CHAPTER I

THE EUROPEAN ADVENTURERS AND INDIAN MILITARY SYSTEM: THE PHASE OF TRANSITION

In the first half of the eighteenth century an unprecedented technological stagnation had crept in the nature of firearms and in the manner of their use in India. It was largely due to the fact that, unlike the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the rulers of this phase had lackadaisical approach to the adoption of new military culture. The result was that it considerably hampered improvements and growth in Indian military system, particularly in artillery, whose weaknesses became evident in the Indian struggles against the English. For instance, the battles of Plassey and Buxar clearly showed the decadent state of Indian military system. But this military scenario was remarkably changed in the second half of the century when significant improvements were made in infantry and artillery under the leadership of the European adventurers. Unlike the reserved disposition of the rulers for changes in military culture in the first half of the century, the rulers of this phase gave full freedom to the European adventurers to raise and train Europeanized armies for them.

The changes that took place in Indian military system during the second half of the eighteenth century can be divided in two phases. The first phase can be characterized as the phase of transition when the adventurers raised wings of trained and disciplined artillery corps for the army. That is, the changes introduced formed parts of the army

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1 It was particularly evident from the Mughal rulers’ approach who remained unenthusiastic in the popularization of artillery during this period. Artillery during this period was maintained only for display than for any serious combat. The Mughal rulers’ lack of seriousness in this regard was also evident from the fact that they did not organize manufacturing of firearms. As a result, it remained scattered and could not receive wide acceptance. Iqtidar Alam Khan, op. cit., pp. 154-155.
and not the whole of it. The second phase can be classified as the phase of transformation. In this phase, the Indian military system underwent complete transformation when full-fledged Europeanized brigades were raised. Infantry and artillery were formed the mainstay of these brigades and cavalry was changed into a subsidiary wing. However, it is necessary to point out here that although there can be discerned two distinct phases in terms of military change, it still remained a continuous process which evolved over a period of time and reached its peak in the last decades of the century.

The present chapter deals with the first phase of the process, spanning roughly from 1760s to the early years of 1780s and military mutation in the region. Set in the context of prevailing political conditions in north India during the middle of the eighteenth century and growing need of the Indian states for European military experts, the chapter discusses the military activities of the adventurers of this phase and its impact.

1.1 Migration of the European Adventurers to North India

The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed a large-scale influx of European military professionals into north India. One of the factors for such a development was the prevailing political conditions in north India. The rise of the Jats, the Rohelas, and the Awadh state in the wake of the declining Mughal Empire and their constant warfare created the need for the employment of the European military experts in these regions.

These newly emerged regional polities, in a bid for local supremacy and to protect their territory from frequent external military aggressions, took the initiative for the
employment of Europeans in order to modernize their armies. They had seen the
effectiveness of small but trained and disciplined corps in the battles of Plassey and
Buxar where small disciplined corps had defeated a vast assembly of unorganized
forces. Therefore, they opened up to the adoption of modern methods of warfare and
sought European military experts’ service for that. The Nawab of Awadh, who
himself had been the victim of this new mode of warfare in the battle of Buxar, took
the lead by giving employment to such men. He had in fact begun making efforts in
this regard much earlier than the time of the battle of Buxar. He made the first attempt
to employ Europeans as early as 1757 when he had approached the French adventurer
Law de Lauriston and offered him to join the Awadh service. The Rohelas also made
the employment of the European adventurers as a state policy soon after the battle of
Buxar and looked for the services of European military experts. Thus, the ‘local
initiative’ in the backdrop of the existing political conditions was a major factor that
led the European adventurers to move to north India.

The working condition in the Company service for common soldiers was another
important factor that forced the soldiers to look for better opportunities outside the
Company service. In the Company service not only the chances of career
advancement for low rank holders were very limited but the existing working

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2 Jean Law de Lauriston, Mémoire sur Quelques Affaires de l'Empire Mogol 1756-1761, publiée par
Alfred Martineau, 1913, Paris, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (CAOM), Aix-en-Provence, France,
p. 216.

3 The Rohela chief Hafiz Rehmat Khan made it a state policy and sent his men in the lookout for
European military experts to appoint them in his army. Madec, 'Né Pour Quelque Chose de Mieux
(1779)' in Guy Deleury's Les Indes Florissantes: Anthologie des Voyageurs Français 1750-1820,
conditions were also harsh and humiliating.\textsuperscript{4} Contrary to this, employment in the native states was not only lucrative but it also offered ample career opportunities. Some of the famous adventurers like Chevalier René Madec, General Sombre, General De Boigne, Major Pedron, General Perron, they all had been ordinary troopers in the Company army before joining the native states and achieving exceptionally high professional growth. In the native states’ service they rose to the ranks of nobles, military commanders, and even governing officers.

A large majority of the European adventurers who made their way to north India—particularly in the initial phase—were French.\textsuperscript{5} It was due to the reason that unlike the English company which had imposed restrictions on its soldiers to join Indian chiefs, the French company made no such promulgations. As a result, the desertion from the French company was comparatively higher. Apart from this, there were other reasons as well. After the French company’s eclipse of power in the wake of their struggle with the English company, many military professionals became either unemployed or the financial constraints pushed their salaries into long arrears which remained unpaid for years let alone months. But instead of returning to France they stayed on in India and took up service with the native rulers. For instance, after the defeat of the French in 1756 at Chandernagore, Colonel Pedron, instead of returning to France, joined the Nawab of Awadh whom he served for thirty long years.\textsuperscript{6} The condition in France was

\textsuperscript{4} In the French army, a commissioned rank was given only to men of high birth and no one could get a commissioned rank until one had produced the proof of his illustrious military background. S. Inayat A. Zaidi, \textit{French Mercenaries in the Armies of South Asian States, 1499-1803 A.D.}, Ninth European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Heidelberg, 1986, p. 56.

\textsuperscript{5} Shelford Bidwell says that the adventurers who entered into north India in the early phase were all French. Shelford Bidwell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 11; C. Grey, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{6} Herbert Compton, \textit{A Particular Account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindustan from 1784 to 1803}, London, 1892, p. 378.
also not encouraging. Being the second largest populated country after Russia, there were rather less employment opportunities for the citizens. The case of De Vil Maublin exemplified this. De Vil Maublin who was present in Mirzapur in 1791 had said that since he could not find a suitable employment in France that he came to India and took up service under Mughal noble Najaf Khan.  

1.2 The Early Adventurers

Gentil, Madec, and Sombre were the famous early European adventurers who migrated to north India in search of better career prospects. All these adventurers were from humble background and before joining the ‘Indian’ service were employed in the French company on ordinary ranks. For instance, Gentil who was the first to be inducted into the service by the Nawab of Awadh did not come from a very illustrious family. Born in Baignol on 25th June 1726, Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil arrived in India in 1752 with an infantry regiment and rendered distinguished service under the command of Dupleix, Bussy, Lauriston, and Lally. When the English company captured Vizagapatnam in 1759, he made his way to Bengal and presented himself to Mir Kasim Ali Khan in 1761. After a short stint in the service of Mir Kasim he left him due to latter’s bouts of cruelty and went over to Awadh in 1763 and took service with the Nawab Shuja-ud-daula.  

His knowledge of Persian proved pivotal in his quick employment at Awadh. He wrote in his memoir that the Nawab was more than happy to find a European who could speak

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7 S. Inayat A. Zaidi, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
Persian. He wrote, *je fus présenté au Vezir. En me témoignant combien il était satisfait de voir près de lui un Français parler sa langue.*

Similarly, Madec and Sombre also came from poor families. Madec who was born in 1736 in Quimper in the Bretagne province of France was the son of a cabaratier (owner of a cabaret or a dancing-dining place akin to a Tavern). He was working as a cabin boy when he first landed at Pondicherry in January 1758. He was recruited in the French company army because Dupleix during this time was urgently looking for French soldiers in order to combat the English and asked the captain of the ship to provide him at least 50 mariners who could serve in the French artillery. In this, Madec saw an opportunity to get rid of slave-like life of a cabin boy and immediately enrolled himself in the artillery wing of the army. At the time of the fall of Pondicherry to the English in 1761, he was captured and deported to Bengal where he worked in the English company before leaving it due to extremely harsh working conditions there.

Sombre’s case was no less different. He was born in a peasant family in a village close to Trarback in 1720. He started his career as a cavalryman in the French army. But soon moved to Spain from where he boarded an India-bound ship. He arrived in Pondicherry in 1750 and instead of taking up a job in the French army he joined the French forces of south Indian states. Here he worked as a trooper before he made his way up to Bengal. In Bengal, after a short stint in the English company, he reached

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9 Gentil, *'L'envie de Satisfaire Ma Curiosité (1775)'* in Guy Deleury's *Les Indes Florissantes, op. cit.*, p. 32. I was presented to the Wazir. By seeing me he was very happy to find a European speaking his (the Nawab’s) language. (My Translation).

Chandernagore where he was appointed a sergeant in the garrison. It was when French forces were defeated and the soldiers began to be captured that Sombre left French company service and joined the Nawab of Bengal Mir Kasim. He worked for the Nawab of Bengal Mir Kasim till the Patna massacre episode.\textsuperscript{11}

Both Madec and Sombre left the company service on account of unsatisfactory working conditions and untimely payment of salaries. Madec wrote that despite being formally registered as the Company soldiers, they were treated as a band of convicts. He further wrote that on many occasions they had to fight with inadequate military equipments.\textsuperscript{12} Payment of salary was another grievous problem which used to remain pending for years, let alone months.\textsuperscript{13} It was because of these reasons that Madec had even returned to I'ile de France, and came back and joined the French company only on the recommendation of a fellow soldier.\textsuperscript{14}

Madec's northward movement began after the fall of Pondicherry in 1761 when he was imprisoned and sent to Bengal along with other prisoners. He wrote that he and other prisoners had agreed to join the English when the British representatives assured them that “they would be made to serve in Bengal, and only against the Indians and

\textsuperscript{11} Herbert Compton, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 400-401.

