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

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## **Chapter 5: Policy Discussions and the 1655 Treaty with Makassar—A Matter of Trust and Belief**

### **Section 1: Chapter introduction**

The topic of this chapter is the deliberations that occurred within the High Government of Batavia concerning Makassar in 1655, and the treaty, which was made on the basis of the decisions on policy that were reached.<sup>707</sup>

#### *The 1655 context*

On October 23, 1655, the High Government decided to find out if the Makassarese were inclined towards peace and sent members of the Council of the Indies, the governor of Ambon, Willem van der Beeck,<sup>708</sup> and the Armenian trader Chodia Soliman to determine if this was the case.<sup>709</sup>

When the High Government took the initiative for peace negotiations in October 1655, it was for a number of reasons, chief

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<sup>707</sup> For the period from the conclusion of the 1637 Treaty to the outbreak of the war I refer to the chronology of Company-Makassar relations p 10-11. above.

<sup>708</sup> Van der Beeck was until 1654 Governor of Ambon, Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 53, n. 4.

<sup>709</sup> *Ibid.* 53.

among them the Directors' worries about the high costs of the war and its detrimental effects on trade.<sup>710</sup> But seen in a broader perspective, and of more relevance in explaining Governor-General Maetsuyker's willingness to accept the treaty terms of the 1655 treaty, is probably the Company's pressed situation at the time.

After the end of the truce with the Portuguese in 1651, the High Government received orders from the Directors to continue the struggle against the Portuguese east of the Cape.<sup>711</sup> The Company was thus engaged in war with the Portuguese in Ceylon until 1656.<sup>712</sup> Relations with Banten also caused concern, particularly following the installation of Ageng as sultan in 1651.<sup>713</sup> Added to this, the relations with Palembang and Aceh were troubled.<sup>714</sup> Finally, the Company's position in Taiwan was worrisome, affected as it was by the chaos resulting from the civil war between the Manchus and Ming loyalists in the south, among them Coxinga, who was no friend of the Company.<sup>715</sup> Given

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<sup>710</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>711</sup> Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië*, 311.

<sup>712</sup> Ibid. 312–13.

<sup>713</sup> Ibid. 350.

<sup>714</sup> Ibid. 355 ff.

<sup>715</sup> Ibid. 366.

these concerns, and with troops tied up in the Moluccas and Ceylon,<sup>716</sup> one must conclude that there were also external pressures for making Maetsuyker accept the terms of the treaty of December 28, 1655. As for the reasons for declaring war in the first place, the conflict over destitution claims regarding the *São João Baptista* and *Nazareé* ships, which involved both Francisco Vieira de Figueiredo and the Sultan, must be added.<sup>717</sup>

#### *Chapter sections and propositions*

I shall begin by giving a brief chronology of the diplomatic interaction between 1650 and 1655 to clarify my subject and my propositions. The analysis proper consists of three sections. The first concerns the Directors' advice on Makassar in the 1650 General Instructions; I intend to identify the general scope of manoeuvre and approach that the Directors' gave the High Government. I propose that the tenor of the advice on Makassar conforms with the generally pragmatic approach to

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<sup>716</sup> Ibid. 350.

<sup>717</sup> "One of the principle causes of the renewal of the war in 1653", Boxer calls it: Boxer, Francisco Vieira de Figueiredo – A Portuguese Merchant-adventurer in South Est Asia, 1624-1667, *Verhandelingen*, KITLV, 52, 1967, 11. For the details of the incidents, see Boxer 109-11 .

overseas diplomacy in the 1650 Instructions. In the following section, I undertake a textual analysis of the conflicting views over policy between Governor-General Maetsuyker and the Governor of Ambon, De Vlaming van Oudshoorn, at the close of hostilities in 1655. The latter saw total victory over Makassar as a necessary precondition for the establishment of a lasting peace and the protection of the Company's interests in the Spice Islands, whereas the former argued that the conclusion of a satisfactory treaty by fall 1655 was not dependent on a total military victory.

I propose that although the two parties held contrary views, their respective arguments sprang from the same *raison d'état*. The difference between the two lay in their perceptions of Makassarese intentions: Maetsuyker's arguments were built on trust in the Makassarese, De Vlaming's on distrust.

When Maetsuyker won the day, the form of the proposed peace treaty of 1655 was based on the assumption that the Makassarese were sincere in their wish for peace and their vow not to interfere with the Company's trade monopoly in the Spice Islands. In the third section, I analyse the regulations and formulations in the 1655 treaty from this perspective.

