CHAPTER

4

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Eastern emporium and company town: trade and society in eighteenth-century Makassar*

Eighteenth-century Makassar (nowadays Ujung Pandang) was a hybrid town, created by the forcible grafting of a Dutch outpost upon an Indonesian port. But despite its position on the edge of Asia and its relatively small population it was no backwater. Makassar's economy was geared to the rhythms of world trade, its government was constantly striving to reconcile distant priorities with local realities, while social life reflected the tension and energy of a multi-ethnic settlement. Makassar was a place with far horizons; its influence and fortunes fluctuated with commercial tides, and most of its inhabitants were fed, directly or indirectly, by the flow of goods through its harbour or by the labour of its merchants and sailors. Neither the historical development of the town, nor the social structure and life of its population, can be understood unless its commercial basis is appreciated.

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This chapter is, therefore, built up of three parts. First, a broad overview is given of the position of Makassar within the trading network of its region and beyond, in which its location on the southwesterly point of Sulawesi (Celebes) constituted the crucial factor. In order to understand the interest of the VOC in Makassar it is necessary to trace the town's rise to pre-eminence in the era before Dutch domination. The second part deals with the administrative policy of the VOC, its attempt to reshape Makassar and make it an effective instrument for the pursuit of its regional objectives — a policy dictated by the overall interests of the Company, but inevitably influenced by its inability to achieve full control over the surroundings of Makassar. Indeed, there was a large gap between the 'Company Town' as envisaged by Speelman and the social reality of Makassar described in the third part of the chapter. It is here that the continuities of the era before and after the arrival of the Dutch show most clearly, as the complexity of Makassar's population structure and the relations between its various ethnic and social groups reflected the inability of the VOC to totally transform regional trading networks. In consequence, Makassar remained an integral part of, rather than an alien intrusion in, the many-layered world of its region which, after all, was its *raison d'être*.

The trading world of Makassar

From its very beginning the development of Makassar has been inseparably linked with the seaborne trade of island Southeast Asia. It lies on the southwest peninsula of Sulawesi, within easy reach of the busy sealanes of eastern Indonesia. Makassar's appeal for traders lay in a combination of natural and political endowments. The anchorage was protected by the many small islands off the coast, while the beach ridges provided an admirably dry site for settlement. Fresh water was readily available, and fertile plains to the north and south were suitable for intensive rice cultivation. Javanese traders had probably been visiting the area for several hundred years before 1500, while Malays from the west began frequenting the waters in the later fifteenth century, perhaps following in the wake of Bajau or sea-nomads. The possibilities of the site were more fully exploited when, in the sixteenth century, the Makassarese-speaking rulers of the young state of Gowa added protection, freedom for foreign merchants and an orderly harbour administration to the port's attractions. These local circumstances, combined with the flourishing trade of the sixteenth century, proved most effective. Indeed, the rise of Makassar has been called 'one of the most rapid and spectacular success stories that Indonesian history affords'.[1]

The development of Makassar followed the established pattern of rising Southeast Asian entrepot states, in the tradition of Srivijaya and the great fifteenth-century Straits emporium of Malay Melaka. Although the classic distinction between Indonesian 'inland agrarian' and 'coastal maritime' centres

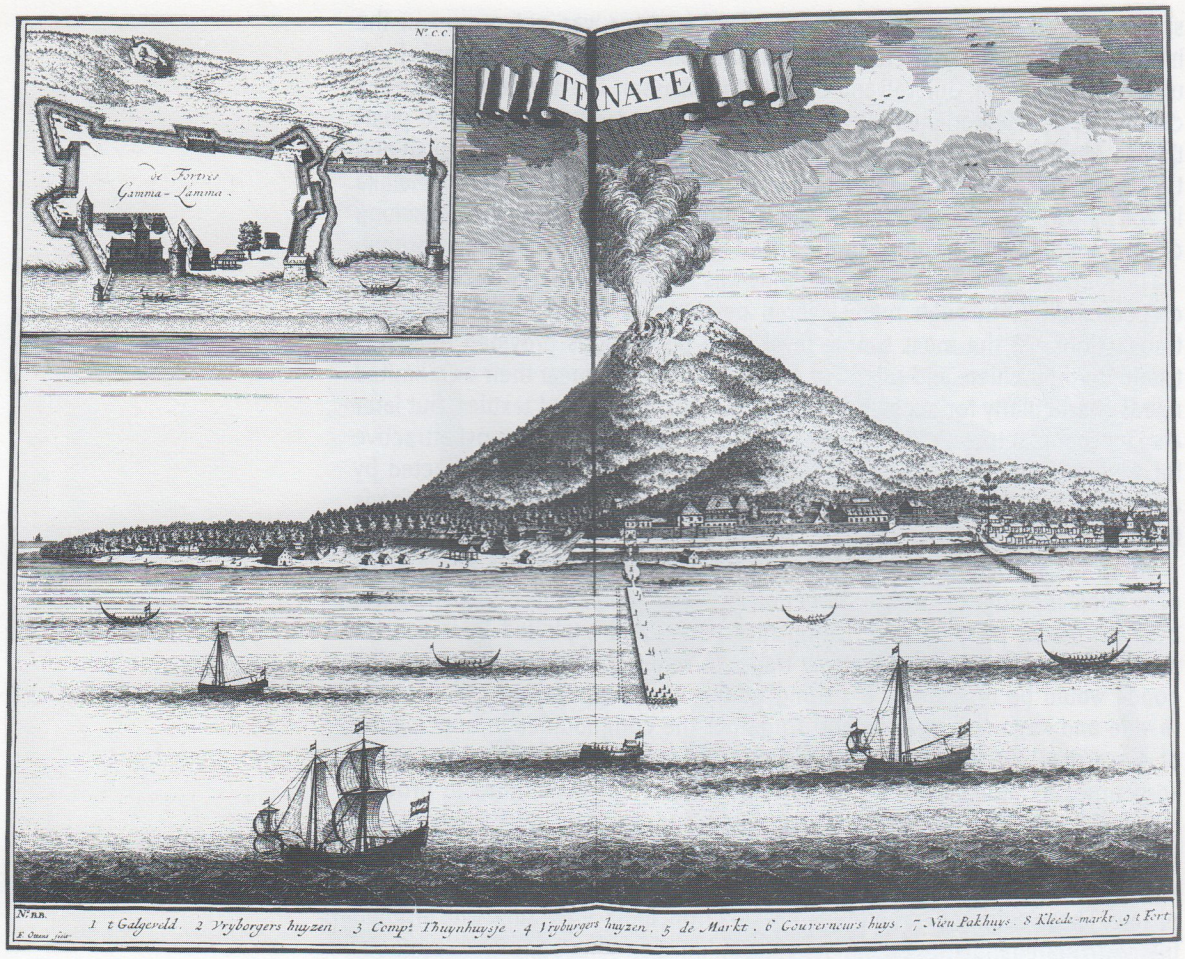
Map 7 *Makassar and its trading world, c.1750*

has been modified by recent recognition of the complex interplay between ports and hinterlands, the image of a harbour principality whose primary source of wealth was trade is still valid for towns like Makassar, and the role of long-distance commerce in early state formation is an important theme in recent research.[2] In this essay, however, we are less concerned with typologies or theories than with the social organisation of one specific town, Makassar, during one particular period of its history, when it was under the control of the Dutch United East India Company (VOC). However, continuities with the preceding state of Gowa run through the history of 'Dutch' Makassar, and can be traced in the economy, morphology and society of the settlement. The Gowan 'port' was the centre of the 'kingdom of the Makassara', and was usually given the name of its inhabitants. But Makassar was actually a cluster of villages sprawling along the beach, densely settled close to the sea and thinning out on the landward side, blending into the agrarian hinterland. The town focused upon the sheltered anchorage, which was protected by a complex of defence works. The most notable were the three forts of Ujung Pandang in the north, the central Somba Opu, between the mouths of the Jeneberang river, and Pankkukang to the south.[3] The heart of the kingdom, and hence of the settlement, was Somba Opu, whose brick walls are said to have been credited with attracting many foreign merchants to the town.

Somba Opu at its zenith is beautifully presented in a 1638 pictorial groundplan from the secret atlas of the VOC. The fort was the focus, facing west out to sea, with boat-filled streams on either side. Its walls enclosed two large palaces on piles, where the king lived, as well as the royal warehouses, a mosque and various fenced compounds each containing a number of houses. Close against the northern wall were the quarters of the foreign merchants: two blocks of Portuguese, one of Gujeratis. Adjoining them, but on the other side of the stream, was the 'large Bazaar or market', and to the north again was a large area of village housing and compounds, where not only Makassarese but also 'other nations' lived. (The 'kampung China' is not shown; there was one in Makassar at that time, but perhaps Chinese merchants were not very much in evidence, as turmoil in China was affecting overseas trade.) To the south, between the fort and another mouth of the Jeneberang, was the 'new bazaar' and houses, and all around were gardens and rice land.

Although Makassar was established as a major port under indigenous rule, its rise was nonetheless closely related to political and economic changes linked to European intervention. The Portuguese defeat of Melaka in 1511 had opened the way for a realignment of trading patterns. The dynamic ruler of Gowa seized this opportunity to build his capital into a strong regional trading centre, making full use of the knowledge and skills of both refugee Malays and Portuguese merchants.