\textsuperscript{12} Madec related that on many occasions his cadet had marched even without shoes. Madec, ‘\textit{Hé Pour Quelque Chose de Mieux (1779)}’ in Guy Deleury’s \textit{Les Indes Florissantes, op. cit.}, pp. 37-38.

\textsuperscript{13} The cadet that Madec had joined had not been paid for three years since he had joined it. When Madec presented himself to the new Governor-General Godeheu regarding the salary, he was told that the assigned amount for his cadet (a cadet was a detachment comprising newly recruited soldiers) had been taken by Dupleix to France and he could be paid a compensation salary of only three months. \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 38-39.

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 42.
not against their own countrymen". But the treatment that was meted out to him and other Frenchmen in the British camp was even more humiliating. Differences were created between them and the English soldiers by keeping them in a separate company. It was such a treatment that he received at the hands of the English and with practically no opportunity for growth there, that he left the English camp along with 250 fellow Frenchmen, and marched towards Awadh. That the working conditions were no good even for the English soldiers finds testimony from the fact that two English soldiers had also accompanied him to Awadh.

The case of General Sombre was no less different from that of Madec. Having realized that job prospects were bleak in the French company army after landing at Pondicherry in 1750, he preferred to work for native powers. Later he moved to Bengal where he was in English company for sometime before joining the French at Chandernagore. When Chandernagore was attacked by the English in 1761, Sombre left the French services and moved into the territory of Awadh after having worked for some time for the rebel leader of Purnia and Mir Kasim, the Nawab of Bengal. It was when Sombre was in the employment of Mir Kasim that the unfortunate incident of execution of some Englishmen took place at his hands. Sombre has been severely criticized by the contemporary English officers as well as by the later historians for

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16 Madec wrote that he was also accompanied by two Englishmen. *Mémoire de Madec, French Nouvelle Acquisition* (Hereafter *Fr. Nouv. Acq.*), Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Paris, p. 35. (The Microfilms *Fr. Nouv. Acq.* are available in the National Archives of India).
carrying out the execution. This act had in fact made Sombre the sworn enemy of the British.\textsuperscript{17}

However, it is important to mention here that so far the historians have presented only one side of the event. The criticism of Sombre for the execution appears to be unjustified when it is seen in the backdrop of circumstances that compelled him to carry it out. Modave who had met Sombre during his journey to Hindustan mentioned that Sombre had himself told him about all possible methods that he had applied to persuade Mir Kasim to desist from the execution. Modave further wrote that Sombre told him that it was only when he was threatened with death penalty that he was left with no other option than to obey his master.\textsuperscript{18} Modave mentioned that Gentil who was in Awadh at that time also testified Sombre’s account. Modave’s writing is worth mentioning here:

\begin{quote}
Tous ces malheureux furent tués jusqu’au dernier. Un Allemand nommé Sombre dont il sera beaucoup parlé dans la suite fut chargé de cette terrible commission. Il m’a raconté lui-même qu’il fit tout ce qu’il put pour engager Cassem-Ali-kan à changer de résolution, qu’ensuite il le conjura d’en remettre l’exécution à un autre, qu’il ne put rien engager et que le nabab le menaça de lui faire couper la tête s’il
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17} Captain Jonathan Scott in his \textit{History of Deccan} called General Sombre as ‘the bloody agent of the cruelties of Mir Kasim’, this view was also endorsed by William Francklin. William Francklin, \textit{The History of the Reign of Shah Alam, the Present Emperor of Hindustan}, London, 1798, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{18} Sombre had also become scared of impetuosity of Mir Kasim during this time who after a series of defeats at the hands of the English and the capture of Murshidabad by Major Adams in July 1763, came to Monghyr and had his chief minister and military commander Gurghis Khan beheaded. Sombre carried out Mir Kasim’s order as he feared the same fate that Gurghis Khan had earlier met with. Comte de Modave, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 150
Among modern historians, although Lester Hutchinson acknowledged the predicament that Sombre faced, but he underplayed it. In fact, it turned out to be the main reason for Sombre to leave Mir Kasim’s service and migrate to Awadh.

Both Sombre and Madec joined the Nawab of Awadh sometime after February 1764. The Nawab during this time was carrying out war preparations along with Mir Kasim and the Mughal Emperor to fight against the English. The prevailing circumstances, therefore, made their entry easy. Madec who had migrated to Awadh along with 252 Europeans was recruited by the Nawab on the recommendations made by Gentil. A. L. Srivastava’s statement that Madec was accompanied by ‘about hundred Frenchmen’ when he took up service with the Nawab of Awadh is not supported by the sources. He further makes an error when he states that at the time of Buxar there were ‘about two hundred European troops’ in the Awadh army. In his memoir Madec stated that his party alone consisted of 252 Europeans which included

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19 Comte de Modave, *op. cit.*, p. 150. Modave wrote, ‘In the massacre at Patna, all the Englishmen were killed. A German named Sombre about whom a lot will be said in following pages, was charged to execute the plan. He (Sombre) himself told me (to Modave) that he did all that he could to persuade Qasim Ali Khan to change the order, and later, he pleaded with Qasim Ali Khan to give it (the task of killing the Englishmen) to someone else—in which he could not succeed, then the Nawab threatened him (Sombre) with execution if he did not promptly obeyed him (the Nawab). Monsieur Gentil also confirmed me (Modave) with the same fact’. (My Translation).

20 Lester Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 43.


250 French and 2 Englishmen.23 Sombre on the other hand was admitted for having presented himself at the command of two battalions.24

Highlighting the wide differences that existed between the Company and native state’s service, Madec wrote that he received affectionate treatment at the hands of the Nawab. He continued that the Nawab treated him like a friend rather than as his subject, something which was unusual for him. He further wrote that besides such a friendly treatment, he was also given more than enough salary.25

As Madec, Sombre and Gentil were enlisted only a few months before the battle of Buxar, there was little time available for them to bring any significant change in the Awadh military system. Later, Madec even lamented about getting very little time to work on the Nawab’s artillery which had remained inconclusive by the time of Buxar. He stated that if the Buxar had not happened then he could have raised it to 200 pieces, a formidable number during that period.26 However, certain changes had definitely been introduced. It was borne out by Major Hector Munro’s testimony that

24 Sombre was accompanied by two of his battalions. Lester Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 46.
26 At the time of the battle, the Nawab had 133 pieces of various dimensions in his possession. Madec’s statement to raise it to 200 sheds light on the potentiality and possibility of accomplishing the task. George Forster, A Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern parts of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Persia, and into Russia, by the Caspian Sea, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, originally published 1798, reprint 1997, Vol. 1, p. 146. Mémoire de Madec, Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris pp. 39-41.
all the 133 pieces of different sizes that the Nawab had on the eve of Buxar were fitted on carriages and most of them were on ‘English carriages’.27

In the battle of Buxar, the adventurers along with their corps formed the core of the Awadh army. They fought on the frontline in Buxar with their combined force of eight trained and disciplined battalions.28 Out of eight battalions, five alone were that of Sombre. Soon after the appointment, Sombre had successfully expanded his force from two battalions to five comprising four battalions of infantry, one of cavalry, and a strong detachment of artillery.29 The Nawab’s cavalry of six to seven thousand Mughal horses had been posted close behind it. Both Madec and Sombre who led the army from the front were wounded by musket shots.30 Unfortunately, the Nawab lost the battle. His artillery was completely destroyed. Throwing light on the importance of artillery, Madec lamented that the number of dead and injured soldiers was not very high on their side but the major loss incurred by them was in the form of artillery, i.e. in his own words: Le nombre des morts et des blessés ne fut pas si considérable de notre coté. Mais le nabab perdu tout son artillerie.31

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31 George Forster gives the figure to be 133 pieces. Letter to the Court of Directors, 6 November 1764, Fort William-India House Correspondence (Public Series), Vol. IV : 1764-1766, edited by C. S. Srinivasachari, 1962, p. 263; Mémoire de Madec, Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris pp. 39-41.
The defeat in the battle was equally disappointing for the adventurers. Madec expressed his sadness and sense of loyalty to the Nawab by saying *J'étais inconsolable de la ruine d'un prince qui m'aimait*.32 Ghulam Husain Khan, the author of *Siyar-ul-Mutkharein* and the contemporary writer, praised the French adventurers in glowing terms by stating that, “the whole army of the Nawab was a heterogeneous crowd of men, animated by little loyalty either to the person of the Wazir or to the cause that they professed to serve, the only exceptions being the two French officers and their comrade Samru (Sombre) and some Hindu and Indian Muslim troops in the Nawab’s service”.33

Sombre rendered exceptional military service even after the battle of Buxar. In January 1765 he was present with the Nawab in the latter’s military expedition to Benares against the English. Unfortunately, there the Nawab had to make a retreat in the face of strong English army under Major Fletcher. But the English commander later wrote that it was Sombre who with his artillery arrangement made the retreat of the Nawab safe. The Allahabad historian Khair-ud-din says that Sombre and his battalions were determined not to give way to Fletcher, but it was only after the Nawab’s insistence that Sombre made the retreat along with the Nawab. Shedding light on the manner of retreat, Khair-ud-din further says that Sombre arranged his

32 It shows the concern of the European adventurers for the fate of their masters in battles. *Mémoire de Madec, 9368* (Microfilm), *Fr. Nouv. Acq.*, Département des Manuscrits, BN, Paris p. 41. He said, “I was extremely sad on the defeat of the prince who liked me so much. (My Translation)

