediary types across the empire, however, ambiguities regarding how groups are classified can occur. For instance, how might we classify a tributary *Zamindar* with a *Mansab* rank who is given an administrative appointment? Defining the peasantry can equally pose a substantial challenge, where there was substantial diversity in the nature of the rural class and the amount of detail given on peasant rebellions is limited. There is an additional challenge to be met when conflicts are led by multiple class groups. The following rules are adopted for defining the class group of the rebel:

Monarchs: This group consists of internal and external rulers who try to take over from the current ruler. This includes both rebellions where those who are related to the emperor and have a claim to the throne try to overthrow him, and those where external monarchs go to war with the state. The former would be what Charles Tilly classified as dynastic rebellions.³¹³ The claim to the throne does not need to come from a direct relative like a prince but can also come from cousins and queens where applicable.

***Mansabdar* (Nobles):** These are the Mughal nobility, commonly referred to as *Mansabdars*. These were elites that received their position from the state and who were ranked according to their status, and usually came from Central Asian descent. Whilst some of these elites participated in the state bureaucracy, all these elites helped to build the Mughal army, where each *Mansabdar* was obliged to provide a number of soldiers to the Mughal army in accordance with their rank. They were given *jagirs* (revenue

³¹² Descriptions of these groups have been given in the introduction (except soldiers).

³¹³ Tilly, *European Revolutions*, 10

assignments in land) to pay for their soldiers and support themselves, but these were not hereditary and were expected to return to the state on death.

Zamindars (Local Elite): The *Zamindars* were termed as tax-collectors by the administration, meaning that they would collect the taxes from the villages on behalf of the empire, taking a portion of the tax revenue as payment for their services. In reality, the definition of the *Zamindar* was very wide and therefore includes both very powerful landholders and small village headmen in the same category.³¹⁴ Therefore the difference between *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars* can be unclear, where several *Zamindars* also received very high ranks though others did not.³¹⁵ For the purpose of this database, one of the following are true: a) they have hereditary rights to specific land, which can be independent of *jagirs* granted by the state and b) they are defined as *Zamindars* by the Mughals. Consequently, this definition also includes *Rajas* and clan leaders that also have hereditary rights to land or *watan jagirs*. In this way, the definition is the same as used by Athar Ali in “The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb.”³¹⁶

Peasants/Ryots: The peasantry in pre-colonial India are difficult to define, largely because of the diversity of land and community rights. As R. P. Rana has noted, the term raiyat, which generally in Mughal sources refers to peasantry, actually means ‘subject’ and could potentially also include *Zamindars*.³¹⁷ Previous studies have included tribal and pastoral communities as part of the peasantry although they may not use settled agriculture.³¹⁸ Usually peasant refers to agricultural cultivators, however for the purposes of this database it can include civilian population in urban areas that would have been considered commoners. If the rebels are expressly referred to as cultivators or ‘unknown’ people or if their name was not given, the rebellion is classified in this category. More often than not the chronicles record these rebels as groups of people as opposed to one individual and names are not provided.

Interclass: These are rebellions led by a combination of more than one of the four groups. It requires that each of the involved had strong leadership and active involvement from of the respective class groups and is usually determined by how the leaders of the rebellion are described. Therefore, rebellions where nobles or *Zamindars* hire peasants would not count as an interclass rebellion, however a rebellion where peasants rebel not as *Zamindar* soldiers but for their own reasons would be counted as interclass. An

³¹⁴ See the discussion on *Zamindars* in the Thesis Introduction

³¹⁵ Zakir Husain, “The *Zamindars* in the Deccan Under Aurangzeb” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 60 (1999): 321

³¹⁶ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 12

³¹⁷ Rana, *Rebels to Rulers*, 41

³¹⁸ Singh, “Conformity and conflict” p427 n18, 424-428

example might be the rebellion of the peasantry who overthrew the Mughal government to call upon Bhim Narayan. The label 'interclass' only applies to categorising larger conflicts, where individuals are not counted as 'interclass.'

Section 2.1.3: The Rank Size Metric

Given the nature of the sources and the variability of information given regarding each conflict, it has not been possible to find a single metric that accurately measures the size for every conflict recorded. Moreover, number of soldiers data sometimes fails to capture larger peasant rebellions because the historians are more likely to describe these in words than in numbers. For instance, no number of soldiers data is given for a Tariki rebellion in 1596, however we know that the rebellion took 24 months to put down and it is recorded over several pages.³¹⁹ For subsequent chapters, and chapter three especially, it becomes increasingly beneficial to have a method of being able to classify the size of all rebellions regardless of whether number of soldiers data exists. In order to solve for this problem, several different types of information for each conflict was collected to help estimate their relative size, including: information on the number of provinces the conflict spanned over, the number of pages the conflict was recorded on in the translations; the rank and position of the officer sent to quell the rebellion; the words used to describe the conflict size; and the number of soldiers on each side. None of these metrics alone are enough to accurately represent the relative size of the conflicts, however together they allow us to classify most conflicts.

The rank size metric attempts to classify how significant or insignificant each rebellion was in terms of the information we have about them and in terms of how much importance the Mughal state itself gave the rebellions. Using a number of indicators, it is attempted to classify rebellions into the categories of very small (Rank 1), small (Rank 2), medium (Rank 3), large (Rank 4) and very large (Rank 5). It is assumed that how much is written regarding a specific rebellion reflects how important the Mughal state thought the rebellion is. This assumption generally seems to hold true in most cases. For example, the histories give quite decent attention to the Satnami rebellion, which is generally accepted to have been a very large peasant rebellion.³²⁰ However, there are potentially

³¹⁹ Fazl, Abu'l. *The Akbarnama of Abu'l Fazl*, Trans. Henry Beveridge, The Asiatic Society (2000), Vol II, 1051

³²⁰ Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 395

cases where the histories deliberately omit or avoid discussing rebellions in order to hide the flaws of the state.

Whilst objective measures like (number of soldiers) are used to mitigate problems of bias in recording, this detail usually not available for a lot of the rebellions, especially peasant rebellions. Therefore, in order to proxy for size, other less indicative indicators have been used. As it is recognised there is not always consistency between these measurements, a priority of measurements has been determined based on the reliability and objectivity of the data. This priority is given at the bottom of Table 1.1 (below) which also presents how each of the ranks have been classified. A rank 5 rebellion, for instance, is one where the rebels' number exceeds 20,000, and usually is where the Emperor or princes are sent. In order to keep consistency and allow for future comparisons wars, rebellions and Vassal State conflicts are measured using the same scale. It should be noted that the differences in scale are large, especially for Rank 4-5 conflicts. These rank boundaries were chosen with the interest being able to discerning conflict sizes more precisely, where there is a clear difference between the higher ranks.

Table 1.1 Rank Size Mughal Conflict Dataset

Size	Rank	Number of Rebels	Mughal soldiers	Words of size	Rank of official sent	Number of pages	Number of provinces
Very Large	5	>=20,000		Ants and locusts	Emperor/ princes	>3	>2
Large	4	>=5000	>10,000	Large force, many, thousands	Senior general	>3	>=2
Medium	3	>1000				1-3	
Small	2	<1000				0.25-1	
Very Small	1			[usually a side note]		<0.25-0.5	

If there was a conflict between measurements (e.g. says over 1000 rebel participants but only 0.25 pages), priority given as follows: No. of rebels -> size in words -> rank of official sent -> number of Mughal soldiers -> No of pages -> No of provinces.

Notes: This table explains how conflicts sizes were measured where there was data inconsistency, meaning the same measurement for size was not available for all data. The ranks are based of patterns noticed when compiling the dataset.

Section 2.2: Recording the data

Section 2.2.1: Software Choices

One of the great qualities of Mughal histories is they are often very rich in data, where historians often wrote detailed accounts full of details. For example, it was not unusual for the historians to give the price of items in multiple currencies,³²¹ which gives us some indication of the exchange rates of the time period.³²² This detail makes it possible to include several different variables in the database, which in turn can provide a fuller picture of how conflicts changed. However, in many cases there are multiple variables that apply to a single rebellion. For instance, a single conflict can take place over several provinces, meaning there is more than one location involved in a conflict. In conventional tables it is difficult to keep a record for all the details involved.³²³ In order to account for rebellions having multiple observations attached to a single rebellion, I have used the relational database software Microsoft Access. This software allows me to link a main rebellion table with tables for variables that have multiple observations, each with their own unique Identification Number (ID). Therefore, if a rebellion takes place in a number of provinces, each province involved would have its own ID, but all the locations collectively would be linked to the rebellion by the rebellion ID. This software is especially useful because it allows me to add considerable detail to the database. For instance, I am able to include location data for the several towns that the Mughals mention the conflicts take place in. Additionally, I am able to create a sub-database of many groups and individuals that participated in rebellion, identifying each with their own ethnicity, motivation, consequence etc.

Another advantage of the software is that it allows for flexibility, meaning it is easy to exclude and include relevant fields where necessary. Consequently, whilst all conflicts have been recorded in chronological order with the year they start, by using Access Queries it is very easy to exclude non-rebellion conflicts like wars and protests in

³²¹ For example, Nizamudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 425

³²² An example is given here: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged History of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, Compiled by his Royal Librarian*, Trans. W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai, (Oxford: Delhi Oxford University Press, 1990): 175

³²³ Theoretically it is possible to have a very large table with multiple columns for each of the different participants and locations, however this would be complicated to design and to use.

order to analyse the data. It is additionally possible to recategorize rebels to remove or include groups for more flexible analysis. The data has been coded and organised in a manner to ensure it is easy to classify them into a specific category or subcategory. For instance, motivations are classified into six general types: tax, plunder, territory, social mobility, policy and 'no data' (for when there is no information in the histories). Additionally, motivations are also classified according to if they were 'gain' (rebelled to gain something) vs 'loss' (rebelled because they lost something). Using the Access Queries function, it is possible to create unique tables with the desired variables for analysis. For example, we can identify all the participants involved in rebellions (as opposed to wars) who were motivated by either losing or gaining territory or social status. The important takeaway here is that the database has been specifically designed to allow for a flexible analysis of the different variables and their relationship to one another. This flexibility bares stark contrast to existing conflict databases which often depict conflicts as relatively homogenous or linear, which was certainly not the case in the Mughal period.³²⁴

Finally, whilst use of text-based software has been considered for determining the total number of rebellions, I have decided that it would be unfruitful to use such a software for examining the sources. This is for several reasons. Firstly, the nature of the sources is such that rebellions were not recorded in the way we would expect. The authors writing in Farsi, and their English translators, used a variety of colourful euphemisms for rebellion which a software would not likely record. For example, terms such as "stirred up the dust" are used to insinuate rebellion.³²⁵ Secondly, there is the fear that rebellions can be over-recorded in instances where a single rebellion occurs for a long period of time. For instance, the 1565 Uzbek rebellion is recorded over eighty pages within the *Tabaqat-I-Akbari*, where several events occur before the rebellion is resolved.³²⁶ Therefore, a software may accidentally record the same rebellion a number of times by associating the same clusters of words over several pages. Finally, whilst many of the translations are in OCR readable pdf format, the nature of some of the sources makes them difficult to read and therefore leads to several spelling and grammatical mistakes in the text. That besides, variations in spelling of the same words like '*ryot*' (*ryat*, *ryot* etc.) would likely confuse the software. Consequently, the best route has been to ensure the development of an accurate and reliable dataset is by combining appropriate software tools with a

³²⁴ For example, a number of papers study 'battles' as a way of measuring conflict. This is not to say that battles are not a useful measurement in the absence of alternative data, however they are less clear. These examples were discussed at the start of the Methodology section with this chapter.

³²⁵ Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 1130.

³²⁶ The rebellion is spread across multiple pages. See: Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 285, 294, 368

personal close reading and examination of the sources. Although very time consuming, this has allowed me to qualitatively assess the size and nature of rebellions as well as their causes, and gauge a deeper perspective of the Mughal response to conflicts.

Section 2.2.2: Description of Tables

This section will briefly describe each of data tables that are recorded in the database which has been drawn from the official histories. This section discusses why the data is generally useful and how it can be beneficial in future analysis. A diagram of how each of the tables are connected to each other is given in Figure 1.1, which shows the Access table relationships. With the exception of the Direct Funding Tables and Support tables which are linked to the participants table, all the sub-tables are linked to the main rebellion table by conflict ID.

Main Conflict Table: The Main Conflict table records the larger overview information related to the conflicts that help us classify it into categories. These are the type of conflict (War/Vassal State/Rebellion), the name of the rebellion, the year it began, the Interclass metric and comments on secondary literature used for clarification. This table gives a chronological overview of all conflicts in the empire.

Locations table: This table is a record of all the different locations that are mentioned in the Official Histories, where every location is linked to the rebellion that occurred. Usually, the official histories gave locations by names of cities or villages. Wherever possible, every location was then tracked to know which *Sarkar* (sub-province) and *Subah* (province) they were in by using Irfan Habib's '*Atlas of the Mughal Empire*'.³²⁷ Locations are therefore recorded by the original names and boundaries of the state used at the time period in question. The type of location was also recorded, including if the place was a capital, a port, etc. Where locations were ambiguous, such as there being multiple cities with the same name or a *Sarkar* and *Parganah* with the same name, the most likely and largest possible region was used (i.e. *Sarkar* instead of *Parganah*). Any location where there was doubt as to the accuracy of the data was not included in the analysis.

³²⁷ Habib, *An atlas of the Mughal Empire*.

Size Table: The size table records several different metrics that can be used to approximate how large the rebellions are. It is from this table that the rank size metric (discussed in Section 2.1.3) described above is derived, and all the variables mentioned there are included. The Number of Soldiers data in the sources is often very detailed, where the Mughals often break down the number of troops they sent by the type. For example, they would give details on the number of cavalry, archers and footmen sent on any particular battle. The type of soldier differentiation has been included because the cost and nature of cavalry is very different to footmen, where the former is more skilled and more expensive. To avoid double-counting troops, the number of soldiers was only recorded if it was clear that the chronicler was referring to additional troops as opposed to troops which were already recorded. Other metrics are included in the size table such as number of pages in the text the conflict takes, the duration of the conflict, the ranks of the officials sent to put down the rebellion etc. From these different measurements, the Rank size metric was developed to determine whether rebellions were very small, small, medium, large or very large (as described in section 2.1.3).

Participants Table: the participants table records all the different actors or participants within the rebellion that are recorded in the histories. Each participant is therefore linked to a specific rebellion. This is useful as often there is more than one participant for a rebellion, however participants can have very different consequences (for example, one could be forgiven and the other executed). The table provides a sample of rebellious individuals which allows us to analyse why particular individuals chose to rebel and whether people from different classes or ethnicities had worse consequences after rebellion. Additionally, it allows us to see the kinds of alliances rebellions created between classes and ethnicities. It is from this table that the interclass rebellion metric in the main table is largely derived (see Section 2.1.2). It should be noted, however, that out of all tables, the participant table has the greatest likelihood of being affected by chroniclers' bias. The Mughal historians would likely give details on participants they considered important, and therefore many lower rank participants, like peasants, may not be included. Additionally, the chroniclers may infer certain motivations from the rebels that we are unable to ask the rebels about directly. Whilst it is undeniable that there is bias, this information is still helpful as it gives an idea of who the Mughals considered to be larger threats and whether rebels of a certain type were treated differently. As is elaborated in the next two chapters, seeing how the Mughals viewed rebellion motivations can also help us to understand how rebellions affected conflict policies.

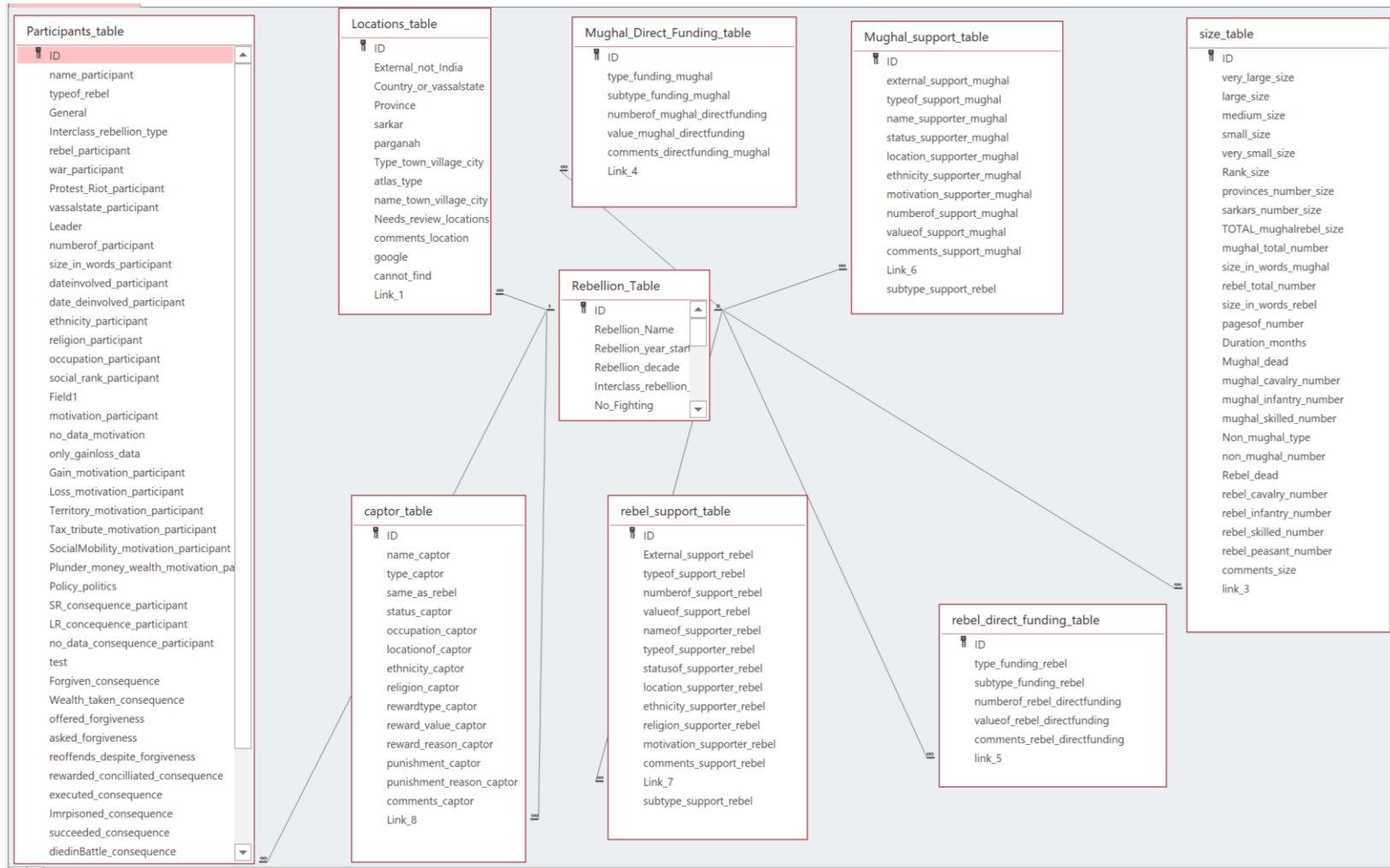
Participant Rebellion Fine Table: Linked to each participant, there is a Fine table that records how much the rebel participant was fined for the rebellion once it was put down. Usually this involved several different types of concessions (e.g. giving elephants, jeweller, money etc).

Captor Table: like the participants table, the captor table records details of the Mughal officials that were sent to lead the capture of the rebels, in some cases where there were more than one as the captors died or failed at their tasks. The table also records whether the captor was rewarded or punished for how he dealt with the rebellion, with detailed information given on the types of reward that were conferred on him, pecuniary or otherwise.

Mughal and Rebel Direct Funding Tables: These tables record any and all mentions of Mughal and rebel expenses that are related to any specific conflict. Sometimes this information is given very directly, where the chronicler will state the total amount estimated to have been spent on a campaign. Other times the cost is determined by the number of soldiers, elephants, artillery and other types of costs mentioned. This table also records if grain and plunder was an important factor in feeding the armies, and how these were gained and spent when acquired. This becomes increasingly important as rebellions go on. This table therefore helps us to develop some idea of the ways in which Mughals and rebels were financing conflicts over time.

Mughal and Rebel Support tables: Whilst the direct funding tables give information on how the Mughals and Rebels self-finance, the support table gives information of military and financial support from seemingly non-direct groups. For instance, if a rebel was put down with the help of one of the Vassal States, or if a rebel is being financed by another regime.

Figure 1.1: Relationships between tables in the Mughal Conflict Dataset.



Section 3: Sources

Regarding the selection of sources for compiling the database, there are three essential requirements which must be met: the sources must be as consistent as possible; they must be as centralised as possible (i.e. as close to the central government); and they must be as detailed as possible.

Contemporary Mughal state histories³²⁸ recorded the major events in the empire in chronological year by year settings. The writers of the histories wrote about ongoing events (or those in the recent past) which they had lived through. These are very different to conventional diaries or logs as these histories were very well researched and usually reviewed prior to publication.³²⁹ Significantly, the Mughal court historians based their histories not only on personal views, but by interviewing people involved, reviewing archival material (letters and edicts), referencing other historians and including royal commissioned paintings within the text to commemorate what they considered to be major events.³³⁰ It is important to emphasise that the historians were very aware that they were creating an official record, and therefore were careful of including as much detail as possible, where often information on costs and expenses can be given in multiple currencies. Consequently, as a source, these are by far the closest records which embody a 'state-perspective,' which is what we want to understand with regards to conflicts.

Section 3.1: Translations

I used existing translations to compile the database, where the supplementary material and notes provided by translators have several useful attributes for the purposes of this study. The translators of the histories provide very detailed footnotes which help to identify inconsistencies between different sources. For instance, there are three different

³²⁸ Described in section 3.4 and Appendix 1.A below

³²⁹ For instance, one of the historians, Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, references all the texts he has used when compiling his history (page iv of the *Tabaqat*), and another, Khafi Khan, notes his reliance on state official records for the period where writing of histories was forbidden (page 214 of the *Muntakhab*). See: Nizammuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, iv; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 214

³³⁰ This is said as much at the beginning of each of the histories, where the authors always state if they have consulted other materials for their writing. For example, the writer of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* is clear that much of his history is based of the work of Abu'l Fazl's writing in the *Akbarnama*. Moreover, the translator of the *Akbarnama*, Henry Beveridge, has noted the general accuracy of Abu'l Fazl's account (see: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama* Vol. III, xii.

contemporary state histories covering the period of Emperor Akbar's reign.³³¹ In each history, the writer has a very different writing style which can create inconsistencies with regards to the interpretation of events. The translation of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* (one of the histories used), for example, references each of the inconsistencies and notes the page and source where it can be found.³³² The footnotes can also help to elaborate on details not provided in the original source though are useful.³³³ The translator's notes can also help disambiguate different names given for people and locations.³³⁴ Lastly, all the translations used have indexes of every person, location and important noun that is used in the record. Consequently, it is possible then to track when each rebel is mentioned over long periods of time by referring to the index, facilitating the creation of relevant variables in the database. Finally, translators usually provide introductory background information of the text, explaining the authors' background, what their relationship was with the state, the context in which the historian was writing and possibly hidden motives of the Mughal historian that might otherwise be missed. The context and detail provided by translators are therefore very useful in helping to ensure the data is consistent, accurate and detailed.

One of the concerns might be that translators have significant agency where that they can add meaning to the original text based on the language they choose to use to translate it. This is best described by Wheeler who criticised earlier translations of the *Tuzuk-I-Jahangiri* for using overly formal language, where he argued that Emperor Jahangir, who authored one of the histories, in reality had a much more casual writing style.³³⁵ In these cases, I have tried to use the most recent translations available with the hope that later translators would catch the implicit biases of earlier translators and try to correct them in their work, or at least make reference to it. The words translators used might also at times create more ambiguity than clarity. For instance, several translators in Akbar's period use the term landholders,³³⁶ which could refer to either *Zamindars* or Peasants. In these cases, I have tried to use other resources to flesh out the real meaning,

³³¹ Outlined in section 3.4

³³² For example, it is noted when there are differences in the number of men recorded. See: Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 55 n1

³³³ For example, giving additional context to a conflict. See: Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 430 n5, 57 n1

³³⁴ For example, it is noted when there are differences in the number of men recorded. See: Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 56, n1

³³⁵ Jahangirnama, *Tuzuk I Jahangiri*, ix-x

³³⁶ For example, see: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama Vol 3*, 412

but often a decision has to be made, such as in this case all references to “landholders” were assumed to be *Zamindars* because this is the more likely reference given the context.

Finally, but not least important, there is the issue of which texts have been translated. There are a number of central state histories (see Appendix 1.A), though not all of them have been translated. This is largely because translating these histories is a very time consuming, rigorous and highly skilled endeavour as these texts are often very long and complex. What this means is that there is a potential bias in the sources used for the database from what the translators have chosen to translate. For instance, despite the fact that a number of histories were written during Emperor Shah Jahan’s reign,³³⁷ it is only the court librarian’s abridged version which has been translated.³³⁸ There potentially could be state histories more suitable for this endeavour which are not used for the reasons given above. However, it should also be remembered the chronicles which have been translated are also those chronicles which were considered to be the most valuable for the historian, largely because of their detail and central nature. Furthermore, we can see from Appendix 1.A that out of the 26 state histories, 13 were not suitable because they were either not centralised (i.e. recorded by a central government official), or covered an earlier period of time than is concerned with this thesis. Since this thesis uses more than 4 of the remaining 13 histories (and these likely being the most relevant ones), it is not likely the other histories would have substantially more or better data for the purposes of this thesis. For Shahjahan’s reign, which is the only period for which we know there is a more detailed source available, there is still a strong advantage in using Inayat Khan’s abridgement instead of the whole Shahjahannama. For example, Inayat Khan wrote his abridged version with the intention of remaining consistent with the previous histories, many of which were used in this thesis.³³⁹ It is additionally explained that the abridgement is made in order to make the text clearer and easier to read. Lastly, Khan notes what has largely been omitted from the original,³⁴⁰ giving us confidence that the more relevant information relating to this dissertation has been kept.

³³⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged History of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, Compiled by his Royal Librarian*, Trans. W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai, (Oxford: Delhi Oxford University Press, 1990), xv-xxiii

³³⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xxix

³³⁹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 3

³⁴⁰ These being communications between kings, appointments of *Mansabs* and descriptions of celebrations. See: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 4

Section 3.2: Assumptions made when compiling the database

Use of these sources relies on a few assumptions, some of which have been discussed already, which could potentially affect the results of the study. For instance, whilst these are contemporary chronological accounts, it is assumed that the authors are equally consistent about their record keeping from the beginning of the history to the end. Additionally, it is assumed that as the historians were often referencing previous histories in their work, that they would adhere to a similar style and consistency in record keeping as in the previous reign. Interestingly, the authors of these histories seem similarly aware of these problems as I am and have made references to this as such. For instance, Khafi Khan very clearly states that for a period of around nine years, he does not have an accurate account of events and therefore can only state major events as well as people have remembered them since.³⁴¹ As has been noted above, the abridged version of the Shahjahannama used also aims to be consistent with previous studies.³⁴² Although it is my view these assumptions are reasonable and that in most cases any issues with inconsistencies are minor, I have taken steps to recognise these inconsistencies and record them. For example, if the chronicler of a history changes for whatever reason (e.g. such as death or retirement), I look at the point of change of chronicler to see if there is a noticeable difference in how rebellions are recorded to see if changes are largely driven by chronicler bias or writing style.³⁴³

Another assumption that has had to be made is that the historians recorded only the rebellions they thought were the most significant. If this assumption is incorrect, it could bias the data in two specific ways. First, there is the issue of omission, where the chroniclers not only omitted rebellions that were less significant, but that they also might have left out rebellions that were very significant that the Mughals did not want a record of. Similarly, the Mughals might have tried to shift or change the narratives and causes of rebellions to suit their version of events. Certainly, it is very clear from the sources that the emperors try and twist the narrative of some rebellions or are much cagier on certain details. An obvious example of this is when the crown prince rebels and the Emperor Jahangir attributes this to his son's ego, whereas many historians attribute the rebellion

³⁴¹ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 175

³⁴² Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 3

³⁴³ Details on inconsistencies with the database are described in Section 4 of this chapter

to a power struggle between the crown prince and the Queen Nur Jahan.³⁴⁴ Where there is such ambiguity, it is usually noted in the translation. That said, I have tried to deal with it by referring to secondary sources to determine what the literature considers the events to have been rather than relying on the sources alone. It is worth noting, though, that what the Mughals chose to include does not always paint the state in a positive light. Chroniclers point out that at times the emperors' harsh actions cause political problems, when he has made a mistake which he regrets or even when the emperor has poor physical or emotional health.³⁴⁵ Chroniclers also criticise imperial policies and openly admit its weakness.³⁴⁶ Given this, whilst in some cases there is potential for the chronicles to give a skewed version of events, it is unlikely conflicts were omitted for political purposes altogether. Still, this does not mean that the histories do not carefully omit important information when it seems critical to the empire, and there are certainly rebellions that are not recorded.³⁴⁷ To avoid contaminating the consistency of the database, I have not added rebellions that were omitted even when I have found that they exist. I simply make note of them in an alternative database.

The second potential bias is where an author focuses on a rebellion for personal reasons as opposed for reasons of its importance to the state. There is certainly potential for such a bias evident for some of the rebellions. Inayat Khan, for instance, notes down rebellions that his father put down and describes in detail how this was done, often praising his father in the process.³⁴⁸ As such, we cannot say if he recorded the rebellion because it was important to the state, or because he wanted to emphasize his father's successes. An advantage of using the translations is the translators make references to such cases, and where they are noticed I have tried to make reference to them. That said, it is likely these possible biased cases are few and far between enough to prevent it affecting the general trends in the database.

³⁴⁴ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 102

³⁴⁵ For example, the historian Nizammudin Ahmad notes that the Emperor Akbar had become overly harsh in his dealings: (Tabaqat, 526). Similarly, Emperor Jahangir does not at all try to hide that he had plotted the killing of Abu'l Fazl, his father's most trusted advisor, or that his father disapproved of his behaviour when he punished a man by having him skinned alive. (Tuzuk I Jahangir, 13, 32).

³⁴⁶ Khafi Khan, for instance, criticised the state for being too lenient to nobles that were caught exacting illegal taxes on the peasants. (Khan, Muntukhab, 94).

³⁴⁷ For example, within the parts of the Akbarnama not used, Abu'l Fazl refers to the conflicts of Bir Singh Deo. See Abu'l Fazl, Akbarnam Vol 3, 1217

³⁴⁸ Inayat Khan, An Abridged History, 339

Section 3.3: Interpreting the data

Before embarking on analysis with the database, it is very important to note how this type of data should be interpreted. These histories only record certain details and do not always give full accounts of incidents. For every variable that is included, there is the possibility that the historians only tell us numbers they consider relevant, where in reality the total numbers could have been greater. For instance, conflicts usually consist of several battles, however histories might only record the number of soldiers sent in one battle, and as such the number of men recorded as being sent could be less than the actual number sent. Moreover, even if data on numbers is given for more than one battle in the same conflict, I do not record the additional numbers. This is because it is possible that the number of soldiers from the first battle are also engaged in the second battle, and therefore there is a risk of double counting and overestimating the number of soldiers involved. Similarly, if the duration of a rebellion is not recorded, it does not necessarily mean the rebellion was short, only that there is no record of how long it lasted in either the histories or any secondary source that was reviewed (i.e. either an end date or a start date are missing). Therefore, every variable in the database should be seen as a minimum, where it is possible that the actual numbers were higher than what the Mughals recorded. It should be noted that this is a factor that could be shared by databases which record similar types of data, the difference being that some of those may report estimates of total numbers involved. No such attempt to estimate the actual number involved has been made for this database.

Something else to keep in mind when interpreting the data is that whilst metrics might classify rebellions as 'small', all of the rebellions were large enough that the central state considered them worthy of recording. In every one of these rebellions the state sent their own forces and very high-ranking officials. So whilst the chroniclers may not give a great amount of detail on some rebellions, it should be remembered that each one was significant enough that they thought it was worth writing in the state histories.

Section 3.4: Which Official Histories?

This section is dedicated to outlining which official histories were chosen to be included within the database and a discussion of why they were chosen. As discussed in earlier sections,³⁴⁹ whilst there are a number of histories recorded (a list of which can be found in Appendix 1.A), the options decrease substantially when we filter for certain requirements, namely: a) existence of at least one translation, b) proximity to the state or emperor and c) the period of time covered (longer periods are preferred for consistency). This section will discuss each of the options that covered these conditions and which histories were chosen on the basis of the requirements. As the histories are usually written according to the four reigning emperors of the period (shown in Table 1.2 below), I will explain which source was taken for each reign.

Table 1.2: Mughal Emperors between 1556-1707

Emperor	Years of Reign
Akbar	1556-1605
Jahangir	1605-1627
Shahjahan	1628-1658
Aurangzeb	1658-1707

Akbar (1556-1605):

Despite being the earliest emperor of our period, Emperor Akbar's reign arguably has the most chronicles suitable for constructing a centralised conflict database. There are three well-known and translated histories of Akbar's reign which cover a large part of his history; the Akbarnama of Abu'l Fazl,³⁵⁰ the Muntakhab ut Tawarikh of Abd al Qadir

³⁴⁹ See the discussion on translations in section 3.1

³⁵⁰ Fazl, Abu'l. *Akbarnama* Vol II

Badauni³⁵¹ and the *Tabaqat I Akbari* by Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad (referred to as the 'Tabaqat').³⁵² The *Tabaqat* was used to compile the database for the majority of the period for three reasons. Firstly, it was the least biased source of the three available. Badauni is well known for having been a critic of Akbar's policies, and his work was kept secret from the emperor.³⁵³ Consequently, the *Muntakhab ut Tawarikh* does not provide a good representation of the state's perspective of events, especially if we consider the 'state' to include the emperor and those that aided the emperor. The *Akbarnama* conversely was full of praise of the emperor Akbar and very flowery language, where the translator considered Abu'l Fazl's writing style akin to "hero worship."³⁵⁴ This means the *Akbarnama* does represent the state perspective, however even then the extent of bias evident in the source is still undesirable. The writing of the *Akbarnama* is highly inconsistent and, as in the words of one translator, "torturous and obscure."³⁵⁵ There are a number of occasions where Abu'l Fazl mentions rebellions without providing much detail on them.³⁵⁶ The *Tabaqat* comparatively is much clearer and has a relatively objective style of writing. Thirdly, Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad served as Akbar's Mir *Bakhshi* (head of military),³⁵⁷ which meant he was at the forefront of dealing with military conflicts and would have a good account of what occurred in battles and the state's perspective on conflict. As the *Tabaqat* ends in 1593, the gap between Akbar's reign and that of Jahangir's is covered by the *Akbarnama*. Given the difficult nature of the source, a comment has been made about the inconsistency of the data here within the source coverage table.

The *Tabaqat* was translated by Brajendranath De, a former vice-president of the council of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta. It was first published by the society in 1936, and republished in 1996, the latter being the version which was used to compile the database. There is theoretically an alternative translation in *The History of India, as Told by Its*

³⁵¹ Bada'uni, Abdal Al-Qadir. *Muntakhab-ut- Tawarikh*, Trans. Georgs S. A. Ranking, Calcutta Asiatic Society of Bengal (1898), Vol II

³⁵² Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*

³⁵³ Fauzia Zareen Abbas., "Abdul Qadir Badauni - A Voice In The Wilderness." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 52 (1991): 263; Afshan Majid., "Ideology And Personal Grievances: Badauni's Career At Akbar's Court." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 72 (2011): 348.

³⁵⁴: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama Vol 3*, xi

³⁵⁵ The translator of the work, Henry Beveridge, describes Abu'l Fazl's writing style as "torturous and obscure." See: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama Vol 3*, ix

³⁵⁶ For example, his description of one Afghan rebellion is less than three links long, with not details on who was rebelling (or why) or on any of the locations. The indication of who was sent to put them down is also not given. See: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama Vol 3*, 987

³⁵⁷ Henry Miers Elliot., *The History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period*. Edited by John Dowson. Vol. 5. Cambridge Library Collection - Perspectives from the Royal Asiatic Society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1873

Own Historians by Henry Miers Elliot³⁵⁸ who worked for the British East India Company, however as it is well recognised in the literature that Elliot's objective of writing the translations was to show the superiority of British rule in India,³⁵⁹ I have avoided that translation as much as possible. All the translations used for this database include an index of nouns of frequent occurrence, however this translation goes further to create an index which gives a short biography of important people in the text, meaning it gives the reader an account of the rebels lives without having to interpret it from the text itself. This index has allowed me to check on many occasions what the fate of a rebel was even when the text is not clear. The Akbarnama translation by Henry Beveridge also includes such an index, however chronicles relating to future emperors only have the more conventional indexes, meaning more use of secondary sources is required when the text is vague.

Jahangir (1605-1627):

For Jahangir's reign, the only Mughal contemporary history that is centralised, covers the period desired and has been translated is the *Tuzuk-I-Jahangiri*, which is a contemporary history written by emperor Jahangir himself.³⁶⁰ Unlike the other emperors in our database, Jahangir took a personal interest in writing the state's history, and he maintained the same style of writing (for example, recoding appointments and currency conversions). That said, although the text was considered to be the "emperor's own guidelines for the maintenance of the empire,"³⁶¹ the history comes across as more of a memoir where at several points Jahangir discusses aspects of his interests that have no relation to the state, such as his fascination with animals and scientific experiments.³⁶² The chronicle is written in the same format as the other histories, where it follows a chronological pattern and records major conflicts and events in substantial detail. Following a bout of depression after the death of his grand-daughter, Jahangir stopped

³⁵⁸ Elliot, *The History of India*, 178-9

³⁵⁹ Richard, Eaton. "Temple Desecration in Pre-Modern India: When, where and why were Hindu Temples Desecrated in pre-modern history, and how was this connected with the rise of Indo-Muslim states," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Oxford University Press, Vol 11, No. 3, (September 2000)

³⁶⁰ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*,

³⁶¹ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 18

³⁶² Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, xxiv, 274

writing his memoirs himself after the 17th year where it is taken over by Mutamad Khan, a senior imperial officer.³⁶³ However, we are reassured that Jahangir reviews and corrects all writing before it is copied into the book.³⁶⁴

Being a text of great interest to scholars, the *Tuzuk I Jahangiri* has been fully translated no less than three times; first by W.H. Lowe in 1889,³⁶⁵ then by Alexander Rogers (edited by Henry Beveridge)³⁶⁶ in 1914 and finally by Wheeler M. Thackston in 1999. For reasons of practicality, I have chosen to use the Wheeler translation because, aside from the fact that it has referenced the other two texts, the text is the only one that has been digitized in a format that is easy to navigate. It also includes a collection of Mughal miniatures that were commissioned for the *Jahangirnama* in the order that they were made in the original. Initially I was inclined to use the Beveridge and Rogers translation as I thought it might give some consistency with the *Tabaqat* translation. However, as Thackston himself notes that he finds the Beveridge and Rogers translation to be “precise and correct”³⁶⁷ and has only changed the colloquial style of the language, I do not think there would be a problem of consistency.

Shah Jahan (1628-1658):

Shah Jahan commissioned several histories during his reign, largely because he wanted to keep a very tight and detailed record of his reign and kept finding the chosen state historians were not up to the task.³⁶⁸ Eventually, Shah Jahan settled on the work of Abdal Hamid Lahori, who wrote the *Padshahnama*—an enormous text of 2700 pages with incredible detail on the accounts of the empire, which was constantly reviewed by the emperor.³⁶⁹ Like the *Akbarnama* and the *Jahangirnama*, as Lahori was unable to continue writing due to old age in 1653, the task of writing the history of the final 4 years was

³⁶³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 194

³⁶⁴ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 386

³⁶⁵ Jahangir, *Tūzūk-i-Jahāngīrī*. Trans: William Henry Low (1889) Calcutta: The Asiatic Society.

³⁶⁶ Jahangir, Alexander Rogers, and Henry Beveridge. 2001. *The Tūzūk-i-Jahāngīrī* (memoirs of Jahangir). Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications.

³⁶⁷ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 18

³⁶⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xv-xxiii

³⁶⁹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xvi

overtaken by the younger Muhammad Waris, who worked in the imperial records department.³⁷⁰

It is unclear when Lahori started writing the biography, though he probably took over the task around Shah Jahan's 12th Regnal year (c. 1640), and he had the histories written by his predecessors to reference in his writing. This issue with covering Shah Jahan's reign however, is that whilst there are a number of texts that can be referred to, there is only one that has been translated, and that is the abridged version of the Padshahnama compiled by the Royal Librarian, Inayat Khan.³⁷¹ It might be argued that the longer text is preferable for providing more detail. However, as has already been noted above, the parts which were removed in the abridged version are would not have a large impact on the findings of this thesis.³⁷² It is additionally worth noting the reason Inayat Khan compiled the abridged version, which is about one third the size of the original, is precisely because he himself thought the Padshahnama was too impractical for normal use and a smaller version with only more relevant events was necessary.³⁷³ Even then, the translation of the abridged version is 565 pages long, and therefore comparable to the other histories used. Consequently, there are several advantages of using the abridged version despite it being shorter than the original.

I have only found one translation of the text, and that is W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai's version published in 1990. The translators describe in great detail how the history was collected and written, providing very good insight into the benefits and potential pitfalls of using the text for this database.³⁷⁴ It seems that of all the histories written, the language and persona of the Shahjahanama is the most likely to omit information that is displeasing to the emperor or which presents the state in a less favourable view. For instance, despite the fact the Tuzuk I Jahangiri was written by the emperor himself, Jahangir is very frank in his memoirs and open to stating things that do not entirely shed him in a positive light (albeit still biased). In the Shahjahannama, however, the

³⁷⁰ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged* xxii

³⁷¹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xxix

³⁷² See section 3.1 of this chapter on translations

³⁷³ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged* xxiii

³⁷⁴ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xiii-xxxvii

several changes of the of the chroniclers by the emperor indicates Shahjahan was more careful about how events were recorded in the chronicles.³⁷⁵

Aurangzeb (1658-1707):

Finding a translated, centralised, chronological and comprehensive history for Aurangzeb was one of the most problematic issues faced when compiling the database. This is because whilst Aurangzeb had originally appointed Mirza Muhammad Kazim to write the ‘Alamgirnamah’, in the 10th year of his reign the emperor forbade a continuation of the state histories.³⁷⁶ The reason for this new policy is unclear, where some scholars attribute it to Aurangzeb’s religiously inspired modesty where he did not like to be portrayed in pomp and grandeur, whilst other scholars attribute this policy to his desire to curtail unnecessary expenditure in a period of financial crisis. Either way, the policy has meant a lack of sources that are suitable for our purposes. What one might consider the most obvious sources, I.e. the Alamgirnama³⁷⁷ or the Ma’athir I Alamagiri³⁷⁸ do not cover the reign in enough detail to be useful, the former covering too short a time period (1658-1668) and the latter not covering any event in great depth relative to the other histories which have been used.

The histories which are most suitable for our purpose is Kafi Khan’s Muntakab-ul-Lubab³⁷⁹ (from here referred to as the ‘Muntakhab’ and the Futuhat-I-Alamgiri³⁸⁰ written by Ishwardas Nagar (from here referred to as ‘Futuhat’). Both histories face the problem in that the writers did not have access to state archives nor were reviewed in the same way previous histories were. As such, the decision of which to use was difficult because on face value they both equally have and do not have the qualities required for the database. These qualities are mainly that they are contemporary, cover the time period

³⁷⁵ For example, see the translator’s explanation for the chronicler Qazwini’s appointment and then dismissal in: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, xiii-xx

³⁷⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 175

³⁷⁷ Elliot, Henry Miers. “Álamgír-Náma, of Muhammad Kázim.”. In *The History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period*, edited by John Dowson, 7:174–80. Cambridge Library Collection - Perspectives from the Royal Asiatic Society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

³⁷⁸ Saqi Must'ad Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*. Trans. Jadunath Sarkar (1947) Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.

³⁷⁹ Khan, Khafi. *Muntakhab*, 130

³⁸⁰ Nagar, Ishwardas. *Futuhat-i-Alamgiri*. Trans. Tasneem Ahmad (1978) Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli.

required in enough detail and are centralised enough to the state. Of the two choices, I eventually went with Khafi Khan's *Muntakab ul Lubab* for a few reasons. Firstly, the *Muntakhab* seems to be more detailed than the *Futuhāt*, where the former is 555 pages long, and the latter is only 276 pages long. Secondly, there is some discrepancy regarding the date of composition of the *Futuhāt*, where whilst Jadunath Sarkar has stated the text was written in 1730, Tasneem Ahmad argues it was finished in 1700,³⁸¹ which suggests a lack of clarity regarding how the text came about. Similarly, whilst the translator is correct in stating that Ishwardas was likely to hear important state discussions because he was so close to the emperor, it raises the concern that if the text was written at a time when Aurangzeb had banned writing histories, what would it mean for the authors' ability to collect sources. Though the manner of the *Futuhāt* does not sound like he was prevented from this, Khafi Khan's work is much clearer in that it referred to records.³⁸² Lastly, although it was a more minor concern, it is arguable Ishwardas Nagar's account could be biased by the fact that he negotiated with the Rathor rebels, and therefore may over-state the rebellions' significance.³⁸³

For the reasons cited above, the *Muntakhab* seems slightly more appropriate for our purposes than the *Futuhāt*. Even then, the *Muntakhab ul Lubab* has three important issues with it that differentiate it from all the other histories that have been selected for the other emperors. Firstly, as already mentioned, the text is not as centralised as all the histories have been. Whilst Khafi Khan was a high-ranking Mughal official, he was not very close to the emperor but served as a *Diwan* under Asaf Jah Nizam al Mulk, who was a vice-royal of the Deccan under Farrukh Siyar.³⁸⁴ All the authors of the other histories have been very close to the emperors and had constant, direct and official contact. Secondly, the history is written around 1728 where the chronicler was born around 1663, which means that whilst this is a contemporary account, it is not one in which the writer was witness to everything, especially earlier events of the reign.³⁸⁵ For these periods, it seems Khan relied on existing records to write the chronicles. Finally, as Khafi Khan himself states, there is a long period between 1668-1677 he is unable to relate accounts in the order in which they occurred and does not have a complete account, despite his best

³⁸¹ Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhāt*, xviii

³⁸² Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 213

³⁸³ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, xx

³⁸⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, xiv

³⁸⁵ This is an estimated age and time of writing based on the translator's introduction. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, xv

efforts to collect as many records as possible³⁸⁶ In consequence of these issues, data on rebellions in Aurangzeb's reign in this database might not be suitable for certain purposes, and this should be kept in mind by the users and those analysing the information. There are two translations of the Muntukhab. One by S. Moin Haq published in 1975,³⁸⁷ and one by Elliot and Dowson which was originally published in 1877.³⁸⁸ As has already been mentioned, I have avoided Elliot's translations because of his known biases, and therefore have chosen to use the translation by Moin Haq.

Section 3.5: Source Coverage





Having discussed the selection of sources for the database based on their utility, it is possible to discuss the scope of coverage of the database. As the source coverage table below (Table 1.3), the sources chosen do a fairly good job of covering the 150-year period under study (1556-1707). There are some gaps, like between the years 1602-5, however by in large these gaps are quite small, spanning a maximum of 3 years. What is more problematic for our purposes is not the gaps, but the periods of time where the records are inconsistent or uncertain (discussed in section 3.4). These are the periods between 1593-1605 and 1669-1678. Additionally, it should be remembered that the record after 1660 is not at the same standard as the record during previous emperors' reigns. Consequently, in many cases through this thesis, I focus my analysis on the period before 1670 where the state records were available and the histories were closely monitored by the emperor.

³⁸⁶ Khafi Khan, notes his reliance on state official records for the period where writing of histories was forbidden. See Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 214.

³⁸⁷ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*,

³⁸⁸ Dowson, *The History of India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Table 1.3: Source Coverage Table

Emperor	Source/Diary	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600	1610	1620	1630	1640	1650	1660	1670	1680	1690	1700	1710	
Akbar	Tabaqat i Akbari	1556				1593													
	Akbarnama						1602												
Jahangir	tuzuk i Jahangiri						1605		1627										
Shah Jahan	Shah Jahan Nama (of Inayat Khan)								1628			1658							
Aurangzeb	Muntakhab ul lubab												1660					1707	
Missing Years and inconsistent years					9	3			1			2		9					
					years	years			1 year			years		years					
										Key:									
												covered but not contemporary account							
												covered as a contemporary history							
												uncovered							
												inconsistent time period records							

Note: This table shows which state histories were used for specific periods of the database and the reliability and consistency of the records. Green cells indicate the decade was covered by a consistent contemporary history. Pink cells indicate periods which were covered by contemporary histories, however there is data inconsistency. The number of inconsistent and/or missing years are also noted in the final row of the table. The years in the cells indicate the year the history began or stopped recording. **Source:** Constructed from the histories discussed in section 3.4 of chapter 1.

Section 4: Database Overview:

The final section of this chapter concludes by giving an overview of what the database results. As stated in the introduction, the method used to compile the database has led to the development of a rich source of data for understanding the state. A list of rebellions from the Main Conflict Table³⁸⁹ can be seen in Appendix 1.B. The detail of the data collected is excellent, and the nature of the data allows for some interesting analysis, much of which will be explored in following chapters.

Table 1.4 presents the total number of conflicts per decade as recorded in the database. In total, the database records 282 conflicts over the 150-year span, these being the larger and broader conflicts the state faced. Within the sub-tables of the database, the amount of data that has been collected is quite large and promising in terms of sample size. In the locations table, there were 557 locations recorded between the 282 total conflicts. By cross-referencing these conflicts with Irfan Habib's Atlas of Mughal India,³⁹⁰ we are able to confirm which provinces 496 of these locations took place in. For 241

³⁸⁹ See Section 2.2.2 of this Chapter.

³⁹⁰ A discussion of how the locations were checked cross-referenced with Habib's Atlas is given in chapter 2

locations we have *Sarkar* (sub-provincial) information. For 214 locations, we know what the type of location it is (i.e. fort, village, town, port etc).

For the participants table, the histories gave information on 606 participants. 390 were rebels, 146 were participants in war, 59 were Vassal State participants and 11 were involved in protests and riots. The database also includes unnamed group participants (i.e. not individuals) labelled as 'general,' of which there are 209 total. This was done in order to include groups like peasants which were almost never named individually. Of course, like the locations data, not every participant has complete information, where whilst we might know what the consequences were for some participants, for others there is much less data. Consequently, if we wanted to conduct analysis for a particular subset of rebels, for example by ethnicity, the sample would be limited to the participants for whom ethnicity data was recorded, which would be a smaller sample than the 606 participants recorded. Even then, the data that has been collected is large enough and detailed enough to provide a sizeable sample of the major rebels the state faced.

Overall, this exercise has successfully provided a large resource of conflict data that can be used for analysis. There are, however, a couple of visible inconsistencies which, though expected, are worth pointing out. Firstly, in the 1590s and 1600s decades where the Akbarnama was used, there is a substantial spike in the number of total rebellions. As has already been discussed above, it is possible this spike is a consequence of Abu'l Fazl's writing style, where he is not nearly as clear as his Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad. However, it is also possible that this spike is a consequence of weather, as the 1590s also coincided with periods of massive famines across India (discussed further in Chapter 3). Additionally, the high frequency of conflicts persists into the 1610s despite a change in authorship, which perhaps indicates the spike is not entirely a consequence of Abu'l Fazl's writing style and instead represents a very real rise in conflicts. Still, it is worth exercising caution when analysing those decades and being aware of potential problems.

The second inconsistency regards the decades from the 1670s onwards, which indicates a drop in the total number of conflicts being reported, despite the literature generally agreeing that conflicts increased in this period. As was mentioned earlier, this is likely in consequence of the fact that Khafi Khan's state history was not as contemporary of that of his predecessors, and he did not have the same access to materials since Aurangzeb stopped the writing of official state histories after 1668. Consequently,

it is likely that after that period, Khan only focused on the largest and most significant campaigns, and smaller rebellions have been omitted. Thus, from the 1670s decades onwards, the database likely highly underrepresents the actual number of rebellions taking place. This view is supported by the fact that although the total number of rebellions decreased, the size of rebellions were far larger in size during this period of time.

Table 1.4: Number of Conflict Type Per Decade

Decade Start	Total	Percentage per decade	Comments
1555	6	2.13	
1560	18	6.38	
1570	18	6.38	
1580	18	6.38	
1590	32	11.35	This spike could be caused by a change in the source used.
1600	39	13.83	
1610	27	9.57	
1620	18	6.38	
1630	29	10.28	
1640	12	4.26	
1650	19	6.74	
1660	20	7.09	
1670	6	2.13	These numbers are fairly low for what is expected for this period. This is likely because of source inconsistency.
1680	7	2.48	
1690	10	3.55	
1700	3	1.06	
Total	282	100	

Source: Compiled from the Mughal Conflict database.

It is possible that these inconsistencies might make the cautious reader somewhat apprehensive about how representative the data really is. However, there are several indications that the database is a good representation of the number of conflicts over time, a few of which are worth pointing out. Firstly, we would expect to see a spike in conflicts during the 1630s decade, as it is well known from the literature that this was a period where massive famines occurred. It is therefore somewhat reassuring that the data records a clear spike in the number of conflicts in the 1630s, where there are 29 conflicts recorded as opposed to only 18 in the previous decade (this is again further discussed in chapter 3). Similarly, the literature generally agrees Bengal and Gujarat were amongst the most rebellious provinces, another finding which is consistent with the database. Lastly, having used contemporary state histories, we know the nature of the data captured in the database very much reflects the state's perspective of events. This gives me confidence that the official histories database is a good representation of the largest conflicts the state faced during the period of study,

Chapter 2 - Explaining Rebel Forgiveness and State Capacity

Abstract: The paper contributes to a growing literature on state capacity with reference to the early-modern Asian empires. The historiography of these states, and especially the Mughal empire of South Asia, has moved away from an image of unrestrained despotism towards that of a constrained state, but is yet to explore fully what these constraints were and what the state did to overcome them. Using a new dataset on conflicts in Mughal South Asia, and an analytical model, the paper shows how forgiving rebel leaders was used as a strategic tool to secure stability, in a setting where high information costs made intermediaries indispensable to the state. The paper also offers some comparison between Asian empires on the role of intermediaries in shaping state constraint and fiscal policies.

I - Introduction

Although the state capacity literature has developed substantially in recent years, precolonial South Asia remains relatively unexplored. The Mughal empire (1556-1707) presents a valuable case-study for understanding how coercion costs and state-elite relationships impacted state development. The state exhibited highly constrained behaviour through the course of the dynasty, reinstating and sometimes even promoting rebel leaders that attempted to secede, defect or take territory by force. The state also adopted an unusual practice of returning confiscated wealth, where confiscation has increasingly been seen as a tool used by states to increase funds.³⁹¹ Moreover, rebels often felt confident the state would reinstate them without exacting retribution at a later date.

This paper will attempt to answer two questions: why the Mughal government forgave rebels (and forgave as many rebels as it did), and why the state's commitment to forgiveness was credible (i.e. why rebels had confidence that the state would honour that forgiveness). The paper develops to a model which shows that administrative capacity, i.e. the ability of intermediaries to implement or oppose policy choices of government,³⁹² can

³⁹¹Arslantaş, Pietri, and Vahabi, "State Predation"; Ma and Rubin, "The Paradox of Power" 277-94.

³⁹² Administrative capacity can be considered the ability implement or counteract policy choices of the government, including the ability of raising raise taxes and managing local regions efficiently Greif, See: Greif, "The Impact of Administrative," 1

explain the choice to forgive rebels. The paper then uses a mixed methods approach to test this hypothesis. In its statistical analysis, the paper first finds that rebels in regions further from the central government in the South were more likely to be forgiven, indicating these officials had higher administrative capacity. Then by using a logistical regression to test the relationship between forgiveness and ethnicity and religion, the paper also finds that rebel leaders from ethnic groups and religions different to the Mughals were far more likely to be forgiven. Whilst rebel leaders of different ethnicities remain statistically significant with the addition of provincial controls, the coefficient of religion loses its significance once provincial controls are added, indicating ethnicity as opposed to religion played a more influential role in rebel forgiveness. Together these results indicate that administrative capacity of elites influenced rebel forgiveness as the state relied on intermediaries where their influence and capacity was lower. The paper then adopts an analytical narratives approach to examine case studies of rebel forgiveness and see whether they fit the model. These cases highlight the factors which affected rebel forgiveness across a heterogeneous empire with varying local institutions and environments.

Based on these findings of this paper, I argue that the Mughal empire was a constrained state³⁹³ that chose to forgive and negotiate with rebellious intermediaries in order to maintain essential revenue streams and power bases. These intermediaries could administer localities with lower information costs than the state because of their greater influence within and understanding of specific ethnic groups, religions and localities. The high level of administrative capacity of these particular rebels made them difficult to replace without incurring substantial costs, and the constant conflict and high costs of administration prevented the state from adopting more direct control of all regions.³⁹⁴ Consequently, the state adopted more inclusive and constrained political policies towards rebellious intermediaries in order to achieve a higher total revenue and greater control at the expense of sharing a larger portion of revenues and autonomy with these intermediaries. As the intermediaries were aware of their bargaining power vis-à-vis the

³⁹³ The term constrained refers to the credible commitment literature discussed in the Thesis Introduction. A constrained state is one that is either motivationally incentivised or imperatively coerced and constrained to honour its commitments, and is usually used in the context of limitations to state confiscation of citizen wealth which has been theorised to lead to state capacity development. See: Douglass North, "Institutions and Credible Commitment," 13

³⁹⁴ 'Administrative capacity can be considered the ability implement or counteract policy choices of the government, including the ability of raising taxes and managing local regions efficiently Greif, See: Greif, "The Impact of Administrative," 1

state, they were able to demand more from it and became increasingly difficult for the state to control. The bargaining power of intermediaries was not always equal, and the ability of an intermediary to negotiate would depend on their value to the state, as well as the threat they posed as a rebel. Despite often conceding to rebel demands, by following these policies the state was able to retain highly skilled administrators and military personnel, which consequently enabled the empire to engage in larger conflicts and adapt to local needs. Thus, administrative and military state capacity grew, although the state's ability to enforce the law was limited.

Section II and III of this paper provides a review of the debates in the literature and a background of the Mughal state. Section IV discusses the methodology adopted in the paper, and Section V discusses forgiveness as a policy of the state. Sections VI and VII develop a framework for explaining rebel forgiveness built from the data and sources. Sections VIII-IX test the framework statistically and using analytical case studies. Section X concludes.

II - Literature Review

As is the case with all chapters of the dissertation, this chapter broadly contributes to both the Mughal economic history literature on the state and the state capacity literature. Having already outlined the broader debates in the literatures in the Thesis' introduction, this literature review will focus on briefly outlining the debates most relevant to this chapter.

One of the most central debates within the Mughal state history scholarship relate to an understanding of the structure and nature of the state between 1556-1707. Where the 'Aligarh School' and Blake have modelled the empire as highly centralised and structured, the 'Process' school scholars have emphasized the state's flexibility and evolution. This revisionist scholarship has come to see rebellion and the subsequent negotiation with rebel groups as evidence of the state's inability to enforce a structured regime over the populace. For instance, Andre Wink sees *fitna* (Sedition) as tool elites used to adjust the power dynamics between the state and local groups.³⁹⁵ Munis Faruqui

³⁹⁵ Andre Wink, "Sovereignty and universal dominion in South Asia." 826

has similarly emphasized state's need to conciliate and cooperate with local groups for political legitimacy.³⁹⁶ Yet whilst the state's frequent forgiveness of rebels is widely acknowledged,³⁹⁷ there is little consideration of the political and economic circumstances which led the state to adopt such a policy, and why it worked so well despite the risks of repeated rebellion. Moreover, there has also been little attempt by the scholarship to try and assess the extent to which the state followed conciliatory policies, or the circumstances where they applied across time and space.

A similar paradox has been identified in the state capacity debates, especially within the literature which has studied the Asian states. Asian governments' power to confiscate property of elites has often been seen as an indication to the limited constraints on the ruling elite of these empires, yet Asian states have equally been seen as vulnerable to internal rebellions and their administrative reliance on elites.³⁹⁸ Models of Asian empires are often designed to either explain why the constraints on government (or the lack of them) caused stagnant levels of development. In these explanations, there is often little accounting for the dualities of governance evident within these states,³⁹⁹ or the changes they went through over time. However, the reality of history is that rulers had to make decisions regarding different choices of government,⁴⁰⁰ and there was rarely a situation where one form of governance was ideal for all periods of time.

The aim of this chapter is to use rebel forgiveness as a way of better understanding the relationship between the Mughals and intermediaries, and the factors which influenced the states policies. The analysis shows that cooperation with and conciliation of these elites was not just a political device, but an economic one as well, with implications not only on revenue but costs of governance. In the face of numerous internal conflicts, conciliation was a tool of state building which increased the state's administrative capacity, though restrained the state in its punishment and predation of elites.

³⁹⁶ Munis, *Princes*, 325

³⁹⁷ Munis, *Princes*, 325

³⁹⁸ Ma and Rubin, "Paradox of Power," 4; Arslantas, Pietri and Vahabi, "State Predation in Historical Perspective." 417

³⁹⁹ For example, Hasan suggests the state was both "strong and vigorous" as well as "weak and ineffectual." See: Hasan, *State and Locality*, 127

⁴⁰⁰ White, Eugene N. "From Privatized to Government-administered Tax Collection: Tax Farming in Eighteenth-century France." *The Economic History Review* 57, no. 4 (2004): 636-63.

III Background of the Mughal State

The purpose of this section in this chapter is to briefly remind the reader of some of the features of Mughal state outlined in the introduction: namely the heterogeneity in the state's administration and the of intermediaries which are the focus of this thesis (i.e. the *Mansabdars* and the *Zamindars*.)

Whilst the Mughal state was one of the largest and most militarily powerful empires in the early modern world,⁴⁰¹ the structure of government varied considerably across provinces. In some localities, the state established direct control of the administration and tax revenue collection (these were called *Khalisa* lands), whereas in other regions greater autonomy was afforded to local rulers and groups.⁴⁰² At its greatest extent, the empire included most of what is modern day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, which encompassed highly differentiated ethnic groups and communities. As discussed in the introduction, the empire's varied landscape of swamps, jungles and mountains, and of both agricultural and pastoral communities, meant the state's management strategies and taxation policies varied, making the state highly reliant on intermediary administrators.⁴⁰³ The characteristics of and the state's relationship with these intermediaries were diverse. However the literature broadly recognises two main types of intermediaries.⁴⁰⁴ The first are the *Mansabdars*, who were higher level nobles incorporated into the government by the awarding of ranks (*Mansabs*).⁴⁰⁵ In exchange for military and administrative service, these nobles were given non-hereditary rights to collect revenue from parcels of land known as *jagirs*. The second are the *Zamindars*, which included a wider and more varied group of local elites with differing degrees of wealth and political power.⁴⁰⁶ Like the *Mansabdars*, *Zamindars* also had a claim to a share of the revenue, though often a more subordinate one to the *Mansabdars*. *Zamindars* also often

⁴⁰¹ Sharman, J. C. *Empires of the Weak*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019; Ronald Findlay, and Kevin O'Rourke, Kevin H. *Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium*. Princeton Economic History of the Western World. 2007, 262-269

⁴⁰² Roy, "Law and Economic Change in India," 115-137; Parthasarathi "Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Grew Poor?"; Moosvi, *The Economy*, 177; Gagan Sood, "Political Sociology Of Empire: Mughal Historians On The Making Of Mughal Paramourty." *Modern Asian Studies*, 56(4), (2022). 1293

⁴⁰³ See the Thesis' Introduction's section called 'Background of the Mughal State.' For other references, see: Nath, *Climate of Conquest*, 272; Singh, "Conformity and Conflict"; Habib, "Evolution of the Afghan Tribal System," 300-308

⁴⁰⁴ Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 169

⁴⁰⁵ Ali, "The Mughal Nobility," 3-5

⁴⁰⁶ Hasanm "Zamindars" 284

had more permanent and hereditary rights to their land and a greater connection to their localities.⁴⁰⁷ Whilst *Mansabdars* have been considered more distinctly a part of the central state, the distinction between these two groups would also blur as several *Zamindars* also were awarded *Mansabs* and appointed to administrative roles.⁴⁰⁸

All intermediaries, at least to some degree, had both a civil and a military role. They were required to maintain armed contingents and could be called to war by the emperor at any time.⁴⁰⁹ These intermediaries also frequently rebelled against the empire. Being armed, influential and often wealthy, the *Mansabdars* and especially *Zamindars* posed considerable and frequent challenges to the state. How the empire managed these challenges and adopted the policy of rebel forgiveness is the concern of this chapter.

IV Methodology and Sources

Given the difficulty in measuring state and administrative capacity for the Mughal empire,⁴¹⁰ this chapter adopts a mixed methodology. It first uses the statistical data and central government sources to assess the nature of rebellions the state faced and the impediments they created to state capacity. It then builds a model which explains rebel forgiveness based on the policies and views expressed in the state histories.⁴¹¹ The model is then tested both statistically and with the use of case studies which illustrate which factors affected rebel forgiveness.

Like in other chapters, the sources used in this chapter derive mostly from central government histories. For the statistical analysis, I use the newly developed Mughal Conflict Database outlined in the previous chapter, where the Participants table⁴¹² provides a record of rebels recorded in the contemporary state histories. To measure forgiveness, I examine at a sample size of 274 rebels within the database.⁴¹³ Although the

⁴⁰⁷ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 292; Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 173-4

⁴⁰⁸ Hasan, “*Zamindars*,” 289

⁴⁰⁹ Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 39

⁴¹⁰ By this I am referring to the lack of data availability for the region (discussed in the introduction and chapter 1) and difficulty quantifying administrative capacity

⁴¹¹ See Chapter 1 Section 3.4

⁴¹² See Chapter 1 Section 2.1.2

⁴¹³ A list of these rebels can be found in Appendix 2.A

database has a record of 390 rebels,⁴¹⁴ the analysis only includes those rebels for whom it is possible to trace what happened to them after their rebellion. For the sake of clarity and the purposes of quantitative analysis, forgiveness is defined by when a rebel is granted the same (or higher) social position after his rebellion as he had held at the point of rebelling. For example, a *Mansabdar* would remain a *Mansabdar* under state employment with a reinstatement of his *Mansab* and *jagirs*. Like the data, the case studies are also largely derived from the state histories as direct examples from the database. However, additional sources and secondary literature are also used to provide greater context to these events.