In summary, my aim is to demonstrate that the advice of the Heeren XVII on Makassar, the discussions between De Vlaming and Maetsuyker, and the regulations and formulations in the December 28 treaty all sprang from considerations of local context. The Company's policy towards Makassar between 1651 and 1655, the 1655 discussions on how to deal with Makassar in the future, and the final arrangements in the 1655 treaty all serve as examples of pragmatic overseas diplomacy.

### *Sources*

The following chronological overview is mainly based on Stapel's *Het Bongaais Verdrag*,<sup>718</sup> which in its turn to a large extent is built on Valentijn.<sup>719</sup> In the first section of textual analysis, I rely mostly on the advice regarding Makassar in the 1650 General Instructions.<sup>720</sup> The policy advice and instructions in individual letters from the Directors during the main period are not analysed, but only referred to because of their influence on policy decisions in Batavia. The 1650 Instructions

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<sup>718</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag* (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1922).

<sup>719</sup> François Valentijn, *Beschryvinge van Oost Indiën*, vol. 1 (Dordrecht: 1724), Molukse Zaaken, 1.286–323, and Ambonse Zaaken, 2.166–203.

<sup>720</sup> All from Mijer, *Verzameling van instructiën*.

offers the framework within which the High Government was supposed to work.

As for the discussion between Maetsuyker and De Vlaming, I rely on Maetsuyker's general letter of December 24, 1655,<sup>721</sup> which refers to De Vlaming's arguments. Maetsuyker's advocacy of the negotiation options to the Directors and his implicit refutation of De Vlaming's plan offer a coherent and consistent deliberation on policy options from which it is possible to reconstruct a "diplomatic worldview." Still, some comment on the use of the *Generale Missiven* as a source for understanding diplomatic culture and outlook is needed.

*A comment on the Generale Missiven as a source for understanding "overseas diplomatic culture"*

The High Government's reports on its dealings with and decisions on policy to the Directors could well be said to represent justifications of how the Company rights and interests had been protected and defended. According to W. Ph. Coolhaas, Maetsuyker particularly underlined this. If the *Generale Missiven* were aimed at pleasing the Directors, they are all the more relevant as a key to understanding the shared diplomatic

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<sup>721</sup> December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.4–8.



culture of the High Government and the Directors at the time. The same goes for De Vlaming's argument for a military solution. The factual contents are not the issue here in either case, but I shall focus on the mode of arguing as indicators of perceptions and attitudes. In this capacity, the discussion over policy towards Makassar in Maetsuyker's general letter and De Vlaming's letter to the Directors show equally well what the two men thought might please and convince the Heeren XVII.

## **Section 2: Conflicting assumptions of diplomatic performance 1650-1655**

### *A brief chronology of diplomatic interaction, 1650–55*

The Makassarese stand on allowing permanent residency for the English and Portuguese but not for the Company was a thorn in Batavia's side.<sup>722</sup>

On February 28, 1650, Evert Janssen Buys was sent to Makassar with instructions to enhance the Company's prestige and discredit the Company's European rivals there.<sup>723</sup> Sultan Maliki Said was given an extract of the 1648 Hispano-Dutch Treaty of Münster that emphasised the considerable concessions that had been made by the Spanish.<sup>724</sup> The story of the beheading of Charles I in 1649 was used to discredit the English.<sup>725</sup> Although partly a matter of prestige, the wish to establish permanent residence in Makassar had to do with the need to acquire a steady flow of information on what was going on there.

The conflict between the Company and Makassar stemmed from the fact that smuggling from Ambon undermined the Company's monopoly regime in the Moluccas. When rebellion in Ambon broke out

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<sup>722</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 45.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid. 45.

<sup>724</sup> Ibid. 45.

<sup>725</sup> Ibid. 45.

again in 1648,<sup>726</sup> the Company suspected and later verified Makassarese support for it.<sup>727</sup> War with Makassar as a result became the only option. A decision for war was made by the High Government on October 23, 1653, and on November 8, Admiral De Vlaming van Oudshoorn set out as superintendent of the eastern quarters, and commander of the land and seas forces.<sup>728</sup>

It is important to note that the final decision to go to war on Makassar did not come until the fall of 1653 after a series of failed missions to seek a peaceful solution. These negotiations were respectively Jacob Hustard's mission, which left Batavia January 16,<sup>729</sup> and that of Evert Buys, whom De Vlaming sent from Buton on June 18.<sup>730</sup> De Vlaming took his own initiative for negotiations on September 22 of the same year.<sup>731</sup> On the news of the Sultan Maliki Said's death and the instalment of his son Hasanuddin as sultan, the decision was taken on December 10 to send Buys to Makassar to see if the mood had

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<sup>726</sup> For the various rebellions in Ambon, see Blussé and de Moor, *Nederlanders Overzee*, 138–41.