Makassar maintained close ties with neighbours such as Maluku (the Moluccan 'spice islands'), Nusa Tenggara (the Lesser Sundas), Java and Kalimantan (Borneo). A vigorous trade developed between Makassar and Maluku, as rice (from South Sulawesi) and cloth (local and imported) were exchanged for



Ternate, one of the former major Sultanates of eastern Indonesia. From **Francois Valentin** *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indien Dordrecht, 1724-26. Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.*

spices, above all cloves, nutmeg and mace (pepper was not grown on the islands). The spices attracted Malays from Johor, Pahang and Patani, Portuguese and Spanish, Gujerati and Chinese to Makassar. The northern Europeans came too; the Netherlands intermittently maintained a factory (trading post) there from the early seventeenth century, followed closely by the English and the Danes. Makassar received another boost when the Dutch conquest of Melaka in 1641 produced further refugees, and it continued to profit from the weakening of earlier indigenous trading powers based in Ternate/Tidore, Java and Brunei.

The foundation of Makassar's economy was regional trade, the accumulation of commodities through many-layered networks of political and economic transactions. At the most simple level local populations provided goods as tribute to their chiefs and rulers, or exchanged them to meet their own limited needs (particularly for such commodities as salt, metals and textiles, but later also for manufactures, coins, opium and guns). Spices were the most attractive for traders from afar, but slaves, sea and forest products were collected by apparently isolated peoples, who nonetheless thus supplied and obtained goods from the international market.

These deceptively simple deals fed into wider systems, with a whole scale of possible methods of linkage. Sometimes coastal populations formed a barrier between inland peoples and visiting merchants, and exploited their contact position to profit from the two-way trade. In more specialised situations the goods would be brought to a visiting trader, who might have local contacts (a wife and kinsmen, or an agent) to gather the commodities in anticipation of his arrival. Or merchants might settle for months on favourable coasts, sometimes as individuals within existing villages, but sometimes in groups, forming seasonal settlements which filled and emptied according to the monsoon regulation of trade. On a still more sophisticated level, the products were carried to town-based merchants who bulked them together for transport or sale. These commodities attracted buyers from India and China, who brought their own merchandise to exchange, while Indonesian spices and Chinese goods proved irresistible to European traders.

In the 1590s the first Dutch fleets had made profits of up to 400 percent on their cargoes of spices, but competition threatened prices and profits, so in 1602 the United East India Company or VOC was founded to protect the principle of buying cheap and selling dear. With the Company's sphere of interest, which extended from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan, it pursued its advantage as best it could, by free trade in competition with others if forced, but preferably via exclusive contracts with native rulers, or in a few instances, by establishing first political control, and then commercial monopoly.[4] In Indonesia, the most important areas under direct VOC rule were the Asian headquarters of Batavia (est. 1619) in West Java, and (since c.1660) all the spice islands of the Moluccas.

During the seventeenth century Gowa's bustling port and political influence were the major obstacles to effective Dutch enforcement of their spice monopoly in the Moluccas. Gowa's refusal to act against what it considered to be legitimate

'An Ambonese soldier': the exotic ferocity of the peoples of eastern Indonesia. From Hendrik Nieuhof *Joan Nieuhofs Gedenkwaerdighe Zee-en Lant-reize door de voornaemste Landschappen van West en Oostindien* Amsterdam, 1682. *Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.*

commerce made Dutch intervention inevitable: the leak from the spice islands had to be sealed, political defiance in such a strategic region could not be tolerated. The Dutch found an ally in an exiled prince from South Sulawesi, whose kingdom of Bugis speakers had been defeated by their Makassarese neighbour, Gowa. In 1667 an alliance of VOC and Buginese forces under Cornelis Speelman succeeded, after a bitter war, in imposing the Treaty of Bungaya which established the Netherlands commercial and military hegemony.[5]

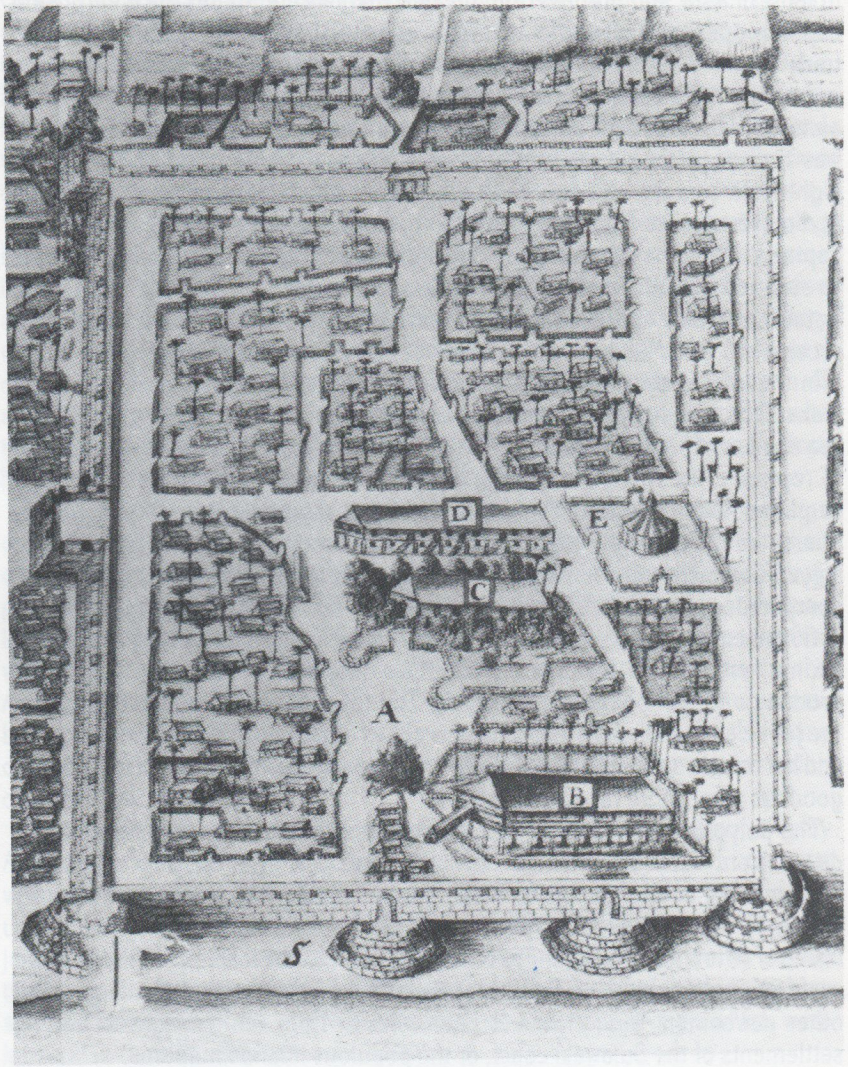
According to the terms of the Treaty, Gowa's main fortifications were to be destroyed, except for 'the northern fort Jumpandang'. Taking the name of his birthplace, Speelman called the restored Ujung Pandang 'Kasteel Rotterdam', and just as the more southerly Somba Opu had formed the nucleus for Gowa's Makassar, so eighteenth-century Makassar was focused upon the Dutch East India Company's castle.

Commercial interests had brought the Dutch to Makassar, and in this they were not alone. Like Somba Opu before it, eighteenth-century Makassar soon emerged as a motley town, populated by merchants and seafarers from all over Asia. For trade is not simply a movement of goods, it is also a social activity, linking individuals and communities in interlocking commercial networks. In the time before legal and political institutions could provide channels for the transfer of credit and protection for merchants, the most common underlying fabric for long-distance trade was provided by ethnic and generously defined kinship ties. Traders were members of scattered communities, where social ties reinforced economic links, and vice versa.[6]

The population of a trade-based town can never be understood in isolation. By definition, such a settlement is only part of a system or, more precisely, of various systems. In many cases Makassar's inhabitants could look across the seas to distant homelands and to related groups in other ports, for the trading beaches of Southeast Asia were home to a floating population of traders and sailors. More established merchants—Chinese, Malays, Indians, Bugis and Makassarese—were all members of wider diasporae, their peoples scattered over the seas, drawn by the chance of profit or driven by political crisis to settle in alien harbours.

Private European captains also followed this itinerant pattern, as they sought to exploit an economic niche between the great Companies (VOC and English East Indian) and the well-informed, low cost Asian networks. The British 'country traders' operating out of Indian ports were too successful for the Dutch; during the eighteenth century they pushed their way into all corners of the archipelago, exchanging textiles, opium and guns for the eastern exotica so desired by tea-rich China. While such vessels sought direct contact with producing areas, they also could rendezvous with local traders seeking attractive alternatives to the Dutch harbours, so bypassing both VOC monopolies and local taxes. The Company, having thus lost income to its arch rivals, redoubled its efforts to forcibly channel trade through approved ports under its own control.