V – Rebellion Forgiveness in the Data and Sources

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the rebellions recorded in the Mughal Conflict Dataset⁴¹⁵ and demonstrates that the empire faced at least 282 major conflicts between 1556 and 1707. Of these, 177 (62.8 percent) were rebellions, 35 (12.4 percent) were conflicts with Vassal States and 65 (23.1 percent) were wars. The high proportion of internal conflicts indicate the South Asian state conflict experience was far more comparable to early modern China than previous work has demonstrated.⁴¹⁶ Moreover, although wars comprised a smaller proportion of overall conflicts relative to rebellions, they were not insignificant. Figure 2.1 shows that the majority of rebellions in the state were led by *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*, the latter increasingly so over the dynasty.

⁴¹⁴ See Chapter 1 Section 4

⁴¹⁵ These are listed in Appendix 1.B

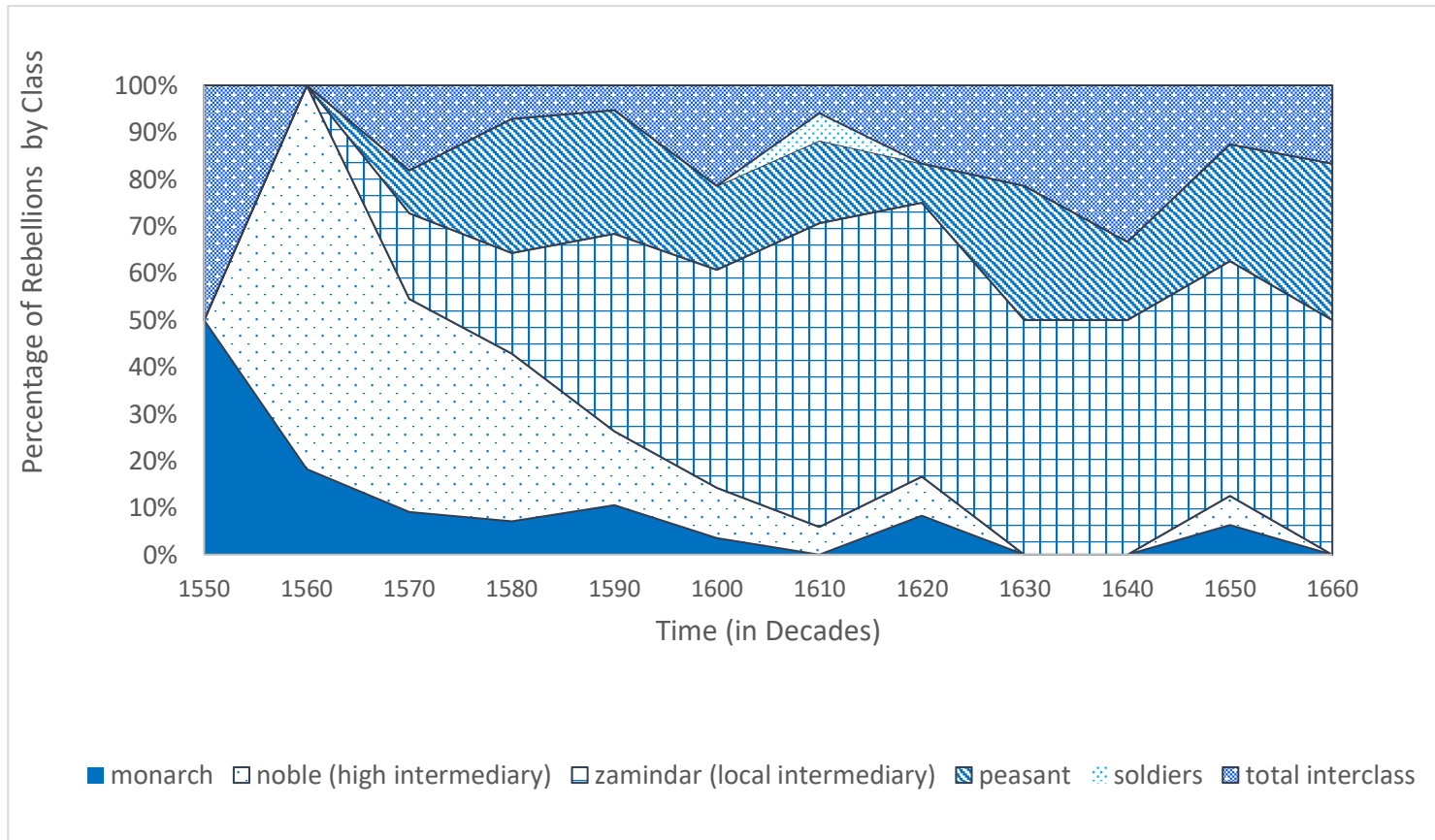
⁴¹⁶ Gupta, Ma and Roy, "States and Development," 51-73

Table 2.1: Number of Conflict Types

Decade Start	Protest/Riot	War	Vassal State*	Rebellion	Total
Total	5	65	35	177	282
% of Total	1.8%	23.1%	12.4%	62.8%	

Source: Constructed from the Mughal conflict database. *Vassal State refers to the Deccan Sultanates of Berar, Bidar, Golconda, Bijapur and Ahmednagar. These states had their own governments, however they paid tribute to the Mughal empire and were required to have all official appointments approved by the Mughal court. They were eventually incorporated into the empire.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of Rebellions Led by Class type



Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict Database. Classes are described in Chapter 1 Section 2.1.2

Table 2.2 presents the number of rebels from each class group and how many were forgiven. It shows that from this sample, 45.3 per cent of rebels were forgiven. Table 2.2 also shows that the *Zamindars* and the *Mansabdars* were amongst the largest group of rebels and had high rates of forgiveness between 52.4 and 45.3 percent respectively. Whilst Monarchs (dynastic rebels) have a higher forgiveness rate of 69.2 percent, there are only 13 Monarchs in the sample, compared to 95 *Mansabdars* and 105 *Zamindars*. Moreover, Table 2.3 shows only 14.2 percent of all rebels were executed, with similar proportions being imprisoned (15 percent) or dying in battle (12.8 percent).⁴¹⁷ This indicates that non-forgiveness for rebels did not necessarily mean execution or imprisonment, suggesting a greater range of consequences.

⁴¹⁷ Some might be concerned about the difference between ‘execution’ and ‘died in battle’ as they were recorded in the sources. However, even if we assume all rebels who died in battle were executed, it still would be a minority of rebels dying. The proportion of total rebels who died (when combining rebels who were executed and died in battle) is 26 percent.

Table 2.2: Forgiveness by Class Group

	No. of Rebels	No. Forgiven	% Forgiven
Monarchs (dynastic rebels)	13	9	69.2%
<i>Mansabdars</i>	95	43	45.3%
<i>Zamindars</i> (Local Intermediaries)	105	55	52.4%
Soldiers	9	3	33.3%
Peasants	45	11	24.4%
Total	267	121	45.3%

Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict Database. This only includes data for which we know what happened to the rebels, and for which we know their class status. Descriptions of classes given in Chapter 1 section 2.1.2

Table 2.3: Number and Percentage of rebels with consequences different to forgiveness

Consequence	Number of	% of Rebels with other Consequence
Executed	39	14.2%
Not executed	235	85.8%
	274	
Imprisoned	41	15%
Not imprisoned	233	85%
	274	
Died in battle	35	12.8%
Did not die in battle	239	87.2%
	274	
Punished	27	9.9%
Not punished	247	90.2%
	274	

Source: Constructed using the Mughal Conflict database, participants table.

Notes: This table only includes data for rebels for whom it is possible to trace a consequence. Consequences are recorded in a binary fashion, where either they occurred or did not. Consequences are not mutually exclusive, meaning rebels can have multiple consequences. For example, a rebel can still be forgiven after being imprisoned or punished. Categories can be defined as follows: Executed means a formal execution ordered or enacted by the state or a high ranking *Mansabdar*. Imprisoned means the rebel was imprisoned at some point during or after their rebellion. Died in Battle means that the rebel died during the course of their rebellion though not through formal orders of the government (i.e. during the course of battle) or by the hands of another group. Punished means the rebel was given some form of punishment for their rebellion, though often forgiven after. Punishments could range from very harsh (for example being thrown under elephants) to very light (being censured or fined).

Rebel forgiveness was such a frequent occurrence that forgiveness and conciliation can be (and often is) considered a part of state policy.⁴¹⁸ In a collection of standardised employment contracts for the Mughal empire, several mid and higher-level officials were given clear instructions to avoid punishing rebels unless necessary, and instead to conciliate them.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, these contracts state that officials must first try to engage in negotiations, and only if these were to fail was force of arms acceptable.⁴²⁰ It is also highly evident in source material, where Mughal chroniclers were explicit regarding what they considered was the optimal strategy for dealing with rebellious elements. For example, the chronicler Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, who was the Mir *Bakhshi* (i.e. Head of the Military) during Akbar's reign wrote the following poem with respect to how conflicts should be resolved:

“When the enemy with humility enters your door;
You should not then, from him, for vengeance seek.
When the offender, for pardon comes to thee,
If thou pardonest not, thou wouldst the offender be.”⁴²¹

The policy of forgiveness is also evident within the philosophy of Sulh-i-Kul (meaning universal peace) which was developed during emperor Akbar's reign and based on principles of religious and ethnic tolerance within a highly diverse community.⁴²² Irfan Habib has noted that references to of Sulh-i-Kul in Mughal sources were more a set of desirable attributes. He notes that Abu'l Fazl, the influential grand vizier during Akbar's reign, describes Sulh-i-Kul as involving “becoming friends with good persons of every community (ta'ifa), and partly in accepting excuses from the bad in order to lay the foundation of conciliation.”⁴²³ Thus the philosophy implies a policy of forgives where it emphasises ‘accepting excuses’ even when it is known or suspected the excuse is false or unacceptable.

⁴¹⁸ Faruqi *The Princes*, 259

⁴¹⁹ Richards, *Document Forms*, 38

⁴²⁰ Day, U. N, *The Mughal Government*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1913), 81

⁴²¹ Nizammuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 307

⁴²² There is a debate regarding how long the policy of Sul-i-kul lasted. Gommans and Huseini argue it lasted through the dynasty whereas Habib has argued it is limited to Akbar's reign. See: Gommans and Huseini. "Neoplatonism and the Pax Mongolica" 870-901; Irfan Habib. "Şulh-i Kul under Akbar: Reconstructing the Short Life of a Concept of Human Amity." *Studies in People's History* 8, no. 2 (2021): 208-14.

⁴²³ Habib, “Sulh-I Kul Under Akbar,” 213

Forgiveness was not limited to the crime of rebellion, but also to more minor offences. The chronicler Khafi Khan lamented that sub-provincial government officials known as *Faujدارs* who were caught embezzling tax revenues or collecting surtaxes⁴²⁴ were only punished for short periods of time, returning to their posts soon afterwards.⁴²⁵ The Mughals instituted an annual prisoner release programme, where numerous prisoners who had committed minor offences were released and their records expunged.⁴²⁶ In one incident, the Chief Revenue Officer of Lahore forgave the debt payments of all prisoners who had tax arrears of 20,000 to 30,000 rupees on the condition that they would repay the sums in instalments of 2000-3000 rupees.⁴²⁷ Clearly, the Mughal government exhibited significant restraint against disobedient officials.⁴²⁸

Given the very high number of internal conflicts, and their negative effect on revenue, it is perhaps unusual that a monarchic and militarily powerful⁴²⁹ state chose to forgive as many rebels as it did. Rebellions could threaten a ruler's control (as well as their life) and forgiveness could potentially encourage repeated rebellion where rebels might be emboldened by low risks. Forgiveness additionally meant that the state reinstated confiscated wealth and status rather than appropriating it or passing it to more loyal subjects. Studies of the Ottoman and Qing confiscation records have argued that confiscation of wealth in these states is a comparable metric for understanding state restraint in predatory behaviour on tax-payers.⁴³⁰ A similar case could be made for the Mughal empire, where land grants and assets were confiscated as a form of punishment for elites.⁴³¹ Confiscation was a tool of reducing rebels' resources during the course of rebellion, and the value of confiscated goods could be substantial. The seized wealth of Jujhar Singh Bundela, for example, was a sum of one crore rupees.⁴³² However, when rebels were forgiven, the vast majority of their wealth and status was returned to them.⁴³³

⁴²⁴ Meaning extra taxes collected above the official rates of central government.

⁴²⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 94

⁴²⁶ See another example in Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 212

⁴²⁷ Khan, *Muntakhab*, 265

⁴²⁸ In this way, absolutism in the Mughal state better follows Epstein's understanding. See: Epstein, *Freedom and Growth*, 13-14

⁴²⁹ The Mughal state was termed as a 'gunpowder empire' by Marshall P Hodgson and the focus on warfare in Mughal sources is highly evident. See the discussion in:

Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff, "Introduction," in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2001, 1-3, 39

⁴³⁰ See: Ma and Rubin, "Paradox of Power"; and Arslantaş, Pietri and Vahabi. "State Predation"

⁴³¹ This concept of confiscation is further developed in Chapter 4 (in the literature review), which applies literature on confiscation within the Ottoman empire to the Mughal case.

⁴³² See: Singh, "Jujhar Singh's Rebellion: A Reappraisal," 236

⁴³³ Sometimes rebels were expected to pay an indemnity to make up for the losses.

In fact, in some cases, the rebels received a higher social status and greater rewards than they had prior to rebelling.⁴³⁴

What kind of rebellions were forgiven? Rebellions can be motivated by a variety of reasons, such as against taxes or for the political policies. The chronicles, however, provided some level of consistency with regards to what the motivations of rebels were. In an attempt to quantify these motivations, Table 2.4 shows inferred motivation data expressed in the histories from the perspective of the chroniclers. While it is impossible to determine the specific motivations of individual rebels with any kind of precision, from the state histories we do have insight into the state's interpretation of rebel motivation. The data is given on the five main motivations which can be gleaned from contextual information in the sources. Of these five motivations, the motivations relating to territory (taking over land administration), taxation (refusal or delays in payment of taxation or tribute) and social mobility (rebelled in order to attain a higher status)⁴³⁵ were by far the highest at 35.54, 21.13 and 24.74 percent respectively. Forgiveness rates across all motivations do not seem to differ substantially, but tax motivation and social mobility motivations are the highest at 58.54 and 52.08 percent respectively. The patterns in this data are consistent with patterns identified in the broader literature, in which territorial and tax competition between the State, *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars* are referred to.⁴³⁶ In light of these patterns, the model below focuses on explaining how the Mughal forgiveness policies related to these kinds of rebellions.

⁴³⁴ The Tuzuk I Jahangiri provides three examples: See: Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 406, 56, 40. See also the rewards offered to defectors to encourage their return in: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 337.

⁴³⁵ Social mobility motivations were determined by when rebellions occurred after a Mansabdar or Zamindar was refused a promotion or increase in rank, or where rebels were reincorporated only by giving them an increase in rank.

⁴³⁶ See, for instance: Rana, "Agrarian Revolts"; Habib, I. "Agrarian System," Alam, Muzaffar. *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*. Oxford India Perennials Series. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Table 2.4: Rebellion forgiveness by inferred motivation

	Number of rebels with the motivation	Percentage of rebels with this motivation data	Number of rebels forgiven with this motivation	Percentage forgiven with this motivation
Territory motivation (capture/secede territory)	67	34.54%	27	40.29%
Tax/Tribute motivation (refuse to pay taxes)	41	21.13%	24	58.54%
Social Mobility motivation (desire higher social status)	47	24.22%	24	51.06%
Plunder Motivation (plundering other lands)	21	10.82%	8	38.10%
Policy Motivation (Rebellion against Mughal laws/policy)	26	13.40%	12	46.15%

Source: Derived from the Mughal Conflict Dataset. Proportion of motivations calculated from the 194 rebels for whom there is motivation data (so percentage of territory motivation is $67/194 \times 100$). Percentage forgiven refers to the percentage of rebels with the motivations who were forgiven. Motivations were not mutually exclusive (i.e. multiple motivations could be recorded for one rebel if supported in the sources).

VI – Forgiveness as Cost Management

One of the aspects less explored in the Mughal historiography is how the costs of rebellions influenced Mughal policy.⁴³⁷ If we consider the administrative structure of the empire and the motivations the Mughals expressed in the sources, it is possible to present a framework to explain rebel forgiveness from the state perspective. Every rebellion, and especially those from influential *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*, would pose costly to the state. Like wars, fighting rebellions was costly in terms of mobilisation of armed forces and the destruction of crops and infrastructure. This was especially the case in the Mughal state where the peasantry and the *Zamindars* were well armed militarily proficient, making conflicts more costly.⁴³⁸ Unlike wars, rebellions posed additional costs related to the state's reduced ability to collect taxes and manage the empire. These costs could come in the form of a direct loss in tax revenue, or more indirectly in terms of the higher costs of managing the empire. For example, when the *Zamindars* who collected taxes or paid tribute to the state rebelled, it would mean they were not paying taxes for the duration of their rebellion, which would have a direct impact on state revenues. Conversely, if the rebel normally played an important administrative role in the empire, such as being an especially efficient administrator, or being highly effective in battle, the loss of these skills would make these tasks more costly or inefficient whilst the rebel was not a part of the state.⁴³⁹ The vertical linkages between the *Zamindars* and the peasantry especially could create substantial difficulty for the state where its ability to collect revenue and manage diverse regions would be impaired without intermediaries' skills.⁴⁴⁰ To simplify the model, and keeping in mind that a large portion of the rebellions were motivated by tax and territorial concerns, the framework presented below will focus on the loss of tax arrears. A linear relationship between the costs of conflict and time is assumed so the costs of conflict can be considered as a function of time.

Figure 2.2 presents the scenario the Mughals faced. The y-axis represents the net tax-revenue the state hopes to recover from the rebel after rebellion, where the

⁴³⁷ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 29-57,

⁴³⁸ Streusand, "The Process of Expansion," 348-9

⁴³⁹ Mansabdars who strictly did not strictly pay taxes but could be important administrators tend to fall in this category.

⁴⁴⁰ Gautam Badhra, "Two Frontier Uprisings in Mughal India," in Alam, Muzaffar, and Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. *The Mughal State, 1526-1750*. Oxford in Indian Readings. Themes in Indian History. Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 486-7

intersection with the curve indicates the total amount recoverable. The x-axis represents the total cost the state faced when putting down the rebellion, including both military and cost of public good destruction as a function of time (i.e. the longer the conflict goes on, the greater the total costs). If the cost of conflict was zero, meaning there was no fighting or mobilisation of troops before the rebellion began, the state might have been able to recover all the revenues as the rebel would have continued his service. Conversely, the longer the rebellion went on, the cost of rebellion increased, and the proportion of the net tax revenue that could be recovered decreased. If a conflict goes on long enough, the cost of putting down the rebellion would eventually outweigh the tax arrears that could be recovered, meaning the state would lose more than the tax arrears. Of course, the state might try to recover these losses from the rebel, where the Mughals did often ask the rebels to pay an indemnity.⁴⁴¹ However, given they had just fought an expensive conflict themselves, it was not likely the rebel could pay the full amount.⁴⁴² Moreover, even if they promised to pay, there was no guarantee the rebel would keep their word.⁴⁴³ Mughals would therefore unlikely recover all the losses even if they won. The state's perspective on the impact of rebellions upon revenue can be understood as follows:

$$\text{Net Tax Revenue from Rebel} = \text{Taxes Arrears} - T^*C$$

Where T = time and C= cost of prolonging war (e.g. military costs, and public good destruction)

Given these parameters, the state would be incentivised to forgive the rebel well before the costs of conflict have depleted the revenues which are recoverable. This is because the state would likely have minimum requirement for how much revenue will need to be realised in order to sustain its military expenses and would want to recover at least that much tax. This minimum amount of revenue can be represented by line A, where the state will forgive the rebel before costs reach this point, and Ca represents the maximum cost the empire is willing to take. Of course, one might argue that the ideal

⁴⁴¹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 29

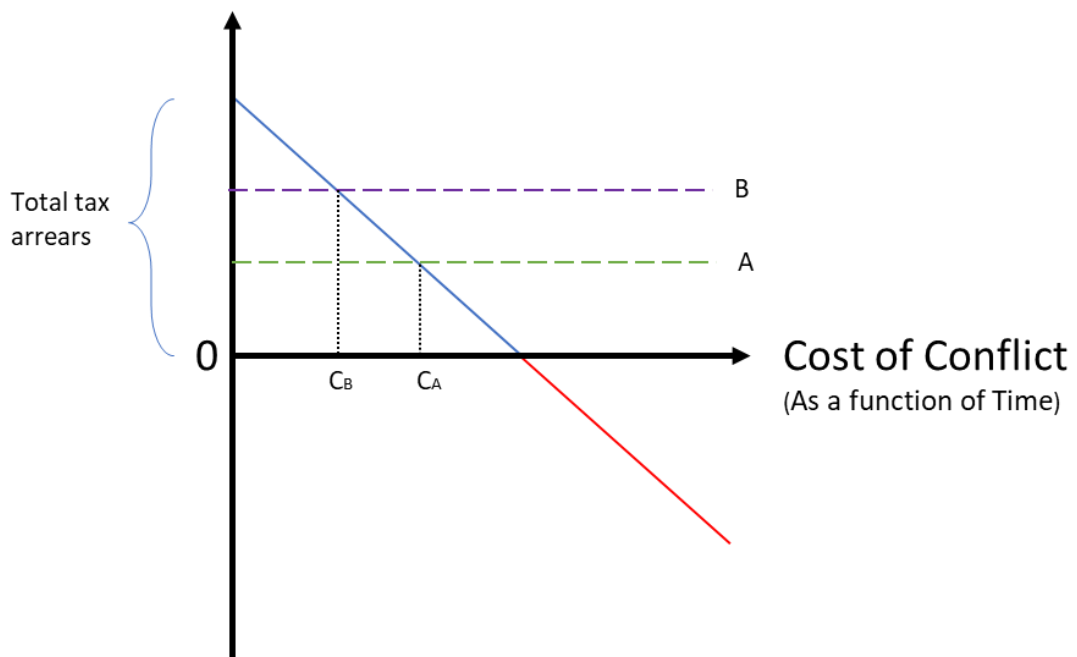
⁴⁴² For example, Adil Khan asked the emperor to remove his troops to encourage peasants to return. See@ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 68, 189

⁴⁴³ For example, the rebel Parya Naik promised payment a number of times but did not produce it. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 526. See also: Nayeem, M.A. "Mughal And Asafia Documents On The Peshkash Of The Zamindars Of South India (1694-1752 A.D.)." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 35 (1974): 144-49..

point of forgiveness is at the beginning of the rebellion where the cost of conflict is zero. In fact, in some instances the state would begin negotiations at the beginning of their rebellions.⁴⁴⁴ However, given the rebellions were likely motivated by other means, the rebel would not likely end their rebellion without first being offered some kind of concession. A state would want to minimise the amount of compromise made in order to retain the highest revenue. Therefore in most cases it is unlikely the state would have forgiven the rebel until cost of conflict surpasses the amount that would be lost through compromise, this being represented by line B. The state would instead prefer to engage in a quick and decisive battle with a minimum loss in power and the maximum revenue retained. The likely point of forgiveness for the state, therefore, is somewhere between points C_A and C_B where the maximum revenue can be obtained with the least compromise. Consequently, by forgiving the rebel the state is able ensure to recover a minimum amount of the total revenue that would otherwise be lost.

Figure 2.2: Graphical Representation of Rebel Forgiveness

Net Tax Revenue



⁴⁴⁴ Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 462

That the cost of conflict was a significant motivating factor in rebel forgiveness is very much evident in the literature and sources. Douglas Streusand refers to tax related conflicts in the empire as “revenue wars,” where revenue settlements were made as a process of bargaining between the state and *Zamindars*.⁴⁴⁵ The chronicler Abu'l Fazl who was heavily involved in developing administrative institutions advised governors to “conciliate the *Zamindars* with presents” because “it is cheaper to keep them in hand thus than to repress them with troops.”⁴⁴⁶ Moreover, the chronicles are filled with couplets and statements which praise administrators who persuade rebels to return. For example, Khafi Khan wrote:

“One who is really wise, puts things, with a word, aright,
that a hundred warriors bold can ne'er achieve.”⁴⁴⁷

Whether the rebel would return or not would also likely depend on their willingness to compromise, as negotiations could break down over unacceptable terms for either side.⁴⁴⁸ Conversely, sometimes the Mughal state refused to negotiate with rebels if they felt the rebel was too dangerous or not worth reincorporating into the state.⁴⁴⁹ Of course, compromising with rebels could pose the risk of repeated rebellions, where the risk of rebelling was low. Yet, as the case studies will indicate, the state considered the costs of repeated rebellion to be generally lower than the costs of disaffecting larger groups of intermediaries.⁴⁵⁰ Namely the overly harsh treatment of a single intermediary could have wider repercussions on the loyalty of many others. Disaffected groups would then be more likely to join other rebellious factions, creating a larger crisis. Conversely, if a smaller compromise could incentivise greater loyalty not only from that rebel but more widely from intermediaries who might prefer to administer for a regime which allows them greater confidence of their safety. Despite the low risks, the incentive to repeat a rebellion was probably not too high as intermediaries also stood to gain by being loyal and

⁴⁴⁵ Streusand, “The Process of Expansion,” 357

⁴⁴⁶ Day, *The Mughal Government*, 74; Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 107.

⁴⁴⁷ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 462; In another instance Nizammudin Ahmad wrote: “As long as you can instruct him with a stick, Don't with the sword or poison or lasso him slay;”: Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 389.

⁴⁴⁸ For instance, Raja Jagat Singh revolted again when his demands were refused in Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 287. See also: Nizammudin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*, 307.

⁴⁴⁹ Examples of non-forgiveness given in the case studies.

⁴⁵⁰ See case studies on the ‘Rebel Non-forgiveness’ for examples and a discussion on this.

not rebelling. Remaining as part of the state also allowed the intermediary to exert greater influence in policy decisions of the empire,⁴⁵¹ where loyalty was a prized quality in the state. The signal that the empire was ‘soft’ therefore had positive repercussions as much as it did negative ones on the state’s ability to enforce direct obedience. At the same time, rebels that consistently repeated their rebellion became the most likely to be executed when their costs exceeded their value, and in these cases their executions were quite often accepted (if not requested) by their own communities for whom they had become a burden.⁴⁵²

VII Credible Forgiveness – The Risk of Returning to The State

Whilst rebel forgiveness can be beneficial for the state, forgiveness can still be impeded by a dynamic inconsistency problem of long-term trust between the state and the rebel.⁴⁵³ The rebel might re-engage in rebellion at a later date, and the state might renege on its deals to forgive the rebel. For the rebels, the risk of returning to the state could be high, where they could face execution or imprisonment. It might have been beneficial for the state to reinstate rebels, however it would have been difficult to persuade them to return. This was a fairly common problem for early modern states, including for the European navies of the seventeenth century facing mutinous sailors.⁴⁵⁴

In the wider comparative literature, state forgiveness and incorporation of rebellious elites has been modelled as a form of risk aversion. Margaret Levi noted that whilst states do aim to maximise tax revenues, another important aim of empires is retaining power.⁴⁵⁵ Where incumbents perceive real and significant threats to their rule, policies that maximise rule over revenue are more likely to be adopted. In states where

⁴⁵¹ This concept has been identified within the early modern Spanish empire. See: Irigoien and Grafe, “A Stakeholder Empire,” 637

⁴⁵² This is discussed further in the case studies on rebel non-forgiveness later in this chapter. See especially the case of Champat Bundela.

⁴⁵³ K Glassmyer, and N., Sambanis, 2008. “Rebel: Military Integration and Civil War Termination.” *Journal of peace research*, 45(3), pp.365–384.

⁴⁵⁴ Steven Pfaff and Michael Hechter. *The Genesis of Rebellion : Governance Grievance and Mutiny in the Age of Sail*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2020, 214.

⁴⁵⁵ Margaret Levi,. *Of Rule and Revenue*. 1st ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. 13, 33

incumbent powers are threatened by internal discord, they are less likely to adopt policies that could increase discord such as increasing rates of taxation.⁴⁵⁶ Appeasement of rebels to diminish threat of losing power and potential execution are then motivating factors in negotiations, and the forgiveness is credible because the rebel is aware of this. This has been a more common argument used to explain non-extractive behaviour of states, especially within Asian empires. Kenneth Chan and Kent Deng, for instance, have both made the argument that the premodern Chinese empires avoided increasing taxation for fear of revolt.⁴⁵⁷ A similar argument has been for the Ottoman empire, where state revenue extraction is seen as a function of political security on the part of the ruler.⁴⁵⁸

Keeping in mind that motivations for rebellion management are not necessarily mutually exclusive or exhaustive, there are a few rebellions of the scale and nature within the Mughal state that would explain this kind of rebel forgiveness. Especially dynastic rebellions where competing princes were capable of amassing significant support that posed serious and overwhelming threats to the incumbent emperor.⁴⁵⁹

However, few rebellions in the empire posed a direct threat to the state. Dynastic rebellions only represent a small sample of total rebellions, whereas in the Mughal state even smaller *Zamindars* and peasants were forgiven regularly.⁴⁶⁰ The reality was that the majority of rebellions against the state were not large enough or close enough to the capital to indicate a real threat to the ruler's security. In fact, many rebels themselves knew their chances for success against the empire were low, and in many occasions, rebels were the first to request a negotiation with the state.⁴⁶¹

That is not to say these rebellions were inexpensive, especially as they often included formidable fighting forces that could take years to defeat. Rather, the Mughals were often better able to collect larger forces than their opponents. Abu'l Fazl estimated there were 342,696 horsemen and over 4 million foot-soldiers available within the empire.⁴⁶² Dirk Kolff probably correctly considers these numbers to be an inventory of the state's military labour market as opposed to an army list, where *Zamindars* were always

⁴⁵⁶ Gupta, Ma and Roy: "States and Development" 532

⁴⁵⁷ Chan, "Foreign Trade"; Deng, "The Premodern Chinese Economy"

⁴⁵⁸ Arslantaş Pietri and Vahabi. "State Predation in Historical Perspective"

⁴⁵⁹ For instance, Akbar when facing Jahangir's rebellion. See: Faruqui, *The Princes*, 196

⁴⁶⁰ See Table 2.2 and the discussion above.

⁴⁶¹ Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff, "Introduction," in ed. Gommans, Jos J. L., and D. H. Kolff. *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia, 1000-1800*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001, 1-3, 39

⁴⁶² Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, 231

likely to rebel or refuse to engage in combat.⁴⁶³ However, even then the Mughal government was better able to collect forces than most rebels. Reinforcements from nearby provinces, for example, were always at hand and rarely exhausted, and there were nearly always *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars* competing for a chance to prove themselves in battle.⁴⁶⁴ The best example of the Mughal's ability in raising armies is demonstrated by the much larger of forces the empire amassed against the wars with the Safavid empire and Deccan Sultanates relative to any single domestic rebellion.⁴⁶⁵ In a conflict with the Safavids in 1642, Inayat Khan recorded that the emperor sent 50,000 cavalry alone with the prince Darah Shikoh to defend Qandahar,⁴⁶⁶ where the average size of rebellions recorded in the Mughal Conflict dataset is 17133 men in total, including both rebel and Mughal soldiers.⁴⁶⁷ That besides, the Mughals were also able to better equip their armies than many of the *Zamindars* which relied on more peasant-based armies (as opposed to cavalry).⁴⁶⁸ As Kolff has noted, one thirteenth century sultan stated that "6-7,000 horse could overcome 100,000 foot soldiers,"⁴⁶⁹ indicating the quality and equipment of the army could impress upon the outcome of a conflict. With trade connections through North India, the Mughals were able to recruit soldiers not just from India but also from Persia, the Ottoman empire and other regions.⁴⁷⁰

Perhaps the best evidence to show forgiveness was not predicated on risk aversion is the state's reinstatement of rebels after they were captured or imprisoned and at a time when they were no longer capable of continuing their rebellion. For example, years after the Rathore rebellion had been quelled, the lead instigators returned to the court only to be forgiven by the same emperor they attempted to overthrow.⁴⁷¹ If longevity was the prime motivation for forgiveness, the state would have had the rebels executed or imprisoned for life instead of reinstated, eliminating any future threat of rebellion from

⁴⁶³ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 204

⁴⁶⁴ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 93-4

⁴⁶⁵ See Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3

⁴⁶⁶ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 293

⁴⁶⁷ This average is probably skewed higher by the very large peasant rebellions evident towards the end of the empire (see Chapter 3). It might also be skewed by the fact that chroniclers were more likely to record numbers of soldiers data for larger rebellions as opposed to smaller rebellions. This figure includes both rebel and Mughal soldiers, and does not restrict to just cavalry.

⁴⁶⁸ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 224-6

⁴⁶⁹ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 223-4

⁴⁷⁰ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 224

⁴⁷¹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*. 254

them. In fact, incidents of fratricide among emperors and princes are often explained by this reason.⁴⁷²

A better explanation for the credibility of state forgiveness across most rebellions relates to the administrative capacity of rebels. Where rebels had high levels of administrative capacity, they were able to bargain with the ruling power for a greater share of the revenue and more say within the decision-making process of the empire. Rebellion for these administrators was a bargaining chip that allowed them to negotiate higher salaries, more prestigious positions or a greater share of the revenues, if even for short periods of time. Significantly, the skills of the intermediaries would have been highly specific to the location or job type of administrative capacity required.⁴⁷³

Specific skillsets of intermediaries affected the long-term consequences of losing administrators, where the cost of managing a region was greater without the rebel. If the state executed such rebels, it would have had to rely on alternative administrators with less influence in the region, or else made substantial investments in a region at very high costs for limited regions of land. As is highlighted in the case studies, often the costs of building infrastructure to bypass these expenses was prohibitively high, especially relative to potential revenues.⁴⁷⁴ Asset specificity additionally would have limited the risk a rebel posed to the state. The skills of the rebel would have been restricted to parameters that though whilst highly useful to the state administrative machinery, would not be capable of taking control of the wider empire. For example, if a rebel was only skilled at administering a specific city far from the capital, or had influence with the peasantry of a certain locality, the state would be reassured by knowing the rebel would not threaten the ruler's control of the wider empire.

From the rebel perspective, asset specificity both reduced the risk of the state reversing on its promises, but also would have made returning to the state more attractive. The Mughal state offered the highest income relative to all the other potential

⁴⁷² Faruqui Munis, *The Princes*, 240

⁴⁷³ Human asset "could be characterized as unique technical skills and experience required in carrying out the activity being transacted. It has also been described as knowledge-specific assets that arise from learning-by-doing and which are not easily transferable, owing to their limited application in other work settings." Glauco De Vita., Arafet Tekaya, and Catherine L. Wang. "The Many Faces of Asset Specificity: A Critical Review of Key Theoretical Perspectives." *International Journal Of Management Reviews*: IJMR 13, no. 4 (2011): 334

⁴⁷⁴ See Case Studies below for examples, especially the ones on Bhim Narayan and the Bargaining Power of Rebels

rivals. Whilst there were a number of alternative polities the rebels could defect to, none would have been able to offer the levels of protection and tracts of land the Mughals were capable of securing. Other polities additionally would not have had the incentive to retain the rebel as much as the state could, especially if the rebel's higher administrative capacity was specific to a single region. The rebel therefore was only able to secure higher remuneration or revenue shares in the locality where they had greater influence or knowledge of. The best opportunity for the rebel was to return to the state if they could guarantee their safety.

The greatest risk of returning for the rebels was therefore the risk that the state would replace them at a future date after developing suitable replacements. For this reason, there were specific conditions that were required which minimised this risk. Firstly, the Mughal state had to be sufficiently and relatively strong enough not to consider the rebels a threat to their power. Whilst a costly rebellion is unwanted, knowing the rebel was not realistically able to take more power, the state would not have had an incentive to remove the rebel at a future date.

Secondly, the consistently high levels of conflict prevented the state from being able to focus their resources in any single region. The constant need to fund ongoing wars or internal rifts made it less likely the state would expend resources gaining direct control unless the returns for doing so were substantially high. The differentiated environment and cultural norms additionally could make developing direct control very costly for little return. High levels of conflict among a differentiated elite also incentivised the state to develop a sort of 'moral economy'⁴⁷⁵ of forgiveness, as forgiveness was a tool required not once but multiple times. The constant need for forgiveness necessitated its credibility, and therefore it became a pillar for the legitimacy of the state.

Finally, the existence of alternative polities or the diversity in the domestic environment gave rebels reasonable means of escape and increased the bargaining power of rebels.⁴⁷⁶ These rival states would be happy to accept the rebels as a means of strengthening their own forces, as well as weakening Mughal capabilities. Alternatively, the Mughals needed strong and stable administrative capacity precisely because the rival

⁴⁷⁵ This term has been used by James Scott and Farhat Hasan to denote the creation of a moral contract. See the introduction for an elaboration.

⁴⁷⁶ An explanation of why this is the case is given in: Albert O Hirschman, . *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970, 22

states would otherwise invade. Competition between states for skilled intermediaries kept the bargaining power of elites high, allowing them to increase their demands.

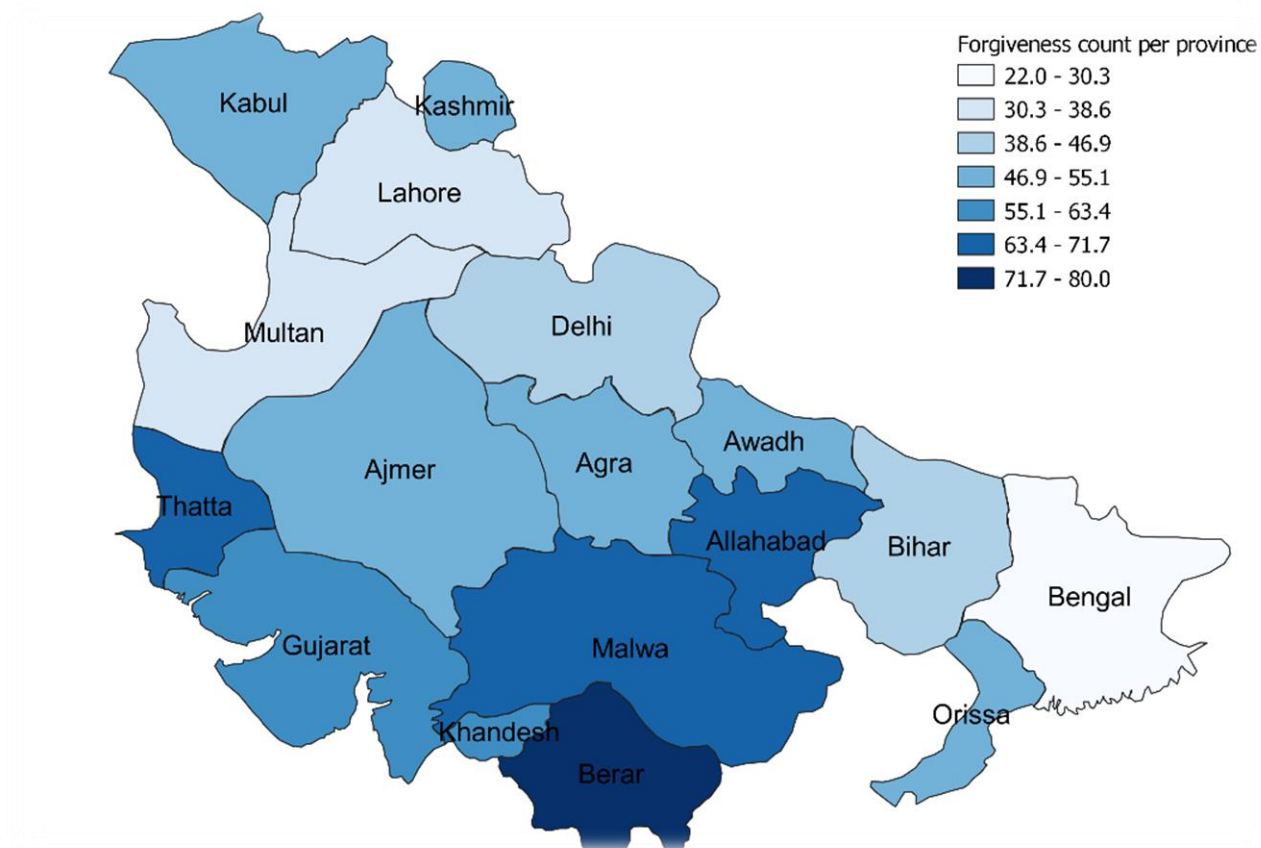
VIII - Statistical Evidence

With the available data, there are two ways to statistically test whether intermediary administrative capacity explains rebel forgiveness. First, we can test the relationship geographically by seeing whether the provinces where rebel forgiveness were most likely to occur were those where the state would be expected to have lower administrative capacity. For instance, as the Mughals invaded from the Northern regions, we should expect to see greater proportions of rebel forgiveness in provinces further South of the capital which were last to be conquered and consisted of ethnicities quite different from the Timurid government.

Figure 2.3 shows percentage of rebels forgiven across the provinces. There is a clear relationship between rate of forgiveness and provinces further South. Rebels in the regions of Lahore, Multan, Delhi and Bengal had a range of forgiveness between 21-46 percent, these all being Northern provinces known to have a higher incidence of taxation and greater government presence. Conversely, the southern provinces of Berar, Khandesh, Gujarat and Malwa have relatively higher proportions of forgiven rebels, where the rate of forgiveness is approximately 57-80 percent. Interestingly, Kabul and Kashmir also have higher rates of forgiveness relative to Delhi and Lahore, the former being more mountainous regions and therefore more difficult to administer.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁷ Mountain passes often became cut off or difficult to transcend from the capital during winters, and the environment there could be particularly harsh. See Case-study 1 for an example.

Figure 2.3: Proportion of Rebels Forgiven by Province



Source: Created using the Mughal Conflict Database and Irfan Habib's Atlas of Mughal India. Darker blue indicates higher levels of forgiveness.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁸ Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*

The second method of testing is to see if certain ethnicities and religious groups which were more differentiated from the Mughal rulers were likely to be forgiven. Being a majority Muslim government which originated in Central Asia, the Mughals would have had less knowledge about and influence over ethnic groups which were differentiated from itself.⁴⁷⁹ Therefore the state would have had to have relied on local leaders of these groups more heavily than in other regions. This is especially the case for ethnic groups such as the Rajputs and the Deccanis, who would not only have used different languages, but who would also have had different cultural norms.⁴⁸⁰ Conversely, we should expect Afghans and Central Asian rebels, which largely consisted of Muslims who were closer in ethnicity to the ruling family of the Mughal state, were less likely to be forgiven. It has been possible to classify rebels into four categories: Rajput, Deccani, Afghan and 'Other' (which largely consists of Central Asian officials including Iranis, Turanis and other 'foreigners').⁴⁸¹

Table 2.5 shows four logistic regressions (employing odds ratios instead of coefficients) with and without provincial controls for ethnicity and religion with Afghan and Muslim as the reference groups. Without provincial controls, regression 1 shows Rajputs and Deccanis were respectively 3.6 and 2.6 times more likely to be forgiven than Afghans, with both coefficients as statistically significant. Conversely, 'Others' were only 1.7 times more likely to be forgiven. Regression 2, which includes provincial controls, shows Rajputs and Deccanis were respectively 5.8 and 1.7 times more likely to be forgiven. The Deccani coefficient is no longer statistically significant, however this can be attributed the fact that the group is related to the Deccan region, and therefore captured by the Deccan dummy. We can see that rebels in the Deccan were 13.5 times more likely to be forgiven, and this is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. It is also interesting that Kabul, Malwa and Kashmir have large and statistically significant odds ratios, all being regions the Mughals had less direct access to. With regards to religion, Regression 3 shows that non-Muslims were 1.8 times more likely to be forgiven, and the coefficient is significant to the 10 percent level. However, when provincial controls are added in Regression 4, the non-Muslim coefficient remains positive but loses its statistical significance. This likely indicates religion was not as large a factor in determining rebel

⁴⁷⁹ John F. Richards, *Power, administration, and finance in Mughal India*, Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain ; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Variorum, 99-107; Ziegler "Some Notes n Rajput Loyalties," 168-210

⁴⁸⁰ Ziegler "Some Notes n Rajput Loyalties," 168-210

⁴⁸¹ For a description of the state's relationship with these racial groups, see: Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 14-37

forgiveness as ethnicity was.⁴⁸² In fact, arguably, the patterns of forgiveness go against what have conventionally been seen as Islamic practices of avoiding conflict with Muslims,⁴⁸³ indicating religion was not as important a factor in rebel forgiveness. Collectively, the regressions show that rebels with ethnicities and religions different to the Mughals were more likely to be forgiven, which supports the hypothesis rebels' specific administrative capacity within their communities influenced their bargaining power within the state. Given the limited insight which can be developed with these regressions, especially for a nuanced concept of administrative capacity, the case-studies aim to explore these mechanisms more closely.

⁴⁸² It is worth noting that religious policies are not likely related to rebel forgiveness either.

⁴⁸³ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 105

Table 2.5: Impact of Ethnicity and Religion on Forgiveness (Odds Ratios)

The dependent variable is Forgiveness

	1. Logistic Regression of Ethnicity	2. Logistic Regression of Ethnicity (province controls)	3. Logistic Regression of Religion	4. Logistic Regression of Religion (province controls)
Rajput	3.6*** (0.003)	5.8*** (0.003)	-	
Deccani	2.6* (0.107)	1.7 (0.488)	-	
Other (Central Asian)	1.7 (0.17)	2.3** (0.079)	-	
Non-Muslim	-	-	1.8** (0.066)	1.7 (0.19)
Jahangir (1607- 1627)	0.4** (0.064)	0.5* (0.108)	0.6 (0.166)	0.6 (0.221)
Shahjahan (1628-1657)	1.1 (0.715)	0.9 (0.74)	1.1 (0.73)	0.9 (0.784)
Aurangzeb (1658-1707)	1.0 (0.956)	0.8 (0.515)	1.0 (0.942)	0.6 (0.409)
Lahore	-	2.3 (0.489)	-	1.8 (0.658)
Multan	-	2.2 (0.599)	-	1.8 (0.722)
Agra	-	3.5 (0.288)	-	2.9 (0.421)
Kabul	-	7.7** (0.083)	-	3.1 (0.418)
Kashmir	-	6.7* (0.116)	-	0.9 (0.946)
Awadh	-	5.7 (0.336)	-	3.9 (0.487)
Allahabad	-	9.9** (0.072)	-	5.1 (0.267)
Bihar	-	3.7 (0.261)	-	3.3 (0.378)
Bengal	-	3.3 (0.317)	-	1.3 (0.837)

	1. Logistic Regression of Ethnicity	2. Logistic Regression of Ethnicity (province controls)	3. Logistic Regression of Religion	4. Logistic Regression of Religion (province controls)
Ajmer	-	5.4 (0.169)	-	6.4 (0.184)
Malwa	-	9.3* (0.114)	-	4.9 (0.284)
Gujarat	-	3.5 (0.292)	-	1.9 (0.652)
Deccan	-	13.5*** (0.025)	-	5.2 (0.230)
Constant	0.5*** (0.029)	0.08*** (0.035)	0.7** (0.061)	0.3 (0.310)
Number of Observations	247	246	212	211
Notes:				
Reference Groups	Afghan, Akbar and Delhi	Afghan, Akbar and Delhi	Muslim, Akbar and Delhi	Muslim, Akbar and Delhi

p-values given in brackets below the odds ratios. All coefficients (odds ratios) are given to one decimal place.

*** indicates the coefficient is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

** indicates the coefficient is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

* indicates the coefficient is statistically significant at the 15 percent level.

Afghans are those rebels identified as Afghans by the chroniclers. Rajput refers to rebels either identified as Rajput by chroniclers or powerful *Zamindars* from central provinces of Ajmer and Malwa. Deccani refers to rebels identified as Deccani or Abyssinian by the chroniclers. Non-Muslims are rebels with non-Muslim names or identified as non-Muslim within the chronicle or secondary literature.

Thatta was omitted with provincial controls due to only one observation.

IX – Case Studies

This section adopts an analytical narrative approach to test the applicability of the model to real examples as gleaned from the sources. What we are most interested in identifying are the following: evidence of the location or community specific skillsets which made intermediaries valuable; and the perceived benefits to the state of reinstating these intermediaries. We are also interested in identifying the conditions and implications where possible, namely: the high-cost environment and the bargaining power of the rebels. The case studies are chosen specifically with the interest of highlighting these attributes. To be clear, the aim is not to demonstrate that every rebellion in the empire fit the model exactly, but rather that a substantial subset of the rebellions did.

Case 1: Nazar Muhammad Khan's Return to Tributary Rule (1646)

A frequent feature of Mughal conquests could be the difficulty in finding competent administrators who were willing to take over the administration of regions far from the larger cities. The most telling example was the Mughals' invasion of Balkh and Badakhshan. Whilst the invasion was primarily motivated to keep stability in the Northern frontiers, the emperor had a strong personal dislike for Nazar Muhammad Khan, the ruler of Balkh, because he had been supporting rebels on Northern Mughal soil.⁴⁸⁴ After a costly two-year campaign, however, Khan, who was once described as treacherous and had fought against the Mughals himself, was reinstated as a local tributary leader, with the support of the Mughal emperor. This was because there were no experienced or capable officers willing to take over the governance of the region, where the chroniclers cited the harsh climate and prevalence of violence as the reason for their refusal.⁴⁸⁵ In fact, according to the chronicler Inayat Khan, when the soldiers became “frustrated over the uncertainty of whether they would leave or have to remain behind, they had begun to extend the hand of violence over the wealth and cattle of the local

⁴⁸⁴ Athar Ali. “The Objectives Behind The Mughal Expedition Into Balkh And Badakhshan 1646-47.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 29 (1967): 162–168.

⁴⁸⁵ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 356

inhabitants.”⁴⁸⁶ The state therefore struggled to find suitable replacements willing to administer the low revenue region. When nobles requested to leave the campaign, they had to be threatened with confiscation to prevent their abandonment.⁴⁸⁷

For his own part, Nazar Muhammad Khan both knew he would be incapable of fighting the Mughals should he refuse their offer to reclaim regency, whilst at the same time this was an opportunity to regain rule over land he would have otherwise lost entirely. He was still highly suspicious of the Mughals’ request for interview, and despite strict orders to return himself, he instead sent his grandson to interview in his place. The Mughal prince in charge accepted the replacement so he and his retinue could leave sooner and avoid adverse weather which would making returning to the capital difficult.⁴⁸⁸

The key points illustrated by this case study are that the level of risk to the Mughal state of reinstating Nazar Muhammad Khan was low. Khan had already been defeated in battle and would not be able to regain his strength quickly. At the same time, his regional knowledge, influence with the locals and desire to remain in the region made him the effective alternative to direct Mughal rule.⁴⁸⁹ In addition, the number of capable alternatives willing to administer the region was small, and the uncertain weather made it important for the issue to be resolved quickly. These factors ultimately led the Mughals to compromise by re-appointing Nazar Muhammad Khan despite his previous actions.

Case 2: Bhim Narayan’s Rebellion in Kutch Bihar (1660-1662) - Local Loyalties and the High Costs of Centralised Rule

This case focuses primarily on the rebellion of Bhim Narayan, the local tributary ruler of Kuch Bihar who rebelled against the Mughals, was defeated and then fled far to an unreachable location in 1661. Once Narayan had fled and his kingdom had been seized, the Mughals focused on developing local support to rule effectively, and installed popular policies designed to develop trust with the locals.⁴⁹⁰ Rather than allowing the plunder of local goods, the Mughal governor made the wrongful appropriation of civilian property

⁴⁸⁶ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 356

⁴⁸⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 357

⁴⁸⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 399

⁴⁸⁹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 375, 419

⁴⁹⁰ Bhattacharyya, *A History Of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy*, 303, 306

punishable by the cutting off of the hands of perpetrating Mughal forces.⁴⁹¹ The state additionally installed Narayan's son as a replacement administrator to try and appease locals.⁴⁹² However, when the new imperial government attempted to install tax changes, the people rose in revolt again.⁴⁹³ Facing a large rebellion and the onset of rainy weather, the imperial army struggled to keep control of the region. Dissatisfied with the Mughal administration, the peasantry searched for Bhim Narayan and asked for his return. Having already been defeated by the Mughals previously in conflict, Narayan recognised his limited capabilities of fighting the state. He requested to return to becoming a vassal and offered to pay an indemnity of 5,00,000 rupees.⁴⁹⁴ The Mughal commander accepted Narayan's offer due to his concerns for larger ongoing conflicts which incentivised him to reach a quick resolution to peace.⁴⁹⁵

Narayan's success in regaining control of Kuch Bihar should not be attributed to his military strength, but rather his relationship with the local population and the high frequency of conflicts in the empire. Had Narayan posed a real threat to the Mughal state's access to revenues and control of the region, it would be unlikely the state would have allowed his return. Instead, the Mughal commanding officer balanced aims. Rather than engage in a costly conflict which could take years to resolve, the state prioritised focusing resources where the threats were greater.

Ultimately, it was not Narayan himself who drove the Mughals away, but the unruly locals whom he had cultivated a loyalty with. Although the Mughals certainly tried to cultivate support among the common people,⁴⁹⁶ it was difficult for the Mughal government officials to develop the same or even similar relationship with locals that Narayan had, especially since it would take time to build trust and they had just fought a conflict in the region. Narayan was more efficiently able to retain control and govern the region than any alternative, making him more valuable as an ally than dead or imprisoned, so long as he agreed to continue supporting the state.

The value Mughals placed on the ability of intermediaries to administer and influence local populations is evident across a multitude of sources and well recognised in

⁴⁹¹ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 138

⁴⁹² *Muntakhab*, 143

⁴⁹³ Bhattacharyya, *A History Of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy*, 308

⁴⁹⁴ Bhattacharyya, *A History Of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy*, 310

⁴⁹⁵ Bhattacharyya, *A History Of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy*, 302

⁴⁹⁶ Richard Eaton, "Temple Desecration," 302

the literature.⁴⁹⁷ For example, in one conflict the government used Tibatis (natives of Mughal era Tibet) employed by the state to “try and persuade the Tibat soldiery to tender their allegiance to His Majesty by inspiring hopes of rewards and favours.”⁴⁹⁸ When intermediaries were exemplary in their management, they were often rewarded and chosen to administer the most important regions.⁴⁹⁹ Conversely, if intermediaries were found to be incapable of maintaining a good relationship with either the locals or the forces they chose, they were replaced and censured.⁵⁰⁰ For example, when it was found that peasants in Gujarat were being harassed by family members of the incumbent governor, said governor was immediately replaced for being considered incompetent.⁵⁰¹

Case 3: Military Skills of Intermediaries – Rajputs, Zamindars and Sidi Yaqut

The Mughals often invested in relationships with administrators, despite their rebellions, and usually with a larger long-term goal in mind. The Rajputs especially were considered to be a significant fighting force worthy of conciliation because of their military strength. The Ranas of Mewar particularly were considered to have substantial influence in the region, where emperor Jahangir wrote the following regarding his reasons to go to Ajmer:

Second was to deal with the damn Rana Amar Singh, one of the major landholders and *Rajas* of Hindustan, whose chieftainship and command, and that of his fathers and forefathers, are accepted by all the *Rajas* and Rais of this land... / twenty-six individuals have been chieftains and commanders [of Mewar] over a period of 461 years. Over this long period they have bowed in submission to no sultan of the land of India, and most of the time they have been in a state of insubordination and insurgence.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁷ Bhadram Gautam “Two Frontier Uprisings,”; Husain “The ‘*Zamindars*’ In The Deccan Under Aurangzeb,” 319-20; Shalin Jain, “The Centre And The ‘Locality’ In Mughal India: The Case Of Mantri Karam Chand Bachhawat Of Bikaner.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 68 (2007): 332–39.

⁴⁹⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 215

⁴⁹⁹ See the example of Inayat Allah Khan in: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 375

⁵⁰⁰ See, for example, Richards and Rao: “Banditry in Mughal India: Historical and Folk Perceptions” ” in *The Mughal State 1526-1750* edited by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998),; Shafqat Arshia, “The Position And Functions Of ‘*Faujdar*’ In The Administration Of ‘Suba’ Gujarat Under The Mughals.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 68 (2007): 340–50.

⁵⁰¹ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 100

⁵⁰² Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 149

Thus the submission of the Rana was considered an important victory for the Mughal forces. After Rana Amar Singh conceded defeat to Mughal forces in 1615, Karan Singh, his son, was sent to the emperor's court. Karan was given a number of lavish gifts over time by the emperor Jahangir, culminating in the award of the emperor's personal weapon and the building of his statue in royal gardens.⁵⁰³ In explaining the special attention he offered Karan, Jahangir wrote the following:

“It was necessary to win Karan's affection, but he was wild by nature and had never seen a royal court, having been raised in the mountains. Therefore, I showed him a new favour every day.”⁵⁰⁴

Jahangir's strategy was successful in incorporating what was one of the strongest and most influential *Rajas* of the region.⁵⁰⁵ Due to the Rana's wealth, strength in numbers and the skills of the Rajput forces, the Mughals gained a valuable ally. In later years, Karan's son Rana Jagat Singh would go on to play an important role in the wars within the Deccan against Shahuji in 1636.⁵⁰⁶ By playing the long-game, Jahangir gained a powerful asset for his administration. More generally, Rajput forces were seen as essential for fighting wars, especially in the larger and more challenging battles with North-Western states. After being forgiven of his rebellion and reinstated to the court, *Raja Jaghat Singh* proved invaluable in the invasion of Balkh and Badakhshan.⁵⁰⁷ The Rajput forces were also essential for the defence and occupation of Qandahar from the Safavid empire, a valuable stronghold for the Mughals.⁵⁰⁸ The Rajput leaders' ability in commanding the loyalty of skilled clansmen was an essential element to this strategy.⁵⁰⁹

It was not just the power Rajput *Zamindars* who gave valuable insight to the state. Local specific knowledge of lower-ranked *Zamindars* was also considered essential for

⁵⁰³ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 197

⁵⁰⁴ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 167

⁵⁰⁵ The chronicles give a lot of attention to the Ranas of Mewar over time, and their conquest was considered a great victory by the Mughals. See: Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 8, 149; Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 6

⁵⁰⁶ Shah Jahan Nama, 168

⁵⁰⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 110, 331. Note, this is likely a different Jaghat Singh, son of Raja Basu of Kangra. See appendix of: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, p 597.

⁵⁰⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 413

⁵⁰⁹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 450

fighting in localities unfamiliar to the Mughals. On a number of occasions, *Zamindars* were chosen to join campaigns and enlisted because of their familiarity with regions.⁵¹⁰ The Mughals recognised the value of these skills and local know-how that were only available from people who would have lived their lives in these regions and understood the cultures.⁵¹¹ At times *Mansabdars* in the Mughal armies were also recruited for similar reasons. For example, Sidi Yakut, an admiral of African descent who had defected from Bijapur. In a letter sent to the emperor, he requested to join the Mughal service citing his superior ability in managing the region relative to previous administrators.⁵¹² Sidi was a highly skilled administrator and military commander and was instrumental in the defeat of the British East India Company during Child's war of 1690.⁵¹³ When the court considered replacing Yakut's men from local administration, the chronicler recorded the following:

“The chief nobles, however, submitted that only the Abyssinians and particularly those trained by Sidi Yaqut, could administer those mountainous regions, command the fort of Rahiri and keep the sea passage to [Mecca] open.”⁵¹⁴

From this it is very clear that the well-recognised local-specific skillsets of Sidi and his men were what gave them considerable prestige and security within the Mughal state apparatus. It is worth noting that during the war, the English responded to Sidi's forces by employing black soldiers of their own. A letter sent by Bombay's leadership to the East India Company's (EIC) governing court of committees in London noted the following:

“The black people we entertained in your Honor's service behave not themselves as we could wish, [though] they are indeed as good as the enemy's. But we cannot expect 2000 should fight with 12000 of the same

⁵¹⁰ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 283; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 67; Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 486

⁵¹¹ Farzana Ashfaque, “Relations Of Kashmir With ‘Indian Tibet’ In Mughal Times.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 71 (2010): 269

⁵¹² Sarkar, Jadunath. *Anecdotes of Aurangzib, translated into English with notes and historical essays*. Calcutta: M.C. Sarkar 1917, 134

⁵¹³ JC Sharman, (Jason Campbell). *Empires of the Weak : the Real Story of European Expansion and the Creation of the New World Order*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2019, 85

⁵¹⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 506

color and we really believe they [i.e., our enemies] have more than 14000 men on the island.”⁵¹⁵

Like the passage before it, this extract highlights the EIC leadership’s recognition of the importance of local knowledge and skills for combat in the region, where English tried to hire locals to overcome Sidi’s forces but could not match his influence and ability to command large armies. Contemporary English observers further noted that an important component of Sidi’s success was the high wages he gave his men,⁵¹⁶ whereas the EIC was struggling to pay the forces they had employed and was four months behind wage payments towards the end of the conflict.⁵¹⁷ There are also records of English-employed black soldiers mutinying because they did not receive their pay.⁵¹⁸ It was not just black soldiers, however, who mutinied for lack of wage payments. One caption wrote that “sixty Europeans of several nations” had deserted the EIC and taken payment from Sidi Yakut, where the reason they gave for their desertion was the “ill usage they had received from some Irish officers.”⁵¹⁹ Eventually, the EIC did secure a pardon from the Mughal state in the form of a *farman* by the emperor Aurangzeb, where they were made to pay a fine of 150,000 rupees and restore merchants’ goods which had been stolen.⁵²⁰

This example speaks not only to Sidi’s skillsets in managing the region and the Mughal recognition of it, but also to the relationship between Sidi and his men and the role monetary incentives played in adopting these skills. It is unlikely Sidi would have defected from Bijapur or joined Mughal service without prospects of higher remuneration, and his own men were similarly drawn to the wages offered to them. Relevantly, the strength here laid with Sidi and his men specifically.

⁵¹⁵ Hunt, Margaret R. Philip J Stern and James Hilton. 2016. *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion : A Soldier's Diary of the 1689 Siege of Bombay with Related Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's A Macmillan Education Imprint. 148

⁵¹⁶ Hunt, Stern and Hilton, *The English East India Company*, 51

⁵¹⁷ Hunt, Stern and Hilton, *The English East India Company*, 148

⁵¹⁸ Hunt, Stern and Hilton, *The English East India Company*, 92

⁵¹⁹ Hunt, Stern and Hilton, *The English East India Company*, 146

⁵²⁰ Hunt, Stern and Hilton, *The English East India Company*, 163

Case 4: Champat Bundela, Abu'l Hasan, Tahawar Kahn - Rebel Non-Forgiveness

Of course, there were also a number of rebels who were not forgiven by the state. Three are worth discussing. The first is what was the last of many rebellions of Champat Bundela, who was the supporter of Jujhar Singh Bundela, the latter who was killed by Gonds during his escape from Mughal pursuit.⁵²¹ Revolts in the Bundela Rajput clan were a common occurrence, though in most cases rebellions were small and led by specific clan members, as opposed to a united group.⁵²² Princes of this clan frequently revolted and it was common for the Mughals to send relatives of the rebel to quell the insurrection, many of whom were happy for the opportunity to raise their status this way.⁵²³ After Jujhar Singh Bundela's death in 1635, Champat resented the Mughal government's appointment of *Raja* Debi Singh as *Raja* of Orchha and led a revolt against the latter. In the face of these oppositions, Shah Jahan removed Debi Singh who was unable to suppress the revolt and instead appointed Pahar Singh Bundela, son of Bir Singh Deo, as *Raja* of Orchha.⁵²⁴ This decision successfully diminished the support of Champat within the Bundela clan given Pahar Singh's ancestry. Champat continued to rebel against and ally with the state. After supporting Aurangzeb in the war of succession in 1658 and then rebelling against the emperor again, Champat was eventually executed by Aurangzeb's government, the execution occurring at the hands of Bundelas who had remained loyal to the state.⁵²⁵

There are two things significant about Champat's execution: firstly, Champat was only executed after he had rebelled and been reincorporated into the empire multiple times. His multiple rebellions and the consistent turmoil he caused eventually wore down the state. Because of this, the benefits of forgiving Champat were no longer greater than the costs of removing him. This was a common reason for executing rebels, where Jahangir said as much for the case of Dulip Singh, another Rajput rebel captured by his brother. Regarding Dulip's execution, Jahangir wrote: "Since he had repeatedly misbehaved, he was executed, and his death served as a good example to other miscreants."⁵²⁶ Secondly, when Champat Bundela was executed, it was by other members

⁵²¹ Jujhar Singh refused the emperor's offer of a pardon twice See: Singh, "Jujhar Singh's Rebellion," 237

⁵²² Amir Ahmad, "The Bundela Revolts During The Mughal Period: A Dynastic Affair." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 66 (2005): 439

⁵²³ Ahmad, "The Bundela Revolts," 440

⁵²⁴ Ahmad, "The Bundela Revolts," 440

⁵²⁵ Ahmad, "The Bundela Revolts," 442

⁵²⁶ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 156

of the Bundela clan themselves, and only after he had lost wider support within his own community.⁵²⁷ His value to the state was diminished by the dwindling support from his own community, many of whom found his rebellions troublesome.

The second case worth discussing is the refusal of Aurangzeb to negotiate for peace with Abu'l Hasan, the ruler of Golconda. A *farman* from the emperor expresses multiple reasons for refusing the request, two in the second half of the letter stand out. First was Abu'l Hasan's failure to listen to the emperor despite several attempts at communication from the emperor.⁵²⁸ Like in Champat's case, there seems to have been a limit on the emperor's forgiveness where rebellions were repeated. Secondly, and significantly, Abu'l Hasan had "sent a lakh of huns to the wicked Sambha,"⁵²⁹ the latter being the contemporary leader of the Maratha forces whose conflicts with the Mughals plagued Aurangzeb's reign. It seems Aurangzeb was especially concerned about the financial support Abu'l Hasan was providing Sambha, where the Maratha ruler was considered to be a genuine threat to Mughal authority.⁵³⁰ At the time of conquest, Sambha's plundering raids and attacks on merchants was creating a political crisis and loss of public support for the empire.⁵³¹ Despite the high costs the state incurred in invading Golconda (including the loyalty of *Mansabdars* who did not want the emperor to invade and petitioned him not to proceed), the perceived risk of not doing so played a role in the state's decision to take negotiation with Abu'l Hasan off the table.⁵³² Relevantly, when Sambha was captured he is said to have insulted the emperor in court despite being in chains, indicating his unwillingness to negotiate with the state.⁵³³ Sambha's subsequent torture and public execution was deliberately humiliating, designed as a show of the emperor's strength and to instil fear in other rebels. There was clearly no room for negotiation in this case.