<sup>727</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 46–47.

<sup>728</sup> *Ibid.* 49.

<sup>729</sup> *Ibid.* 46.

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid.* 47.

<sup>731</sup> *Ibid.* 49.

changed for the better.<sup>732</sup> When he confirmed that this was not the case, the war was escalated. The initiatives to see if a negotiated solution could be reached were important in two respects. They underscored the fact that negotiations were the preferred means for solving the conflict with Makassar. The decision to again enter into negotiations upon the accession of a new sultan, hints that the evaluation of the Makassarese plans and prospects determined the choice between the continuation of war or the start of negotiations for peace. In 1655, the central issue for the High Government became when and how to conclude the war. It was on this issue that De Vlaming and Maetsuyker laid out their differing assumptions about the intentions of the Makassarese.

The decision to seek peace with Makassar by negotiations to be carried out by the Council of the Indies on October 23<sup>733</sup> was partly motivated by pressure from the Directors, who felt that the war was costly in terms of both military expenditures and loss of trade.<sup>734</sup> As we shall see, Maetsuyker adopted this line of argumentation

As it was, Van der Beeck and Soliman, arrived in Makassar December 28, and were successful in their dealings. A treaty between

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<sup>732</sup> Ibid. 50.

<sup>733</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>734</sup> Ibid. 53.

Van der Beeck on behalf of the Company, and Sultan Hasanuddin of Makassar was signed December 28 and countersigned in Batavia February 2, 1656.

*Makassar as a category 3 territory in the 1650 General Instructions*

At the outset, Makassar belonged to the polities that fell under category 3 of the 1650 tripartite classification. As such it was a place of trade where the Company could neither dictate nor decide the terms of interaction, but should accommodate itself to the local ruler.<sup>735</sup> As we have seen, the advice on mode of operation in places falling under category 3 was that the Company must trade “without causing any offence to anybody.”<sup>736</sup> The importance of information gathering was also stressed.<sup>737</sup> Finally, the High Government was instructed to take particular care not to cause conflict with the local princes and rulers of those places<sup>738</sup> because that

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<sup>735</sup> 1650 Instructions, art. 71. See chapter 2.

<sup>736</sup> “in vriendschap en vrede, zonder eenige de minste offensie te geven.” 1650 Instructions, art. 116. See chapter 3.

<sup>737</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>738</sup> “zonder te denken, om in eenige verwijderingen met de koningen en prinsen ... te geraken.” See chapter 3.

would prove “most harmful for the Company’s well-being.”<sup>739</sup> This general advice also applied to Makassar.

Yet, Makassar was an extraordinary case. Thanks to its proximity to and entanglement in affairs of the Eastern Archipelago, it was a place of primary importance to the Directors, as its actions had direct implications for the Company’s possessions and position in the region.

That Makassar was intrinsically intertwined with the Company’s vested interests in the Moluccas modified the recommended restraint and accommodation, and amplified the Company’s need to obtain information on Makassarese plans. This was, however, hampered by the absence of a permanent Company residency. In the 1650 Instructions, information gathering was stressed by the Directors as being vital to improving the Company’s relative position compared to the English and the Portuguese.

Two articles in the General Instructions of 1650 are devoted to Makassar, namely articles 44 and 45. In the former it is emphasised that the profits that could accrue from trade on Makassar should not be the High Government’s primary concern. Taking the magnitude of trade and

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<sup>739</sup> “als ten hoogste nadeelig voor her welvaren van de Generaele Compagnie wezende.” See chapter 3.

therefore also the great numbers of people frequenting Makassar into consideration, the Company should trade there with the aim of obtaining information, particularly on the doings of other European traders.”<sup>740</sup> The Company must further out seek information with a particular eye to whether in due time a situation might arise whereby the Company could get ahead of its European rivals.<sup>741</sup> In other words, the Directors encouraged information gathering from a political and commercial point of view.

Profit-making motives were however entangled with political ones. The smuggling and trade of cloves from Ambon via Makassar was the subject of the article 45. The cloves brought by Makassarese sailing to Ambon and sold to the English and Portuguese residing there was causing “considerable damage”<sup>742</sup> to the Company. Although this smuggling seemed to be subsiding, the High Government was reminded that one could never know whether there would be an upsurge in the

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<sup>740</sup> “om nevens de kleine negotie van de Compagnie aldaer te hooren en te zien wat er passeert en zonderling ten regarde van de europeische negotianten.” 1650 Instructions, art. 44, *Verzameling van instructiën*, 81.