33 Ghulam Husain Khan Tabataba, *Seir Mutaqherin or Review of Modern Times* translated by Nota-Manus, Delhi: Low Price Publications, 4 Vols., First Published 1926, Reprint 1985, Vol. III, p 188. Lester Hutchinson gives skewed arguments when he says that Sombre stayed away from Buxar. His line “As we have come to expect, Sombre did not take part in the battle” reveals his biased attitude against the French adventurers. Lester Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
troops and artillery in the manner of a fort to protect the Nawab inside it and fought the enemy all the way while retreating towards Jaunpur.\textsuperscript{34}

The Nawab also supported the adventurers employed in his service. It was most evident during negotiations after the battle of Buxar when the English demanded the surrender of Madec and Sombre. But the Nawab dilly-dallied to evade the arrest of his French officers. Instead of complying with the English demands, he counselled his French officers to take up employment with other states. Madec, who had been treated like a friend, was suggested to look for employment in the interior of Hindustan.\textsuperscript{35} The Nawab regretted about his inability to provide him shelter in his territory for long but assured him of calling him back once the political conditions would turn favourable.\textsuperscript{36} The Nawab shielded Sombre by projecting him as militarily too powerful to be arrested. But Sombre apprehensive of his arrest and prolonged negotiations already moved into the Ruhela territory.\textsuperscript{37}


\textsuperscript{35} Madec wrote that the Nawab’s affection for him remained undiminished till he was in the Nawab’s service. Mémoire de Madec, 9368 (Microfilm), Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, BN, Paris, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{36} Madec, ‘Mon Voyage à Farroukhabad, (Juillet 1766)’, in Guy Deleury’s Les Indes Florissantes, p. 625.

\textsuperscript{37} Lester Hutchinson’s statement that Sombre had become so powerful that the Nawab of Awadh could not arrest him is untenable. Apart from his own army, the Nawab had the military support of Gentil and Madec which he could always put to use whenever the need would have arisen. That Sombre was given the charge to guard the harem was indicative of the Nawab’s deep faith in him. It is also unlikely that the Nawab would defend only Madec and not Sombre at the time of negotiations with the British when Sombre had fought against Fletcher also after the battle of Buxar. The only difference was that Madec waited till the outcome whereas Sombre, feeling jittery, left the Nawab. Sombre left the Nawab only after January 1765 whereas Madec left, after the Nawab’s advice, in 1766. Lester Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 48-49. At the negotiating table when the English demanded the person of Mir Qasim and Sombre, it
The historian Lester Hutchinson’s argument that before leaving Awadh Sombre had plundered the ladies of the Nawab’s harem of their money and jewellery does not stand the scrutiny of evidence.\textsuperscript{38} One hardly finds any information on this in any other work which may support Hutchinson’s statement.\textsuperscript{39}

Both Madec and Sombre joined the Ruhela state. The Ruhela chief had also been looking for European military experts. It was on one such occasion that some of the Ruhela nobles met Madec and offered him to join the service.\textsuperscript{40} Madec wrote that he agreed to work for two reasons, first, his party was completely dependent on him, and secondly, he also had to maintain his contingent. We do not know about the salary that Madec was given in Awadh, but the Ruhela chief appointed him at a salary of 10,000 rupees per month. It was definitely an exceptionally high salary by any standards, as ten years later, when Modave and Dieu moved to Delhi after Shuja-ud-daula’s death, they were offered by Shah Alam II the salaries of 2500 rupees and 600 rupees per month respectively.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{38} Lester Hutchinson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{39} A. L. Srivastava who has written a voluminous account exclusively on Shuja-ud-daula nowhere mentioned about such an alleged act by Sombre. He rather wrote that Sombre was one among the last of the Nawab’s allies who left him. A. L. Srivastava, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. II, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{40} Hafiz Rehmat Khan had ordered his officers to be in constant search of European military men and if they found anyone, they immediately offer him service. Madec, ‘\textit{Mon Mariage a Farrukhabad, (Juillet 1766)}’ in Guy Deleury’s, \textit{Les Indes Florissantes}, p. 624, BnF, France.

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Under the leadership of European adventurers, the western military culture began to take roots in the Ruhela principality. It was reflected in the swelling ranks of their corps indicating that natives began to be initiated in the ‘new’ military culture. The increased strength of Madec’s party from 400 at the initial stage to 800 was a proof of considerable local participation in it. But the introduction of new military culture could not be seen on a large-scale. Sombre who was employed in Rohelkhand along with Madec was asked by the Ruhela chief to leave the Ruhela service. The Ruhela chief, under the apprehension of incurring wrath of the English and consequently the combined English-Awadh attack on his principality for employing Sombre, himself asked Sombre to leave his territory. Sombre, on his part, immediately obliged his master. Thus, we see that the inward movement of the European adventurers during this phase was more the result of English company’s politico-military pressure on Indian states than their own monetary interests.

1.3 European Adventurers and Service in Upper India

The maximum impact of the western military culture in the initial phase was felt on the Jat and Mughal states. The comparatively longer stay of the European adventurers in these states was the chief reason for such a change. In addition to it, unlike the Awadh and Ruhela states, the absence of British political clout here also proved advantageous for carrying out military experiments. Sombre, who joined the Jat raja

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Jawahar Singh in July 1765, was instrumental in this.44 His entry into the Jat service was occasioned by the prevalence of unsettled political conditions that had arisen after the death of Suraj Mal.45 Jawahar Singh, who during this time was struggling to be accepted widely as a ruler in his territory, enrolled Sombre to measure up the forces of his rebellious nobles Balram and Mohan Ram. Sombre’s military presence tilted the balance in Jawahar Singh’s favour. Armed with Sombre’s contingent, Jawahar Singh went to Agra and succeeded in arresting Balram and Mohan Ram along with their supporters. Thus with Sombre’s help, Jawahar Singh was able to arrest his rebellious chiefs.46 With the support of Sombre, Jawahar Singh also marched to the Jat city of Wair to chastise Bahadur Singh who had been fortifying and augmenting the garrison of the city ever since the death of Suraj Mal. Jawahar Singh captured and imprisoned Bahadur Singh after the siege of three months which ended in September 1765.47

44 Lester Hutchinson statement that Sombre was present in the siege of Delhi laid by Jawahar Singh as a mark of revenge for his father Suraj Mal’s death is not supported by available evidence. Hutchinson writes that the siege took place in 1765, but according to Wendel who himself was present in north India during that time, the siege had taken place in November 1764. And we know that Sombre during this time was in the Awadh service and had still not joined the Jats. Lester Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 50; Wendel’s Memoirs, op. cit., p. 84; K. R. Qamungo, History of the Jats, edited and annotated by Dr. Vir Singh, First Published 1925, Delhi: Originals, 2003, p. 104.
45 The death of Suraj Mal in a battle with Najib-ud-daula on 25th December 1763 created succession crisis in the Jat state. His powerful chiefs Balram, the general of the cavalry and governor of Bharatpur, and Mohan Ram, the general of the artillery, placed Nahar Singh on the throne. Balram and Mohan Ram were the most powerful and wealthy chiefs in the Jat territory after Suraj Mal. They opposed Jawahar Singh’s accession, and when the latter assumed power after Nahar Singh’s flight to Dholpur, they put up their resistance by shutting the gates of the Bharatpur state in Jawahar Singh’s face and by not giving him the details of the locations where Suraj Mal had kept his treasure. In addition to the opposition of Balram and Mohan Ram, Jawahar Singh also had to handle Bahadur Singh who was his cousin and wanted to rule Wair independently. Wendel’s Memoirs, op. cit., pp. 90-93.
46 Wendel’s Memoirs, op. cit., p. 90.
47 Bahadur Singh was the cousin of Jawahar Singh. Wendel praises him for being courteous and spirited. He was given the authority to govern the city of Wair by Suraj Mal. After the death of Suraj
Thus, Sombre’s appointment at troubled times proved crucial for Jawahar Singh in his struggle against his adversaries.

1.4 Sombre and Madec: Agents of Military Change

The appointment of Sombre as a European military professional by Jawahar Singh had an immediate effect on the Jat army. In the same year as that of his appointment, there emerged a large number of musket-wielding peasantry in Bayana who shot to fame for one of their encounters with the Ruhela chief Najib-ud-daula’s troops. It was reported that of 3000 armed peasants who were present in the encounter, 1000 were trained musketeers who exhibited their military skills by firing matchlocks in quick succession. The rise of 1000 peasants as expert musketeers in such a quick time was definitely a sign of significant military change in the Jat state.

Apart from the changes in the Jat army, the military map of the Jat state also underwent noticeable alteration. Some cities which had earlier existed only as fortified towns were transformed into well-equipped military centres. Ordnance houses or depots were built in some of them for re-provisioning of arms during wars. For instance, when Sombre fell short of gun powder and bullets while

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48 These musketeers belonged to the village of Bayana situated approximately 25 km north of Delhi. The encounter between the Jat armed peasants and Najib-ud-daula’s forces took place in 1765. Iqtidar Alam Khan, op. cit., p. 172.

