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Principled pragmatism : VOC Interaction with Makassar 1637-68, and the nature of company diplomacy

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Chapter 2: Positions and Propositions Refined

In this chapter, I turn specifically to the historiography on Makassar. I shall start by briefly introducing F. W. Stapel's now classic thesis of 1922 before concentrating on Andaya's views on the contrasting nature of South Sulawesi and European diplomacy. In a separate section, I contrast Andaya's views to Resink's view on Makassarese international law in order to clarify my own positions. Finally, I present the structure of my argument and plan of exposition in the empirical chapters, before I round off with some comments on sources and method.

Section 1: Brief historiography on seventeenth-century Company–Makassar interaction, with an emphasis on Andaya's propositions

F. W. Stapel's *Het Bongaais Verdrag*²²³ is a monograph on the Company's interaction with Makassar from the early seventeenth century up to the Bongaya Treaty. Stapel focuses on the political and diplomatic interaction, and the text is organised in a chronological narrative with analytical comments inserted. However, the analytical implications are

²²³ F. W. Stapel: *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, PhD diss., Leiden University, 1922.

more often hinted at than fully explicated. Typical is Stapel's remark that the behaviour of the Makassarese "did not come as a surprise to those who knew their nature."²²⁴ This should not be read as a racist remark; "the nature of the Makassarese" should more likely be read as "culture" or "habitual way of doing things."

However, the remark leaves some assumptions uncommented. It combines an explicit proposition of difference and the implicit assumption that the Company, in spite of such difference, had been able to decipher the Makassarese code of conduct. In other words, Stapel operates from assumptions that there were difference in codes of behaviour between the Company and Makassar but that they did not prevent the Company from having a functional understanding of the situation. In other words, their respective systems of interaction and communication were compatible to a degree that enabled the Company to have a meaningful interpretation of the Makassarese system. Such propositions of compatibility and the possibility of functional understanding came to form the main targets of Leonard Andaya's two

²²⁴ "voor hem, die den aard der Makassaren kende." Ibid. 34.

publications on the diplomatic interaction between Makassar and the Company,²²⁵ which appeared almost fifty years after Stapel's work.

In his analysis of the VOC's diplomatic interaction with Makassar, Andaya vehemently rejects Stapel's assumption that the Company's personnel were capable of understanding the nature and therefore the "ways" of the Makassarese. On the contrary, he holds that for South Sulawesi and the Company, the meaning of state interaction and treaty were totally incompatible. Thus, there was no foundation for meaningful communication between the two. The diplomatic communication between the Company and Makassar represented a structural miscommunication grounded in antagonistic political cultures and perceptions.

I shall clarify Andaya's positions about the incompatibility between South Sulawesi and European diplomatic conceptualisations with a particular eye to his propositions and assumptions about the nature of the VOC's overseas diplomacy primarily using his 1978 article as my reference.

²²⁵ Andaya, "Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions," and *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*.

Spiritual versus secular conceptions of “treaty”

The basic difference between the Dutch and South Sulawesi conceptions of how treaties functioned was that while the Western tradition operated within a secular, rational logic, the South Sulawesi tradition was confined within sacred, mythical beliefs and perceptions. Andaya builds to a large degree on Noorduyn’s *Een Achiende-Eeuwse Kronik van Wadjo – Buginese Historiografie*.²²⁶ Hans Hägerdal and William Cummings represent more recent elaborations of similar views.²²⁷ Writing about Timor and the eastern Indonesian archipelago Hägerdal for instance prefers the terms “princedom” or “domain” instead of “kingdom” in order to cover the non-bureaucratic nature of the polities there,²²⁸ and points to Henk Schulte Nordholt’s use of the term “Mandala state.”²²⁹ Hägerdal himself uses the term “kingdom of word” to describe the “spiritual or symbolic essence of such polities),²³⁰ Immanent in the “symbolic” conceptualisation of power is also a conceptualisation of “history” that is different from the modern Western standard. In the

²²⁶ Proefschrift, Universiteit te Leiden, ‘s Gravenhage, 1955.

²²⁷ Hägerdal, Hans, *Lords of the land, lords of the sea: conflict and adaptation in early colonial Timor, 1600-1800* Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012, and: Cummings, W., *Making Blood White: Historical Transformations in Early Modern Makassar*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002, respectively.

²²⁸ Hägerdal 2012, 5, n. 7.

²²⁹ Hägerdal 2012, 171 n. 76.

²³⁰ Hägerdal 2012, 61 and 69-70.

“sacred world view”²³¹ there was no term for “myths”, indicating the nonexistence of the Western distinction between “myth” and “fact.”²³² The Solorese, in the words of de Roever thus had no “history” in the Western sense, only oral, “mythological history.”²³³ It is with this background that we must view William Cummings’ statement that “no Makassarese (historical) chronical ever set out to rewrite or interpret what had been set out in a previous text.”²³⁴

Gerrit Knaap is also pointing to the same logic when he characterises the mentality on Ambon as backwards-looking with an emphasis on honouring the tradition with a belief in spirits in the guise of forefathers to guard and protect it.²³⁵ The “conceptual package this springs from is one where everything is interpreted as “signs” and “warnings.”²³⁶

Having demonstrated that Andaya both stands in a tradition preceding him of emphasising the peculiar sacral or mythological

²³¹ Hägerdal, 2012, preface, xi.

²³² Hägerdal 2012, 74.

²³³ de Roever, 2002, 20.

²³⁴ Cummings, 2002, 48-49.

²³⁵ Gerrit Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen: De VOC en de bevolking van Ambon 1656-1696*, tweede herziende druk Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2004, 90.

²³⁶ Knaap 2004, 91.

foundations of society and polity in maritime Southeast Asia him and that this tradition is still vital, I shall return to his treatment of it as a determining factor in the understanding of the logic of state-interaction and diplomacy in the region.

Andaya considers what he calls “the spiritual element” of the treaties, “as important as the political to South Sulawesi states.”²³⁷ In fact, he asserts that a predominantly “spiritual” orientation as opposed to a this-worldly approach formed the defining trait of South Sulawesi diplomacy and treaty making up to the twentieth century: “A South Sulawesi ruler prior to the 20th century was also a product of his culture and time, and while he was mindful of the secular world, he was equally, *if not more so*, responsive to the spiritual one.”²³⁸

In introducing this statement, Andaya also warns that such a mythological worldview or mode of perception is hard to grasp for “the cynical modern-day observer ... tempted to see everything in terms of Realpolitik.”²³⁹ Andaya’s implicit historical comparative argument is that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, European treaty partners with Sulawesi states did *not* understand the kind of logic and mentality

²³⁷ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 283.

²³⁸ *Ibid.* 283, emphasis added. See also Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 9, 17.

²³⁹ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 283.

the local actors were operating from, set as they were in their own kind of rational thinking and rational tradition. When Europeans met with the spiritual South Sulawesi tradition, it was a clash of cultures, a confrontation between two incompatible worldviews.²⁴⁰

The “cosmological,” “sacred,” and ritual nature of South Sulawesi diplomatic treaties was embedded in oral traditions and lived on when these were written down. This can be seen in the “ritual-like repetition of certain phrases,”²⁴¹ and the phrases used for “treaty,” such as “to give one’s word of honour,” “to uphold or support one’s word,” and the like.²⁴² The introduction of the written treaty was thus simply seen as “an extension” of the older, oral tradition.²⁴³ The logic and meaning of the oral tradition was thus carried over to and came to be contained in the written tradition. The essential point that Andaya wants to make is that the act of putting treaties into writing did not mean a transition into a new conceptualisation, but a continuation of the sacred logic in a new form.

²⁴⁰ See section on “misunderstandings,” below.

²⁴¹ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 278.

²⁴² *Ibid.* 278-279, for the same views in a more recent work, see for instance: Cummings, 2002, 11, 41.

²⁴³ *Ibid.* 278.

The sacred or “cosmological” conceptualisation of treaty making in the South Sulawesi tradition also revealed itself in the ritual modes of confirming treaties, and the sanctions invoked for breaking them. The traditional confirmation ritual by drinking palm wine that had been stirred by the overlord’s *kris* or sword of state reflected, for instance, the perception that the *kris* was believed to imbue the potion with its powers.²⁴⁴ When treaty obligations as a rule were made binding for present, as well as future generations, it pointed in the same direction of a magical worldview.²⁴⁵ Also, making the extinction of lineage the ultimate sanction for breaking the treaty underlined the “great importance attached to the survival of [the king’s] line.”²⁴⁶ The threat at least reflected the lineage logic in South Sulawesi society, where lineage formed the basic social and political structure.²⁴⁷ It was with such notions of spirituality and collective survival that South Sulawesi states made treaties with each other, and—this is the basic assumption in Andaya’s argument—it was with such conceptualisations and

²⁴⁴ Ibid. 279.

²⁴⁵ Ibid. 281.