Lastly, the case of Tahawwur Khan, who was the commandant of the vanguard of Prince Akbar during the Rathore Rebellion in 1681,⁵³⁴ is notable on the role of risk in negotiations. The incident is recorded somewhat differently in three histories of

⁵²⁷ See the author's comments on Champat Rai's plundering of other Bundela chiefs' land in: Ahmad, "The Bundela Revolts," 441

⁵²⁸ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 331

⁵²⁹ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 331

⁵³⁰ Sambha is regularly depicted as a formidable opponent. After taking over the Maratha kingdom, he is seen as a Vassal State participant. For an example of how the Mughals considered him very formidable, See: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 424, 462-3.

⁵³¹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 218-9

⁵³² Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 107-9

⁵³³ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 222

⁵³⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 266, 272

Aurangzeb's reign, though the summary of events is as follows.⁵³⁵ After first seeming to join Prince Akbar's rebellion against his father, Tahawwur came to rejoin emperor Aurangzeb's camp later in the rebellion. However, the emperor suspected Tahawwur Khan had come with bad intentions and he was asked to disarm himself. Tahawwur Khan refused to disarm himself, and when he entered the hall, he was killed by the surrounding officers.⁵³⁶

The incident is somewhat unusual in that Tahawwur Khan took such a large risk in disobeying the emperor's orders after joining in a rebellion. In other cases of rebellion, it was more common for the Mughals and Rebels to find ways of lowering the risk of returning. For example, it was usual for the Mughals and rebels to use intermediaries who were trusted by both sides and experienced in negotiations.⁵³⁷ Moreover, often the rebel would not be required to return to court or would be allowed to send a relative in his stead.⁵³⁸ However, Tahawwur Khan's confidence to walk into that room despite the circumstances is also telling. He believed his status as a *khanazad* (i.e. hereditary servant)⁵³⁹ gave him the right to keep his arms, and did not think much of the risks that came with his actions.

Together, these incidents of non-forgiveness highlight the many different factors which could determine whether a rebel was forgiven or not, especially highlighting the risk these rebels posed to the state relative to the advantages of reincorporating the rebels. In these relatively unusual incidents, the rebels were not forgiven despite their requests because they were considered too dangerous or too troublesome, and forgiveness was not an option because the costs and risks were too high.

⁵³⁵ Khafi Khan suggests his death was the cause of a reaction of the nobles, whereas Ishwardas Nagar implies it was ordered by the emperor. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 272; Musta'idd Khañ Muḥammad Sāqī, *Maāsir-I-'ālamgiri : A History of the Emperor Aurangzib-'ālamgīr (Reign 1658-1707 A.d.) of Saqi Must'ad Khan*. Trans Jadunath Sarkar (1947). Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 124; Ishwardas Nagar, *Futahat*, 134-5

⁵³⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 271-2

⁵³⁷ See a few such examples from: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 149, 113; Ishwardas Nagar, *Futahat*, 27

⁵³⁸ See Case Study 1 of Nazar Muhammad Khan above for an example.

⁵³⁹ Saqi Must'ad Khan, *Maasir*, 124

Case 5: Rebel Bargaining Power and Negotiation

Local elites were very aware of their value to Mughal interests, and they used this value as leverage against the state. A strong example of the use of this leverage is perhaps the response of the rebel Sanatan Sardar to a proposal of peace from a Mughal officer. After peasants and *Zamindars* rebelled, the Mughals offered to replace the *Karoris* found to be oppressive.⁵⁴⁰ To this, Sanatan responded the following:

‘Now the [peasants] do not possess the power and ability to turn their attention to the payment of revenues. Two of our noble *Rajas* accepted imperial vassalage and gave lakhs and crores. What benefit have they derived which I may consider an advantage? I shall hand over one of my brothers for Your Excellency’s service on the condition that first, stern punishment should be meted out to Shaykh Ibrahim; secondly, the revenue should be remitted for full one year; thirdly, the Mughal soldiers will have to return to Gilahnay; Fourthly, the allowance of the paiks should be paid direct to them and should not be made as an addition to the revenue due to the government.’⁵⁴¹

The Mirza’s response was also significant, where he responded as follows:

“Your demand for the dismissal of Shaykh Ibrahim and the appointment of another official in his place can be very easily complied with. But the proposal of the remission of revenue for a year and the withdrawal of the imperial officers to Gilahnay are impossible terms.”⁵⁴²

After negotiations had broken down, Sanatan decided to escape to Jutia, which was “situated in the midst of a dense forest”⁵⁴³ and therefore less accessible to the Mughal armies.

⁵⁴⁰ Mīrzā Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī: a history of the Mughal wars in Assam, Cooch Behar, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa during the reigns of Jahāngīr and Shāhjahān*. Trans Moayyidul Islam Borah (1992) Gauhati, Assam: Gov. of Assam in the Dep. of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Narayani Handiqui Historical Inst., 369. This case is also studied by Gautam Badhra in: Badhra, “Two Frontier Uprisings,” 479

⁵⁴¹ Mīrzā Nathan, *Bahāristān*, 370

⁵⁴² Mīrzā Nathan, *Bahāristān*, 370

⁵⁴³ Mīrzā Nathan, *Bahāristān*, 382

Sanatan's demands reflected the support he had from the peasantry, the latter which was relevant to the successful administration of the region. It is also relevant that he asked for more than previous *Rajas* had received, showing he is aware of his bargaining power and is trying to exact greater wealth and status in the process of negotiation. The Mughal response is also telling: they were happy to comply with political changes, but not with the economic ones. The continuation of payment of taxes in the following year was a key source of contention.

It is also notable that Sanatan was able to take advantage of the local environs to escape the Mughals and make his capture more difficult. The use of the subcontinent's geography to escape the state's tax reach was a common occurrence.⁵⁴⁴ In 1615, Jahangir made the following comment about the difficulty of collecting taxes from another *Zamindar* named Durjan Sal:

“Every time the governors of Bihar tried sending armies against him, or going themselves, the roads were so easily defended and the jungles so thick that they contented themselves with taking two or three diamonds and left him alone.”⁵⁴⁵

The quote highlights how the environment limited the state's ability to collect taxes. It is notable that Jahangir states that the Mughal governors (*Subahdars*) were not able to enforce payment. *Subahdars* were among the highest ranked *Mansabdars* and had large contingents of cavalry, which indicates the rebel's evasions must have been quite formidable to escape them.⁵⁴⁶

The climate was also used as a means of escaping the state, where on more than one occasion, rebels were able to defeat the Mughal armies simply by dragging out battles long enough to ensure their supply line was cut by bad weather.⁵⁴⁷ Conversely, when intermediaries had less influence, they would be the ones more willing to pay for peace: in 1632, European merchants in Bandar Hughli had paid one lakh rupees as a preliminary

⁵⁴⁴ T.H. Ansari, “The Nature Of Relationship,” 32; Habib, “Evolution Of The Afghan Tribal System,” 34

⁵⁴⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 188

⁵⁴⁶ The next chapter discusses how the rank of the *Mansabdar* sent to put down the official can be an indication of the size of the rebellion.

⁵⁴⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 399. In another example, a Mughal noble does not punish a rebel because of the rainy season. See: Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama* 1232

arrangement for peace, albeit thereafter negotiations broke down and they were taken prisoner.⁵⁴⁸ If the *Zamindars* could not control the region, they were less likely to be awarded.⁵⁴⁹

Rebels would also attempt to escape to neighbouring polities, some of which would be happy to welcome them to weaken the Mughal forces.⁵⁵⁰ Prince Shah Shuja's protection from the Mughal emperor by the Kingdom of Arakan was, for instance, partially motivated by the jewels he brought to the kingdom.⁵⁵¹ The reverse was also true—where the Mughal state or its rivals wished to reduce the strength of their enemies, poaching intermediaries would weaken their opponents making their enemy easier to overcome.⁵⁵² In fact, for many intermediaries, the most powerful element of their administrative capacity was their ability to conciliate and round-up troops and locals for their cause.⁵⁵³

At times, the bargaining power of the rebel lay not with themselves but the locations of the forts which they commanded. Rather than engage in costly battles that lost the lives of men and damaged well-built forts, the Mughals negotiated surrenders with fort commandants, sometimes even providing compensation for the capture.⁵⁵⁴ They often noted the impregnability of the fort and their value if intact.⁵⁵⁵ In one Northern-western conflict, the chronicler wrote that only one fort in the region had been captured by force of arms without any negotiations and correspondence.⁵⁵⁶ In another instance, it is noted that a Mughal commander avoided the use of destructive weapons because “if other mines were sprung and all the bastions demolished, the fort would be desolated; so that after capturing it, the rebuilding of them anew would be a source of endless delay.”⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁴⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 84

⁵⁴⁹ For instance: Ansari, “The Nature Of Relationship” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 71 (2010): 319–26; Ahmad, “The Bundela Revolts” 438–45.

⁵⁵⁰ See for instance: Kiran Sampatrao Jadhav, “Nature Of Factionalism In The Adil Shahi Sultanate Of Bijapur.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 78 (2017): 333–39; Hallissey, Robert C. 1977. *The Rajput rebellion against Aurangzeb: a study of the Mughal Empire in seventeenth-century India*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 73

⁵⁵¹ Ray, Aniruddha. “A Contemporary Dutch Account Of Shah Shuja At Arakan.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 35 (1974): 112–18.

⁵⁵² Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 511

⁵⁵³ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 368, 306

⁵⁵⁴ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 501

⁵⁵⁵ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 114, 156; Singh, Abha. “Jujhar Singh's Rebellion, 237

⁵⁵⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 514

⁵⁵⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 192-4; It is worth noting the Mughals equally saw the destruction of forts as an important means of preventing rebellion. See: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 501

From these cases, it is very clear the costs of coercion with regards to tax collection was very high, where especially rebel's knowledge and influence within local regions gave intermediaries significant bargaining power in tax-payments and administration decisions. Negotiation and reincorporation of rebels was therefore a preferred policy of the Mughals, where allying with the elites with influence allowed the state better access to local populations.

Case 6: Aghar Khan - Labour Market and Legal Capacity

The state's reliance on intermediaries created an environment where it could be difficult to control them. The Mughals clearly understood the importance of security and property rights in helping to foster economic growth and increase revenue.⁵⁵⁸ More often than not, the laws and practice of the state went out of its way to encourage and increase security in an environment of unrest.⁵⁵⁹ As will be discussed further in Chapter 3, aside from tax remissions and investment subsidies, the state enacted numerous policies to increase the welfare of the people and peasantry.⁵⁶⁰ Extensive efforts were made to provide food to districts in time of famine, and overbearing intermediaries were removed.⁵⁶¹ The state even worked at restoring the loss of agriculturalists and forgiving debts to encourage cultivators to stay after times of unrest.⁵⁶² In an attempt to encourage commercial activity, the state not only committed to returning plundered goods, but also to insuring compensation from the administrators own pocket if the goods were not retrievable.⁵⁶³

Although it enacted various laws designed to constrain intermediary predation, the government found itself struggling to dissuade this behaviour.⁵⁶⁴ For example, when

⁵⁵⁸ Zakir.Husain, "Aurangzeb's First Viceroyalty Of The Deccan: A Reappraisal." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 70 (2009): 312-3; Shafqat, "The Position And Functions Of 'Faujdar'." 347; Nazer Aziz Anjum, "Security On The Routes In Mughal India." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 66 (2005): 450.

⁵⁵⁹ A number of examples are provided in local sources covered in the following articles: Arshia Shafqat, "Imperial Control Our Provinces During Aurangzeb's Reign: The Case Of Gujarat." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 74 (2013): 255;

⁵⁶⁰ Geoffrey Parker., *Global Crisis : War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century*. New Haven : London: Yale University Press, 2013.

⁵⁶¹ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, 111

⁵⁶² Inayat Khan, *Muntakhab*, 537, 265

⁵⁶³ Richards, *Document Forms*, 38. a strong account of the state's conciliatory relationship with mercantile groups can be found in: Husain. "Aurangzeb's First Viceroyalty Of The Deccan," 310-17; Eaton, "Temple Desecration": 297

⁵⁶⁴ Shafqat, "Imperial Control Our Provinces." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 74 (2013): 255

the *Mansabdar* Aghar Khan and his men were reprimanded and not permitted to return to court because they had disobeyed orders to refrain from plunder, their response was to threaten the commanding imperial officer and return to court in any case. Despite this clear disobedience of authority, Aghar Khan's *Mansab* was confiscated for a short period of time, only to be returned to him when he was sent to Kabul as reinforcement for the Mughal armies.⁵⁶⁵ In another incident, Khafi Khan noted that although the emperor had instructed *Mansabdars* to leave behind their families when going on expeditions, "due to the merciful treatment" of the emperor and an unwillingness to punish offenders, this rule was not obeyed.⁵⁶⁶

These intermediaries who were too indispensable to be dismissed could still behave in ways that were contrary to the state's interest; namely increasing discord and insecurity. The Mughals consequently were often forced to make overtures to merchants and cultivators that were affected by such instability. Destruction of crops and disturbance of merchants was a frequent concern within the chronicles.⁵⁶⁷

Despite this, the consequences of not forgiving rebels could be more substantial. When the emperor Akbar was overly harsh to a number of Central Asian nobles, it instigated a large rebellion which ended in an apology from the emperor in the form of an edict.⁵⁶⁸ In another example, after convincing Shivaji to join the Mughal court, the emperor's unwillingness to provide him and his retinue with a high *Mansab* led to his rebellion and the formation of the Maratha state.⁵⁶⁹ In his letters, Aurangzeb reflected on the outcome:

"Negligence for a single moment becomes the cause of disgrace for long years. The escape of the wretch Shiva took place through carelessness, and I have to labour hard [against the Marathas] to the end of my life [as the result of it]."⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 162-4

⁵⁶⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 454

⁵⁶⁷ See for instance: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 309; Further examples are given in the following chapter.

⁵⁶⁸ Nizammuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat*. 526, 531

⁵⁶⁹ *Muntakhab* 193

⁵⁷⁰ Quote is taken from: Pearson, "Decline of The Mughal Empire," p230

There were additionally financial consequences. Where intermediaries were not paid well, they became disloyal. A Mughal noble who had caught the rebellious Shivaji was easily bribed with jewels to release the latter ahead of the arrival of the central army troops. When explaining his actions, the chronicler notes that the intermediary “preferred prompt payment to a credit about which there was nothing certain.”⁵⁷¹ On a number of occasions intermediaries refused to join in battle without being paid first.⁵⁷² The greater the bargaining power of the intermediary, the higher the cost to the state.

How did the bargaining relationship between the intermediaries and the state change over time? An understanding of these changes is complicated by the empire’s expansion into the Deccan regions and incorporation of Deccani elites, where it is difficult to delineate reasons for state expansion and changes with intermediary relationships for this period. What is clear is that forgiveness and conciliation remained a consistent policy over the period, and according to Richards’ estimates the state’s total revenues continued to rise indicating a sustained, though likely limited, increase in fiscal state capacity.⁵⁷³ As Figure 2.4 below shows, both the size of conflicts the Mughals faced and percentage of rebel forgiveness increased substantially over the seventeenth century. Partly, this can be explained by the Mughal expansion Southward where the state’s reach became increasingly compromised by distances, meaning Deccani rebels were more likely to be forgiven because of their value in administrating newly incorporated regions. Partly, it reflects a change in the dynamics of the relationship between all the intermediaries and the state more broadly, where when the cost of rebellions increased so did the leniency of the state to disobedient officials who were still necessary for administration. Legal capacity therefore was declining, as the central state found itself less able to dissuade refractory behaviour and less effective at responding to it as well.

Whilst the literature widely recognises the changes to the state’s relationship with intermediaries, the cause of the change is debated. Ali believed the incorporation of new officials from the Deccan led to a scarcity of *jagirs* and a crisis in the nobility.⁵⁷⁴ Pearson contends the nobility lost faith in the government.⁵⁷⁵ Alam suggested there was increased

⁵⁷¹ See also the comments of: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 220.

⁵⁷² Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 335

⁵⁷³ Richards, J. F. “Mughal State Finance” 293. R. P. Rana likely disagrees with this increase however. See: R. P. Rana. “Was There an Agrarian Crisis” 18–32.

⁵⁷⁴ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 107

⁵⁷⁵ Pearson, “Decline of The Mughal Empire,”

tax resistance of a more powerful *Zamindar* class, a notion perhaps supported by the higher percentage of *Zamindar* rebellions in the seventeenth century (see Figure 2.1).⁵⁷⁶ It is not the aim of this chapter (or thesis) to explain the empire's decline, yet the increased forgiveness patterns and the framework presented above would concur with the view that the state's ability to align the interests of intermediaries with its own goals became increasingly limited.

What is clear (and demonstrated in the next chapter) was that the state was facing larger and more populous rebellions and protests unlike it ever had before, and the Mughal state increasingly had difficulty controlling intermediaries. In conflicts, plunder and monetary compensation was prioritised by rebels over political rhetoric.⁵⁷⁷ For example, powerful Maratha rebel leaders ransomed Mughal *Mansabdars* they capture instead of killing them.⁵⁷⁸ Most significantly, peasant participation in rebellions seemed to increase with more populous armies and larger peasant uprisings. As the frequency of conflicts increased, the dependence of the state on local administrators did too, increasing their bargaining power and ability to disobey government regulations without repercussions.⁵⁷⁹ Concurrently, a more unstable economic environment could have led intermediaries to become more self-reliant given a limited ability of the state to respond to a growing crisis.⁵⁸⁰ As will be explored further in the next chapter, the structural shift evident in conflict-based sources are possibly linked to wider patterns of an economic decline not specific to the state itself. In the last decade, scholarship has found evidence of a steep decline in labour wages and falling GDP in the seventeenth century.⁵⁸¹ Perhaps greater uncertainty and scarcity drove intermediaries to increasingly prioritise monetary concerns. Further research is required to better understand these changes.

⁵⁷⁶ Alam, "*The Crisis of Empire*"

⁵⁷⁷ See. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 451

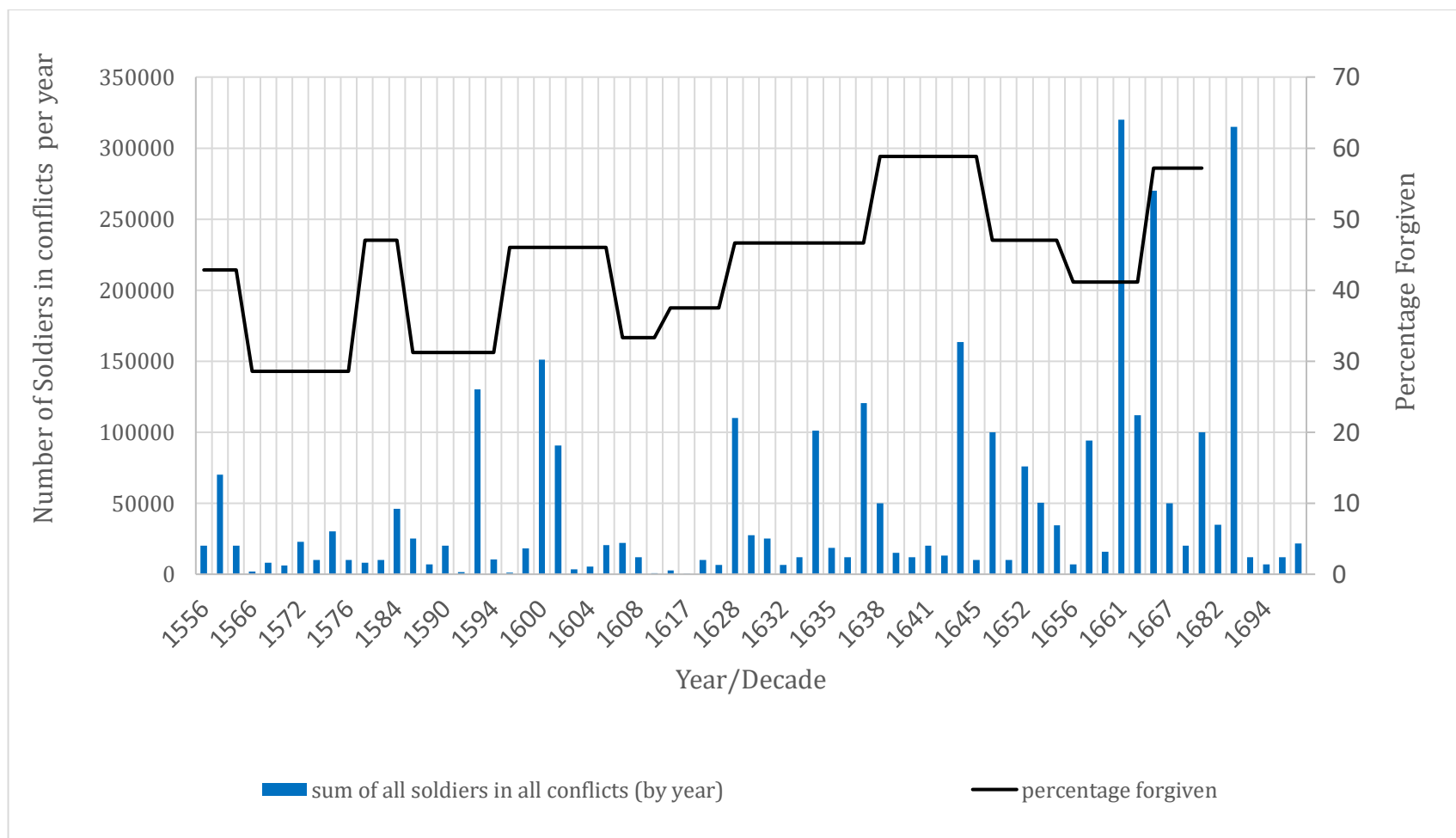
⁵⁷⁸ See. Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 451

⁵⁷⁹ This is elaborated on in chapters 4 and 5

⁵⁸⁰ This is admittedly speculative, although a discussion can be found in chapter 3 in the section on 'Structural Change and State Response.'

⁵⁸¹ Zwart, and Lucassen, "Poverty or prosperity in northern India?"; Broadberry, Custodis and Gupta, "India and the great divergence" 58–75; Radhika Seshan "Wages and Prices in Madras c. 1650-1720" in *Wage Earners in India 1500-1900: Regional Approaches in an International Context*, edied by Jan Lucassen and Radhika Seshan, Sage: New Delhi, 2022

Figure 2.4: Rate of Forgiveness (percentage forgiven) compared with conflict size over time



Source: Forgiveness rates and number of soldiers from the Mughal conflict database

X. Conclusion and Wider Implications

The patterns of rebel forgiveness provide a unique insight into method of state building adopted by the Mughal government. The duality of the state as being both ‘weak’ and ‘powerful’ raised by Farhat Hasan is clearly evident in the interaction between the central government and its administrators.⁵⁸² The analysis indicates the relationship between the State and intermediaries was not simply a question of being ‘rivals’ or ‘allies,’ but rather a negotiation of interests which developed into a social and economic cultural space. High costs of administration meant the state relied on intermediaries to govern a heterogenous population and environments. The incorporation of elites certainly strengthened the empire and allowed more flexible and effective management of the region, where overly structured and inflexible systems would not work as well. The system was therefore very much tailored to the realities of the subcontinent at the time on the ground, as opposed to a top-enforced institutional design. As is evident from their numerous victories against rebels and rival polities (including the European trading companies), as well as the expansion of the government revenues and offices,⁵⁸³ the model of state-building adopted by the Mughals was effective in building both military and administrative capacity. To use the metaphor employed by Alam and Subrahmanyam, the state was not simply a ‘carapace’ per say,⁵⁸⁴ but very much connected and involved with the communities, a concept further explored in Chapter 4.

However, such incorporation was also a double-edged sword, as the effectiveness and credibility of forgiveness depended on rebels’ confidence in the state, and this in turn constrained the state. Constraints on government did give confidence that the state was limited in its predation, however it also had implications on the state’s ability to enforce laws. With the emphasis on the ‘carrot,’ there was little the central government could do in terms of enforcing a ‘stick.’ Even when the Emperor knew and recognised intermediaries were disobedient, their value and sometimes necessity in administration disincentivised repercussions from government.

⁵⁸² Discussed in the introduction in the Mughal literature section.

⁵⁸³ This expansion is demonstrated in the analysis within Chapter 4

⁵⁸⁴ Alam and Subrahmanyam, “Introduction,” 2

A wider implication of the research is the differences in intermediary management between Asian empires, and their implications for state administrative capacity building. The complexity of the Mughal case highlights difficulties of modelling state capacity development already well recognised within the literature.⁵⁸⁵ The large Asian empires of the early modern period all faced the principal agent problems involved in managing a large and expansive territory, yet the bargaining power and relationships with their intermediaries differed. For example, In the Mughal empire the high bargaining power of intermediaries meant the state could not maintain a low-wage, low tax solution in the same way Ma and Rubin have argued was the case for the premodern Chinese state.⁵⁸⁶ The Mughal state is perhaps more comparable to the Ottoman empire which also adopted conciliatory policies, but even there not to the same degree.⁵⁸⁷ As is discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5, these differences in relationships likely had long term implications for the state's ability and strategies of development.

⁵⁸⁵ Hasan, *Paper Performance and the State*, 126

⁵⁸⁶ Ma and Rubin, *Paradox of Power*, 4

⁵⁸⁷ There is no formal study on rebel forgiveness which I am aware of for either the Ottoman or Qing empires, however discussions with Dr. Yasin Arslantas and Dr. Nora Yitong Qiu who have both studied confiscation in the Ottoman and Qing dynasties respectively have indicated such in conversations that such high levels of rebel forgiveness were not as common. As was discussed in the Thesis' Introduction, and will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, the literatures of these states have similarly adopted this view. For example, see: Balla and Johnson, "Fiscal Crisis," 838-9

Chapter 3 - Conflict, Climate and the State

Abstract: An agrarian crisis in seventeenth century Mughal India has been well documented in the wider Mughal historiography, however there still exists a debate regarding the causes and chronology of the crisis. This chapter leverages the Mughal Conflict Database to map the development of conflicts across the empire. It shows there was a large cluster of conflicts around the 1630s, followed by a considerable growth in conflict size over time as measured by numbers of people involved as well as duration. This chapter examines whether there is a relationship between large peasant rebellions and the frequency of famines and climate events. Based on the results, I argue that rather than systemic institutional causes of the conflict, exogenous climate related factors played a role in instigating the crisis. The paper additionally discusses the impact of the agrarian crisis on state capacity, noting a fall in the state's ability to collect revenues and an increase in instability.

Introduction

The seventeenth century was a transformative period for the Mughal empire, where the state grew substantially in size both geographically and administratively.⁵⁸⁸ The scholarship has strongly debated the nature of transformations of the economy. Recent work has suggested that the state saw an increase in commercial trade.⁵⁸⁹ At the same time, it was a period marked by larger conflicts, greater lawlessness, and a reduced ability in the empire to control local official exactions. As Moosvi noted, “the late 1650s and early 1660s were thus marked by a definite contraction of cultivated area, the flight of the peasantry and a fall in revenue.”⁵⁹⁰

Where other chapters of this thesis focus on the relationship between the state and the *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars*, this chapter of the thesis focuses more on the state's relationship with the peasantry and how this evolved over time. The reason for the focus on peasant rebellions to try and identify a shift in the nature of rebellions, where the

⁵⁸⁸ Discussed in the Thesis' introduction and Chapter 4 respectively.

⁵⁸⁹ Guha, Sumit. "Rethinking," 532-75.

⁵⁹⁰ Moosvi S. "Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation" 50

empire faced increasingly very large peasant rebellions in the latter half of the seventeenth century known as the ‘agrarian crisis.’ The growing agrarian crisis is well recognised within the sources and the literature, however there is little understanding of what the causes of the crisis were. Adopting a more Marxist perspective, the Aligarh school historians have explained the crisis as a consequence of systemic failures in the institutional set up of the state, where the government’s revenue assignment system led to greater oppression of the peasantry and instigated tax revolts.⁵⁹¹ As was outlined in the introduction, this perspective of an oppressed peasantry and oppressive state has reformed considerably, and more recent literature has suggested that the revolts signalled an empowerment of *Zamindars* in their ability to resist state taxation.

One of the debates in the historiography has been identifying the period in which the agrarian crisis began, namely when peasants became increasingly involved in rebellions. This is especially difficult because Zamindar and peasant rebellions against the state can be difficult to differentiate in sources due to the close nature of their relationship and lack of detail in the sources. Defining peasant rebellions as rebellions led by a peasant leader (as defined by the chroniclers) as opposed to a Zamindar, the Mughal Conflict database allows us to differentiate between peasant rebellions and Zamindar rebellions.⁵⁹² We are also able to infer peasant involvement in conflict from large increases in numbers involved in conflicts. As such, the data allows us to identify when we see an increase in peasant participation in rebellions specifically, as per the perspective of the central government records. There can be a concern that the peasant rebellions were not directly a rebellion against the Mughal government but the Zamindar of the region. This thesis assumes that in all cases where the Mughal’s were involved in negotiating with or putting down peasant rebellions, then it can be considered a rebellion against the central government as this was clearly the view of the state for it to have become involved.

Leveraging new data from the Mughal Conflict database, this chapter maps the changes in the nature of conflicts in the state between 1556-1707, especially focusing on peasant roles within these conflicts. The paper first outlines changes in the size and nature of conflicts over time, where the data shows that conflicts became increasingly populous after the 1630s, which is decades earlier than some of the earlier literature has

⁵⁹¹ Discussed in the Thesis’ introduction

⁵⁹² For a full discussion of the classification of rebellion by class, see Chapter 1 section 2.1.2 page 68

suggested. The significant increase in conflict size as well as the Mughal state's own records of who led rebellions indicates that peasants became major participants in rebellion. The paper then discusses the applicability of previous explanations of the crisis which have argued that the agrarian crisis was caused by increases in rebellion. The analysis shows that the timing of the increase in rebellions does not corroborate with these earlier theories. The paper then tests to see if the adverse climate of 'The Little Ice Age' identified by climate historians could have been a factor in increasing the size of peasant rebellions. By graphing peasant rebellions (by size) alongside frequency of famines, I find a correlation between the period of the Little Ice Age, an increase in famine frequency and an increase in the size of peasant rebellions. Analysis of contemporary text-based sources also indicates there was an increase in unusual weather events.

The timing of the increase in rebellion size and peasant involvement in rebellions suggest that climate, as opposed to state oppression was a likely and significant cause for the increase in the agrarian crisis.

. The evidence also indicates that in consequence of the agrarian crisis state capacity in terms of its ability to raise revenue and enforce the law declined. As peasants played an important role in feeding armies and paying taxes, their migration and joining of *Zamindars* increased their power in tax resistance against the state. The findings revise previous literature which has claimed there was no seventeenth century crisis, and that climate does not seem to have been a contributing factor to a decline in state development.⁵⁹³

The outline of the chapter are as follows. First data on the evolution of conflict patterns is pooled to show evidence of the changes in the nature of conflicts within the empire between 1556-1707. The chapter then explains why it is unlikely the crisis can be explained by the systemic explanations given by Marxist scholars. This is followed by discussing evidence that climate was a greater cause of the conflict. Lastly, the paper discusses the state response to the crisis in terms of attempts to secure food in times of increased scarcity.

⁵⁹³ John F Richards, "The Seventeenth-Century Crisis in South Asia." *Modern Asian Studies* 24, no. 4 (1990): 625-38; Geoffrey Parker, "Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered." *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 4 (2008): 1053-79

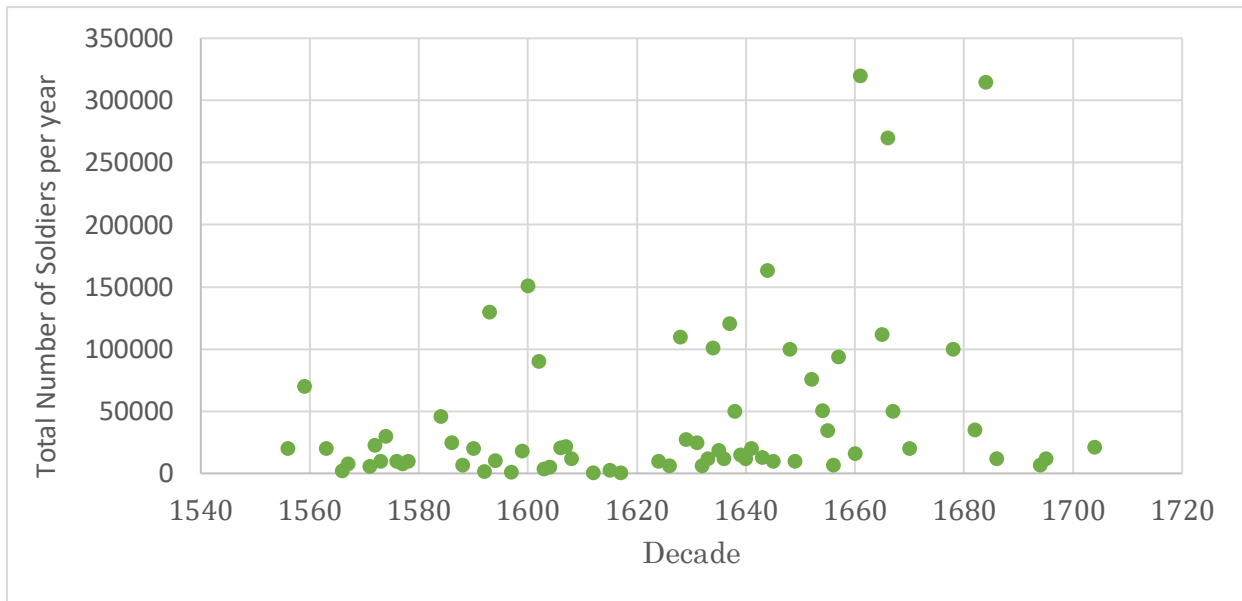
II Changes in Conflict Patterns Over the Seventeenth Century

The Agrarian crisis of Mughal India has been well documented within the literature, where evidence of larger peasant participation within revolts against the state are prevalent in localised sources like *azardashts* (petitions).⁵⁹⁴ However there has not been a quantitative assessment of the scale and timing of the crisis. The Mughal conflict dataset therefore provides a macro perspective of how and when conflicts developed over the course of the empire. Figure 3.1 shows the changes in size of all conflicts over time in terms of a) number of soldiers per year and 2) duration of conflict over time, these being two different measures of the scale of conflicts. The patterns clearly demonstrate a sharp rise in the scale of conflicts over the course the seventeenth century, first around 1600 and then from around 1630s onwards. After 1660 the conflicts appear to be especially large, with twice the number of soldiers as conflicts before 1650.

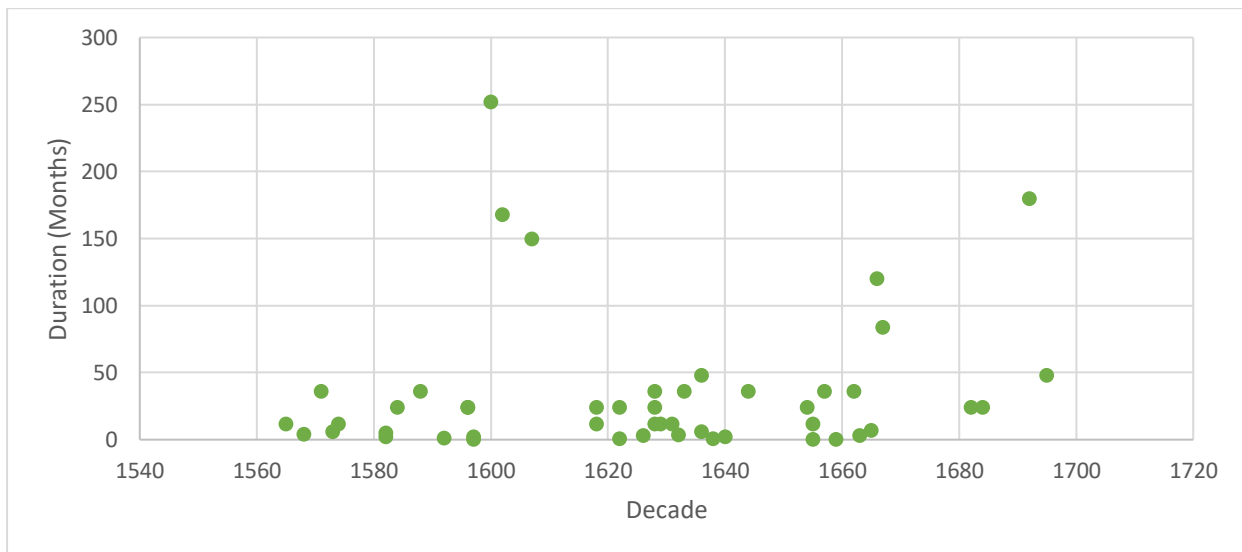
Figure 3.1: Size of Conflicts by year

- a) Conflict size by total number of soldiers per year over time.

⁵⁹⁴ Rana, *Rebels to rulers*; Rana, "Agrarian"; Rana, "Was there an Agrarian Crisis" 18-32;



b) Conflict size by duration in months



Source: Constructed from the Mughal conflict database

Figure 3.2 disaggregates the number of soldiers variable by conflict type, and provides a much clearer picture of the changes in conflict levels over the period. There are a few notable patterns in the change of conflicts in this graph. Firstly, again we see very clearly a sharp increase in the number of soldiers in all types of conflict, however the

number of soldiers engaged in warfare is especially high. From this graph, it is clear that the wars and Vassal State conflicts the state engaged in were much larger than rebellions, despite rebellions being the vast majority of conflicts the state faced.⁵⁹⁵ That said, the data also clearly shows rebellions became increasingly larger over the course of the dynasty, which leads to the second trend that merits discussion. There is a very clear and discernible cluster of conflicts of all types between the 1630s and the 1640s. Rebellions, Vassal State conflicts and wars all increased together, though perhaps rebellions especially became more frequent and relatively larger. After the 1640s, the size of conflicts became increasingly larger over the remainder of the century to include conflicts of dramatically bigger scales. The third (and final) relevant pattern of interest is the scale of the increase in number of soldiers recorded in these conflicts. It is unlikely that the rise in number of soldiers reflects a growth in the number of trained mercenaries employed. The extent of the change suggests a greater peasant participation in the conflicts at large, where *Zamindars* often recruited large numbers of peasants into their militias.⁵⁹⁶ Unlike trained *Mansabdars* which were usually equipped with cavalry, peasant foot soldiers (*piyada*) could have some experience in martial arts but often were not fully equipped and did not use cavalry like the Mughal armies would.⁵⁹⁷ It is possible that a general rise in population size could also have contributed to a rise in the size of peasant armies, though a comparison of the scale of the increase in numbers of soldiers and estimates of population growth a greater proportion of the peasantry was participating in later conflicts.⁵⁹⁸

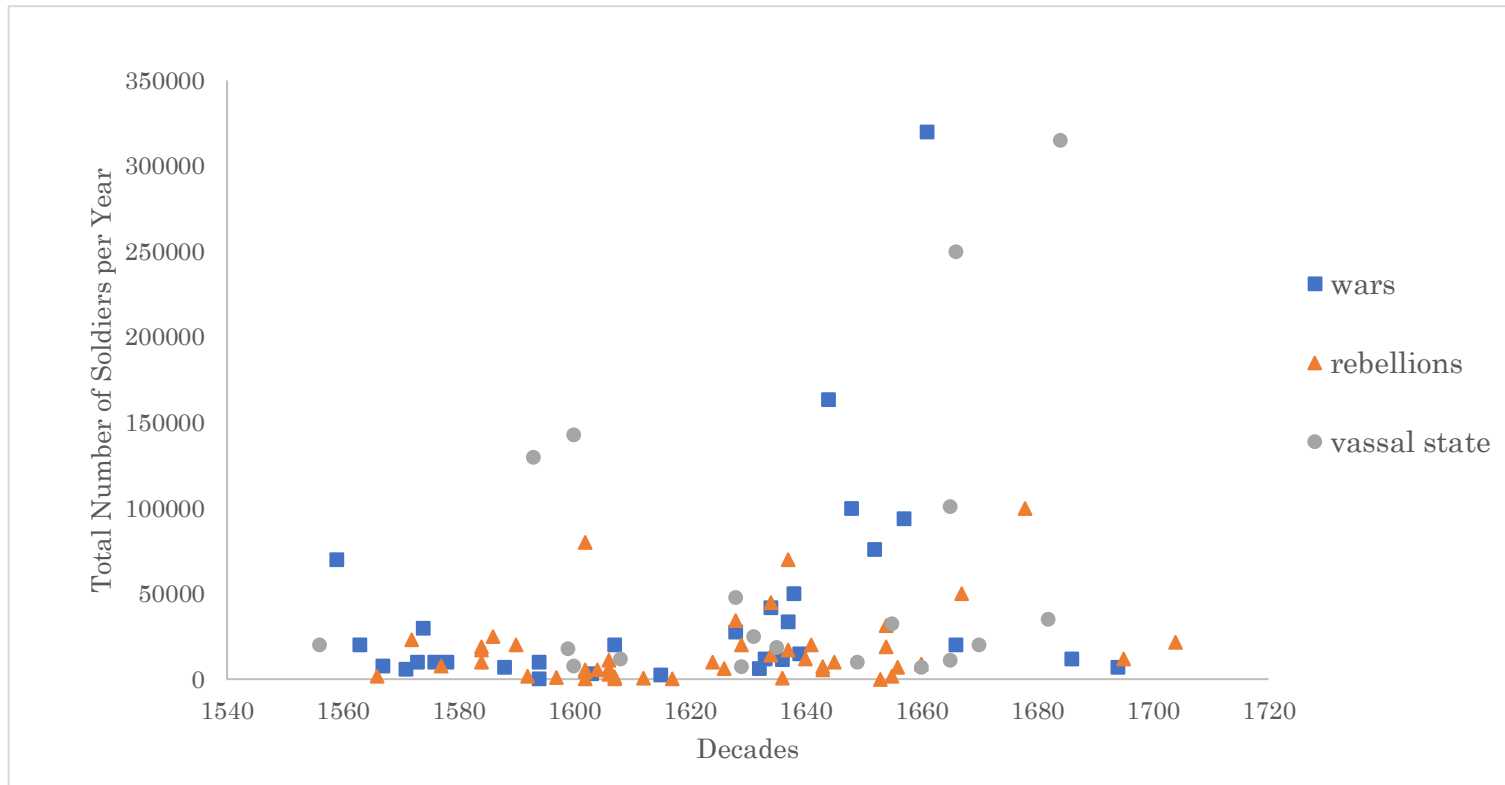
⁵⁹⁵ This possibly should be caveated with the fact that rebellions data on numbers of soldiers is likely more limited because numbers of peasants were not likely accounted for in sources.

⁵⁹⁶ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 223-4

⁵⁹⁷ This was discussed in Chapter 1 section VII

⁵⁹⁸ As is further discussed in Chapter 4. the level of population growth is for 17th century India is heavily debated and unfortunately difficult to test with certainty. However if we consider that between 1600 and 1830 where population increased from 150 million to only 200 million people, it seems unlikely population growth was driving the increase in scale of rebellions. It is also unlikely given the large instances of famine and war over the period. Irfan Habib, "Population." In T. Raychaudhuri & I. Habib (Eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India* (The Cambridge Economic History of India, pp. 161-171). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1982), 167

Figure 3.2: Number of Soldiers disaggregated by conflict type



Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict database

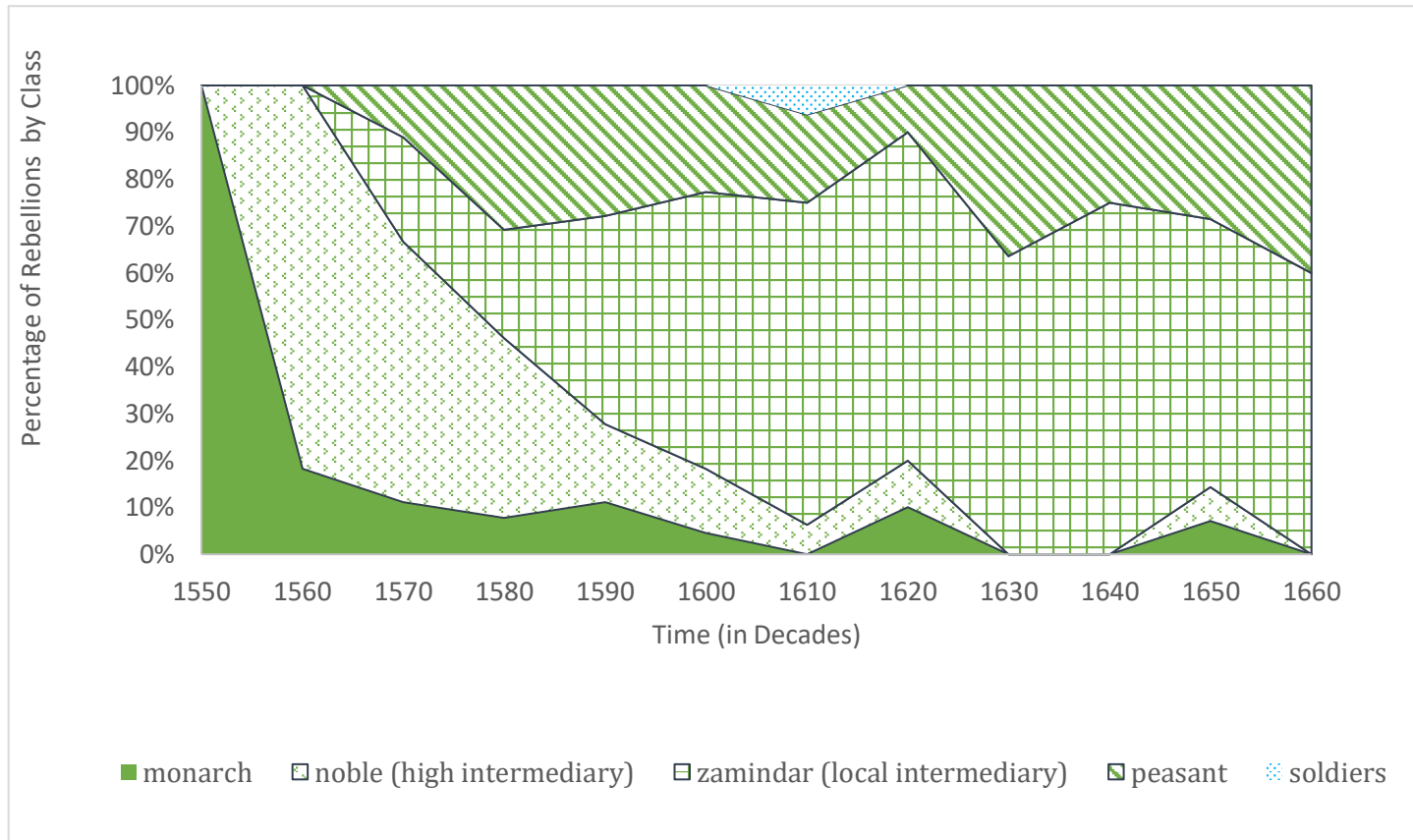
We also see a substantial shift in the class groups leading conflicts across the period of study in Figure 3.3. This graph is different from Figure 2.1 in the previous chapter because it does not include interclass rebellions which referred to rebellions led by leaders from different class groups.⁵⁹⁹ What is clear is whilst the *Zamindars* dominated rebellions over the course of the seventeenth century, peasant led rebellions were also increasing substantially, especially after the 1630s where they constituted 30-40 percent of rebellions from this decade. It is worth noting these rebellions classed as peasant rebellions would not include the numerous peasant groups who were involved in *Zamindar* led rebellions, meaning peasants' involvement in conflicts was likely even greater than the graphs indicate. If we include interclass rebellions (Figure 2.1),⁶⁰⁰ peasant and interclass rebellions together accounted for 50 percent of rebellions for most decades after and including 1630. It has previously been noted in Chapter 1 that the Mughal conflict database very likely underestimates the total number of peasant rebellions faced by the state because it would only record what were some of the largest and more pressing conflicts facing the empire.⁶⁰¹ Thus the increased proportion of peasant rebellions suggests not only that peasant rebellions were more frequent but that the state considered them a greater concern over time, where they recorded peasant involvement in conflict more frequently.

⁵⁹⁹ See Chapter 1 Section 2.1.2

⁶⁰⁰ The determination of rebellion type was based on the information given in the sources. See chapter 1 Section 2.1.2 on how rebellions were classified.

⁶⁰¹ See Chapter 1 section 2.1.2

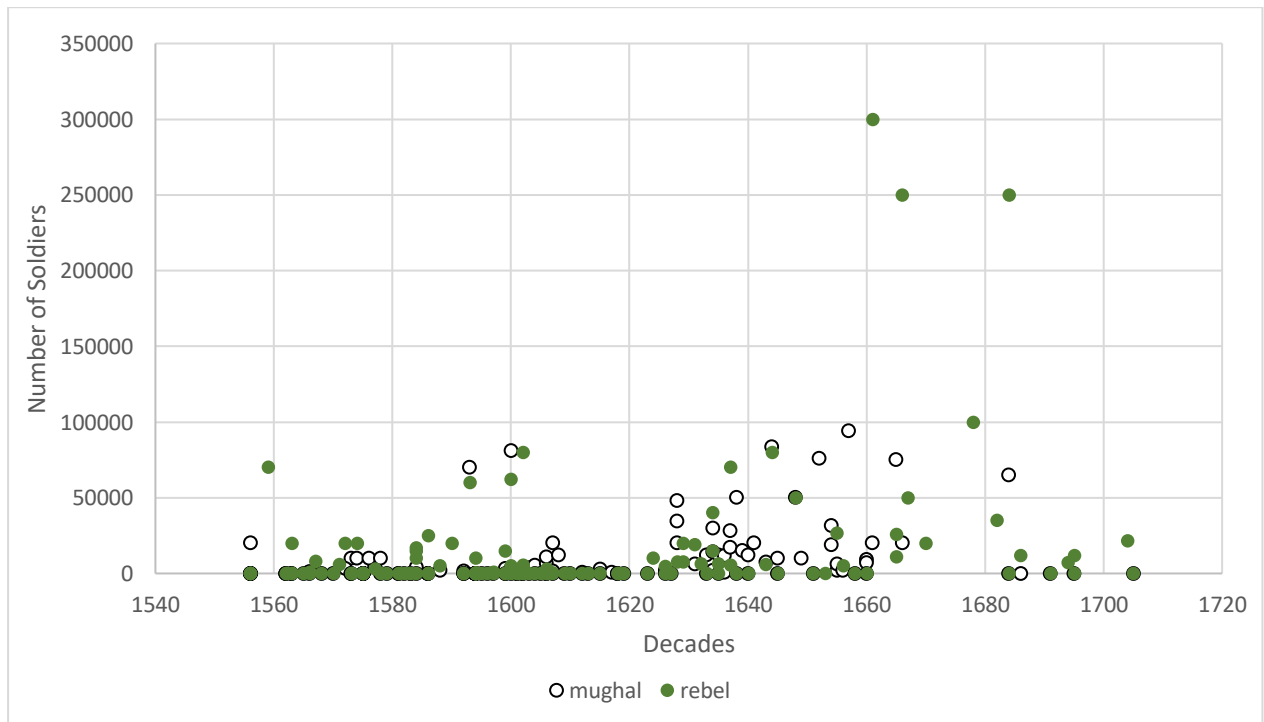
Figure 3.3: Percentage of rebellion by class groups over time by decade



Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict dataset. This is the same graph as Figure 2.1 in Chapter 2 without interclass rebellion

The change in scale of conflicts also reflects the increasing costs the state faced to respond to them. Even if peasant armies were normally less effective than the well equipped cavalry of the Mughal forces, given the scale of increase the costs to the state would have been substantial. Figure 3.4 shows the increase in both Mughal and rebel troops in engaging in conflicts. The congruence between the increase in Mughal and Rebel soldiers suggest the former had to expand the size of their armed forces to match the growing rebel armies. As such, it makes it unlikely the greater numbers involved in rebellions were simply an increase in coercive capacities of the state, but rather a response to an internal crisis. After the 1660s, it further seems that the size of rebel armies outstripped the Mughal forces, though the latter continued to be better equipped with cavalry and weapons.

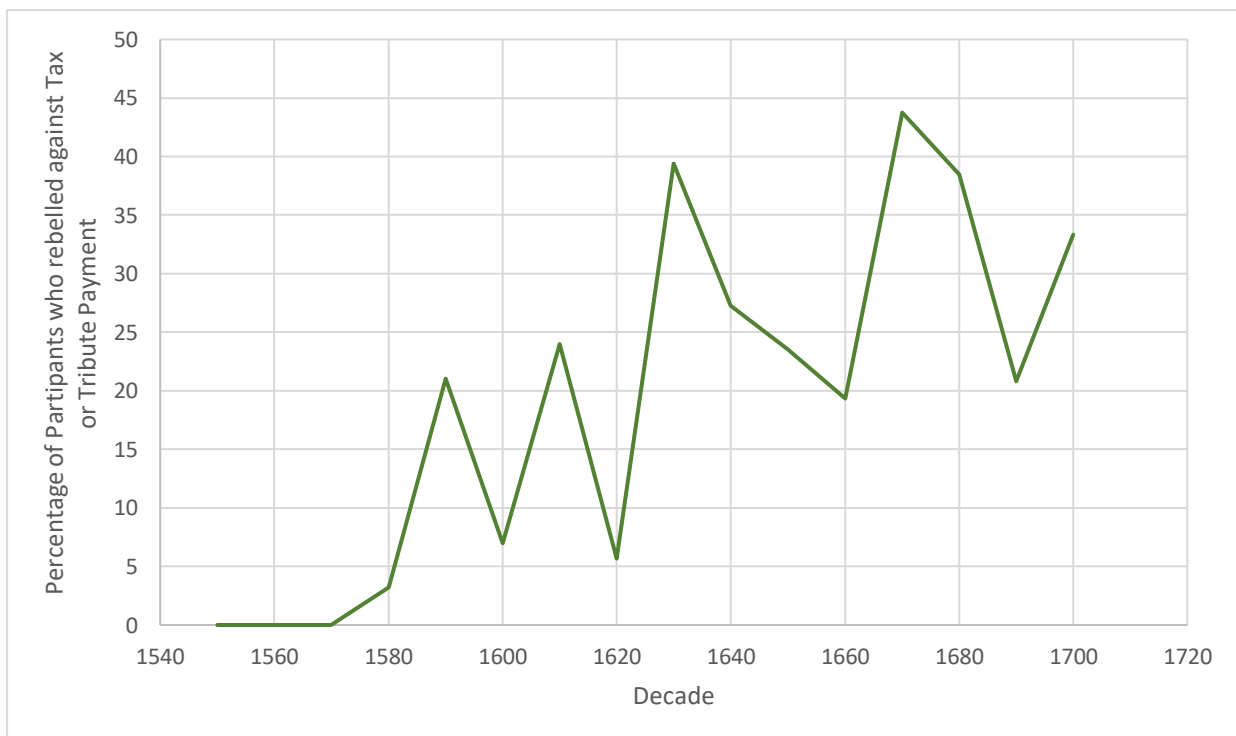
Figure 3.4: Number of soldiers in rebellions disaggregated by Mughal and Rebel soldiers



Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict Dataset.

The effect the larger rebellions had on state capacity is evident in the inferred motivation data which reflects the state's perspective of the motivations of rebels in their rebellion. As Figure 3.5 shows, the percentage of rebels considered to have been motivated by tax increases spiked substantially from the 1630s onwards and continued to grow over the period. As outlined in the model presented in Chapter 2, the larger rebellions would have meant increasing costs to the state for managing them and limited recovery of tax arrears. In short, the revenue the state was able to extract from rebellious elites likely was less than expected. This would concur with Sumit Guha's observation that the state had to negotiate leaving a larger share of revenue for the *Zamindars* in later periods.⁶⁰²

Figure 3.5: Percentage of Rebels motivated by tax reasons (by decade)

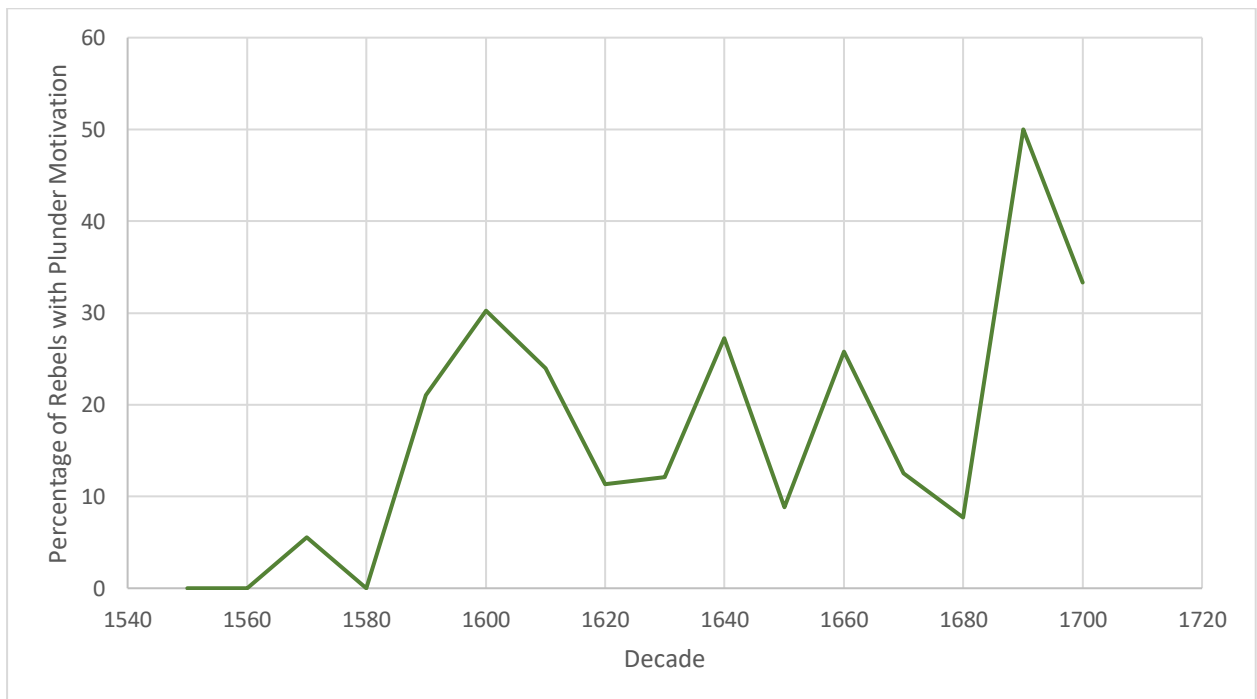


Source: From the Participants Table within the Official Histories database. Taken from the 393 rebels for which the sources give information of cause of rebellion. This is inferred data based on chronicler's views. The data indicates the percentage of rebels (with motivation data) where the chronicler has indicated this motivation.

⁶⁰² Guha's calculations were based on Maratha sources, however he extends the argument to include the Mughal government: Guha, "Rethinking," 561-566

The higher rates of conflict also reflect a growing instability within the state that has been recognised by a number of sources. Figure 3.6 shows that although the percentage of participants motivated by plunder remains a minority for most of the sixteenth century, it rises substantially from the 1590s onwards. Additionally, the graph seems to fluctuate according to periods where conflict intensity rises as the percentage jumps in the 1640s and 1660s. This is followed by a sharp increase in the 1690s to accounting for 50 percent of rebels' motivations. Whilst this pattern is less clear than the one on tax motivations, it is nonetheless notable that plunder was also a growing concern over the course of the period.

Figure 3.6: Percentage of Rebel Participants with Plunder as a Motivation for Rebellion



Source: From the Participants Table within the Official Histories database. Taken from the 393 rebels for which the sources give information of cause of rebellion. This is inferred data based on chronicler's views. The data indicates the percentage of rebels (with motivation data) where the chronicler has indicated this motivation.

Another way of assessing the increased instability within the region is emergence of largescale protests and riots across the state. Farhat Hasan has noted a growing anger against the state evident in eighteenth century public discourse and poetry, where the data indicated it perhaps is possible to trace this back to an earlier period.⁶⁰³ In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the state saw mass protests unlike anything that had been recorded in past periods in 1659, 1669, two in 1672 and 1691. What was significant about the protests were the wide swathes of societies which involved themselves in them. Whilst the 1669 protest did relate to the reimposition of the *jizya* tax,⁶⁰⁴ the others seemed largely reactionary to contemporary frustration with economic circumstances and state handling of the political economy. In Lahore, for example, an enormous protest erupted in reaction to what the public believed was an abuse of power by a *Subahdar* (provincial governor) that falsely arrested and killed the local *Qadi* (magistrate or judge).⁶⁰⁵ The protests cut across occupational class groups, including merchants and tradesmen who did not live within the confines of the city. Another example was where a riot among artillery men in the army was caused because a Mughal official disciplined an artillery man by striking him. In this incident, Khafi Khan specifically mentions the artillery men were joined in their protests by “jobless Mughuls, unemployed adventurers and the vagabonds of the market.”⁶⁰⁶ In both latter incidents, the reaction of the protestors was so profound that the offending officials had to be moved secretly. Whilst these events show there was widespread dissatisfaction in the empire, they also demonstrate unity between groups of citizens with very different backgrounds and ethnicities, and motivations for disaffection that developed across community lines. How did such large-scale mass protests come about? This is a difficult phenomenon to explain, however my analysis below suggests adverse climate could have instigated the response. Economic hardship and concentrations of populations in urban centres driven by climate-induced crises likely united them in their frustration against the state. High levels of unemployment probably

⁶⁰³ Hasan, *Paper Performance and the State*, 70

⁶⁰⁴ The Jizya is a tax on non-Muslims which was commonly imposed in Islamic empires of the past. The jizya was abolished by emperor Akbar in 1564 as a means of pacifying non-Muslims part of the administration. It was reinstated by emperor Aurangzeb in 1679. The reasons and effects of this tax has been much debated. For a discussion on the jizya tax as a part of Islamic law, see: Abou El Fadl, Khaled Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague. *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2002. 21. For an account on the law in the Mughal state, see: Chandra, Satish. “Jizyah and the State in India During the 17th Century.” *Journal of the economic and social history of the Orient* 12, no. 3 (1969): 322–340.

⁶⁰⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 260

⁶⁰⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 393

also contributed to the large-scale participation in protests, where many people little else to do than to engage in these protests.

Analysis of the Mughal Conflict Dataset thus indicates that there was a clear structural shift in the nature of conflicts from the 1630s, where they became significantly larger in scale and involved increasing participation from the peasantry. Whilst we do not have year on year revenue data for the state, the data indicates that the rise in conflicts had a substantial impact on the state's fiscal and legal capacity, where not only was the government facing greater tax resistance but also reduced ability to enforce laws.

III Systemic explanations of the crisis

The scholarship which has perhaps done the most work in identifying and recording the large peasant rebellions of the seventeenth century are the Aligarh scholars, who have written on mass rebellions extensively.⁶⁰⁷ The explanation which has been given for the causes of the agrarian crisis in the Mughal empire, commonly referred to as the *jagir* crisis, relates to a view of the systemic oppression of the peasantry which was a byproduct of the state system. An outline of the *jagir* crisis was provided in the introduction,⁶⁰⁸ however it is worth briefly reminding the reader of the crisis and its consequences here. In an explanation which mirrors prevailing views in Marxist literature on medieval Europe,⁶⁰⁹ proponents of this explanation argue that system of *jagirs* incentivised *Mansabdars* to apply high and arbitrary rates of taxation on the peasantry which left the latter with little surplus and in a state of poverty. Eventually, the destitution of the peasantry led to mass rebellions and the downfall of the empire. The mechanism is perhaps best explained by Rana:

To sum up, the structural basis of peasant poverty can be traced to the everyday working of imperial administration. Though the tangle of material forces at play was quite complex, a close look into the socio-economic structures clearly indicates that short *jagir* tenures and the

⁶⁰⁷ Discussed in the introduction in the Mughal Historiography Debates Section. R. P Rana's work is especially enlightening. See: Rana, "Was There an Agrarian Crisis," 27

⁶⁰⁸ Discussed in the Thesis Introduction the section on Mughal Historiography debates.

⁶⁰⁹ For a discussion of this historiography, see: Claridge, Jordan, and Spike Gibbs. "Waifs and Strays: Property Rights in Late Medieval England." *Journal of British Studies* 61, no. 1 (2022): 52–53.

sequel of high taxation, land desertion, agricultural decline and peasant unrest, were interrelated features. The 'apparatus of the empire' which was responsible for initiating an endless process of raising revenue demand, was the first to feel the tremor of its diminishing income. Eventually, the empire was ruined. It can, therefore, be argued that a disturbed peasant economy was at the root of the political crisis of the Mughal.⁶¹⁰

Thus, Rana and other Aligarh scholars, maintain that high taxes spurred mass migration and tax revolts which eventually led to the collapse of the empire. Rana suggests the land tax on the peasantry was highly regressive, where whilst wealthier peasants only paid 25 to 33 percent of the tax, the poorer majority of the peasants (especially *gaveti* peasants) were more likely to pay 50 percent of the tax.⁶¹¹ The *jagir* crisis of course provides a compelling explanation of the crisis, especially as we have already seen in Figure 3.5 that the percentage of revolts motivated by taxation rose substantially over the period. However, in many ways the systemic explanation does not seem to gel well with the chronology of the crisis, which persisted for several decades. It might be understandable, for instance, that an oppressive state could instigate peasant revolt for a while, however the central government facing considerably larger conflicts would likely have recognised the problem and introduced reforms. To put it more bluntly, it would be irrational for the government to have continued to oppress the peasantry if it negatively affected their rule. The Aligarh explanation does not account for why the government would not have attempted to reform in light of an agrarian crisis that threatened the state.