49 Modave mentions three Jat cities in this regard but unfortunately does not provide their names. Comte de Modave, op. cit., p. 422.
defending the Jat city of Deig in 1774 from the siege operations of Najaf Khan, he
could immediately procure it from the nearby storehouses. 50

An area two \( \text{cos} \) (2 cos = 6.44 km) away from Agra was developed into a formidable
military centre. Sombre was given a house there by the Jat raja where one ordnance
factory was also set up. Later, under the direction of an Armenian, who was widely
renowned for his military expertise, a foundry was also established there to
manufacture cannon-balls. A magazine was also built at the same place for keeping
spare arms. 52 Modave's writing is worth mentioning here:

Il (Sombre) tenoit du raja la maison qu'il avoit à deux cosses d'Agra à
laquelle il avoit ajouté tant d'ouvrages que c'était une espèce de place
forte. C'etoit la qu'il fendoit son artillerie sous la direction d'un
Arménien qui entendoit assè de ce métier. Il y conservoit aussi ses
armes de rechange. 53

Sombre also took initiative in the direction of providing medical facilities to his
soldiers which till then had been a feature only of the European armies. It was a
pioneering work for it had not been in practice in Indian armed forces to provide
organized and sustained medical facilities to a large number of soldiers. As a result, a
rudimentary form of modern day hospital was set up for the treatment of soldiers of

50 James Ferguson, History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, 2 Vols., First Published 1876, Revised
51 Icos = 3.22 km. Jahangir's India, The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert, translated from the
52 The name of the Armenian is not mentioned by Modave. Comte de Modave, op. cit., p. 422.
53 Comte de Modave, op. cit., p. 422. He received from the Raja (the Jat raja) the house which was at
two cos from Agra which was worked up so much that it appeared a sort of fortified place. It was here
that he founded his artillery under the direction of an Armenian who was considered as an expert in
that profession (military profession). There he (Sombre) also kept his spare arms. (My Translation)
his corps. Giving testimony to Sombre's initiative, Modave wrote, *Il y avait élevé une espèce d'hôpital pour les Européens malades.*

The support of Jawahar Singh was the most important factor in Sombre’s long stay in the Jat state. Unlike the Awadh and the Ruhela states from where the British pressure had led to his early exit, Jawahar Singh defied all mandatory tones of the English to dismiss him. The Company had begun demanding Sombre’s expulsion right from the time of his taking employment with the Jat raja. The governor of Bengal had even written a letter to Jawahar Singh on 19th August 1765 asking him to dismiss Sombre. Jawahar Singh, however, on his part, refused to comply with the English demands and made it clear to the English authorities that he had no hostile plans against the Company and had appointed Sombre for organizing an infantry brigade for him.

Madec’s employment by Jawahar Singh led to further intensification in military transition in the Jat state. Madec was inducted in the Jat service particularly to expand the Europeanized auxiliaries. Therefore, soon after the appointment, more and more locals were enrolled by him and trained in western methods of combat.

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54 Although Modave mentions about the hospital but he does not mention its location. Comte de Modave, *op. cit.*, p. 422. 'He had raised a kind of hospital for ill European soldiers'. (My Translation).

55 During this time the English were seeking an alliance with the Jats against Abdali and Maratha menace in Hindustan. They had wanted a faithful ally who could divert the forces of the British enemy and thus help the English company during battles. The English had thought that the Jats could keep the Abdali busy in the Punjab by backing the Sikhs. In case Abdali threatened to march against the English, the Jats could divert Abdali’s forces providing time to the English forces to reinforce themselves. And in the adventurers’ presence the English saw the failure of their plans. K. R. Qanungo, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113

training was generally given in rainy season when the army used to be stationary. Madec succeeded in making a substantial increase in the number of trained soldiers. It was borne out from the increment of 5000 rupees that he received for his services. He had definitely made a great progress on this front as it was reported that by April 1770 he had raised the strength of his auxiliaries to 1400 soldiers. And when he joined the Mughals two years later, he was heading a corps of 3000 men.

Knowledge about western military science was imparted not only in terms of training Indian soldiers for battles, but it was also disseminated through the manufacture of firearms in the region’s foundries itself. This was testified by Madec’s establishment of a big foundry in Agra which produced twelve pieces of cannons and one mortar at a time.

1.5 The Adventurers in Wars

The European adventurers’ involvement in battles considerably changed the outcome of combats. Their corps made a huge difference in the battles which were largely fought to establish political dominance and for monetary benefits. The concern here to deal with wars is to highlight the application of new military technologies in wars and their ability to change to the outcome of wars. Thus, battles and wars in this context are important as a process than merely for its results.

57 Mémoire de Madec, Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, p. 64.
58 K. R. Qanungo, op. cit., p. 123.
59 The troops of 1400 men that Madec had in 1770 were killed during the battle of Sonkh on 6th April 1770. But he again raised his troops to the tune of 3000 men from a near scratch-like position. It only indicates the speed and vigour with which such a force was raised in a quick time of nearly two years. Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 8, 45, 46.
The military superiority of the Europeanized corps of Sombre and Madec was particularly evident in the battle of Maonda where their small disciplined corps not only saved the entire army of the Jats from complete route but even led them to victory in the end. In the battle between Jawahar Singh and the Jaipur Raja Madho Singh at Maonda near Pushkar on 14th December 1767 the Jat position was severely compromised despite their having fielded 70 pieces of cannons of all calibre. The Jats could not hold on for long in the face of valiant Rajput attacks, and retreated headlong in a *sauve-qui-peut* (those who could save themselves) manner to their territory, leaving behind all military stuff. While the entire Jat army had fled, Sombre and Madec stuck to the field along with their auxiliaries and kept fighting until they had secured the safe retreat of their master.61 This ‘unmolested’ retreat of Jawahar Singh was due to the artillery fire of Madec and Sombre’s guns which rattled the Rajput warriors who had until then fought with extreme firmness.62 Thus, it was due to the presence of trained battalions under Sombre and Madec that a seeming Jat defeat was converted into victory.63 K. R. Qanungo praises Madec and Sombre and their battalions by saying that ‘the party of Madec and that of Sombre, who laboured in that affair (in the battle) with all the bravery and prudence of a great soldier, restored the battle and defeated the Raja of Jaipur’.64

The military capabilities of trained units were also evident in the battle fought between the Jats and Marathas near the fort of Sonkh on 6th April 1770. It was again

62 The slow movement of the Rajputs’ artillery proved one of the factors in their defeat compared to the swift artillery on the Jat side, highlighting the importance of compact and organized artillery of Sombre and Madec. Jadunath Sarkar, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 342.
64 K. R. Qanungo, *op. cit.*, p. 121
the adventurers who came to the Jats’ rescue. The reasons for the conflict had arisen due to the Marathas instigation of Ranjit Singh against the legitimate Jat ruler Nawal Singh. Apart from this, they also carried out disruption in the Jat territory and appointed officials in the name of Ranjit Singh. But when Nawal Singh challenged them they avoided pitched battle on account of the presence of European-led forces on his side. Later when the Jat Raja heard that the Marathas were also parleying with Najib-ud-daula to form alliance against them and were marching towards Govardhan that he also ordered his troops to march to the same destination. It was near Sonkh which was not more than 5 miles from Govardhan about six cos (19 km approx.) east of Deig that the two forces met on 6\textsuperscript{th} April 1770.\textsuperscript{65} The Jats had not expected that they would meet the Marathas so soon. They were not even ready for fight at that time as a large number of Jat soldiers had gone back to Deig to fetch necessities. Therefore, both Madec and Sombre advised the Jats not to pick up fight with the Marathas on that day as not only they did not have enough man power but also most of the day had already passed and there was no sufficient light left for regular action. But their advice was not paid any heed and Dan Sahi, the brother-in-law of Nawal Singh, who had an excellent cavalry, and Gosain Balanand, the leader of Naga sanyasi, decided to fight. The battle that ensued continued even after nightfall. In the battle, Nawal Singh made a fatal mistake. Instead of leading the army, he alighted from his elephant, mounted on a horse and retired behind the Sombre’s sepoys. Sombre protected the Jat Raja by forming a square which faced continuous repeated shocks from the Marathas for a long time. The Jat Raja fled even from there, creating anxiety and panic in the army ranks. Madec and Sombre, however, fought bravely and

\textsuperscript{65} Sonkh lies on Deig-Govardhan-Sonkh route. It is not more than 5 miles away from Govardhan. Govardhan in turn is 6 cos east of the Jat town of Deig. K. R. Qanungo, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 133.
stood their ground till the end of the battle. Madec saved himself and his men by forming ‘square’ and taking on the Maratha assault on three fronts simultaneously. It was reported that 5000 horses and foot were wounded and 2000 had been killed. Madec himself had lost around 1400 men of his corps in the battle. It was reported that but for the daring fight put up by the adventurers and their square formation tactics not a single man would have escaped from the Marathas.⁶⁶

By 1772 the military superiority of adventurers’ battalions began to be acknowledged even by the adversaries. The Jats’ military supremacy under Madec can also be assessed from the fact that they were able to intimidate even the Mughals. In 1772, the Mughal forces invaded the Jat territory stretching south of Delhi and took possession of all mud forts in the area. The Jat Raja Nawal Singh who was already engaged in a fight with the Marathas quickly made peace with them by agreeing to make a monetary contribution, and sent his forces under Madec to free his territory from the Mughal occupation. Madec with a newly equipped well-armed force of 3000 men and 8 field guns along with the Jat cavalry marched against the Mughals. The mere arrival of Madec’s artillery made the Mughals so nervous that they immediately retreated without giving a fight, and Madec recovered all lost Jat posts without a single fire.⁶⁷

The grit and devotion of the adventurers to their profession can also be discerned from Madec’s chastisement of a Rajput ruler. Madec besieged the fort and after a month and a half he was able to climb on one of the bastions. But the entire effort failed due

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to the abandonment of the siege by the native troops for their fear of terrible fire from the Rajput defenders. Madec however did not abandon it, and defeated the Rajputs in his next attempt. 68