From the 1670s the English East India Company had permitted private trade



Somba Opu Fort, Makassar, eastern Indonesia (c. 1638). The focus of pre-Dutch Makassar, and one of the forts destroyed by Speelman.
VOC, Geheime Atlas, Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague.

in most of Asia, and profited from the new markets and routes the enterprising captains opened. But the VOC clung to its belief that if they could only contain trade within a straitjacket of their own design, then riches would flow once more into their coffers. Their hostility to the British, however, was political as much as it was economic; of far more immediate commercial importance was the recalcitrance of the Chinese. Trade with China boomed during the eighteenth century, and despite Dutch efforts (which included a failed attempt at direct trade with Canton, 1717-45), it proved impossible to bypass the junk captains. The best the Company could do was to try and force them to come to selected VOC ports. Free junk trade was banned in 1753, and apart from Batavia, the only approved harbours were Banjarmasin, which was allowed to receive two, and Makassar with a quota of only one vessel per year.[7]

In the later eighteenth century the arrival of the junk was the high point of Makassar's trading year. Before it came collectors sailed out to gather their sea and forest produce; local and Batavia Chinese formed *kongsi* (associations) to represent the Amoy merchants, while the chains of transactions necessary to gather together the outward cargo, and to distribute the inborne goods, guaranteed a welcome commercial stimulus. Moreover, the annual junk usually stayed several months in port (February to June for example), and it was huge compared to local craft. Chinese overseas junks could easily measure 400 *lasten* or 800 tons, carrying a crew of more than a hundred sailors as well as passengers. So not only traders benefited, but all the suppliers of services, from food-producers to gambling-den managers. The town was alive with activity when the junk came, but when the Chinese went to other ports, Makassar was quiet, and her traders sailed out to exchange their trepang and tortoiseshell for Chinese goods at some more favoured harbour.

The polyglot inhabitants of Makassar were mostly immigrants. Some came direct from their homelands, but others arrived after staying in trading settlements elsewhere in the archipelago, and no doubt were merely temporary residents. Many were far from their place of origin, so their cultural and social frame of reference could come to be defined more by the towns and the scattered seafaring communities of Southeast Asia than by their ancestral villages. But other newcomers were closer to home, drawn from the fishing and trading settlements of the Sulawesi coast, or the populous inland kingdoms.

The main inhabitants of the peninsula were the Makassarese and Buginese, who were organised in a number of states; further north were the coastal Mandar and the Toraja of the interior. By the seventeenth century the basic pattern of Sulawesi politics was already clear: a constant jockeying for position between fluctuating alliances of warring states. The competition between Makassarese Gowa in the west and the Buginese kingdom of Bone in the east was central, as each struggled to establish its hegemony over smaller states, such as Soppeng or Wajo'. If for the Dutch the primary motivation for their seventeenth-century wars with the Makassarese was to protect their interests in the spice islands, for their eventual allies, the chief Buginese state of Bone, cooperation with the VOC was simply a logical step in their long-drawn-out struggle against

Gowa. This constant strife between states did not stop with the establishment of Dutch Makassar. Although Gowa was no longer a force to be reckoned with, the great trading state of Wajo' was a serious threat to Makassar and Bone in the middle of the eighteenth century. Even in the areas ceded to the Company by the Treaty of Bungaya, such as the fertile Northern Districts, VOC control was often nominal, limited to a shaky garrison presence and the collection of a tithe on the rice crop.

The Dutch establishment in Makassar looked seawards, towards the shipping lanes; its only real interests in the peninsula were coastal trade and, of more importance, the rice of Maros in the north and Takalar to the south. These areas, probably opened for large-scale production during the sixteenth-century rise of Gowa, had long attracted ships seeking rice as a cargo for the Moluccas, or as provisions. After the defeat of Gowa the Dutch repeated the pattern of allocating the fertile plains to allies, who used slaves and followers to cultivate the land. These local Karaengs or lords paid the Dutch a part of the rice crop, but were free of any effective political control.[8]

In fact, the VOC could never completely dominate Makassar's surroundings or the trade of the region. For much of the eighteenth century it was an embattled outpost, helplessly watching the decline of Company trade, while anxiously placating mighty Bone and fighting to defend itself and its allies from ambitious local powers such as Wajo'. Even in their central task, the campaigns against violation of the trade monopolies, Dutch success was limited. Eliminating the Asian spice traders was relatively easy, given the restricted production areas, but for more generally available goods it was a different story, as the many creeks and beaches offered ample opportunity for private commerce, which only the VOC saw as illicit.

The Company's attempts to eliminate competition were resisted not only by Asian traders, but also by the *vrijburgers*, the retired or locally born Europeans who were allowed to settle in Company towns. A more powerful, if largely hidden, undermining of the monopolies came from the officials themselves. They had joined the VOC to become wealthy, and did not expect to do so by saving their salaries. Private trade and the abuse of office were the roads to riches, and much Company time and influence was used to arrange deals which were inimical to the VOC interest.

Of all Makassar's entrepreneurs it was probably the burgher merchants who suffered most from the VOC's heavy-handed attempts at mercantile management. Although free trade within Asia by burghers had been encouraged by J. P. Coen in the early 1620s, and was again promoted by Governor-General G. W. baron van Imhoff (1743-1750), it was usually seen as against the Company's interest and heavily restricted. Private traders were limited to secondary commerce which fed the VOC network, or to areas where the Company could not compete, or to low-profit activity. The governor and council in Makassar intermittently remonstrated with Batavia on behalf of local traders. They argued that a potentially flourishing economy was being squeezed to death by Company regulations and the regular closing of profitable routes to private

merchants. Even when a given commodity could be legally traded, greater profits could often be earned in the more flexible irregular circuits. The private slave trade, for example, provided burghers with a good income. But even so, many slave traders preferred to deal illicitly, as their slaves were 'stolen' people who lacked the papers necessary for sale through approved channels.[9]

Although Makassar was an outpost, near the geographical limits of Dutch power, it had great strategic value for the VOC. It was the base for the cruising sloops and fast native-rigged *pancallang* which lay in wait for 'smugglers'; it was the diplomatic and military centre for the delicate negotiations necessary to protect Company interests in the polycentric world of East Indonesia. The town was very much part of all that world, and remained sensitive to all economic and political shifts, even if each community may have registered them slightly differently. For although Castle Rotterdam dominated the Makassar landscape, and other settlements clustered around the bastions, it would be a serious misperception simply to see eighteenth-century Makassar as a Dutch colonial town.

The VOC establishment provided security and a major source of income for the town dwellers: traders, merchants, artisans, sailors, fishermen, gardeners, market pedlars, brothel and toddy-shop keepers. This other Makassar was a multi-ethnic settlement with prosperous mestizo, Chinese and Malay elites doing business and politics with each other, with Buginese and Makassarese merchants, and with VOC employees (in their private capacities). To varying degrees the different groups were self-regulating, to some extent in symbiosis with the VOC, but in many respects going their own way. This patchwork of communities—separate yet in constant interaction—constituted the fabric of Makassar. Before we can understand this social reality, however, it is necessary to discuss VOC administrative policy; as will be seen, there was a considerable gap between theory and practice.

The company town

By the end of the seventeenth century it was clear that the Dutch, unlike the Portuguese, had decided that their settlements in the east should be based on ethnic separation rather than assimilation. But attempts at colonisation by European couples failed—settlers were squeezed between the monopolistic Company and Asian traders and farmers, so no feasible basis for an autonomous white community existed. Such small groups could not survive in isolation, and despite official barriers mixing occurred. In the absence of European women, men sought their wives and concubines among the mestizas, local women and slaves. As Boxer comments: 'Batavia, and in varying degrees the other Dutch settlements in Asia, thus presented the curious spectacle of a Dutch calvinist male society wedded uneasily with a large Indo-Portuguese female society.'[10]

While the general pattern of life in Makassar was similar to that of the VOC

capital (and most of her institutions and laws were Batavia-derived), nonetheless there were also important differences. Makassar was simply an outpost in the Company's empire, albeit an important one. It had less than a quarter as many VOC employees as Batavia,[11] so it was harder to maintain clear boundaries and Dutch values. Accommodation to local ways led to ambiguities and deviations. Indeed, trying to write an account of the town is accompanied by a sense that reality is elusive: each attempt to focus upon the structure blurs the picture; each effort to pin down categories makes them shift.[12] Speelman's ideas concerning the proper form and development of Dutch Makassar are outlined in his invaluable Memorandum, written in 1669-1670. He decreed that the new town should consist of a well-fortified castle; *kampung* or 'native villages' with 'each nation under its own headman'; and 'a merchant town with the houses of foreigners and strangers'.[13] These three elements—castle, town and kampung—had been typical also of Somba Opu and many archipelago ports, and were to dominate the morphology of Makassar for almost 200 years. In the early eighteenth century Francois Valentijn described the merchant settlement as follows: 'The city is just a small market town (*vlek*) that is also called the Negory Vlaardingen, with only one large unpaved street, I think the Chinese street, and two or three smaller ones where the Dutch burghers, some Chinese under their captain, and some Makassarese and other natives live, and which can be closed and guarded by the Chinese and Burgher watch.'[14]