The *jagir* crisis explanation additionally does not reconcile well with contemporary sources reflecting state perspectives. Although recent studies have argued the proportion of land taxes were not necessarily as large a percentage of total tax revenue as once thought,⁶¹² agrarian taxes were still a major source of income for the state. The role of the peasantry with regards to generating revenue was significant, a factor which was well recognised by the government. A constant concern of the government was the increased

⁶¹⁰ Rana. "Was There an Agrarian Crisis," 27

⁶¹¹ Rana. "Was There an Agrarian Crisis," 24

⁶¹² Sumit Guha, for instance, uses Maratha assessments of taxation in 1674 to note these records suggest the state only received 34 percent of tax income from regularly assessed revenue, where 46 percent came from taxing trade. However, it is also worth noting that Khafi Khan states that he believed the Maratha's assessed 3 to 4 times the tax on traders that the Mughal state did. See: Guha, "Rethinking," 556; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 508.

cultivation of land, and the importance of incentivising the *Zamindars* and peasantry to engage in cultivation was not lost on the empire. Moreover, the peasantry played an essential role in feeding the Mughal armies which went to war across the subcontinent. Movement of large numbers of people to foreign environments fighting for several months meant the state needed secure ways of accessing food and resources, for which the peasantry were vital.⁶¹³

The state was fully aware of its reliance on peasant cultivation and consistently instituted policies to try and improve total output of production. Policies designed to incentivise increasing cultivation were common, where peasants were offered tax incentives and credit from the state for migrating to new locations.⁶¹⁴ When moving armies, the state would take longer routes to avoid destroying crops and compensate the peasantry of any destruction in order to minimise peasant losses from Mughal movement of forces.⁶¹⁵ For its part, the state was always trying to keep a pulse on the mood of the peasantry and, as discussed in the last chapter, often would not hesitate to remove oppressive administrators at the request of the peasantry. As Farhat Hasan has shown, these views were also present in contemporary discourse. The scholar and philosopher Shah Waliullah's writings expressed the view that tax revolts from illegal and arbitrary claims were a key cause of the dissolution of previous dynasties and should be avoided at all costs.⁶¹⁶ What is equally noteworthy was his views on the causes of the decline of cities, of which there are eight. Two are worth repeating:

Among disorders (which may strike a city) are: 1) that a group of wicked people who have vigor and power may join together to follow their own desires and throw off the just practice, either out of desire for the wealth of people, such as highwaymen; or in order to harm people out of hostility, malice or desire to dominate. In this instance, people have to gather forces together and prepare to fight... 7) That the people of the city revert to nomadic live ... or that they move to other cities or distribute themselves in professions in such a way that it harms the city. For example, most of them become merchants and agriculture declines.... Indeed it is necessary that the agriculturalist be consisted like the good, and the manufacturers, traders and those protecting property be considered like the salt seasoning the food⁶¹⁷

⁶¹³ See for example: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 52, 68, 79, 116, 484; Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 115

⁶¹⁴ Habib, "The Agrarian System" 291, 293

⁶¹⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 105; Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 537.

⁶¹⁶ Hasan, *Paper, Performance and the State*, 89

⁶¹⁷ Shah Wali, *Hujjatullah Al Baligha*, translated by Marcia K. Hermansen under the title "The Conclusive Argument from God: Shah Wali Allah of Delhi's HUjjat Allah and al Baligha" (Leiden: Brill, 1996) 129-130.

Although Walli was writing in the eighteenth century and therefore after the period of study in this dissertation, his work reflected the importance of the peasantry and security for the development of the cities that was reminiscent of a view within the state histories. For example, Najaf Haider notes that although Abu'l Fazl⁶¹⁸ placed the peasantry as the lowest class in the social hierarchy, he referred to peasants as “like earth because the form the basis (lit hands) from which the assets of life (*sarmaya-i-zindagi*) emanate and it is because of their efforts that the world gets strength and happiness.”⁶¹⁹ Thus the sources clearly reflect there was widespread recognition of the importance of peasant cultivation within the state.

The government was also acutely aware of the crisis many peasants were facing over the course of the seventeenth century, where the state instituted policies to alleviate the some of their difficulties. For example, the emperor Aurangzeb remitted over eighty different types of taxes to help ease the burden on the peasantry caused by shortages and inflation as a result of the wars and failure of the monsoons, including taxes on Hindu temples.⁶²⁰ In one *farman* the emperor expressly noted the potential for local officials to charge excess taxes on the peasantry, giving the following instructions: “distributions of tax remissions (on account of ‘calamities’) should not be left in the hands of the chaudhuris, the muqaddams and the qanungos, since the benefits would not then reach the small peasants (*reza-riaya*).”⁶²¹ The ruling government was therefore clearly cognisant of the potential for officials to exact excessive taxation on the peasantry, and their policies were designed to limit such excess. It is difficult to imagine this awareness would not translate into structural reform unless the state was limited in its ability to effect such reform.

A more nuanced understanding of state peasant relationships in the Mughal empire can be gleaned from the global literature on this topic. The ideas of the oppressed Mughal peasantry are largely drawn from contemporary European observations and comparisons where serfdom historically prevailed for centuries during the medieval age.⁶²² However,

⁶¹⁸ As noted in Chapter 2, Abu'l Fazl was the grand vizier for Emperor Akbar and drafted documents of administration including contracts of official orders. See Chapter 2 Section V.

⁶¹⁹ Haider N. “Money and social inequality: The views of Abū'l Fazl. *Studies in People's History*.” 2016;3(1):22

⁶²⁰ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 94

⁶²¹ Moosvi, “Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation,” 53

⁶²² For a discussion of the European Marxist literature, see: Claridge and Gibbs. “Waifs and Strays” 52-3

theories which explain peasant-state relationships for other regions of the world are perhaps more appropriate for understanding the Mughal case. Economic historians of Africa, for instance, have noted that land abundance on the continent meant precolonial African states had difficulty keeping and collecting taxes on the peasantry as the latter could 'vote with their feet' by moving to new land when they were unhappy with the government.⁶²³ Although South Asia had one of the largest populations of the early modern era, population density and extent of cultivation was highly variegated across the expanse of the empire.⁶²⁴ Lower rates of cultivation indicated by state records in the *Ain I Akbari* can indicate a reduced ability of the state to monitor peasants in that region. In provinces of Agra and Delhi, high levels of cultivation probably meant the state was more easily able to monitor the peasantry and collect taxes. In other regions like parts of Malwa, Ajmer, Thatta, Kabul and arid Deccan zones, lower levels of cultivation probably reflect a lower ability for the state to monitor or coerce peasants.⁶²⁵ Differences in rates of cultivation within provinces likely indicates the difficulty the state faced in monitoring or coercing peasantry was not restricted to certain provinces alone.⁶²⁶ Moreover, competition between claimants on tax revenues like the *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars* would exacerbate the difficulties of tax collection, as peasants could escape to a rival claimant's land. Although theoretically intermediaries had the right to dispossess peasants of their land, the reality was that they instead constantly competed to keep the peasantry on their land. As one European observer noted in the 19th century:

“Land being more abundant than labour, in general the zemindar has greater reason to dread the desertion of his *Ryots* than they to fear expulsion from their lands. The instances accordingly would appear to be few in which the zemindars have actually exercised their doubtful right of dispossession.”⁶²⁷

⁶²³ Frankema, “The Biogeographic Roots,” 281; Herbst, “States and Power in Africa” 15-16

⁶²⁴ This is discussed in the Thesis introduction in the Section on the Background of the Mughal state. On comparability with other states, Pomeranz notes that India had a large population in ‘absolute terms,’ though land abundance remained an important quality of the period. See: Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*, 23, 190-1.

⁶²⁵ Moosvi *The Economy*, 149

⁶²⁶ This was discussed in the Thesis’ Introduction.

⁶²⁷ Habib, “North India.” 246n3

Irfan Habib additionally concurs that for the 16th and 17th centuries, “so long as land was abundant, the right to evict the peasant had much less significance than the right to detain him.”⁶²⁸ It was because of this competition the state attempted to impose laws trying to restrict peasant movements, where *Zamindars* and *Mansabdars* were required to ‘return’ peasants that had moved to their land from another’s, albeit these attempts at controlling peasant movement were not often successful.⁶²⁹ Additionally, though agricultural slavery was not common and references to kidnapping relatively fewer, there were instances where cultivators were in fact kidnapped by plundering neighbours because of their value as labour.⁶³⁰

Taking advantage of competition among the *Zamindars* was not the only means peasants could use to escape excessive taxation. James Scott has argued that historical communities evaded state and societal coercion by moving to regions which were difficult to administer and inaccessible to the state apparatus.⁶³¹ Many communities in the Mughal state were pastoral or nomadic and did not engage in settled agriculture, which allowed them to easily simply move away from state purview and further limited the state’s ability to monitor or coerce them.⁶³² In Northern provinces like Kabul and Kashmir especially, tribal groups would use the mountains and stones as a natural defence against Mughal incursions.⁶³³ In central and southern provinces, rebellious peasants hid in thick jungles that limited state access and prevented use of Mughal cavalry. Though the state sometimes attempted to cut these jungles down, they were often so vast it was a labour-intensive and costly operation.⁶³⁴ If it was not the jungles and mountains, it could be the rivers and deserts or man-made fortifications which limited state coercion.⁶³⁵ Like the *Zamindars* referenced in the previous chapter, there were clearly many avenues for peasants to escape from coercion during the Mughal period of rule.

Moreover, Dirk Kolff has shown that many peasant groups could be armed and skilled in martial combat, indicating peasant communities even without the *Zamindars*

⁶²⁸ Habib, “North India.” 246

⁶²⁹ Habib, *Agrarian System*, 130-135

⁶³⁰ Richards, John F., *The Mughal Empire*, 168; Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 8, 98.

⁶³¹ Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 234-7

⁶³² This ability of pastoral communities to evade taxation is well recognised by literature in African economic history. For an example of pastoral communities, see: Samreen, Farha. “The Hazaras of Afghanistan in Mughal Times.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 70 (2009): 821–29.

⁶³³ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 529; Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 102, 328, 165, 227, 413; Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 508.

⁶³⁴ For examples of these incidents, see: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 155, 237, 327; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 44, 56, 85 and 165.

⁶³⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 69, 149, 328; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 466

were not defenceless against the state.⁶³⁶ For example, Khafi Khan noted the following of the Satnami peasantry: “they acquired their livelihood by honest means and not by unlawful sources, but if anyone oppressed them by a show of courage and authority, they did not tolerate it.”⁶³⁷ Khafi Khan’s perspective reflected his description of the instigating event of the Satnami rebellion, which began when a government footman hit a Satnami cultivator, causing a group of cultivators to kill the footman. When a Mughal *Faujdar* (i.e. the sub-provincial governor) attempted to arrest the killers, it triggered a mass rebellion where several successive armies sent to quell and even the Emperor himself camped outside of Narnaul, which was the location of the rebellions, to attend to it.⁶³⁸

The Satnami rebellion was not an isolated incident in which Mughal officials faced the wrath of a common populace. In regular mass protests, Mughal officials often feared for their lives when they were found to have upset the masses with what was considered unjust rulings to single individuals.⁶³⁹ In many occasions the most formidable rebellions were instigated by a single act of a Mughal official, where large mobs demanded either the replacement or execution of said official.⁶⁴⁰ This was not only true for the central state, but also for *Zamindars* and *Rajas*. When Jujhar Singh Bundela was escaping Mughal pursuit, it was not the Mughal army but the Gond community which had captured and executed him, partially because of their own consternations with *Raja* from past dealings.⁶⁴¹ In fact, local rulers could sometimes find themselves at the mercy of their followers, facing mutiny if their decisions were unpopular. For instance, in the year 1599 Chand Bibi, who was the ruler of Ahmadnagar Sultanate at the time, was killed by a mob of her own troops when they found she was negotiating with the Mughal forces.⁶⁴² Such instances suggest an existence of a common understanding between rulers and subjects akin to a ‘moral economy’ of the state, similar to what has already been identified by Farhat Hasan in court disputes of the empire.⁶⁴³

This is not to suggest that peasant coercion and exploitation was non-existent in the South Asian state – there is plenty of evidence that the peasantry could be and were

⁶³⁶ Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput and Sepoy*, 7

⁶³⁷ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 256.

⁶³⁸ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 257

⁶³⁹ Hasan, *State and locality*, 44

⁶⁴⁰ See, for example: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 393

⁶⁴¹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 165

⁶⁴² Fazl, Abu'l, *Akbarnama*, 1158

⁶⁴³ Scott, “*The Moral Economy of the Peasant Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976, 7-11

exploited and coerced by tax-hungry officials charging unauthorised cesses and the local communities.⁶⁴⁴ Whilst the central state had relatively limited ability to coerce peasants, there were perhaps still more localised and community based forms of coercion, where caste hierarchies and community regulation could be used to exploit groups which were vulnerable. Moreover, though moving to escape an oppressive state was an option for the peasantry, it would still be undesirable, especially for wealthier and higher caste peasants who had more to lose,⁶⁴⁵ and especially as the productivity of land was not equal across regions.⁶⁴⁶ Yet, as is evident in the sources, migration was still be preferable to joining an armed resistance which risked peasants' lives and livelihoods. In a critique of the Aligarh explanations for the agrarian crisis, S. P. Gupta explains it best:

Though, cases of oppression of peasantry by a *jagirdars* did occur, this did not perceptibly led to any peasant uprising. As soon as such cases were reported, a conciliatory settlement was attempted. Every attempt was made to console the peasantry not to approach the imperial court⁶⁴⁷

The point highlighted here is that the central state recognised that the relative gains of using excessive coercive means by the state were limited, and therefore created institutional checks to prevent an exodus or resistance of the peasantry. High costs of coercion and monitoring of the peasantry made excessive taxation untenable to begin with, so the empire found different ways of ensuring the peasantry would engage in agriculture and pay their taxes. The endogenous and systemic explanations for the agrarian crisis related to *jagir* system fail to explain why the institutional checks evident within the state apparatus did not mitigate the development of mass peasant rebellions, especially as it persisted for so many decades. The following section then considers alternative explanations, particularly focusing on the role adverse climate played.

⁶⁴⁴ For example, the chroniclers themselves note local officials charged over and above the tax rates despite remissions: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 94-6

⁶⁴⁵ Though there have been few studies on migration for the Mughal period, one study for the colonial period has found there was lower return migration from lower caste males. See: Neha Hui, and Uma S. Kambhampati. "Between Unfreedoms: The Role of Caste in Decisions to Repatriate among Indentured Workers." *The Economic History Review* 75, no. 2 (2022): 421-46.

⁶⁴⁶ Desai, Ashok V. "Population and Standards of Living in Akbar's Time—A Second Look." *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*. 1978;15(1): 60.

⁶⁴⁷ Gupta. "The 'Agrarian Crisis,'" 327

IV Climate as a Contributing Instigator of Rebellion

If not the state and *jagirdars*' predation, what are alternative explanations for the causes of the Agrarian crisis in the seventeenth century? There are a few different possible explanations. The chroniclers themselves considered warfare and military campaigns tended to drive the peasants off the land.⁶⁴⁸ Another strand of the literature has blamed the emperor Aurangzeb's personality and the reinstatement of the *jizya* tax on non-Muslims, thus sparking a 'Hindu' reaction.⁶⁴⁹ Whilst the former explanation of warfare is a plausible contributor to peasant flight, the latter has more widely been rejected in the literature. As Satish Chandra has noted, though the *jizya* tax did instigate widespread protest, the tax itself was designed to target richer, urban groups more than poorer agricultural workers within the empire.⁶⁵⁰ Moreover, whilst it was arguably still regressive, the poorest groups who were unable to pay the tax were exempt from it.⁶⁵¹

This section however explores a different potential cause of the crisis which has also been debated in the literature though more recently dismissed: the adverse climate of the seventeenth century. The prospect of poor climate causing the decline has previously been suggested by Moosvi, who observed a "vast economic disturbance in Northern India that occurred late in the fifties and continued practically throughout the sixties of the seventeenth century."⁶⁵² Moosvi still considers the agrarian crisis to partially be instigated by the excessive taxation of the *jagirdars*, however she also suggests poor rains and warfare were contributing factors to the crisis. She supports this contention with abundant evidence of growing scarcity and famine during the seventeenth century:

Muhammad Kazim ascribed the scarcity [of grain] to a breakdown of administration during the War of Succession, an added factor being the insufficiency of the rains.' Khafi Khan too gives an account of the severe famine in the Eastern and Northern provinces and offers a narrative similar to that of the Alamgirnama. The causes according to Khafi Khan were the ravages of the War of Succession and, at certain places, the failure of the monsoons. The Ma'asir i 'Alamgiri implies that the high prices continued until 1670, when relief was obtained owing to better harvests. These general statements are corroborated by information relating to specific areas. The

⁶⁴⁸ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 200

⁶⁴⁹ See a discussion in: Bhargava, Meena. "Introduction," xi-xvi

⁶⁵⁰ Chandra, 'Jizyah and the state', 339; and Ali Muhammad Khan, Mirat I Ahmadi, Trans. M F Lokhandwala, Baroda: Oriental Institute (1965), 266-7

⁶⁵¹ Chandra, 'Jizyah and the state', 339

⁶⁵² Moosvi, "Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation," 46

English records show that Gujarat suffered from an acute scarcity in 1659 that lasted until 1663-64. The prices of foodgrains as well as indigo rose so much that they touched the price-level of 1630-32, the years of the Gujarat famines. The scarcity and high prices in 1663-64 led to apprehensions of large-scale depopulation; this was happily averted by timely rains in 1664. The famine in Gujarat was thus attributed largely to the failure of rains.⁶⁵³

The increased prevalence of famines in the seventeenth century identified by Moosvi coincides with a period of adverse climate commonly referred to by climate historians as the Little Ice Age. Using a range of paleo-climate data, the papers express clear albeit broad patterns regarding climate events in the Southern hemisphere and close to South Asia.⁶⁵⁴ Whilst the literature varies slightly in terms of the time period of identification, all papers identify specifically the period between 1600 to 1670 as being one where there are clear records of adverse climate events. Neukom et al., for instance, have noted that both the North and Southern hemispheres simultaneously show extreme cold or warm temperatures identified between 1594 and 1677, where the extreme temperatures around 1600 are unique and possible offer the most “viable explanation for the drop in global CO₂... between 1540-1580 and 1600-1640.”⁶⁵⁵ In their reconstruction of the South Asian Summer Monsoon Index, Feng Shi et al. have noted that famines are identifiable in ice core data in 1625, 1630 and 1650-1661, and additionally recognise a shift in their index after 1658.⁶⁵⁶ Singh et al. have used tree-ring data from the Jammu and Kashmir (North-west Himalayas) to find major drought periods between 1610-1640. However, they identify three distinct centennial phasis and suggest the Little Ice Age peaked during the 1650s-1850s.⁶⁵⁷ Interestingly, the periods identified by climate historians of increased climate crisis concurs with previous findings by Anthony Reid’s study on South East Asia, where he noted several incidents of crop failures and political crises and argued for the

⁶⁵³ Moosvi, “Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation,” 46

⁶⁵⁴ See Appendix 3A for graphs used to show periods of adverse climate events. For an example of this research, see: Yadava, A. K., Braeuning, A., Singh, J., and Yadav, R. R., (2016). “Boreal Spring Precipitation Variability In The Cold Arid Western Himalaya During The Last Millennium, Regional Linkages, And Socio-Economic Implications.” *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 144, 28-43

⁶⁵⁵ Raphael Neukom, Joelle Gergis, et al.” *Nature Climate Change* 4, 362–367 (2014).

⁶⁵⁶ Shi, F., Li, J. & Wilson, R. “A Tree-Ring Reconstruction Of The South Asian Summer Monsoon Index Over The Past Millennium.” *Sci Rep* 4, 6739 (2015)

⁶⁵⁷ Vikram Singh, Kishna Misra, Arun Singh, Ram Yadav, and Akhilesh Yadava., 2021. “Little Ice Age Revealed in Tree-Ring-Based Precipitation Record From the Northwest Himalaya, India.” *Geophysical research letters*, 48(6),

existence of a general crisis in the region. Reid still qualified himself by noting famines in South East Asia were not as bad as in India. He wrote:

“These specific incidents [of adverse climate] have to be seen against the background of repeated statements by Europeans that the region was remarkably blessed by its climate and its freedom from the famines which affected *India* [emphasis added] or Europe.”⁶⁵⁸

Although the theory of a ‘general crisis’⁶⁵⁹ of the seventeenth century has gained traction in the wider literature, economic historians like Jan de Vries and John F Richards have rejected the existence of a crisis.⁶⁶⁰ Richards argues the prosperity of the empire over the seventeenth century and its economic expansion indicates there was no crisis.⁶⁶¹ Geoffrey Parker, who despite having advocated the view that the Little Ice Age precipitated political and economic crises across the globe, concurs with Richards. Parker has suggested that the state’s intervention through charitable endeavours and law enforcement mitigated the crisis, where he writes the following: “Although their territories suffered natural disasters (notably droughts) in the mid-seventeenth century, [The Mughal and Safavid states] escaped political catastrophe, and for most their subject’s life was indeed ‘not worse or more calamitous than it used to be.’”⁶⁶² The validity of these arguments will be tested below by using the conflict dataset and existing paleoclimate data.⁶⁶³

To what extent was the Agrarian crisis in Mughal South Asia caused by the Little Ice Age? If adverse climate did impact the intensity and frequency of rebellions, we should expect that periods of conflicts should broadly match periods of famine or adverse climate. It follows therefore that we should discern a pattern of change in rebellions and conflicts within the empire between 1600-1670, with a special emphasis on the 1630s and 1650s being decades of increased famine in consequence of poor weather. The correlation of

⁶⁵⁸ Anthony Reid, “The Seventeenth-Century Crisis in Southeast Asia.” *Modern Asian Studies* 24, no. 4 (1990): 665

⁶⁵⁹ The ‘general crisis’ refers to a period of increased political and social upheaval identified by the Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm which he argued was crucial for a capitalist revolution to arise. For a discussion of the crisis, see: J.H. Elliott. “The General Crisis In Retrospect: A Debate Without End.” *In Spain, Europe and the Wider World 1500-1800*, Yale University Press, 2009, 52-55

⁶⁶⁰ Jan De Vries, “The Economic Crisis of the Seventeenth Century after Fifty Years.” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Autumn, 2009), 151-194

⁶⁶¹ Richards, “The Seventeenth-century Crisis,” 625

⁶⁶² Parker, *Global Crisis* 306, 314

⁶⁶³ See Figure 3.7 and the accompanying analysis later in this section

climatic trends identified in the paleo climate data and the sharp increase in conflicts within the seventeenth century suggest there is a likely relationship here. The 1630s and 1650s, identified by Feng shi et al. as peak periods for climate driven famines, are precisely the decades where there is a discernible shift in the size and frequency of conflicts in the Mughal Conflict Database (see Figure 3.2 above). However, we still need to demonstrate a clearer link between climate induced famines and an increase in peasant revolts specifically.

Figure 3.7 shows the results of an attempt at recording both famines over time and estimates of peasant rebellion size over time. I use Abha Singh's records of famines and natural disasters to construct an aggregate record of the number of famines per province per year over the period.⁶⁶⁴ It also shows the 37 peasant rebellions which were recorded by the state chroniclers as estimated by their relative size. It has been noted before, though is worth repeating here, that this is not a comprehensive account of all the peasant rebellions the state faced which were far more numerous, but rather the peasant rebellions which were large enough and significant enough that they were considered worth recording in the state histories.

Unlike *Zamindar* or *Mansabdar* conflicts, the size of peasant rebellions are less frequently given because the chroniclers rarely gave accurate indications of the number of rebels in these cases. I therefore use a rank-based system to estimate the size of rebellions which was outlined in Chapter 1 and is also explained again in Appendix 3B.⁶⁶⁵ The ranking system adopts a number of proxies which allows us to determine the size of rebellions for which there is no data related to duration or number of soldiers. For instance, it can be assumed that the higher the rank of the Mughal official sent to put down the rebellion, the larger the rebellion must have been since there is a clear correlation between the *Sawar* rank (which indicated military contingents) of the Mughal and the forces he was expected to command. The higher rank would also indicate a greater involvement of central government officials, as these appointments were given to the top-ranked *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*. In the Mughal Conflict dataset, rank 5 is only awarded if the emperor or princes are involved in putting down the rebellion, and rank 4 refers to senior generals. There are generally five ranks: rank 1 rebellions which were

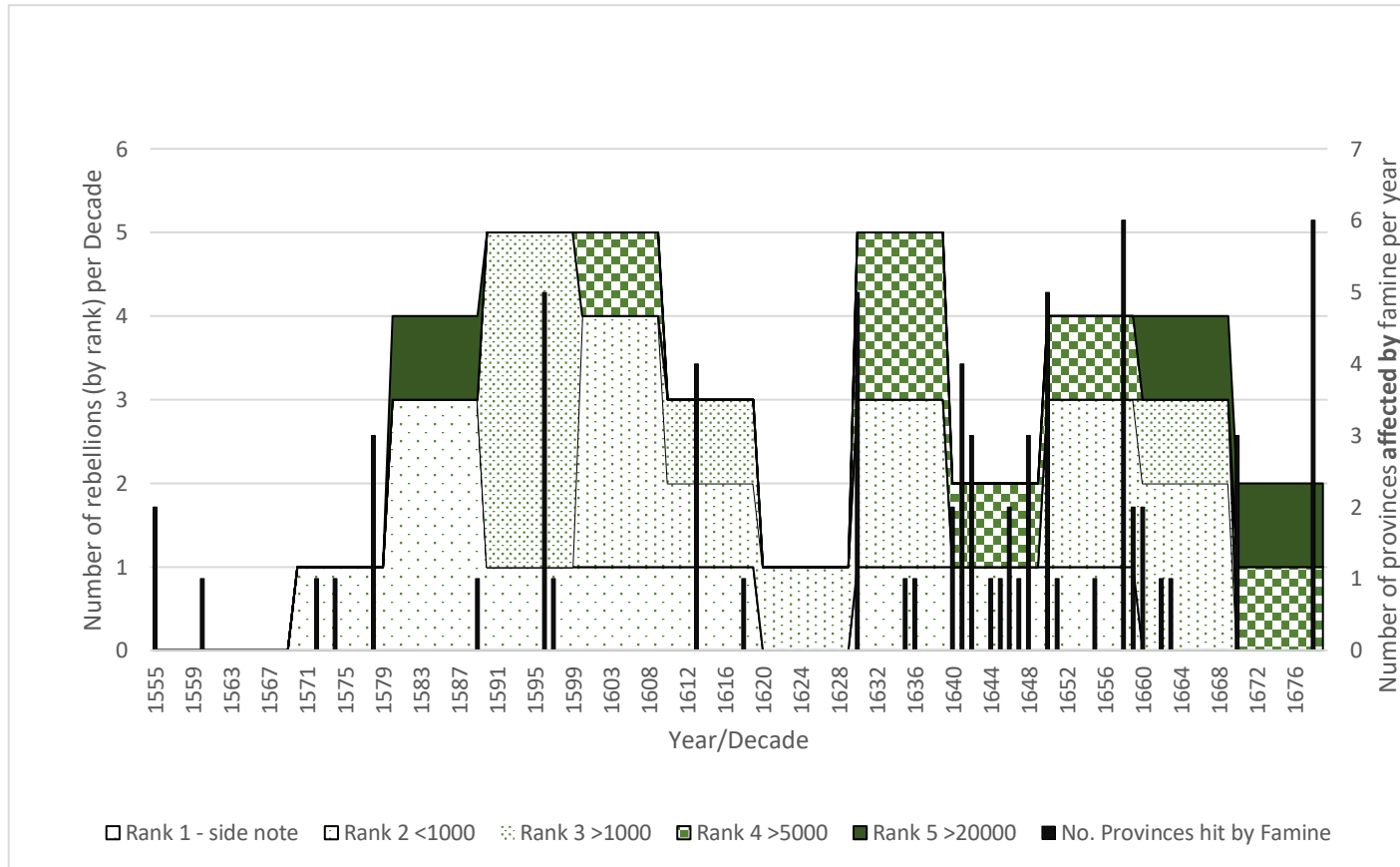
⁶⁶⁴ an explanation of how the data was compiled can be found in Appendix 3C

⁶⁶⁵ An explanation of how ranks are recorded can be found in Appendix 3B

very small and usually sidenotes in the chronicles, rank 2 rebellions which are estimated to have fewer than 1000 rebels involved; rank 3 rebellions which are estimated to have more than 1000 rebels involved; rank 4 rebellions which are estimated to have more than 5000 rebels involved; and rank 5 rebellions where chroniclers recorded more than 20,000 rebel participants. As the keen reader might observe, the rank 4-5 rebellions are exponentially larger relative to the rank 1-3 rebellions, where a rank 4 rebellion is estimated to be five times larger than a rank 3 rebellion. Thus, rebellions of rank 4-5 were especially large and significant to the state.

The graph indicates that there is a fairly clear relationship between the frequency of famines and the scale of peasant rebellions identified in the Mughal conflict dataset. We can see a large famine event in the 1590s and a substantial increase in the frequency and size of famines between 1630-1664 (a 34 year period) which records at least 17 instances of famines, relative to only 10 famines between 1555-1630 (a 75 year period). Moreover, it seems like on average more provinces were affected by later famines. At the same time, aside from a rise in the 1590s, there seems to be a massive increase in the scale of peasant rebellions during the 1630s, which increases substantially after 1660. We can see there are four rank 4 and two rank 5 rebellions recorded between 1630-1680 (a 50 year period), where there are only two rebellions above rank 3 recorded between 1555-1630 (a 75 year period). From this, it is possible to determine that there is dramatic shift in the size of peasant-led rebellions after 1630, precisely in the periods where paleo-climate data has identified the LIA to have been worst.

Figure 3.7: Peasant Rebellions by rank size and the number of provinces affected by famine over time.



Source: Constructed from the Mughal conflict database. For an explanation of rebellion rank size, see Appendix 3B. For an explanation of famine per province calculations, see Appendix 3C

The timing of the shift in peasant rebellions is significant. It indicates that the increase in famines frequency and larger peasant rebellions began not after the 1650s as Moosvi has argued, but actually much earlier from the 1630s under Shah Jahan's reign, and it continued into the end of the seventeenth century. Whilst we cannot entirely delineate whether famines were caused by climate or the succession wars of the 1650s, the same is not true for the earlier periods of peasant revolts before the succession wars, where climate is the most likely cause. Thus, it is more likely that exogenous factors, as opposed to endogenous systemic factors, played a role in causing the agrarian crisis of the seventeenth century at least in the first half of the century. Shah Jahan's reign is also the period Richards and Parker have considered as an era of more widespread peace and prosperity in the economy, whereas the data indicates the period faced an increased instability in his reign.⁶⁶⁶

Parker and Moosvi have already provided a wealth of contemporary observations which reflect how climate affected crisis, however it is worth adding a few more from the chronicles. In Great Famine of 1630, Inayat Khan recorded a drought longer than a year in the Deccan and Gujarat, which he described as follows:

The mortality was so dreadful that in all the cities, town, and villages of those kingdoms, the streets and market-places were so thronged and choked by the immense number of corpses that a passenger could scarcely make his way through them. In consequence of the famine and pestilence, there was not a single soul left in most of the *Parganahs* and villages; for whoever after suffering the excruciating pangs of hunger gained a respite from death, betook himself instantly to some more propitious clime⁶⁶⁷

In 1617 the emperor Jahangir noted the population was very concerned for lack of rain, which led his government to organise there being water from the river.⁶⁶⁸ In the latter half of the seventeenth century, flooding also seemed to be a substantial concern.⁶⁶⁹ Khafi Khan wrote expresses the rains were "untimely and excessive," as well as

⁶⁶⁶ Parker, *Global Crisis*, 306; Richards, "Seventeenth Century Crisis,"

⁶⁶⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 62.

⁶⁶⁸ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 221

⁶⁶⁹ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 44, 171, 340, 446, 467, 468

unexpected.⁶⁷⁰ Around 1662, Khan records the consequences of some of the rains as follows:

“the Muslim army was attacked by different physical ailments such as typhoid fever and other fatal diseases... many of the stores became rotten because owing to heavy rains the men of the army did not know how to save them ... Because of the scarcity of grain the condition of the troops and particularly of the poorer among them reached the very of destruction.”⁶⁷¹

In another incident during the wars in the Deccan, Khafi Khan again noted how the rains affected cultivation and devastation on cultivation:

During this year, in spite of excessive rains, in season and out of season, the Kharif crops suffered due to plentitude of water. Wheat and other Rabi' crops also suffered heavily owing to intense falling of dew which in Hindi is called kuhra or dhuwar (fog). For several days (due to dense fog) nothing was visible on the sky or on the earth. The wheat became red, and in two or three provinces of the Deccan, only one in place of ten maunds could be harvested. Large quantities of harvested crops had become rotten and were destroyed due to excessive rains. The expectations of the army for cheapness of grain and pleasure of complete rest, were changed into despair caused by dearness and poverty.⁶⁷²

In another incident in the province of Thatta, Inayat Khan noted the impact of excessive rains on cultivation:

Throughout the city and all the neighbouring *Parganahs* that boarded on the sea, rain had fallen unceasingly for some 36 hours with such violence as to remind one of the universal deluge. Most of the buildings were overthrown by this terrific hurricane of wind and rain; and large numbers of men, horses, and all sorts of cattle perished from it... About 1000 ships some in ballast and some carrying cargoes of grain bound for the capital from the neighbouring *Parganahs*, were either wrecked in the open sea or stranded on the coast. These disasters caused heavy losses to all concerned; but in addition to them the sea, through the force of wind and water, on this occasion rose so considerably as to flood a large tract of

⁶⁷⁰ Khafi Khan, Muntakhab, 448

⁶⁷¹ Khafi Khan, Muntakhab, 171

⁶⁷² Khafi Khan, Muntakhab, 502

country, which was impregnated with the salt held in solution by the water and thereby rendered incapable of cultivation.⁶⁷³

During his journeys with the emperor, Ishwardas Nagar recorded the comments of the emperor on the nature of the weather:

“Traversing a number of stages, the imperial army reached Ahir Bari, where it started raining. Since drought conditions had been prevailing there, the rain was considered a good omen by the Emperor, who thanked the Almighty for it. Unmindful of it, the Emperor continued his march. It rained continuously for many days and soon most of the land inundated and rivulets were in spates.”⁶⁷⁴

The correlation between peasant rebellion and famines as well as contemporary observations of the effects of adverse weather on cultivation and scarcity of grain provides compelling evidence that the little Ice Age was causing economic havoc in the seventeenth century. It should be noted that whilst the chroniclers focused more on the plights of the wealthy Mughal officers, if the rich were struggling from the crisis the poorer peasantry must have faced much greater devastation and poverty as a result of it.

V Structural Change and State Response

Whilst there is a clear correlation between periods of famines and peasant rebellions, what is less clear is exactly what mechanisms might have induced large portions of the peasantry to engage in mass conflict against the state. As Eric Wolf has stated, “the emergence of a common myth of transcendental justice often can and does move peasants into action as other forms of organization cannot, but it provides only a common vision, not an organisational framework for action.”⁶⁷⁵ The broader motivations and organisational factors behind peasant conflicts can be difficult to discern through existing sources as rarely would there be an account which would indicate the precise reasons for peasant rebellions from the peasant perspective. There are very few sources

⁶⁷³ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 211

⁶⁷⁴ Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhāt*, 167

⁶⁷⁵ Eric R Wolf, *Peasants*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966, 108

written directly by the peasantry (who were by in large illiterate), meaning we are left to rely on the perception of elites who did occasionally write on the condition and actions of the wider populace. Even where there were sources written by the peasants, at the time it was unlikely the peasant authors were aware or focused on the broader climate disasters they faced. Like most of what was written by elites, sources on the actions of individual groups of peasants did not often reflect on wider social changes, but rather their own specific needs at that time. That besides, it is very much possible there could be lagged effects with regard to the occurrence and intensity of an adverse climate event and the sizable rebellions which developed (although the chroniclers suggest mass rebellions did often develop very quickly).

Keeping these limitations in mind, this section will explore two potential explanations for how climate affected state development. It will first briefly discuss the Aligarh school contention that peasant conflict was a somewhat spontaneous collective reaction against the state. It will then consider an alternative hypothesis: that peasant migration and search for security induced a structural shift in the economy which led peasants to join militias and empower local elites. Neither can be proven conclusively based on current evidence, though it will be argued the latter is more likely given what we know of the period from the sources.

One of the limitations of the Aligarh school explanation of the agrarian crisis is the little attention which is given to the timing of the rebellions. As the data analysis above has shown, peasant rebellions were a constant feature over the 150-year period, however the scale of these conflicts were far greater after the 1630s and then in the 1650s. It is difficult to contend this rapid change in the size of rebellions was a consequence of all peasants having become entirely disaffected with the state all at once. At this time, there was no identifiable increase in taxation which could have spurred a common reaction across peasant populations.

There is also the question of why the peasantry would have specifically rebelled against the central government. *Mansabdars* were not the only claimants on the revenue, where some *Zamindars* also exacted excess taxes from the peasantry.⁶⁷⁶ In fact, often Mughal courts provided a means for the peasantry to remove oppressive *Zamindars* who

⁶⁷⁶ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 44

taxed heavily despite state orders against it.⁶⁷⁷ The state was also heavily involved in providing famine relief and therefore was sometimes a source of relief for peasant in a disastrous economic environment. During Shah Jahan's reign, when famine in the Punjab was very great, the state made it law that if anyone was forced to sell their child from starvation, the price paid would be funded from the state and the child would be restored to them.⁶⁷⁸ Another law ordered an increased yearly payment of one-hundred thousand rupees in charity for the people in the city of Shahjahanabad and, in a surprisingly modern fashion, ensured the funds were divided equally between men and women that were in need.⁶⁷⁹ Aurangzeb was equally responsive to the increasing famine. When the capital became crowded with hungry migrants, the state opened ten soup kitchens in the city and twelve in the nearby towns, additionally ordering all the *Mansabdars* with a Rank higher than 1000 *zat* to open soup kitchens in their *jagirs*.⁶⁸⁰ Although it has been argued that the state's overall allocated budget to charitable purposes was not very large,⁶⁸¹ it is clear the government did actively engage in charitable endeavours, and likely was the largest provider of famine relief in the region. However, as will be discussed in more detail below, it is also likely the government's ability to provide relief for affected citizenry was limited with respect to the scale of the crisis.

Irfan Habib, who has reflected on the difficulties of explaining how very large rebellions were organised, has suggested religion and community united and helped to coordinate large rebellions.⁶⁸² Certainly caste groups and religious affiliations did play a unifying role in many conflicts, including the Jat, Satnami and Sikh rebellions which were among the largest peasant based conflicts the state faced.⁶⁸³ At the same time, however, a common religion or caste identity was not necessary for stirring up large groups of people. Like with protests, the large-scale disaffection rampant throughout the seventeenth century indicates there was little needed to be done to encourage thousands of people to join rebellions. In 1663, a man impersonating prince Dara Shikoh, who had been executed in 1659, managed to rally a large army of people, attracting "vagabonds

⁶⁷⁷ Gupta gives evidence for this in: Gupta, "the 'Agrarian Crisis,'" 329

⁶⁷⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 337

⁶⁷⁹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 84, 95

⁶⁸⁰ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 130

⁶⁸¹ See Shireen Moosvi, "Charity Objectives and Mechanisms in Mughal India (16th and 17th Centuries)" *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 73, pp.335–346, 2012.

⁶⁸² Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, 380-384

⁶⁸³ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, 380-384, 390-345

and looters” from across the province.⁶⁸⁴ The Rajput rebellion attracted swathes of people from the Mughal camp to join Prince Akbar despite there being uncertainty as to the true relation of the Rajput prince they were fighting for.⁶⁸⁵ Insecurity and unemployment gave would-be leaders an opportunity to rally those who were negatively affected by calamities and in need of support. Many of these rebellions however quickly fell apart as well; participants would flee when faced against a smaller but better trained Mughal army. The lack of cohesion of rebel interests and prioritisation of plunder perhaps explains why rebellions which aimed to build new states were rarely ultimately successful.⁶⁸⁶ The Mughals often were able to offer the highest pay to more skilled groups, the state’s ability to organise and coordinate armies mostly remained superior.

This brings us to the alternative explanation for the changes in the scale of rebellions. I propose that the climate-induced famines increased economic and political insecurity in the seventeenth century, driving the displaced peasantry to align with *Zamindars* and bandits who were able to provide security when the state’s ability to address all concerns was limited. In the face of poverty and the need for security, migrating peasants would be incentivised to join with *Zamindars* or rivals to the state, especially when the state itself was not able to provide for all the people affected by famine. Whilst the government did try to alleviate burdens on the peasantry, the scale of the crisis meant the state alone was unable to mitigate it entirely through its charitable efforts. Even though the Mughal government was the most capable in providing charity and protection, and also remained the largest and highest paying employer in the region, the state could not attend to every individual in crisis. Consequently, much of the rural population had to find other means of finding relief, which local *Zamindars* who were more accessible to the peasantry and knowledgeable of their localities were able to provide. Keeping in mind that this was a period the state was already feeling financial pressures from conflicts and was turning away requests for official appointments.⁶⁸⁷ Peasants who would previously not have likely joined armed conflicts now were compelled to for either protection or income. Along with food security and better tax resistance, the opportunity

⁶⁸⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 179

⁶⁸⁵ Ali, Mohammad Athar. “Causes Of The Rathor Rebellion Of 1679.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 24 (1961): 135–41., 136-7, 139; John F Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 182

⁶⁸⁶ Irfan Habib has repeatedly questioned why rebellions failed overturn the state in the Mughal empire as they did in China. His argument is elaborated in Chapter 5’s introduction.

⁶⁸⁷ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 395

to plunder and gain booty equally incentivised larger portions of peasant populations to reorganise themselves as collective forces.

This is not an entirely new understanding of the period, where elements of this line of argument are already well noted in the literature. The peasantries' proclivity to align with *Zamindars* in their rebellions against the state is well recognised even within the Aligarh scholarship, however often the reasons given for these alignments is still the oppression of the state as opposed to an escape from calamity.⁶⁸⁸ Albeit for the eighteenth century, C A Bayly has argued political and economic insecurity led to the development of alliances between the peasantry, merchants and local magnates.⁶⁸⁹ Alam has similarly argued the *Zamindars* were growing in strength and independence towards the end of the dynasty. Perhaps most directly, Richards and Rao have linked an increase in banditry in the seventeenth century to the condition of the peasant economy, arguing famine, and higher taxes made the opportunity cost of becoming a bandit lower for peasants than remaining in their villages.⁶⁹⁰ However, the link between adverse climate patterns, increased banditry and the strength of *Zamindars* has not been explored as directly for the case of Mughal India.

As discussed at the start of this section, it is difficult to prove this hypothesis conclusively, yet there are a good deal of sources which support it. These sources provide evidence of stronger alignments between the *Zamindars* and the peasantry, more frequent instances of plunder and banditry and a rise in mass migrations fuelled by disasters. The data analysis above has already demonstrated there was higher peasant participation in armed conflicts.⁶⁹¹ The chroniclers also increasingly attributed the growth in rebellions to greater peasant participation. One particularly interesting account of how the relationship was changing can be seen in the chronicler Inayat Khan's description of one rebellion and its causes. He wrote:

The former *Zamindar* of fort Gunnur, Sangram Gond had always been distinguished for his loyalty to the throne. After his death, one of his servants, named Maru ... now assumed the administration of affairs in the *Zamindari*... Maru became elated at the strength of his fastnesses and the zealous ardor of his band of rebels. He accordingly shook off his allegiance

⁶⁸⁸ Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 387

⁶⁸⁹ Bayly, "*Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*," 558-9

⁶⁹⁰ Richards and Rao, "Banditry in Mughal India," 495. Similar patterns are also evident in a wider global literature. James Tong, for instance, has argued banditry in premodern China was fuelled by peasant flight. See: Tong, *Disorder Under Heaven*, 83

⁶⁹¹ See Section II of this Chapter

and refused to pay the proper land revenue to the crown. Furthermore, at his instigation, the peasantry of several villages lying contiguous to the confines of Gunner... also raised objections to paying the customary taxes⁶⁹²

Inayat Khan's description implies it was the strength of Maru's forces and coordination between the *Zamindar* and the peasantry which led to his rebellion and made it more formidable. In the chronicles, the size of rebel forces is frequently considered a factor for rebels' success. Ishwardas Nagar for instance notes that one Jat chief "collected a large number of mischief-mongers" and "raised the standard of rebellion much serious than the earlier one."⁶⁹³ In other cases, enormous peasant armies described as 'ants and locusts' put intense pressure on the Mughal forces. In one Afghan rebellion, for example, the size of the Afghan forces seems to have been formidable:

that tribe, which exceeded the locusts and ants (in number) and was united among themselves and hostile to the outsiders, collected from every nook and corner, held consultations with each other and decided the road to Kabul should be blocked... Meanwhile the Afghans descended from the hillside in wave after wave and cut him off from which was situated in the vicinity and started trouble. The scarcity of water created difficulties in the rank and file of the imperial army and the heat of the sun was also oppressive. So the soldiers were put to great difficulties due to thirst a large number of persons and animals died. When Umdatul-Mulk saw that, the army was suffering he, veering from his renowned bravery, opened negotiations with the Afghans and requested them to restore the water-supply." *[sic]* The Afghans demanded the restoration of their annual subsidies with special reward (*inam*).⁶⁹⁴

The larger size of *Zamindar* armies was not only evident in enemy militias but also those of *Zamindar* allies. Ishwardas Nagar in one instance notes that the *Raja* Bishan Singh had "recruited 2000 horsemen (*Sawars*) and 20,000 (twenty thousand) footmen (*piyadas*)"⁶⁹⁵ to fight against the Jats on behalf of the government. The very large number of foot men he recruited suggests many of them must have been peasants.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹² Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 311. For other examples, see: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 154 and 507-8

⁶⁹³ Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhāt*, 228

⁶⁹⁴ Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhāt*, 104

⁶⁹⁵ Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhāt*, 228

⁶⁹⁶ Koff makes this observation that large numbers of foot soldiers indicates high peasant participation. Koff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 218-225

There is plenty of evidence within the source material and secondary literature that support the view that an ability to feed and supply large armies of soldiers and peasants was increasingly critical for success in battle. Uzbek and Alman tribes frequently raided Mughal armies in their campaigns in the North during Shah Jahan's campaign and occupation of Balkh.⁶⁹⁷ The Cheros and Arakanese in the east increased their plunder and raids of Mughal lands over time.⁶⁹⁸ In one riot in Burhanpur where two local clans fought each other during a festival, it was estimated that 40-50,000 Rupees were plundered.⁶⁹⁹ The Mughals' equally found themselves under pressure by needs for grains. *Mansabdars* would spare the lives of their enemies in forts in an attempt to secure the food and armaments within them, where food scarcity became a substantial obstacle in battle.⁷⁰⁰ In fact, the Mughal generals struggled in these periods to keep their own troops from engaging in plunder despite being given orders against it, and the soldiers could become rebellious themselves if they were punished for engaging in plunder. For example, when suppressing the rebellion of Jujhar Singh Bundela, the *Zamindar* of Orchha, the Mughal officers tried desperately to prevent soldiers appropriating the wealth for themselves, where uncontrollable and disobedient soldiers accidentally set off an explosion that killed hundreds in their quest to gain plunder.⁷⁰¹

Perhaps the Maratha forces were best able to take advantage of the situation. Stewart Gordon has attributed Maratha military successes in the seventeenth century to guerrilla tactics, where smaller bands of *Zamindars* were used to raid and plunder Mughal towns.⁷⁰² Displaced refugees likely helped to swell the Maratha numbers by promises of plunder and reward from conquest. Their enormous armies were described as 'ants and locusts' on multiple occasions, indicating the large size of the forces. In one such occasion, the chronicler noted:

The enemy was more in reckoning and enumeration. They attacked them from all sides like ants, locusts and worms and thus they created a quake in the foundation of pillars of the army and disturbed their order... The Dekhanis remained there for a few days after the capture of Abdul Hamid Khan and pillage of provisions. They then plundered towns and villages

⁶⁹⁷ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged History*, 380

⁶⁹⁸ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 550

⁶⁹⁹ Khan, I. "An Abridged History,"

⁷⁰⁰ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged History*, 429, and 115 for an example of scarcity.

⁷⁰¹ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged History*, 157

⁷⁰² Gordon, "The Slow Conquest," 1-40; Ali, "The Passing of Empire," 385-396

and exacted Khandani (tribute). A great commotion and vast realization spread in the Subah. There was disorder and anarchy. Rebellious Kohs who had retired to a corner of obscurity and oblivion due to the chastisement and punishment of *Faujdar*s and Thanadars, emerged from every corner and side, referred to their inborn nature and raised disturbances⁷⁰³

As the passage indicates, the vast numbers of Marathas attacking Mughal forces had a debilitating effect on the state. Ransoming for monetary gain also became a more standard Maratha tactic. Famous Maratha commanders usually asked for large sums of money in exchange for releasing captured Mughal officers.⁷⁰⁴ Chroniclers additionally noted an increased concern with protecting baggage which was constantly under attack. Khafi Khan for instance noted that Shivaji had a rule that any common booty seized in battle became the property of the person who had seized it.⁷⁰⁵ Moreover, large numbers of peasants joined Maratha forces despite the tax rates imposed by Maratha rulers staying relatively similar to Mughal impositions, suggesting tax payments were not a motivating factor in peasants' rebellion.⁷⁰⁶

As has already been touched upon in the discussion above, there is also considerable evidence of large-scale refugee migration. Rana has provided compelling evidence that peasant migration caused by economic hardship increased substantially in the second half of the 1600s, where entire villages were known to migrate away from crisis.⁷⁰⁷ During the 1630 famine of Gujarat, Inayat Khan noted that regions affected by famine were deserted as droves of people searched for better climate.⁷⁰⁸ When Kashmir was affected by famine, it was reported that 30,000 people left their homes to go to Lahore where the climate was likely better and the state was better able to provide food.⁷⁰⁹ Thousands of people were reported to have left their villages in search of food, and many amassed towards provincial capitals to receive state aid. As implied by the high death rates noted by contemporary observers, the state was unlikely able to meet the needs of

⁷⁰³ Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat I Ahmadi*, 323

⁷⁰⁴ For example, the Mughals paid a 2 lakh ransom for their Mansabdars that were captured in one battle. See. Khafi Khan's, *Muntakhab*, 451

⁷⁰⁵ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 123

⁷⁰⁶ Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System*, 402-3. The Mughal state conversely often had very strict rules against plundering and the sharing of booty, which could have made soldiers less obedient (discussed in Chapter 2, case study 2).

⁷⁰⁷ Rana, "Was there an Agrarian Crisis," 18-32

⁷⁰⁸ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 123, 61

⁷⁰⁹ Abha Singh, "State Response to Disasters in Mughal India," *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, Vol. 22:2, 2017, 308

the people adequately. The impact of famines on peasant destitution and desperation is also apparent. Dutch Factors stationed in the Coromandel coast wrote that desperate people were willing to sell themselves and their family into slavery in order for food security.⁷¹⁰ In such an environment of uncertainty, desperation and mass migrations it seems more plausible than not the groups which were badly affected and unable to secure state support would turn to banditry or join rebellions of local *Zamindars*. It is difficult to estimate the proportion of people affected by famines in this way, and it certainly would not have been the entire population. The high volume of evidence which attest to these crises, however, do indicate the phenomenon was widespread. Even if only five percent of the peasant population were induced to join rebellious elements in this way, the impacts of these movements on the structure of the economy and the nature of conflicts would have been substantial.

Response of the Government

How did the Mughal state respond to these new challenges? If the records in the chronicles are anything to go by, it seems there was at least some recognition of these structural changes by the central government and attempts to address them. Part of the response, as we have seen in the last chapter, was an increase in the rates of rebel forgiveness.⁷¹¹ The state was more willing to compromise and engage in negotiation as a tool of resolving these conflicts. As will be shown in Chapter 4, there was concurrently a structural change in government administration with the expansion of localised officials. There are also indications of state responses which were more directly focused towards conciliating the peasantry and grain merchants. Aside from the tax remission and increase in charity which have already been discussed above, the chroniclers recorded interactions and negotiations with the peasantry far more directly than had been done in previous periods. Protection and security provisions were vital strategies for repopulating deserted lands, where the state tried to secure peasant houses as trust when they fled.⁷¹² Inayat Khan, for instance, makes the following comments about one Mughal commander:

⁷¹⁰ Abha Singh, "State Response," 308

⁷¹¹ See Figure 2.4 in Chapter 2

⁷¹² Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 142, 116

“And as he had conciliated the goodwill of the peasantry round about by his kindness and urbanity, they had brought an abundance of grain for sale, so the royalists suffered no privations with regard to food during this besiegement.”⁷¹³

This quote, and others like it, indicate there was a growing emphasis on securing a good relationship with the peasantry by the state as a means of military success. Similarly, in different occasions in both Qandahar and Hyderabad, commanding Mughal officers ordered subordinates to “conciliate the residents of that city and dissuade them from dispersing – and also to endeavour to protect their wealth and property.”⁷¹⁴ Where grain merchants could face frequent attacks and raids from rebel forces, the state would try to provide them with security. However, whilst they often sent forces to prevent raids, the impression given in the sources is that the state still struggled to protect merchants:

“As the emperor was engaged with all available forces in besieging the distant fortresses in the hilly region, the Marathas stopped with their families and equipment and elephants etc. For months and year wherever they managed to reach and administered the area by appointing Subehdars, Kamayishdars and Rahdars like the Imperial government. The Maratha Subehdar on hearing about a big caravan, attacked and plundered it with his seven or 8000 horsemen. He also appointed Kamayishhdars at all places to collect chawth. Wherever they failed to collect it owing to the opposition of the *Zamindar* and Fawjdar, the Subehdar himself, rushed to their help and surrounded and plundered the place. The procession of the Radhars of those misguided people was that, whenever a merchant wanted to secure safety from the Marathas, they charged a fixed amount per waggon or per bullock as Radhari which was 3 or 4 times, the radhari tax collected by the tyrannical rahdars and Fawjdars of the government. Thus they became major shareholders in the collections of the *jagirdars* and the fawjdars. They built one or two small fortresses in every province and made it their refuge and place of retreat, from where they conducted raids in all directions. The leading *Muqaddams* in some villages had constructed gadhis. With the help and advice of the subehdars of the infidels and with their support and protection resisted the Imperial officers when they came to collect the revenue. They had reduced to dust the countryside up to the frontiers of Ahmedabad and *Parganahs* in the province of Malwa.”⁷¹⁵

⁷¹³ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 116

⁷¹⁴ Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 519. For an example in Qandahar, see: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 484.

⁷¹⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 508

The passage indicates not only an awareness of the crisis and the difficulty the state faced in protecting merchants, but also that exactions on merchants became a greater source of revenue for Maratha forces.⁷¹⁶ It is difficult from the current literature and sources to state with any certainty the extent to which the state was able to respond to these challenges. Richards and Parker are not wrong in pointing to the endurance of the state though a period a period of intense instability, where the empire did manage to quell most larger rebellions and expanded its territory even if only temporarily.⁷¹⁷ Despite these victories, the description in the chronicles suggest the decline in the economy and security within the state were felt widely. On military campaigns, the extent of the difficulties faced by *Mansabdars* wore down the troops and increased disaffection.⁷¹⁸ As already shown, it appears often-times the sheer magnitude of peasants involved in the conflicts could be overwhelming for the state forces. In face of the scale of change, the state was limited in its ability to respond to conflicts both fiscally and institutionally, and elites and troops could be demanding regarding their expectations of income and duties within battle.⁷¹⁹ I would suggest, then, that the state response did help to mitigate the crisis, however these effects were limited. Adverse climate and internal conflicts continued to impact the lives of the wider populace, as well as the broader structure of the economy.

VI Conclusion

Whilst it is difficult to precisely determine all the potential effects of exogenous climactic factors due to issues of multiple causality, the evidence presented here suggests that adverse climate played a role in instigating larger peasant rebellions. However, contrary to Moosvi's suggestion that the crisis started in the mid-seventeenth century, the spike in conflict size and frequency during the 1630s indicate a crisis began during Shah Jahan's reign although later the scale of conflicts increased substantially after the 1650s. The larger conflicts were fuelled by increased peasant participation, where rural populations looked for more security. In the face of increased tax resistance, mass migration and a

⁷¹⁶ In line with Sumit Guha's findings discussed above. See: Guha, "Rethinking," 555-6

⁷¹⁷ This is in reference to the fast collapse of the state in the early eighteenth century.

⁷¹⁸ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 498

⁷¹⁹ Discussed in chapter 2

limited ability of the government to enforce its own laws, both legal and fiscal state capacity declined. The general economic crisis of sorts where there was increased scarcity, higher prices and less security was a contributing cause of this decline.

The agrarian crisis was thus at least partly driven by an exogenous challenge and not solely rooted in a systemic failure of the state. Although the state attempted to mitigate the crisis by providing tax and famine relief, the substantive evidence indicates its ability was limited, especially as the government's reach into rural hinterlands was short. The scale of the crisis and growing tax resistance of *Zamindars* suggests the economy was undergoing a structural change of sorts during this period. I have proposed that refugee migration and greater economic desperation motivated peasants to join *Zamindars* and can explain the increasing strength local elites. Yet in the face of a growing internal challenges, the state remained a relatively powerful force, partly by adapting its responses, a factor which will be considered further in the next chapter. Thus, the impact of the agrarian crises on state capacity was not sudden, but rather protracted over several decades.

Chapter 4 - The role of Intermediaries in State Formation (1574-1658)

Abstract: The question of the centralisation and state capacity of early modern Asian empires has been debated in the literature, although an understanding of the evolution of the seventeenth century Mughal state has not been studied in detail. By adopting methods y used in the wider global literature, this paper uses a newly-digitised database of 10,735 appointments of Mughal government officials to measure salary payments between 1574-1707. It shows that the total number of appointments was increasing over the period, but average salaries declined after the mid-1620s. This fall is attributed to a large increase in the number of officials and coincided with an increase in conflicts. The chapter argues the rise in lower-level officials can be attributed to an increased prevalence of conflict, which incentivised the government to cut costs and increase administrative capacity by increasing the number of lower level officials.

Introduction

The centralisation and capacity of early-modern Asian empires like the Ottoman and Qing Chinese state has been debated extensively by economic historians, where scholars have tried to understand the constraints faced by central governments in increasing tax revenues and concentrating authority.⁷²⁰ However, little recent work has studied in depth the early modern Indian government to see how changes in the South Asian state's structure of government can inform us about how state's institutions evolved over time. The lack of attention to the Mughal state's structure can partially be attributed to limited data availability for conventional measures of state capacity like per-capita tax revenues.⁷²¹ Previous studies on the Mughal state's structure have involved mostly qualitative discussions on the chronology of state's development and the effect of state policy on the economy.⁷²² This paper uses new quantitative analysis and draws on the

⁷²⁰ These debates were discussed in detail in the Introduction, within the State Capacity Literature section.

⁷²¹ Moosvi, "Economic Change in the Seventeenth Century," 278-86; Richards, "Fiscal States in Mughal and British India," 413

⁷²² There are notable exceptions within the Aligarh scholarship discussed in the Introduction. especially: Moosvi, *The Economy*; Athar Ali, *Apparatus of empire*.

growing global literature on the relationship between conflict and state development.⁷²³ It employs newly digitised data from Athar Ali's 'Apparatus of Empire' which allows us to estimate changes in salary payments of officials and the administrative structure of the government between 1574-1658. It uses the data to outline how the state fiscal and administrative capacity changed over time, especially with respect to the centralisation of the state and its relationship with, and management of, government officials.

The first half of this paper estimates the total salary payments made to officials every year to see how the changes in salary payments, and the distribution of these payments among social classes, changed over time. The data shows that that whilst there was a large increase in total payments, the rate of increase declined after the 1630s despite the number of officials having grown. This pattern can be explained by a significant increase in lower-level officials and a stagnation in the number of higher level officials, where the salaries of lower officials was significantly smaller than the salaries of the highest officials.

The second half of this paper tests to see if the increase in the number of officials led to increased administrative capacity in response of the increasing size of conflicts (as identified in the previous chapter) incentivising the state to employ lower level officials with more localised administrative capacity. It graphically shows that the change in state structure occurs at the same period conflict intensity increases. By looking at three measures of decentralised administrative capacity, namely the distribution of administrative roles, number of Zamindars employed, and the geographical distribution of salaries, the paper finds support for the view that there was an increase in the number of and salary of localised administrative roles in government.

This study finds there was a significant transformation in the government's administrative structure in the first half of the seventeenth century, especially between 1630-1660. As has previously been identified by Athar Ali, the number of officials appointed by the Mughal government expanded substantially over the period, and especially during Shah Jahan's reign (1628-1658).⁷²⁴ The analysis below demonstrates the rate of increase of number of officials was very high, exhibiting an exponential pattern.

⁷²³ This is a large branch of the state capacity literature. Some of the relevant literature is as follows: Dincecco, Fenske, Menon, and Mukherjee. "Pre-Colonial Warfare"; Besley and Persson, "Wars and State Capacity." 522-30; Tilly, *Coercion*,

⁷²⁴ Athar Ali, *Apparatus of Empire*, xiii-xiv

However, whilst the rate of increase of total salary payments of all officials was rapid from 1590-1630, from the 1630s onwards the sum of salaries of all officials stagnated and increased at a lower rate of growth. This meant the total expense on salary payments incurred by the state did not grow at as fast a pace after 1630s as they did in decades before then. The dramatic reduction in costs of salary payments despite a large rise in the number of officials appointed can be explained by a change in the administrative structure of government. After 1630, officials were appointed at a much lower average salary and rank and were appointed to lower-level and localised roles within government. A greater portion of state expenditure was therefore spent on lower-level officials like *Faujdars* (sub provincial governors) and *Waqia Navis* (News Reporters) as opposed to high ranked officials like *Subahdars* (provincial governors). I argue this localisation of government administration can be attributed to the increase in frequency and intensity of conflicts identified in the previous chapter, where the state was incentivised to reduce costs and increase administrative capacity at the local level. By localising governance, the state was able to bridge information gaps and respond more effectively and flexibly to conflicts or unrest.

This chapter contributes to the discussion on the chronological development and nature of the Mughal state which has been written on extensively and recently reinvigorated.⁷²⁵ As was outlined in the thesis' introduction, the impression of the state given in this literature is usually one which is more static until the eighteenth century, after which the rapid decline of the empire either precipitated anarchy or the commercial development of the economy.⁷²⁶ The analysis in this chapter suggests the state was transforming and decentralising much earlier than previous literature has suggested, and these changes were driven by internal conflict dynamics. This paper equally contributes to a growing literature on the state capacity of Asian empires which has focused on the role of administrators and elites in either restraining or assisting development.⁷²⁷ I argue the Mughal government's devolution of control to lower-level officials was an adaptive

⁷²⁵ These debates were outlined in the Thesis' introduction. For a discussion of these debates, see: Guha, Sumit, "Rethinking" 532–575; Bhargava, "Introduction,"

⁷²⁶ These debates were outlined in the Thesis' introduction. Alam and Subrahmanyam "Introduction"; Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality*,

⁷²⁷ See, for instance: North and Weingast *Violence and social orders*; Dincecco and Wang, "Violent Conflict and Political Development," 341-58; Greif, "The Impact of Administrative Power," 1;

response of the government to high levels of conflict, where decentralisation increased administrative capacity at the expense of centralisation.

As appointments of *jagirs* were not restricted, and as not all *Zamindars* were appointed by the government, this chapter and the next uses the term ‘official’ to refer to intermediaries who were paid a salary and officially appointed to their roles by the central government. The remainder of the chapter is organised as follows. Section II outlines the background of the Mughal historiography on the chronology of state development. It discusses the debates on chronology within the Mughal empire, but also draws on literature on the Ottoman state to help provide a different interpretation of the data than the existing Mughal literature has discussed. Section III discusses the sources and methodology which is used to measure structural changes in the economy. Section IV discusses and analyses the main results with regards to trends in total salary expenditure and average salaries. Section V outlines the implications of the findings to our understanding of how conflicts affected the state’s administrative structure, especially considering the needs of the empire in the face of the internal conflicts it faced. In Section V-II, the effects of conflict on state centralisation is studied more specifically.

II. Background and Literature Review

As was highlighted in the introduction, the nature and evolution of the precolonial Mughal empire has been widely debated in the historiography of the Mughal state. An understanding of the state’s centralisation in terms of concentration of wealth has transformed considerably.⁷²⁸ It is now widely acknowledged the state’s per capita tax revenues were much smaller than previously envisaged by Aligarh scholars, where a large portion of the revenue remained with local leaders.⁷²⁹ Despite the progress made in developing an understanding of the structure of the empire, there remain a number of paradoxes and unsolved mysteries. One of these is how the structure of the empire transformed over the seventeenth century, where there is conflicting evidence on whether

⁷²⁸ Guha, “Rethinking”; Habib, “Potentialities,” 32-78; Roy, Tirthankar, “Economic Conditions in Early Modern Bengal” 179-194

⁷²⁹ Gupta, Ma and Roy, “States and Development,” 51-73; Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich*.

the state centralised (or remained centralised) or decentralised over the seventeenth century.

Although founded by Babur in 1526, the Mughal empire underwent centralising reforms under the reign of Akbar which began in 1556 and took hold in the 1570s. These reforms led to substantial increases in the administration of the state, where they included the standardisation of contracts and forms for official appointments, an empire wide survey of crop cultivation and greater precision in rates of taxation assessed on peasants.⁷³⁰ After Akbar's death in 1605, emperor Jahangir's accession to the throne was met with increasing political instability. Relative to his father, historians have not characterized Jahangir as a powerful statesman of the period, where the administration during his reign was relatively weaker than his predecessor and successors.⁷³¹ It was during Shah Jahan's reign, with his ascendance to the throne in 1628, that the empire is considered by historians to have centralised and expanded substantially.⁷³² Shah Jahan enacted a series of reforms and expanded the empire both territorially and administratively, additionally investing in a number of large infrastructure projects, some historians considering this period the zenith of Mughal rule.⁷³³

However, Shah Jahan's reign ended with the 1657 war of succession between the Mughal princes which was followed by increasingly larger civil conflicts and a period of increased lawlessness.⁷³⁴ From this point, the narrative history of the Mughal state becomes more difficult to unpick. Whilst there is an abundance of sources for Aurangzeb's reign, there are fewer centralised state sources like the state histories used for earlier periods.⁷³⁵ The sources that have survived are limited in scope with regard to what can be discerned from them. Aurangzeb's reign from 1658-1707 presents a mixed picture of state centralisation and state decline. Territorially and legally, the empire continued its expansion with the conquest of the Deccan sultanates and the introduction of the first centralised legal doctrine of the state, the 'Fatawa al Alamgiri'.⁷³⁶ John F Richards has argued revenues continued to increase,⁷³⁷ though R P Rana has conversely argued

⁷³⁰ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 58

⁷³¹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 100

⁷³² Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 119

⁷³³ For instance, see Richard's comments in: Richards, "The Seventeenth-Century Crisis in South Asia." 629-4

⁷³⁴ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 151

⁷³⁵ This was discussed in Chapter 1, Section 3.4

⁷³⁶ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 173; Roy, "Law and Economic Change in India," 115-137.