The adventurers wielded considerable influence in the political affairs also. This was evident during succession crisis which came up after the death of Jawahar Singh. In the succession crisis that ensued, Madec's support played a crucial role in Nawal Singh's success against his rival Ranjit Singh. 69 Even during the rule of Jawahar Singh, European adventurers were given important political assignments. For instance, on the request of the British in April 1767 to form an alliance against Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Marathas, Jawahar Singh appointed a European named Don Pedro De Silva as his wakil to conclude a treaty with them. Don Pedro De Silva had enjoyed high confidence of Jawahar Singh and was instrumental in effecting alliance between the English and Jawahar Singh. In fact, in October 1767 when the English governor requested Jawahar Singh about readjusting the treaty, Jawahar Singh wrote a letter to him and sent Don Pedro to Calcutta to carry out the negotiations. 70

Contrary to Don Pedro, Madec and Sombre's participation in north Indian politics was directed more against the English company. They motivated Indian powers to unite against the English. Madec's role in this regard would be studied in greater details in the fourth chapter. Here suffice would it be to refer to Sombre's efforts in this regard. In January 1770 when the Sikhs were on an invasion of the Jat territory

68 Madec does not mention the name of the Rajput ruler and the state where the siege was laid. *Mémoire de Madec*, Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, p. 50.
and the Mughal capital, Sombre was at Kalpi\textsuperscript{71} helping Mir Kasim in his efforts to unite the Sikhs and the Marathas against the English. After this he went to Chunar on 8\textsuperscript{th} February 1770 and effected a peace settlement between the Sikhs and the Jats. His efforts for the peace settlement are of particular importance as on this occasion he persuaded the two warring powers to use their forces against the English.\textsuperscript{72}

The growing military strength of the Jats under the European adventurers was also witnessed by the Mughals. They themselves had seen the effectiveness of the European adventurers' disciplined and trained artillery in many battles with the Jats. Therefore, from 1770s the Mughals also made efforts to employ the Europeans in their service. This urge became even more intense once they faced reverses against the Jats in the early years of 1770s which again was the result of military renderings of these adventurers. That a tiny Jat state with limited resources could militarily take on the Mughals came as an eye-opener to the Mughals. As a result, from 1772 onwards the Mughals began making desperate efforts to have both Sombre and Madec on their side. For this, in October 1772 they even opened parleys with Nawal Singh for the peaceful settlement of the disputed territories between them. But their real intention was to win over Madec to their side. Unaware of such developments in the Mughal camp, Nawal Singh also chose Madec as his representative to carry out the settlements.\textsuperscript{73} The Mughals gave an enticing offer to Madec to join their service and modernize their army. He was offered a salary of 40,000 rupees per month and the status of a Mughal noble with the title of \textit{Shams-ud-daula Bahadur Qaim Jung}. Along

\textsuperscript{71} Kalpi is on the right bank of the Jamuna some 80 kilometers to the south-west of Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh.


\textsuperscript{73} K. R. Qanungo, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 139.
A daring manoeuvre: de Boigne changes formation to attack at Lalsot. S, old square; CC, companies breaking into column; A, artillery; LL, new line; R, Rathor Cavalry
with this, he was offered a mansab rank of 6000 zat and sawar. Besides, he was also promised complete freedom to enlarge his army from the then 3000 men to any proportion he would have thought necessary. It was definitely a grand offer by any standards, and Madec whose salary had been in arrears for a long time in the Jat service accepted the offer. 74

But Nawal Singh, for obvious reasons, did not want to discharge Madec from his services. But instead of adopting diplomatic means to retain him, he resorted to coercive measures. He ordered all his troops under his command to check Madec’s movement. He also sent orders to the villagers living on the roadside of the route from Bharatpur to Deig to take up arms and arrest Madec. As a result, a formidable force of 100,000 men was assembled to prevent Madec from leaving the territory. Madec resorted to his ‘hollow square’ tactics and musketry fire. 75 His continuous volley of grape-shots and simultaneous movement in hollow square framework prevented the Jats from putting up any organized effort to stop him. He not only succeeded in leaving the Jat territory but was also able to keep the casualty low on his side. 76

74 Madec gave the reason for leaving the Jat service in his letter. He said that although he was serving the Jats, he was not interested in staying there as a large part of his salary was in arrears which had amounted to 20,000 Rs. But he admitted that it was not as simple to change sides as it appeared. Letter by Madec dated 8 July 1772, Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, pp. 82-84.

75 Hollow square tactics was the most effective military innovation in the context of warfare in India. In this the artillery wing of the Europeanized corps was formed in a square with all firearms such as cannons, cannon-balls etc kept inside the square hidden from the enemy’s view. When the cavalry of the enemy used to attack then the artillerymen used to go behind their cannons and start firing incessant volleys of fire. It proved to be the most effective tactics in Indian system of warfare. See the map where De Boigne’s assault at Lalsot shows the formation of Hollow Square. Victor de Saint-Génis, Une Page Inédite de l'Histoire des Indes; Le Général De Boigne 1751-1830, Poitiers, 1873, pp. 167-170.

76 It was only 200. Madec, ‘Né Pour Quelque Chose de Mieux (1779)’ in Guy Deleury’s Les Indes Florissantes, op. cit., pp. 37-38.
The departure of Madec and later that of Sombre spelt doom for the Jat power. Their military prowess declined rapidly whereas that of the Mughals registered an upswing.77

1.6 European Adventurers in the Mughal Service

After appointing Madec as a military officer, the Mughals further tried to widen the canvas of their Europeanized troops by training more soldiers on these lines. Najaf Khan, in particular, who was a leading Mughal noble, tried to bring changes in the army. He appointed commanders to train the army on European model. But such an exercise met with a limited success as the commanders entrusted with the task possessed only partial knowledge of western combative techniques. However, it was reported that at the time of his expedition to the Jat state in September 1773, he had fielded six battalions of sepoy musketeers two of which were trained by the English and others by the indigenous commandants who had some knowledge of European military methods.78 The two battalions of English-trained sepoys had played a crucial role in the Mughal victory in September 1773 against the Jats in the Doab.79 Apart from the English-trained battalions commanded by a European Ramru80, the Mughal victory was also attributed to the work of trained native soldiers. The grape-shots and volleys of fire from their muskets had rattled the Jat army which was led by their best generals Dan Shah and Chandu Gujar. Chandu Gujar was killed and Dan Shah was

77 Jadunath Sarkar argues that the departure of the European adventurers from the Jat territory was one of the crucial factors in their rapid decline. He further says that the consequent military ascendancy of Mughal noble Najaf Khan was due to the European adventurers’ support as by this time they had joined the Mughals. Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 64-65.
80 We do not have much information on Ramru except that later he joined De Boigne’s military service.
wounded. Curiously, the Jats did not order Sombre to take the field who during this time was still in their service. The loss in the battle did a great damage to the military reputation of the Jats which they had acquired through Madec and Sombre.81

But the Mughals posited more faith in Madec and his levies. It was soon to be seen in the battle of Purana Qila where Madec fought against the Marathas. The battle took place on 17th December 1772 a little over a month after Madec had joined the Mughals.82 When the Mughal army came out to confront the Marathas, Madec was dismayed by the inexperience and lack in the unity of command of the Mughals. He noted, “When the Marathas advanced, the Mughal paltans through their ignorance and mismanagement fired their muskets while the Maratha horses were still beyond the range and by the time they reloaded their cannons for another shot, the enemies had already reached up to them”. The poor musket-handling skills of the Mughal soldiers proved disastrous for them, for the Maratha army with their mobile cavalry rattled both the right and the left flanks of the Mughal army, and afterwards, they attacked the centre which was being guarded by Madec himself. The battle was finally centred where Madec was fighting. The Marathas surrounded Madec’s troops from all around. Madec in order to save the onslaught of his troops quickly formed a square. Another Frenchman who fought for the Mughal cause with vigour and zeal was Monsieur de Kerascao. He was second in command to Madec and provided timely military assistance to the latter at the time of his square formation. Najaf Khan whose forces had already been rattled also took refuge in Madec’s square. Jadunath Sarkar

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82 Madec joined the Mughal service sometime after October but definitely before December. Letter by Chevalier to Madec (unaddressed, fifth letter), Fr. Nouv. Acq., Département des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, p. 90.
who otherwise is critical of Madec praised him in glowing terms by stating, “Madec’s French square alone stood in the field like a solitary island in the midst of a raging sea of horsemen. From noon up to three hours of the night Madec held his position, keeping the enemy at a distance and preventing them from dragging his three guns away”. Both sides suffered heavy losses but the Mughals were outdone by the Marathas in this battle. Despite the setback, the Emperor acknowledged the bravery of Madec and Najaf Khan and honoured them with his own shawls. This battle resulted in a heavy loss for Madec who lost nearly all his equipments, property, tents and pieces of artillery. But what was crucial was that his forces put up a brave fight and brought back the remnants of the Mughal army under their protective shelter. 83