This walled settlement of Vlaardingen lay just north of the castle and south of the Kampung Melayu or Malay quarter; the beach lay to the west, while east were open fields and, along the High Path, the Company Garden. Close to the southern wall of the castle a further settlement grew in the early years of the eighteenth century, the new village or Kampung Baru, where the number of company subjects—natives, Christian Mardijkers (free Asians, often of slave origin) and burghers—almost equalled that of Vlaardingen. While the Company officials and garrison lived within the castle, some had houses in the burgher settlements, where they stayed with their family, slaves and retainers. Thus the basic pattern of fortified politico-military indigenous housing which typified so many early Asian cities repeated itself in Dutch Makassar. Each of these areas was clearly defined: the castle had its great stone walls, redoubts and gates, while Vlaardingen was surrounded by a more modest stockade. In both Vlaardingen and the *kampung* most people lived in fenced compounds containing several houses. In 1679 the VOC complained that a fire in Vlaardingen had burnt out some eighty houses, including the compound of Ince Buang and his family. This was a cluster of four large houses and assorted shacks where his followers, slaves and debtbondsmen lived—'all sorts of riffraff' (*een hoopen gespuys van volck*). A later source suggests about eight houses per compound and an average of eight people per house for the Malay quarter. In general, the Dutch preferred to segregate the various ethnic groups: hence, after the fire the 'Moor' (Indian Muslim) Ince Buang was moved from Vlaardingen 'to the Moorish quarter on the beach by the Bugis section', where his commercial coconut oil preparation promptly generated a new fire burning down much

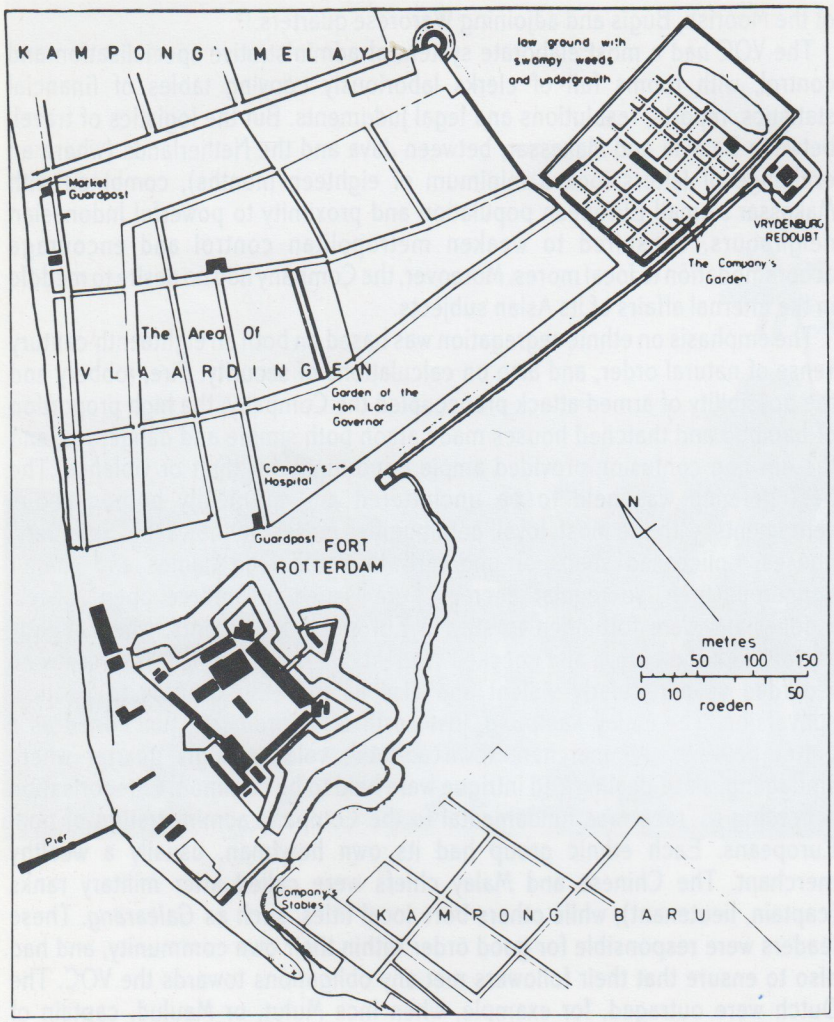
Kampung Melayu, Makassar, east Indonesia, c. 1840. It is typical of separate settlements which form Indonesian port cities in the eigh and nineteenth centuries.
P. van de Velde, *Gezigte uit Neê Indie, Amsterdam, Buffa 1845, K Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden.*

of the Moorish, Bugis and adjoining Warorese quarters.[15]

The VOC had a most elaborate system of administrative specialisation and control, with rooms full of clerks laboriously copying tables of financial statistics, reports, resolutions and legal judgments. But the logistics of travel, between Batavia and Makassar, between Java and the Netherlands (where an exchange of letters took a minimum of eighteen months), combined with Makassar's small European population and proximity to powerful Indonesian neighbours, conspired to weaken metropolitan control and encourage accommodation to local mores. Moreover, the Company had no desire to meddle in the internal affairs of its Asian subjects.

The emphasis on ethnic segregation was based on both an eighteenth-century sense of natural order, and also on calculations of security. Fire, robbery and the possibility of armed attack preoccupied the Company; the high proportion of bamboo and thatched houses made arson both simple and dangerous, and the ensuing confusion provided ample opportunity for theft or violence. The best defence was held to be uncluttered and ethnically homogeneous settlements, with the most 'loyal' communities closest to the castle. Squatters' houses, unlicensed sheds or undergrowth could feed flames and shelter dangerous men, so regular decrees were issued to enforce open spaces. Indonesians were forbidden to stay in European settlements, where nightly patrols kept the curfew and checked credentials. Bugis and Makassarese were regarded as particularly violent and also as more susceptible to political subversion. The Malay *kampung*, just north of Vlaardingen, functioned as a buffer between the merchant town and the volatile Bugis quarter where smuggling, slave-dealing and intrigue were held to be common. Categorisation according to 'race' was fundamental to the Company administration of non-Europeans. Each ethnic group had its own headman, usually a wealthy merchant. The Chinese and Malay chiefs were called after military ranks (captain, lieutenant), while others bore local titles, such as *Galearang*. These leaders were responsible for good order within their own community, and had also to ensure that their followers met any obligations towards the VOC. The Dutch were outraged, for example, when Ince Mulut, or Maulud, captain of the Malays (1724-1728), refused to intervene to protect some Netherlanders under attack in a Bugis-Makassarese riot in 1726: this was seen as a serious dereliction of duty.[16]

If the Buginese and Makassarese were held to be the most dangerous inhabitants of the town, it went without saying that pure Europeans (especially Company men) were the most trustworthy, followed by mestizos, then Asian Christians (who might be Indian, Chinese or Indonesian—particularly Ambonese—in origin), Malays and Chinese. The explicit policy of the VOC was to ensure the domination of Company interests at all times; this meant that responsible posts should be held by those least likely to put personal or communal advantage before that of the VOC. So even the role of established burgher families was restricted to institutions such as the orphanage or the church council. For the VOC, outposts like Makassar existed to defend Company



Map 8 *Makassar: Fort Rotterda environs, seventeenth century*

commerce, preferably without costing too much. Indeed, both the Gentlemen Seventeen in the Netherlands and the High Government in Batavia cherished the constantly expressed (and regularly disappointed) hope that the government in Makassar would be able to cover expenses with profits generated by the sale of VOC-imported goods, particularly textiles. Piecegoods from India and elsewhere were sold through the Company store and in auctions, to traders seeking stock for their journeys. But despite all exhortations from the High Government, which suspected Makassar's officials of mismanagement and corruption, Company imports continued to be undersold by Asian merchants and undermined by the private trade of its own officials. So although Makassar helped Batavia's economy by providing cheap consignments of slaves for the VOC labour force, on the whole it was a financial liability.

Besides Company commerce, Makassar also had its own local sources of revenue. Like most Asian and VOC settlements, a system of farms and monopolies (*pachten*) existed, in which the government surrendered its rights over selected economic activities in exchange for payment. In the late 1600s the only documented farm was the alcohol monopoly, for which burghers paid the considerable sum of over 1000 rds (*rijksdaalders*, 'rixdollars') per year. In some subsequent years the *pacht* climbed as high as 4000 rds, with prices depending less on the thirst of the garrison than on such imponderables as the interruption of the supply of palmwine by wars in the interior, on the competition from tea and coffee shops or, more predictably, on officials' private financial arrangements with the proprietors of illegal toddy shops or bidders for the monopoly. Most alcohol farmers were retired soldiers who, when they were in military service, had drawn an annual pay of around 24 rds, so the purchase of a monopoly was a major, though popular, investment.

The mid-eighteenth century saw a considerable shift from direct Company exploitation of taxes to farms. From 1745 the right to collect customs duties (on imports and exports) was sold to the highest bidder, producing a steadily increasing yearly revenue which exceeded 20 000 rds by the end of the century. Gambling joined drink as the next most important source of funds, at between two and three thousand rds per annum in the 1750s, while the market tax, Chinese head money and the slaughter tax (essentially on pork) were less significant.

Bad trading years were immediately felt by the monopoly farmers, and not only in customs revenue. Trade generated prosperity, and drew people to harbour and markets. More specifically, any major decline in the Chinese population lowered the value of the gambling and headmoney monopolies. This underlines the importance of Makassar's harbour and garrison functions, while the frequent suspicious queries from Batavia and Holland about the conduct of auctions, and the recurring complaints about unlicensed drinking and gambling dens, suggest that the administration of local finance was as susceptible to fraud and evasion as were the VOC trade regulations.