⁷³⁷ Richards, *Seventeenth Century Crisis*, 627-8

revenues were falling.⁷³⁸ However, the empire faced political instability and a financial crisis unlike any previous reign before it. The emperor stopped the appointment of new *Mansabdars*, noting limited availability of *jagirs* (revenue assignments), and we have already seen in Chapter 3 rebellions against taxation increased. After Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the empire faced a rapid decentralisation in the early eighteenth century where regional governments became effectively autonomous in administration.⁷³⁹

Conflicting evidence has led scholars to provide competing explanations related to the state's evolution or causes of decline. As discussed in the previous chapter, earlier literature often attributed decline to systemic limitations of Mughal institutions, where the expansion of officials resulted in the scarcity of *jagirs* and put pressure on government finances. In this way, the fall of the empire has been seen as some form of institutional sclerosis,⁷⁴⁰ where the pre-existing system could no longer cope with demands of *Mansabdars*, and there was little ambit for reform within the state structure. Newer literature has emphasised the importance of local power sharing and the development of new theories of kingship over the course of the empire. From this perspective, the state was not a structured bureaucracy but an evolving machine which adapted to local environments into the eighteenth century. Farhat Hasan, for instance, has argued the empire's administrative system provided legal spaces for adjudication of disputes and cultural discourse although customary laws and local elites and officials retained their power. The relationship between the state and localities was a reciprocal one, where the state's policies were also formed by public discourse and performative interactions.⁷⁴¹ During the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the state increasingly became integrated with local organisations which resulted in a structural shift in the nature of government during this period.⁷⁴²

There is certainly a duality evident where the competing interpretations of the Mughal state can both have some truth to them. We have already mentioned above that there are several administrative sources which attest to the centralisation of the Mughal regime, and the analysis below will attest to this.⁷⁴³ Previous chapters have equally

⁷³⁸ Rana. "Was There an Agrarian Crisis" 18–32.

⁷³⁹ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 254

⁷⁴⁰ Olson describes institutional sclerosis in: Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations : Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982, 210

⁷⁴¹ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 105-6

⁷⁴² Farhat Hasan, *State and locality*, 126-7

⁷⁴³ Richards, *Document Forms*, 38

demonstrated that the state shared authority with local groups and state building was a negotiation with intermediaries.⁷⁴⁴ The good illustration of this shared regional power is evident during an exchange between a high ranking *Mansabdar* and the ruler of the Vassal State of Golconda, Abu'l Hasan Qutb al Mulk. In the course of the argument, the *Mansabdar* admonished Abu'l Hasan by telling him it was not proper for the latter to refer to himself as a 'king.' However, the Vassal ruler countered the argument by stating: "Your objection is wrong. If I do not bear the title of king, how can the Emperor be called the King of Kings."⁷⁴⁵ To this, the chronicler attests the words rendered him speechless.

Another aspect of debate in the literature is related to understanding the points of decline or decentralisation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Richards for instance argues that the decline of the state only began in the eighteenth century towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign.⁷⁴⁶ Moosvi, conversely, suggests an earlier period of decline, arguing the crises of the empire can be traced to the succession wars of 1658.⁷⁴⁷ One of the aims of this chapter is to explore the seventeenth century government in more detail to understand how the government's administrative structure was changing over periods of conflict, specifically with regards to wider debates regarding how these adaptations affected state capacity development, on which there has been little discussion in Mughal historiography.⁷⁴⁸

Where the Mughal scholarship has not engaged as much in state capacity debates, scholarship on the Ottoman empire provides a useful framework for studying the evolution of the state as there are broad similarities in the way the empire assigned tax-farming rights (or in the Mughal case, *jagirs*).⁷⁴⁹ For example, like the Mughal government, the Ottoman empire contracted local elites, commonly referred to as *Ayans*, as tax farmers.⁷⁵⁰ *Ayans* were given relative autonomy in their jurisdiction of control and

⁷⁴⁴ See Chapter 2 conclusion

⁷⁴⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 299

⁷⁴⁶ Richards, "The Seventeenth-century Crisis," 625

⁷⁴⁷ Moosvi, "Scarcities, Prices and Exploitation," 1, 45-55

⁷⁴⁸ This was outlined in the Thesis' Introduction (section on State Capacity Literature).

⁷⁴⁹ The main difference between the *jagir* system and conventional tax farming is that the *jagirs* did not require a portion of the revenues to be sent to the state, but often amounted to the full salary of the *jagirdar* (an explanation of the *jagir* system and its similarities and differences to tax farming is given in the Thesis' introduction in the section on 'Structure and Administration of Tax Collection.')

⁷⁵⁰ Ariel Salzman describes the Ottoman tax farming institutions as follows: "The institutional distinctiveness of the late seventeenth through eighteenth century Ottoman ancient regime rests in a tendency to pursue a policy of internal borrowing through the sale of parcelized, dispersed holdings rather than concentrating financing in centralised institutions like the French *ferme generale* or in the form of a

kept a percentage of the revenues they collected.⁷⁵¹ Like the offices of the *Mansabdars*, tax-farming offices in the Ottoman state were also non-hereditary and could be rescinded by the emperor. Similar to the Mughal state, the seventeenth century Ottoman state expanded the number of *Ayans* and tax-farming offices, a process which Ali Yaycioglu refers to as the 'localisation' of the state in reference to the more localised roles these administrators took on.⁷⁵² Ariel Salzman's description of the seventeenth century illustrates the change:

Short term tax farming, which had served as one of the more important means of internal borrowing, was also in a state of crisis. Conditions in many rural areas had deteriorated over the seventeenth century, not only in the Middle Eastern provinces, which had witnessed the Jelali revolts and recurrent social upheaval, but in the Balkans as well. New incentives were needed to attract reliable agrarian tax farmers. Because of widespread insecurity in the country and the flight of many peasants to remote areas or toward the cities, many potential tax farmers, both military officers and the provincial gentry, simply refused under existing terms of contract to undertake what appeared on paper to be lucrative tax farms. In addition, provincially stationed janissaries dominated local auctions and controlled the more profitable and commercialised revenue contracts. Urgently seeking cash advances on anticipated revenue income, in 1695 the state was forced to concede a new form of social contract specifically addressed to the problem of tax collection on the villages and the fields. / The life-term revenue tax farm (*malikane muqataa*) was a contract on state revenues which gave the tax contractor rights to collect taxes on the basis of established rates from the time of the award until the contractor's death.⁷⁵³

Thus, the circumstances of the expansion of the Ottoman state and the institutional form of tax-farming rights were similar to the Mughal state. There is, of course, also an important difference to the method of distribution. Whilst in the Ottoman empire sales of government offices are considered to have been an important method of raising tax revenue and the cause for the 'parcellization' of revenue administration, the Mughal state literature has not viewed assignments in the same way.⁷⁵⁴ In the Mughal

national bank like the merchant-founded Bank of England." See: Salzman, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 400

⁷⁵¹ Yaycioglu, Ali. *Partners of the Empire: the Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions*. Stanford, California: Stanford Security Studies, 2016, 79

⁷⁵² Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire*, 79-80

⁷⁵³ Salzman, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 400-401

⁷⁵⁴ Salzman, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 401

state system, there was no formal system for sale of farming rights and appointments were made purely on the 'merit' of the official.⁷⁵⁵ The expansion of government officials in Mughal empire, as such, would not likely reflected a method of increasing revenues the way it could have for the Ottoman state.

In the literature on the state formation of early modern Asian empires, it has often been argued that fiscal and legal centralisation⁷⁵⁶ is an indicator of state capacity development. Karaman and Pamuk, for instance have argued the devolution of power in the seventeenth century Ottoman state precipitated a financial crisis for the central government.⁷⁵⁷ Failure of Asian empires to sufficiently centralise or 'modernise' their governments is seen as a reason for their stagnation relative to European empires.⁷⁵⁸ However, a number of Ottoman historians have challenged this perspective to argue that devolution of power and sharing revenues increased the state's administrative capacity as opposed to reducing it. Most recently, Choon Hwee Koh has made a compelling argument that the relationship between state centralisation and state capacity development is more nuanced than the simple concentration of power in the centre of government. In her examination of the Ottoman post-master system, she argues the contracting of government administration strengthened the state's monitoring capacity because the information the state was able to receive from these localised actors was superior to what the state could have achieved without them.⁷⁵⁹ She notes that it was "precisely the surrender of a slice of sovereignty to local agents" which allowed the state to achieve "a wider and deeper administrative reach."⁷⁶⁰ Thus, decentralisation in the Ottoman state had the effect of increasing rather than decreasing administrative capacity. As will be demonstrated in the analysis below, the Mughal state expansion exhibited a similar tendency to increase administrative capacity.

What is less discussed in quite as much detail in either the Mughal or Ottoman state literatures is what factors drove the state to increasingly devolve power in this way.

⁷⁵⁵ Despite there being no formal mechanism of 'sale' evident in the sources, it is also recognised that candidates for official appointment did often need to bribe those in charge of making recommendations to the state and some form of payment was common Grover, *Land Rights*, 107

⁷⁵⁶ fiscal and legal centralisation meaning concentration of tax revenues and ability to enforce power within the central government relative to the provincial elites. This is discussed in more detail in Section V of this chapter.

⁷⁵⁷ Karaman and Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances," 593-629., 603, 612, 618.

⁷⁵⁸ Karaman and Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances," 620

⁷⁵⁹ Koh, Choon Hwee. "The Ottoman Postmaster: Contractors, Communication and Early Modern State Formation." *Past & Present* 251, no. 1 (2021): 251

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 141-2

The findings in this paper indicate that in the Mughal case conflict precipitated the state's localisation of officers as it was a way of increasing the empire's administrative capacity. The need to develop more responsive and flexible forms of government in response to conflict drove the empire to localise government, thereby improving its reach into the lives of the populace.

III. Methodology and Data Sources

Where data relating to tax revenue or the GDP of the Mughal empire is less readily available, there is a very rich source of base data on government officials within the empire. *Mansabdars* and *Zamindars*, discussed in other chapters, held administrative posts and ranks which were frequently recorded within the state historical and administrative records. Using a newly digitised database of Mughal appointments, it is possible to calculate the total and average salary payments the government spent each year. These salary payments are a good reflection of changes in government expenditure, and therefore can indicate the governments' ability to increase spending as well as the nature of how state spending changed over time (i.e. how the distribution of expenditure changed). In her study of the Mughal economy in 1595, Moosvi estimates that the *Mansabdars* accounted for 80 percent of total government expenditure, demonstrating how important these officials were for the government. This indicates changes in salary payments can be a reasonable reflection of the state's development.⁷⁶¹ Studying the changes in how officials were appointed also allows us to map developments in the administrative structure of government, especially with regard to which administrative roles the government increasingly prioritised in their appointments and how well officials within these roles were remunerated for their work. The data is also excellent for comparative studies as similar datasets on official appointments have been developed for other empires, especially for the premodern Chinese state.⁷⁶² There are, of course,

⁷⁶¹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 223

⁷⁶² This was discussed in Chapter 1's introduction. Some of the comparable methods used by other scholars are as follows: Bijia, Campbell, Ren, and Lee, "Big Data for the Study of Qing Officialdom" 431-460; Arslantaş, Pietri, and Vahabi. "State Predation in Historical Perspective," 427; Sheth and Zhang, "Locating Meritocracy"

limitations to what the available data can reveal related to the consistency in representation and which officials may or may not be included. However, the trends can still indicate new patterns which may have otherwise been difficult to see.

The data on official appointments is derived from Athar Ali's 'Apparatus of Empire', which is a compilation of 10,735 appointments, promotions and demotions of officials within the Mughal empire between 1574-1658.⁷⁶³ This is an impressive collection of data providing details of the officials, including the year of the appointment, the name, title and ethnicity of official, the rank of the official, the role of the official, the location of posting and information on the family relations of some of the officials (for instance, if they had a father or brother also in government).⁷⁶⁴ Ali was additionally meticulous with recording where the sources for each of these appointments came from, giving us assurances on the accuracy of the data. The high level of detail given allows us to track not only changes in salaries of officials, but also the changes in the ethnic composition of government and the sectors which were growing. Tracking across a range of measurements makes it possible to find consistency within patterns across several metrics.

Although Ali's dataset ends in 1658, I am able to extend the period of study for certain variables using the appendices in Ali's text "The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb," which provides a complete list of 1067 higher level *Mansabdars* under Aurangzeb.⁷⁶⁵ However, the data is far more limited – unlike the year-on-year data available for the pre-1658 period, there is only data on the *Mansabdars* with *Zats* greater than 1000 for two periods encompassing two decades: 1658-1678 and 1679-1707. There is also far more limited data on the roles of the *Mansabdars* in the later periods, where only data on their ethnicities is available. What this means is that the data analysis can only be extended for specific variables, especially when there is some consistency in the way the data has been collected and presented.

Figure 4.1 shows the number of official appointments per year (as recorded in the dataset), which reflects a rise in the number of officials appointed as well as outlines the distribution of the data across the period of study. The circular dark orange dots represent

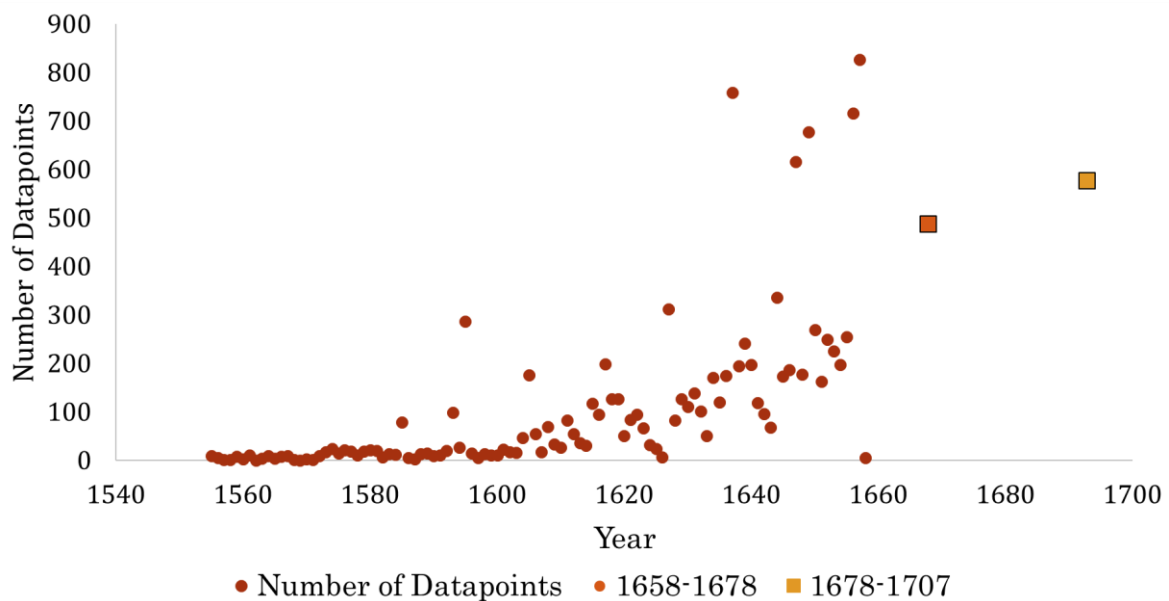
⁷⁶³ Ali, *The Apparatus of Empire*, 1-345

⁷⁶⁴ It is worth there is not complete data for every appointment. For instance, we may not know the locations where they were posted. We do have 'salary' data for all appointments.

⁷⁶⁵ Ali, *The Mughal*, Appendix, 175

data collected from ‘The Apparatus of Empire,’ whereas the square dots represent the data from the appendices of ‘The Mughal Nobility.’⁷⁶⁶ Since the latter only recorded appointments of *zat* greater than 1000, the smaller number of appointments recorded after 1658 should not be seen as a reduction in the number of officials in these decades. The substantial increase in appointments of officials evident between 1590-1660 reflects the increase in the size of government over the period. The rapid rise in the number of appointments can therefore also be interpreted as an increase in administrative and military capacity, as officials can be seen as an additional unit of administration that the state can employ. The graph also shows that the sample size for studying the state is large, especially for the period for which this paper is most concerned (1595-1658).

Figure 4.1: Number of Official Appointments per year



Source: Derived from data in ‘Athar Ali’s Apparatus of Empire’ (1985)

⁷⁶⁶ These sources were discussed above

In my analysis, I study the ranks of these officials and how they changed over time. Called *Mansabs*, these ranks were awarded by the emperor to signify the official's status within the hierarchy of the empire's administration.⁷⁶⁷ As a point of comparison, the *Mansab* system of ranking officials is similar to the system used by the Qing government (albeit without the examination system).⁷⁶⁸ *Mansabs* consisted of two components: the *zat* which referred to the status and salary of the official, and the *Sawar* which referred to the military contingents the official was meant to keep.⁷⁶⁹ This chapter will look specifically at the *zat* ranks, where each rank can be attributed to specific monthly salary bands.⁷⁷⁰ There were 66 salary bands attributed to different levels of ranks. However, following Moosvi, I only use the 32 bands for which data is available.⁷⁷¹ The salary bands had a wide range. The lowest band of '10' *Zat* equated to a monthly salary of between 75 to 100 rupees, while the highest rank of '10,000' *zat* corresponded to a monthly salary of 60,000 rupees. These salary bands were mostly consistent over the period except during emperor Shah Jahan's reign the salaries attributed to each rank declined to become on average about 68 percent of what they previously were, though the point at which this change occurred is debated.⁷⁷² I therefore employ new estimates of bands based on the changed numbers we know about and apply them after 1628, which was the start of Shah Jahan's reign.⁷⁷³ In my analysis, I have not included salaries of officials who did not hold a rank with an attributable salary grade, meaning officials with *Mansab* ranks above 10,000 *zat* will not be included in the calculation of the total and average salaries. This arguably provides more accurate estimates as it does not include unusually high salaries and ranks which could only be attributed to the royal family. There were additionally three salary

⁷⁶⁷ *Mansabs* were described in more detail in the Thesis' introduction in the section on 'Structure and Administration of Tax Collection.' As it has been a while since the concept has been discussed, it is repeated here.

⁷⁶⁸ L Brandt, D.Ma, T.Rawski, "From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China's Economic Boom" *Journal of Economic Literature* Vol. 52, No. 1 (2014): 63, 103; Ho, Ping-ti. *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911*. New York: Science Editions, 1964., 10

⁷⁶⁹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 204

⁷⁷⁰ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 213 (Appendix 4.A gives the salary bands along with changes under Shah Jahan's reign)

⁷⁷¹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 209

⁷⁷² Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 71

⁷⁷³ A calculation of these salary bands are attributable in Appendix 4.A. It should be noted that Habib contends it is possible and likely these changes in salary bands were actually introduced under Jahangir's reign around 1618, however as the earliest source referring to these changes comes from Shah Jahan's reign I only apply from then. See: Irfan Habib, 1967. "The Mansab System 1595-1637." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 29, pp.224

classes which attributed slightly different salary rates within each band. However, as it is impossible to tell which band a *Mansabdar* belonged to, I use the highest band since the salary scales are most complete.⁷⁷⁴ As the differences between the bands are so slight, it does not affect the overall findings (see Appendix 4.B). In his analysis, Ali divided *zat* ranks into three levels: Below 500, between 500-1000, between 1000-5000 and above 5000.⁷⁷⁵ I use the same categories of *zat* ranks to measure larger changes across social classes since these are a good representation of the differences between the groups, and to maintain consistency with his studies. Richards notes that only nobles with ranks higher than 500 *zat* would have been considered higher level nobles during Akbar's reign, but by the seventeenth century only nobles greater than 1000 *zat* would be considered nobles in government.⁷⁷⁶

Although the *Sawar* ranks also represented a payment from the state for the maintenance of an official's military contingents, I do not attempt to estimate costs of the *Sawar* ranks for three main reasons. Firstly, the paper is interested in changes within the administrative structure of government with respect to the salaries of the officials as opposed to the military requirements of government. *Sawar* ranks represented the military obligations of the officials, whereas *zat* ranks are solely a reflection of the official's value to the empire and salaries paid to officials independent of military obligations.⁷⁷⁷ *zat* ranks are therefore a better measure of administrative capacity of the official which is the point of focus for my research. Secondly, proper calculations of the payments made in accordance to *Sawar* ranks would require more data than is available and a fair degree of estimation will be required. The *Sawar* rank was an innovation during Akbar's period which continued to evolve over the dynasty and there is debate over the points in time where some of these innovations were adopted.⁷⁷⁸ *zat* ranks were conversely consistent through the period (other than the change implemented during Shah Jahan's reign mentioned above). Unlike *zat* ranks, the size of contingents attributed to a *Sawar* ranks did not necessarily represent the actual payment made for maintaining the contingent, where the amount paid could be very different based on a number of factors not always represented in the data, including: whether the officials had submitted their cavalry for

⁷⁷⁴ Class 2 and 3 salaries are not provided for officials with a rank about 7000.

⁷⁷⁵ Ali, *Apparatus of Empire*, xx

⁷⁷⁶ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 63

⁷⁷⁷ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 39

⁷⁷⁸ Shireen, Moosvi, "The Evolution of the Mansab System Under Akbar Until 1596-7." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, 113(2), pp.173-185, 1981, 174

registration; the types of horses which were being brought by the official; and the location where the official was posted.⁷⁷⁹ Moreover, there are several indications that in later periods *Mansabdars* did not maintain (or were not required to maintain) the full contingents of cavalries awarded by the *Sawar* ranks.⁷⁸⁰ Consequently, any analysis conducted would need to account for a wide margin of error or make assumptions on how *Sawars* were appointed across *Mansabdars* which are tasks beyond the scope of this chapter. Finally, *Sawar* ranks were usually approximately two thirds the value of the *zat* rank through the period, meaning the general trends established by estimating the *zat* ranks would be followed with the *Sawar* ranks. That the *Sawar* ranks followed similar trends to the *zat* ranks is evident in Appendix 4.C.⁷⁸¹ As such, there is little benefit to gain from studying changes in *Sawar* ranks (for the purposes of this paper), where the chapter instead focuses on a deeper analysis of the *zat* ranks.

Despite the detail presented in the dataset, there are three relevant limitations of the data related to this study which are worth addressing. Firstly, it is very likely this database does not capture all official appointments over the period, as there was no comprehensive list of officials kept for every year that I am aware of. However, the number of datapoints suggests this database contains a very sizeable sample of the total officials, especially for the years where there is more data. It is possible to check the representativeness of the data for at least two years for which historians and chroniclers have provided an accounting for the size of government. The first is the *Ain i Akbari*, written for the year 1595, which claims to list all the *Mansabdars* of ranks of 200 *zat* and above for the 40th Regnal year of emperor Akbar's reign (i.e. 1595).⁷⁸² For the same year, this database records 96.7 percent of the officials from this group. The second record is an official government list which was compiled in 1658 which recorded all the officials with ranks of 1000 *zat* or higher, and the dataset used records 88 percent of these officials. Whilst it is clear the dataset does not give a comprehensive accounting of officials, the comparisons in data availability indicates it does represent a substantial proportion of the government officials, (especially for the higher-level officials). Where there might be biases of omissions on a year-to-year basis, we can assume to some degree these are equal across all years. In cases where the representativeness of data may affect the findings, I

⁷⁷⁹ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 54

⁷⁸⁰ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 54

⁷⁸¹ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 220

⁷⁸² Moosvi, *The Economy*, 206, 224; Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 71, 8

employ different checks to show the patterns seem to hold despite potential limitations (referred to in the analysis).

It is worth keeping in mind that it is likely the amount of data for lower-level officials is less comprehensive than data for higher ranked officials, although it is not clear by how much. For instance, Abu'l Fazl, who was the Grand Vizier to the Emperor and compiler of the *Ain-Akbari*, claimed there were more than 4.4 million *Zamindars*. The database records far fewer, and likely only recorded the most prominent *Zamindars*.⁷⁸³ Whilst Abu'l Fazl's numbers are not implausible given the wide definition of what constituted a *Zamindar*, there is reason to believe that these could be exaggerated estimates based on how officials were often estimated in these periods.⁷⁸⁴ Either way, it does not seem these omissions would have substantial effects on the overall findings as the salaries of lower-level officials were substantially smaller than that of higher level officials, which means the total omitted salaries of lower level officials would not impact the estimates substantially. This is made clear when we compare the total salary payments calculated from the database with existing estimates from the historiography, which shows the difference in total salaries is not great and therefore including the payments for missing officials would not increase total revenue payments significantly (especially as we are interested in broad trends).⁷⁸⁵ Still, it is worth keeping in mind that all 'total salaries' estimates should be seen as minimums for the year, where records may not give the complete data.

The second limitation worth addressing is the way in which the tables were compiled originally. Ali did not keep a unique reference for each individual, where the database can have multiple records for the same individual over different periods of time. This means there might be a potential of double counting an official, where the same official could be change posts multiple times within a single year. To mitigate this, I have removed all instances where an official is double counted within a single year, keeping only the higher rank record if there is a difference. The tables additionally required sorting and categorisation of variables that made them more accessible for analysis, and I have included these notes in Appendix 4.D.

⁷⁸³ Kolff, "The Polity and the Peasantry," 204

⁷⁸⁴ Kolff refers to a need to look at numbers critically : Kolff, *Naukar Rajput and Sepoy*, 21

⁷⁸⁵ calculates the maximum total monthly zat expenditure to be 1,815,810 Rupees, whereas the database records 1,75,602 for the year 1605. Moosvi (2015). See, Moosvi, *The Economy*, 215

Lastly, it is worth keeping in mind that this data presents the monthly salaries of the officials as opposed to their annual salaries. When monthly scales were introduced during Shah Jahan's reign, we know that not all officials were assigned *jagirs* for the same number of months per year and there is a potential decline in the duration of holding a *jagir*.⁷⁸⁶ Consequently, annual salaries in later periods were likely less if represented on an annual scale relative to a monthly scale. It is not possible to account for these differences as we are not provided information on the duration of the *Mansabdars* assignment. However, given these monthly scales were employed under Shah Jahan's reign, we can assume that the fall in salaries was lower than what is shown, and perhaps there is scope for greater relative stagnation in annual data than is evident.

IV. Numbers and Salaries of State Officials

IV - I Estimating Trends in Total Salary Expenditures

How did the administrative structure of the government change over the seventeenth century? In Figure 4.1 we have already seen that the number of government officials was growing in an exponential fashion between 1600-1658. Figure 4.2 outlines the total and average monthly salaries by year and by decade,⁷⁸⁷ showing that between 1590-1650 there is a rise in the total salary payments to officials from approximately Rs. 2.64 million in the 1590s to Rs. 9.646 million in the 1650s. Whilst figure 4.2(a) does show spikes for specific years, raising questions on the consistency of the trends, these are a consequence of the data for these years being specifically good. As there is only one spike apparent per decade, the decadal averages should still be representative of overall trends. This is made evident when we graph trends of only the years with the most data per decade (see Appendix 4.H). As such, the graphs show the government's expenditure on officials more than tripled over the sixty-year period under investigation. The rate of increase over decades is mostly steady through the period with the exception of the 1630s and 1640s. In these decades we observe a stagnation in the rise of total payments only to increase

⁷⁸⁶ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 46

⁷⁸⁷ The analysis focuses on decadal trends, however the inclusion of annual data allows us to see if specific years or problems with the data might be influencing the results.

again in the 1650s. This period of stagnation is attributable to the new salary scales that were employed by the Emperor Shah Jahan which reduced salaries of officials substantially, and in this analysis were only employed after his accession in 1628. If there were no changes made to the salary scales, the rise in salaries would be consistent throughout the period (See Appendix 4.E).

These estimates have not been adjusted for inflation for two reasons. Firstly, there is some debate in the literature regarding what the rate of inflation was in the period and limited data has prevented the construction of a reliable annual price series which allows us to accurately measure any changes. Whilst some historians have argued there was a 'price revolution' in India in consequence of the influx of New World silver imports,⁷⁸⁸ more recent studies have noted a relative stability of prices over the course of the seventeenth century.⁷⁸⁹ Moosvi, for instance, estimated inflation rate of just 0.3 percent per annum over the seventeenth century.⁷⁹⁰ Estimates of inflation have equally been complicated by the different theoretical approaches used by historians, and by uncertainty of the data quality available (e.g. trends in the money supply over time).⁷⁹¹ As such, given the wide margin of error in including an inflation rate and the likelihood that inflation was moderate, it seems adjusting the data for inflation could do more harm than help. The second reason for not adjusting the data for inflation is that it would not likely change the broader trends identified. In fact, seeing as inflation was more likely higher in the later periods, adjusting the data for inflation would only mean that the stagnation in growth of wages after 1630 was greater than currently depicted in the graph. There is therefore no real advantage in estimating the real changes in salaries, especially since there is already a margin of error in the data related to other factors like the differences within salary bands of officials (See Appendices 4.A and 4.B). For the sake of clarity, it is also worth noting that there was no debasement of the currency over this period.⁷⁹²

⁷⁸⁸ Aziza Hasan, "Mughal Silver Currency Output and Prices in India in the 16th and 17th Centuries: A Reply." *The Indian Economic And Social History Review* 7, no. 1 (1970): 151

⁷⁸⁹ Najaf Haider, "The Quantity Theory and Mughal Monetary History." *The Medieval History Journal* 2, no. 2 (1999): 327; Shireen Moosvi, "The Silver Influx, Money Supply, Prices and Revenue-Extraction in Mughal India." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 30, no. 1 (1987): 83

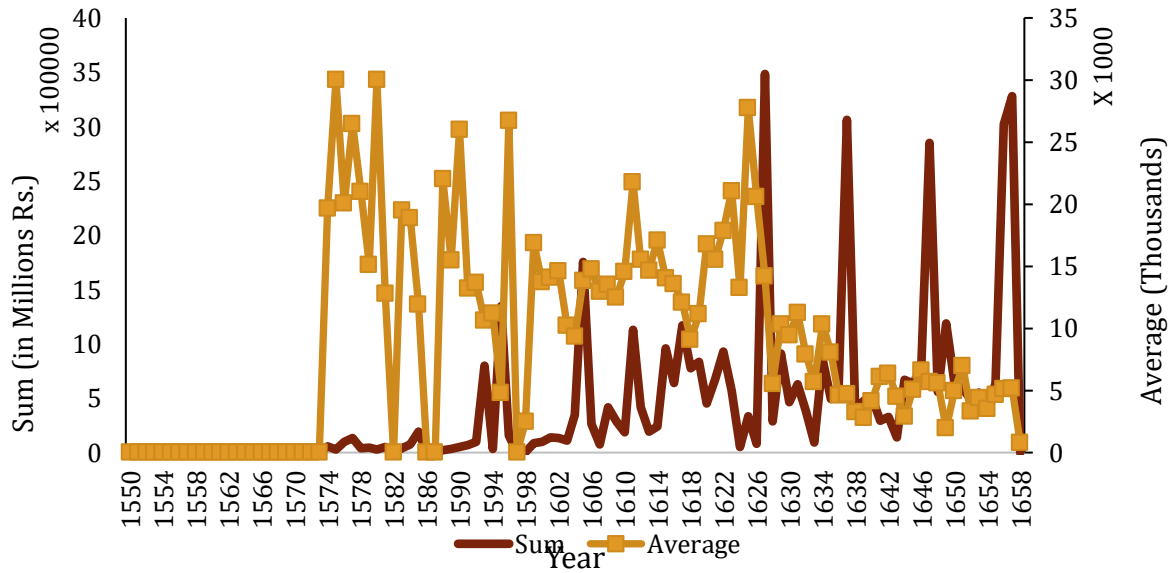
⁷⁹⁰ Moosvi, "The Silver Influx," 94

⁷⁹¹ Najaf Haider, "The Quantity Theory," 347; There is a debate on the effect of a 'price revolution' in India in consequence of New World Silver Imports. Moosvi suggests inflation was very low and moderate over the period: Moosvi, "The Silver Influx," 73

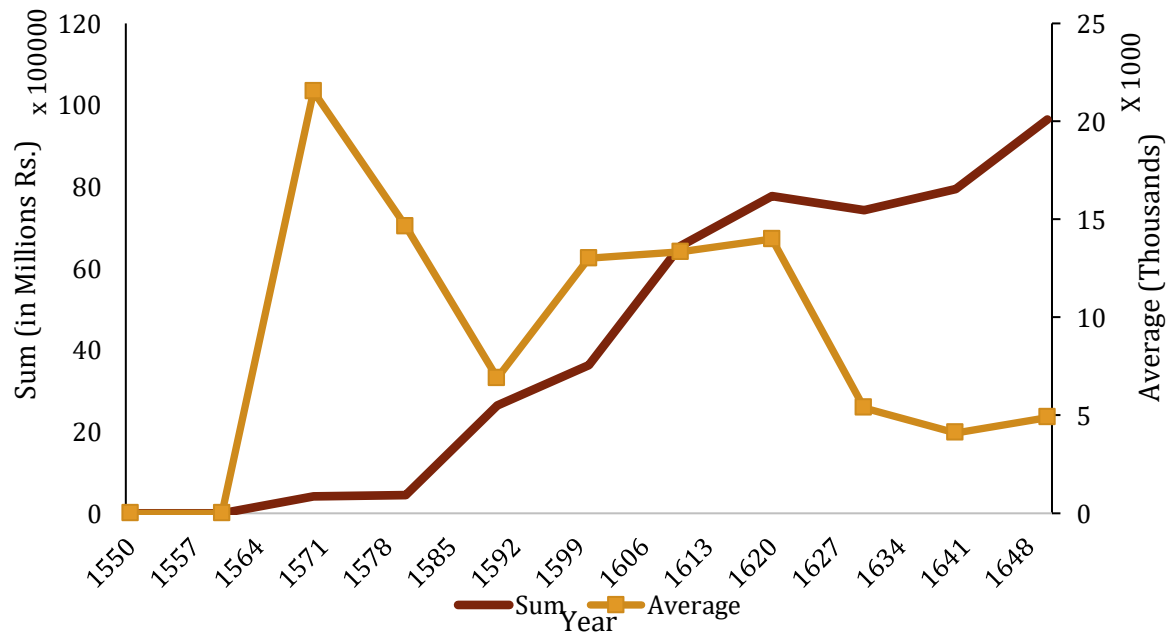
⁷⁹² I.e. the quantity and purity of silver within a government minted rupee remained constant. See: John F Richards, *The Unending Frontier: an Environmental History of the Early Modern World*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, 28.

Figure 4.2: Total and Average Salaries by year/decade

a) Salaries by year



b) Salaries by decade



Source: Derived from data in 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

How did the trends in government salary expenditure compare to the trends in population growth and total tax revenues over the course of the period? With limited data, the population of the empire after 1600 has been difficult to estimate, and the range of estimates calculated by economic historians is wide.⁷⁹³ These estimates are often further complicated by the territorial expansion of the state, where it is debatable which regions might be included for any specific year. To give an example of the variation, estimates of the population size during Akbar's reign range from 64 to 182 million.⁷⁹⁴ Yet what we can say with some certainty is that none of the estimates of population growth evident in the literature match the rate of increase in government salary spending over the entire period. Habib, for instance, estimates that it is likely the population of India increased from just under 150 million in 1600 to around 200 million in 1800, indicating a 33 percent increase in the size of population, which far below the increase in the size of government spending on officials.⁷⁹⁵ In a more recent paper, Broadberry, Custodis and Gupta have estimated population in 1650 was the same as in 1600 (142 million people), though they note the data for these periods is subject to relatively larger margins of error.⁷⁹⁶ What these statistics indicate is that either the size of Mughal population growth has been underestimated, or the size of government increased substantially relative to population regardless of which estimate of population growth is used.

A somewhat similar pattern is evident when studying the change in salary payments relative to revenue estimates of government income. Using Habib's estimates, total assessed revenues (*jama*) of government increased by 52 percent between 1605 and 1650.⁷⁹⁷ Yet the rise in total salary payments for these specific years in the database seems to be a much more substantial rise, which is from Rs. 95900 in 1600 to R. 641588 in 1650, an increase of around 569 percent. It should be noted that whilst this increase in salary payments is substantial, they remained far less in total than the total revenues Habib estimated. Yet there are clear indications the size of government spending increased at a higher rate relative to the size of government revenue generated.

⁷⁹³ Habib, "Population," 162-7

⁷⁹⁴ Moreland estimated 182 million and Moosvi estimated 64 million. Habib, "Population", 165-166. For examples on the debates on the calculation of figures, see: Shireen Moosvi, "Production, Consumption and Population in Akbar's Time." *The Indian economic and social history review*, 10(2), pp.181-195, 1973.

⁷⁹⁵ Habib, "Population," 167

⁷⁹⁶ See Table 1 in: Broadberry, Custodis and Gupta, "India and the Great Divergence," 61, Table 1

⁷⁹⁷ Habib estimates total revenues between 1600 and 1646-56 to increase from 5,834,690,344 dams (145,867,258 rupees) to 8,900,000,000 dams (222,500,000 Rupees) where there were 40 dams in a Rupee through the dynasty. See: Habib, *Agrarian System*, 454

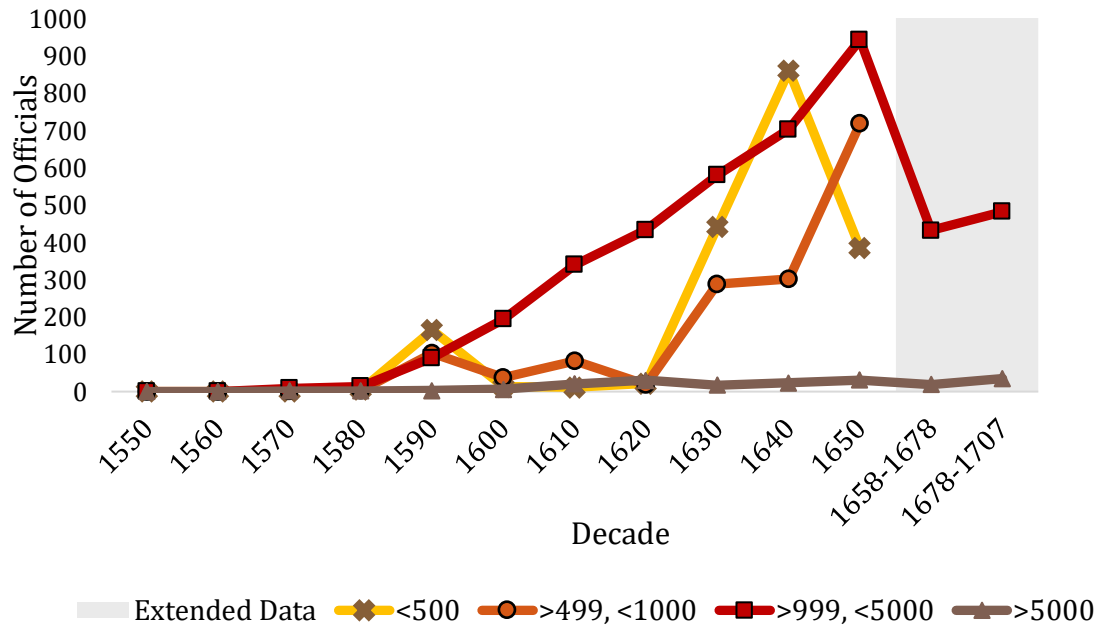
IV - II Estimating Trends in Average Salaries of Officials

Although total salary payments rose substantially over the period, trends in average salaries exhibit very different patterns. Between the 1590s and the 1620s, average salaries of officials were fairly stagnant, with perhaps a rise between the 1590s and 1600s.⁷⁹⁸ However, from the 1630s there is a dramatic fall in average monthly salaries from 13996 rupees to 5382 rupees, which remains consistent for the remainder of the period of study. As above, due to uncertainty of measuring inflation, this data has not been adjusted for inflation. However, if it were, the drop in real wage would be even lower in the later decades when inflation was higher.

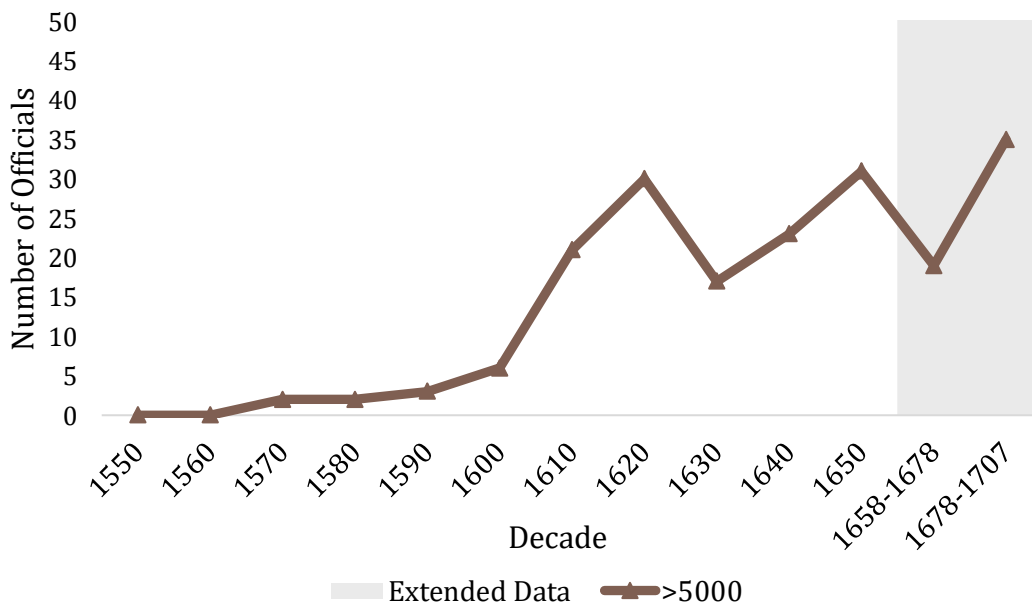
Although this change in average salaries can partly be explained by the new scales introduced by Shah Jahan, the change in salary scales cannot be attributed to most of the decline. As is shown in Appendix 4.D, if the original scales are applied consistently over the period, there is still a significant drop in the total salaries of officials. A greater contributing factor to the fall in average salaries is the increase in lower ranked officials in government. Figure 4.3(a) disaggregates the number of officials in each decade by their *zat* social groups and shows that the number of officials with *Zats* less than 1000 in rank grew faster between 1630 and 1650 relative to the period under Jahangir's reign. At the same time, while the number of officials with a *zat* rank between 1000-5000 increased consistently, the number of officials with a *zat* rank between 5000-10000 becomes stagnant or falls for the remainder of the period.

⁷⁹⁸ Overfocus on pre-1590s data has been avoided keeping in mind data is less reliable for those periods.

Figure 4.3: Number of Officials in each Social Class



b) Number of Officials with *zat* Greater than 5000 Only



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985). The scale of the y-axis is different in (b) to show the trend more clearly.

The nature of the increase in lower ranked officials raises several questions regarding the data which are worth addressing. Firstly, there seems to be a substantial change in the number of officials being recorded in later periods relative to earlier periods, suggesting these changes are indicative of government abilities of recording data as opposed to only an increase in the total number of actual officials. This is especially evident during Jahangir's reign, where the number of officials between 500-1000 *zat* recorded seems to remain stagnant and there are less than 50 officials with a *zat* below 500 recorded for every decade. Conversely, during Shah Jahan's reign there are 861 officials with a *zat* below 500 recorded for the 1640s decade alone. This clearly indicates that either Jahangir's government did not have the ability to keep track of the lower-level officials directly over the course of his reign, or rather Shah Jahan's government took a substantially greater interest in recording these lower level officials than his predecessor. Either way, the relatively greater importance accorded to officials with a *zat* below 1000 is evident.

Despite clear indications there were limitations to the number of lower-level officials recorded under Jahangir, the data still indicates there was a significant rise in lower-level officials under Shah Jahan. We can see this by looking at the rate of increase during Shah Jahan's reign relative to earlier periods. For specific years in each decade, the data is relatively comprehensive, especially for the year 1595 which is taken from the *Ain i Akbari*.⁷⁹⁹ Between 1595-1637, the number of officials with a *zat* between 500-1000 increased from 102 to 228, whereas the increase from 1637 to 1657 was much larger (228 to 719 officials). Moreover, there are indications the number of lower-level officials were increasing at a faster rate than higher level officials. Taking the years 1595 and 1649, for where the data seems to be the most comprehensive, as reference points we can see there is a 210 percent increase in the number of officials with *Zats* of less than 500 or between 500-1000, whereas official with *Zats* between 500-1000 only increased by 164 percent, and the number of officials with *Zats* greater than 500 remained stagnant over the period. This indicates there is a faster rate of growth of lower-level officials relative to higher level officials over the period, supporting the view the number of lower-level officials grew relative to higher-level officials. Whilst we may never be able to tell the actual number of unrecorded officials from any of these years, it is difficult to imagine the rise in recording

⁷⁹⁹ Trends of only *Zats* greater than 1000 can be seen in Appendix 4.G

of lower-level officials did not coincide with a proportional rise in employment of this group.

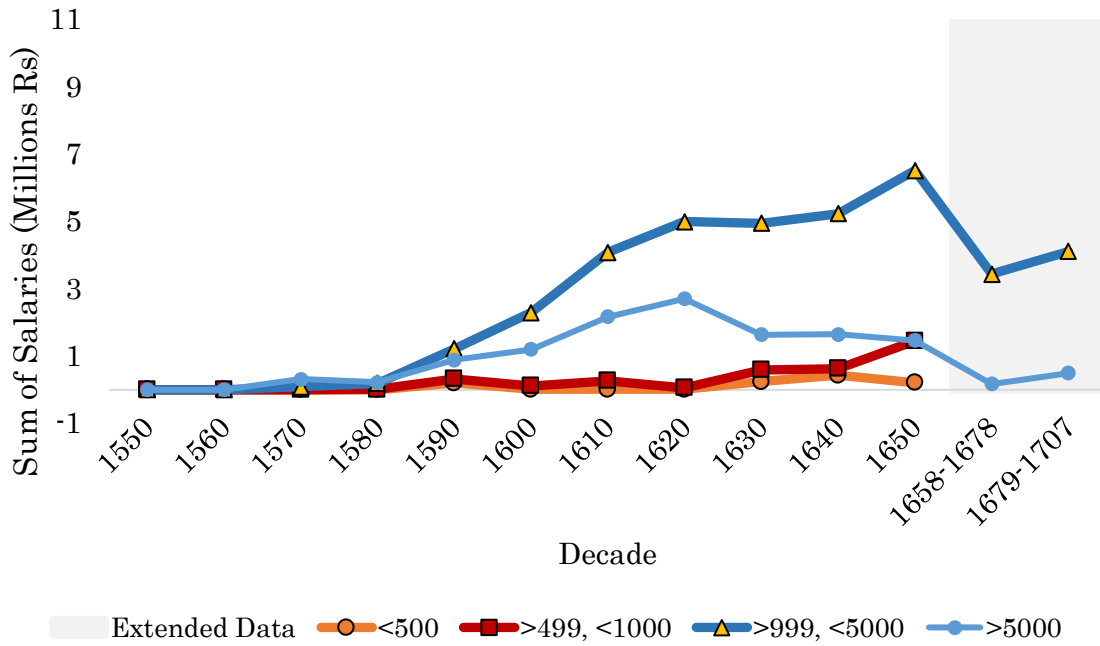
Concerns of the disproportionately lower representation of lower-class groups in Jahangir's reign might also raise questions regarding the accuracy of the estimates of salary changes and trends evident in the data. However, even when excluding officials with *Zats* less than 1000 to measure average salaries of more consistently represented groups, we see a substantial fall in the average salaries of officials over the course of Shah Jahan's reign (see Appendix 4.F). This indicates that even amongst officials with ranks above 1000 *Zat*, there were increasingly more officials hired of lower ranks than higher ranks. Moreover, when we look at specific years where we know the data is relatively more comprehensive, the pattern holds, albeit to a lesser extent.⁸⁰⁰ At the same time, there seems to have been limited growth of the highest salary ranks which remained stagnant or falling over the course of the period or, as in the case of ranks between 1000-5000, rose fairly consistently (Figure 4.3b).

Despite the very large increase in lower ranked officials with *Mansabs* less than 1000 *zat* over the course of the period, the total salary payments of these officials was not a substantial sum relative to the total salaries of officials with greater than 1000 *Zat*. Figure 4.4(a) shows that the sum paid to officials between 1000-5000 consistently remained greater than the sum of total salaries for lower ranked officials except perhaps until the 1650s. The substantial increase in government size seems to have come at little cost relative to the salaries paid to higher level officials. This change is reflected in Figure 4b, which shows the proportion of salary payments over time. Whilst the proportion of salaries paid to the highest band officials of *Zats* greater than 5000 remained steady for the decades between 1590-1620, from the 1630s these officials took a substantially smaller part of total revenue payments. Conversely, the proportion paid to officials of ranks below 1000 *zat* increased and the proportion of payments to officials with ranks between 1000-5000 remained steady, and constituted the largest cost to government spending at 60-70 percent of all monthly salaries.

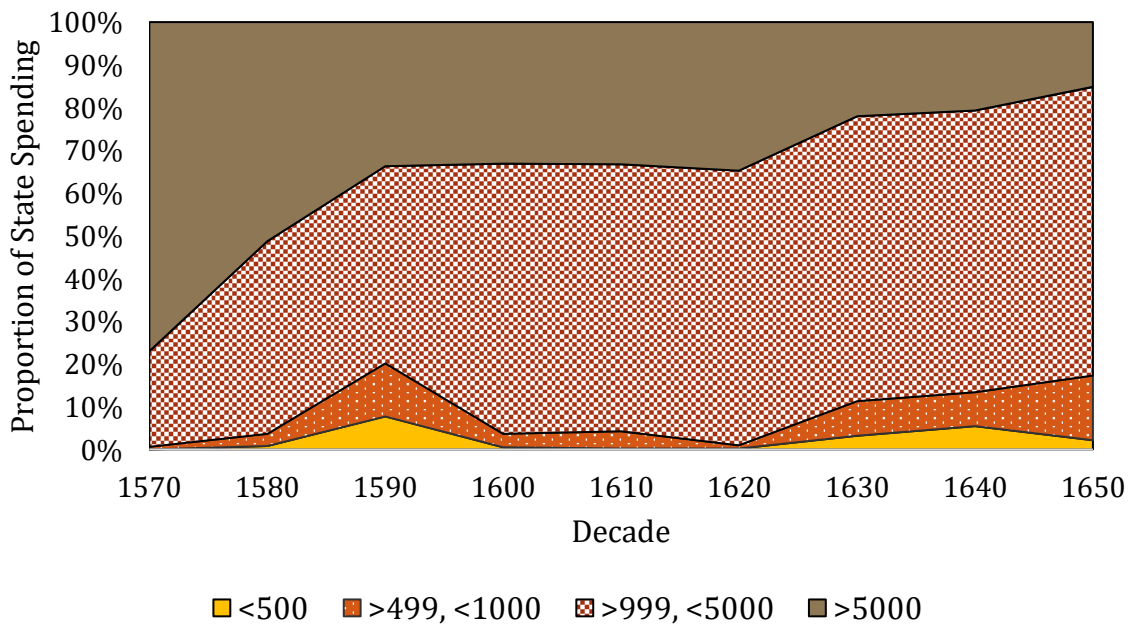
⁸⁰⁰ Other years where the data is relatively more comprehensive are 1605, 1617, 1627, 1637, 1649 and 1657. By looking at average salaries for these specific years we can gain confidence the patterns are not being driven by poor data in other years relative to these years (see Appendix 4.H).

Figure 4.4: Sum of Salaries paid to each Social Class

a) Sum of Salaries by *zat* Rank



B) Proportion of Salaries Paid to Each Class Group



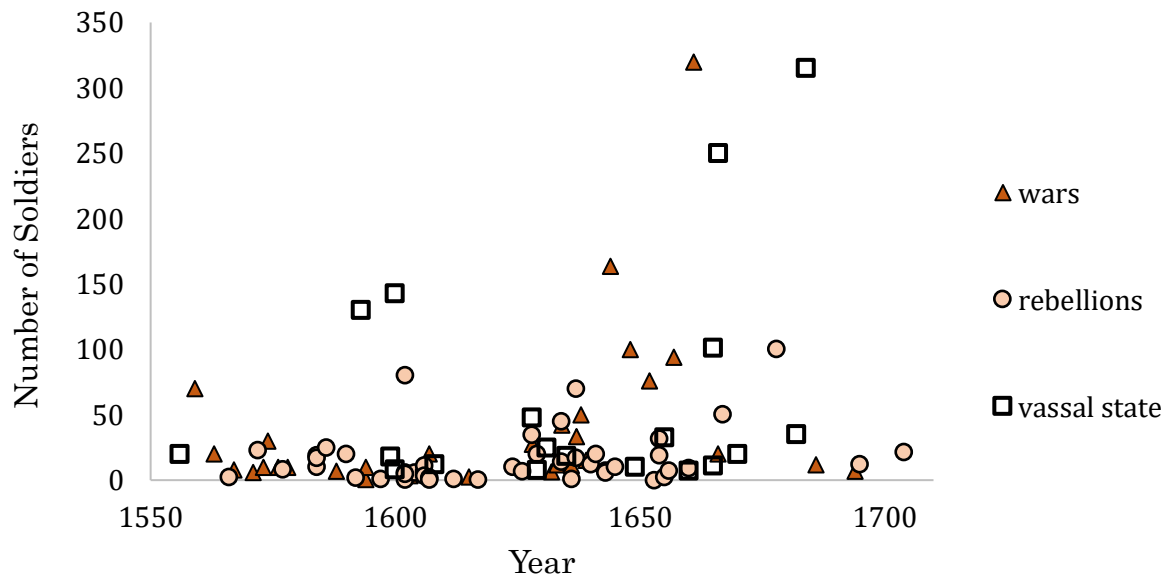
Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

IV-III Summary of Analysis

Broadly, we find the following patterns. Firstly, the size of the state in terms of number of officials and the total salaries paid to them was increasing substantially over the course of the period. However, these did not necessarily grow at the same rate over time. Whilst the number of state officials increased in a more exponential fashion between the 1630s and 1650s, the rate of growth of total payments to officials stagnated after the 1630s. We can also observe that from the 1630s, the average salaries of officials fell substantially and remained low or falling for the remainder of the period. This fall in average salaries can partially be explained by the new salary scales that were implemented by Shah Jahan's government which reduced the salaries of all officials, and partially by the substantial increase in the number of lower-level officials in government who were paid a lower salary relative to the higher level officials.⁸⁰¹ Conversely, the number of the highest-level officials remained stagnant during Shah Jahan's reign despite increasing during Jahangir's.

Overall, the structure of government spending across ranks of officials changed quite dramatically from the 1630s, where lower-level officials increasingly took a greater proportion of government spending relative to higher level officials. However, the salaries of officials with *Mansabs* below 1000 *zat* were so much lower than the salaries of officials above 1000 *zat* that the effect of this increase in total salary payments was not as significant, meaning the government increased its size without increasing total salaries payments as much as in previous years. The most fascinating pattern, however, is the timing of these structural changes which is evident in the data. The expansion of the Mughal government in the 1630s and changes in the administrative structure of government coincided with a period of high intensity conflict of a frequency and scale the government had not experienced in previous years (See Figure 4.5, which is the same as Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3).

⁸⁰¹ See Appendix 4.A

Figure 4.5: Number of Soldiers in Conflicts Disaggregated by Conflict Type

Source: Constructed from the Mughal Conflict Dataset. This Figure is the same as Figure 3.2, which has been repeated for ease of reading.

V. Conflict and Localisation of Administrative Capacity

V- I Relationship with Conflict and State Formation

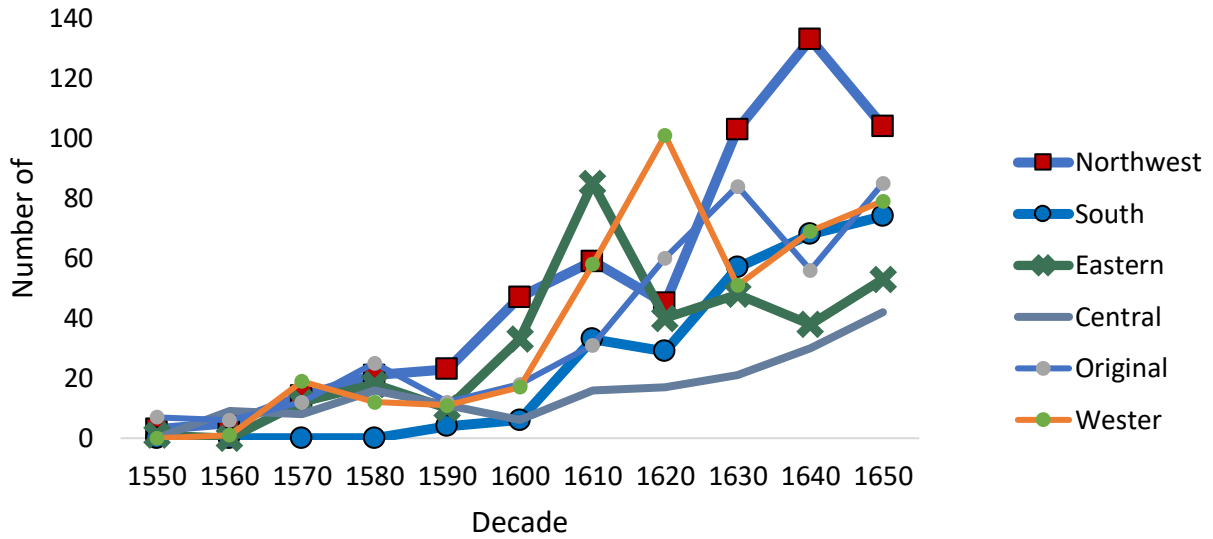
What are the potential drivers of the structural changes in government after 1630s discussed above, especially the increase in appointments of lower-level officials relative to higher level officials? There are a few different possible explanations. One possible explanation is the data is showing a growing concentration of power among the highest officials who had more subordinates to command. However, as the discussion later in the chapter will show, this explanation is unlikely because the structure of the state was not necessarily hierarchical. Another explanation might be that fewer higher-level officials

were appointed because they were efficient in managing large territories, and there was no need for more of these officials despite the conquest of new territories. However, this explanation is equally unlikely given the higher prevalence of conflict and famines over this period (discussed in the last chapter). It is also unlikely the stagnation in the number of higher-level officials reflected a greater convergence of military and civilian duties, where the number of officials appointed to different roles in government also increased.

A more plausible explanation for the structural shift in government is that the increased frequency and intensity of conflicts from the 1630s incentivised the change as a way of both reducing expenditure and raising administrative capacity of the state. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this chapter to prove this link conclusively, to some degree the relationship can be discerned by observing the locations of where officials were being appointed over time. Figure 4.6 shows the number of officials appointed to each province over time (by decade). The number of officials appointed to most provinces increased after 1630, however there was a relatively larger increase in officials appointed to the North-Western, the Southern, and the Central provinces respectively. Figure 4.7, which maps the intensity of conflicts in the 1630s, indicates these were also the regions where the state faced the most conflicts in this decade.⁸⁰² The correlation between provinces which saw the largest increase of official appointments and provinces with high conflict intensity suggest there was a relationship between the increase in the number of state officials and the increase in appointments.

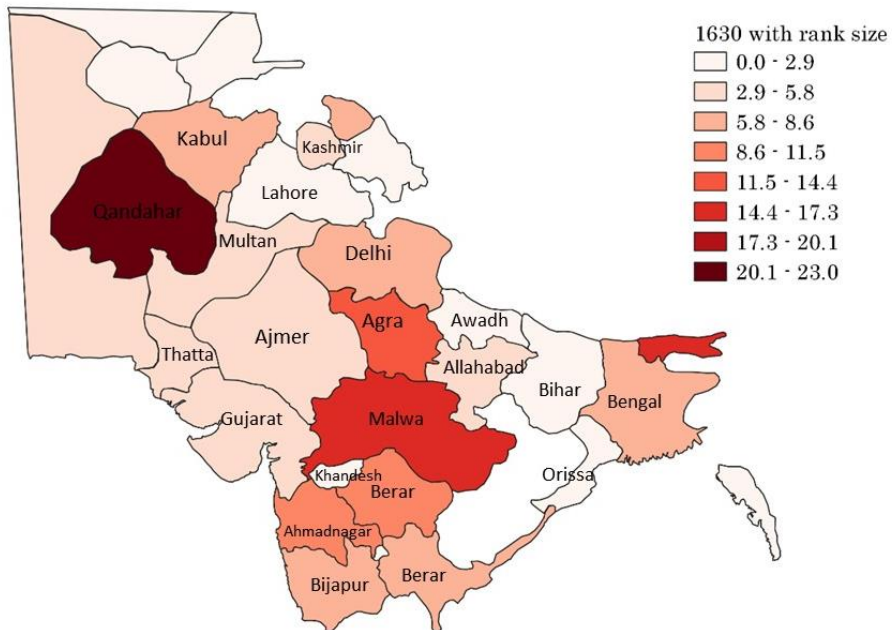
⁸⁰² These are also regions which faced high levels of conflicts over the course of the period of study. See Appendix 4.I

Figure 4.6: Number of Appointments by Province



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985) **Grouping of Regions:** Northwest: Kabul, Lahore, Kashmir, Qandahar, Multan; Southern: Deccan States (Aurangabad, Berar, Khandesh); East: Bengal, Bihar, Orissa; Western: Gujarat, Thatta; Central: Malwa, Ajmer; Original: Delhi, Agra, Awadh, Allahabad

Figure 4.7: Conflict Intensity by Province (1630s)



Source: Constructed from the Mughal conflict dataset. The data is weighted by conflict size.

That conflict had a dramatic effect on the development of the Mughal state is not surprising. As was discussed in the introduction, the role conflicts played in state capacity development has been explored extensively in the literature.⁸⁰³ In Europe especially, the high costs of war is believed to have incentivised governments to increase tax efficiency and state capacity.⁸⁰⁴ As has already been highlighted in this thesis, the Mughals were well accustomed with the economics of warfare from the start of the dynasty, where high levels of conflict were prevalent through emperor Akbar and Jahangir's reigns. Yet the conflicts the state faced in the 1630s were of a scale and frequency unlike those the empire had witnessed before. The size and frequency of the new military engagements would have put substantial pressure on the treasury. The ability of the state to increase payments to officials via conquest of new lands became more limited as newly conquered regions did not yield as promising revenues, or where the remaining bordering polities were more expensive to conquer.⁸⁰⁵ Moreover, adverse weather conditions and increased famine are also likely to have made it difficult for the state to demand higher revenues from the peasantry.⁸⁰⁶

By hiring a larger number of officials at lower salaries the state was able to address both the need to increase its administrative capacity in response to conflicts as well as save on costs related to high salaries of officials, which had been standardised earlier in the regime. Through changing of the salary scales to lower average compensation paid to officials, Shah Jahan's government was able to expand the manpower of the empire in a relatively short period of time even without a proportional rise in revenue. There is reason to believe this strategy was effective. For example, if we assume there were no diminishing returns to administrative capacity in consequence of the large increases in number of officials, the state could be said to have tripled its administrative capacity between Akbar and Shah Jahan's reigns.⁸⁰⁷

Although it is clear why the state would want to lower salaries to save on costs, the patterns still raise questions on the labour market conditions which allowed the state

⁸⁰³ See this Thesis' Introduction's section on State Capacity Literature

⁸⁰⁴ See this Thesis' Introduction's section on State Capacity Literature

⁸⁰⁵ Balkh and Badakhshan are examples of lands which the Mughals took years to conquer. Although the state expanded, often they described new areas as being full of jungle and uncultivated. The Mughals constantly struggled, for instance, to compete with the Deccan sultanates. See the chronicler's comments on the difference: Inayat Khan, *An Abridged*, 351

⁸⁰⁶ See discussion in Chapter 3

⁸⁰⁷ This is not an implausible notion if the *Faujdar's* ambit of control did not decrease over the period, however since authority could overlap there is a chance this was unlikely.

to make these changes. The fall in salaries indicate new officials were willing to join the empire for lower pay than offered by the state in earlier years, which begs the question why officials might have accepted a fall in compensation, especially in a competitive environment for administrative skills. There are two potential explanations. One is that the state was widening its ranks to include lower skilled (or less experienced) individuals who were willing to accept a lower salary. This could have led to the incorporation of officials' who were more closely connected to their localities and therefore were better able to bridge information gaps between the state and local communities. Choon Hwee Koh has argued there was similar expansion of lower level officials in the Ottoman empire, where she notes the Ottoman government no longer hired scribes that received formal training and instead hired administrators with more localised skills.⁸⁰⁸ In the Mughal empire as well many of the Munshis (meaning scribes and accountants) hired in the seventeenth century came from local Hindu families of the regions they worked in, meaning these scribes were often able to better walk the line between Persianate culture of the Mughal state and that of their own localities very well.⁸⁰⁹ This was also the period where 'process' school scholarship has argued the state increasingly became more of a 'paper empire,' as there was a notable increase in state record keeping and development of administration.⁸¹⁰

An alternative, though not mutually exclusive, explanation is that these changes were the result of a wider economic decline. The higher levels of famine, conflict, insecurity, and unemployment in the latter half of the seventeenth century which were discussed in the previous chapters could have in turn affected employment opportunities available for government officials as all 'employers' were looking to cut costs. Shah Jahan's government experienced one of the largest famines across South Asia, which would have put even the wealthier government officials under economic pressure.⁸¹¹ Analysing data from Dutch East India Company archives, Pim de Zwart and Jan Lucassen have found evidence of a general fall wages during the second half of the seventeenth century.⁸¹² That wages were declining across different regions and not only

⁸⁰⁸ Koh, "The Ottoman Postmaster," 130

⁸⁰⁹ Muzaffar Alam, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. *Writing the Mughal World*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011, 314

⁸¹⁰ Alam and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," 31

⁸¹¹ Khafi Khan often commented on the difficult circumstances wealthy people faced over the period. See: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 274, 497

⁸¹² Zwart and Lucassen, "Poverty Or Prosperity In Northern India," 647

within the government indicates there was a wider pattern wage declines in the subcontinent during the seventeenth century. Higher levels of unemployment might also explain why emperor Aurangzeb ordered that no new officials were to be accepted into government during a time when there was little cash available in state treasury.⁸¹³ The chronicler Khafi Khan noted that when the emperor reprimanded the *Mansabdar* Ruh Allah Khan for presenting him with new orders of appointment despite the emperor's ban, the official responded as follows:

“The Empire of Hindustan, a gift from God, is a refuge for the rulers of the seven climes. It is beyond all dictates of obedience to tell a word of despair to the people who are in need, it would be an act of disrespect. Our duty is to make a request but you have the authority of accepting or rejecting it.”⁸¹⁴

Ruh Allah Khan's response implies there was a general economic need and pressure for the state to employ officials because of wider crises. This also indicates the number of requests to join the state administration remained very high, which in turn suggests demand for officialdom did not decline despite falls in wages. However, the chronological incongruence between wage trends derived from Dutch sources and Athar Ali's dataset indicates economic decline was not the only factor affecting the wage decline for government employees. The fall in government wages occurred earlier than the general wage declines identified from Dutch sources, suggesting the government salaries first declined for reasons which occurred earlier than the economic crisis evident in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The higher costs of conflict and the need to increase administrative capacity therefore seems a more likely explanation for the patterns in the data.