²⁴⁶ Ibid. 279–80.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. 283–84.

expectations that Makassar concluded treaties with the Company, and which lay at the heart of their miscommunication.²⁴⁸

One should note that Andaya's proposition of an antagonistic difference between the South Sulawesi and European conceptualisations of state interaction rests on two basic assumptions. The South Sulawesi religious or sacred conceptualisation and mode of operation stood in such absolute contrast to those of secular Europeans as to make meaningful communication or interaction between the two impossible. Furthermore, Andaya does not consider the possibility that either party could apply modes of thinking and operation that differed from those inscribed in their respective cultural models of state-interaction. Both were locked within and unable to transgress their respective monolithic cultural models.

South Sulawesi and Western functions of treaty and function of state-interaction systems contrasted

The point of departure in Andaya's comparison between treaty making in Europe and South Sulawesi is that while the Western tradition operated

²⁴⁸ See also "miscommunication", below, 50.

within a secular, rational logic, the South Sulawesi tradition was confined within sacred, mythical beliefs and perceptions. From this it follows that the concrete form and function of treaty making was basically different, too. For instance, the South Sulawesi treaties had a particularly localised function and meaning that could be found in the preamble, where the “precise relationship of the treating parties was declared in purely conventional terms.”²⁴⁹ These “precise relationships” ranged from full equality to master–slave relationships.²⁵⁰ These hierarchical relations were expressed in terms of closeness of family relations, like father and son, elder and younger brother and so forth.²⁵¹ This system further meant that once the type of hierarchical relation was given, it became “superfluous to mention particular details already implied in the conventional phrases.”²⁵² This mode of giving the specific obligations and rights by inference from hierarchical relations, with “no possibility of ambiguity” according to Andaya,²⁵³ stood in diametrical opposition to the typical European mode, in which rights and obligations were expressively stated in the specific: “they [the Dutch and the native

²⁴⁹ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 280.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 280.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* 280.

²⁵² *Ibid.* 280.

²⁵³ *Ibid.* 281.

states] differed fundamentally in the manner in which they invoked the treaty as a legitimising document. Whereas the Dutch would cite a particular provision within the detailed Bongaya treaty, the native states would simply refer to ‘the treaty’ without mentioning any specific clause.”²⁵⁴ In the South Sulawesi perception and practice, stating specific rights and obligations was superfluous. In the European perception, such specifics were the primary task of treaty making. These conflicting technical modes of treaty formulations accordingly reflected conflicting modes of perception as to what a “treaty” actually was which laid the ground for misunderstandings. At the heart of the matter lay the basic difference between the South Sulawesi and the Western traditions where the former was of a “spiritual-” and the latter of a secular nature.

²⁵⁴ Ibid. 278.

A spiritual conceptualisation of interstate relations: The workings of the South Sulawesi system and grounds for structural misunderstandings, and conflicting views on the nature and bonds of treaties

The spiritual primacy in treaty conception meant that no treaty once concluded was ever considered totally dead and done with. On the contrary, it was seen as a perpetual part of the sacred lineage heritage: “The words and oaths of the ancestors contained in the treaties became a moral and supernatural sanction which adumbrated all interstate relations.”²⁵⁵ This conceptualisation not only provided stability²⁵⁶ but also gave flexibility and dynamism to the interstate-system in South Sulawesi. For, when actual power centres changed and prior alliances were broken and new formed, obsolete treaties were relegated to the shadows of the new ones, but with the possibility of re-emerging should changes in the actual power relations require it: “Once a treaty had been agreed upon, it remained a permanent agreement which could be resurrected and renewed or allowed to recede into the background in face of other superior political and spiritual forces.”²⁵⁷ The notion of treaties as “enduring sacred documents” was thus no impediment to stability or

²⁵⁵ Ibid. 283–84.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. 284.

²⁵⁷ Ibid. 284.

dynamic readjustments; quite the contrary, it served as a facilitating factor for both: “The treaties, oaths and the whole treaty making procedure were part of a continuing process of reassessment of political and spiritual affiliations to assure the establishment of a hierarchy of states which accurately reflected the power situation in South Sulawesi.”²⁵⁸

As for flexibility, Andaya goes so far as to rank the South Sulawesi states diplomatic system as superior to the Company’s, because in the latter, treaties were used and functioned as “instruments of oppression,”²⁵⁹ whereas in the former they served as “a means of establishing proper and peaceful relations.”²⁶⁰ Leaving aside the ranking and the moral context that Andaya puts it in here, his explanation of motivating forces and the driving factor “” in the South Sulawesi system demands comment. Unique moral conceptualisations of “honour” *siri* and “dignity” (*pesse*) form the underpinnings of the South Sulawesi states system, a system that stands out in diametrical opposition to the European diplomatic system.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. 284.

²⁵⁹ Ibid. 284.

²⁶⁰ Ibid. 284.

The concept of siri and the workings of diplomacy and treaty in the South Sulawesi states system

Distribution of *siri*, a concept that may be translated as “shame,” “self-respect,” or “self-worth,”²⁶¹ was what the typical South Sulawesi system of treaties was about. Diplomacy was a mechanism by which proper and peaceful relations with other states were established by distribution and redistribution of it.²⁶² At the personal level, *siri* worked as motivational factor. To have *siri* meant “to know one’s status and place in one’s society,” and a person would “defend his self-respect to the death if necessary.”²⁶³ The struggle for recognition of *siri*, and conversely the fear of being deprived of it at the personal individual level, was replicated in the political life of interstate relations. The instrument in which political *siri* was gained was the treaty: “A similar philosophy appears to have underlined the concept of treaties in South Sulawesi. A state’s understanding of its proper status in relation to all other states was determined by the treaty.”²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Ibid. 284. See also: Pelras, 1996, 206 and Cummings, 2002, 164.

²⁶² Ibid. 285. For these concepts, see also Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 15 ff.

²⁶³ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 284.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 284.

Recognising the *siri* mentality as the driving factor in the South Sulawesi interstate system has serious implications for the understanding of the particular logic of treaty making in South Sulawesi, because the *siri*-logic meant that the primary goal of the treaty was to preserve social harmony: “The efficacy of the treaty lay, as with ‘siri,’ in the universal acceptance in South Sulawesi of its legitimate function in preserving harmony in the society.”²⁶⁵ The implicit contrast is with the Western treaty as a zero-sum game in which one party always has to lose. So, for Western Europeans and South Sulawesians, the purpose and way of treaty making constituted a binary, contrasting pair not only at the conceptual level, but also for their inherent logic and motivating factors. Furthermore, in Andaya’s view, these were not differences of degree but of kind. As such, they constituted a structural impediment to meaningful communication, and hence for systemic misunderstanding between the Company and South Sulawesian states like Makassar.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. 284–85.

Miscommunication in treaty making between Makassar and the Company

The seventeenth-century contractual record between Makassar and the Company up to and including the Bongaya Treaty serves as Andaya's main example of systemic misunderstanding. It is central to his argument that the Makassarese were inexperienced in the Western mode of treaty making. Thus he stresses that there is no evidence of any treaty making with the Portuguese, and that the treaties with the VOC of 1637, 1655, and 1660, represented the only three previous occasions in which the sultanate had entered into "a formal treaty arrangement with a European power prior to the one of 1667."²⁶⁶ Likewise important to Andaya's proposition of structural misunderstanding is that there was no learning either. Andaya regards the Bongaya Treaty as exemplary when it comes to structurally conditioned misunderstandings originating from the underlying divergence in the way the Company and South Sulawesi states understood the concept of the treaty.²⁶⁷ To the degree that there were exceptions, these can be explained as exceptions that prove the rule.

²⁶⁶ Ibid. 289 (referring to Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 33–34, 53, 66–77).

²⁶⁷ Andaya, "Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions," 289.

Exceptions confirming the rule in the Company's treaty practice

The Company, says Andaya, “was not unaware of the existence of local treaty traditions in South Sulawesi as it “actually became party to such treaties.”²⁶⁸ But special contextual factors go to explain the rare instances where the Company made concessions to local norms. Accommodation to indigenous treaty traditions happened in cases where the Company was weak, such as when concluding the 1655 treaty with Makassar,²⁶⁹ or in dealings with native states from which the Company had nothing to fear, such as four treaties concluded in December 1671 with minor South Sulawesi states the Company considered insignificant.²⁷⁰ Andaya’s explanation of these exceptions is that the Company would depart from its own contractual tradition either when it felt itself bargaining from a weak position, or from a position of disproportionate strength in its favour.

Looking at Andaya’s use of the 1655 treaty as an example of Company accommodation to local standards in more detail, one of the accommodations he sees is that although “the framework of the treaty is

²⁶⁸ Ibid. 286.

²⁶⁹ December 28, 1655 treaty with Makassar, see analysis in Chapters 4 and 5.