A serious dent to the Jat military superiority was made in the battle of Barsana which took place soon after. In this battle the Mughals had also fielded the European-led troops. Madec, who had already spent two years in the Mughal service, was pitted against Sombre who was fighting for the Jats. Apart from Sombre’s nine battalions, the Jats also had a strong detachment of Naga militia under Balanand Gosain. As both sides were laced with artillery, it became the test of artillery strength in the battle. Both sides started with an exchange of artillery fire and fought for another four hours only with it. It was when the Jats lost a thousand Naga men that they began to retreat. In such a scenario, the Mughal artillery battalions under the native leaders Raza Beg Khan and Rahim Khan advanced towards Sombre. But the Mughals made a tactical blunder here by holding their shots till they reached closer to Sombre’s troops. Sombre, on the other hand, did not give the Mughal commandants any chance to fire and killed Raza Beg Khan and Rahim Khan just in the first round of gunfire. Finding

it tough to overcome Sombre’s gunfire, Najaf Khan changed the strategy and targeted Nawal Singh which proved disastrous for the Jats. At the arrival of the Mughal cavalry, Nawal Singh fled from the scene leading to demoralization in his army. Despite the absence of Nawal Singh, Sombre held his ground with artillery’s support and square formation methods. The Mughal army avoided Sombre’s gunfire shots. Najaf Khan himself avoided Sombre’s artillery fire while attacking another Jat leader Jodhraj, the Jat Diwan. In this attack, Jodhraj’s army became disorganized. Then under the protective cover of Sombre’s corps, he quickly organized a cavalry of 500 horses to combat Najaf Khan. In the fresh fight Najaf Khan was wounded but he was able to defeat Jodhraj. The defeat of Jodhraj also compromised the position of Sombre who was left with no other support. As a result, he had to make a retreat. But he withdrew his forces with ‘an utmost steadiness and order’. While Sombre was withdrawing his forces, a Frenchman who was second-in-command to Sombre continued the Jat resistance by repelling the Mughal cavalry attack through his gunshots. This Frenchman fought until he was killed by a guided shot from Najaf Khan’s artillery. He was the ‘last man standing’ for the Jats, as after his death, the Jat resistance also ended. Although the Jats were defeated, Sombre was praised for providing safe retreat to his troops. His military skills also found encomium from the pen of Jadunath Sarkar who wrote that ‘discipline and European leadership saved Samru’s sepoys even in the midst of such a complete defeat’.

The importance of modern military methods was particularly realized in the 1770s. Apart from Madec, the Mughals also tried to enrol some other European military professionals. Polier was one such professional whom the Mughals confirmed in their

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ranks by giving him a jagir. His services were particularly resorted to at a time when
the Mughal attempts to capture the fort of Agra were going awry. Despite the laying
of the siege by Najaf Khan himself the Mughals had been unable to make much
progress as the walls of the fort required heavy cannon firing to manoeuvre the enemy
out. It was then that Polier along with a contingent was sent by Shuja-ud-daula for
Najaf Khan’s help. Sending Polier for capturing the fort was indicative of the growing
confidence of Indian ruling authorities in European adventurers’ military leadership.
Polier reached Agra with only one contingent of the Awadh army. When he reached
Agra he wrote to the Nawab to ask Najaf Khan to send the troopers deputed with him
to come with gun powder and other ammunition indicating that he had not come
equipped with necessary war material.

Polier played a crucial role in the capture of Agra fort. He laid out entrenchments
(damdama) near the fort walls and carried out heavy bombardment of the fort.
Although the fort had been besieged nearly for a month, it was only after Polier-led
assault that the Jats began to give up. They soon opened negotiations with Najaf Khan

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85 Letter by Polier to Mirza Najaf Khan, Akbarabad (Agra) in Muzaffar Alam & Seema Alvi’s, the Persian Letters of Polier—the Ijaj-i Arsalani, Folio No. 41a, p. 119. Polier simply writes that “I am in Akbarabad (Agra) with a contingent of the Awadh army”.
86 Jadunath Sarkar’s argument is untenable when he says that Polier was sent with heavy artillery to capture the fort. Polier’s letters reveal that many times he asked Najaf Khan to provide him big cannons to bring the fort under control. Polier frequently lamented the ineffectiveness of small cannons which had been deployed there. Letter by Polier to Nawab Shuja-ud-daula in Muzaffar Alam & Seema Alvi, the Persian Letters of Polier—the Ijaj-i Arsalani, Folio No. 42a, p. 119; folio 46b, pp. 122-123.
87 Polier says that the Najaf Khan’s forces had only 150 balls for each of fourteen cannons and they required 400 to 500 cannon-balls. Although Najaf Khan had promised to furnish the requisite amount of cannon-balls, it appears from Polier’s letter that it could not be done. It implies that they had only 2100 cannon-balls for the assault. The figure given by Jadunath Sarkar that they had bombarded 5000 cannon-balls comes out to be more an inflated figure than what actually was available there. Letter by Polier to Shuja-ud-daula, in Muzaffar Alam & Seema Alvi, op. cit., Folio No. 56b, Folio No. 73a, pp. 128, 139; Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., Vol. III.
and on 13th February 1774, they agreed to vacate the fort on the promise of safety of their lives and property. Thus, by 18th February 1774 the Mughals brought the Agra fort under their control. 88

Although Polier had been enrolled in the Mughal nobility, he was not given many military assignments of this nature. His employment with the English company earlier might have been the reason for the Mughals to be cautious in entrusting assignments of military importance to him. But Madec continued to remain the main military asset of the Mughals. The Mughals assigned him the tumultuous areas of Bari, Bayana, Sepau, and Sirhind as his jagir. He governed these jagir for four years restoring law and order in the region by controlling refractory chieftains and quelling their rebellions. The French traveller and adventurer Modave who had been present in the region during this time wrote that when he arrived in Agra in 1776 he had to go to Bari to meet Madec. Madec during this time was busy in chastising the rebellious chief of Biloni—a fortified town about 15 miles to the east of Karauli and had just returned from there. Modave informs us that despite the illness Madec marched against the chief, captured his fort, and forced him to submission. 89

Realizing the effectiveness of the Europeanized wings in battles, the Mughals also employed Sombre. He was taken into the service nearly two years after Madec’s appointment. 90 The Emperor was highly impressed with Sombre’s political acumen and his deep influence in Sikh politics. The primary motive behind admitting Sombre

89 Comte de Modave, op. cit., pp. 203-204. Bari was situated 44 miles or 26 cos to the south-west of Agra. Sepau was on the left bank of the river Parbati about 13 miles to the north-west of Dholpur.
90 Sombre was appointed in May 1774, whereas Madec was employed in 1772.
was to utilize his influence among the Sikhs to keep the Doab and Delhi area free from their frequent inroads which had caused utter chaos in the region. He was appointed at a monthly salary of 65,000 rupees. Besides, he was also assured a jagir in the Mughal territory. But Sombre joined the Mughals only on the assurance that he would never be handed over to the English. It is pertinent to mention that although he had been in the Jat state for long, he was never free from the fear of being handed over to the British. The British machinations and their espionage system had always been on the work and it never gave Sombre any respite from their menace. It has already been noted that the demand for his deportation was immediately made by the English when he had joined the Jat Raja Jawahar Singh.

Soon after the appointment, Sombre was given the areas of Sonepat and Panipat—the areas coterminous with Sikh territory—to control. Frequent Sikh inroads had created anarchy in this part and had bred deep discontent among its inhabitants against the decaying Mughal authority in the region. The dissatisfaction with the Mughal administration had grown to such an extent that the people had even begun openly defying the Mughal authority. Sombre was given the responsibility to bring the area under control. He was given a free hand to check the Sikh inroads and to extend control in adjacent Jind—then ruled by a Sikh Gajpat Singh. It was also stated that he would enjoy complete authority on whatever area he would be able to wrest from the Sikhs.91

Sombre took charge of the responsibility in July 1774 at the command of nearly 2000 soldiers, five pieces of cannons, a considerable quantity of ammunition, and six elephants. He met with early success when he recovered a place called Gharaunda.

situated halfway between Panipat and Karnal from the Sikhs and garrisoned it for defensive purposes. However, he could not bring absolute peace in the region as the Sikhs kept making trouble there. To compound his problem further, even the land revenue from the jagir which was assigned to him in lieu of his salary was not adequate. He could procure 5000 rupees from Panipat, 3000 rupees from Samalkha, and a little sum from Gharaunda. Despite the lack of sufficient returns from the Jagir, Sombre did not hold his soldiers’ salaries. It was reported that he paid his civil and military officers from his own account.92

The Mughal Emperor also realized the difficulty in the appropriation of land revenue from the disturbed areas of Sonepat and Panipat. Therefore, in order to supplement Sombre’s income, the Emperor, in July 1775, assigned him the territory of Bari and Bayana. The Emperor also granted Sombre a tract of land as jagir in the doab which stretched from Aligarh to Muzaffarnagar. It was a fertile land whose annual yield was six lakh rupees. Sombre chose a place called Sardhana—a few miles north of Meerut—as the seat of his authority.93 It was raised as a shadow power centre of the Mughals which had its own foundry and arsenal.94

From this time onwards Sombre’s army emerged as one of the most reliable forces in service of the Mughal Empire. When during the siege of Deig in January 1775 the entire army of Najaf Khan had fled in the face of sudden Jat attack, it was only Sombre who immediately reached to Najaf Khan’s rescue along with one battalion

and two guns. He dispersed the Jats through his accurate fires and saved Najaf Khan who had been giving a lone fight there after being deserted by his own troops.95

The decade of 1770s was a crucial phase as far as adoption of modern form of combat was concerned. There was a big spurt in native soldiers receiving training in it. Sombre whose career was at its apogee during this phase inducted many locals in his army and gave them training in handling firearms and artillery. Through such methods he increased the strength of his force to three battalions with 1000 soldiers each. Out of 3000 men he had, the Europeans were not more than 200. These Europeans did not form a separate contingent. They were either present in battalions imparting military skills to their fellow Indian soldiers or served in artillery as gunners. Monsieur Dieu who was present in Hindustan during this time along with Modave gave an even larger and elaborate figure for Sombre’s army. From his description of Sombre’s army we can deduce that his army had shaped up as a very strong force at this juncture. Writing about Sombre’s army, sometime in the year but definitely after January 1775, Dieu stated:

M. Sombre, ancien sergent des troupes de la compagnie était à la tête de 3500 hommes, composés de 101 européens, une vingtaine de Topas ou métis, trois bataillons de Cipahis armés de bon fusils à l’européenne, un bataillon de Barcandaz ou Caytoquiers, 300 hommes de cavalerie, une artillerie de 18 pièces de canon bien montés, des richesses assez considérables pour subvenir aux dépenses qu’un corps aussi nombreux devait entrainer.96

95 Jadunath Sarkar, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 84.
96 Monsieur Dieu, Précis du voyage du Mons. Dieu officier des vaisseaux de la Compagnie des Indes auprès de Shah Alam, Empeure Mogol, Fr. Nouv. Acqu., Départements des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, p. 190. Sombre, the former sergeant of the company, was at the command of 3500 men comprising 101 Europeans, about twenty Topas, three battalions of sepoys well-armed in
Sombre's artillery found rich appreciation from Polier also. In his letter dated 4th July 1776 he stated that Sombre did not have a large cavalry but possessed powerful artillery with 14 excellent cannons. During this period Sombre was at the apogee of his career. Apart from enjoying free hand in the principality of Sardhana, he had also been the governor of Agra for one year. But Sombre did not live long, and died in 1778. Despite his untimely death, Sombre had established Sardhana as one of the strongest military centres in Hindustan.