<sup>741</sup> “op welke action (de europeische negotianten) naauw gelet moet worden, om dezelve in tijd en wijle naar gelegenheid van zaken te mogen preveniëren.” 1650 Instructions, art. 44, *Verzameling van instructiën*, 82.

<sup>742</sup> “merkelijke schade.” 1650 Instructions, art. 45, *Verzameling van instructiën*, 82.

future. It was therefore “all the more important for the Company’s servants to stay in contact with the king and Court of Makassar to keep their ears and eyes open to what was really taking place there, and what might serve the Company.”<sup>743</sup>

Article 45 in essence merely repeated the substance of the preceding one. The only difference between the two paragraphs was their perspective. Article 44 concerns the relative standing of the Company as compared to its European rivals in Makassar, while the second deals with the issue of smuggling directly. The shared message was that the High Government must acquire the most accurate information possible about plans in Makassar to serve the Company’s interests. No further instructions were given as to how exactly the High Government should go about improving the Company’s position in Makassar. The appreciation of the situation, as well as the specific mode of action was left to the discretion of the High Government. All this aligns well with the tenor of the General Instructions, namely that the High Government

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<sup>743</sup> “de presentie van de ministers van de Compagnie omtrent het hof en den koning van Makassar te meer nodig is, om te hooren en te zien, wat aldaar passeert, en de Compagnie te mogen dienen.” 1650 Instructions, art. 45, *Verzameling van instructiën*, 82.



was expected to perform within the general framework laid down there and supplemented and elaborated in particular letters by the Directors.

As for choice of action and implementation of policy, the High Government was expected to adjust its approach to the context in situ. The Directors could only provide the general framework in the 1650 Instructions, and give some general advice. Still, the costs of war—both direct military expenditures and the loss of trade—were a worry that made the Directors press for a conclusion of peace.<sup>744</sup>

#### *Implications in the Directors' advice on Makassar, 1650*

The Directors' advice on Makassar in the 1650 Instructions did not explicitly say much more than this: get your share of information and political influence at the expense of the Portuguese and the English. But, in this advice there were two important implications for Batavia's diplomacy towards Makassar. Reducing the influence of other Europeans in Makassar implied undermining their influence at the Makassarese court, and enhancing that of the Company. This could only be achieved by a diplomatic approach that was at least superficially accommodating.

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<sup>744</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 53.

An alternative would be to engage the Company's European rivals at sea, but then this would mean the risk of falling out with the Makassarese at the political-diplomatic level. A third option was of course to engage the Makassarese directly in a costly campaign both at sea and on land. The 1650 Instructions remain silent on these options, but the High Government's reflections in the period 1653–55 oscillated among them. The reason lay in the problem of deciding how Makassar's role in the Ambonese rebellion against the Company's monopoly regime should be tackled.

### **Section 3: The De Vlaming–Maetsuyker Controversy over When to End the War: the shared pragmatic mode of thinking about overseas diplomacy, and the assumptions in Maetsuyker’s “soft approach”**

#### *Section topic and problem*

A disagreement rose between Governor-General Maetsuyker and De Vlaming concerning how and when to end the war with Makassar. De Vlaming’s position was that any treaty with Makassar should be based on a military victory. Against this position of “treaty by total victory only” Maetsuyker argued for negotiations as soon as the Makassarese were “ripe for it.” This discussion may have started already in fall 1654, when De Vlaming was in Batavia November 1–24, to confer with the High Government, and when he presented a letter to the Directors in which he proposed a strategy for a final victory over Makassar in order to settle the Company’s problems with it once and for all.

In this section, I focus on the respective arguments as presented by Maetsuyker in the *missive* of December 24, 1655.<sup>745</sup> My aim is twofold: to reconstruct the shared implications of the pro and con

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<sup>745</sup> In 3.4–8. I have not been able to find De Vlaming’s original letter to the Directors.

arguments for war, and second, to establish the particular characteristics of Maetsuyker's argument in favour of negotiations.

*Presentation of the two contestants*

*Maetsuyker: Career and historiographic evaluation*

Maetsuyker was legally trained and had practised at the provincial court of Holland. He had been “headhunted” by the Directors as part of a campaign to straighten up corruption and irregularities in the judicial system in Batavia. He left for Batavia in 1636, and was the author of the *Bataviasche Statuten*. He gained diplomatic experience as envoy to the Portuguese, viceroy in Goa, served as governor of Ceylon, and was appointed director-general before his election and official appointment as governor-general in 1653.<sup>746</sup> Stapel praises him for his “great capability” and “exceptional political talents,” particularly in dealing with local rulers.<sup>747</sup>