That the increase in the number of *Mansabdars* was driven directly by a need for administrative capacity, as opposed to only military capacity, is evident in two ways. Firstly, we know that emperor Shah Jahan imposed new regulations on *Mansabs* which lowered the size of military contingents *Mansabdars* were required to maintain depending on whether they were posted in provinces outside of their *jagir* assignments or whether

⁸¹³ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 410

⁸¹⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*, 410

they were posted in Balkh or Badakhshan.⁸¹⁵ This means although the number of *Mansabdars* might have tripled in size, the size of the military contingent under them would be less regardless of the numerical increase in officials. If the government's aim was to increase the size of the army, the number of contingents assigned would have increased or at least remained stable.

The second piece of evidence is the large increase in civilian appointments within this period. Figure 4.8 below, which disaggregates the appointments by the role officials played, shows that between the 1590s to 1650s, the number of officials appointed within government increased across all departments of government (referring to the different categories of roles in government).⁸¹⁶ However, the number of appointments of provincial governors (i.e. *Subahdars*), which had the largest increase between 1600-1620, decreased substantially and consistently over the next few decades. Conversely, we see a much sharper increase in the number of *Faujdars* (sub-provincial governors) which surpasses the appointments of *Subahdars*. We also see increases in the number of *Bakhshis* (military officers), *Diwans* (Revenue Officers), *Qiledars* (fort commanders), *Daroghas* (Superintendents) and *Waqia Navis'* (news reporters). Whilst the number of officials in all these departments increased, differences in the size of increase within the departments of government is very telling, especially as many of these departments which increased had large administrative components. This is true even of the role of a *Bakhshis*, whose responsibilities primarily involved organising appointments of *Mansabdars*, acting as paymaster for them and managing state intelligence operations such as relaying information of Secret News Reporters within the empire (*Kufia Navis*).⁸¹⁷ All *Mansabdars* were required to maintain military contingents, but only some were appointed to civilian governance and administrative roles.⁸¹⁸ It was unlikely the state would have increased administrative appointments if there was no need for them. The increase in these civilian appointments therefore points to a rise in the bureaucratic and administrative capacity

⁸¹⁵ This is in reference to the rule of one-third, one fourth etc which were designed so that only a certain portion of a Mansabdar's military contingent were required to be kept when not in conflict. There is question if the rule of one third was enforced. There are questions of whether these were placed during Jahangir or Shah Jahan's reign, however the rule of one fifth was certainly placed in Shah Jahan's reign. The reasons for these changes is speculated to have been reduced adherence during the reign of Jahangir, though there does not seem to be proof of this. Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 54

⁸¹⁶ An understanding of what is meant by 'departments' and how they are categorised is given in Appendix 4.D

⁸¹⁷ Richards provides a description of the various administrative duties Bakhshis held. See: *Richards, The Mughal Empire*, 59, 63-4, 68-9

⁸¹⁸ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 149

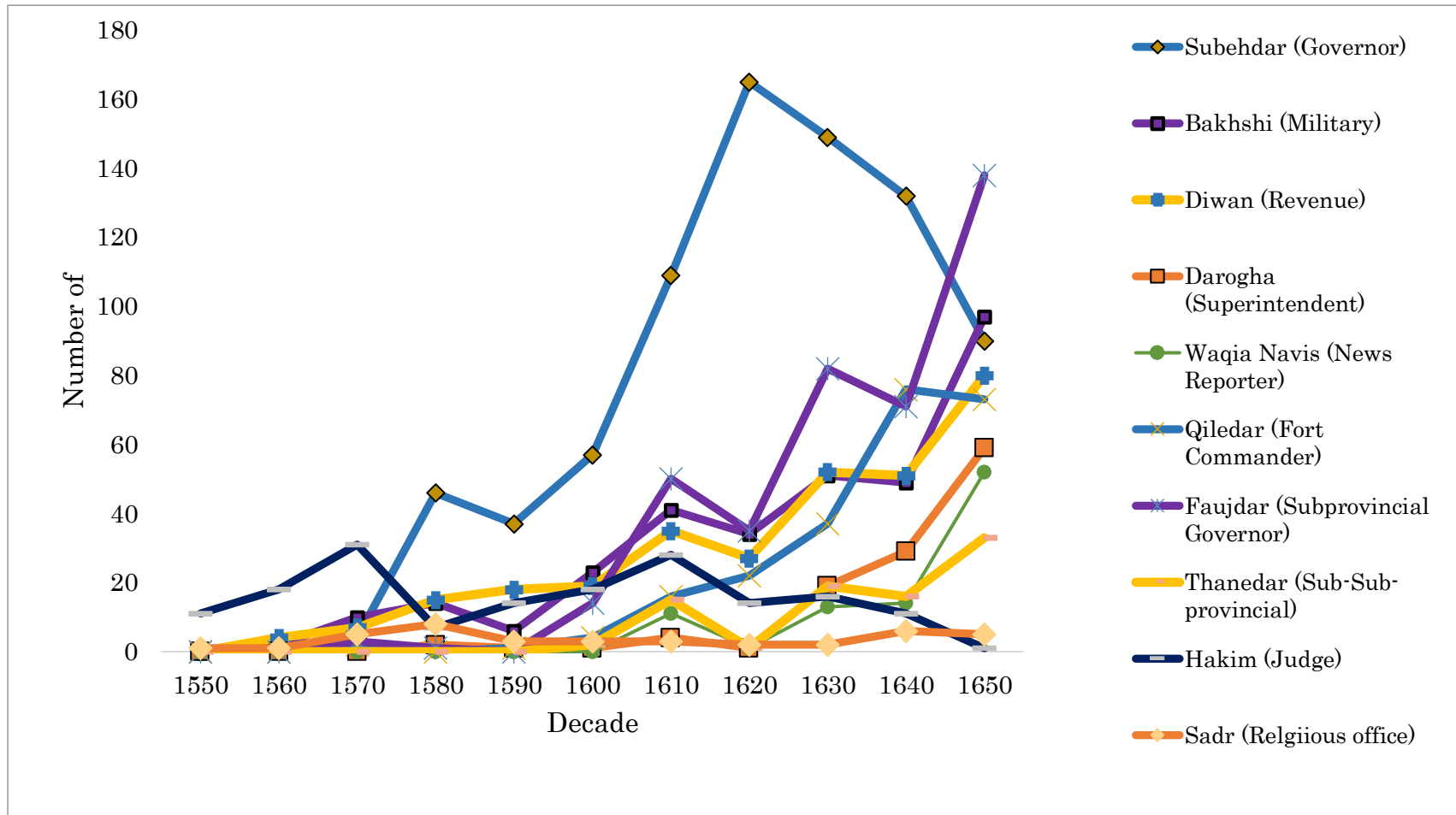
of the state. This is furthered by the fact that there are large increases in purely administrative departments like that of the *Diwans* (i.e. revenue officers) or the *Waqia Navis* (i.e. news reporters).

What is relevant about the groups which increased in number is the specific nature of their responsibilities. *Faujdar*s, for instance, would have command of specific *Sarkars* or a few *Parganahs*, and this specificity meant they were usually appointed to the localities they were needed most (especially if the *Faujdar* was more skilled).⁸¹⁹ Conversely, a *Subahdar*'s ambit of responsibility over a province was relatively more broad and often more supervisory than related to direct administration.⁸²⁰ That the number of *Faujdar*s were increasing and *Subahdar*s decreasing suggests the state was strengthening its direct control of more localised areas and perhaps becoming more strategic regarding where it focused its administrative resources. Increasing local administrative capacity would have helped to make governance more tailored to regions of appointment and would have allowed for a more direct channel of communication between the state and localities. Moreover, the rise in appointments for purely administrative roles in government (like those of the *Diwans* and *Waqia Navis*) is indicative of the state attempting to improve the administrative abilities of the empire. In short, the governance structure was becoming more 'localised,' which helped to reduce information gaps between the state and localities.

⁸¹⁹ Singh, "Centre and Periphery," 317

⁸²⁰ See for instance the contracts for the position of Subahdar which requires them to pledge to "assiste and aide" the *Faujdar*s. Conversely, there is no similar requirement in *Faujdar*'s commands to 'obey' the Subahdar: Richards, *Document Forms*, 32; 53; Noman Ahmad Siddiqi. "Pulls and Pressure on the *Faujdar* Under the Mughals" *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 29 (1967): 243-55;

Figure 4.8: Number of Officials by Job Type (or Department in Government)



Source: Derived from data in 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

V- II Political and Fiscal Patterns of Centralisation

It was emphasised in the introduction that debates on the Mughal state have largely revolved around the degree of centralisation of the empire as it changed over time. Much of the scholarship in these debates tend to focus on how much tax revenue and autonomy was retained by intermediaries relative to the central government, where a centralised state would be able to concentrate power over tax collection and administrations.⁸²¹ Bearing this in mind, this section will use salaries and numbers of officials' data to analyse the evolution of the centralisation of the Mughal state over time using three different measurements of the fiscal and political autonomy of intermediaries. The first of these measurements is the salary payments of officials as distributed across local and central elites, where an increase in salaries of local elites can indicate a shift within the power-balance of the state's administration. The second measurement is looking at the proliferation of *Zamindars* who had more hereditary property rights, and therefore greater relative autonomy than other groups. The last is to study regional differences in officials' salaries, where higher salaries in more remote regions might signify a differentiation in bargaining power or a need for a more competent official in those regions.⁸²² The analysis finds a mixed picture, where the state's evolution cannot be characterised as necessarily centralised or decentralised, but rather 'localised' (i.e. where local elites gained in income and authority). This is in line with the view that changes in government reflect an attempt to bridge information gaps at the lower level.

Before looking at these measurements, it is important to discuss the structural form of the Mughal bureaucracy, as the limited hierarchical organisation within the state's bureaucracy has implications for our interpretation of the data. On face value, and with the assumption that the empire could be modelled as a Weberian-style bureaucracy, it could be argued that the fall in higher-level officials and increase in lower-level officials identified in earlier sections was the consequence of a greater centralisation of the state. For instance, the declining number of *Subahdars* (governors) and sharply rising number of *Faujdar*s (sub-provincial governors) could be interpreted as administrative power

⁸²¹ This is discussed in the Thesis' Introduction in the section on 'State Capacity Literature'

⁸²² For example, we saw in Chapter 2 Case Study 1 that the Mughals struggled to find officials willing and capable of managing Balkh and Badakhshan.

becoming concentrated within fewer governors who became in charge of a much larger corps of soldiers. Yet it is unclear to what degree we can consider *Faujdar*s as subordinate to *Subahdar*s, especially with respect to whether a *Faujdar* was obliged to obey the instructions of a *Subahdar*. Whilst *Faujdar*s were certainly a lower administrative unit to the *Subahdar*s and more likely to receive significantly smaller ranks (and pay), the nature of the relationship between the *Subahdar*s and the *Faujdar*s was not necessarily one of power hierarchy. For instance, Stephen Blake has described the empire as a 'Patrimonial Bureaucracy,' where he argues the emperor had a direct command of and a personal relationship with each official separately as opposed to their being a multi-staged hierarchy of command.⁸²³ Each official took orders directly from the emperor (or his immediate subordinates) as opposed to from the officer ranked above him. Proponents of this view additionally note that officials had relative autonomy in terms of how they administered their jurisdiction, where the central government's role was one of oversight than direct administration. However, the emperor's ability to confiscate the rank or position held by an official meant the emperor was able to exact greater deliberate control on the power and administration of intermediaries, and thus concentrate power in his hands.⁸²⁴

Whilst Blake considers the centralised system of assignment an indication of the concentration of power of the central state, literature on the Ottoman empire presents a very different interpretation of this structure in governance.⁸²⁵ For instance, Yasin Arslantas has argued this system of direct control did not concentrate power within the central government, but instead can be considered as a "controlled decentralisation"⁸²⁶ designed to protect the incumbent ruler from losing too much power. He argues that in a system where the government was forced to share autonomy with peripheral elites in order to administer lands effectively, the central government's right to confiscate tax-farming rights served as a protection for the ruler. Applying Arslantas' model to the Mughal government, the increase lower-level officials therefore does not necessarily mean

⁸²³ Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire," 88

⁸²⁴ Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, 60

⁸²⁵ As was discussed in Section II of this chapter, the Ottoman institutional structure bears similarities with the Mughal structure, and therefore the literature can be a good reference for comparison.

⁸²⁶ Arslantas, "Making Sense of Müsadere Practice," 2

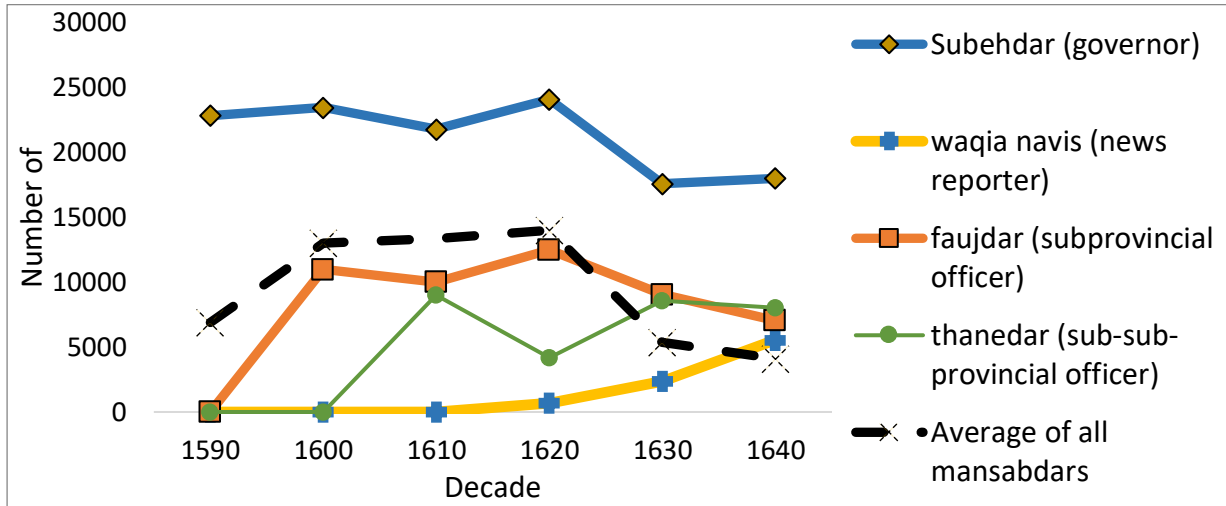
a greater concentration of power with the central government, but a greater division of the state into smaller units with each official directly reporting to the central government.

This brings us to the first measurement of state centralisation: the relative income of localised officials compared to more central officials. If we consider salary payments to be a reflection of the increased power and influence of officials, it seems local officials and those with more administrative roles increased their power relative to more central officials. Figure 4.9(a) shows that whilst the majority of appointments faced a significant drop in salaries, the salaries of the *Faujdars* (sub-provincial governors), Thanedars (sub-sub-provincial governors) and the *Waqia Navis* (News Reporters) appear to break these trends. Although the average salaries of *Faujdars* does also decrease after the 1620s, it does so by a much smaller amount than the average of all the *Mansabdars*. In fact, where *Faujdars* would historically have had held salaries below average, after the 1620s their average salaries were consistently higher than the average. A similar pattern is evident for the salaries of the Thanedars, which increased (or at least remained fairly stable) to become a higher salary grade than the average. The most telling however are the salaries of the *Waqia Navis* who experienced a steady and rapid increase in their average salaries over the period. Since their role was directly related to keeping a check on other officials and directly reporting incidents to the emperor, it most directly shows the state was increasingly focused on improving its intelligence gathering abilities.

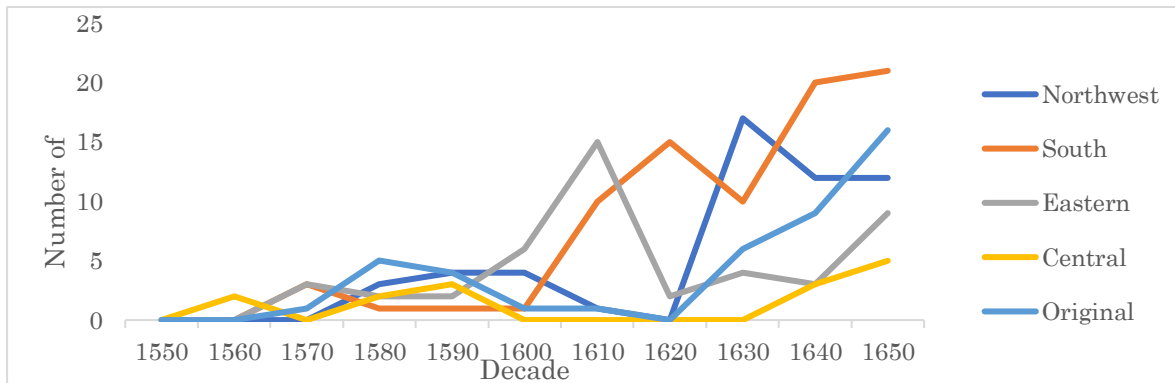
We can also see there was an emphasis on growing the administrative capacity of the state specifically within more remote regions of the empire (or at least regions furthest from the capital). Figure 4.9(b) and (c) graph the numbers of *Diwans* in each province, and the average salaries of *Diwans* in each province over time. Together they show *Diwans* were tended to be appointed to more remote regions like North-western and Southern provinces over time, and that the salaries of *Diwans* appointed to these regions also grew. The increase of salaries means either appointing more skilled administrative officials there warranted a higher salary or there was a need to incentivise officials to with higher salaries to improve revenue collection related performance. Whichever the reason, the rise in numbers and salaries of *Diwans* in remote regions indicates the state was increasing the administrative capacity in these areas over time.

Figure 4.9: Salaries of Officials by Job Type (Or Department)

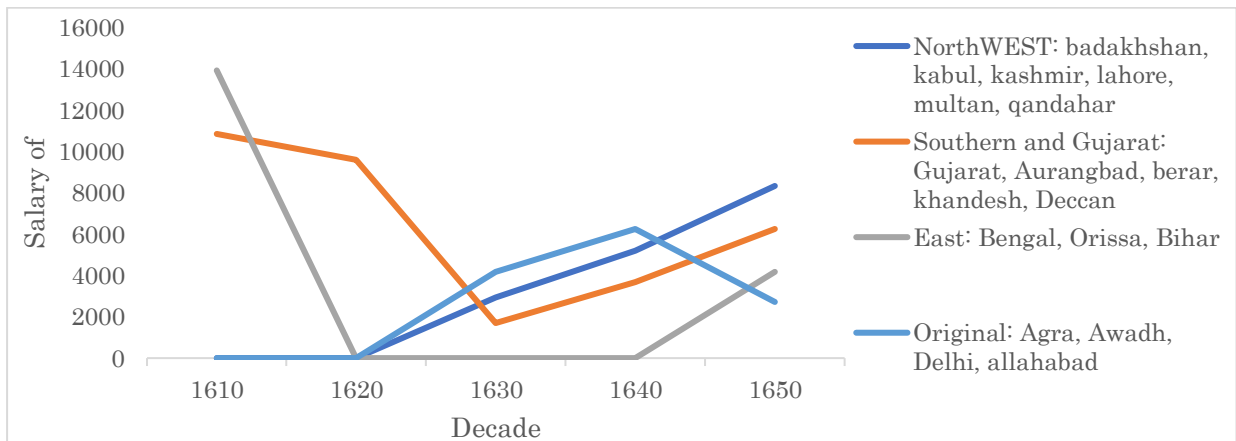
a) Average salaries of *Mansabdars* by Role



b) Total number of *Diwans* by Region



c) Average Salaries of *Diwan* by Region



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

The second way of measuring the centralisation of the state is to study the proliferation of groups with more hereditary property rights in land: namely the *Zamindars* and Rajput clans.⁸²⁷ Unlike other ranking officers whose appointments and rights to land were not hereditary, the *Zamindars* had hereditary rights to regions which they were local to and knowledgeable of.⁸²⁸ Powerful Rajputs, often referred to as *Zamindars* within the chronicles, also held hereditary property rights though these could be held by the clans as opposed to individual rulers.⁸²⁹ As the state theoretically did not have the same power of confiscation over these groups and individuals, an increase in their numbers or their salaries (which often reflected their *jagirs'* value) would suggest a greater amount of land was out of the state's control. Unlike the *Mansabdars* who were rotated regularly to prevent them becoming attached to any region, *Zamindars* and Rajputs were also entrusted to manage revenue collection and administration of their localities for longer periods of time, again showing they had more autonomy and regional control than *Mansabdars*.⁸³⁰ By these two mechanisms, we can infer from a rise in the numbers or salaries of *Zamindars* that there was an increased decentralisation of the state.

The data paints a very different picture to the role of *Zamindars* in government than the literature has previously suggested. The *Zamindars* are often described in the literature as challengers to state authority, and as a group the government chose to remove.⁸³¹ However, the dataset presents a different picture of these relationships. As shown in Figure 4.10, rather than declining, the number of *Zamindars* and Rajputs in government increase over the period. Moreover, there is a discernible spike in the number of these intermediaries employed in the 1630s, especially of the officials labelled *Zamindars*, which persists for the remainder of the period. The timing again suggests conflicts were a driving force in changes made to the structure of government. Although some of this increase can be attributed to the expansion of the state through the

⁸²⁷ It has been noted both in the introduction and chapter 1 that the category of a Raja includes *Zamindars*, which also applies here. However, I noted Rajput Clans separately because the hereditary right was sometimes held within the family as opposed to within the leading individual.

⁸²⁸ Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 12, 85

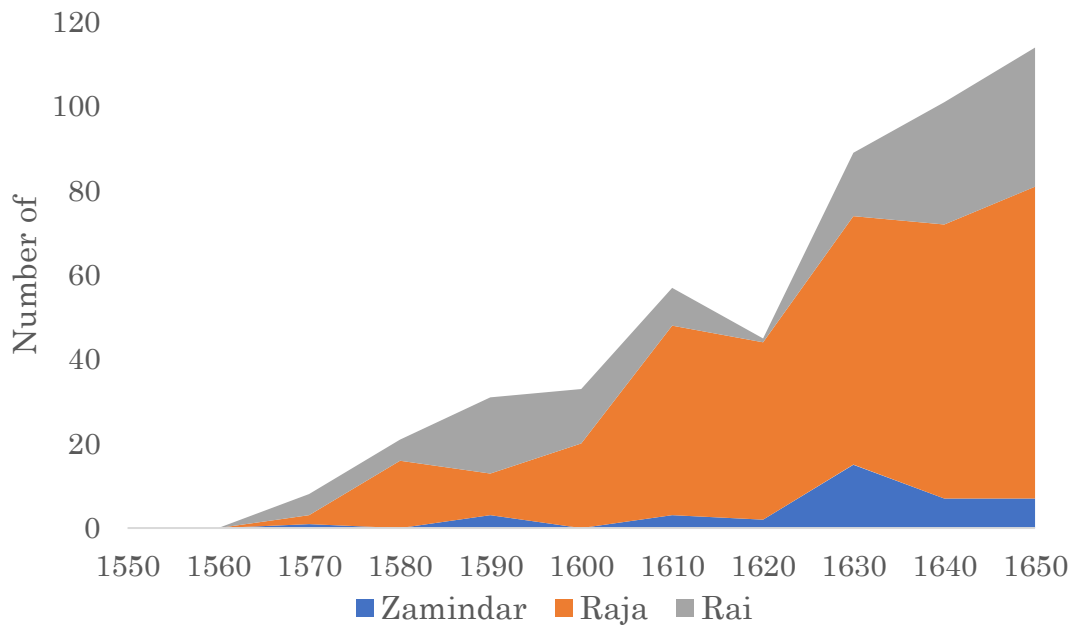
⁸²⁹ *The Mughal Nobility* 79

⁸³⁰ Theoretically *Mansabdars* also did not pay a percentage of tax revenue to the state and could claim the entire revenue of their *jagirs*. However, the implementation of the monthly scales could sometimes mean there was a difference between expected and actually collected taxation. See: Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 46. *Mansabdars* were also expected to bring gifts to the emperor when visiting, and their rebellion might additionally take over territories for long periods of time.

⁸³¹ See for instance: Habib, *The Agrarian System*, 385; and Alam, "Aspects of Agrarian Uprisings,"

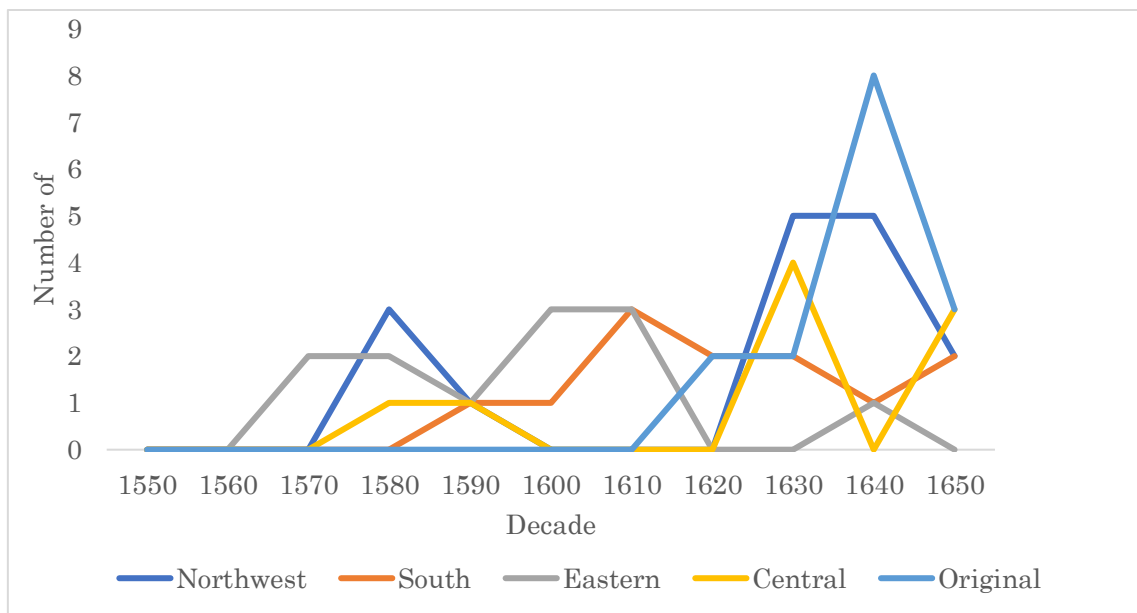
conquering of new lands, many of these appointments were located within the 'Original' provinces where administrative capacity of the state was strong, indicating territorial expansion of government alone cannot explain the increase in number (see Figure 4.11). As *Zamindars* were more knowledgeable of and influential in their local regions, their increase in number within the state administration further supports the view that there was a greater focus on the localisation of the state for reasons of improving administrative efficiency.

Figure 4.10: Number of Zamindars, Rajas and Rai over time.



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

Figure 4.11: Number of Zamindar, Raja, Rai Appointments by Region



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

It could be possible that the increase in *Zamindars* relates to lower ranked *Zamindars* as opposed to higher ranked *Zamindars*, which would then indicate that whilst *Zamindars* were increasing in number their income and power was decreasing over time. If it were true, it could suggest a greater concentration of power within the central state relative to local *Zamindars*. However, the evidence suggests this was not the case. Figure 4.12 shows the number of *Zamindars* disaggregated by social group (i.e. the classes of ranks used by Ali). By disaggregating *Zamindars* by class group is possible to get a sense of the social status of the *Zamindars* within government,⁸³² and also allows us to extend the data for higher class *Zamindars* into later years.⁸³³ The graph shows that *Zamindars* of all class groups were increasing over the period, and the increase in number of highest ranked *Zamindars* (those holding ranks of 5000 *Zat* or greater) was more notable. Moreover, if the numbers from the extended data is consistent and is included in the analysis,⁸³⁴ this increase in the higher ranked *Zamindars* continued in later periods as well.

There is also evidence that the Rajputs in government also experienced an increase the share of government revenues over time. Figure 4.13 shows the average salaries of officials disaggregated by ethnic group. It shows the average salaries of the Rajputs increased substantially over the period relative to all other ethnicities (including Iranis and Turanis who were traditionally more numerous and better paid),⁸³⁵ despite being one of the lower salaried ethnicities before 1620s. In fact, the ethnic composition of the state seems to follow a similar pattern. Figure 4.13(b), which estimates how the ethnic composition of government changed over time, shows that whilst the Irani and Turani *Mansabdars* continued to compose a large proportion of officials in government, the state became increasingly more ethnically diverse from the 1630s. The groups which saw the

⁸³² As was outlined in the Thesis' Introduction, in the Section on the State's Administrative Structure. There were three types of *Zamindars*: primary *Zamindars* who were akin to upper class peasants; secondary *Zamindars* who were like lower level state officials and chieftains who were more like petty rulers of their own autonomous lands. Stratification of the data by rank class allows us to see these differentiations more clearly.

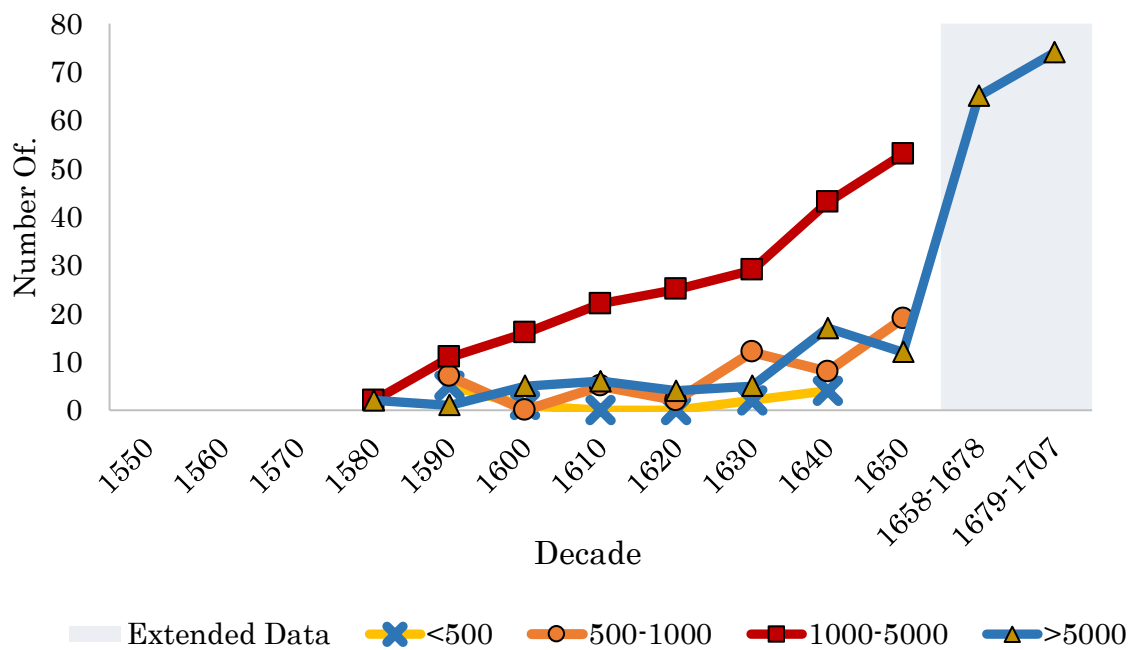
⁸³³ For the extended data in the shaded area (which represents data after 1658 from Athar Ali's 'The Mughal Nobility,' (i.e. the points in the grey shaded area of Figure 4.12), it is worth keeping in mind the values represent the sum across two decades as opposed to one decade as the data before 1650 shows. To get a more comparable average, the numbers should be halved. However, even when the numbers are halved the trend still holds.

⁸³⁴ See previous footnote for a discussion on the need to consider adjustments in numbers based on the different data sources and what that means for trends.

⁸³⁵ Iranis and Turanis were Central Asian officials. For a description of them, see: Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 16-19

greatest increase (in order of the size of the increase), were the Rajput, Maratha and Abyssinian officials, these being ethnic groups quite differentiated from the Timurid rulers. The greater incorporation of these groups is indicative of the ethnic composition of the state better reflecting the ethnicities of the groups which were being ruled, especially of those which were most rebellious and difficult to control.

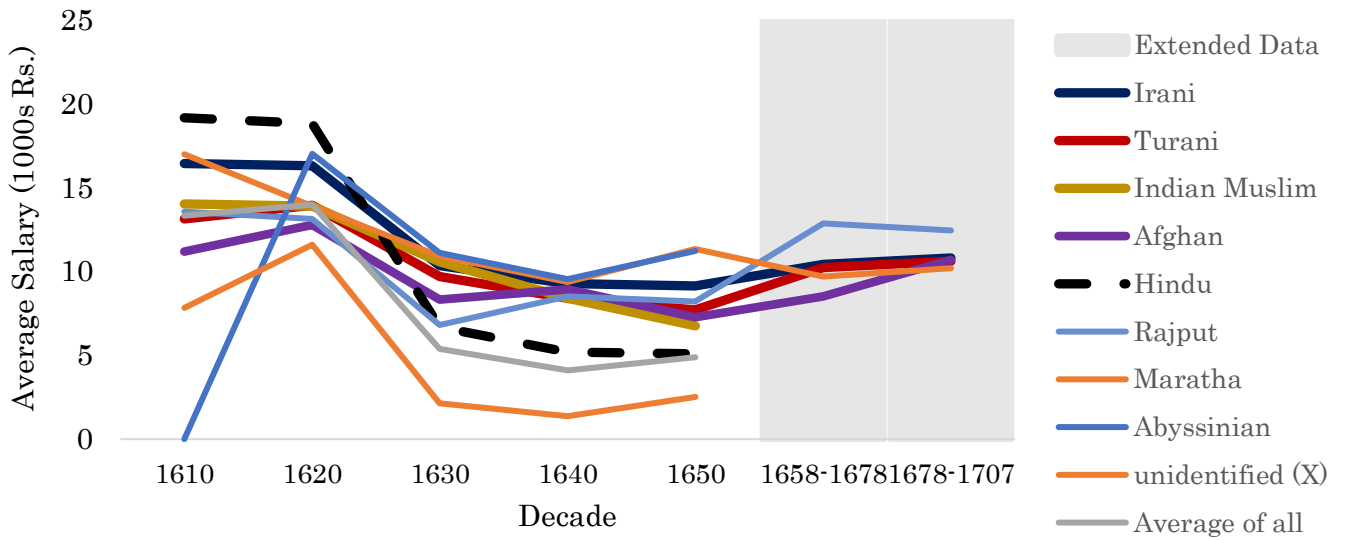
Figure 4.12: Number of Zamindar, Raja, Rai Disaggregated by Social Class



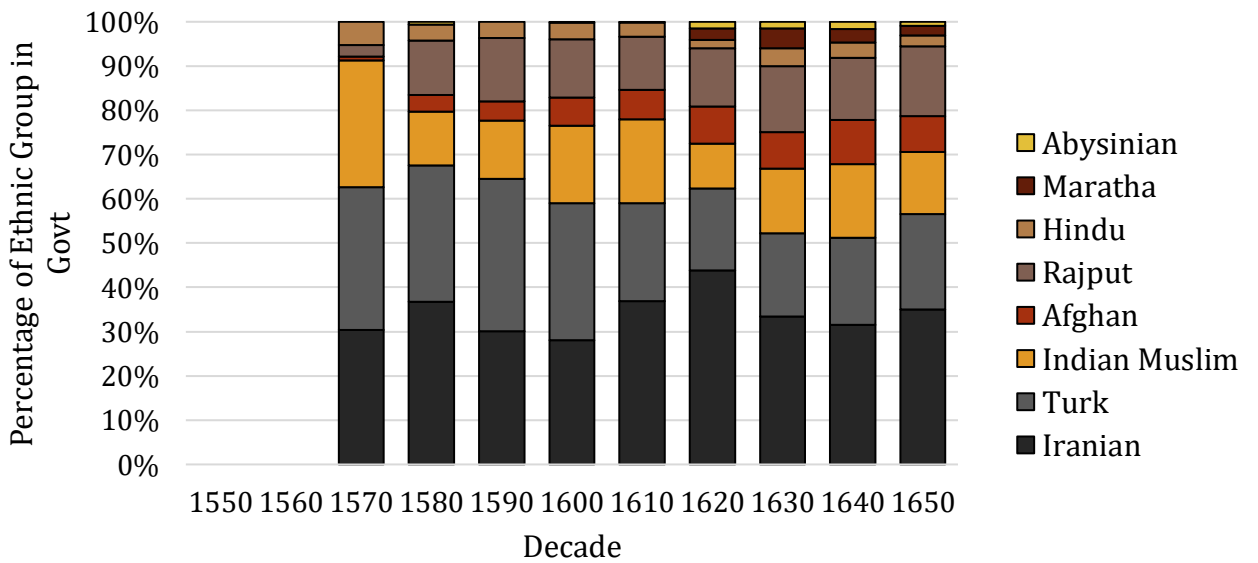
Source: Derived from ‘Athar Ali’s Apparatus of Empire’ (1985). For the extended data in the shaded area, it is worth keeping in mind the values represent the sum across two decades as opposed to one decade as the data before 1650 shows. To get a more comparable average, the numbers should be halved.

Figure 4.13: Salary payments and Number of Officials by Ethnicity

a) Average Salaries by Ethnic Group



b) Proportion of Ethnic Group within Government



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

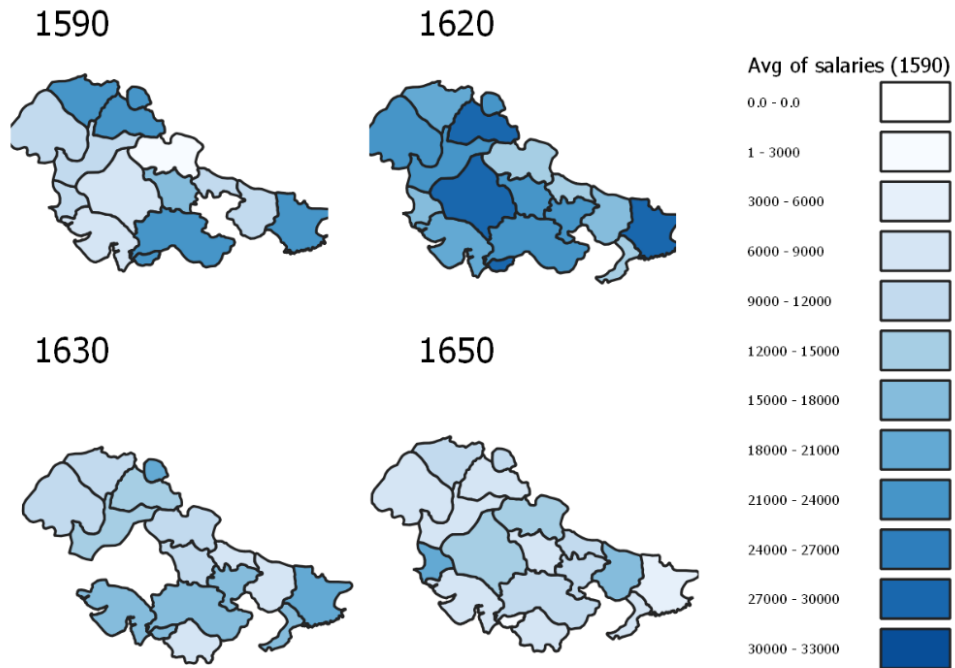
The final measure of state centralisation is to look at the regional differences between elites' salaries. The aim is to see whether higher incomes were concentrated in regions where the Mughal administration was the strongest (e.g. the provinces of Delhi, Agra and Lahore), as opposed to those regions where the state's administration was weaker (e.g. Ajmer, Malwa, the Deccan Sultanates and Kabul). If officials posted in central provinces on average had higher salaries, it could indicate a concentration of wealth and authority within more centralised officials who were closer to the capital. Conversely, higher salaries in regions where the state's administrative apparatus was weaker could indicate elites sent to more remote regions needed to be skilled to effectively administer those populations, or perhaps needed persuading to move to those locations because of their difficulty to rule. It could also simply indicate that elites in remote regions, who were more likely to have local influence, were paid a higher wages.

Figure 4.14 (a) and (b) show the average salaries of officials within each province. Figure 4.14(a) maps the differences in averages for four decades over time (1590s, 1620s, 1630s and 1650s), which allows us to see the spatial distribution of salaries. It shows there is no clear concentration of income in any one region over time, and in fact suggests that perhaps the less central southern and central provinces had higher average salaries for officials during the 1630s and 1650s. Figure 4.14(b) graphs the average over time, making the regional differences easier to decipher. The graph shows that whilst average salaries of officials decreased in all the provinces of the empire over time, they tended to remain the highest within the central provinces. As these were provinces which had a lower incidence of taxation at least in 1595, the data supports the view there was not a concentration of wealth in more centralised provinces.⁸³⁶ It also seems that officials posted to more remote regions or where administration would have been more difficult were paid a higher salary on average through the period in question.

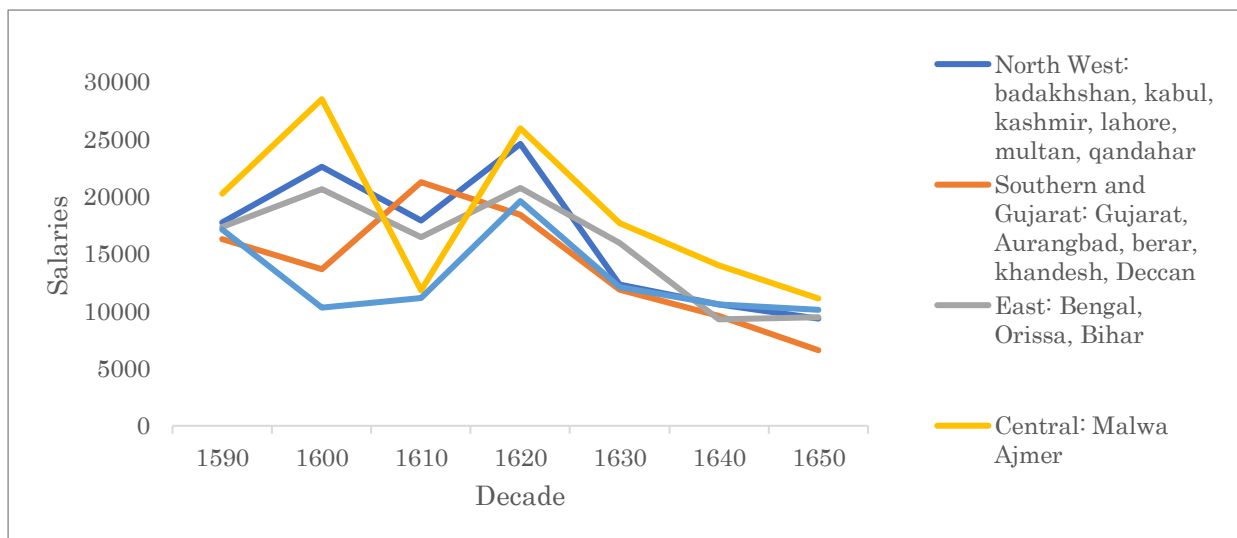
⁸³⁶ Moosvi, *The Economy*, 161, 191

Figure 4.14: Average Salaries Across Regions over Time (by decades)

a) Map of Average Salaries in Each Province



(b) Average Salaries in Each Region Over Time



Source: Derived from 'Athar Ali's Apparatus of Empire' (1985)

V – III Summary

To summarise the findings of the analysis, the data seems to indicate the Mughal empire's administrative capacity was growing significantly over the seventeenth century. However, it is difficult to characterise these changes as centralisation. Given the structure of the state was not hierarchical where officials were directly under the command of government, the expansion in officials was more of a 'controlled decentralisation'⁸³⁷ of the state as opposed to concentration of the power within the central government. An increase in the number of officials meant a greater division of authority and revenue across the empire, and greater focus of each official within a specific locality.

Officials with more localised ambits of authority and with greater administrative roles in government (like the *Waqia Navis* and *Diwans*) became more numerous within the state's administration and also received higher salaries on average (or saw a smaller fall in their salaries relative to other groups). Administrative officials like *Diwans* were more likely to be posted to regions more remote from the capital, and when officials were appointed to these regions they were paid higher salaries (on average). The *Zamindars*, who as a group had more hereditary rights to land as well as greater influence within their localities than *Mansabdars*, were also growing in number within the state administration. The salaries of Rajputs especially increased on average after the 1630s, these being a group with greater hereditary rights within their clans. Given the greater influence of *Zamindars* as administrators within their localities, the increase in their numbers and salaries after 1630 can be attributed to further evidence of a greater localisation of state administration. Similarly, the diversity of ethnicities within government was also increasing over time, where the proportion of Rajputs, Maratha and Abyssinian officials were increasing over time. The integration of more localised ethnicities again indicates a shift to a more localised governance structure. Lastly, there is no indication from the above analysis that average wages of officials in the capital were higher. In fact, officials posted in the central provinces of Malwa and Ajmer, which were said to have had the highest concentration of *Zamindars*, had the highest salaries over time. The higher wages in central provinces suggest administration of these regions were relatively more difficult, and required a greater income to be offered to officials there.

⁸³⁷ This is borrowing Yasin Arslantas' terminology discussed in the last section. See: Arslantas, "Making Sense of Musudere," 3

These higher wages would signify the greater bargaining power and autonomy of officials posted in these provinces, though this seems to have been relatively constant over time.

By all three measures, the state increasingly prioritised officials with greater local connections and influence, as well as officials with better administrative abilities. Officials with roles more related to specific localities and administrative in nature were the ones that grew in number the most, and received higher salaries. *Zamindars* who had a more hereditary connection to their land and more influence amongst local populations also grew in number and, in the case of Rajputs, grew in salaries. The composition of officials within government became more diversified to include greater proportions of officials from ethnicities like Marathas and Rajputs which had more local roots as opposed to the Central Asian Iranis and Turanis. And finally, there is no indication there was a greater concentration of wealth in the more established provinces of the state, whereas officials in more remote regions tended to be paid higher salaries. Altogether, it is clear there was a structural change within government, where more localised administration was prioritised. The timing and location of where these changes seemed to be most prevalent would suggest conflict was a motivating driver of the localisation of the state.

VI. Conclusion

Whereas the nature of development and evolution of the seventeenth century Mughal state has remained the subject of debate, this chapter has attempted to shed new light on the state's structural development by exploring a large dataset of Mughal appointments. It is worth emphasising that this is the first time such a large amount of data has been used to examine changes in the structure of the Mughal state over time,⁸³⁸ and therefore the findings reflect new insights which have otherwise been obscured by conflicting sources from the period. The objectives of our research has required the incorporation of several new ideas that have been tested using the available data. As there are several layers to the argument made and findings of this chapter, it is worth breaking them down again.

⁸³⁸ See the discussion on data in the introduction

The analysis above makes clear that number of officials appointed by the Mughal government did expand in an exponential fashion in the seventeenth century with the hiring of numerous new officials, yet after 1630 the costs of the state did not increase at the same rate. I have argued (and given evidence) that this was because the government expansion focused largely on increasing the number of lower-level officials at lower salaries. I have suggested that the correlation in timing of the periods of the state's expansion and the period where there was an increase in conflicts (i.e. the 1630s onwards) indicates that changes in the structure of state administration were likely driven by the rise of conflicts. However, unlike the European experience of state-building, where conflicts drove fragmented polities to centralise,⁸³⁹ the data here suggests that the increase in conflicts led the Mughal empire to increasingly rely on more localised officials who were able to administer their localities more effectively, and on officials with more administrative roles. Despite falls in average wages for all officials over time, these more localised and administrative officials either did not face the same fall in wages, or conversely saw increases in their wages. Thus, there was a clear shift in the administrative structure of the government, where the state became more localised as officials tended to have greater local connections, and more administrative roles were created over time to help in the decentralization process. Since many of the newly appointed officials retained the autonomy their appointed role originally provided.⁸⁴⁰ and as they on average received higher salaries over time, it is possible to infer that the then Mughal administration pursued more of a 'controlled decentralisation' strategy rather than a strategy focused on centralisation of government.

This strategy of expansion and the change in the structure of government gave several advantages to the Mughal state, especially during the period conflicts increased. Firstly, the state was able to save on costs at a time when fighting conflicts was especially expensive. The salaries of lower-level officials were significantly less, and division of the empire into smaller administrative units gave more control to the state. Secondly, the localised nature of these officials allowed the state to develop increasingly targeted policies of action and provided flexibility to the empire's governance. Rather than strengthening only the capital, the empire proved to be resilient to attacks across most

⁸³⁹ This was outlined in the introduction

⁸⁴⁰ For example, *Zamindars* having more hereditary rights than *Zamindars*. See: Athar Ali, *The Mughal nobility*, 25, 79

regions and borders. Given the frequency of conflict across the empire, the state was thus able to respond more directly (and flexibly) to conflicts as they arose. Finally, localisation of officials led to a substantial increase in the administrative capacity and information gathering abilities of the state. Local officials, and especially *Zamindars*, were better at information gathering and more knowledgeable about the regions they administered. Using more localised officials therefore helped to bridge information gaps between the state and localities.

As this chapter has drawn heavily from frameworks on the Ottoman empire, it is worth concluding with a small discussion on a key difference between these empires: namely the apparent longevity of the Ottoman state relative to the Mughal government. Whilst the Ottoman state decentralised in the 17th and eighteenth centuries, military failures against western powers in the nineteenth century led to the reformation and ‘re-centralisation’ of the state.⁸⁴¹ Conversely, the Mughal government continued to decentralise with the growth of more powerful *Zamindars* and the establishment of provincial magnates. Without more rigorous comparative research, our understanding of why these states experienced such different trajectories in development is speculative. However, two relevant (though not mutually exclusive) possibilities stand out from the literature. The first is the relative bargaining power of the Mughal elites relative to the Ottoman elites. Whilst the Ottoman government did seem to have some success in reducing the power of regional elites by confiscation, the central Mughal government did not have this ability as the local elites in the empire were both a necessity and too costly to remove. Subsequently, as suggested by Farhat Hasan, it is possible the empire continued to localise and decentralise over time because the state needed to keep co-opting and negotiating with different groups of the population.⁸⁴² The second is the continuing high costs of conflict the Mughal government continued to face in the seventeenth century, and the prevalence of an existing economic crisis. The very large internal conflicts in the subcontinent put substantial financial pressure on the Mughal government and increasingly made them more reliant on their intermediaries. As we have seen from the exchange between the emperor Aurangzeb and Ruh Allah Khan, even when the emperor wanted to discontinue the appointment of new officials there was a pressure from within the government to continue accepting appointments. Thus, these larger conflicts

⁸⁴¹ This was discussed in the Thesis’ introduction, within the State capacity literature section.

⁸⁴² Hasan, Farhat. *State and Locality*, 127

increasingly constrained the state by making it more reliant on its administrators and therefore making it difficult to implement reform which would concentrate wealth and authority within the central government.

Chapter 5-- Governance Practices and Conflict Incentives: An Asian Divergence

Abstract: State capacity scholarship which tries to explain the divergence in capacity development between early modern Chinese and European empires has tended to highlight the negative impact of internal conflicts on China's state capacity relative to the positive impact of external conflicts on European state development. Mughal South Asia also faced internal rebellions but experienced a different trajectory of development when compared to the early modern Chinese state. Drawing on the findings of the previous chapter, this chapter explores the divergent effects of conflict on administrative state capacity development within Asia through comparison of the Mughal and Qing empires. The chapter suggests high information costs and larger conflicts in the Mughal empire encouraged it to increase its administrative state capacity by incorporating more localised officials, whereas these incentives were not present in the Qing empire.

Introduction

This chapter was largely inspired by a recurring question posed by the historian Irfan Habib, whose work has already been discussed extensively within this thesis.⁸⁴³ Noting the high frequency of rebellions in Mughal India and the peasants' intense resistance to tax pressure, Habib suggested these rebellions might be comparable to China "where too the repeated agrarian crises resulted in cycles of massive peasant revolts that overthrew dynasties but did not lead to the rise of capitalism."⁸⁴⁴ However, Habib has also noted what he considers a key difference between the countries: "the low development of self-recognition of the peasantry as a class" in India. He goes on to suggest two possible reasons for the less united rebellions within the Mughal empire relative to the Chinese state: the first is the existence of caste system in India which might have limited the peasantry's ability to unite; and the second was the existence of *Zamindars* who could have divided the loyalties and interests of the peasants as a group.

⁸⁴³ See the Thesis' Introduction' section called 'Debates in the Mughal Historiography,'; Also see Chapter 3 Section III

⁸⁴⁴ Habib, "Potentialities," 50

Whilst Habib viewed these rebellions through a Marxist lens,⁸⁴⁵ his questions remain relevant: what was the role of rebellion in state formation within these empires, and how did intermediaries respond to internal institutional constraints and challenges? These are questions still being explored by scholars. Muzaffar Alam, for instance, has concurred with Habib's view that *Zamindars* did limit the development of a broader national interest development across the populations of India. He argues that *Zamindars'* reliance and focus on their kin and caste relationships prevented them from forming broader alliances, and their parochial vision of a state still led them to raid and plunder ethnic groups which were different to their own, thus limiting regional growth.⁸⁴⁶

The comparative question is also very relevant to our understanding of influences within Asian states' formation patterns. The Mughal state's development in the seventeenth century, which was outlined in the previous chapter, can be contrasted with how the state capacity literature has come to model the effect of conflict on development in other Asian empires. Relative to the European states, early modern Asian empires' development have been depicted as fiscally weak and stagnant. The literature has particularly placed emphasis on the low tax per capita revenues generated by Asian empires.⁸⁴⁷ Much of the comparative state capacity literature on Asia has focused on the premodern Chinese empire.⁸⁴⁸ This is partly because of better availability of data, and partly because of a view that China was more comparable to Europe in economic development relative to any other state.⁸⁴⁹

There have been few comparative studies on the effects of internal conflicts on the development of Asian states, and my findings indicate that a closer look is warranted. While the mechanisms are widely debated, a recurring observation of Chinese economic historians has been that high levels of internal conflict and low levels of internal conflict

⁸⁴⁵ Habib based his views of rebellions in China on the work of Mao Zedong's edition of 'Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung. Peking, 1967, II 308-9'. Mao Zedong became the Chairman of the Communist party in China from 1949-1976. Mao's insights on peasant rebellions in China was therefore likely biased by his political interests of uniting peasants under the Communist regime. For Habib's references to Mao's work, see: Irfan Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 405n84. For a discussion of Mao's political incentives, see: Wakeman, Frederick Jr, "The Study of Popular Movements in Chinese History" *The Journal of Asian Studies* 36:2 (1977), 222

⁸⁴⁶ Alam, *Aspects of Agrarian Crises*, 472

⁸⁴⁷ Gupta, Ma and Roy "States and Development"

⁸⁴⁸ Frankema and Booth, *Fiscal Capacity and the Colonial State*, 11

⁸⁴⁹ Two popular publications which have inspired focus on the Chinese state include: Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*, 29; Joseph Needham, *The Grand Titration: Science and Society in East and West*, (1969). p.16, 190.

limited the states' development.⁸⁵⁰ The analysis in the previous chapter has suggested conflict in the Mughal empire had a very different effect on state development. By comparing the institutional constraints between these Asian empires, this chapter proposes an explanation for their very different state formation experiences. In doing so, I highlight how local environment and pre-existing institutional structures have influenced the way in which rebellions affected state development. I additionally note that whilst state centralisation⁸⁵¹ can perhaps help explain state formation in European states, the picture for Asian empires is more complex.

The aim of this chapter is to study differences in institutions and conflict patterns in Mughal South Asia to premodern China to understand why these empires responded to conflicts differently; namely why the Chinese government chose not to increase the size of local administration whilst the Mughal government expanded it. I argue that the Mughal government's need to govern a more heterogeneous society and fill information gaps explains this different pattern of long run development. This chapter begins with a comparison of institutional structures within the two empires with a focus on the role of government intermediaries in rebellions and state administration. This is followed by a case-study which illustrates the similarities in the forms of rebellions faced and the roles intermediaries played in conflicts. The last section suggests a model for understanding why these two regions followed very different paths with respect to state formation.

II. Institutional Comparisons of Rebellious Elites

The institutional structures of the pre-Mughal and Qing Chinese states were surprisingly comparable, especially with respect to the management of the government employees and the development of rebellions. These were both large agrarian economies and reliant on agricultural taxation and salt monopolies and, as mentioned, faced a large number of

⁸⁵⁰ See, for example, the following: Dincecco and Wang, "Violent Conflict and Political Development," 341-58; See also: Chan, "Foreign Trade," 68-90

⁸⁵¹ i.e. concentration of authority and revenue in the central government. The concept was discussed in the previous chapter.

internal rebellions over the course of their dynasties.⁸⁵² Both states were governed by minority ethnic rulers of central Asian origin who gained power through conquest and who mostly allowed local populations to maintain and arbitrate local customary law.⁸⁵³ Most significantly, both states appointed and recruited officials within a centralised rank-based system, where the rank of the official impacted either the salary or benefits received.⁸⁵⁴ These central officials' posts were not hereditary where any income or benefits received by the state had to be returned, and the postings of regular officials were rotated every few years.⁸⁵⁵ As with *Mansabdars* of Mughal India, not all of the Qing officials were appointed into civilian administrative office, though they could be called to one. However, unlike the Mughals, none of these Qing officials held military roles; the state military responsibilities were held with the ethnically designated Banner armies and the Han Green standard army.⁸⁵⁶

At the same time, there were important differences between the states' institutions: namely, the centralised examination system used by the Qing government to recruit officials; the relatively less geopolitical competition as there were fewer polities bordering the Qing state; and the homogeneity of the Qing population relative to the large ethnic diversity in South Asia.⁸⁵⁷ Whilst officials in both empires were paid salaries, the mechanisms of these payments were different. The majority of *jagirdars* in Mughal India received their salaries as revenue assignments from *jagirs* (where they were given the right to collect revenue on land which amounted to the value of their salary) instead of directly by the state,⁸⁵⁸ whereas Qing officials received a low salary from the central government which was supplemented by local extra-legal taxation.⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵² Gupa, Ma and Roy, "States and Development"; Roy, "Economic Conditions in Early Modern Bengal", 184; Gang. *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, 38

⁸⁵³ Roy, "Law and Economic Change in India," Lary, Diana, Chinese Migrations: the movement of people, goods and ideas over four millennia, (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield 2012), 64

⁸⁵⁴ Ho, *The Ladder of Success*, 10; Brandt, Ma and Rawski, "From Divergence to Convergence" 76; Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 83-5

⁸⁵⁵ Brandt, Ma and Rawski, "From Divergence to Convergence" 63, 103; Ali, *The Mughal Nobility*, 83-5

⁸⁵⁶ Christine Moll-Murata, and Ulrich Theobald. "Military Employment in Qing Dynasty China." *Fighting for a Living: A Comparative Study of Military Labour 1500-2000*, edited by Erik-Jan Zürcher, Amsterdam University Press, 2013, pp. 355.

⁸⁵⁷ For a discussion on homogeneity and Confucian ideals, see: Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, 106-121. A summary of the examination system can be found in: Ho, *The Ladder of Success*, 168. A discussion of literature on the geopolitical competition in the region is below.

⁸⁵⁸ As noted in the introduction, there were *jagirdars* who collected salaries directly from the state though these were relatively fewer. See: Habib, *Agrarian System*, 299-300

⁸⁵⁹ Paul C Hickey, "Fee-Taking, Salary Reform, and the Structure of State Power in Late Qing China, 1909-1911." *Modern China* 17, no. 3 (1991): 389-417; Ma and Rubin "Paradox of Power," 8

In China, many of the elites were drawn from families who, as a clan, could wield power against the state and vie politically to influence the government. Yet, as Feuerwerker describes, these elites can be separated into two types:

We may thus schematically divide the dominant elite into (1) those who held office, had once held office, or expected to hold office (the bureaucratic elite); and (2) their much more numerous relatives and peers who might have a traditional education but lacked the formal qualifications – usually *jinsi* or *juren* degree status – for substantial office (the nonbureaucratic or local elite.) Although they came from similar social backgrounds, the bureaucratic elite and local elite (the latter are frequently called “gentry” by English-language writers) could and did differ in the degree to which they had a commitment to the state or government itself as opposed to sustaining gentry wealth, power and status in local society. This “ruling class,” so to speak, shared the common necessity to control sufficient amounts of the surplus produced by the agricultural labor force to permit it as a group (although the fate of individual families might be more precarious) to continue to dominate. But the national outlook of the bureaucratic elite (what I have called elsewhere “Confucian *raison d’etat*”) could differ from the parochialism of the local gentry (what I have called “Confucian general will”) with respect to such important matters as taxation and government economic policies.⁸⁶⁰

Thus, like in the Mughal system, there existed a degree of differentiation between local officials and those in the central bureaucracy and the gentry, although the distinction between the groups was less distinct. Functionally, the role of the gentry bares many similarities to role of the *Zamindars* in rebellions. For example, Min Tu Ki describes the gentry as follows:

These people [gentry] were granted special privileges by the government and engaged in social interaction with officials. They sometimes supported the ideals of the Confucian state and cooperated in the maintenance of order (while protecting their own positions), but at times part of this stratum engaged in anti-state or anti-official activities to protect their own interest. They promoted public works which the state could not participate in directly, but they could also disrupt local administrative order by disturbing “proper administration”; when that happened, the state stepped in to control them⁸⁶¹

⁸⁶⁰ Feuerwerker, “The State and the Economy in Late Imperial China.” 306

⁸⁶¹ Tu-Ki Min, *National Polity and Local Power: The Transformation of Late Imperial China* edited by Philip A. Kuhn and Timothy Brook, (Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: The Council on East Asian Studies/Harvard University and The Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1989), 29

Ming Tu-Ki also discusses the military leadership of these groups and their tendency to ally with the commoners.⁸⁶² From these extracts and several others,⁸⁶³ it is clear this intermediary group in China had several features in common with *Zamindars*. Whilst both are associated with their local commoner groups, they also tended to be large landowners and were granted specific privileges which differentiated them from the peasants. Often, they were involved in collecting taxes or providing local public services.⁸⁶⁴ Some even had access to their own military retainers or peasant followers who they would lead in rebellions against the state.⁸⁶⁵ Moreover, several scholars have noted how these leaders did not necessarily identify with the peasant themselves, often harbouring their own goals such as wealth or power. For instance, once in control of an area, rebel leaders could install an equally oppressive regime on the peasants as the one they were rebelling against,⁸⁶⁶ and the system of administration itself would not change.⁸⁶⁷

Zurndorfer has argued that the power relationship in China can be described as a triangular network between local elites, the emperor, and the populace, all counterpoised with one another to create a balanced relationship.⁸⁶⁸ She argues the elite were necessary for the state to act as an intermediary to retain control. Songgyu has argued that while the local elite desired to retain autonomous control of their localities, they were also constantly threatened by other local bandit groups and gentry that could challenge their authority.⁸⁶⁹ The local elite therefore needed the backing of a state as a legitimising force that would allow them to maintain their autonomy while also guaranteeing them protection from other local groups. The state in turn needed the local elite in order to maintain control, as the gentry were able to “absorb severe shocks” in peasant reactions and accommodate minor institutional changes without impairing the stability of the

⁸⁶² Min, *National Polity and Local Power*, 29

⁸⁶³ See: Mark Elvin. *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*, (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), 260-1; Wang, *Land Taxation in Imperial China, 1750–1911*, 16, 33; Lary, Diana, *Chinese Migrations*, 64; John W., Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 21, 86 and 101.

⁸⁶⁴ Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*, 260;

⁸⁶⁵ Albert Feuerwerker, *Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century China*, (Michigan: The University of Michigan, Centre of Chinese Studies, 1975), 53; Philip A Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796-1864*, (London: Harvard University Press, 1980), 7.

⁸⁶⁶ Wakeman, Frederick Jr, “The Study of Popular Movements in Chinese History” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 36:2 (1977) 205; Feuerwerker, Albert, *Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century China*, (Michigan: The University of Michigan, Centre of Chinese Studies, 1975), 38

⁸⁶⁷ Zurndorfer, “Violence and Political Protest,” 311

⁸⁶⁸ Zurndorfer, “Violence and Political Protest,” 318

⁸⁶⁹ I Sonngyu, Yamane Yukio, Inada Hideko, Mindaishi Kenkyu, Joshua A. Fogel, “Shantung in the Shun-Chih Reign: The Establishment of Local Control and the Gentry Response” *Chi'ing-shih wen-t'i*, 4:4 (1977) (Translation Published by Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 1-34

empire.⁸⁷⁰ This alliance, however practical, was not necessarily an easy one. While requiring the state's backing, these groups still did not want to give up on their autonomy in their own localities, creating a strained relationship with the centre. The gentry would even refuse to pay taxes (a common trait of the *Zamindars*) which they had obtained through proxy remittance, causing chronic tax arrears for the Manchu government.⁸⁷¹ Recognizing this problem, Songgyu has argued that the Manchus deliberately preserved some local bandit groups in order to keep the recalcitrant gentry in check. Banditry was considered a prevalent feature in the Chinese empire as well. In a detailed statistical study of rebellions during the Ming and Qing, James Tong found banditry constituted 80 percent of total mass actions in the late Qing, a pattern he also noticed during the Ming.⁸⁷² The comparability of conflicts in the Mughal and Qing empires perhaps is best illustrated in the case-study below, which highlights the dual role of intermediaries and their role in governing local populations. While there are no identical situations, similarities and differences can be identified between how the rebellions played out in both regions.