Apart from the *pachten* the government in Makassar also levied taxes on property, such as houses and ships, and on the sale of various goods. Payments

on property generated more than 400 rds a year for Vlaardingen, where the total of real estate exceeded 80 000 rds in 1759; individual houses ranged from bamboo shacks to stone houses worth several thousand rds. The financial importance of these taxes, however, was slight compared to the harbour or alcohol monopolies.[17] As far as the Company was concerned, any involvement in town affairs was only justified in so far as it maintained a suitable environment for trade and garrison. In general the Gentlemen Seventeen and Batavia had no interest whatsoever in promoting local prosperity. On the contrary, they were always worried that a flourishing settled community would develop its own activities at the expense of the VOC. The high officials of the Company concentrated their attention on security and commerce, keeping the flow of goods moving and the ledgers up to date.

Specialists such as the *syahbandar* (harbourmaster), *fiskaal* (prosecutor) and *predikant* (Calvinist preacher) were important men for both the VOC and the town. They were officially responsible for the constant and usually fruitless attempts to combat the endemic illegal trade, evasion of monopolies, and debauchery so characteristic of the town. The harbourmaster, for example, maintained patrols and watchhouses on the beach to discourage smuggling, supervised the weigh-house, and inspected ships for contraband goods; he also maintained a register of incoming and outgoing vessels.[18] The *fiskaal* acted as head of the police and public prosecutor, catching suspected criminals, organising interrogation and presenting cases before the Council of Justice. Routine Company administrative efforts within the town focused on the Christian community, where the church with its charitable institutions and intermittent attempts at education was the bearer of European civilisation. Other services were provided by the militia (*schutterij*) and the town administration, which consisted of honorary block supervisors and chief firemen (*wijkmeester, brandspuitmeester*) and a lamplighter.

The burgher elite was active in the *schutterij* and also in charitable bodies, such as the *diakonij*, which supervised poor relief and the *weeshuis*, or orphanage. The directors of the orphanage not only supervised the housing and education of Makassar's relatively numerous Christian orphans, but also invested their inheritances, so they could look forward to a dowry or business capital on reaching their majority. The orphanage funds were used as a de facto bank, providing financial resources for burgher, Chinese and Makassarese traders alike as well as, on occasion, unsecured and lost loans for directors and their friends. The Makassar government intervened several times when scandal reached intolerable levels. But on the whole—even where the Christian community was concerned—the actual mechanics of intracommunal control were of little interest to the VOC, except when civil or criminal cases required legal action: the jurisdiction of the Council of Justice extended over Asians and Europeans alike.

Makassar society

When considering Makassar's inhabitants, it is necessary to follow Company usage, and make a rough distinction between the groups most closely identified with the VOC, and the more alien others. For most of the eighteenth century people were divided into several general categories. The first two divisions were that of 'Company servants, burghers and families' (which would include slaves) on the one hand, and the heterogeneous category of 'Makassarese, Buginese, Chinese, Ambonese, Bandanese, Moors, Peranakans and their slaves' on the other. This division paralleled that between Christians and heathens, since slaves—whatever their origins or beliefs—were simply subsumed in the census category of their owner. These two groups lived in the complex of settlements grouped around the castle, including Vlaardingen, Kampung Baru and the *kampung*. Beyond this cluster were areas under formal Dutch suzerainty, but in practice their fishermen and farmers were ruled by local chiefs or Karaeng; these were the territories of Galesong, Bulukumba, Bantaeng (Bonthain), Polombangkeng, Maros and the island Saleyar.

Around 1740 the combined population of castle, Vlaardingen and town *kampung* averaged around 5000. This figure increased to some 6000 in the 1760s and 1770s. Excluding the *kampung*, the population of the nucleus of Dutch Makassar (castle and Vlaardingen), remained relatively steady and increased slowly, from just over 2000 in the 1730s to almost 3000 by the 1780s. These figures indicate a stable and defined core population, but the reality was quite complex, as two very different sorts of community were involved.[19]

On the one hand there was the burgher population, derived originally from retired VOC employees (mostly soldiers or sailors), and their Asian wives and concubines. They formed a settled social group, earning a living in trade and commerce, with ties to both Dutch and Asian communities. In the first Makassar 'soulcount' for 1679 there were only two 'minties' (mestizo) men as opposed to forty male 'Nederlanders', but some ten years later the burgher community was already about 80 percent mestizo, a proportion which recurred and was probably fairly constant throughout the 1700s. During the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the mixed bag of labels from the early period were reorganised into a more defined hierarchy. The distinction between Dutch and mestizo was soon dropped, in favour of a more formal division between 'burghers' and employees of the VOC. At the same time, however, there was an inevitable tendency in the society to acculturation, to a less sharply graduated ethnic and cultural spectrum, where relative closeness to *kampung* or castle was influenced by social status.[20]

The strength of the Company establishment at Makassar waxed and waned depending on her economic and military fortunes. The small elite of fifteen to twenty 'qualified' officials—the governor, chief merchants, undermerchants and assistants—decided policy in Council and performed their specific administrative tasks individually. Below them was a middle-ranking group of similar size, skilled men such as the translators and harbourmaster, the teachers

The cosmopolitan character of Indonesian port cities: A Javanese of Batavia (Jakarta), Indonesia, c. most port cities of Malaysia and Ind the different settlements included Javanese trade communities. This Javanese trader demonstrates a cu style quite separate from the courti of the land-based kingdoms of Cen Java.
From Hendrik Nieuhof *Joan Nieuh Gedenkwaerdighe Zee-en Lant-reiz de voornaemste Landschappen van en Oostindien* Amsterdam, 1682. *Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State of New South Wales.*

and *predikant*, hospital staff and artisans. The rest of the Company personnel, from five to eight hundred men, were soldiers and sailors, generally believed to represent the dregs of Europe.

The garrison and officials usually numbered eight to nine hundred men, but increased to more than 1500 when the political situation on the peninsula was threatening. Such temporary expeditionary forces were not included in the census, but more lasting reinforcements were. Crises in the security situation were reflected also in fluctuations in the non-European and burgher population groups, both within the central *kampung* complex around the castle and in more outlying areas under Company control.

During the wars with Wajo' (1739-1740) and the troubles in Gowa (1776-c.1790) the non-Christian population of Makassar, including the urban *kampung*, reached peaks of well over 4000 while for most of the eighteenth century there was a very variable 'heathen' (in reality, of course, predominantly Muslim) population count of between two and three thousand. During these same insecure periods the number of inhabitants in the outlying districts shrank dramatically (the total was less than 30 000 in 1780, as compared to well over 50 000 in 1760 and 1790). These figures emphasise that while the castle itself could provide relative safety for the settlements huddled around it, the Pax Neerlandica was far from guaranteed for more distant villages.

Such numbers can give us a general picture of the scale of settlement and population movements, but they tell us nothing of the town's social texture. Scattered references indicate that Makassar had a high mortality, skewed sex-ratios, widespread slave-holding and a kaleidoscope of ethnic categories. These factors combined to create a society which kept bursting out of its VOC framework, revealing the tensions, frustrations and dynamism born not of a static juxtaposition of Company garrison and Indonesian port, but from the interaction of the two.

In this context the walls, stockades and bamboo fences marking the boundaries between castle, *kampung* and compounds faded; only in the official middle-range vision did such limits seemed fixed and clear. A close look at the social reality of Makassar and, in particular, its patterns of residence indeed shows that the theory of ethnic segregation, as expressed in Speelman's precepts, was far from being realised. The castle, as a military base, was tightly controlled. The day-to-day problem there was to keep its inhabitants inside, rather than trying to keep others out—the soldiers tended to abandon their posts for nights of drinking, whoring and gambling, while higher officials sought the comfort of their houses and society in the settlements. Outside the castle walls, however, boundaries become more permeable, and inhabitants more variegated.

While Vlaardingen was essentially a Chinese and European settlement, the presence of Indonesians (particularly at night) gnawed at the government's sense of security. Despite regulations and placards, it was easy to arrange nocturnal visits, as the stockade was pierced by the back doors of houses close to the walls, and many residents had personal or business ties with Indonesians.

Moreover, by no means all burghers lived in Vlaardingen. Many mestizos—particularly the poorer members of the community—lived in the *kampung* among Asian neighbours. If we take 1733 as an example, and look at the annual taxation list on urban property, we can see who owned houses where, and what they were worth. The elite lived in the Tuinstraat, where just over half the houses were stone (twenty-one, as opposed to twenty of bamboo). Here was concentrated the property of two wealthy burghers, each of whom owned seven houses on the street, and paid 35 rds each in tax. But not everyone there was rich; two single women, probably representatives of the widows who were such a striking element in Makassar's society, lived in humble bamboo houses, and paid only a fraction of a rd each. The only obvious non-European on the Tuinstraat would seem to be Maria van Bima, whose name suggests she was an ex-slave from the island of Bima, who converted to Christianity as the common-law wife of some burgher. A second European street was the Middelstraat, but here we enter a lower economic bracket. Most houses are bamboo, and six are owned by women, four of whom are described as widows.

The busiest road in Dutch Makassar was the Chinese Street. Running close to the beach, it accommodated fifty households. Twenty-six houseowners bore Chinese names (twenty-three being Ko), of which almost a quarter indicated that their owners were heavily acculturated local Chinese, in many cases Muslim (*peranakan*). The rest of the inhabitants were European (including six female heads of households), except for one possible Makassarese.