This was also the period when a large-scale influx of Europeans took place into the Delhi region. Most of them had migrated from Awadh where they had been employed by Shuja-ud-daula. After his death in January 1775, the French corps was disbanded by his successor Asaf-ud-daula under the English company pressure. As a result, all the French adventurers migrated to Delhi in search of employment. They all joined Madec as he had maintained the tradition of regular payment of his soldiers. It was in this exodus that the famous Modave along with Dieu and Moncelet also came to Delhi. Later, Modave and others were employed at a decent salary in the Mughal service on Madec's recommendation. Modave was given a salary of 2500 rupees per month. Besides, a provision of secretary and domestic help was also made for him whose salaries were fixed at 200 and 248 rupees respectively. Dieu was given 600

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European manner, a battalion of Barqandaz, a cavalry of 300, an artillery corps of 18 pieces of cannons in good form, along with enough riches sufficient to meet the expenses of such a large corps to maintain it. (My Translation)

97 There is an error in John Lall's work when he says that Sombre was made the governor of Agra by the Jats. Sombre was made the governor of Agra in 1777 when he was in the Mughal service. He was made the military and civil governor of Agra an appointment which was separate from the governor of the fort of Agra. Najaf Khan's nephew Mohammed Beg Hamdani was the governor of the fort of Agra. John Lall, op. cit., p. 41; Lester Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 56.

98 Comte de Modave, op. cit., pp. 205-207.
rupees per month and Moncelet’s appointment was fixed at a monthly income of 400 rupees.\textsuperscript{99}

By the end of third quarter of the eighteenth century the importance of maintaining Europeanized troops was fairly established. Apart from their utility on warfronts, they also began to be seen as potent instruments for multiple tasks, such as, maintaining law and order, establishing peace in the region or collecting land revenue, and most importantly to combat the rebels. Thus, they also emerged as the saviours of the Mughal Empire. Madec and Sombre’s appointment by the Mughals was mainly guided by this motive.

Polier’s services were however resorted to in a limited manner. He was not assigned any disturbed areas as his jagir. The Jagir of Khalilganj near Jalesar that was given to him in 1776 was a peaceful tract from where revenue could be realized easily without any show of force.\textsuperscript{100} In addition to it, his other jagir in pargana Khair in Koil district which he held since 1770 was also free from political turbulence. Thus, his task there had remained confined to collection of land revenue and its remittance to the state treasury.\textsuperscript{101} For instance, after collecting revenue from the pargana Khair he retained 55,000 rupees which was his salary and remitted rest of the amount to Delhi. Interestingly, it was Polier who took the initiative and sought the Emperor’s

\textsuperscript{99} Comte de Modave, ‘La Guerre des Jats, Madec et le Voyage d’Agra a Haidarabad’, in Comte de Modave, op. cit., p. 27.


\textsuperscript{101} Polier wrote that his job required him to administer the mahal properly, and collect revenue from the people of various strata in a judicious manner, Iqrarnama Submitted to the Mutsaddis of the Royal Daftar in Muzaffar Alam & Seema Alvi, op. cit., Folio No. 440a, p. 385.
permission to set up a foundry in the jagir for manufacturing flint guns. This suggests that although Polier was in the Mughal service, he did not enjoy much confidence of the Mughals. For it can be seen that while Sombre and Madec’s appointment was more in military nature, Polier was called for such services only in extreme circumstances. It might have been due to the fact that Polier was also connected with the English company which restricted the Mughals from relying too much on him.

Payment of salary on time was the chief attraction for soldiers during this period. The European adventurers always made sure that their troops were paid on time. Madec in particular was deeply concerned with the timely payment of salary to his soldiers. He mentioned that the usual mode adopted by native rulers to pay the hired detachments were either in advance or after the completion of campaign. He was surprised that even the hired soldiers did not show any disaffection for such a method. He said that as the European corps were habitual of being paid regularly, therefore, he made recruitment commensurate with his ability to pay them on time. Such a policy made him selective in his recruitment which also restricted the expansion of westernized forces beyond a certain point. Contrary to it, De Boigne as would be shown in the next chapter had full support and confidence of the authorities to raise as large an army as possible. Madec had said thus:

*Mais je ne pouvais pas me maintenir avec les miennes de cette manière, qui étaient habituées à être payées exactement, et comme ce prince ne retirait plus de secours de son pays, il ne voulait pas se dégarnir des espèces qui lui restaient dans la position où il se trouvait;*

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The growing number of European adventurers in north India created panic in the English company circles. The adventurers' presence there had been unnerving for the British right from the very time of Madec and Sombre; but their large-scale migration, particularly after the dissolution of *partis français* in Awadh, made them even more jittery. The British resorted to various machinations to have information on the activities of these adventurers. Political espionage was one such means chiefly utilized by them. Polier and Del Pedro's services were greatly used by the British to know the political dynamics of Hindustan.

The English anxiety grew to such a proportion over a period of time that it began to be manifested in their open disapproval of the adventurers' presence in the region. It led to intensification in their demands for the expulsion of these officers from Upper India. Besides, they also carried out political intrigues to destabilize the career of these professionals and have them out of influential circles. For instance, it was reported that the British pressurized Najaf Khan to expel the Frenchmen from his service. In order to achieve their ends, they had even castigated the French in the Mughal service as useless people and only a burden on the state exchequer. In a letter dated 13th June 1776, they specifically demanded from the Mughal authorities the

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103 *Mémoire de Madec*, 9368 (Microfilm), *op. cit.*, p. 42. Madec had said, "I cannot maintain my troops by following that method of payment (by that method Madec meant the practice of paying hired detachments or militia either in advance or after the campaign), for my troops were habitual of being paid regularly. As the Emperor did not get much support from his country, and did not want to give away the land he was in possession of, I found myself forced to send away many troopers of my contingent, and kept as many soldiers as I was in a position to support myself". (My Translation)
deportation of Madec, Sombre, and other French soldiers present in Upper India. Interestingly, they offered to replace the French troops by the English one.\textsuperscript{104}

Polier in early 1770s had advised Najaf Khan not to be on friendly terms with Madec. But when his demands went unheeded he warned Najaf Khan of the consequences of his proximity to Madec by saying that it would make Warren Hastings unhappy.\textsuperscript{105} Modave later reported that the British succeeded in their secret intrigues and were able to create rift between Madec and Najaf Khan which considerably damaged Madec’s reputation. The jagir of Bari and Bayana was taken from him under the allegation that he was unable to govern them and given to Sombre. Withdrawal of the jagir further strained the relations between the two.\textsuperscript{106}

The Company also stressed on Najaf Khan to dismiss other Frenchmen in his service. Middleton wrote to Hastings that despite the Company’s order, Najaf Khan dismissed only those who were not of much use to him. Middleton was more concerned with the presence of Daniel du Jarday who had become Najaf Khan’s confidant and was receiving a salary of 1000 rupees per month.\textsuperscript{107} This was also the phase when

\textsuperscript{104} Comte de Modave, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 414-415, 417, 419.

\textsuperscript{105} Polier wrote to Najaf Khan, “Further, the day I met you in Akbarabad (Agra) we also talked about Madec. I hope you remember what I told you about him. Now I learn that you have developed a relation with him, and have also obtained a jagir for him. This is contrary to what we discussed the other day. Since I am your friend I should warn you that if sahib-I Kalan (Warren Hastings) hears about it he will be very unhappy”. Letter by Polier to Najaf Khan, in Muzaffar Alam & Seema Alvi, \textit{The Persian Letters of Polier—the Ijaz-i Arsalani}, p. 214.

\textsuperscript{106} It reached to open bickering between the two to such an extent that Madec even went straight up to Najaf Khan and reproached him loudly. Comte de Modave, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 417-418.

\textsuperscript{107} Muzaffar Alam and Seema Alvi, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 20. In the light of available evidence, Bidwell’s sweeping generalization that the English did not attach much importance to the Frenchmen present in north India becomes untenable. In fact, the English always tried to look for loopholes to make entry into north Indian politics and influence the ruler’s decision in their interests. For instance, when confusion prevailed in the Mughal Empire after the death of Afrasiyab Khan, the Mir Bakshi, on 4th
Madec's role as intermediary of Shah Alam and Chevalier had become crucial. He had begun working on Chevalier’s diplomatic project which was to effect an umbrella alliance between the Mughals, Marathas, and the French to strengthen the Mughal Empire and drive the English out of Bengal whenever the opportune time came. Madec’s role and Chevalier’s diplomatic projects has been elaborately discussed in one of the subsequent chapters. Suffice is it to say that the English company’s interference in north Indian politics during this phase was centred on expulsion or surrender of Frenchmen from there.