III. Comparative Case Study

Wakeman has given a detailed analysis of the Chiang-yin rebellion including the reactions and motivations of the different participants.⁸⁷³ This rebellion is interesting because: it involved a change in the state power; it was in an area with strong landlords and warlords; it also was an area rife with banditry; and it was also a popular trading centre during the Ming. It therefore bore strong resemblance to Mughal cities like Surat and Cambay as Hasan and Moosvi have identified then.⁸⁷⁴

The events of the rebellion are as follows. At first, the Qing occupation was peaceful and the gentry swore an oath to the new regime. Trouble only began when the Manchu regent issued a law commanding all Chinese men to cut their hair in a Manchu style which was considered a barbaric custom by the Chinese. When village gentry came to

⁸⁷⁰ Feuerwerker, *Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century China*, 79

⁸⁷¹ Sonngyu et al. "Shantung," 19

⁸⁷² Tong, "*Disorder Under Heaven*," 4

⁸⁷³ Wakeman, Frederick Jr, "Localism and Loyalism during the Ch'ing Conquest of Kiangnan" the Tragedy of Chiang-yin" in *Conflict and Control in late imperial China*, edited by Frederick Wakeman Junior and Colin Grant (Berkeley, California: University of California Press 1975), 49

⁸⁷⁴ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 54; Moosvi, *The Economy*, 185

petition against the law, Fang Heng, the new Qing magistrate “reviled” them and rejected their petition, as doing otherwise could risk his dismissal. Fang tried to appease the citizens by going to the local temples, but the more Fang insisted on the law, the more rebellious the people became, and he lost authority. Fang’s tutor was killed trying to calm the peasants, and Fang himself at first was just saved from being hung because the gentry intervened. Desperate, Fang sent a message for help from the state military which was intercepted by the locals. Considering this as a betrayal, the peasants elected a warden, Ch’en Ming-Yu, and the local elite lost sway over the crowds. Ch’en executed Fang and went to war with the Qing. However, aware of how weak the peasant forces were, he turned for help to external professionals who agreed to fight in return for supplies given in advance of the battle. The mercenaries, however, were easily defeated, and while Ch’en needed a more organised force as “it would take more than rice wine to attract their soldiers.”⁸⁷⁵ After defeating surrounding areas, the Qing forces sent a letter appealing to the gentry in the city promising no harm if the law was obeyed. Ch’en forced the gentry to return a rejection of the amnesty. The gentry and the local peasants seem to have been more reluctant to go to war; Ch’en tried to hide the amnesty from villagers but as morale fell hundreds to villagers are said to have shaved their heads, submitting to the Manchu law. Further, the gentry’s weak alliance with Ch’en withered as the city’s notables “tried to seek a settlement with the enemy” because they wanted to protect their city and Ch’en did not.⁸⁷⁶

In this narrative, there are three actors whose reactions we should take into account: the state, the local leaders and the peasant rebels. When the magistrate Fang was approached by the local elders, Wakeman describes him as feeling pressured to uphold the law but also fearful of the reaction of the crowd. On several occasions, Fang tries to diffuse tensions by visiting local shrines and changing orders to flog those who opposed him. By the end, he was desperate to send for help because he was fearful of the strength of the villagers. Hasan recounts a similar incident in Surat when a Mughal Qazi (magistrate) asked the *Kotwal* (fort leader) for endorsement of the mahr (dowry) of a Hindu woman who married a Muslim and converted to Islam. The *Kotwal* seized the money and arrested the woman on the pretext that the mahr was stolen, causing the people of Surat to organise a protest. Hasan describes the movement as “remarkable in

⁸⁷⁵ Wakeman, “Localism and Loyalism,” 64

⁸⁷⁶ Wakeman, “Localism and Loyalism,” 79

that its scale and intensity was matched with its discipline and organisation.”⁸⁷⁷ Like Fang sent his tutor, the Qazi sent an emissary to plead his innocence and though the emissary was not killed, he was “returned back with his garment in tatters.” Both magistrates felt panic and pressure from the alacrity with which the protests formed.⁸⁷⁸

Another feature of the state worth mentioning is their willingness to forgive the rebels if they stop the rebellion and follow the law and the way in which this occurred. For example, a Mughal admiral similarly sent a letter to the rebelling elite, offering to help the latter retain his tax revenues if he submitted peacefully.⁸⁷⁹ There is also evidence of both states, through Confucianism or adoption of Hindu practices, using symbolism and ritualisation to enforce control. For instance, the Qing state’s insistence on Chinese adoption of the Manchu hairstyle. Similarly, the Mughals made new subordinate leaders wear cloaks and prostrate towards the emperor symbolise submission.⁸⁸⁰ One Mughal admiral even tried to avoid a war by battling a rhino to show his strength and get rebels to submit.⁸⁸¹ This suggests both states were reluctant to kill the rebels but unwilling to concede authority, possibly due to fear of losing legitimacy.

The local gentry whilst siding with the peasants’ views on the law by approaching Fang first also protected him and tried to keep the peasants from killing him as if to play a mediating role between the state and the peasantry. When the rebellion could no longer be contained and Fang was killed, they were then pressured by Ch’en to help the rebellion and make a stand against the state. This seems to have been a frequent feature in Mughal rebellions as well. In the same Surat rebellion discussed above, the citizens forced local *Muftis* to “assume the mantle of leadership”, reminding them it was their “responsibility to defend the moral principles of the city.”⁸⁸² This is despite the fact the *Muftis* were theoretically a part of the state they were rebelling against. Thus, the gentry had to obey the confines of what James Scott has termed the “moral economy”⁸⁸³ meaning the norms of society that had developed and needed to be adhered to in order to keep peace. Within this ‘moral economy,’ the elites were expected to be liaisons with the government and

⁸⁷⁷ Hasan, *State and Locality*, 57

⁸⁷⁸ These kinds of incidents seem to have been common in India. See: Badhra, “Two Frontier Uprisings,” 479

⁸⁷⁹ Mirza, Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-ghaybī*, 644-9

⁸⁸⁰ Eaton, “The Rise of Islam,” 143

⁸⁸¹ Mirza Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-ghaybī*, 644

⁸⁸² Hasan, *State and Locality*, 57

⁸⁸³ Scott, *The Moral Economy*, 4

administrators of justice, where their apathy in local affairs could be as equally abhorrent as their interference.

This case study also highlights important features of success in rebellion. Initially, the reaction was large, violent, organised and quickly gained momentum. In both India and China, arms were readily available to the common man, and incidents where the state tried to take away these arms resulted in defiant villagers joining the rebels.⁸⁸⁴ However, in China the rebel leader also recognised that he did not have the money or resources to attract the kind of army he needed to fight the state. Moreover, many villagers seemed to desert the cause and submit to the Manchus. Although this is only one case study, it is recognised that the Chinese state deliberately tried to prevent the accumulation of wealth and military power for the elites to prevent war-lordism and only allowed it in Chiang-yin out of necessity.⁸⁸⁵ The Mughals likely needed armed local contingents, possibly because controlling locals would be unmanageable without them. The Chinese state likely had less of a need for armed intermediaries, except perhaps until the 19th century when Qing officials on the eve of the Taiping rebellion considered increasing provincial militarisation as the most efficient way to maintain control of an increasingly rebellious populace.⁸⁸⁶

Whilst the Chiang-yin rebellion was only one conflict out of hundreds, the similarities of events with respect to officials' roles in rebellion instigation and management speaks to the comparable manner in the way rebellions developed and were handled in the Mughal and Qing empires. The alacrity and strength with which small incidents could have larger societal repercussions, and the divisive roles of local elites, were similar. The case studies also point to an important difference - the wealth and military strength of these elites relative to the state. This is discussed in more detail below.

⁸⁸⁴ Wakeman, "Localism and Loyalism," 58; Habib, Irfan, "Forms of Class Struggle" 253

⁸⁸⁵ The exact differences between the state's ability to enforce bans on weaponry cannot really be tested, though there is greater recognition of the difference in this case. Wakeman, "Localism and Loyalism," 50; Fuerwerker, *Rebellion in Nineteenth Century China*, 92

⁸⁸⁶ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China*, 53

IV. Comparisons of State Development

Given the relative similarities of the institutional organisation of these empires, these early modern governments followed very different paths of state capacity development. As has been discussed at length in the previous chapter, the Mughal empire expanded quite rapidly, especially within the lower ranks of government. Moreover, there was a very clear shift in the administrative structure of government to incorporate more localised officials. Conversely, one of the most fascinating aspects of Qing state development between 1664-1840 was the stability in the size of the state apparatus (in terms of numbers of officials and revenues collected) despite significant population growth. Across a range of metrics, scholars of the Qing state have identified the number of officials, the salaries of these officials and the budgets assigned to local government remained stagnant through the course of the dynasty except perhaps in the middle of the nineteenth century.⁸⁸⁷ The data in Table 5.1, for example, is taken from Chen Feng's data on Provincial Military Spending over time. It indicates a relatively stable or stagnating budget, only increasing again in the mid-nineteenth century.⁸⁸⁸

⁸⁸⁷ Albert Feuerwerker, "The State and the Economy" 306; In his unpublished dissertation, Ziang Liu gives quantitative information showing the falling budgets of localised clerks; Ziang Liu: *Quantification and fiscal governance in China, 1400-1800*. PhD thesis London School of Economics and Political Science (2021); Kent Deng, *Mapping China's Growth and Development in the Long Run, 221 BC to 2020*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Pte., 2015., 19, 47-8

⁸⁸⁸ Chen Feng, "A Study on Qing Military Spending" or 清代军费研究 Qingdai junfei yanjiu, Wuhan: Wuhan University Press. 1992, pg 194-5.

Table 5.1: Table of Qing Provincial Military Spending over time.

Year	Provincial Budgets in Silver Taels
1651	17,714,161
1685	17,092,038
1723	17,015,982
1735	17,245,018
1737	16,821,016
1745	13,000,000
1750	13, 633, 903
1812	13,184,873
1849	17,881,066

Source: Chen Feng, "A Study on Qing Military Spending" or 清代军费研究 Qingdai junfei yanjiu, Wuhan: Wuhan University Press. 1992, pg 194-5

Some of the literature has attempted to explain low levels of Qing state spending as a response to internal conflicts which would have disincentivised government spending. It has been argued, for instance, that Qing governments avoided increasing taxation for fear it could lead to rebellion and risk the incumbent's power. Subsequently, the state kept wages of officials low knowing officials would raise extra-legal taxes independently from central government control.⁸⁸⁹ This is a compelling narrative often used for understanding

⁸⁸⁹ Chan, "Foreign Trade," 68-90

the Asian state, with one potential limitation – it does not explain why the Chinese state would not invest in improving its ability to deal with rebellions. For an empire consistently facing large rebellions, one might expect the state to build measures to respond to such threats, yet the early modern Chinese investment in military capabilities was fairly stagnant.⁸⁹⁰ A further argument in the literature has the state's inability to constrain itself from confiscation allowed it to adopt a low wage low tax solution.⁸⁹¹ Whilst the scholars differ in their perspectives on the constraints and power dynamics within the Chinese state, the underlying view seems to be that the Qing government was self-restrained because of internal conflicts it faced and the lack of constraints on the states predation of elites.

By comparison, the Mughal empire experienced a very different development path which differed dramatically from models of Chinese state development, at least in terms of its expenditure and expansion. In terms of raising taxes on the peasantry, the evidence suggests the Mughal state followed similar policies to the Qing. The Mughals avoided overtaxing the peasantry and often would give tax concessions in times, and avoided conflict with them, which is comparable to choices made by the premodern Chinese state.⁸⁹² However, unlike the Qing, the Mughal government rapidly expanded in numbers of officials and in the expenditure on those officials' salaries.⁸⁹³ over the seventeenth century (see previous chapter). Although average salaries did fall during the reign of Shah Jahan after 1630, this was largely driven by the number of officials across social ranks increasing, especially amongst the lower-level officials with ranks of less than 1000 *Zat*. Salaries of localised officials and administrative offices were in fact increasing, especially in regions of conflict.⁸⁹⁴ Like the Qing state, the Mughals also faced many internal conflicts, including large peasant rebellions of enormous scales. Unlike the Qing, however,

⁸⁹⁰ The percentage spent on the Qing military was very high (70 percent), however wages of troops was low and not always paid in cash. The military budget was also stagnant for long periods of time. Yingcong Dai, "Qing Military institutions and their effects on the Government, Economy and Society, 1640–1800." *Journal of Chinese History = Zhongguo Li Shi Xue Kan* 1, no. 2 (2017): 342-343

⁸⁹¹ Ma and Rubin, "The Paradox of Power" 278; Sng, Tuan-Hwee. "Size and Dynastic Decline" 107

⁸⁹² Granted, the central tax rate for the Mughal empire may have been higher relative to the Qing, although this has been disputed, for instance see: Guha, "Rethinking" 560. For reference of Mughals ceding taxes, see: Habib, *Agrarian Systems*, 291

⁸⁹³ Demonstrated and discussed in Chapter 4

⁸⁹⁴ All of this is demonstrated in the analysis of the previous chapter. See Chapter 4 conclusion for a summary.

the Mughal empire responded to these conflicts by increasing its administrative state capacity, a strategy considered essential for the government.

This begs the question: Why did two states facing large internal conflicts and similar institutional structures react to these conflicts in very different ways? Although admittedly speculative, this chapter suggests potential explanations of the differences of the state development. Specifically, it will focus on two explanations: 1) the difference in information costs of managing the empires, and 2) the high level of conflict costs the state faced. The purpose is not to suggest this is the primary or only cause of differences in development paths between these states, but to highlight how differing relationships with local elites could have potentially shaped central government policies. As part of the explanation, the analysis will assume the states relationship with government officials factored into their policy decisions, which is not an unreasonable assumption given the important roles state officials played in government, both as administrators of local regions and in terms of the percentage of government income which went to paying their salaries.

V. Monitoring, Information and Bargaining Power of Elites

In a comparison of meritocracy between the Qing and the Mughal empires, Seth and Zhang identify several similarities between the Mughal and Qing systems of government officials related to the skills of officials and how they were selected for government. One of the differences they comment on is with respect to how these empires defined meritocracy and the qualities they searched for in intermediaries:

If government in China was about managing resources and personnel through the rhetoric of merit, Mughal India was preoccupied with bridging information gaps that made consistent rule across centre and periphery virtually impossible. Agency problems were real, and as a response, the Mughals fostered a composite style of ruling by issuing *jagir* and *Mansab* ranks. Holding one or both did not preclude enterprising individuals from having other identities such as being a local king, a regional strongman, or an enterprising revenue farmer.⁸⁹⁵

⁸⁹⁵ Seth and Zhang, "Locating Meritocracy," 113

The passage identifies a key difference in the motivations of the states; whilst each government tailored administration and fiscal regulations to local environments, the degree of complexity of cultures was far greater in India than in China. In consequence of this, the administrative costs of managing the diversity and the necessity of managing the different localities made local knowledge and skills of intermediary officials more valuable to the state. To use the authors' terminology, the information gaps and principal agent problems in India between the state and the rulers created an environment where localised knowledge and skills were invaluable to the state, as was the ability to negotiate with local populations. Maintaining relationships with influential elites allowed the state to overcome hurdles of high information costs. In other words, the relative benefits of employing localised officials were greater in the Mughal empire because the potentially higher administrative costs. The skills, abilities and influences of the localised officials made them less replaceable. By comparison, whilst monitoring costs remained high in the empire, the Qing government faced relatively lower administrative costs given the homogeneity of the Han populations and the existence of standardised systems which predated the dynasty. The same localisation of skills was perhaps less necessary because of pre-existing institutional homogeneity of both formal and informal institutions.

This line of explanation must, of course, be caveated with the knowledge that officials in the Qing empire were important part of the Qing administrative system. Certainly, within at least specific spheres, local knowledge was considered an important quality for the emperor's appointment of an official, especially when related to family related fields. Seth and Zhang make reference to one official who was appointed to manage a port in part because it was recognised the family he came from knew much about the ports.⁸⁹⁶ In the South Eastern Chinese provinces, where landlordism was higher, Zurndorfer additionally notes the important role elites played in calming social unrest and liaising between localities and the central government.⁸⁹⁷

Yet the extent to which the Qing government prioritised these relationships as opposed to the administrative abilities seems to have been of a different degree. Take, for instance, the mechanism of appointments of officials within the Qing empire, which for a

⁸⁹⁶ Seth and Zhang, "Locating Meritocracy," 113

⁸⁹⁷ Zurndorfer, "Violence and Political Protest," 304-319

large part for lower-level officials came from the examination system.⁸⁹⁸ Through the examinations, Qing gentry were selected based on their knowledge of Confucian classics, which whilst included principles of governance, though these were not principles specific to localities but general teaching of Confucianism. In many ways, given the majority of the Han population was Confucian, the use of Confucius' teachings as a means of assessing suitability of an official was perhaps not an irrational choice.⁸⁹⁹ However, with a highly diverse population in India, the Mughals' could not adopt a similar framework. In India, lower-level officials could be placed across the empire in very diverse environments and were expected to liaise and govern localities very different to their own. The ability to mediate conflicts and appease locals was consistently considered to be an admirable and necessary quality of Mughal officials. The better the administrator was at their job, the more likely he would be promoted and sent to perhaps what were the most difficult regions to manage.⁹⁰⁰ This is reflected in the previous chapter where we can see officers with the same job could receive different salaries depending on the regions which they were appointed to administer.⁹⁰¹ Moreover, officials posted further away from government lands, like in the North-western or Southern regions which were most difficult to manage, received higher salaries.

Although Sharia law⁹⁰² and a centralised court system was enforced across major towns in Mughal India, there was equally a strong recognition of existing legal cultures and systems within non-Muslim communities.⁹⁰³ These legal differences played an important factor in resolving disputes between different ethnic groups and the government. One incident which reflects this situation most aptly was a fight between a central Asian official and a Rajput soldier led to a conflict between the Rajput clan with the central government. In resolving the conflict, the Rajputs insisted the official in question must be executed and, whilst the Central government tried to persuade them

⁸⁹⁸ This was not a simple structure as the route to officialdom could come in various forms. Seth and Zhang for instance note that some higher-level officials probably did not even take the higher level exams. However, the majority of officials would have expected to have attained or bought a degree and relative to the Mughal system there was greater focus on examination success. For a discussion of the different forms of meritocracy, see: Seth and Zhang, "Locating Meritocracy," 91

⁸⁹⁹ Yifu Lin, "The Needham Puzzle," 269; Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy*

⁹⁰⁰ Singh, "Centre and Periphery," 305-6

⁹⁰¹ Refer Figure 4.9(c) in the previous chapter, which shows *Diwan's* salaries were different by region. Figure 4.14(b) also shows There was on average differentiation in wages between provinces.

⁹⁰² Sharia Law is the Islamic legal system of jurisprudence

⁹⁰³ Roy, *Law and Economic Change in India*, 122, 133n12

otherwise, it was compelled to follow the Rajput demands.⁹⁰⁴ In another case when trying to find a solution for punishing a rebellious official through the use of an intermediary who would vouch on his behalf, the chronicler of the event reflected on the comments of a central Asian tribal official who stated that in his culture they would have executed the entire tribe if one person rebelled in that way. The emperor, however, did not consider this an appropriate course of action given the clan's historical patronage relationship with the government.⁹⁰⁵ Clearly there was a recognition and acceptance of a duality within legal systems differentiated by local and central government spheres of authority.

The role of Mughal officials in bridging over and mediating these gaps was essential for the state. Unlike in premodern China where the examination system ensured there was a high supply of officials able to take the roles within governance, and officials were sorted by their scores through a standardised exam, the Mughal empire was more likely to face a skill differentiation dilemma where the skills required to manage regions were more specific.⁹⁰⁶ Despite a large population, the pool of administrative officials qualified was relatively far smaller. The requirements become more complex when considering the differentiation within India and the need for officials to be able to engage with local populations more effectively. Thus, whilst the Qing government had an abundance of officials capable of taking on administrative positions (due to them having to worry less about a need for local knowledge), the Mughals had to select from a smaller pool of potential officials, looking for those with the ability to effectively govern a population perhaps different to their own. Consequently, Qing officials were relatively more replaceable, and the state was able to offer lower wages to officials which had less bargaining power. The Mughal state conversely was reliant on the administrative capacity of its officials, and therefore increasing their number and salaries especially in places where the state had less presence was an essential part of the Mughal strategy of bridging these gaps.

A related contributing factor to the differentiation between official wages is perhaps reflected in the geopolitical differences between these states. Although we have earlier discussed the existence of a group like the *Zamindars* in China, unlike the Mughal empire the Qing state did not possess as many wealthy and powerful *Zamindar*-like local

⁹⁰⁴ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 410-1

⁹⁰⁵ Jahangir, *Tuzuk*, 34-5

⁹⁰⁶ Or conversely diverse if we think about needing to speak multiple languages.

landholders who posed a significant challenge to the state. The most comparable equivalent to the tributary *Zamindars* was perhaps the Three Feudatories, defectors from the Hans dynasty given hereditary to their land and relative autonomy in its management, whose rebellion in the 1673 did inspire substantial mobilisation of the Qing forces.⁹⁰⁷ In India, the *Zamindars* were the best and most reliable source of local power and knowledge, yet they could additionally be rebellious and contend against the state, and their relative power and large numbers made these challenges more formidable. Mughal officials managing the *Zamindars* needed to be armed and ready to quell and negotiate with recalcitrant *Zamindars*. The frequency and ubiquity of such conflicts required officials to both maintain administrative skills and military proficiency, including the maintenance of militias to aid in their security. The militarisation of officials, necessary for their protection and the fulfilment of military obligations, equally created a dilemma for the state, where powerful *Mansabdars* could later prove to be a threat. In some ways, this mirrors the problem of high monitoring costs of governance identified by literature on the Chinese state.⁹⁰⁸ To mitigate this dilemma, however, the Mughal state created overlapping roles of governance within departments, that created competing interests and encouraged officials to check on one another.⁹⁰⁹ With the need to bridge information gaps, it is likely that the state increased the number of officials, balancing higher monitoring costs with potential losses from reduced information capacity.

Proliferation of lower-level officials had another advantage related to the frequency and ubiquity of conflicts. Having numerous lower-level officials on the ground gave the state the ability to group together forces from different localities to respond to threats, both internally and externally.⁹¹⁰ In the face of rebellion in distant provinces, the state was able to enforce immediate action by collecting local governance groups. Whilst this is perhaps a more military advantage as opposed to an administrative one, the

⁹⁰⁷ A study is available from the following unpublished dissertation: Tsao K (1965). *The Rebellion Of The Three Feudatories Against The Manchu Throne In China: Its setting and significance*. PhD Dissertation, Columbia University 1965, 169. Another relevant comparator might be the South-Eastern clans, however these might have had a more limited geography. See: Zurndorfer, Harriet T., "Violence and Political Protest," 304-319

⁹⁰⁸ Sng, "Size and Dynastic Decline," 107-27; : Zurndorfer, "Violence and Political Protest" 319; Greif, and Tabellini. "The Clan and the Corporation" 1-35.

⁹⁰⁹ Siddiqi, "Pulls and Pressures," 243-55;

⁹¹⁰ Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India*, 162

structure of the empire enabled the state to bridge information gaps and respond to conflicts more effectively.

Conflicts did then seem to play an important capacity-building role in the Indian empire relative to what they did in the Chinese case despite high frequency of internal conflict. Perhaps the best explanation for these differences is the intensity of the conflicts they faced, meaning differences in frequency but also the relative difference in the ability of the state to defeat the rebels. The relative wealth and power differences between the Mughals and the *Zamindars* was lower than the difference between the Qing and their rebels. In his evaluation of Mughal battles, Streusand has noted that the Mughals “enjoyed a definite but limited margin of military superiority over their rivals in Hindustan,”⁹¹¹ where winning any war or quelling a rebellion would be a highly costly and engaged affair since much of the populace was militarised and skilled in combat. The Qing government conversely mostly faced peasant rebellions which, whilst formidable when they gained momentum, perhaps did not pose the same level of threat and cost to put down as a wealthy official.⁹¹² Consequently, the Qing government did not feel the need to expand its armed forces and military might in the same way the Mughals did.

The difference in the relative balance of powers between the states and their respective would-be rebels is somewhat apparent when we measure the difference in duration of rebellions in the two states. Duration is an appropriate measurement of the difficulty these states had in putting down rebellions because it should not be affected by population size differences, where the premodern Chinese state experienced very high rates of population growth during the Qing dynasty.⁹¹³ It is worth noting that the sources from which the data for each empire is collected is different. I do not use Brecke’s dataset for both empires because the data it has for the Mughal empire is quite poor and does not reflect the actual number of rebellions the state faced.⁹¹⁴ Conversely, Brecke’s dataset

⁹¹¹ Streusand, “The Process of Expansion,” 348-9.

⁹¹² Yingcong Dai notes the Qing did not raise military related taxes after 1661 and there was a long period of general peace in the country: Dai, “Qing Military institutions,” 351

⁹¹³ Perkins estimates a growth rate of 0.4 percent per year with few interruptions, these being the 1644 conquest of the Qing and the Taiping Rebellions in the middle of the 19th century. This meant the population rose by seven to nine times between 1400-1953. See: Dwight Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China, 1368–1968*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1969. 184-5

⁹¹⁴ See the discussion in Chapter 1’s introduction.

provides a longer list of rebellions for China than some alternative datasets.⁹¹⁵ However, it is possible Peter Brecke's data does still not provide a comprehensive record of Chinese rebellions, especially of duration data, and so it is worth being cautious in drawing conclusions.⁹¹⁶ However, a comparison of conflict intensity provides a good illustration of the challenges rebellions posed to the state in each of the two regions.

Figure 5.1 demonstrates that within the first 150 years of these dynasties, the frequency of rebellion in the Mughal state was significantly higher than in the Qing empire. This is supported by Table 5.2 which shows there were 34 rebellions in the Mughal empire during the first 150 years of the dynasty compared to just 16 rebellions within the Qing.⁹¹⁷ The differences in duration of rebellions are harder to discern. Whilst there were 6 rebellions in the Mughal dynasty substantially larger than the Qing rebellions, the average Mughal rebellion was not necessarily so much larger. This is evident by differences in the mean and standard deviations of rebellion duration, where the Mughals certainly had a higher mean of 39 months as opposed to an average of just 31.5 months for the Qing dynasty. However, the standard deviation of the duration of Mughal rebellions is also much larger (57.6 for the Mughals compared to 29 for the Qing), indicating there was a much larger range of durations of rebellions in the Mughal state. However, by both frequency and duration measures, the data still tends to suggest the intensity of conflict was greater in the Mughal empire compared to the Qing. This indicates the incentive and pressure from the Mughal state from rebellions was therefore more substantial. This is notwithstanding the external geopolitical pressures the Mughals may have faced from the Safavid empire which are not included in the data below. Of course, in the period after these 150 years, the Chinese state faced much larger conflicts in the form of the Opium Wars in the nineteenth century against European states which accelerated institutional innovation, as well as the Taiping rebellion in 1850.⁹¹⁸

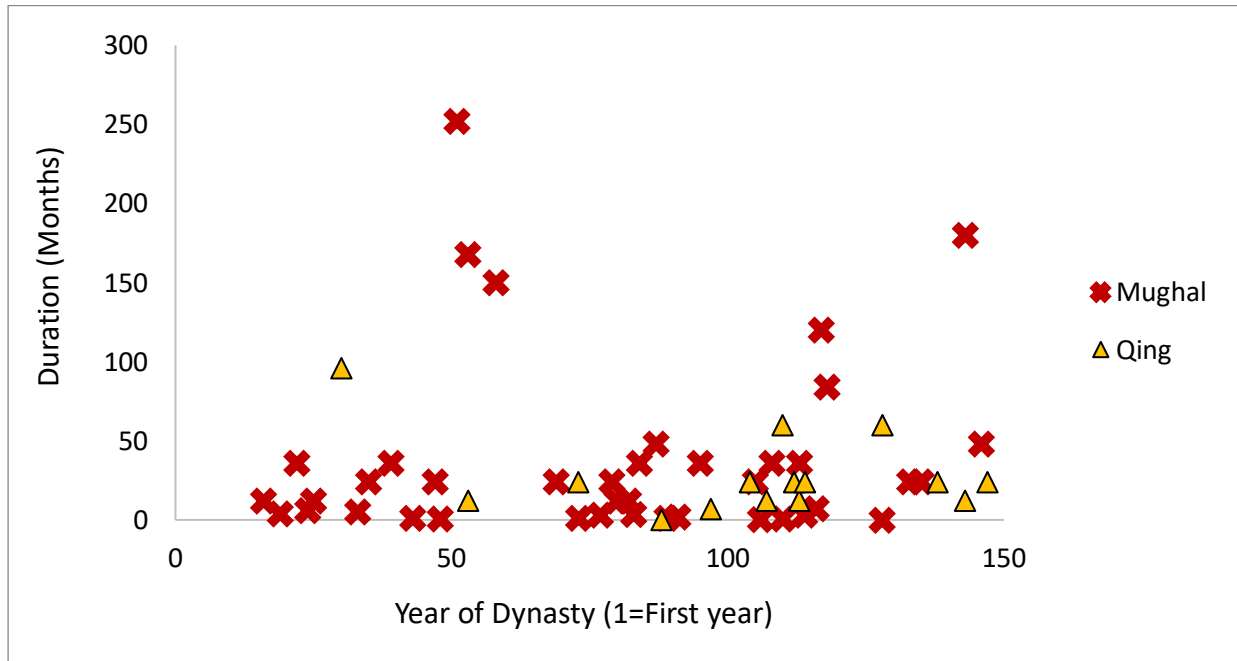
⁹¹⁵ Deng's database for instance records only 19 rebellions for the Qing dynasty whereas Brecke's database records 85 rebellions for the same period (1644-1900). Whilst only 16 rebellions have duration data in Brecke's database, only 6 rebellions have duration data within Deng's database for the first 150 years of the Qing dynasty as taking from (1644-1794) See: Gang Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy*, 375, Appendix J; Brecke, "Violent Conflicts 1400 A.D. to the Present"

⁹¹⁶ See previous footnote for an outline of the numerical differences.

⁹¹⁷ Again, this might be skewed by the data availability on durations of rebellions.

⁹¹⁸ Ma, "Why Japan, Not China," 385-6; See also the following Working Paper: Deng, "The Merit Of Misfortune," 28

Figure 5.1: Duration of Rebellions in the First 150 years of the Mughal and Qing Dynasties



Source: Qing Conflict Data is taken from Peter Brecke’s Conflict Dataset. Mughal Conflict data is taken from my Mughal Conflict Dataset. The first year of the Mughal dynasty is taken to be 1556, and the first year of the Qing dynasty is 1644. This is only rebellions for which duration data is available.

Table 5.2: Comparative Statistics on the Average Duration and Frequency of Rebellions

	Mughal	Qing
Mean Duration	39	31.5
Standard Deviation of Durations of Rebellions	57.6	29
Total Count of Rebellions	34	16

Source: Qing Conflict Data is taken from Peter Brecke’s Conflict Dataset. Mughal Conflict data is taken from my Mughal Conflict Dataset. This only includes data for rebellions for the first 150 years in each dynasty, meaning between 1644-1797 for the Qing state and between 1556-1707 for the Mughal state. This is only rebellions for which duration data is available. Data is given to one decimal place.

To summarise, relatively higher information costs in the Mughal empire coupled with relatively more formidable conflicts indicate that the Mughal state had a greater incentive to increase its administrative capacity than the Qing government. The Mughal state was able to increase its capacity whilst maintaining flexibility through the employment of lower-level officials. The Qing government likely did not face the same kinds of pressures because of the relatively smaller threats to their power. However, it must be acknowledged that there could be other potential explanations for the two states following very different paths of development. It could, for instance, a simple difference of policy choices made by these states where their objectives for governance were not the same. It could also be the more unlikely explanation that the Mughals were simply increasing the number of localised officials because it could afford to hire more officials to increase its tax-extractive capacity.⁹¹⁹ More research is needed to explore this question thoroughly, and the possibility of multiple factors impacting state development cannot be ignored. That said, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that Mughal intermediaries clearly held greater value to the state so that the empire thought the increase in number of officials was worth the changes made.

My analysis suggests the relationship between centralisation and state formation is more complex than the correlation expressed within much of the literature. Whilst centralisation perhaps played an important role in Europe in state development, the same does not seem to be necessarily true in Asia. Whereas the politically centralised Chinese regime experienced stagnant state development, the decentralised Mughal government grew substantially in numerical size and administrative capacity, albeit with lower expenditure. This chapter joins previous articles which have criticised oversimplification of this relationship without due consideration of the cost-saving effects of organisational form.⁹²⁰

⁹¹⁹ This explanation seems unlikely as the evidence suggests that the state did face a *jagir* crisis in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

⁹²⁰ Koh, "The Ottoman Postmaster" 251

VI. Conclusion

The comparison between the Qing and Mughal experiences in state formation sheds light on why the Indian state chose to expand its local reach and followed a different path its East Asian neighbour. In an environment of high information costs resultant from the diversity of the subcontinent, and the existence of strong local intermediary groups like the *Zamindars*, the Mughal state used its relationship with localised officials as a strategic measure of bridging these gaps. The strategy of incorporation strengthened the Mughal state and allowed it to respond to conflicts more effectively. The diversity within these states' experience despite similar institutional structures demonstrates how conflicts shaped state policies. The Qing state did not face the same pressures of funding conflicts as the Mughals did despite both empires facing predominantly internal conflicts. The Mughal empire in comparison faced relatively more challenging threats to its power, so the need to develop its state capacity was greater. The need to incorporate a larger and more capable establishment pressured the state to hire more employees and to compete with rival states in wages.

The divergent patterns of state capacity development identified within this chapter and the last raises important questions with regards to how the state capacity literature has tended to study the impact of conflict on state formation within Asian empires. It is often taken for granted that the Chinese state experience of the negative effects of conflict on state capacity development and a subsequent stagnation of the state's size was inevitable due to the number of internal conflicts the state faced. However, the comparison with the Mughal state suggests that internal conditions within Asian empires (namely greater heterogeneity, higher information costs and greater conflict intensity) can lead states onto very different paths of state formation. In other words, the existing local environments and institutions within localities of empires can impact how governments are incentivised to change the structure of the state's administration and policies over time.

Chapter 6: Conclusion – Structure and Process of Empire in the Mughal Golden Age

This thesis set out to ask how conflicts affected the state formation of the precolonial Mughal empire, with specific attention to the role intermediaries played in both the administration of the empire and rebellions against it. The analysis has shown that the impacts of conflict were transformative: the high frequency of internal rebellions shaped and constrained both the empire's behaviour and its policies in historically significant ways. As Andre Wink has indicated, conflict was very much a part of the every-day life of the Mughal empire, where state development can be seen as a process of defection and reincorporation of the elites.⁹²¹ As Munis Faruqi has argued, the ruling family needed to develop broad bases of allies across the elites in order to secure legitimacy and win dynastic contests.⁹²² Yet, as this thesis has demonstrated, rebellions also had significant implications for the administrative capacity of the empire. It was the high costs of conflicts which incentivised the government to adopt an array of conciliatory policies. This had the effect of restraining the government from predation of the elites, giving the latter confidence to defy the state and still expect to return to it with limited consequences. It was not just conflicts alone, however, that influenced state building strategies but the interplay between conflicts and local conditions like the heterogeneity of environment, cultures and institutions. To rule such a diverse region, co-sharing of power and revenue was the most cost effective form of governance. The desire for cooperation led to the development of a 'moral economy,' where the central government needed to respect diverse groups and avoid crossing metaphorical boundaries of what was acceptable for the government to do, even in times of rebellion.

As the size and frequency of conflicts changed, however, so did the state's choices of administrative structure. Specifically, conflicts incentivised the localisation of the

⁹²¹ Wink A. Sovereignty and universal dominion in South Asia. *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*. 1984;21(3): 286; Wink, André. *Land and Sovereignty in India : Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth-century Maratha Svarājya*. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications ; No.36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. 381-2

⁹²² Munis, Princes, 137, 141, 160, 171-4

state's structure, meaning there was an increase in employment of lower-level officials who retained relative autonomy over smaller parcels of land they administered. Thus, the 'structure' and 'process' of the state's development was very much related to one another. The state was from the start formed by the high frequency of conflicts within the region, and as local conditions and size of conflicts increased, the government responded accordingly.⁹²³ The transformation of the presented within the chapters of this thesis indicates that the Mughal state of the seventeenth century was a dynamic one, where the structure of administration within the empire was very different by the end of the century than what it was at the start. Significantly, this shift was not just evident towards the end of the period of study, but much earlier from Shah Jahan's reign in the 1630s.

A central argument in this thesis has been the importance of the administrative skills and abilities of the elites, as well as their connections to local populations, in shaping the state's policies. The diversity and breadth of the empire made a standardised system of taxation and jurisdiction across all the provinces impossible to implement, and the state could not hope to both have knowledge of and command loyalty within communities in a way that allowed them effective control. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, capable elites who were able to influence, negotiate with and administer localities were an essential part of the Mughal administration. Their specific skills, however, increased their bargaining power vis a vis the state, and made it difficult for the central government to admonish them, let alone confiscate or extract large shares of revenues. Relevantly, there was a varying degree of rebel forgiveness influenced by the abilities and skills of groups. As has been argued especially by studies of the Ottoman state, cooperation between the centre and periphery was an important determinant of the state capacity development of the empire, and that was true for the Mughals as well.

Chapter 3 maps out the changes in conflicts over time and argues that the series of agrarian rebellions which became increasing larger over the seventeenth century were at least in part fuelled by exogenous climate events as opposed to high revenue demands of the empire. A climate crisis in turn led to structural changes in the economy, especially in the intensity of rebellions. High famine rates and economic instability empowered *Zamindars* and bandits by attracting refugee peasants to their lands and providing them

⁹²³ The structure or process debate is referenced in the introduction within the outline of the Mughal historiography.

with greater ability to resist the tax collection of the state. Peasant flight and desperation, as well as the limited ability of the state to overcome the scale of the crisis, thus played a vital role in the restructuring of the state. The crisis limited the state's ability to feed its armies and collect taxes and could also have the effect of strengthening *Zamindars* who were able to provide security for peasants when the state could not. The chroniclers' accounts in the central government sources suggest the state was aware of these challenges, and although it tried to respond by increasing security and charitable provisions (such as opening soup kitchens), the ability of the state to respond to such a large crisis was limited.

The higher levels of conflict also likely precipitated a change in the administrative structure of the government. As is demonstrate in Chapter 4, these costlier conflicts drove a reform which saw the proliferation of administrative elites across the different localities of the state. However, rather than a simple centralisation or decentralisation of government, the expanse in lower-level officials indicate a 'localisation' of the state. The bulk of the state's administration came to have more localised and administrative functions. The relative power of localised groups, in terms of their proliferation and salary payments, increased over the course of the century.

Finally, Chapter 6 makes an argument for an explanation for the relative differences in paths of state development in the Mughal and Qing Chinese states' expansion of local officials. The larger conflicts in the Mughal state and the need to bridge information gaps incentivised different responses of these governments to rebellions. Whilst the Qing government did not engage in hiring many more officials despite a growing population, the Mughal government directly hired many lower level officials which allowed the state to respond more quickly to local needs and bridge information gaps between the central government and local groups.

In many ways, the findings of this thesis underscore the duality of the state highlighted by Farhat Hasan (and was discussed in the introduction).⁹²⁴ As the empire relied on local knowledge and elite influence, it found itself having to cooperate and conciliate local interests. This often left the empire vulnerable to rebellion and disobedience of officials. On the other hand, it was precisely this partnership with local groups that strengthened the empire against various threats and allowed the state to

⁹²⁴ Hasan, Farhat. *State and Locality in Mughal India*, 127

access remits of the localities which could not be controlled by force alone. The success of Sidi Yakut against the English, or the Rajputs against the Safavids, was success for the empire as a whole. The empire was willing to tolerate internal restraints in order to become more capable of much larger goals in the process.

However, these policies came at the expense of reduced control of the elite. A continuous feature of the period was the state's unwillingness to punish elites for long periods of time despite recognising their flagrant disregard for the law. This could restrain central government predation, but could also come at the expense of increasing insecurity for peasants and traders who could be raided or taken advantage of when elites believed they could get away with it. The issues of balancing state constraints and enforcing its own policies and laws were exacerbated by the higher levels of conflicts and increasing agrarian crisis of the period, where the alignment of interests between the elites and the state was skewed by greater demands from the population and changes in the power-balance between administrators. Intermediaries continued to be essential for effective administration, yet political and economic insecurity as well as financial strain on the state resources reduced the opportunity cost of disobeying central government orders. In many ways, this shift of alignment between the state and elites interests was also part of the process of state formation, albeit one which was very much instigated by exogenous changes.

A question which has been posed during the writing of this study is if the level of rebellion and conflict an indicator of there being no appropriate forums for elites and the state to engage in discourse on the topic. As Farhat Hasan has shown in his examination of court documents of the Mughal era, this explanation is not likely, seeing as the state had multiple forums for adjudication within the bureaucratic structure of the economy.⁹²⁵ Rather, rebellious elites themselves saw an opportunity to further their own aims and took it outside of the legal order because it advantaged them. When the interests of the elite were not congruent with the laws of the empire it incentivised intermediaries to ignore them, especially given the limited repercussions of their actions. For instance, refusal to pay taxes and the invasion or plunder of neighbouring could hardly have been considered something the state would condone in any legal forum, so would not be brought before a court if the offender knew this.

⁹²⁵ Hasan, Farhat. Paper Performance and the State, 47

As was stated in the introduction, the findings of this thesis contributes to two literatures which have debated the nature of the state. In the Mughal historiography, the concept of a conciliatory and cooperative empire is not new, however a framework for understanding how the state's management of conflicts led by intermediaries has been less developed. The adoption of conceptual frameworks and methodologies from the global state formation literature has helped to facilitate new insight into how local conditions and costs of conflict shaped the nature of government. The use and focus on central state sources to illustrate how local conditions shaped Mughal policies show that the metaphorical distance between the state and periphery was closer than has previously understood, and became even closer as the state localised over time. Conflict costs and the need to overcome them significantly determined the state's institutional and policy choices.

Significantly, the patterns of change over time present a more dynamic understanding of the evolution of the state than has currently been considered in the literature. Rather than a rapid development in the eighteenth century or even the late seventeenth century, forces of change in the structure of the economy were clearly evident from the 1630s. Perhaps the pace and direction of change evolved over the period, however the central government form was changing through most of the seventeenth century. Whether the developments in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century should be considered a decline somewhat depends on what our understanding is of what represents a decline. Although the central state no longer commanded the same power and revenue as it did before, many of the localised institutions of the state persisted and were subsequently adopted and adapted by future regimes like the Maratha state.⁹²⁶ That said, the impact the deterioration of centralised, coordinated power had on the Mughal state's ability to fend off invasions had significant implications for the populace and general security of the region. The Afghan invasion and then the EIC's colonisation were met with little coordinated effort, and the consequences of these conflicts on the livelihood of people were significant. As the findings of this thesis have repeatedly tried to emphasise, it was not the rapacity of the state's predation in terms of high taxes and confiscations that posed a limitation on economic growth. Rather, the state consistently struggled with establishing a rule of law which engendered security for merchants and

⁹²⁶ Gordan, Stewart. "The Slow Conquest," 225

citizens from the very elites who they relied on. As conflicts became larger and costlier to manage, legal capacity also declined as the central government was unable to control and punish the many officials which became increasingly disobedient.

In the state capacity literature debates, this thesis represents the first study of the Mughal state which uses a broader comparative framework of Asian empires to bring the case study of the Mughal empire into the literature. Through this, the thesis has joined a chorus of authorship on Ottoman state formation that argues against the commonly held trope that centralisation of the state, meaning a concentration of authority and revenues with the central government, is the only means of increasing state capacity.⁹²⁷ In the Mughal state, the central government played an important role in the coordination and appointment of elites across the subcontinent, however it was only by sharing fiscal and legal autonomy with such groups was the state able to respond to threats quickly and flexibly. The cooperation between the centre and peripheral elites led to a development of a kind of moral economy that gave confidence to rebellious groups that they could return to power. Despite the ethnic divisions of the elite, the empire was restrained in its predation with the recognition that any predatory behaviour would have the effect of diminishing rather than increasing long term revenues. Importantly, the findings show Mughal state development was influenced more by 'bottom up' factors as opposed to 'top-down' imposition of structures as has commonly been argued in the literature.⁹²⁸ Conflicts therefore precipitated a decentralisation of the empire as opposed to a state centralisation as in Europe, however in both cases the administrative capacity of the state increased.

In this way, whilst the thesis has adopted a comparative framework for analysis, the findings highlight nuanced differences in the development of each of the three early modern Asian empires whose state-building experiences were influenced by the different internal and external challenges they faced. Like the Mughal empire, the Ottoman empire was constrained by local elites and needed to bargain with them.⁹²⁹ Yet the Ottoman scholarship has recognised the state's ability to confiscate revenue farming rights to centralise the government. By comparison, although the Mughal state also had the right to confiscate from elites, the return of the property rights upon a rebel's forgiveness indicate this was only a legal possibility as opposed to something which could be enacted

⁹²⁷ See the discussion in the introduction as well as in Chapter 5 (background and literature review).

⁹²⁸ Discussed within the introduction in the state capacity section

⁹²⁹ Arslantas, "Making Sense of Musadere,"

without significant consequences.⁹³⁰ The degree of difference between the states' ability to confiscate could have played a significant role in their subsequent evolution. It additionally seems that its position between the centralising European empires and the Safavids made warfare as opposed to internal rebellion a primary concern of the Ottoman state, whereas the Mughal state was mostly more affected by rebellions.

Like the Mughal state, the Qing Chinese empire also faced a number of internal conflicts fuelled by the mobilisation of large peasant groups. Despite the lack of attention given to it in the state capacity literature, there also existed an intermediary class functionally akin to the *Zamindars* and local Mughal officials in their roles of administering and leading rebellions. However, as discussed in Chapter 6, rebellions had profoundly different impacts on state response; whilst the number of officials in the Qing state remained stagnant or declined in per capita terms, the Mughal empire saw a very large increase in its employment of localised officials. I have suggested these different paths of development can be explained by two factors. Firstly, relatively higher information costs in the Mughal empire made administrative elites an essential element to the state's ability to manage a diverse population and led the government to increase, rather than decrease, their numbers in response to conflict. Secondly, the higher relative costs of conflict the state faced (due to the smaller differences in state military capabilities compared to their elites), made developing administrative capacity imperative for the Mughal state. As such, studies which have emphasized internal conflict as having a limiting effect on state development in Asia relative to Europe need to be nuanced to consider the varying responses on the continent influenced by different internal constructs.

What are then future avenues for research? Despite the title of this thesis, there are many mysteries in the development of the Mughal state and Asian state development that warrant further study. For the Mughal historiography, a continuation of the conflict database and extension of Athar Ali's impressive data collection into the eighteenth century will help us identify how the empire transformed. As it stands, even the data provided in chapter 4 is limited after 1658, meaning we do not know for certain whether

⁹³⁰ Yaycioglu, Ali. *Partners of the Empire : The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions*. 2016, 108-111; Karaman, K. Kivanç, and Şevket Pamuk. "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspective, 1500–1914." *The Journal of Economic History* 70, no. 3 (2010): 593-629.; Balla and Johnson, "Fiscal Crisis and Institutional Change," 825

Aurangzeb continued the process of official expansion (beyond the Maratha Deccan) or attempted a re-centralisation like the eighteenth-century Ottoman state. The qualitative evidence remains relatively mixed on this front, and the quantitative evidence is limited to officials with a *zat* greater than 1000. My theory is that even if there was an attempt of centralisation, which is unlikely, the state's ability to have instituted such a policy was restricted exactly by its need of local officials. Thus, any reversal would not have been substantial. There still also remains the question of the wider effects of structural changes on the economy. The evidence of a growing agrarian crisis in the state and the consequence it had on increasing scarcity and uncertainty is difficult to contest. Yet this does not preclude that concurrently certain sectors or groups in the economy were subsequently incentivised to adapt to these changes and become stronger in spite of them. In any economic downturn there are winners and losers, and question remains why certain groups were able to take advantage and benefit or adapt to the changes, and how these changes had implications for long term development. Whilst crises can precipitate a decline in some institutions, it can also inspire innovations in other areas.

In the state capacity field, more needs to be done to develop our understanding of the nuanced experiences of Asian state development. The differences in longevity of the dynasties and their ability to overcome challenges remains a question which is less understood. The adoption of the comparative framework employed in this thesis can be taken much further if we note striking similarities in some of the experiences of these governments despite different outcomes. In the case of India and China, the development of mass peasant rebellions especially deserves further attention. These involved the coordination of sometimes hundreds of thousands of people and had debilitating effects on the state, or else were the consequence of waning state capacity. The greater formation of independent communal and national identities within Asian states in the last decades of their decline is another fascinating similarity in the experience of state decline in all three empires. Although the Mughal empire's decline occurred centuries ahead, many of the same struggles the Mughals faced seemed to affect the Ottoman and Qing empires of the nineteenth century. Granted, all these assertions must be made with caution, and can only really be understood with more rigorous study.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.A Table of Contemporary Mughal Histories

This Appendix provides a table of all available Contemporary Mughal State Histories (which I am aware of) with an explanation of why it was or was not used.

Book	Writer and Historian	Patron	Issue with the Source
Akbarnama and Ain-i-Akbari	Abu'l-Fazl	Akbar	Detailed coverage, but writer is very vague
Tarikh-i-Firishtah	Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah	Akbar	History of the Deccan (dedicated to Adil Shah)
Tabaqat-i-Akbari	Nizamuddin Ahmad	Akbar	Good source (Used)
Muntakhabut-Tawarikh	Abd al-Qadir Bada'uni	Akbar	Was kept secret from the emperor therefore not a reflection of state's view
Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi	Abbas Khan Sarwani	Akbar	About Sher Shah Suri
Tarikh-i-Salatine Afghana	Ahmed Yadgar	Not-mentioned	Account of Lodi and Sur dynasties
Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat	Jauhar Aftabchi	Akbar	Account of Humayun
Tarikh-i-Sindh	Mir Muhammad Masoom Shah Bakhri	Akbar	Pre-Mughal history of Sindh
Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi	Shiekh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqui	Akbar	Pre Mughal history
Tarikh-i-Humayunshahi	Jauhar Aftabchi	Akbar	Same as Takirat ul Waqiat
Tarikh-i-Akbari	Muhammad Arif Qandhari	Akbar	Young Akbar account- not a long enough span
Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri or Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri	Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir	Jahangir	Used Wheeler translation
Makhjan-i-Afghana	Ni'mat Allah al-Harawi	Jahangir	History of Afghans – a little later than 1576
Tarikh-i-Dandi	Abdullah	Jahangir	History of Afghan rulers before Mughal conquest
Maasiri-i-Jahangir	Gharat Khan	Jahangir	

Book	Writer and Historian	Patron	Issue with the Source
Shah Jahan Nama	Md Sadiq Khan	Shah Jahan	Not translated
Padshah Namah	Mohammed Waris	Shah Jahan	Not translated
Alamgirnamah	Mirza Muhammad Kazim	Shah Jahan	Not Translated
Masir-e-Alamgiri	Mohd. Saqi Mustaid khan	Aurangzeb	Does not cover full period
Zafar Namah	Guru Gobind Singh Ji	Aurangzeb	
Muntakhab-ul-Lubab	Muhammad Hāshim or Hashim 'Ali Khan (Khafi Khan)	Aurangzeb	Used although not as thorough as other sources
Futuhāt-e-Alamgīh	Ishwar Das Nagar	Aurangzeb	
Nuskha-e-Dilkusha	Bhimsen Burhanpuri	Aurangzeb	Away from centre and relatively short
Khulasat-u-Tawarikh	Surjan Rai Khatri	Aurangzeb	
Sijarul Mutkhann	Ghulam Hussain	Aurangzeb	
Imadus Sadat	Ghulam Naqvi	Aurangzeb	

Appendix 1.B Mughal Conflict Database Conflict List

The following is a list of the broader conflicts within the empire. It lists the conflicts from the 'Main Rebellions Table' from Access. One conflict could comprise of multiple rebels and locations with differing.

A relevant page number relating to the start, end of the rebellion is included, or the closest thereof.

The ID number refers to the ID created in the Mughal Conflict Dataset. This is separate from counting the number of conflicts, shown by the Number Count.

Key to Sources:

KNA= Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, Tabaqat I Akbari, Vol 2.

AFM= Abu'l Faz, Akbarnama, Vol. 3.

CONT= Continuation of Akbarnama after Abu'l Fazl's death

JAH= Emperor Jahangir, Tuzuk I Jahangiri

HADI= Continuation of Tuzuk (under supervision of Jahangir)

INK= Inayat Khan, Abdringed Shahjahannama

KAF: Khafi Khan, Muntakhab ul Lubab,

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
1	5	Ab'ul Ma'ali Rebellion 1	1556	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	209
2	6	Sikandar Afghan 1	1556	War	Akbar	KNA	210
3	7	Mirza Sulaiman (Akbar's brother) 1	1556	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	212
4	8	Muhammad Adil Shah (Sur Dynasty part)	1556	War	Akbar	KNA	184, 191
5	9	Jaunpur Conquering (Sharqi Sultans)	1559	War	Akbar	KNA	233
6	10	Shir Khan Afghan	1559	War	Akbar	KNA	234

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
7	11	Bairam Khan / Khan Khanan	1560	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	243
8	12	Baz Bahadur	1561	War	Akbar	KNA	250
9	13	Jai Mal aka Jaimal	1562	War	Akbar	KNA	258
10	14	Attempt to conquer Asir and Burhanpur	1562	War	Akbar	KNA	261
11	15	Adam Khan (Gakkhar)	1562	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	263
12	16	Mah Chuchak Begam	1560	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	269, 271
13	17	Mirza Sharif ud din	1563	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	273
14	18	Ghazi Khan Sur	1563	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	280
15	19	Rani Durgavati	1563	War	Akbar	KNA	281
16	20	Abdullah Khan Uzbek	1563	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	285
17	21	Mirza Sulaiman	1568	War	Akbar	KNA	291
18	22	Ali Quli Khan (aka Khan-i-Zaman)	1565	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	294
19	23	Asaf Khan	1565	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	300
20	24	Mirza Muhammad Hakim	1566	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	318
21	25	Ibrahim Hussain Mirza	1566	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	326
22	26	Rana Udai Singh	1567	War	Akbar	KNA	341

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
23	27	descendants of Muhammad Sultan Mirza	1568	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	350
24	28	Rai Sarjan	1568	War	Akbar	KNA-JAH	353
25	29	<i>Raja</i> Ram Chand	1570	War	Akbar	KNA	357
26	30	Sultan Mahmud	1571	War	Akbar	KNA	366
27	31	conquering of Gujrat	1573	War	Akbar	KNA	369
28	32	Ikhtiyar ul Mulk (Abyssinian Chief)	1572	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	375
29	33	Bidhichand (<i>Raja</i> Jaichand's son)	1573	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	399
30	34	unnamed peasants	1573	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	421
31	35	conquest of Bengal	1574	War	Akbar	KNA	429
32	36	Sulaiman Mangli	1575	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	459
33	37	Junaid	1575	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	461
34	38	Qiya Khan Gang	1575	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	462
35	39	Jalal ud din Sur	1575	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	469
36	40	Mirza Shahrukh against Mirza Sulaiman (ruler of Badakhshan)	1575	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	474
37	41	Daud Khan Afghan	1577	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	483
38	42	Rana Kika aka Rana Pratap	1576	War	Akbar	KNA	487

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
39	43	Gajpati - <i>Zamindar</i>	1577	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	490
40	44	<i>Raja</i> Ali Khan	1578	War	Akbar	KNA	498
41	45	Muzaffar Husain Mirza (son of Ibrahim Husain Mirza)	1578	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	515
42	46	Kalapahad aka Rudranarayan	1579	War	Akbar	KNA	515
43	47	Bihar and Bengal Rebellion	1581	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	560
44	48	Ma'sum Khan Farankhudi	1581	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	553
45	49	Niyabat Khan	1581	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	542
46	50	Mirza Muhammad Hakim (Akbar's brother and ruler of Kabul)	1582	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	549
47	51	unnamed peasant rebellion	1582	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	551
48	52	Bahadur (Shah)	1582	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	552
49	53	Khabisa (servant of Ma'sum Kabuli)	1583	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	556
50	54	Muzaffar Gujrati aka Nanu Rebellion	1584	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA-JAH	564
51	55	the Jam Satarsal, Rja of Jhalawar	1584	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	582
52	56	Rulers of Berar, Mir Murtaza and Khudawand Khan	1584	War	Akbar	KNA	584
53	57	<i>Raja</i> Ali Khan	1584	Vassal State	Akbar	KNA	586

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
54	58	Nephews of the Khangar (<i>Zamindar</i> of Kach)	1584	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	592
55	59	Conquer Kashmir	1586	War	Akbar	KNA	607, 617
56	60	Baluchis	1586	War	Akbar	KNA	607
57	61	Afghans	1586	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	607
58	62	Jalala Tariki (aka Jalal Raushnai) son of Pir Raushnai	1586	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	608, 649
59	63	Jani Beg	1588	War	Akbar	KNA-AFM	621
60	64	Yusufzai (tribes)	1588	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	622
61	65	Jam Satar Sal, <i>Raja</i> of Jahalwar	1590	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	630
62	66	Conquest of Sindh and Baluchis	1590	War	Akbar	KNA	632
63	67	Madhkar, <i>Zamindar</i> of Undjha	1591	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	634
64	68	Yadgar, nephew of Miza Yusuf Khan Rizavi	1592	Rebellion	Akbar	KNA	689
65	69	Conquering Orissa	1592	War	Akbar	KNA	646
66	70	Fort of Bandhu	1592	War	Akbar	AFM	1089
67	71	Burhan al Mulk Conquest of the Deccan	1593	Vassal State	Akbar	KNA	650
68	72	Mozaffar Husain (son of Ibrahim Husain)	1594	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	999
69	73	Jabbari son of Majnun K Qaqshal	1583	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1000

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
70	74	Muhammad Yar (grand-son of Gulbadan Begum, Humayun's sister)	1594	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1001
71	75	Muhammad Zaman, native of Andijan	1594	War	Akbar	AFM	1002, 1003
72	76	Kashmir Rebels	1594	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1013
73	77	Conquest of Siwi (Sibi) fort in Baluchistan	1594	War	Akbar	AFM	942
74	78	Conquest of Qandahar	1594	War	Akbar	AFM	1026
75	79	Conquest of Busnah	1594	War	Akbar	AFM	1023
76	80	Conquest of Garmair	1595	War	Akbar	AFM	1027
77	81	conquest of Kakruya Fort (Malwa according to translator)	1594	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1048
78	82	Kakar Tribe	1594	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1048
79	83	Conquest of the Deccan (Cand Bibi, Berar)	1594	War	Akbar	AFM	1050
80	84	Dissension in the troops	1596	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1050
81	85	Tariki rebels	1596	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1051
82	86	Fort of Busna	1596	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1059
83	87	Basu and some Landholders	1596	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1060
84	88	Isa	1596	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1093

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
85	89	Conquest of Kuc Bihar	1596	War	Akbar	AFM	1066-7
86	90	Jamil (pretends to be a mirza sulaiman's son), but really a peasant	1597	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1080
87	91	Bahadur, son of Muzaffar Gujrati	1597	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1083
88	92	<i>Raja</i> Basu- Fort of Man	1597	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1084
89	93	Natives of Ghor	1597	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1085
90	94	Dalpat Ujjainiya - aka <i>Raja</i> Bhojpur	1599	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1121
91	95	Biraghar (near Jalnapur as a reference)	1599	Vassal State	Akbar	AFM	1135
92	96	Umra the Rana	1599	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1140
93	97	Afghan Rebellion- Bengal	1600	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1151
94	98	Khandesh Rebels (nizamshahi)	1600	Vassal State	Akbar	AFM	1153
95	99	Saadat Khan and Raju Deccani aka Raju Mannu	1600	Vassal State	Akbar	AFM	1154
96	100	Hindia Landlord	1600	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1161
97	101	Pretender Humayun (son of M. Sulaiman)	1601	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1187
98	102	Shah Ali's son	1601	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1187
99	103	<i>Wanku Zamindar</i>	1601	Rebellion	Akbar	AFM	1191

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
100	104	Mau and Jammu	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1206
101	105	<i>Zamindars</i> of Garha	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1208
102	106	Jahangir Rebellion	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1210
103	107	Khudawand K Abyssinian	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1211
104	108	Conquest of Jammu	1602	War	Akbar	CONT	1213
105	109	Jalal of Kahakra	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1213
106	110	Qasi Mumin	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1124
107	111	Village in hill country Punjab	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1121
108	112	Ahadad (Afghan) aka Dilazak	1602	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT-JAH	1222
109	113	<i>Zamindar</i> of Banawara	1603	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1232
110	114	M. Hasan son of M. Shahrukh	1603	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1233
111	115	Ali Rai- ruler of Tibet	1603	War	Akbar	CONT	1235
112	116	Bengal <i>Zamindars</i> and <i>Raja</i>	1603	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1235
113	117	Alizai Tribe (Afghans)	1604	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1238
114	118	<i>Zamindars</i> of Garmair	1604	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1240
115	119	Cak tribe	1604	Rebellion	Akbar	CONT	1250

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
116	120	Sultan Khusraw	1605	Rebellion	Akbar	JAH	1248
117	121	Rana Amar Singh of Mewar	1607	War	Jahangir	JAH	154
118	122	Son of Muzaffar Gujrati aka Nanu	1606	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	48
119	123	khusraw	1606	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	48
120	124	Persian Semi Invasion	1607	War	Jahangir	JAH	66
121	125	Raju and Amba	1606	Vassal State	Jahangir	JAH	59
122	126	Baz Bahadur Qalmaq	1606	Vassal State	Jahangir	JAH	62
123	127	Ram Chand, Nanda Kuwar's son	1606	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	67
124	128	Sangram- one of the chief <i>Zamindars</i> of the souba Bihar	1606	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	64
125	129	Afghans of Bangash	1607	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	75
126	130	Nephew of <i>Raja</i> Bir Singh Deo	1607	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	78
127	131	Ali Quli Khan	1607	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	75
128	132	Khusraw 2nd Rebellion	1607	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	84
129	133	Dilazak Afghans	1607	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	86
130	134	Nizam Al Mulk's territory	1608	Vassal State	Jahangir	JAH	97
131	135	Instability in the Deccan	1609	Vassal State	Jahangir	JAH	102, 221

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
132	136	Rebels in Oudh	1610	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	109
133	137	Rebels and Trouble makers in Delhi	1610	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	111
134	138	Qutb [False Khusraw]	1610	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	112
135	139	Bikramajit-Zamindar of Bandhu	1610	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	113
136	140	Usman the Afghan-Zamindar	1612	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	129
137	141	Soldiers and <i>Ryots</i> in Thatha	1612	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	137
138	142	Franks of Goa (Portuguese)	1613	War	Jahangir	JAH	154
139	143	Dulup Singh (Rai Rai Singh's son, Suraj Singh's brother)	1614	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	155
140	144	Mughals protecting English from the Portuguese	1614	War	Jahangir	JAH	165
141	145	Chin Qilich	1615	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	181
142	146	Kangara Fortress	1615	War	Jahangir	JAH	186
143	147	Province of Gogra	1615	Vassal State	Jahangir	JAH	188
144	148	Qadam (Afridi Afghan)	1616	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	192
145	149	semi-savage afghans	1616	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	193
146	150	Sangram-landholder of the hill country	1616	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	211-3

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
147	151	Abdul Latif of Gujarat	1617	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	221
148	152	<i>Raja</i> of Jaitpur	1617	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	225, 227
149	153	Hari Ban- <i>Zamindar</i> of Chandrakota	1617	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	227
150	154	<i>Zamindars</i> of gondwana	1617	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	234
151	155	Province of Kurda	1617	War	Jahangir	JAH	248
152	156	Province of <i>Rajamundry</i>	1617	War	Jahangir	JAH	248
153	157	Conquer Tibet and Kishtwar	1618	War	Jahangir	JAH	328
154	158	Rai Bhara	1618	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	267
155	159	Panju the <i>Zamindar</i> of Kandesh	1618	War	Jahangir	JAH	269
156	160	Subhan Quli (scout)- previously involved with usman the afghan	1618	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	271
157	161	Suraj Mal- son of <i>Raja</i> Baso	1618	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	286
158	162	<i>Raja</i> Kaylan the <i>Zamindar</i> of Ratanpur	1619	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	304
159	163	Jawhar Mal (son of <i>Raja</i> Baso)	1620	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	329, 343
160	164	<i>Zamindars</i> of Kishtwar	1620	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	345
161	165	Iran Invasion from Shah Abbas	1622	War	Jahangir	JAH	377
162	166	Kishtwar <i>Zamindars</i>	1622	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	379

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
163	167	Bedawlat- Shah Jahan	1622	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	380
164	168	Rajput Skirmish with Sayyids	1623	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	410
165	169	Villagers in Mathura	1623	Rebellion	Jahangir	JAH	412
166	170	Uzbek war	1624	Rebellion	Jahangir	HADI	423
167	171	Yalangtosh the Uzbek and Ahdad	1625	Rebellion	Jahangir	HADI	436
168	172	Mahabat Khan (chief commander of the mughal army) with Rajputs	1626	Rebellion	Jahangir	HADI	447
169	173	Rebellion against Mahabat Khan Rajputs- Khwaja Abu'l-Hasan's son-in-law Badi'uzzaman and his brother Khwaja Qasim	1626	Rebellion	Jahangir	HADI	444-5
170	174	Nizamal Mulk [Nizam Shahi dynasty, Ahmednagar]	1626	Vassal State	Jahangir	HADI	450
171	175	Civil War, War of Succession (Adopted Faruqi Munis' definition)	1627	War	Shah Jahan/Jahangir	INK	460
172	176	Balkh and Badakhshan war	1628	War	Shah Jahan	INK	23
173	177	Nizamal mulk, Sayyid Kamal (Garrison Commander of Bir)	1628	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	30
174	178	Jujhar Singh Bundela	1628	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	154

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
175	179	Qutb al Mulk (sultan abdullah qutb shah)	1629	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	64
176	180	<i>Zamindars</i> of the surrounding district of Mahindari	1629	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	65
177	181	Adil Khan territory Bijapur	1631	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	74
178	182	Portuguese expelled from Bandar Hughli	1632	War	Shah Jahan	INK	84
179	183	Fort of Khatakheri	1633	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	90
180	184	conquering of Tibet- Abdal Khan (<i>Zamindar</i> of Tibet)	1633	War	Shah Jahan	INK	122
181	185	Delhi rebellion	1634	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	145
182	186	<i>Zamindar</i> of Ratanpur and <i>Zamindar</i> of Bhagi	1634	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	145
183	187	Jujhar Singh Bundela and son	1634	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	154
184	188	Kaman Pahari rebels	1634	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	151
185	189	<i>Zamindar</i> of Srinagar and other <i>Zamindars</i>	1634	War	Shah Jahan	INK	151
186	190	<i>Zamindar</i> of Chanda	1635	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	165
187	191	Bhujpal	1635	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	169
188	192	"6 other insurgents" in Chador and Dhorap	1635	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	169
189	193	Qutb al Mulk (Golconda)	1635	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	166
190	194	Adil Khan	1635	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	170

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
191	195	Jitpur <i>Zamindar</i>	1635	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	192
192	196	Indarman, <i>Zamindar</i> of Dhandhera	1636	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	195
193	197	Forts of Keljhar and Ashit which were in control of unruly spirits	1636	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	200
194	198	Kukia, <i>Zamindar</i> of Nagpur fort Deogarh	1636	War	Shah Jahan	INK	200
195	199	Bhupat, <i>Zamindar</i> of Jammu	1636	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	205
196	200	Bundella tribes in Bundelkhand (followers of the late Jujhar)	1636	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	209
197	201	<i>Zamindar</i> Partab	1636	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	220
198	202	Karimdad (son of Jalala)	1637	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	221
199	203	Safavid- Qandahar	1637	War	Shah Jahan	INK	221
200	204	Baldeo aka Dharma Naryan aka Bali Naryan- Payaks	1637	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	232
201	205	Conquest of Balgana territory in the Deccan (Arakan)	1637	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	246
202	206	[Potential] war with Iran- Safavids	1638	War	Shah Jahan	INK	254
203	207	Hazaras- unloyal (and stopped paying tribute)	1638	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	257
204	208	Sangi Bamkal (ruler of greater Tibet)- invading into lesser Tibet	1638	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	259

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
205	209	Malik of Seistan (Safavid employee)	1639	War	Shah Jahan	INK	263
206	210	<i>Zamindar</i> Jam of Nawanagar	1640	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	277
207	211	<i>Raja Jagat Singh</i> <i>Zamindar</i> of Kangra	1640	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	278
208	212	Pratab- <i>Zamindar</i> of Palamau	1641	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	290
209	213	Palamau Rebellion	1643	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	306
210	214	Fort Ginnur <i>Zamindar</i>	1643	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	311
211	215	Rajput revenge for Amar Singh	1643	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	314-6
212	216	Balkh- Tardi 'Ali Qatghan, preceptor of Nazar Muhammad Khan	1644	War	Shah Jahan	INK	319
213	217	Conquering of Balkh and Badakhshan	1644	War	Shah Jahan	INK	327
214	218	Mirza in Tibet	1645	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	339
215	219	Gujarat disorder	1645	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	340
216	220	Shah Abbas II invades Qandahar	1648	War	Shah Jahan	INK	412
217	221	refractory Mewatis in Kaman Pahar	1649	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	448
218	222	Jailasmir <i>Zamindar's</i> nephew	1659	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	450
219	223	Hijli <i>Zamindar</i>	1651	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	454

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
220	224	Mirza Jan in Lesser Tibet	1651	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	458
221	225	<i>Zamindars</i> of chauragarh and Bandhu	1651	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	461
222	226	reconquest of Qandahar	1652	War	Shah Jahan	INK	447
223	227	Jasrup Marathia-one of the servants of the crown	1653	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	495
224	228	Rana Raj Singh (son of <i>Raja</i> Jagat Singh)	1654	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	501
225	229	<i>Zamindar</i> of Srinagar	1654	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	502, 507
226	230	Afghans in the Province of Kabul	1655	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	507
227	231	<i>Zamindar</i> of Banda Lahiri	1655	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	509
228	232	Kirat Singh, <i>Zamindar</i> of Deogarh (son of Kukia)	1655	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	514
229	233	Sripat, <i>Zamindar</i> of Jauhar Sripat	1655	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	515
230	234	Villages near Darra Tangi	1655	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	516
231	235	Qutb al Mulk	1655	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	517
232	236	disaffected Afghans	1656	Rebellion	Shah Jahan	INK	525
233	237	conquest of Bijapur- Adil Khan's death	1556	Vassal State	Shah Jahan	INK	533
234	238	War of Succession	1657	War	Shah Jahan/Aurangzeb	INK	14

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
235	239	Champat Bandelah	1658	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	69
236	240	Protest in Delhi led by Haybat (an Ahadi)	1659	Protest	Aurangzeb	KAF	91
237	241	<i>Rajah</i> Karran aka <i>Raja</i> Karran Singh	1660	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	116
238	242	Shivaji	1660	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	180
239	243	Prithi Singh- <i>Zamindar</i> of Srinagar	1660	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	129
240	244	<i>Zamindar</i> of Baladan	1660	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	136
241	245	Rebellion/Conquest of Kuc Bihar- Pran/Bhim/Prem Narayan	1661	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	142
242	246	conquest of Assam	1661	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	139
243	247	Rai Singh- brother of the <i>Zamindar</i> of Jam	1662	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	162
244	248	Peasants call for Bhim Narayan	1662	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	174
245	249	Wild Afghans- Niazi Afghans	1663	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	179
246	250	Dara Shikoh pretender	1663	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	179
247	251	Adil Shah Bijapur tax payments	1665	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	187
248	252	Chief/Marzban of Tibet	1665	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	188
249	253	Capture of the forts in Arakan	1665	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	191

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
250	254	Shivaji	1665	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	203
251	255	Almost war with Iran (Safavid Empire)	1666	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	205
252	256	<i>Zamindar</i> of Chandah	1666	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	208
253	257	<i>Zamindar</i> of Deogarh	1666	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	209
254	258	Conquest of Bijapur	1666	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	319
255	259	Yusufza'l Afghans	1667	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	234
256	260	Riot between 2 rival clans during a festival of Tabut	1669	Protest	Aurangzeb	KAF	216
257	261	Satnami Rebellion	1672	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	257
258	262	<i>Zamindars</i> and Rajputs in the <i>Subah</i> of Ajmer	1672	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	258
259	263	Protest against the Jizya	1672	Protest	Aurangzeb	KAF	259
260	264	Protest- against subehdar that killed a Qazi	1672	Protest	Aurangzeb	KAF	260
261	265	Rajput Rebellion	1678	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	266, 268
262	266	cultivators and Fawjdars and <i>Muqaddams</i>	1681	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	283
263	267	Shivaji/Samba	1670	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	285, 288
264	268	Conquest of Golconda Hyderabad	1682	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	360
265	269	Jat Rebellion	1684	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	319

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
266	270	conquest of Bijapur	1684	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	319
267	271	Prince Mu'Azzam	1684	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	324
268	272	Conquest of Golconda	1684	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	328
269	273	Pidiyah Naik-Hakim of the fort of Sakar between Bijapur and Hyderabad	1686	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	513, 515
270	274	Marathas- after Sambha's death	1691	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	414
271	275	riots in the Mughal troops	1691	Protest	Aurangzeb	KAF	393
272	276	Raja Ram followed by Tara Bai (wife)- Maratha	1692	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	412
273	277	Portuguese	1692	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	399
274	278	Chiefs of Bijapur	1692	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	402
275	279	Suspected rebellion of Prince Muhammad Azam Shah	1692	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	405
276	280	English	1694	War	Aurangzeb	KAF	419
277	281	Trouble creators in Akbarabad	1695	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	439
278	282	Baluchis in Multan- sect of the Balpi	1695	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	439
279	283	Santa defeated	1695	Vassal State	Aurangzeb	KAF	441
280	284	turbulent people in Kukak	1700	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	484

Number Count	ID	Conflict Name	Year	Conflict Type	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
281	285	Parya Naik (nephew of Prem Naik)	1704	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	517, 526
282	286	Deo Gaon <i>Zamindars</i>	1705	Rebellion	Aurangzeb	KAF	528

Appendix 2.A Table of Rebels

Below is a table of all the rebels with consequence data available in the Mughal Conflict Dataset.