²⁷⁰ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 287.

borrowed from the Western European practice of including each new subject in separate numbered articles, the contents read like a typical South Sulawesi treaty.²⁷¹ The local imprint by contents is demonstrated in three articles safeguarding the autonomy of Makassar.²⁷² As for form, local influence shows itself in general or imprecise phrasings of the treaty clauses, which only in article 8²⁷³ does “again revert to the precision of a European document.”²⁷⁴

The 1671 treaties

In cases where the Company felt it held the upper hand, accommodation to local forms concerned the vassal–overlord relationship, in which the Company was recognised as ruler in the “traditional South Sulawesi treaty idiom.” Another example Andaya uses is the fact that the swearing of the treaty also took the traditional form by swearing on the Koran and drinking the ritual palm wine “all in the traditional fashion.”²⁷⁵ But all in all, apart from the 1655 and 1671 examples, both of which were marked by exceptional circumstances, the general rule was that the Company’s

²⁷¹ Ibid. 287.

²⁷² Ibid. 287.

²⁷³ Art. 8 is the final one of the treaty.

²⁷⁴ Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 287.

²⁷⁵ Ibid. 287.

ideas about Asian rulers and treaty making with them were locked in Eurocentric perceptions and practices. However, local contractors interpreted these Eurocentric treaties in terms of local idiom. Andaya uses the Bongaya Treaty as a prominent example of both.

The Bongaya Treaty of 1667

After demonstrating how Arung Palakka perceived the Bongaya Treaty in terms of local conceptions and how he continued to act in accordance with these conceptions vis à vis the Company,²⁷⁶ Andaya goes on to argue that this was the *general* South Sulawesi interpretation of the Bongaya Treaty. Arung Palakka and his allies thus viewed their relation with the Company as “a favoured child to the mother”²⁷⁷ and according to local tradition, this type of relationship carried certain obligations for the “mother” as the person responsible for the protection and welfare of its “child”: “When the South Sulawesi states accepted their subordinate relationship to the Company in the Bongaya treaty, they fully expected the Company to accept its responsibilities as mother/master and

²⁷⁶ Ibid. 290.

²⁷⁷ Ibid. 291.

guarantee the sovereignty of all its children /slaves in the traditional South Sulawesi overlord-vassal *relationship*.”²⁷⁸

When the Company, acting on a different set of conceptions, failed to meet local expectations, the South Sulawesi considered the treaty to have been broken: “But this expectation turned to bewilderment and anger when the Company failed to adhere to the proper code of behaviour expected of an overlord.”²⁷⁹

The examples that Andaya uses to illustrate the Company’s failure to meet South Sulawesi’s expectations mainly concern Sulawesi’s fears of the Company’s infringements on local autonomy.²⁸⁰ Over this issue, there was a constant struggle in which the Company tried to “force” the South Sulawesi states into the European conceptions of treaty.²⁸¹ But these states “never relinquished their traditional belief that any treaty guaranteed a state’s right to its own *adat* and *bicara*.”²⁸² Basically, this too was a conflict caused by incompatible expectations grounded on conflicting assumptions about the meaning of “treaty” and, no less important, how treaties function.

²⁷⁸ Ibid. 291.

²⁷⁹ Ibid. 291.

²⁸⁰ Ibid. , 291

²⁸¹ Ibid. 291

²⁸² Ibid. 291, “customary law” and “autonomy.”

European tunnel vision and lack of understanding of and sensitivity to local perceptions in the Company's treaty making

Andaya describes the Company's approach to its Asian counterparts as based on three features: A principled lack of intention to understand the local treaty traditions; an all-embracing dominance of the "European" model in the Company's treaties with states in South Sulawesi; and a lack of interest in accommodating local practices. "There is little indication that any effort was made to understand the whole intent of local treaties," he writes. "Almost the entire corpus of the treaties between the Company and the South Sulawesi states was framed in the Western European tradition of treaty making, with little or no attempt to accommodate local practices."²⁸³

Andaya's message is clear: Company servants suffered from a form of Eurocentric tunnel vision. They brought with them a Western model of "treaty" to Asia and made no adjustments when applying it in the Asian context. Given that the "European beliefs and concepts" brought overseas were in total opposition to local perceptions, the treaty making by necessity had to end in a clash of cultures. I shall end my

²⁸³ Ibid. 287-88.

exposition of Andaya's viewpoints by demonstrating how conflicting conceptualisations of "treaty" lay at the heart of the Company's recurring complaints about "breaches of contract" by its South Sulawesi opposites.

Allegations of breach of contract as a cultural misconception

As we have seen, Andaya claims that the difference in the Company and its South Sulawesi counterparts' conception of what a treaty was can be ascribed to the fact that the Company's intention was to establish regulations on specific issues to which both parties agreed, whereas the South Sulawesi intention was to signal positions within a hierarchy of implicit, but still specific reciprocal obligations. A divergent view of what actually constituted a breach of contract was thus built in at the outset. For the Company, it followed that any failure by the treating parties to honour the explicit regulations agreed to in the treaty was considered a violation of its terms. From the South Sulawesi point of view, however, such explicit and specific regulations were peripheral to the intention of entering into a treaty at the outset, as the centrality of the agreement lay in its function as a regulator of a given state's position and thereby implicit rights and obligations within a hierarchy of states. In

South Sulawesi the state interaction system was set in a mental framework in which “the local states viewed the treaty not in its individual parts, but as a total document.”²⁸⁴ It all meant a deep-seated difference between the South Sulawesi states and the Company regarding the view of what constituted breach of contract. In South Sulawesi, “the treaty represented an open declaration of a shift in the spiritual and political power relationships in the area, and ... when circumstances demanded it, the ruler felt free to re-examine his alternatives and to make necessary realignments to reflect the new power relations.”²⁸⁵ By the Company’s particularistic standards, however, such rearrangements came to be regarded as “breaches of contract.”²⁸⁶ It all boiled down to the essentially antagonistic conceptualisation of the meaning and function of treaty as respectively a secular political or spiritual political entity.

In essence, the local South Sulawesi treaties represented a mechanism for the distribution of political and spiritual “capital.” To the Company, these treaties were intended as a political means for acquiring profit: “The treaties between the Company and the native states were ...

²⁸⁴ Ibid. 288.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. 288

²⁸⁶ Ibid. 288

always basically commercial with the foremost aim being the acquisition of trading advantages for the Company.”²⁸⁷ The South Sulawesi treating parties did not put much emphasis on commercial matters, which were always secondary and instrumental to political and spiritual concerns or considerations about hierarchical position.²⁸⁸

In general, Andaya purports that the very idea of entering into treaties for commercial purposes was not an integral part of the South Sulawesi perception of “treaty”: “Such a treaty whose central concern was trade was totally alien to the concept of treaties in South Sulawesi.”²⁸⁹ So, not only were the European and South Sulawesi treaty traditions different in form and content, they served fundamentally different purposes.

Besides that, the wording of the Company’s treaty regulations was formulated so intricately that the local ruler was left with no other option but to protest against the most “outrageous” of them, while leaving the rest in the belief that “all things would find their proper place according to well-known traditional practices.”²⁹⁰ The latter assumption

²⁸⁷ Ibid. 288.

²⁸⁸ Ibid. 288.

²⁸⁹ Ibid. 288.

²⁹⁰ Ibid. 288.

was an expectation that sprang from the Sulawesi tradition, in which it was assumed that the commercial or economic arrangements would find their solution within a framework of reciprocal rights and obligations that did not compromise any of the party's sovereignty.²⁹¹

Summing up of the subsection

Whatever the contextual reasons Andaya offers to explain the exceptions to the VOC's mode of treaty making, in the main he offers a structural explanation for the typical meaning and mode of diplomatic practice by both the Company and the South Sulawesi polities. Because these meanings and modes sprang from incompatible conceptualisations, there was no real communication between the two. Such diplomatic interaction as occurred was based on mutual misunderstanding

Andaya's views on treaty and treaty making in historiographic perspective

Andaya's analysis is as I have pointed out, to a large degree built on Noorduynd, and assumptions supporting his propositions have been shared by a number of more recent authors. Yet, at the end of this section

²⁹¹ Ibid. 288.

I would like to draw attention to some interpretations that complement or modify Andaya's view. Noorduyn for instance draws attention to what he calls "pragmatic opportunism" as a feature of the Bugis political system by the fact that people would back the person considered to manifest the greatest concentration of power as leader. This convention thus represented an additional source of flexibility to the enduring life of treaties to be brought back and forth according to the demands of situation and context.²⁹² Christian Pelras on the other hand seems to stress other factors than the sacred conceptualization of cosmos more than Andaya, pointing to that although the ruler ruled by sacred legitimation or divine origin, power was also conceptualized as a contractual relationship between ruler and the people which could be broken if the obligations were not met.²⁹³ Yet another latent source of flexibility in other words.

Anthony Reid takes this a step further in pointing to the fact that despite the sacred and binding nature of oaths taken before the spirits of

²⁹² Noorduyn, Jacobus, "The Wajorese merchants' community in Makassar", in: Roger Tol, Kees van Dijk and Greg Acciaoli (eds.), *Authority and Enterprise among the Peoples of South Sulawesi*, Verhandelingen, KITLV 188, Leiden, KITLV PRESS, 2000, 95-121, 116.

²⁹³ Christian Pelras, *The Bugis*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, 106.

the ancestors, there are plenty of examples where these were broken,²⁹⁴ which also might be seen as a source for flexibility.