The strained relations with Najaf Khan was an important factor that led Madec leave the Mughal service. In October 1776 he left the Mughals and came back to Bari. Najaf Khan sent orders to Mohammed Beg Hamdani to be watchful lest Madec should join the rebels. Hamdani marched with his detachment to the outskirts of Bari where Madec had set up his camp. Fearing that the detachment was sent to arrest him, Madec moved with his troops to the territory of Rana of Gohad where he took up service. Madec stayed there for another seven months, and after that, he sold his arms, ammunition and artillery to the Rana and set out on his journey to Pondicherry. He left Hindustan in January 1777 and reached Pondicherry on 14th February 1778.

November 1784, the English grew interested in the Mughal politics. Major Browne, who was familiar with the north Indian politics, was desperately working during this time to revive Warren Hastings’ abandoned plan of turning the Emperor into a puppet of the English and governing the empire through some Muslim noble who would be under the control of the British Resident at the capital. Jadunath Sarkar, _op. cit._, Vol. III, p. 199; Shelford Bidwell, _op. cit._, p. 14.

108 Comte de Modave, _op.cit._, pp. 446. 453.
Madec stayed in Pondichery nearly for one year before leaving for France in January 1779.\footnote{Lettre by Madec (undated), Fr. Nouv. Acqu., Départements des Manuscrits, 9368 (Microfilm), BN, Paris, p. 117.}

The departure of Madec from Hindustan in 1777 and the death of Sombre in 1778 brought disruption in the process of military transition. This disruption however remained only temporary as Begum Sombre, the famous wife of General Sombre, soon took charge of her husband’s forces and provided continuity to the process. Later, the arrival of De Boigne on the scene not only led to expansion in the Europeanized force but also brought complete transformation in it.

1.8 Begum Sombre: The Tradition Continued

After the death of Sombre, his wife more famously known as Begum Sombre\footnote{Begum’s real name was Farzana. Born in 1751, She was a woman of decent ancestry but misfortune brought her to a kotha of Chauri Bazar in Delhi. She was spotted by General Sombre in a mehfil at the haveli of a noble where she had come to perform. Enamoured by her beauty, General Sombre bought her and later married her. She was also given the title of ‘Zeb-un-nissa’ by the Mughal Emperor for saving his life through her daring act. John Lall, op. cit., p. 20; Lester Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 50-51; W. H. Sleeman, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 273.} or Samru took control of her husband’s contingent. She not only brought the corps under her leadership but also augmented its strength. With the help of Col. Saleur who was earlier in Sombre’s army she raised the infantry corps from 3 to 6 battalions and supplemented it with a cavalry detachment. Apart from working on her artillery, she also developed an effective cavalry force. Victor Jacquement who visited the region in
the late 1820s noted that not only Begum Sombre’s artillery but her cavalry force was also the best in Hindustan.\textsuperscript{111}

The corps under Begum’s leadership also made great contribution in military operations of the Mughals. For instance, at the time of siege of Kanud fort in November 1779 which was under the ruler Balwant Singh, Najaf Quli Khan, one of the nobles of Najaf Khan, found great assistance in Begum’s detachments. Najaf Quli Khan was finally able to capture the fort in February 1780 with the help of Begum’s military units.\textsuperscript{112}

Like her husband, Begum Sombre also remained a faithful ally of the Emperor. She had become the most trusted ally of the Empire. She even spurned many lucrative offers of the rivals of the Mughals. For instance, in 1787, Ghulam Qadir Rohela, who had rebelled against the Mughals, sought Begum’s support against the Mughals, offering her in return an equal share in the administration of the Mughal state. Begum Sombre flatly refused to side with Ghulam Qadir Rohela and declared that she would remain loyal to the Emperor, and would even sacrifice her life for His Majesty’s cause.\textsuperscript{113}

Begum Sombre’s detachments were engaged not only for maintaining law and order but were also utilized to combat the rebel forces. In 1788 when the Emperor was attacked by his rebellious nobles Najaf Quli Khan and his general Mansoor Khan on his way back to Delhi from Rajputana, it was her corps that provided security and safety to the Emperor. In 1788, Najaf Quli Khan and Mansoor Khan had attacked the


\textsuperscript{112} Jadunath Sarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. III, pp. 139-140.

\textsuperscript{113} William Francklin, \textit{op. cit.}, p.152.
Mughal army at Gokulgarh, two miles north of Rewari, on the Rajputana-Delhi route. The rebels had nearly defeated the Emperor had the Begum not reached in the nick of time. She had been camping in the vicinity then and immediately came at the command of her hundred best soldiers and a 6-pounder gun. The timely arrival of Begum along with her selected soldiers turned the table on the rebel nobles. Although small in strength, the trained soldiers’ well-directed charge of grape-shots on the rebels along with volleys of fire from small arms as they came closer had a disastrous effect on them. Soon the rebels began to lose ground and took to flight. The Emperor Shah Alam praised Begum Sombre for her gallantry and her troops for their military skills. The Emperor clothed her with a magnificent robe and honoured her with the appellation of ‘his most beloved daughter’. Later, it was only through her influence that a truce was effected between the Emperor and Najaf Quli Khan on 19th March 1788.

Begum Sombre was a woman of astute political acumen and remarkable political stature. She wielded influence not only in Delhi politics and in its surroundings, but like her husband, had a considerable say in Sikh politics also. The level of her depth in Sikh politics also became evident from the English company officer Robert Stuart’s episode. The problem started when in 1790, Bhanga Singh, the ruler of Thanesar, captured Lt. Col. Robert Stuart of English company from Anupshahr in one of his raids into Doab. Robert Stuart was brought to Thanesar and imprisoned in the fort. Afterwards, Bhanga Singh demanded ransom from Lord Cornwallis. The Governor-

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116 This quality of Begum was also attested by Victor de Saint-Génis in his writings. Victor de Saint-Génis, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.
General who refused to pay ransom wrote a friendly and flattering letter to the Sikh chief attempting to lure him by proposing to buy horses from the Punjab through him. Responding to this proposal, Bhanga Singh made it clear to the Nawab of Awadh who was also trying to free Robert Stuart that he would not leave the Englishman without a ransom. The Nawab of Awadh then suggested that the zamindars in the neighbourhood should be bribed to get the Colonel released when Bhanga Singh was away to the hills. When all the overtures of the Nawab failed, he approached Begam Sombre. Begum Sombre went to Thanesar and offered Bhanga Singh 20,000 rupees for releasing Robert Stuart, but Bhanga Singh demanded 1 lakh rupees. Finally, Begam Sombre settled it for 60,000 rupees and thus Robert Stuart was released. Afterwards, Begam Sombre took Robert Stuart to Delhi where he offered a nazr of 11 gold mohurs to the Emperor. The Emperor welcomed him and gave him robes of honour.\footnote{This event was significant as being the representative of the Mughal power she had raised the prestige of the Mughals by managing the release of Robert Stuart.}

Begum remained loyal to the Emperor till the end. However, after 1803 the political equation in Delhi had changed. After the defeat of the Mughals and the capture of Delhi by the British in 1803, the Emperor became a pensioner. The accomplishment of Begum amid such turmoils was that she managed to keep her territory exempted from the British jurisdiction, and ruled it successfully until her death in 1836.

In the post-Madec and Sombre phase when there was relative shortage of European professionals, the Indian military generals themselves attempted to the raising of corps on European lines indicating that native military officers had begun adopting new warfare system. As we have earlier seen, Mirza Najaf Khan showed particular interest\footnote{H. R. Gupta, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. IV, pp. 96-99.}...
in this regard. He engaged a famous Indian military expert Shaikh Kabir to raise battalions trained in European manner. Besides, he also tried to procure new and better guns cast by the famous expert of that time Monsieur Le Vassoult.\footnote{The daily newsletters of the time of Najaf Khan's regency which lasted from 9th November 1779 until his death on 6th April 1782 provide information on this matter. Jadunath Sarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. III, pp. 137-138.}

Apart from Begum Sombre, Sangster was another military adventurer who filled the military void created after Sombre and Madec. He was in the service of Rana of Gohad commanding one thousand well-disciplined soldiers and an artillery wing. Later he took up service under De Boigne and was made director of the foundry at Agra.\footnote{James Grant Duff, \textit{A History of the Mahrattas}, 3 Vols., Calcutta, 1912, Vol. II, p. 478.} Thus, there was no halt in the militarization process even after Madec and Sombre, and the continuum in the process was maintained.

The foregoing study establishes that the superiority of western military science had begun to be widely recognized and in some instances the ruling authorities even began making their own arrangements for imparting training to their troops in European methods of warfare. It can also be seen that the mobility of the European adventurers to the interior of Hindustan was more due to the politico-military pressured exerted by the English company on Indian states than due to their own choice. In fact, on some occasions even the rulers suggested these adventurers to take up employment in upper India. The suggestions given by the Nawab of Awadh Shuja-ud-daula to Madec is relevant in this regard. The changes introduced in the military wings of the Jat and the Mughal states were the most recognizable impact of the adventurers' presence during this period. In addition to it, the growth of military towns and the European-led principalities under these personalities were other significant changes in the
militaryscape of the region. The adventurers' presence also led to the increased intervention of the English company in internal politics of the states. The souring of relations between Madec and Najaf Khan was the result of the English company's machinations which even led Madec to leave the Mughal service.

The process of militarization of Indian armed forces, however, reached its culmination in the last decade of the century and the early years of the nineteenth century when under De Boigne and Perron complete transformation was effected in it. De Boigne's period was characterized by the constitution of full-fledged Europeanized brigades which were trained in the latest military technology and were armed with the latest weapons.