Some concentrations of Europeans were also to be found outside Vlaardingen's stockade, such as the clusters of predominantly stone houses by the Dutch market (between Vlaardingen and the castle) and along the Hoge Pad leading to the Company Garden. But around the fringes of Vlaardingen and the castle, particularly on the southern side, were much poorer areas. Along the Koestraat, Breestraat and Langestraat at Kampung Baru were collections of bamboo housing inhabited by Asian Christians and ex-slaves, whose names suggest their origins; Maria van Bengal, Rachel van de Westkust, Badjo van Dompo and Maart (March) all probably began their Makassar lives involuntarily, while the recurrence of the Ambonese name Lehitu underlines the Christian element.

Nonetheless, these citizens of Makassar were still within the reach of the Company administration. More marginal were the *kampung* agglomerations under their own headmen, while the houses round the Bugis Market (about a half hour's walk north of the castle) and the warrens of squatters' sheds along the beach were virtually impervious to official European penetration.[21]

While the lists of houseowners indicate a clear clustering of residence by ethnicity and status, household composition was much more pluriform than might be expected. Since VOC employees often preferred to live outside the castle, many burghers rented houses or took in boarders, so while we know from the tax list that Abraham Fransz and Michiel de Vreede each owned seven houses in the Tuinstraat, we can only guess who lived in them. Details of domestic organisation are, however, both more important and more elusive.

In practice, the norm in Makassar was not that of the Calvinist nuclear family. Even in many parts of contemporary Europe extended households were common, and in Makassar this was further elaborated, both by the custom of living in compounds, with kin and followers, and by the pervasive influence of slavery. Poorer burghers often lived in bamboo dwellings on stilts, while the layout of many European-style houses showed specific Asian characteristics. The yard or compound was dominated by the main house, with a 'front gallery', followed by the main room and a 'back gallery', with kitchen, storerooms and slave quarters in the yard. Here also small industries were to be found, the workshops of artisans, or activities such as the preparation of foodstuffs and other goods, destined to be sold along the streets or through rented stalls in the Dutch Market.

Domestic inventories made in cases of intestate deaths or inheritance disputes can give us some insight into the household possessions of Makassar citizens. In 1767, for example, the Captain of Chinese and two colleagues inventoried the assets of one Niopanlong. This wealthy Chinese merchant's most valuable possessions were two houses on the Chinese Street, one stone (value 1500 rds) and one bamboo (240 rds) and three ships: two *perahu paduwakang* (one large, 150 rds, one small, 100 rds), and a *perahu pamayang* (40 rds). Luxuries (gold, silver and silks) were worth almost 1000 rds, while furnishings, which were Chinese in style, weapons and household goods came to about 1800 rds. Niopanlong's credit balance was increased by the value of trade goods in stock (2000 rds) and moneys owed him (c.1500), so his total assets came to an impressive 8800 rds. This was reduced, however, by his own debts to the burgher Voll and three Chinese, so that on balance he was worth 4122 rds. Niopanlong had been farmer of the market in 1764 and 1765, and had even been able to hold the import and export dues monopoly for 1765, in which he invested 12 000 rds, so it is fair to assume he was a relatively rich man. And indeed, the archives of court and orphanage show few estates as large as his.[22]

One notable absence in the list of Niopanlong's possessions is slaves; whether this is an oversight or not is hard to tell, but slaves, both as domestic assets and as trade goods, are a striking feature of virtually all mestizo and European inventories. We can gain an impression of a European household by looking through the detailed inventory from 1768 of Jan Adolph Kook, a blacksmith's mate in Company service. It is clear, despite the lack of valuations in the inventory, that he was a surprisingly wealthy man. Kook owned two stone houses (one in the Chinese Street), and a bamboo house in the Nieuwe Negory where his mother-in-law lived. He also owned five female slaves, one of whom had her oldest child living with her, and another had a son; one was from Makassar, two from Manggarai, and two were Bugis, as were his three male slaves, one of whom had a wife (also a slave) and three children. These nine adults were 'house slaves'; in addition Kook had a stock of 'trade slaves' at the time of his death: thirteen males and ten females, mostly from South Sulawesi and Nusa Tenggara. It seems probable that his wealth came more from his slave dealing than his salary, some twenty rds per month.

An impression of Kook's lifestyle can be gained from the very detailed description of each room of his house. The 'front gallery' had not only a pipe rack, but also a rack for *payung* (umbrellas), and an impressive seventeen chairs. But the real signs of ostentation emerge in the main house, where the reception room was furnished with hanging lights, racks of weapons, glass-fronted cupboards, tables and a couple of dozen chairs, and decorated with seven mirrors and thirty assorted paintings.

Our last eighteenth-century visit is to a Makassarese, Karaeng Tutolo, who lived in a bamboo house on stilts in the compound belonging to Karaeng Tujang in *kampung* Bulekang. (Although the title Karaeng is a high one, its frequent use in eighteenth-century documents suggests that it referred to a well-born Makassarese and not necessarily ruling nobility.) Karaeng Tulolo kept three women slaves in his house, two Balinese and one Makassarese, and two men. Another male slave, from Ende, was away in his *perahu* on a trading voyage to Bali. The furnishings of the house were relatively simple; there were four chairs—a sign of European influence—and a number of chests containing Makassarese clothes and weapons, mats and cushions, plates and Chinese porcelain and some simple silver jewellery.[23]

These three households give us an impression of relative prosperity and comfort; they are no doubt atypical, in that their importance required a proper inventory and VOC intervention. Each fits the stereotype of communal economic activity: the wealthy Chinese, the European slave dealer, and the relatively small-scale Indonesian trader. Although such detail is only illustrative, it does suggest the importance of trade, the significance of slavery, and differences in taste. As such, it gives us some sense of the daily lives of our subjects. Other documents can provide even less tangible, but fascinating, insights into contemporary behaviour and morality.

Both Portuguese predecessors and Asian neighbours in Celebes set examples of complex and far from puritan family life. The influence of slavery was pervasive, concubinage common, and the prolonged absences of men on trading voyages added to the flexibility of domestic arrangements. The effects can be glimpsed in official documents: a Company man's wife is caught violating curfew for a rendezvous with a Balinese soldier, while drunken soldiers returning after hours from a hunting expedition so gratuitously insult the *fiskaal* that he opens his blind eye and they all end up receiving heavy sentences for what was probably an everyday affair. Accounts of brawls in toddy shops, rumours of adultery, complaints about loose women and murders recur regularly in the files.

Drinking and to a lesser extent opium seem to have been the main recreations of Makassar's citizens and soldiers. More apparently modern indulgences were also noted: in October 1715 it was reported that 'various of our inhabitants, soldiers as well as artisans, have turned to the brewing of brown beer mixed with datura or marsh-marigolds, wild hemp and other sorts of maddening or crazy-making herbs'.[24] Attempts to enforce Calvinist morality upon such a seafaring and garrison community were doomed to failure. As early as June

1687 the governor and Council of Makassar sent a request to Batavia to be instructed on how to arrange civil and criminal affairs; adultery was common, they sighed, because 'many Netherlanders are married to sluttish native women, who walk out and leave them at the drop of a hat, and go into the bush and are never seen again'. A similar outrage was expressed ninety years later, when the government complained about the 'scandalous roaming around among the natives, by both married and unmarried Christian women'. Concubinage with slaves was regarded as normal, and the registration of children born of such unions was necessary to ensure their Christian status. Unacknowledged children followed their mother's status. Since, however, it was customary to free the mother of your children, most such children born of slave mothers would at least have been free. Both government and burgher elite were concerned about the souls of half-European children, of unknown fathers, who were doomed to sink into the *kampung* and follow the 'perfidious' teaching of Mohammed.[25]

An example of how a well-known mestizo family could develop is provided by the de Siso clan, descended from Daniel Dusisiaux from Vlissingen who arrived in 1728. He married a native woman, called Debora of Makassar, and his mestizo son Jan was a prosperous slave trader and captain of the burghers. Jan married three times, and had seven legal offspring; he also acknowledged two illegitimate children, one of them borne by the slave Clara of Sumbawa. One son, Alexander (b. 1766), who was also a leading citizen and slave trader, probably had five children, at least two of whom were by Asian mothers (Baba and Tjina).

Such a pattern is fairly typical; we see it again in histories like that of the Krookwits family. Jan Hendrik Krookwits arrived from Weteringen as a soldier in Batavia in 1722, and reached Makassar in 1740. His youngest and seventh son, Jan Hendrik, shipowner and trader, had several children by various mothers, such as the free native woman Mina of Makassar, the native Randa from Mandar and the slave Satima. One son, inevitably Jan Hendrik, who was born of the native woman Bintang of Mandar, chose for matrimony in 1808 (perhaps a sign of changing times?) and married Henriette Geertruida Claassen, daughter of one Hermanus and the free native woman Rananga of Makassar.[26] Such family histories make a mockery of the official emphasis on ethnic segregation and Calvinist morality.