In a somewhat different direction, Reid points out that this was closely related to the readiness of Bugis and Makassarese communities to regulate their affairs by contracts between two parties, each recognising the other's rights.²⁹⁵ Because the concept of contract meant trust, there might have been greater respect for mutual contracts than for the authority of kings.²⁹⁶ I shall elaborate more on this in subsection 3 below. But before that, a conclusion on Andaya's positions is necessary.

Concluding remarks

There is little space left for dynamism in Andaya's analysis. Both the Company and the South Sulawesi states acted on their cultural structures well up into the twentieth century. Diplomatic interaction between the two was consequently a continuous process of repeated misunderstandings and conflict.

²⁹⁴ Anthony Reid, "The Rise of Makassar", *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian affairs*, 17, 1983, 117-160 136.

²⁹⁵ Reid, in Tol et al. eds., 2000, 64.

²⁹⁶ Reid in Tol et al. eds., 2000, 66, 70.

The picture of seventeenth-century South Sulawesi diplomacy Andaya draws also rests on the basic assumption that even in communication with European outsiders the South Sulawesi applied their traditional logic and approach to state interactions. Likewise, regarding the Company, Andaya's proposition is that it applied its heritage of European diplomatic means and modes without adjusting its expectations to the Asian context. I shall argue that Andaya's static assumptions are historically wrong for both parties. Diplomatic interaction between Makassar and the Company represented a dynamic process. My counterproposition can be illustrated by comparing Andaya's assumptions to those of G. J. Resink's interpretations of seventeenth-century international law in the Indonesian archipelago and Makassar. I shall go through Resink's points of view, and their implications for Andaya's assumptions, mainly relying on Resink's analysis in *The Law of Nations in Early Makassar*.²⁹⁷ After that I pursue the topic of Makassarese dynamism, briefly introduced above.

²⁹⁷First published as "Volkenrecht in vroeger Makassar", *Indonesië*, IV, v (March, 1953). My references are to the English version: "The Law of Nations in Early Makassar", in Resink: *Indonesia's History between the Myths*, (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Publishers, 1968)

Section 2: Resink's proposition on international law in Makassar and its implications for Andaya's positions

Introduction

In *The Law of Nations in Early Makassar* Resink states that he set himself two goals, firstly to point out parallels between Makassarese notions of international law as compared to the Company's (or Western) notions, and secondly to identify incorporations or adaptations of local elements in the Company's diplomatic practice. Resink's project thus builds on two basic propositions that run contrary to Andaya, namely that there *was* a kind of international law in Makassar which for all its particular differences was compatible with Western notions of international law. In other words, Resink's assumptions are diametrically opposed to Andaya's propositions about the absolute singularity of Makassarese tradition and the incompatibility of Makassarese and Company approaches to diplomatic relations.

I shall first treat Resink's identifications of constitutive institutions in the Makassarese variant of international law and then look at the instances where he singles out particular traits or variances in the Makassarese system. Finally, I shall sum up the instances where he finds

integration of Makassarese elements into the Company's mode of diplomacy. My discussion follows a pattern where I first expose Resink's positions and then contrast them to Andaya's proposition with a particular focus on the implications of Resink's view for Andaya's argument. Before I go on to the analysis, it should be mentioned that Resink's argument rests on empirical research at the time of writing.²⁹⁸

Parallelisms

Whereas Andaya points to the difference in meaning and intent in concluding interstate treaties in Europe and South Sulawesi, Resink starts his argument by stating that there was a long-established tradition for concluding diplomatic treaties in South Sulawesi. Examples of such contracts, such as the *ulukanya*, a collection of treaties concerning Goa's political relations with its dependencies and other Indonesian states, could for example be regarded as a "Goan Corpus Diplomaticum."²⁹⁹ As Resink finds no need to qualify the parallelism with respect to differences in meaning and intention in the South

²⁹⁸ In particular A. A. Cense, "Enige aantekeningen over Makassars-Boeginese geschiedschrijving," *BKI* 107 (1951): 42–60, and V. E. Korn, "Problemen der Makassars-Boeginese samenleving," *BKI* 108 (1952): 17–35.

²⁹⁹ Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths*, 41, referring to Cense, "Enige aantekeningen."

Sulawesian treaties, the implication must be that he finds no essential difference between the European and Asian treaties.

The same goes for the perception of boundaries and territories. Pointing to studies by Van Vollenhoven and Korn, Resink claims the existence of “fixed boundaries” for the Makassarese and Buginese principalities “with frontiers sedulously described and delineated ages ago.”³⁰⁰ As such, a delineation of fixed borders also implies a secular trait shared by people in South Sulawesi and Europe—one that stands in indirect opposition to Andaya’s proposition about an absolute contrast between a sacred conceptualisation of statehood in South Sulawesi and a secular conceptual framework in Europe.

Resink finds a similar modern and secular trait in the Makassarese conceptualisation of international law in the field of maritime territorial rights. In the treaty of 1637 with the Company for instance, one finds “recognition of maritime authority in the customary sense of territorial waters.”³⁰¹ This is but a reflection of the general rule that principalities of southern Sulawesi had such defined “marine

³⁰⁰ Ibid. 43, referring to Vollenhoven and Korn.

³⁰¹ Ibid. 45. For an analysis of the making of the treaty and its contents, see chapter 4.

belts.”³⁰² Note that Resink seems to suppose that the clause was included by the initiative of the Makassarese. However, of greater importance in my context is the implication that the Company and Makassar worked within a shared perceptual framework regarding this matter.³⁰³

Given this background, Resink believes the conflict between Makassar and the Company in the seventeenth century can be seen as a struggle over this kind of maritime authority “in the broader sense.”³⁰⁴ This proposition is important to note, because it signals quite a different interpretation of the nature of the conflict between the Company and Makassar than Andaya’s view that it arose from a structural miscommunication between incompatible parties pursuing different goals. For his part, Resink is quite clear that Makassar and the company were pursuing the same goals: “Macassar ... with a large-scale transit trade in spices from the Moluccas had no choice but to resist the efforts of the Company to force through treaties banning shipping, transportation and trade on the part of others in order to promote the monopoly which it desired for itself in the nutmeg and clove trade.”³⁰⁵

³⁰² Ibid. referring to Vollenhoven.

³⁰³ See chapter 4 for my further corroboration of this point.

³⁰⁴ Resink, *Indonesia’s History between the Myths*, 45.

³⁰⁵ Ibid. 45.

From this perspective, Resink logically comes to view Makassar as a *de facto* champion of *mare liberum*³⁰⁶, but, contrary to Andaya, acting on secular, commercial motives.

According to Andaya Makassar and the Company were pursuing quite different goals. While the company sought profit, Makassar was interested in prestige. The root of the conflict for Andaya lay in the Makassarese pursuit of the recognition of overlordship in areas where the Company had vested monopoly claims.³⁰⁷ So, while for Resink the conflict between the Company and Makassar over the Moluccas was one in which both struggled to get a share of the commercial prize,³⁰⁸ for Andaya the conflict represented yet another example of misunderstanding due to the incompatibility between the worldviews of Makassar and the Company. The sultan was not a champion of an “open sea”; he was protecting his pursuit of prestige by a proxy argument. His “real” interest lay in the accumulation of prestige, which he could acquire by acting and being recognised as a protector and defender of the

³⁰⁶ Ibid. 45.

³⁰⁷ Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 46.

³⁰⁸ Reid for one, shares the impression of Makassar as a champion of an open door policy of free trade, Reid 1981, 10.

faith and overlordship in the Moluccas. *Mare liberum* was conceived in terms of notions of prestige, not commercial terms in Makassar.³⁰⁹

For Andaya, the conflict over the Moluccas between the Company and Makassar sprang from the fact that the one could not have its wishes fulfilled without trespassing on the interests of the other. But they did not have shared interests. The conflict originated in different motivations, namely Makassar's quest for prestige and the Company's for profit. What caused the clash was the fact that control over the Spice Islands served as a means to both ends.

For Resink, the conflict between the Company and Makassar over the Moluccas was a conflict over shared interests, as the core of the conflict was that the Company's monopoly claims ran counter to Makassar's economic interests. Thus, when Makassar applied an open seas argument, it did so to protect its interests as a transit harbour, while the Company tried to protect its monopoly interests by outlawing the transit traffic from the Moluccas on Makassar. In other words, they were both trying to protect their respective commercial interests. The conflict lay in the Makassarese refusal to recognise or adhere to the Company's

³⁰⁹ Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, 46.

monopoly claims: “What the Dutch looked upon as Makassarese smuggling ... was perfectly legal trade in the Makassarese view. Hence the (Makassarese) struggle for the *mare liberum* and against the Company ... was even from the Dutch point of view a struggle against the injustice of the closed seas attempted and perpetrated by the Company in Indonesia.”³¹⁰ In other words the struggle between Makassar and the Company was primarily a conflict over a common goal: economic resources.³¹¹ For that reason, the struggle was also fought with a shared rhetoric.