Participant ID refers to the relevant ID in the participant table of the Mughal Conflict dataset. Rebellion ID refers to the broader rebellion the rebel was involved in (see Appendix 2).

Rebels part of conflicts which were very large and could have multiple locations attached to multiple rebels were not included in the regressions. These can be identified by there being no location data provided.

Page numbers refer to the chronicler's translations which can be found via the key below (for full citations, see Appendix 4).

Key to Sources:

KNA= Khwaja Nizammudin Ahmad, Tabaqat I Akbari, Vol 2.

AFM= Abu'l Faz, Akbarnama, Vol. 3.

CONT= Continuation of Akbarnama after Abu'l Fazl's death

JAH= Emperor Jahangir, Tuzuk I Jahangiri

HADI= Continuation of Tuzuk (under supervision of Jahangir)

INK= Inayat Khan, Abdringed Shahjahannama

KAF= Khafi Khan, Muntakhab ul Lubab

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
7	Mirza Sulaiman	7	1556	monarch	Y	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	290
17	Bairam Khan	11	1560	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Lahore	Akbar	KNA	243
21	Raja Jai Mal aka Jaimal	13	1562	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Akbar	KNA	346
26	Adam Khan (Gakkhar)	15	1562	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Multan	Akbar	KNA	263, 267
27	Mah Chuchak Begum	16	1560	monarch	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	269
28	Mirza Sharif ud din	17	1563	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	273, 389
29	Abdul Ma'ali	17	1563	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	273, 279
30	Ghazi Khan Sur	18	1563	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Allahabad	Akbar	KNA	280
32	Abdullah Khan	20	1563	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	285, 613
35	Ali Quli Khan (aka Khan-i-Zaman)	22	1565	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Awadh	Akbar	KNA	294
38	Iskandar Khan 2	22	1565	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Ajmer	Akbar	KNA	368
39	Bahadur Khan (brother of Khan Zaman)	22	1565	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Allahabad	Akbar	KNA	314/309
40	Asaf Khan	23	1565	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Allahabad	Akbar	KNA	300, 317
41	Mirza Muhammad Hakim	24	1566	monarch	Y	N	Other	Lahore	Akbar	KNA	326, 549
42	Ibrahim Husain Mirza	25	1566	monarch	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	326, 403
45	Shahab Khan	22	1565	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Awadh	Akbar	KNA	332
54	Ikhtiyar ul Mulk	32	1572	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Deccani	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	376/420
60	Hamzaban	25	1566	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	385, 387

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
61	general- men of the fort (led by Maulana Nizam ud din Lari)	25	1566	soldier	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	KNA	385
62	Muhammad Husain Mirza	25	1566	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	419
64	Bidhichand	33	1573	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Akbar	KNA	402
65	Masa'ud Husain Mirza	25	1566	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	403
66	general - prisoners	25	1566	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	KNA	403
67	general (leaders)	25	1566	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	KNA	397/403
70	Sulaiman Mangli	36	1575	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	459
71	Junaid, son of Daud's uncle	37	1575	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	461
72	sons of Jalal ud din Sur	39	1575	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	469
75	Daud Afghan 1	41	1577	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	491
87	Qatlu Khan Afghan	41	1577	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	562/646
89	Khalidi Khan	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	460, 560
90	Raushan Beg	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	460, 529
92	Masum Kabuli	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	532, 562
93	Arab Bahadur	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	531, 615
97	mirza beg qaqshal	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	338, 560
98	kabbar bardi [Jabbar Bardi]	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	560

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
99	Sharf ud din Husain Mirza	47	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	273, 534
100	Ma'sum Khan Farankhudi	48	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	KNA	543, 553
101	Niyabat Khan	49	1581	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Allahabad	Akbar	KNA	542-553
102	Mirza Muhammad Hakim	50	1582	monarch	Y	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	549
104	sa'id badakhshi	52	1582	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	552
105	Bahadur (Shah)	52	1582	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	552
106	Khabisa	53	1583	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bihar	Akbar	KNA	556
122	Jam Satarsal, <i>Raja</i> of Jhalawar	55	1584	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Akbar	KNA	582
134	Jalala Tariki	62	1586	peasant	N	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	649
135	general- Tribes Tarikhi	62	1586	peasant	N	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	KNA	649
141	Madhkar <i>Zamindar</i> of Undjha	67	1591	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	KNA	634
142	Yadgar	68	1592	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Kashmir	Akbar	KNA	642
145	Mozaffar Husain	72	1594	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	AFM	999
148	Muhammad Yar	74	1594	monarch	N	N	Other	Lahore	Akbar	AFM	1001
151	general- peasants, kashmir	76	1594	peasant	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1013
152	Kashmir rebels ring-leader	76	1594	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1013
153	<i>Zamindar</i>	81	1594	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Akbar	AFM	1043

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
158	general- leaders mughal army	84	1596	monarch	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1050
159	general- vagabonds mughal army	84	1596	soldier	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1050
160	general- peasants tariki tribe	85	1596	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	AFM	1051-2
164	Isa	88	1596	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	AFM	1063
165	Jamil	90	1597	peasant	N	N	Other	Kashmir	Akbar	AFM	1080
168	Bahadur, son of Mozaffar Gujrati	91	1597	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Akbar	AFM	1083
172	Ghorisada	93	1597	peasant	N	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	AFM	1085
173	general- peasant cultivators	93	1597	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1085
176	Dalpat Ujjainiya aka <i>Raja</i> Bhojpur	94	1599	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Akbar	AFM	1121
180	Usman	97	1600	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	AFM	1151
181	Sajawal	97	1600	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Akbar	AFM	1151
184	Saadat Khan	99	1600	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Deccani	Deccan	Akbar	AFM	1154
187	Hindia Landlord	100	1600	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	AFM	1161-2
190	False Humayun, son of M Sulaiman	101	1601	peasant	Y	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	AFM	1187
191	Shah Ali's son	102	1601	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Deccan	Akbar	AFM	1187-8
193	Wanku	103	1601	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Akbar	AFM	1190-1
194	<i>Raja</i> of Mau	104	1602	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Multan	Akbar	CONT	1206, 1248

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
198	Jahangir (Prince Selim)	106	1602	monarch	Y	N	Other	Agra	Akbar	CONT	1210
200	Raja of Jammu	108	1602	Zamindar	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Akbar	CONT	1210/1213
201	Zamindar of Nagarkot	108	1602	Zamindar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1213
202	general- landowners	108	1602	Zamindar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1213
203	general- hillmen	108	1602	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1213
204	Jalal of Kahakra	109	1602	peasant	N	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	CONT	1213-4
205	Qasi Mumin	110	1602	Zamindar	N	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	CONT	1214
207	Ahad dad aka Dilazak aka Ahdad [JAH]	112	1602	Zamindar	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT-JAH	1222
208	general- tribe Afridis	112	1602	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT-JAH	1222
209	general- tribe Orakzai	112	1602	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT-JAH	1222
212	Zamindar of Banswara	113	1603	Zamindar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1232
213	M. Hasan son of Mirza Shahrukh	114	1603	Mansabdar	N	N	Other	Kabul	Akbar	CONT	1233
214	general- Afghans Hazaras	114	1603	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT	1233
219	general- Alizai tribe	117	1604	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT	1238
224	Ruler of Kishtwar	119	1604	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1250-1
227	Zaida (a proprietor)	119	1604	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1250-1
229	general- Zamindars	119	1604	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Akbar	CONT	1250-1
230	Sultan Khusraw	120	1605	monarch	Y	N	Other	Agra	Akbar	JAH	17/50

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
231	Raja Man Singh	120	1605	peasant	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Akbar	JAH	17, 29
232	Khan Azam	120	1605	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Agra	Akbar	JAH	17, 63, 91
234	Abhai Ram	121	1607	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Jahangir	JAH	34
237	son of Muzaffar Gujrati	122	1606	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Jahangir	JAH	48
238	Khusraw	123	1606	monarch	Y	N	Other	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	84
239	Abdul Rahim "the Donkey"	123	1606	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	58, 106
240	general- oymaqs tribes (badakshan)	123	1606	peasant	Y	N	Other	Delhi	Jahangir	JAH	58
241	Sultan Shah Afghani	123	1606	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	90
242	Husayn Beg	123	1606	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	58
243	general- men of hindustan	123	1606	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	56
244	Guru Arjan	123	1606	peasant	N	Y	Other	Delhi	Jahangir	JAH	59
250	Azam Mirza Koka	123	1606	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	63
251	Ram Chand Bundela, Nanda Kuwar's son	127	1606	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	67
252	Ram Chand's relatives	127	1606	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	67
253	Sangram- chief <i>Zamindar</i> of Bihar	128	1606	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Jahangir	JAH	64
256	Nephew of Raja Bir Singh Deo	130	1607	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	78
257	Ali Quli Khan	131	1607	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Bengal	Jahangir	JAH	79

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
259	Fathullah - son of Hakim Abu'l Fath's son	132	1607	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	84
262	general- ring leaders	132	1607	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	84
263	general- 500 men	132	1607	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	84
264	Badi'Uzzaman - son of Mirza Shahrukh	121	1607	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Ajmer	Jahangir	JAH	86, 104
265	general- Dilazak Afghans	133	1607	peasant	N	N	Other	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	86
270	Qutb [false Khusraw]	138	1610	peasant	N	N	Other	Bihar	Jahangir	JAH	112
271	general- trouble makers/comrades	138	1610	peasant	N	N	Other	Bihar	Jahangir	JAH	112
273	Bikramajit- <i>Zamindar</i> of Bandhu	139	1610	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Gujarat	Jahangir	JAH	113, 194
275	Allahadad (Ahdad brother, but leaves him)	112	1602	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Akbar	CONT-JAH	192
276	Usman the Afghan	140	1612	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Bengal	Jahangir	JAH	129, 132
279	Usman the Afghan relatives	140	1612	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Bengal	Jahangir	JAH	132
281	Dulip (Rai Rai Singh's son)	143	1614	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Delhi	Jahangir	JAH	155-6
283	Chin Qilich	145	1615	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Allahabad	Jahangir	JAH	181-2
288	Qadam	148	1616	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Jahangir	JAH	192
290	sangram	150	1616	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Other	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	211-3
291	Abdul Latif	151	1617	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Jahangir	JAH	221

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
292	Raja of Jaitpur	152	1617	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	226-227, 233
293	general- villagers in Jaitpur	152	1617	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	227
294	Man of the Raja of Jaitpur	152	1617	soldier	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	227
296	general- Zamindars of Gondwana	154	1617	Zamindar	Y	Y	Other	Malwa	Jahangir	JAH	234
301	Rai Bhara- Zamindar of Kutch	158	1618	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Bengal	Jahangir	JAH	267
303	Subhan Quli Khan	140	1612	soldier	N	N	Other	Bengal	Jahangir	JAH	271
305	Suraj Mal son of Raja Baso	161	1618	Zamindar	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	286, 295, 309
306	Raja Kalyan	162	1619	Zamindar	Y	Y	Other	Gujarat	Jahangir	JAH	304
308	Adam Khan	98	1600	Mansabdar	N	N	Deccani	Deccan	Akbar	AFM	231
314	Jawhar Mal- Raja Baso's son	163	1620	Zamindar	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Jahangir	JAH	343, 352
316	general- Zamindars of Kishtwar	164	1620	Zamindar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	345
318	general- Zamindars kishtwar	166	1622	Zamindar	N	N	Other	Kashmir	Jahangir	JAH	379
319	Shah Jahan aka Bedawlat	167	1622	monarch	Y	N	Other	Malwa	Jahangir	JAH	380
320	Rustam Khan	167	1622	Mansabdar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	404, 405
321	Muhtaram Khan	167	1622	Mansabdar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	388
322	Khalil Beg Zulfaqar	167	1622	Mansabdar	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	388

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
323	sharza khan	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	391, 406
324	Qabil Beg	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	400, 406
325	Arif son of Zahid	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	418
326	Zahid	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	418
327	zahids sons	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	418
328	general- 41 rebels in Ahmadabad	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	406
329	Muhammad Mu'min	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	450
330	Zahid Khan	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	404
331	Muhammad Murad	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	405-6
332	Qazi Abdul aziz	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	418
333	Abdul Aziz Khan	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	394
334	Mansur Khan Firangi	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	395
335	Maghrur (Masum Khan Firangi's brother)	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	395
336	Nawbat Khan Dakkani	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	395
337	Sharza Khan	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Gujarat	Jahangir	JAH	404 (406 shows executed)
338	Sarafraz Khan	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	406
339	general- deserters	167	1622	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	405
342	<i>Raja Gridhr</i>	168	1623	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	410-1
343	general- rajputs	168	1623	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Jahangir	JAH	410-1

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
344	general- ganwars [villagers] and farmers	169	1623	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Jahangir	JAH	412
346	Ahdad Afghan	171	1625	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Jahangir	HADI	436
347	general- Ahdad's followers	171	1625	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Jahangir	HADI	437
348	Mahabat Khan	172	1626	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Lahore	Jahangir	HADI	446, 453
356	Khan Jahan/Khan Jahan Lodi	174	1626	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Deccan	Jahangir	INK	30, 56
363	<i>Raja</i> Jujhar Singh Bundela	178	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	23, 31
381	Sikandar Dotani	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	Y	Afghan	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	35
382	general- Afghans with Khan Jahan	177	1628	soldier	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	56
383	Bikramajit (Jujhar Bundela's son)	177	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Allahabad	Shah Jahan	INK	35, 51
385	Aziz Khan (son of Khan Jahan Lodi)	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	56
386	Aimal Afghan	177	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Allahabad	Shah Jahan	INK	56
387	Farid (son of Khan Jahan)	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Allahabad	Shah Jahan	INK	56
388	Jan Jahan (son of Khan Jahan)	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Allahabad	Shah Jahan	INK	56-7
390	general- men of Samandar Khan	177	1628	soldier	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	66

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
392	Jadu Rai	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	40
393	Jadu Rai's brother Jagdeo (and wife and son)	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	73
394	Bahadurji (son of Jadu Rai)	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	73
395	Kamal as Din (son of Shaikh Rukn ad Din Rohilla)	177	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	40-41
396	'Abd al Qadir (son of Ahdad)	177	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	40, 143
397	Karimdad (son of Jalala)	177	1628	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	40, 220
412	Bhagirat Bhil	183	1633	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Shah Jahan	INK	89
413	Yaqut Khudawand Khan Habshi	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Deccani	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	99, 111
414	Gheloji	177	1628	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	101, 181
420	general- restless spirits (peasants)	185	1634	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	145
421	<i>Zamindar</i> of Ratanpur	186	1634	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	145-6
425	Jujghar Singh Bundela (son of Bir Singh Deo)	187	1634	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	154, 165

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
426	Jagraj (son of Jujhar Singh Bundela)	187	1634	Zamindar	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	165
427	family of Jughar singh	187	1634	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	167
428	general- kaman pahari rebels	188	1634	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	151
432	governor of fort of Jhansi	187	1634	Mansabdar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	161
433	Zamindar of Chandha (described as one of the principle Zamindars of the Gondwana territory)	190	1635	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	165
434	general- chiefs 3 kos from Chandha	190	1635	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	166
440	Jitpur Zamindar	195	1635	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	192
443	Kukia- Zamindar of Nagpur	198	1636	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Shah Jahan	INK	200-201
444	general- inhabitants of deogarh	198	1636	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	201
445	Bhupat- Zamindar of Jammu	199	1636	Zamindar	N	Y	Other	Lahore	Shah Jahan	INK	205
446	general- Rajput soldiers	199	1636	soldier	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Shah Jahan	INK	205

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
450	Zamindar Partab	201	1636	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	290-1
452	Habib Chak	184	1633	Zamindar	Y	N	Other	Kashmir	Shah Jahan	INK	217
453	Ahmad Chak	184	1633	Zamindar	N	N	Other	Kashmir	Shah Jahan	INK	217
455	general- tribes of Naghar	202	1637	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	220-1
456	general- people of Tirah	202	1637	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	220
457	Karimdad's brother	202	1637	Zamindar	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	220-1
459	general- tribe of Lakan and 2 other tribes	202	1637	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	221
471	Baldeo aka Dharma Naryan aka Bali Naryan	204	1637	Zamindar	N	Y	Other	Bengal	Shah Jahan	INK	232, 243
474	shatrujit- thanadar of Pandu	204	1637	Zamindar	N	Y	Other	Bengal	Shah Jahan	INK	237
476	general- Zamindars of dakinkul	204	1637	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	238
477	general- chiefs	204	1637	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	232
482	general- Hazaras	207	1638	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	257

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
483	general- Hazarah chiefs	207	1638	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	257
486	Abdal- the chief of all the Qizilbashis of half the region of Qandahar	209	1639	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Other	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	263-4
487	the Jam	210	1640	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Gujarat	Shah Jahan	INK	277
488	<i>Raja Jagat Singh-Zamindar</i> of Kangra	211	1640	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Lahore	Shah Jahan	INK	278, 287-8
491	Pratab- <i>Zamindar</i> of Palamau	212	1641	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	291
492	general- local inhabitants	212	1641	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	290
493	Partab Rai	213	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	306, 308
494	Tej Rai- Partab's paternal uncle	213	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	307
495	Darya Rai- Partab's paternal uncle	213	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	306-307
497	Surat Sen (Tej Rai <i>wakil's</i> son)	213	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	307
498	Sabal Sen (Tej Rai <i>wakil's</i> son)	213	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	307
499	general- Tej Rai garrison	213	1643	soldier	Y	Y	Rajput	Bihar	Shah Jahan	INK	307

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
500	Maru Gond- (successor to <i>Zamindar</i>)	214	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Shah Jahan	INK	311-2
501	general- peasants	214	1643	peasant	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	311
502	<i>Raja</i> Amar Singh	215	1643	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	314-6
503	general- followers of <i>Raja</i> Amar Singh	215	1643	soldier	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Shah Jahan	INK	314-6
515	Khwaja Kalan	217	1644	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	381
516	Qazi Timur	217	1644	peasant	N	N	Other	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	381
519	general- refractory Mewatis	221	1649	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	448-9
520	Ramchand- nephew of deceased <i>Zamindar</i> , Rawal Manohar	222	1659	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Shah Jahan	INK	450
521	Partab Bhati	222	1659	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Shah Jahan	INK	450
522	<i>Zamindar</i> of Hijli	223	1651	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	#N/A	#N/A	Bengal	Shah Jahan	INK	454
523	Mirza Jan	224	1651	peasant	N	N	Other	Kashmir	Shah Jahan	INK	458
524	Hirde Ram- <i>Zamindar</i> of	225	1651	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Shah Jahan	INK	461

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
	Chauragarh, son of Prem Narain										
525	Anup Singh- <i>Zamindar of Bandhu</i>	225	1651	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Gujarat	Shah Jahan	INK	461-2
527	Jasrup Maratha	227	1653	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	Y	Deccani	Delhi	Shah Jahan	INK	495
528	Rana Raj Singh- son of <i>Raja Jagat Singh</i>	228	1654	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Shah Jahan	INK	501-3
529	<i>Zamindar of Srinagar</i>	229	1654	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	502, 514, 531
532	general- Afghans	230	1655	peasant	Y	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	507
533	Rana Rukun <i>Zamindar of Banda Lahiri</i>	231	1655	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	#N/A	Rajput	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	509
534	Kirat Singh, <i>Zamindar of Deogarh</i>	232	1655	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Shah Jahan	INK	514-5
535	Sripat, <i>Zamindar of Jauhar</i>	233	1655	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Other	Deccan	Shah Jahan	INK	515-6
536	general- 11 villages around Dara Tangi	234	1655	peasant	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Shah Jahan	INK	516
539	general- 14 Afghan chiefs	236	1656	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	525-6
540	general- Afghans (disaffected)	236	1656	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Shah Jahan	INK	525-6
563	Champat Bandela	239	1658	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	Y	Rajput	Malwa	Aurangzeb	KAF	69, 134-5

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
572	Raja Karran Singh (of Bikanner)	241	1660	Zamindar	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	116, 130
580	general- peasants in Baladan	244	1660	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Aurangzeb	KAF	136
581	Pran/ Bhim/ Prem Narayan- Zamindar of Kuch Behar	245	1661	Zamindar	Y	Y	Other	Bengal	Aurangzeb	KAF	142-4
586	Rai Singh- brother of the Zamindar of Jam	247	1662	Zamindar	N	Y	Rajput	Agra	Aurangzeb	KAF	162-3
587	general- peasant	248	1662	peasant	N	Y	Other	Bengal	Aurangzeb	KAF	166
588	Bhim/Pran/Prem Narayan	248	1662	Zamindar	Y*	Y	Other	Bengal	Aurangzeb	KAF	174
590	False Darah Shikoh	250	1663	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	179
591	general- misguided people of the desert	250	1663	peasant	N	#N/A	#N/A	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	179
594	Nathuji (Shivaji companion)	251	1665	Mansabdar	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	198
599	Chief of Tibet	252	1665	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Aurangzeb	KAF	188
603	Shivaji	254	1665	Mansabdar	N	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	203
605	Sambha- Shivaji's son and successor	254	1665	Mansabdar	Y**	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	203
606	Nathuji	254	1665	Mansabdar	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	210
611	Zamindar of Chandah	256	1666	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Aurangzeb	KAF	208
612	Zamindar of Deogarh	257	1666	Zamindar	Y	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	Aurangzeb	KAF	209
615	Aymal Khan	259	1667	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Kabul	Aurangzeb	KAF	234, 247-8

Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
616	general- Yusufza'l Afghans	259	1667	peasant	N	N	Afghan	Lahore	Aurangzeb	KAF	244, 248
621	general- Satnami cultivators	261	1672	peasant	N	Y	Other	Agra	Aurangzeb	KAF	257
630	Rana of Chittor/Rana of Mewar	265	1678	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Rajput	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	265-7
632	Prince Akbar (Aurangzeb's son)	265	1678	monarch	N	N	Other	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	268, 280
634	Tahawwur Khan-follower of Prince Akbar [Came to be forgiven but refused to disarm, killed]	265	1678	<i>Mansabdar</i>	N	N	Other	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	271-2
635	Mujahid Khan-follower of Prince Akbar	265	1678	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	271
636	general- mughal soldiers, followers of Prince Akbar	265	1678	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Ajmer	Aurangzeb	KAF	272, 280
637	general- cultivators	266	1681	peasant	N	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	283
638	general- Fawjdars	266	1681	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	283
639	general- <i>Muqaddam</i>	266	1681	peasant	N	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	283
652	Khan Jahan Bahadur	267	1670	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	316-17, 319
653	general- Jat rebels	269	1684	peasant	N	Y	Other	Agra	Aurangzeb	KAF	319
685	Prince Kam Bakhsh	278	1692	monarch	Y	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	417-419

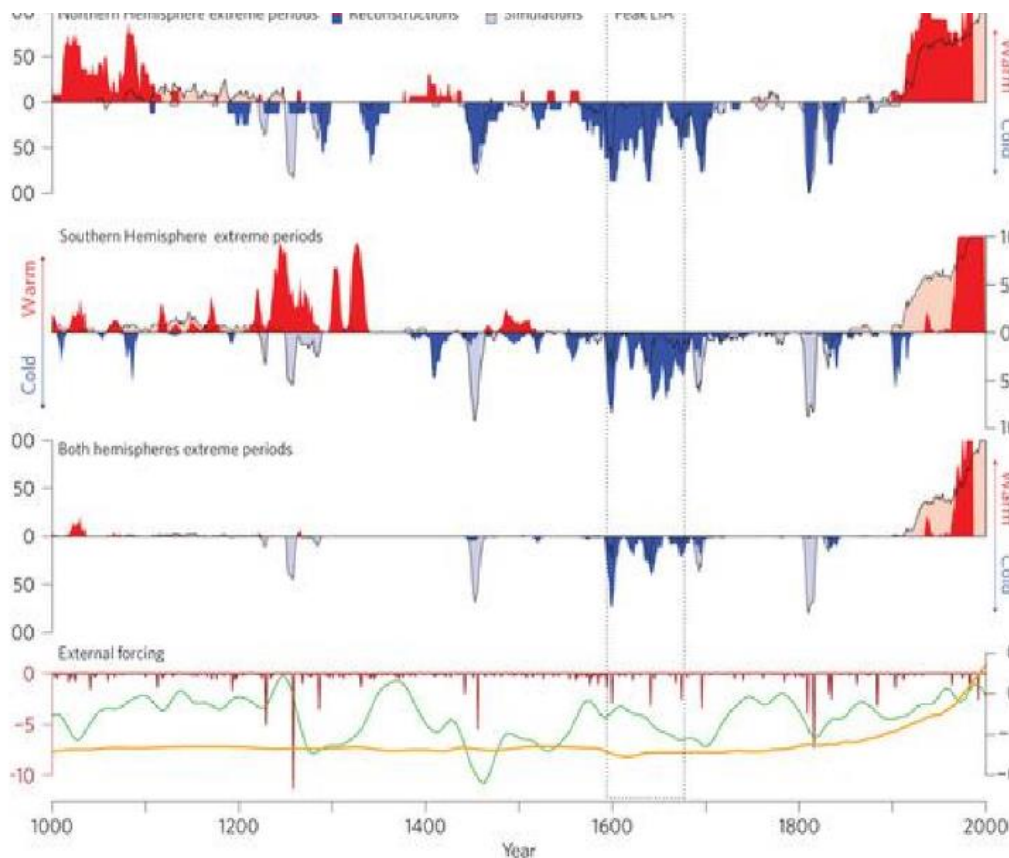
Participant Table ID	Rebel Name	Rebellion ID	Year Start (of Rebellion)	Type	Forgiven	Non-muslim	Ethnicity	Location	Emperor	Chronicler	Page Number
695	Lati Chief-baluchistan	282	1695	<i>Zamindar</i>	N	N	Other	Multan	Aurangzeb	KAF	456
697	Parya Naik (nephew of Prem Naik)	285	1704	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	516, 521-3
698	general- <i>Zamindars</i>	285	1704	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	N	Other	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	528
701	Som Shankar- Parya Naik's brother	285	1704	<i>Zamindar</i>	Y	Y	Deccani	Deccan	Aurangzeb	KAF	523
706	Qiya Khan Gang	38	1575	<i>Mansabdar</i>	Y	N	Other	Bengal	Akbar	KNA	462

* Although not in the Muntakhab ul Lubab, we know that Bhim Narayan was forgiven. See: Bhattacharyya, Sudhindra Nath. 1998. A history of Mughal north-east frontier policy: being a study of the political relation of the Mughal Empire with Koch Bihar, Kamrup and Assam. Guwahati, Delhi: Spectrum Publications, 302

** Although not in the Muntakhab ul Lubab, we know Sambha rejoined Mughal service for a while, defecting from his father, before returning to the Maratha kingdom at a later date. All conflicts after this are Vassal State. See: Gordon, Stewart. *The Marathas, 1600-1818*. New Cambridge History of India ; II, 4. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 80; Khan, Sāgui Must'ad. 1947. *Maāsir-i-Ālamgiri: a history of the Emperor Aurangzib -Ālamgir (reign 1658-1707 A.D.)*.88; Aziz Abdul 1945 "The *Mansabdari* System and the Mughal Army," Printed by Ripon Printing Press. Bull Road, Lahore and published by the Author; Sharma, S. R. 1966. *Mughal empire in India; a systematic study including source material*. Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, 532

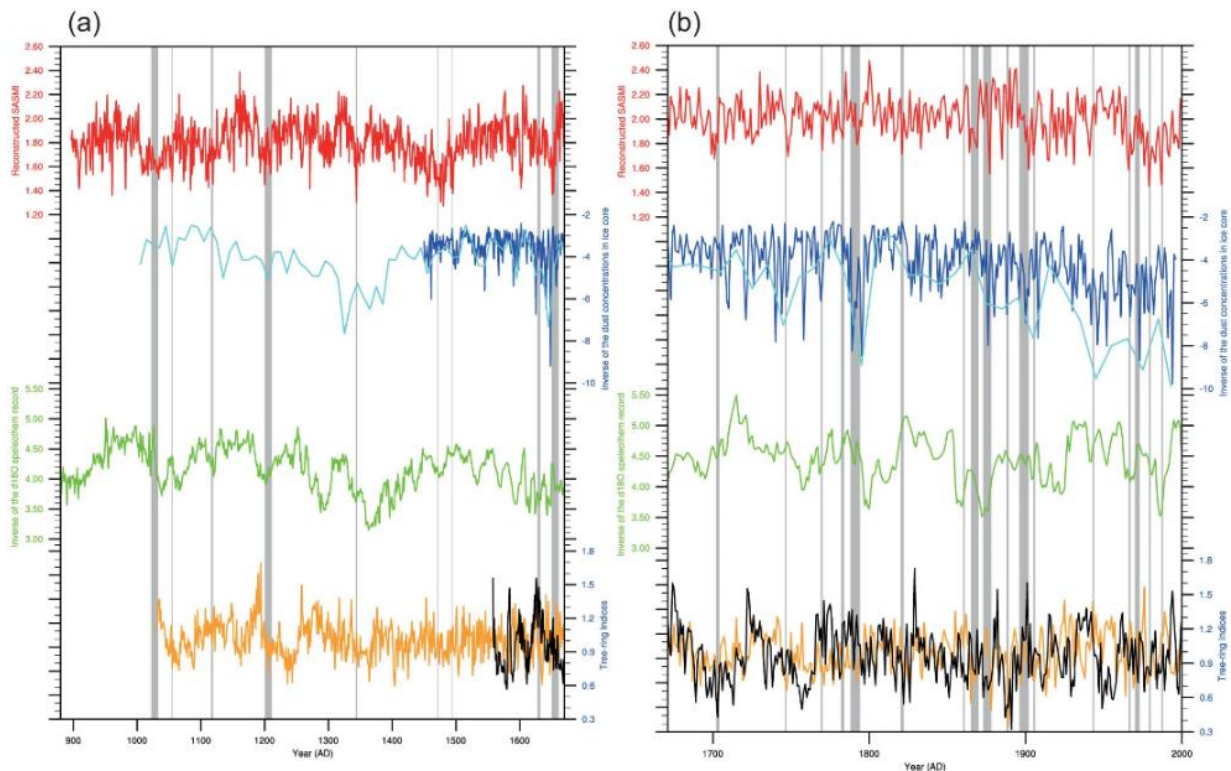
Appendix 3.A Graphs from climate history literature indicating periods of abnormal climate

Figure Appendix 3.A.1: a, b, Fraction of ensemble members with extreme warm (red) or cold (blue) decadal temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere, (a) and Southern Hemisphere (b), respectively. Dark shading represents the reconstructions, light shading with black border the model simulations. C, Probabilities for simultaneous extreme periods in both hemispheres are calculated by multiplying the fractions in a and b, d, Volcanic (brown), solar (green), and greenhouse gas forcing (yellow) relative to 1961-1990. Dotted lines enclose the globally expressed peak Little Ice Age (LIA) 1594-1677).



Source: Neukom, R., Gergis, J., Karoly, D. et al. Inter-hemispheric temperature variability over the past millennium. *Nature Clim Change* 4, 362–367 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate2174>

Figure 3.A.2: Time series of the reconstructed South Asian summer monsoon index (SASMI) (red line), the decadal (cyan line) and annual (blue line) inverse of dust concentrations in ice core record¹, the inverse of the $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ speleothem record (green line)² and the tree-ring chronologies from Mae Hong Son (MHS) (black line)¹² and Bidoup Nui Ba National Park (BDNP) (orange line)¹¹ before AD 1670 (a) and after AD 1671 (b). The grey periods indicate the 26 famine events identified in India over the past millennium.



Source: Fe Shi, F., Li, J. & Wilson, R. A tree-ring reconstruction of the South Asian summer monsoon index over the past millennium. *Sci Rep* 4, 6739 (2015).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/srep06739>

Appendix 3.B Rebellion Ranking Explanation

The Rank size metric attempts to classify how significant or insignificant each rebellion was in terms of the information we have about them and in terms of how much importance the Mughal state itself gave the rebellions. Using a number of indicators, it is attempted to classify rebellions into the categories of very small (Rank 1), small (Rank 2), medium (Rank 3), large (Rank 4) and very large (Rank 5). The difference in size between each rank is not consistent, where higher ranks are estimated to have exponentially larger sizes. For instance, a rank 4 rebellion is estimated to be around five times larger than a rank 3 rebellion, and a rank 5 rebellion is estimated to be around 4 times larger than a rank 4 rebellion.

As it is recognised there is not always consistency between these measurements, a priority of measurements has been determined based on the reliability and objectivity of the data. This priority is given at the bottom of Table 1 (below) which also presents how each of the ranks have been classified. A Rank 5 rebellion, for instance, is one where the rebels' numbers exceeds 20,000, and usually is where the Emperor or princes are sent. In order to keep consistency and allow for future comparisons wars, rebellions and Vassal State conflicts are measured using the same scale.

A more detailed explanation of the compilation of the database and the ranking system can be found in the Data Chapter.

Table 1: Conflict Size Rank table

Size	Rank	Number of Rebels	Mughal soldiers	Words of size	Type of person sent	Number of pages	Number of provinces
Very Large	5	$\geq 20,000$		Ants and locusts	Emperor/princes	>3	>2
Large	4	≥ 5000	$>10,000$	Large force, many, thousands	Senior general	>3	≥ 2
Medium	3	>1000				1-3	
Small	2	<1000				0.25-1	
Very Small	1			[usually a side note]		$<0.25-0.5$	

Source: Official Histories Database, Data Chapter Section

Data Priority Explanation: No. of rebels -> size in words -> who is sent -> number of Mughal soldiers -> No of pages -> No of provinces.

Appendix 3.C Famines per province calculations

Figure 4 in this database uses Abha Singh's table on disasters in the Mughal empire to count the number of provinces affected by famine per year. The table records locations of famines as they were given by Mughal sources they came from. As some of the locations given are not clear as to how many provinces they represent, this Appendix clarifies how the number of provinces data has been calculated. The table below records the region given in the disasters table, which regions it has been interpreted as meaning, how many provinces have been counted and the rules for how the information was recorded. To avoid double counting, rules to re

Location in Abha Singh's Dataset	Interpreted as Including	Number of Provinces it Counts for	Rules for Inclusion for a given year
Corramandel	included	1	not counted if Golconda is noted separat
Northern India	Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Multan, Awadh, Ajmer	3	if one of the 3 provinces there, it is not recounted
Hindustan	Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Multan, Awadh, Ajmer, Gujarat	4	Maximum of 5. if one of the provinces included, they should count as part of the five.
Deccan	Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda	4	if one of the deccan provinces is recorded separately, it is not recounted
Doab	Agra and Allahabad	2	
Peninsular India	Deccan	4	if one of the deccan provinces is recorded separately, it is not recounted
bagar tract	Sindh	1	
cities	Included		if the province is mentioned separately, the data is not recounted

Appendix 4.A Salary Bands and Social Classes

This appendix gives details on the Salary bands from *Mansab* ranks in 1594 and those under Shah Jahan's reign (starting 1628).

The *Mansab* bands data has been collected from Moosvi's 2015 edition of 'The Economy of the Mughal Empire c.1595: a statistical study' which was originally published in 1987.⁹³¹ The new salary bands data was collected from Athar Ali's 2003 edition of 'The Economy of the Mughal Empire.'⁹³² The conversion between rupees and Dams was constant through the period, where 40 Dams = 1 Rupee.

Ali only provides salary bands for Shah Jahan's reign for officials with a *Zat* ranks greater than 1000. There also does not seem to be a clear pattern to the changes in salary range. To calculate the salaries of the missing bands I converted all the salaries to monthly rupees and found the average ratio for changes in salaries, which is 0.6785. This is then multiplied across all salaries.

In the analysis, Shah Jahan's salary bands are used for all years after his ascension to the throne.

Manşab	Monthly salary (rupees)			Allowance for animals and carts (rupees)	Shah Jahan (Ali 71-3) Annual DAMS	Ratio between old and new (dams annual)	Shah Jahan Monthly Rupees (divide Dams by 40)	Shahjahan Salary Bands
	I	II	III					
						average ratio: 0.6785		
10,000	60,000	—	—	20,849.00				40710.3
8,000	50,000	—	—	16,992.75				33925.3
7,000	45,000	—	—	14,643.63	14,000,000	0.65	29166.7	
5,000	30,000	29,000	28,000	10,703.50	10,000,000	0.69	20833.3	
4,500	26,000	25,800	25,700	9,416.88				18750.0

⁹³¹ Moosvi, the Economy of the Mughal Empire c. 1595, 204, 209, 213

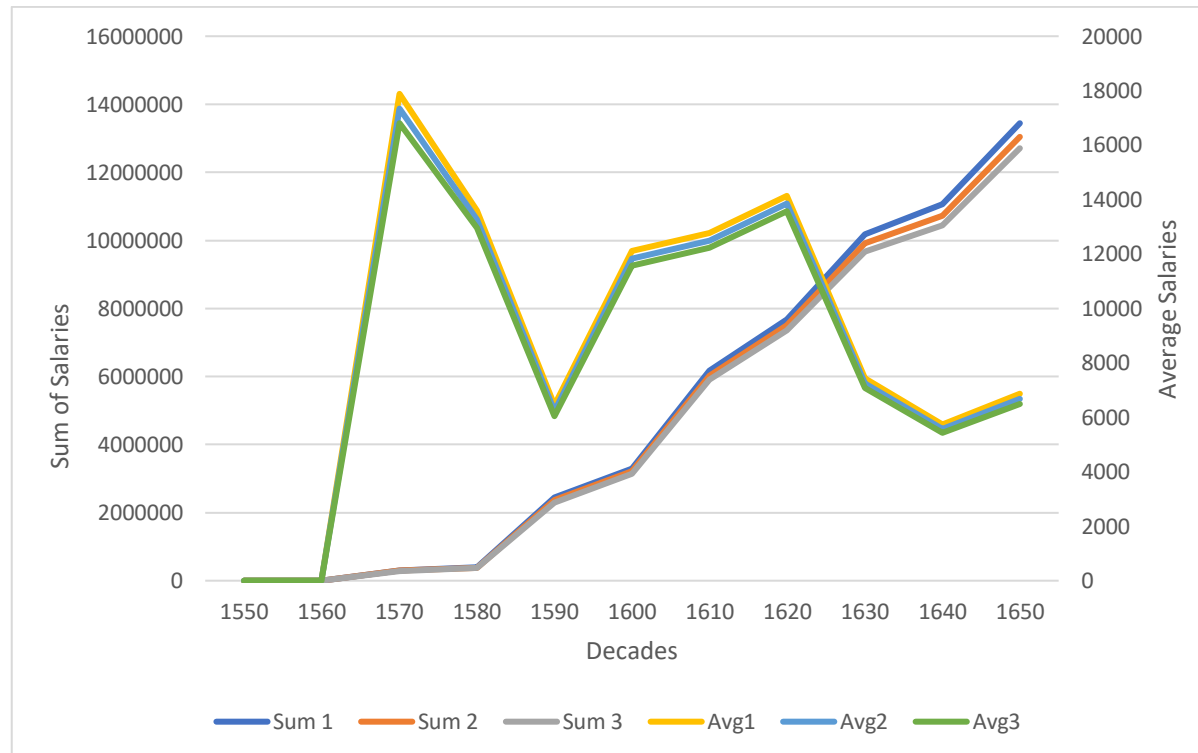
⁹³² Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility, 71-3, 76, Appendix B

Manşab	Monthly salary (rupees)			Allowance for animals and carts (rupees)	Shah Jahan (Ali 71-3) Annual DAMS	Ratio between old and new (dams annual)	Shah Jahan Monthly Rupees (divide Dams by 40)	Shahjahan Salary Bands
4,000	22,000	21,800	21,600	8,422.88	8,000,000	0.76	16666.7	
3,500	18,600	18,400	18,300	7,702.13				14583.3
3,000	17,000	16,800	16,700	6,568.25	6,000,000	0.74	12500.0	
2,500	14,000	13,800	13,700	5,254.75				10416.7
2,000	12,000	11,900	11,800	4,219.13	4,000,000	0.69	8333.3	
1,500	9,000	8,900	8,800	3,431.40				6250.0
1,000	7,700	7,400	7,100	2,838.50	2,000,000	0.51	4166.7	
900	5,000	4,700	4,400	2,464.88				3392.5
800	4,000	3,700	3,600	1,968.13				2714.0
700	3,500	3,200	3,000	1,486.00				2374.8
600	2,800	2,750	2,700	1,314.25				1899.8
500	2,500	2,300	2,100	1,144.75				1696.3
400	2,000	1,700	1,500	726.5				1357.0
350	1,450	1,400	1,350	612.5				983.8
300	1,400	1,250	1,200	561				949.9
250	1,150	1,100	1,000	485.5				780.3
200	975	950	900	448.5				661.5
150	875	850	800	354.5				593.7
120	745	740	730	329				505.5
100	700	600	530	302.5				475.0
80	410	380	350	241				278.2
60	300	285	270	186.5				203.6
50	250	240	230	186.5				169.6
40	223	200	185	164				151.3

Manşab	Monthly salary (rupees)			Allowance for animals and carts (rupees)	Shah Jahan (Ali 71-3) Annual DAMS	Ratio between old and new (dams annual)	Shah Jahan Monthly Rupees (divide Dams by 40)	Shahjahan Salary Bands
30	175	165	155	121.5				118.7
20	135	125	115	113.5				91.6
10	100	82.5	75	44				67.9

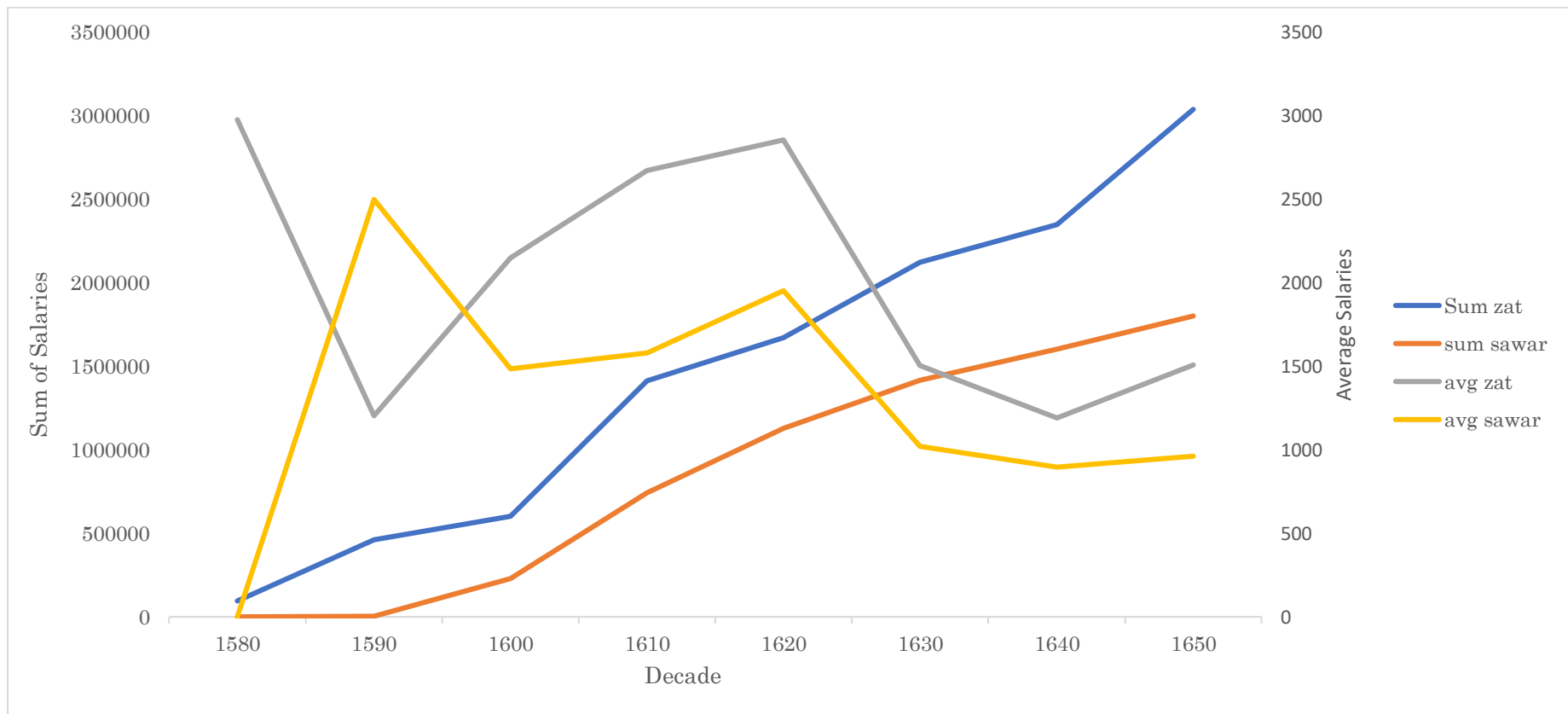
Appendix 4.B Salary Class Bands Compared

This graph shows the differences in total and average wages if the three different class bands are used. As is apparent, there is little difference between trends of the classes over the period of study.



Appendix 4.C *Sawar* Trends Relative to *Zat* Trends

The graph below shows the *Zat* rank relative to the *Sawar* Rank over time. They show that *Sawar* ranks tended to follow trends of *Zat* ranks, although they were numerically lower.



Appendix 4.D Categorisation of Variables

This appendix is designed to discuss the method used to categorise ‘departments’ within the government (i.e. the different administrative roles). Ali’s tables required heavy cleaning and sorting in order to make them suitable for statistical analysis.

As there were a wide variety of officials, it is not useful to include in the analysis all the different available types of administrative roles within the government. It has therefore been necessary to consider how to group officials for the purposes of statistical analysis.

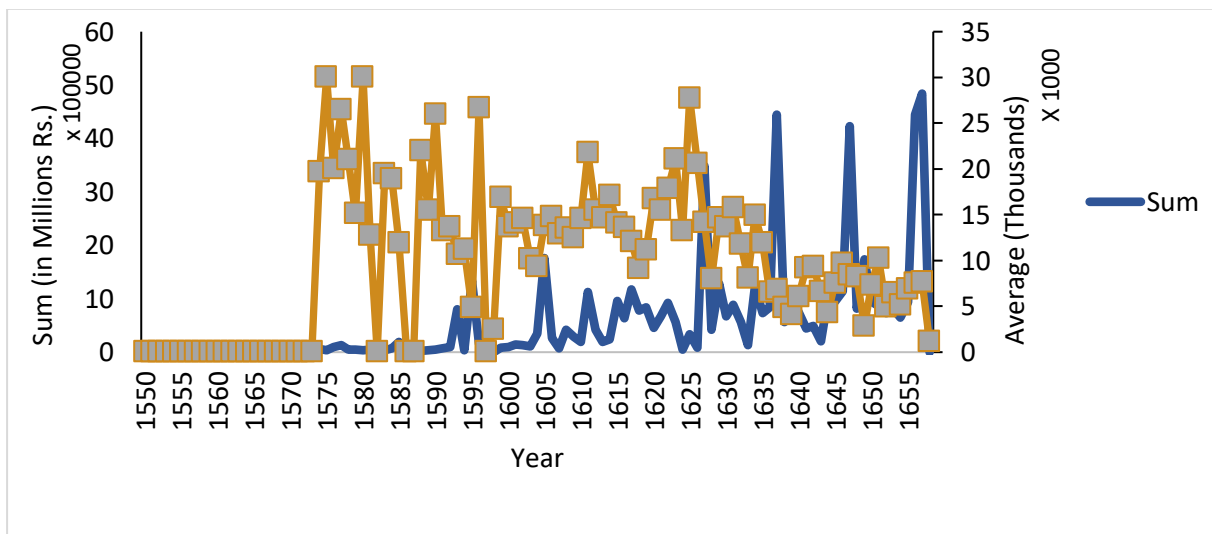
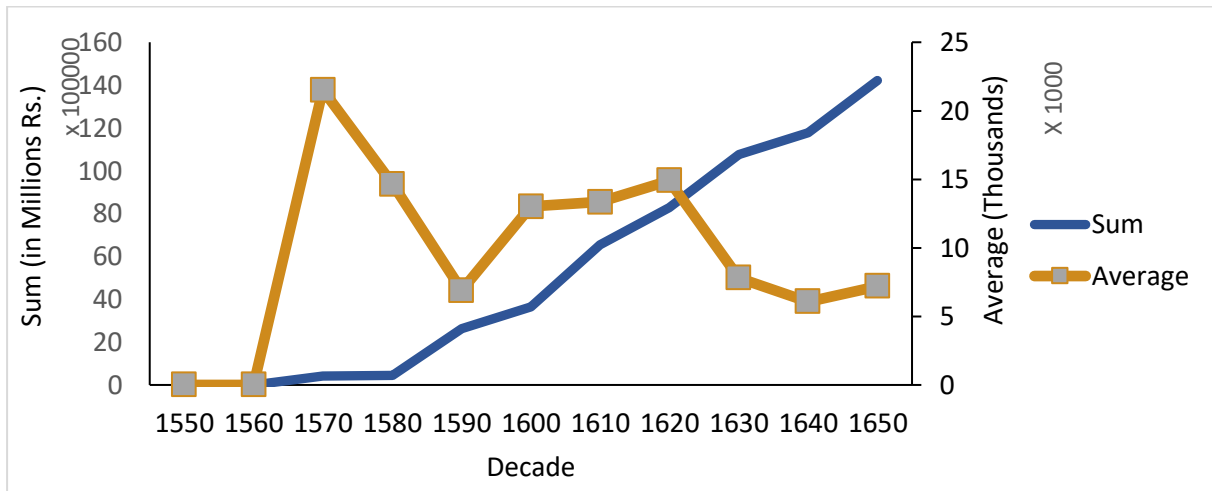
As often officials could have the same function across different hierarchical layers of government. For example, there were *Diwans* (i.e. Revenue officers) of *Subahs*, as well as a *Diwans* of *Parganahs* who was the head of all other *Bakshis*. There were also different types of *Diwans*, where the *Diwan-i-Saman* was in charge of the royal household.

Given this, there were essentially two ways it was possible to categorise the variables. The first (which has been used) was to categorise roles of the officials based on the functions of their jobs. For instance, all *Diwans* were grouped together regardless of whether they were posted. This had the advantage it was easy to group officials using data cleaning methods as they were given the same name. Another advantage is these categories encompass most of the appointment data available as this type of information is usually provided. These categorisations can also still be a good reflection of hierarchies, where some roles were automatically demarcated at hierarchical levels. For instance, a *Faujdar* would never be appointed at the *Subah* level, and *Sabahdar* would never be appointed anywhere other than a *Subah* level. The disadvantage is that these groups are broad and therefore can include officials whose functions might be relatively different, potentially skewing the results. However, the likelihood of roles being substantially different is not great, especially as we are mostly interested in knowing whether they are administrative in function or not.

The second option was to do create roles hierarchically, where officials of *Parganah* level are grouped together and officials of *Subah* level are grouped together. Whilst this might have been good to include, the data is not always clear whether the location given is a *Parganah* or a *Subah*, so the sample size would not be as large. This is also somewhat already determined by differences in *Mansab* ranks.

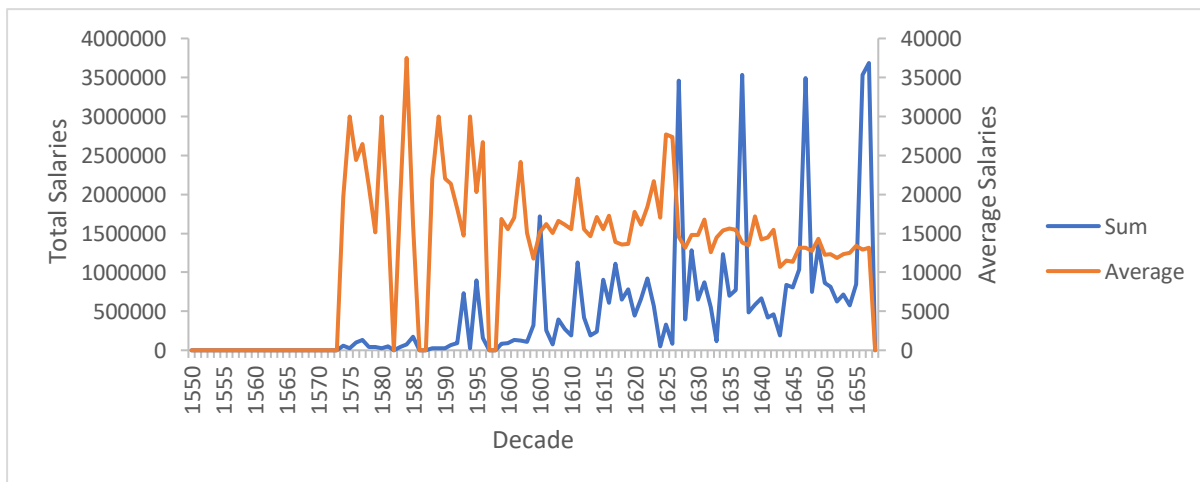
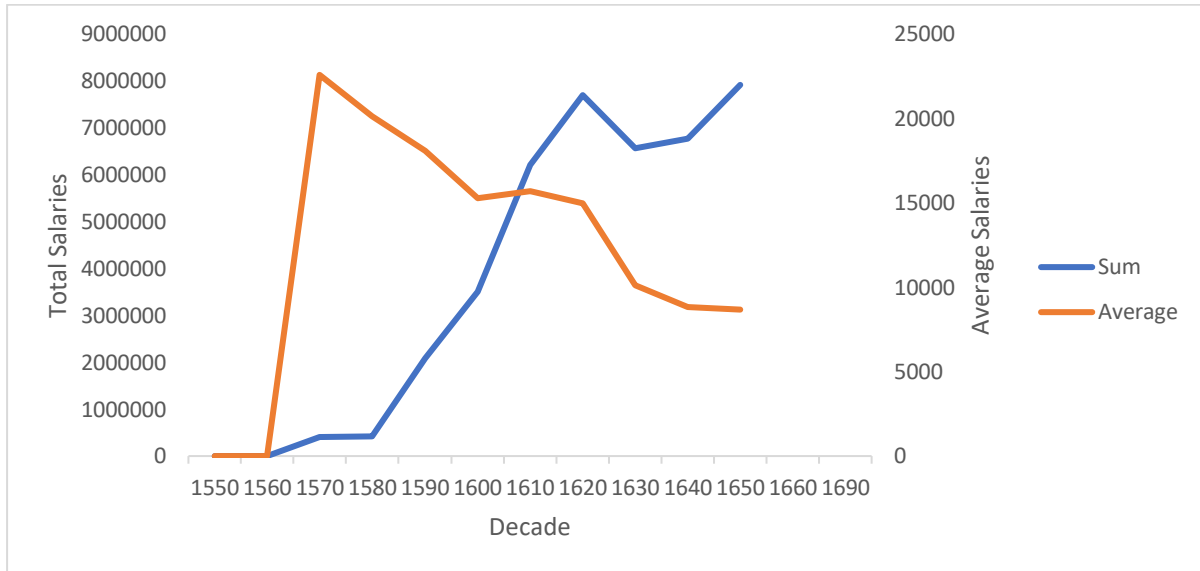
Appendix 4.E Total and Average Salaries without changes in salary scales

These graphs show the total and average salaries if the pre-Shah Jahan scales are employed for the entire period. It can be seen that there is still a clear fall in wages.



Appendix 4.G Salaries Excluding smaller *Zats* (less than 1000)

The graphs below show salary trends excluding officials with *Zats* less than 1000. The data for these *Zats* of 1000 or greater is more comprehensive.



Appendix 4.H Salaries for years in decades with the Most datapoints

To make sure the averages are not being driven by poor data for some years relative to other years, this table takes the data from years where there is the highest data availability to look at trends. The years are given in the table. Graph A shows the total and average salary trends of these specific years. Graph B shows the number of officials in each *Zat* class.

Years of Maximum Data	Number of Observations
1595	279
1607	6
1617	97
1627	246
1637	651
1647	503
1657	633

Figure 4.H.1: Total and Average Salaries of Officials (only years with most data)

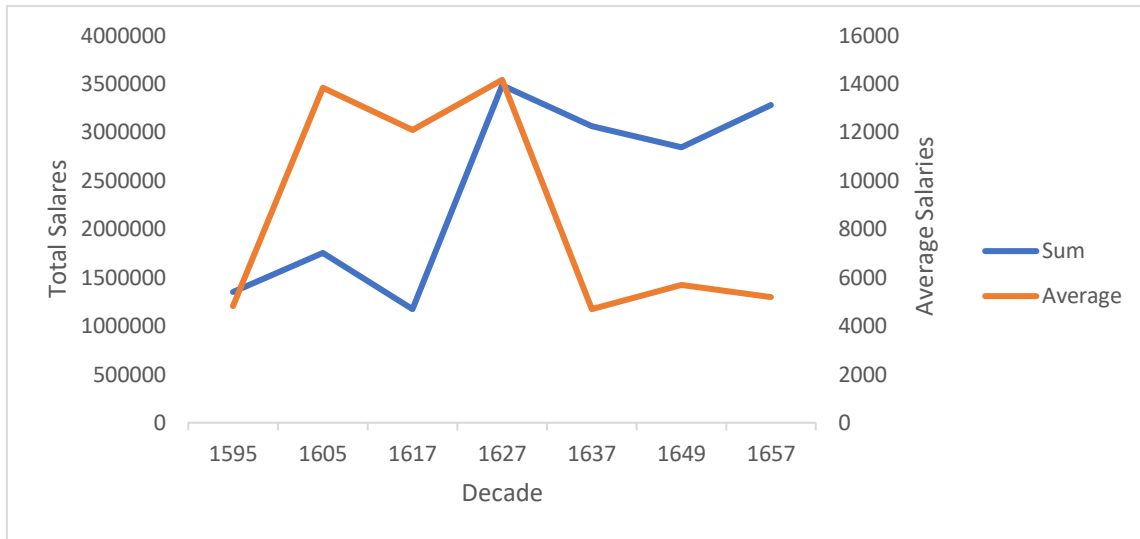
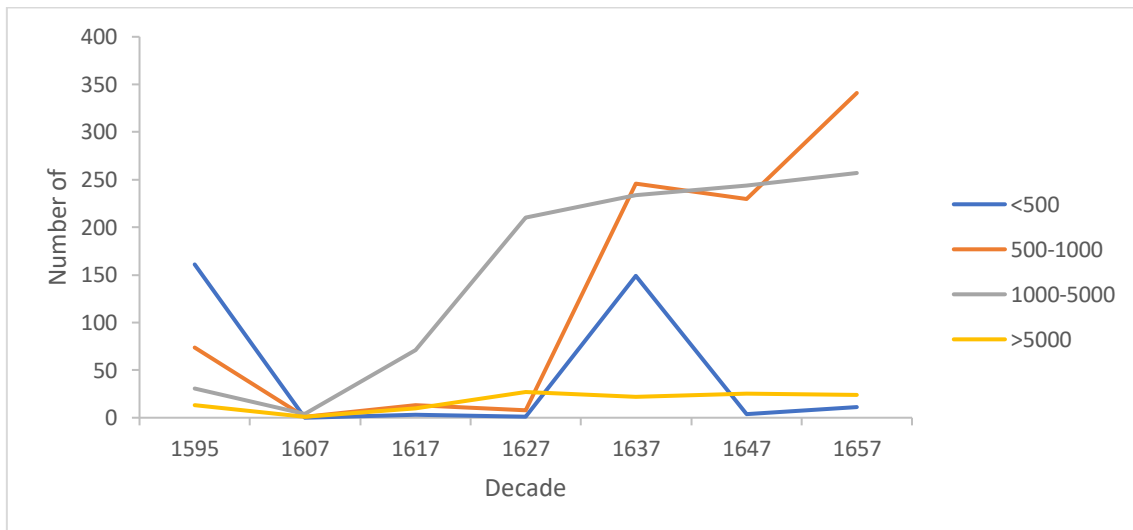


Figure 4.H.2: Number of Officials in Each Zat Class (only years with most data)



Appendix 4.I Conflict Intensity by Province Across Time

This graph shows the intensity of conflict (measured by frequency and size) across provinces for the entire period of study.