The two officials most closely involved with regulating the mores of Makassar were the *predikant* and the *fiskaal*. Their job was not easy, and in many cases they probably adjusted to their environment. In fact, there were various periods when Makassar managed without any *predikant* at all, and some incumbents were eccentric to the point of insanity, or preoccupied with trade, particularly in slaves. The *fiskaal* could call upon the power of the eighteenth-century law, and criminals were regularly hung up with weights on their feet, broken on the wheel, flogged, branded and exposed to the birds of prey—behaviour which the Buginese and Makassarese found most barbarous. In a couple of instances the archives suggest that at times neither the public nor the governor and

Council appreciated attempts to impose a more rigorous morality.[27] The Company establishment in Makassar were less preoccupied with virtue than with trade. Their limited concern reflects not only an acceptance of a tolerant modus vivendi, but also the constraints upon Company administration which were imposed by both resources and expectations. Even in the two areas most closely associated with central VOC interests—security and trade—compromise was necessary. So Chinese might be allowed to join the watch, local princes consulted on security, headmen left to their own devices, and the ruler of Bone allowed to appoint a representative who assisted the *pachter* in port administration.[28]

But accommodation could only go so far. Company interests and Christian status had to be maintained, and although in practice it was quite possible to advance private trade at the expense of the VOC, and to recognise the useful qualities of non-Europeans, there were limits. The formal organisation of the town was predicated upon the economic dominance of the Company, while ethnic niches provided the social framework. But these principles could not be maintained. The problem was that neither the VOC nor the Christian community could compete effectively with Asian traders. There was an inherent and growing contradiction between the Company policy of controlling commerce and protecting Christian status, and the dynamics of Makassar itself, generated by local traders (including those from Wajo'), Chinese and Malays. These tensions sometimes surfaced in strained relations between burghers and the Company, and between Chinese and Malays.

The burgher population of Makassar was too few and too poor to support the proper urban institutions. In 1694 their *swacke getal* (small number) caused the government to introduce a paid rather than a citizen's night watch. In 1743 the government ascribed the low profits of the farm auctions to the absence of bidders because they were held in August when 'all burghers and freemen . . . are sailing to Batavia or elsewhere'. On 12 May 1767 a resolution was passed to limit the mobility of burghers who were thought to be using trading trips as a way of avoiding communal responsibilities. And in 1780 it was acknowledged that the burdens of the watch and tax were too heavy for the citizens, and were contributing to their economic woes during what was in general a difficult time.[29]

A brawl in a toddy shop in May 1772 led to a confrontation between burghers and the government. A 'free native', Kamanjang, was returning from the Bugis Market with some trade cloth he had bought, and stopped to enjoy a jug of palmwine with his friends Balatong and Titus. Two burghers, much the worse for wear, were arguing in the drinking shop, and one enlisted Kamanjang's support. He was promptly accused of interference by the second man, Samuel Jansz, but refused to back down. Kamanjang then left the shop, his anxious friends remonstrating with him for talking back to 'such a respectable man'. Jansz thereupon emerged from the shop and without a word proceeded to beat Kamanjang severely.

Such incidents were common enough in Makassar, but this developed into

something of a *cause célèbre*, either because tensions in the community were high, or because the *fiskaal* was unusually officious. He called Samuel Jansz up for punishment in the presence of the watch. The sergeant, Leendert Geesdorp, refused to assist in the punishment; he appealed to the crowd, saying that the burghers had had enough blood drained from them, and had no need to lose more to the cane just because of a native.

Such 'mutiny and rebellion' attracted the attention not only of the government in Makassar, but also Batavia, which suspected more was afoot and ordered an enquiry into burgher grievances. Makassar was unable to oblige as Geesdorp died a few days after Batavia's letter arrived. Whether or not the affair was simply a flash in the pan, or had deeper causes, is impossible to say, but burgher discontent was made explicit in April 1782. A group of prominent citizens (including Anthony Geesdorp) wrote a formal petition to the governor concerning unfair competition from VOC officials in the slave trade, which was they said 'the only way in which we can legitimately make a living'. They requested that the clandestine participation by Company men in this commerce be stopped. The governor, forwarding the petition to Batavia, stated in his defence, 'it is untrue and totally unknown to us that Company officials are attempting to monopolise the slave trade'.[30]

Throughout the eighteenth century, but particularly in the latter half, the burghers appeared as a struggling community. On the other hand, Malays, Chinese and local traders seemed to flourish, despite VOC attempts to dominate commerce. Company records regularly lamented the decline of Makassar's economy, but the number of local vessels using the port remains fairly constant (around 500 arrivals or departures per year), and Asian merchants willingly paid more each year for the monopoly on customs duties. The Company jealously strove to discourage local trade and shipping. Each year a list of vessels had to be sent to Batavia, and any increase in seagoing boats had to be explained away. By the end of the 1700s only three or four boats were listed. But the harbour master's register shows that whether or not ships were officially registered in Makassar, many were using the port. Unfortunately for both Company and burghers, it was Indonesians, Malays and Chinese (and perhaps VOC officials, in a private capacity) who seemed most active.[31]

From its beginnings in 1745 the monopoly on the collection of customs duties had been the most important farm, both in terms of its impact on local trade, and as a source of revenue. Conflicts between traders and the farmer could become intense, as happened in 1755 when a group of Batavia and Makassar Chinese felt that their associate, the captain of the junk, had been unfairly taxed. Competition between Chinese and Malays for the position of *pachter* could increase tension, and so in October 1766 it was decided that the customs monopoly was only to be given to Chinese, with the argument that others, particularly Malays, caused too much trouble and too many rows.

The Chinese victory proved shortlived. They may have been able to keep the Malays at bay until 1770, but from then until 1790 a Malay, Ince Sadulla, held the monopoly, except for a three-year stretch early on (1773-1775) when

it reverted to a Chinese. Since virtually all other farms were Chinese-held, it was only to be expected that the loss of the most lucrative one should be the cause of some dissatisfaction. In 1781 a group of twenty Chinese merchants, of Makassar and Batavia, wrote to the governor accusing Ince Sadulla of violating the *pacht* conditions. Batavia, which was in any case unhappy that Makassar kept renewing Ince Sadulla's monopoly without public auction, asked for an explanation. The Makassar government defended Ince Sadulla on the grounds that 'he has held the *pacht* for years, and is used to getting along with the native kings and other powerful men, in particular with those of Bone, and should a Chinese or some other take over then we could expect daily squabbling'. Batavia must have been convinced, as Ince Sadulla kept the monopoly till the end of 1789, when it passed to a Chinese.[32]

Despite the vigorous and sometimes bitter competition between Malays and Chinese for positions of commercial power, the boundary between the two communities was blurred at the edges by the presence of the Muslim Chinese *peranakan* community. This very closeness was a cause of dissension. Thus, in November 1750, the captains of the Chinese Lijauko and Quepodang sent a formal letter of complaint to the governor concerning Malay conduct. They described how at the time of the conquest by Speelman the first captain of the Chinese, Ongwatko, was given authority over all Chinese, *parnakangs* and Malays. Because of old age his son (uncle of Lijauko) eventually took over as deputy, and in that period the Malays received the right to their own head, although without the status of captain. However, the governor then granted the request of the wife of Aru Palakka that Ince Tjoeka be made Kapitan Melayu; Ongwatko responded by requesting only that the new chief of the Malays have nothing to do with the *peranakan* Chinese, be they Muslim or not. But, wrote the suppliants, the present captain of the Malays was trying to assert his authority over the *peranakan*, thus violating both established custom and Company policy.

This complaint was promptly countered by an equally outraged missive from the Kapitan Melayu, complaining that Malay women marrying *peranakan* Chinese, or *peranakan* (sic) Malays marrying *peranakan* Chinese were treated by the Kapitan China as if they were 'his own people'. The Malay captain also called upon history to justify his claim, and added that he was convinced men were attaching themselves to the Chinese to avoid those Company services which fell heavily upon the Malays. More was involved here than mere status. Each captain had to call upon his people for both Company and personal services; fewer people meant less manpower to provide labour and funds for communal activities, such as maintenance of temples or mosques, and also fewer subjects to pay the petty fees and taxes which helped support the Kapitans. The Makassar government took the matter seriously, and finally decided the specific problem of the mixed marriages by applying the principle that wives should follow the nationality of their husband; this involved thirteen *peranakan* Malay women married to *peranakan* Chinese

Amboina (Ambon), the mestizo port town of eastern Indonesia. This view of Ambon emphasises the Dutch and mestizo character of the architecture of this trade outpost.
From Hendrik Nieuhof *Joan Nieuhofs Gedenkwaerdighe Zee-en Lant-reize door de voornaemste Landschappen van West en Oostindien* Amsterdam, 1682.
Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

men, and six Malay men. Placed in a broader perspective, the dispute suggests not only intercommunal competition, but also a sharpening of ethnic boundaries.[33]

Conclusion

Centres and boundaries are essential to any definition of place, but each depends on the perspective adopted. What is of crucial importance to one individual or group can be peripheral to another. There was a VOC Makassar with its own institutions, regulations, ethics, politics, interests and domestic arrangements, just as there was also an identifiable Chinese or Malay or Bugis Makassar. The fences around the compound of an exiled prince or Malay merchant defined the nucleus of family and followers, just as Vlaardingen's stockade or the massive walls of the castle seemed to segregate the clusters of Europeans from their Asian environment.

But these boundaries were permeable. Vlaardingen's backdoors allowed quiet and frequent passage between settlements, and within the houses a polyglot population of slaves, concubines and children with kin in several communities blurred the lines between Christian and Muslim. Indeed, the very categories used to place Makassar's inhabitants within the social and legal systems, which seemed so 'natural', were maintained by deliberate choices. Flexibility of identity declined during the eighteenth century; this was perhaps clearest for the *peranakan* Chinese, who were often Makassarese-speaking Muslims, but was no doubt also true for other communities. The indications are that the formal structuring of ethnicity progressed under the VOC, and whereas changes in community and religion were probably relatively easy in indigenous society, with the rise of a more institutionalised administration labels became more firmly fixed.