Institutions of international law in Indonesia

The institution of diplomatic envoys, for one, was one of long standing in Indonesia,³¹² pointing to the existence of a system of diplomatic interaction with similar age-old roots. If this was an institution found in both Indonesia and Europe, there were also specialist institutions in Indonesia primarily meant to facilitate maritime trade. Resink draws particular attention to the institution of the *sabannara*, the Makassarese

³¹⁰ Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths*, 46.

³¹¹ Compare “This essentially economic struggle,” *ibid.* 45.

³¹² *Ibid.* 48.

translation of *shahbandar*, a local administrative office that can be translated as “harbourmaster” and which was meant to serve the special needs of the maritime states in South East Asia.³¹³ The *shahbandar* was responsible for receiving foreigners and bringing them to the ruler, but there are several instances in which the *shahbandars* also exercised jurisdictional authority over foreign traders. Resink’s point is that states such as Makassar whose income derived largely from maritime trade needed an institution to facilitate and regulate that trade.³¹⁴

Resink finds similarities between the *sabannara* or *shahbandar* and the European medieval institution of *consul de la mer*, but prefers to regard the *shahbandar* as a uniquely Indonesian institution because of the *shahbandar*’s function as administrator of international law: “Though all this suggests that the *sabannara* might in a way be compared to the medieval *consul de la mer*, it would seem more satisfactory to view him as a quite distinct Indonesian legal functionary who was endowed with

³¹³ This institution is also treated by Cummings, who traces it back to the 1530s, and notes that the institution was never occupied by high ranking nobles, indicating that it did not have particularly high prestige. See Cummings 2002, 29 and 111 respectively.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.* 48–50.

both administrative power and regulatory and judiciary authority in the sphere of international law.”³¹⁵

Whatever the particularities of the institutions of the *sabannara/shahbandar* the important point is that the institution and the powers attached to it are indicative of the international nature of the harbour states. Symptomatic of the functionality of the institution is that the Company came to adopt it, under the name of *license master*.³¹⁶ In both cases, the institution points to a context of (maritime) interaction where a diplomatic repertoire confined to a “landlocked” tradition would be insufficient. Another functional necessity of the maritime interaction system was that it had to make structural space for foreigners or outsiders.

The outsider as a separate category in the Indonesian system of maritime interaction

Referring to A. A. Cense, Resink states that “Makassarese and Buginese manuscripts time and again contain regulations defining the rights and duties of foreigners, and thus: in Macassar there must have been a fairly

³¹⁵ Ibid. 51.

³¹⁶ Ibid. 50. Referring to Pieter van Dam’s use of the term.

well-defined status for aliens.”³¹⁷ In actual fact, Resink holds that Makassar was not only typical, it was an *extraordinarily* typical example of how a particular defined place for the outsider was designed, as Makassar “saw and drew the lines between the status of aliens and that of subjects more clearly than was customary and necessary at the time.”³¹⁸ The mental division between insiders and various outsiders was well entrenched and there was a “vivid awareness of what or who were Makassarese on the one hand and Dutch, English, Danish, Spanish, Portuguese, Ternatan, Tidorese, Batchanese and so forth on the other.”³¹⁹ This awareness and the legal demarcation between Makassarese subjects and outsiders have serious implications for Andaya’s propositions about the nature of Makassarese diplomacy.

As we have seen, Andaya pays no attention to specific regulations for outsiders in Makassar. His argument of incompatibility between the Makassarese and the Company’s modes of diplomacy rests on the assumption that the Makassarese applied the same diplomatic approach towards the Company that they would to a neighbouring South Sulawesi state. In other words, Andaya’s proposition of incompatibility and

³¹⁷ Ibid. 47.

³¹⁸ Ibid. 47.

³¹⁹ Ibid. 47.

structural misunderstanding rests on the assumption that Makassar saw the coming of and contact with the Company as it was approached by a South Sulawesi *insider*, while in fact there was a special category reserved for the treatment of outsiders. Recognising the fact that the Makassar had every reason to hold the Company at arm's length, this is hardly convincing. The Company was an obvious candidate to be treated as an "outsider," both by definition as well as for tactical considerations.

Furthermore, when Resink points to that the Makassar system contained a separate category particularly designed for the "outsider," it undermines the foundation of Andaya's dichotomy between the Makassar and Company's system of interaction, because the very existence of such a category raises the possibility of a plurality of regulatory forms. More specifically, Andaya's assumption that Makassar would simply apply endogenous traditions established to handle interstate affairs in South Sulawesi to its dealing with outsiders is not credible. There were alternative modes reserved precisely for such cases, and common sense suggests that Makassar rulers would have found

these far more attractive than treating the Company as a South Sulawesi “insider.”

The presence of outsiders in the Makassar community further necessitated internationally organised administration of justice at the individual level.³²⁰ Resink finds examples of this in the 1637, 1660, and 1667 Bongaya Treaty.³²¹ We need not go into details here, but besides demonstrating the existence of specific institutions arising from the cosmopolitan nature of Makassar, it is important to note that the Company by definition would fall under this category.

Besides the identification of both similarities and differences of international law in Makassar and Europe, Resink also points to instances of Company adoption of local institutions and usages. One I have mentioned already, namely the appointing of a *license master* to meet the function of the *shahbandar*. Another example to which Resink draws attention is the habit of naming the treaty after the name of place where it was concluded³²², which definitely is a weaker case, considering that this was a European custom too. But another feature pointed out,

³²⁰ Ibid. 51.

³²¹ Ibid. 52.

³²² Referring to Cense, “Enige aantekeningen,” and using the Bongaya Treaty as a prime example.” Ibid. 42.

namely the gradation of different types of relationships between treaty partners³²³ is particularly interesting when placed alongside Andaya's propositions. Referring to Cense, Resink states that in the Makassarese system, "relationships could range from a "footing of equality" to various degrees of subservience and dependence."³²⁴ That the Company adopted this system is evident from the Company's subsequent practice of employing the same variety of relationship types in its treaties with other local rulers.³²⁵

As we have seen, Andaya emphasises that South Sulawesi treaties typically specified the nature of the relationship between the treating parties in the preamble. The fact that naming the type of relationship also made further explication of the reciprocal rights and obligations redundant further distinguished the South Sulawesi tradition from the European. Resink's demonstration of the Company's adoption of certain local treaty elements, however, weakens Andaya's argument about the absolute dichotomy between the "Western and South Sulawesi treaties." If elements from one tradition could be integrated

³²³ Ibid. 42–43.

³²⁴ Ibid. 42.

³²⁵ Ibid. 42–43.

into the other, there must have been some kind of compatibility. Such part-by-part adoption is blocked in Andaya's structural assumptions.

It is important to note the contrast between Resink's and Andaya's views on the possibility of cultural exchange more generally, as they represent diametrically opposite approaches. By proposing an absolute antagonism between the South Sulawesi and Western European modes of conceptualisation, Andaya presupposes an insurmountable barrier to learning by exchange between the two modes. Resink's proposition of compatibility opens the possibility that such cultural exchanges actually could take place. To which degree the Company adopted local practices I shall not consider here, but I would argue for a broadening of Resink's implicit proposition of cultural borrowing in a general direction, and propose that adaptation to Asian contexts was a hallmark of the Company's diplomacy.

Section conclusion

Resink sums up the aim of his article in the following manner: "that a knowledge of the history of non-European international law thus in this case the specific international law of Indonesia ... can in its turn help to free our knowledge of the history of international law in general from its

emphatically European stamp.”³²⁶ This is a statement of a programmatic anti-Eurocentric comparative methodology.

Andaya is also anti-Eurocentric, but from diametrically different comparative assumptions. Resink identifies both similarities and differences between the systems and practices of international law in early modern Europe and Indonesia, and operates from assumptions of compatibility that allow for an analysis of mutual influence. The latter is barred in Andaya’s contrasting approach of structural incompatibility. Which point of view encourages the most fruitful interpretation of the nature of the Company’s diplomatic method, and which is the more fruitful in analysing the nature of Makassar-Company interaction? I shall restrict myself to summarising how my own propositions look if we take the contrast between Resink’s and Andaya’s positions as our point of departure.

First, the examples of similarity in Resink’s comparison weaken Andaya’s propositions of an absolute dichotomy between the Company’s and local perceptions of diplomatic interaction. Second, the particular

³²⁶ Resink, *Indonesia’s History between the Myths*, 56.

institutions of international law that Resink identifies in the Makassarese system lessen the likelihood that it would have restricted itself to local endogenous models of interaction in its dealings with the Company. Third, the Company's adoption of local elements of international law could probably be seen as examples of a policy of Company accommodation rooted in a general pragmatic approach.

In the following, I build on all of these propositions. There was some compatibility between the Makassarese and the Company's perceptions of international law, and thus structural space for meaningful communication between them. Makassar was not confined to one single model as far as its dealings with the Company went. As a harbour state, the Makassarese had developed a system of international law that offered structural space and institutions in which the Company could be categorised as an "outsider" on par with other outsiders. But it was neither the first nor the most important one.

Section 3: Two views on Makassarese dynamism

In this section I present two views on Makassarese dynamism, mainly represented by William Cummings and Anthony Reid. The former holds that there definitely was dynamism in early modern Makassar, particularly embedded in the coming of writing, whereas the latter also subscribes to that there were dynamics and change, but primarily sees this in conjunction with expansion in trade and cultural contacts. More importantly the two differ in the contents and nature of the dynamics. Whereas as Cummings sees it as a change that gives a new forms and meanings to existing “traditional” structures, Reid interprets the changes he finds as parts of a process towards more “modern” structures. I shall clarify their respective positions, with a particular focus on Reid and the implications his positions on a dynamics of modernity has for Andaya’s propositions.

Cummings is not alone in countering propositions of societies in the Eastern archipelago as “self-perpetuating systems.” Hans Hägerdal for one has argued change and dynamism in Timor, subscribing it to

increased income from trade.³²⁷ Gerrit Knaap has done the same for Ambon, subscribing increasing dynamism to increased outside contacts and the number of people with experience with the outside world.³²⁸

Cummings singles himself out in that he declares himself in opposition to the all-embracing and exclusive status he thinks Reid gives to commerce as the driving force of historical dynamics.³²⁹ He sets out to analyse the beginning of written manuscripts in the beginning 16th century, as the motor of a particular social and cultural change, or as he calls it: “a shift in historical consciousness.”³³⁰ With the introduction of writing, custom was now no longer perceived as resting with the elders, but in written manuscripts.³³¹ Thus “custom” was codified into “culture.”³³² Cultural codification along with an increased strengthening of the social hierarchy and political centralisation were the big processes that were facilitated by literacy.³³³

As one of the changes brought with the transition to literacy was an increased importance put on ancestors or the written past, with it came

³²⁷ Hägerdal 2012, 55.

³²⁸ Knaap 2004, 12-13.

³²⁹ Cummings, 2002, 127.

³³⁰ Cummings, 2002, 12.

³³¹ Cummings, 2002, 169, 170, 172.

³³² Cummings, 2002, 177.

³³³ Cummings, 2002, 195.

a new emphasis on genealogies.³³⁴ A curious by-product of this was the creative fabrications of them where parents for instance would put Arung Palakka into their genealogies.³³⁵

On a more general level the changes that writing brought to Makassarese society were firstly, an enhanced authority to those who possessed written texts, be it genealogies or histories, and a change of view on past and present (by the enhanced weight put on genealogies for instance, and that the past came to be viewed as something that could be possessed (by manuscripts or objects). Put together these changes extended and refined the social hierarchy in a direction that later came to be viewed as “classical.”³³⁶ That proposition is the key point in my context. For, if literacy brought about profound changes in Makassarese mentality, perception and world view,³³⁷ it was a change that cemented structures that were still “traditional” in the sense that it was looking backwards into a reconstructed past. For Cumming the Makassarese dynamics lay in the increased emphasis and reconstruction of that past.

³³⁴ Cummings, 2002, 104.

³³⁵ Cummings, 2002 106.

³³⁶ Cummings, 2002, 126.

³³⁷ Cummings, 2002, 11.

As already stated, Reid's interpretation of the early modern dynamics in Makassar is that it is "modern", in the sense that it is perceived in perceptions about the future.

Reid on Makassarese dynamism

Christian Pelras stresses as characteristic of the Bugis their ability in cultural borrowing of novelties from the outside, particularly brought about by external contact and trade which up to the 19th century "produced by a continuous process of change."³³⁸ This dynamics by cultural borrowing concerned almost every area of Bugis life – customary law, socio-political rules, customs, rites and creeds.³³⁹

Reid points to similar dynamic traits, although possibly more restricted to the ruling elite, but nonetheless depicted as a general trait in Makassar from the end of the sixteenth until the second half of the seventeenth centuries. As examples of innovations and changes in this dynamic period Reid mentions that in the wake of an incident with the Dutch in 1615 the then sultan Alauddin and his first minister Matoaya³⁴⁰ started to build brick walls for defence purposes. It was done in a

³³⁸ Pelras, 1996, 149.

³³⁹ Pelras, 1996, 150.

³⁴⁰ See: section 1, chapter 1, above.

European fashion which marked “a sharp break with older Indonesian methods of warfare.”³⁴¹ Matoaya also had the forts Ujung Pandag and Pannakkukang built, and there were innovations in the manufacture of cannons and small muskets, as well as technical innovations in shipbuilding. There were also innovations in the minting of gold and lead.³⁴² Supporting the picture of an innovative culture and inquisitiveness was that there were translations into Makassarese of technical treatises from Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, and Malay authorities, as well as map making.³⁴³ Reid also holds forth that the shift to Islam should be seen as a (cultural) innovation.³⁴⁴

With respect to the population growth in Makassar, the rise is estimated to be from only a few thousands in the 1590s to about 25,000 in 1615 and 100,000 at its peak 1640-1660, and is taken as an overall indication of the seventeenth century’s economic growth and dynamism.³⁴⁵ On the one hand it is clear that this growth can be seen as

³⁴¹ Reid, Anthony, “A great seventeenth century Indonesian family: Matoaya and Pattingalloang of Makassar”, *Masyarakat Indonesia*, 8/1, 1-28, 1981, 11.

³⁴² Reid, 1981, 12.

³⁴³ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 60.

³⁴⁴ Reid, 1981, 13.

³⁴⁵ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 58.

part of the general growth in maritime Southeast Asia in the early modern period,³⁴⁶ the question is how the particular inventiveness of the Makassarese can be explained. According to Reid it lay in the nature of the Makassarese leadership at the time, which demonstrated an “unusual aptitude for adopting new ideas and technologies.”³⁴⁷

The nature of late sixteenth and seventeenth-century leadership in Makassar

As for Matoaya, ruler of Tello and chancellor of Goa 1593-1637, Noorduyn praises his sensible politics as for instance in his non-offensive, conciliatory policy towards Bone during the Islam-wars.³⁴⁸ It is also necessary to notice that Sultan Alauddin was both a nephew and pupil of Matoaya.³⁴⁹ Reid evaluates both Matoaya and his son Pattingalloang as possessing an extraordinary combination of intellectual eminence and political wisdom.³⁵⁰ While a lot of the innovations mentioned above can be ascribed to the initiatives of Matoaya, as for

³⁴⁶ See: Reid, Anthony, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*, vol. 2: *Expansion and Crisis*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

³⁴⁷ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 58.

³⁴⁸ Noorduyn, 1955, 98.

³⁴⁹ Pelras, 1996, 135.

³⁵⁰ Reid, 1981, 3.

intellectual orientations and cultural openness Pattingalloang deserves some more detailed comments.

Pattingalloang

Indicative of Pattingalloang's openness and intellectual curiosity is that he was exceptionally fluent in Portuguese and Spanish, and had a library of European books. He also showed an interest in applied mathematics.³⁵¹ In Reid's evaluation it is certain that Pattingalloang's role in Makassar, seen in the light of his interest in European science, mathematics, and astronomy, "influenced the culture of Makassar in this period, and lay behind many of the innovations to which it gave rise."³⁵² Also by the VOC there was appreciation of this man of the "Makassarese enlightenment", as Reid calls him.³⁵³

After Pattingalloang's death in 1654 and with the succession of Sultan Hasanuddin, according to Reid, there was a change of system of

³⁵¹ Reid, 1981, 20-21.

³⁵² Reid, 1981, 22. I should also make a reference to Tristan Mostert's contribution: "Ik vertrauwe dat de wereldtbhem naar dien twee polen keert" in Lodewijk Wagenaar (ed): *Aan de opverkant: Ontmoetingen in dienst van de VOC en WIC, 1600-1800* (Leiden: 2015), 77-96, who paints a vivid picture of Pattingalloang's quest for knowledge.

³⁵³ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 60. "a man of great knowledge, science and understanding."

government. Goa and Tello were unable to agree who should be the Chancellor, Hasanuddin himself, or one of two of the sons of Pattingalloang, Karaeng Sumana or Karaeng Karunrung.³⁵⁴ In the end Hasanuddin decided to be his own chancellor, which meant the end of the division of Sultan and chancellor in Makassar.³⁵⁵ Reid reckons Hasanuddin to be a “weak” character and he marks the beginning of his reign as the start of the demise of Makassarese dynamism.³⁵⁶ But returning briefly to the role of the exceptionally able rulers and advisors just discussed, I shall now turn to the structural factors that Reid points to as crucial for explaining Makassarese dynamism during their reigns.

Structural factors

Besides the lack of quality in the two chancellors, Matoaya and his son Pattingalloang, Reid primarily points to the capacity to attract trade and traders; by providing security of life and property and by offering an open society as structural factors behind Makassarese dynamism.³⁵⁷

There were also other structural factors such as the concept of contract as being closely related to a typical pluralistic political assumption, which

³⁵⁴ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 70-71.

³⁵⁵ Reid, 1981, 26.

³⁵⁶ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 70.