Power in Makassar was concentrated in the hands of the Company officials; they could use their naval and military power to advance not only VOC policy, but also their own commercial interests and moral values. But their reach was limited. The internal life of the settled communities unfolded beyond their regulation, and many officials were dependent on local informants for their interpretation of the world around them. Nonetheless, they were involved and affected by this environment, as were their neighbours. For despite its formally segmented organisation Makassar was much more than the sum of its parts. Through the interaction of its inhabitants—which it both structured and symbolised—the port city realised both its own identity and its contribution to the dynamics of the region.

Notes

1 Anthony Reid 'The Rise of Makassar' *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 17, 1983, pp.117-60; Kenneth R. Hall *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* Honolulu, 1985

2 On the history of the Malay region, including early trade, see Barbara Watson Andaya & Leonard Y. Andaya *A History of Malaysia* London, 1982; for background and comparative material, Karl L. Hutterer (ed.) *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia* Ann Arbor, 1977; and James F. Warren *The Sulu Zone. The Dynamics of Trade, Slavery and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* Singapore, 1981. The traditional dichotomy of agrarian and maritime cities has recently been re-endorsed by T. Kathirithamby-Wells in 'The Islamic City: Melaka to Jogjakarta, c. 1500-1800' *Modern Asian Studies* 20, 1986, pp. 334-35, but see Chapter 2 in the present volume

3 Reid 'Rise'

4 The classic, and still unrivalled, account is C. R. Boxer *The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800* London, 1965. See also F. S. Gaastra *De Geschiedenis van de VOC* Haarlem, 1982; Holden Furber *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* Oxford, 1976; and M. A. P. Meilink-Roelofsz *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630* The Hague, 1962

5 Leonard Y. Andaya *The Heritage of Arung Palakka. A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* The Hague, 1981

6 For a general account see Phillip D. Curtin *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* Cambridge, 1984

7 Leonard Blussé 'Chinese Trade in Batavia during the Days of the VOC' *Archipel* 18, 1979, pp. 195-214

8 Reid 'Rise'; Heather Sutherland 'Power and Politics in South Sulawesi, 1860-1880' *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* v 17, 1983, pp. 161-207, also discusses the region's history

9 Boxer *Dutch Seaborne Empire* ch.8, and Gaastra VOC ch.3 on slavery; Heather Sutherland 'Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi, 1660s-1800' in A. J. S. Reid (ed.) *Slavery, Bondage and Dependence in Southeast Asia* St Lucia, 1983

10 Boxer *Dutch Seaborne Empire* p.262; also Jean S. Taylor *The Social World of Batavia; European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* Madison, Wis., 1983; and F. Lequin *Het Personeel van de Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in Azië in de Achttiende Eeuw, meer in het bijzonder in de Vestiging Bengalen* 2 vols, Leiden, 1982

11 Gaastra *VOC* p.82; Heather Sutherland 'Mestizos as Middlemen? Ethnicity and Access in Colonial Makassar' in G. Schutte & H. Sutherland (eds.) *Papers of the Dutch-Indonesian Historical Conference held at Laage Vuursche, The Netherlands, June 1980* Leiden, 1982, pp.250-77

12 A major cause of this fluidity is our dependence on the VOC archives, which are in many ways disingenuous, calculated to deceive. Faced with conflicts between local realities and state policy—in town administration, social life and the regulation of trade—officials found that a blind eye was essential if their stay in Makassar was to be both pleasant and profitable. Missives and appendices were laboriously copied and sent off to Batavia twice a year, but their compilers were more anxious to make a good impression than to explain local complexities. In many cases Company officials preferred not to let their superiors know what was happening, but where Asian communities were involved they themselves often had very little real insight. Hence we have volume upon volume on trade and politics, but scant information on other aspects of society

13 Speelman's 'Notitie', Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague (henceforth ARA), Aanwinsten 1 November 1926, fol.704 ff

14 F. Valentijn *Oud en Nieuw Oost-indien* 1865-58 ed, The Hague, vol.3, p.116

15 Sutherland 'Mestizos'; ARA, OB (Overgekomen Brieven) 1680, VOC no.1358, ff.294-95; OB 1682, VOC no.1368, f.449

16 National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI), Makassar Collection no.313/1, 'Papieren in de zaak Intje Moeloet'

17 Details on the *pachten* were given every year at the beginning of the report from Makassar to Batavia; the property tax ('the twentieth penny') appeared irregularly, but see VOC no. 2933, ff.96-101, and 3150, ff.275-77

18 A micro-computer data-base analysis of this register is being used in a current research project on Makassar's trade; see Heather Sutherland and David S. Bree 'The Harbourmaster's Specification: a pilot study in computer-aided identification of regional trade patterns in VOC Asia', paper presented to the Second International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies (ICIOS II), Perth 1984.

19 Population totals were given every year in Makassar's missive to Batavia; there are scattered very detailed early censuses from before 1730 in the archives, for example, for 1679 VOC no.1347, f.499 ff.

20 See Heather Sutherland 'Mestizos' and 'Ethnicity, Wealth and Power in Colonial Makassar: a historiographical reconsideration' in P. J. M. Nas (ed.) *The Indonesian City: studies in urban development and planning* Dordrecht, 1986, pp.37-55
21 VOC no. 2314; earlier years such as the OB for 1719 (VOC no.1910, f.109 ff.) show less homogeneity, with some Indonesians (Isaac from Bali, or the 'Free woman Jaria') among the citizens in the Tuinstraat
22 Papers of the *weeskamer*, Makassar, in ANRI, Makassar Collection 374/2
23 ANRI, Makassar Collection 309/2
24 OB 1716, VOC no.1867, f.51; the seeds and leaves of *datura fastuoso* (Malay *kacubong*, Makassarese *kucubu*) are narcotic in effect
25 For example, OB 1767, VOC no.3181, ff.51, 99-100; OB 1773, VOC no.3358, f.108; OB 1787, VOC no.3732, ff.51-53. On 'abominable' Islam OB 1773, VOC no. 3358, f.108. See also Taylor, *Social World of Batavia*.
26 Mr C. Christiaans of the Dutch Central Genealogical Bureau, ARA, The Hague, has generously provided information on Makassar families
27 Examples of conflict are, for the *predikant* OB 1749, VOC no.2717, ff.336 and OB 1763, VOC no.3958, ff.8-11; for the *fiskaal* OB 1753, VOC no.2818, ff.56-81, and OB 1766, VOC no.3150, ff.223-29
28 OB 1791, VOC. no.3905, f. 154
29 OB 1694, VOC no.1556, ff.699-700; OB 1744, VOC no.2606, f.52; OB 1768, VOC no.3210, ff.41-42; OB 1775, VOC no.3412, ff.6-7; OB 1781, VOC no.3580, ff.6-8
30 OB 1773, VOC no.3358, ff.86-89, 108; OB 1783, VOC no.3623, ff.82-89
31 For a preliminary study based on the registers see Heather Sutherland and David S. Bree 'The Trading Communities of Eighteenth Century Makassar', paper presented at the 10th Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia, Singapore, October 1986
32 OB 1756, VOC no.2859, ff.181-90; OB 1767, VOC no.3181, ff.6-7, 89-90; OB 1782, VOC no.3598, ff.141-43, 153-56, and appendix to the appendices of the Resolutions; OB 1784, VOC no.3648, ff.4-5; OB 1787, VOC no.3732, ff.42-43
33 OB 1752, VOC no.2780, ff.85-89, 90-96; OB 1753, VOC no.2799, ff.199. See also 'De Kapitein Melajoe to Makassar (1920)' *Adatrechtbundels. XXXI: Selebes* The Hague, 1929, pp.110-112

Further reading

Blussé, Leonard *Strange Company: Chinese settlers, mestizo women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* Dordrecht 1986. Essays on the Dutch East Indies capital of Batavia, concentrating on social mores and the Chinese, but giving a stimulating picture of the wider networks in the region.

Boxer, C.R. *The Dutch Seaborne Empire* London 1965. This classic remains the most lively and readable account of the Netherlands overseas expansion and society.

Bruijn, J.R., F.S. Gaastra and I. Schoffer *Dutch Asiatic Shipping in the 17th and 18th Centuries* vol. 1, The Hague 1987. An introduction to the definitive statistical and general study of shipping plying between the Netherlands and Asia in that period.

Gaastra, F.S. *De Geschiedenis van de VOC* Haarlem 1982. A concise and valuable summary, including recent work, on the organisation, development and social aspects of the VOC.

Meilink-Roelofsz, M.A.P. *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630* The Hague 1962. A pioneering study presenting detailed analysis drawn from the Dutch archives, which reopened the discussion on the interaction between Asian and Western trading systems.

Reid, Anthony (ed.) *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce* vol. 1 *The Lands below the Winds* New Haven 1988. A stimulating introduction to the world of Southeast Asia before the establishment of European domination.

Taylor, Jean Gelman *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* Madison, Wisc., 1983. Recaptures much of the atmosphere of the multi-ethnic Indies capital, focusing on the role of women and the fabric of social life.