³⁵⁷ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 61.

gave the Bugis and Makassarese communities the readiness to regulate their affairs by contracts between two parties, each recognising the other's rights.³⁵⁸ The position and role of the Portuguese may serve as an example in both the general openness and security of property and business transactions.

There is no doubt that the Portuguese in Makassar were the main providers of arms and gunpowder and the main agents of diffusion of Western written books and on such various subjects as fort building, artillery, mathematics, astronomy, geography and cartography, some of which were translated into Makassar and Bugis.³⁵⁹ When the Portuguese in Makassar chose to stay on, it seems reasonable not only to contribute this to the security provided for property and business, but also to an environment of religious toleration.

After the shift to Islam there was toleration of Portuguese Christian worship, four new places,³⁶⁰ as well as the presence of Franciscans, Jesuits and Dominicans.³⁶¹ According to Reid, Makassar

³⁵⁸ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 64.

³⁵⁹ Pelras, 1996, 141.

³⁶⁰ Reid, 1983, 139.

³⁶¹ Reid, 1981, 18, and Reid in Tol et al eds., 2000, 60.

stands out as “the most striking example of religious tolerance in a generally tolerant archipelago.”³⁶² This toleration he proposes could be regarded as an aspect of Makassar’s general welcome to foreigner traders.³⁶³

A seventeenth century cultural shift with “modern” implications?

Reid’s positions on Makassarese dynamism, is that it on the one hand formed part of a pattern of global integration where Southeast Asia as other cultures after 1500 came into continuous contact with each other “with an intensity not previously imagined.”³⁶⁴ By an unusual luck of able leaders, and wise policies establishing structural conditions promoting trade and technological as well as cultural innovations, a dynamism sprang forth which made the Makassar chronicle read like a “litany of innovations.”³⁶⁵

Reid clearly indicates that these innovations might be part of a greater shift in mentality, and then in the direction of “modernity” in a broad definition of the term which would include a direction towards a

³⁶² Reid, 1981 18.

³⁶³ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000 , 58.

³⁶⁴ Reid: “Early Modernity as Cosmopolis: Some Suggestions from Southeast Asia”, in Sven Trakulhum and Ralph Weber (eds.), *Delimiting Modernities - Conceptual Challenges and Regional Responses*, (Lexington Books, London 2015), 123-143, 125.

³⁶⁵ Reid, 2015, 135.

more pragmatic approach to myth and religion. Models taken over from the Dutch, under Pattinggaloang, in the writing of “state diaries”, which recorded state events, chronologically, with dates both in the Christian as well as the Islamic form, Reid takes as an example of this.³⁶⁶ But the phenomenon was by no means entirely new: The chronicles of Tello and Goa reveal that the authors had no doubt about the concept of progress, states Reid³⁶⁷ and goes on to label the nature of the historical writing of Tello and Makassar as an indicator of the open nature of Makassarese society in the seventeenth century: “If one of the key features of an “Open society” is historical writing concerned to preserve past events rather than to construct a state mythology, to portray the dealings between states rather than asserting the superiority of one of them, to record disasters as well as triumphs, the chronicles of Goa and of Talloq get high marks.”³⁶⁸

The picture that Reid paints of Makassarese dynamism stands in opposition to the tendencies towards a new and enhanced “traditionalism” portrayed by Cummings. One may thus wonder whether

³⁶⁶ Reid, 2015, 136.

³⁶⁷ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 59.

³⁶⁸ Reid in Tol et al., eds., 2000, 61.

Knaap's criticism that Reid is making it "too macro economically rational"³⁶⁹ when describing the motives of Southeast Asian leaders when engaging in war - whether he is not making the same anachronistic misjudgement in describing Makassarese dynamism.

I shall not approach this issue on a general basis, but point by way of example that even if Cummings is right on the general level, Reid's propositions about seventeenth-century Makassarese dynamism are primarily about members of the leadership in a restricted period of time. For all its merits or faults the argument is of vital importance in our context because these were the people that the Company was negotiating and concluding treaties and waging war and concluding peace with. It simply strongly implies that the Makassarese leadership had a certain grip on the motives and modes of operation of their Dutch adversaries.

³⁶⁹ Knaap. Gerrit: "Kora-kora en kruitdamp – De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in oorlog en vrede in Ambon", in Knaap, Gerrit, and Teitler (eds.) *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2002), 257-279. 279.

Section 4: The structure of the argument

In chapters 1 and 2, I have given an introduction to my topic and presented propositions in the historiography as well as stating my own positions. The remaining chapters are dedicated to an empirical analysis of the Company's diplomatic thinking and practice. Chapter 3 introduces my empirical counter-argument to categorisations of VOC diplomacy as "Eurocentrically dogmatic" by demonstrating that, even in the Republic people were well aware that European concepts and standards of diplomacy did not necessarily apply in the charter area. On analysing the respective *Generale Instructies* sent from the Heeren XVII in the Republic to the High Government in Batavia, with an emphasis on the last and final instruction of 1650, my conclusion is that not only the latter, but *all* of these instructions either imply or openly stress adaptation to local modes and circumstance in a way that defies any categorisation of them as dogmatically Eurocentric. The key message in the Heeren XVII's General instructions to the High Government is one of awareness of local particularities as the basis for the conduct of pragmatic diplomacy. In a brief section on the Directors' particular

patriase letters on Makassar I demonstrate that these conform to the general picture.

The encounter between the Company and Makassar in 1637 that ended up with the first treaty between the two forms the topic of chapter 4. Here I refute Andaya's argument of structurally conditioned diplomatic miscommunication between the Company and Makassar. By analysing Van Diemen's report on the encounter and process of treaty making with Sultan Alauddin, I demonstrate that the Company's approach in the negotiations was one of adaptive pragmatism. Not only that, the Makassarese reactions and proposals bear witness to the fact that there was functional communication between the two parties. Although the 1637 encounter was characterised by mutual suspicions and uncertainty, Sultan Alauddin and Van Diemen were in essence playing a diplomatic game by compatible rules, and both seem to have been well aware of it.

In chapter 5, I turn to the discussion on policy within the High Government itself. The topic is the disagreement between Governor-General Maetsuyker and Superintendent Arnold de Vlaming in 1655 on whether to take a hard- or a soft stand towards Sultan Hasanuddin. The analysis is primarily based on Maetsuyker's presentation of the reasons

for his rejection of De Vlaming's hard-line approach to the Heeren XVII in Maetsuyker's general letter of December 24, 1655.³⁷⁰

In his defence of the soft approach, Maetsuyker systematically presents De Vlaming's arguments point by point. Ironically, the discussion on the one hand gives us an insight into their disagreement on policy, but although the two men disagreed, they also shared some basic tenets, for example about the goals. The disagreement was over assumptions and means, and was based on diametrically different perceptions of Sultan Hasanuddin's character and plans. Maetsuyker trusted that Hasanuddin had learnt his lesson and would not interfere in the Moluccas anymore, while De Vlaming, distrusting the Sultan, was convinced that he would.

Equally important, the very existence of this disagreement and discussion weakens propositions about the Company as a monolithic body. The fact is that the issue of whether to take a "soft" or a "hard" stand against Makassar was the subject of discussion in Batavia, and that the arguments from both sides were presented to the Heeren XVII, shows

³⁷⁰ December 24, 1655, in W. Ph. Coolhaas, *Generaele Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 3, 1655–74 ('s Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1968), 4–8. (Hereafter *GM*.)

that the Company's diplomacy was flexible and reactive rather than dogmatic. Moreover, both sides based their arguments on contextual considerations rather than fixed legal principles.

As for dynamics and trends in the High Government's deliberations on Makassar, there is a decisive break after 1655 away from "soft diplomacy." With the disillusionment after the conclusion of the 1655 treaty there came a growing belief that a lasting contractual order with Makassar could not be established unless it was preceded by a complete military victory. I elaborate on this shift in chapter 6, where I treat the change in policy assumptions from 1656 to 1661 as they can be read from the *Generale Missiven* in that period. A close reading of the sections on policy towards Makassar reveals how Batavian decisions on diplomacy towards Makassar formed a "learning process" based on experience on the ground. This runs counter to propositions of fixity, whether of a cultural-conceptual or legalist-dogmatist kind. The Company was able to both learn from experience and readjust its approach according to lessons learned. The determining factor in policy decisions and shifts of approach in Batavia lay predominantly in changing assessments of tactical opportunity and other constraints. In other words, policy deliberations in Batavia were based on evaluations of

context more than legal text. Flexibility moulded by contextual considerations stand out as a characteristic of the High Government's decisions on policy.

In chapter 7 I pursue the argument about the contextual focus and dynamic nature of the Company's diplomatic approach presented in chapter 6, albeit from a more concrete and specific point of view. Contrasting the treaties of 1637 and 1655 on the one hand and the treaty of August 1660 on the other, I demonstrate how the general learning and adjustment process outlined in chapter 6 is reflected in a move towards a more constructivist perception of "treaty" by the High Government after 1655.

Chapter 8 takes this one step further in that it analyses the construction of Company hegemony treaty in the respective post-1660 treaty texts up to and including the Bongaya Treaty of 1667 and the one with Tello in 1668. By situating the treaties analysed in both these chapter in their respective contexts and varying expectations towards the Makassarese, I demonstrate three essential interconnected characteristics of Batavia's treaty making. First, legal thinking and appeals to principles of international law played a limited and very narrowly defined role in all

these treaties. Second, the difference between the contracts, both in the selection and contents of the regulations, as well as in the mode of formulating the clauses, can all be explained by variations in the appreciation of the context and changes in the Company's expectations towards Makassar.

Symptomatic of Batavia's devaluation of its trust in the Makassarese after 1655 is that not only was the number of clauses of the 1660 treaty increased significantly, they were far more detailed and specific than they had been previously. This elaboration would reach its acme with the Bongaya Treaty. These traits, including an almost ritually repetitive insistence on the binding nature of the treaty, do not reflect a "legalist obsession" on the part of the Company; they were meant as safeguards against a breach of contract. The contents and form of the 1660 treaty thus reflect a move towards a more realistic and possibly cynical perception of treaty making compared to the High Government's assumptions and beliefs in 1655.

The difference between the 1660 and 1667 contracts reflects the fact that the latter was drafted in the aftermath of a total military victory for the Company and its allies and the unconditional surrender of the Makassarese. The Bongaya Treaty was part of a treaty complex that

included not only Makassar but the other states in South Sulawesi and the outer islands. Together this treaty complex made up a system whereby the Company was hegemon. The 1660 treaty on the other hand was a bilateral one that represented a “middle ground” as far as the Company’s political status was concerned.

Speelman’s reflections on how to maintain the hegemonic position created by the Bongaya treaty complex, as recorded in his *Notitie* of 1669,³⁷¹ forms the topic of chapter 9. The *Notitie*, some 600 folio pages long, contains both a broad and detailed geographical and political mapping of Sulawesi and the outer islands, as well as detailed instructions on the running of the Company’s colonial headquarters, Fort Rotterdam. I shall be concentrating on Speelman’s presentation of the challenges of hegemonic rule and his advice on how to meet them as his reflections on these points mainly cover surveys of who is and is not trustworthy and recommended modes of diplomatic action. Chapter 9

³⁷¹ Cornelis Speelman: *Notitie dienende voor eenen corten tijt en tot nader last van de Hooge Regeeringe op Batavia, tot naarrigtinge van de Onderkoopman Jan van den Oppijnen, bij provisie gesteldt tot Opperhoofd en Commandant in 't Casteel Rotterdam, op Maccasser, en van den Capitain Jan Fransz; als hoofd over de Militie, mitsgaders die van den Raadt, anno 1669. VOC 1276 OB, *Inkomen Briefboek Makassar 1671*, fols. 684–1007 (Hereafter “*Notitie*.”) I have had immense help by comparing the original source with the typed manuscript undertaken by W. Ph. Coolhaas and Dr. H. J. de Graaf in 1949–50, now at the KITLV (Nr. H 802).*

constitutes a reconstruction of Speelman's "overseas diplomatic model" with a focus on these aspects of it.

"Reconstruction" is the keyword here, because one of my basic points is that Speelman worked on a case-by-case basis and never presented a general model of overseas diplomacy. His "model of diplomacy" thus has to be constructed from his specific advice.

It is also important to note that Speelman's case-based approach was dependent on getting precise and accurate information about local affairs. The *Notitie* typically abounds with an insistence that good overseas diplomacy depend on obtaining accurate information. This insistence on basing decisions and choice of action on extensive empirical information is one of two factors that stand out as general traits of Speelman's approach towards overseas diplomacy in the *Notitie*. The other is his reliance on agency and personal diplomacy. Clearly working from, but never elaborating on, the assumption that local diplomacy had a strong personal bias, Speelman's analysis of local power contexts and the tactical space it left for Company influence and control is focused on the personality traits of men who are in, or aspire to, power. The personalised approach may be explained by the overall purpose of pre-empting the rise of foes and keeping the bonds of alliance with old and

new allies in a political environment built on personal charisma and bonds.

Context also played a part in Speelman's political perspective, though it seems to be subsidiary to agency. Chapter 9 consequently has two parts. In the first, I analyse Speelman's thinking regarding the institutional dimension of the hegemonic order, and in the second I look at his recommendations vis-à-vis personal diplomacy. Both sections reveal an "open" and unprejudiced approach towards overseas diplomacy. With ups and downs, and some counter-cases, I still hold that this attitude and approach stands out as a general, but increasingly marked feature of the Company's diplomatic performance towards Makassar between 1637 and 1667.

On the primary sources

The material I use for my reconstruction of the Company's model of overseas diplomacy comprises documents that were produced at various levels of, and served different functions in, the Company hierarchy. The reconstruction of diplomatic mode as initially devised by the Heeren XVII, the *patriase* model of overseas diplomacy, which is dealt with in

chapter 3, is primarily based on the General Instructions from the Heeren XVII of 1609, 1613, 1617, 1632, and 1650, as well as a selection of comments on Makassar in their particular letters to the High Government.³⁷² The discussion of the nature of the Company's perceptions about Makassar, and the nature of the communication between Makassar and the Company, analysed in chapter 4, are primarily based on Van Diemen's report on the negotiations in Makassar, June 24–26, 1637,³⁷³ and secondarily on the treaty text itself, as compiled by Heeres.³⁷⁴ For the discussions over policy towards Makassar and the policy assumptions of the 1655 treaty, I rely mainly on the advice concerning Makassar in the Heeren XVII's General Instructions of 1650.

³⁷² “Instructie voor Pieter Both, Gouverneur Generaal en die van den Raad van Indiën,” November 14, 1609;

“Ordonnancie en Instructie voor den Gouverneur Generaal en den Raden van India,” August 22, 1617; “Punten en artikelen, in Forma van Instructie, voor Hendrik Brouwer, Gouverneur en Generaal en de Raden van Indië,” March 17, 1632; and “Punten en artikelen in form van Generale Instructie voor den Gouverneur Generaal en de bijvoegde Raden,” April 26, 1650, all in Pieter Mijer, *Verzameling van instructiën, ordonnanciën en reglementen voor de regering van Nederlandsch Indië, vastgesteld in de jaren 1609, 1617, 1632, 1650, 1807, 1815, 1818, 1827, 1830 en 1836, met de ontwerpen der Staats-commissie van 1803 en historische aantekeningen* (Batavia: Lands-drukkerij, 1848).

³⁷³ “Verhaell vant gene d'Heer Generaall van Diemmen wedervaren is zyjne Amboijnesche vojage int weder keeren voor Macassar,” June 22–26, 1637, in *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlands-India. Anno 1637*, edited by H. T. Colenbrander ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1899), 280–89. (Hereafter, *DRB*.)

³⁷⁴ “Treaty of peace between the king of Makassar and the noble Gentleman General Governor Antonio van Diemen, June 26, 1637.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 1.303–306.

For the difference of opinion between Maetsuyker and De Vlaming, I rely on Maetsuyker's *Generale missive* of December 24, 1655.³⁷⁵

As for the shift after 1655 from the optimistic view that the Makassarese could be trusted not to interfere in the Moluccas, to the more realistic view that the Makassarese would interfere if not deterred, analysed in chapter 6, I rely mainly on the information on Makassar found in the *Generale Missiven* of the period 1656–61.

The nature and dynamics of the High Government's treaty making with Makassar in the period 1637 to 1668 in chapters 7 and 8 are based on the texts of the contracts, as compiled by Heeres and Stapel in the *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum*. The ninth chapter in which I reconstruct the diplomatic model implicit in Cornelis Speelman's advice for his successors as the Company's leading representative in Makassar is wholly based on his *Notitie*.

The nature of the primary sources and method

The sources on which I base my analysis range from the Directors' orders sent from the Republic to the on-the-spot decisions and

³⁷⁵ December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.4–8.

deliberations on policy in Batavia. The documents span from Instructions from the Heeren XVII to the Company's authorities in Asia, to reports from Company servants in the charter area (*octrooigebied*) to Batavia. And not the least, my sources include the product of these diplomatic negotiations, the written contracts or treaties themselves.

The sources I use have admittedly all been used before, but not for the same primary purposes, and neither have they been used in the way that I have. I do not intend to use my sources as building blocks in a general reconstruction of interaction. That has been done before. I treat and analyse my relevant documents to find indications about a mode of thinking about diplomatic practice in a cross-cultural setting. Therein lies the originality of this study. The method that follows from this approach is to read these documents closely to see what they may reveal about the Company's diplomatic mind. There is nothing fancy about my method. It is simply based on close reading of meaning and intent in these official documents with the aim to establish characteristic traits and typical dynamics in the Company's assumptions and thinking about its diplomatic practice towards Makassar in the seventeenth century. Using Company–Makassarese interaction as a *case study*, it goes by definition

that I also intend to say something about the nature of the Company's seventeenth-century overseas diplomacy on a more general level.