*De Vlaming van Oudshoorn*

Arnold De Vlaming van Oudshoorn was appointed governor of Ambon in 1647. In the view of Stapel and others, he was a man of energy, but

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<sup>746</sup> All from Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië*, 310–11.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.* 310.

little empathy<sup>748</sup>—a man with an “iron fist,”<sup>749</sup> or an *ijzervreter* (swashbuckler) as Blussé calls him. Tellingly, De Vlaming’s performance in Ambon drew criticism from Governor-General Van der Lijn who held that he was imposing too much hardship on the local population.<sup>750</sup> Nonetheless, De Vlaming was the one who was put in charge of suppressing the rebellion in Ambon. In short, he had earned his position and prestige for reasons quite different from Maetsuyker. When De Vlaming openly opposed Maetsuyker’s policy, he could do so because of the strong position he had already earned in the service of the Company.

### *Propositions*

The contrast in Maetsuyker’s and De Vlaming’s approaches to Makassar may be explained partly by differences in character: Maetsuyker was prudent and calculating, De Vlaming devious and energetic. Such armchair psychological judgement should not overshadow another important factor that reveals itself from a close reading of Maetsuyker’s

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<sup>748</sup> Ibid. 294.

<sup>749</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 46.

<sup>750</sup> Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië*, 294.

counter-argument to De Vlaming's offensive tactics. It becomes clear that their disagreement was embedded in diverging views on what to expect from the Makassarese, or, more specifically, Hasanuddin's intentions and motives. Maetsuyker believed that Hasanuddin would honour a treaty in which Makassarese non-intervention in the Spice Islands was stated. De Vlaming believed that no matter what the treaty said on this point, the Makassarese would continue to interfere. Diverging appreciation of context conditioned the diverging views on tactics. This is supported by the shift in policy after 1655, when an appreciation of the sultan's motives and real intentions were reinterpreted in line with De Vlaming's positions, and in 1660, when direct military intervention in combination with opposition from within Makassar itself became promising.<sup>751</sup>

Although Maetsuyker and De Vlaming started from distinct assumptions and arrived at different conclusions in 1655, both conformed to the pragmatic mode of thinking about overseas diplomacy. No appeal to international law was included in the respective arguments. Both applied a mode of argument that would now be termed a "cost-

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<sup>751</sup> See chapter 6, below.

benefit analysis,” as seen from the Company’s perspective. Thus, even when Company opinion overseas was split on tactics, it is still possible to reconstruct a shared framework of thought about overseas diplomacy for the two divergent arguments.

*Textual analysis, Maetsuyker’s advocacy for the negotiation option in the missive of December 24, 1655*

The section on Makassar in the December 24 *missive* starts by giving some general reasons for the decision to start negotiations. The illicit export of cloves from Makassar had caused the High Government “serious worries.”<sup>752</sup> The High Government did not concur with De Vlaming’s proposal “to avoid participation by others... and that the foreigners should be deterred.”<sup>753</sup> Such a policy would only provoke increased cultivation of cloves in places unheard of before,<sup>754</sup> and thus lead to a volume of smuggling that the Company could not possibly

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<sup>752</sup> “ons in groote becomingen hout.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.5.

<sup>753</sup> “Dat om het minste dat iemant anders daarin willen participiren ... de vremdelingen te detereren.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.5.

<sup>754</sup> “Maer dat deselve door ons groot woelen eer sullen worden waecker gemaect om haer totte cultur ende aenplantinge van nagelen te begeven, daer se anders noyt en souden hebben om gedacht.”

contain.<sup>755</sup> The result would be a heavy draw on the Company's resources from which only the Company's rivals stood to profit.<sup>756</sup>

It was understood that the third parties reaping the fruits of the imperfect control were the other Europeans, particularly the Portuguese, residing in Makassar. The above argument sums up Maetsuyker's general opposition to De Vlaming's militant approach, which he considered counterproductive in terms of cultivating local goodwill, too costly to be effective, and therefore damaging to the Company's interests.

*On De Vlaming's excessive use of force as counterproductive in particular*

The suggestion that De Vlaming's hard method was alienating the locals and creating opposition instead of goodwill was further elaborated by Maetsuyker in a separate section. Maetsuyker criticised De Vlaming's excessive use of force, which, according to him, alienated the locals and thus created opposition. He ventured more general considerations on the counter-productivity of using violence in the Moluccas to obtain good

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<sup>755</sup> "Te meer om dat ons hetselfde (the smuggling) overal te beletten t'eenemael onmogelijck is." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.5.

<sup>756</sup> "In welken gevalle de Compagnie onder de sware lasten sal moeten beswijcken ende andere mette vruchten van deselve doorgaen." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.5.



relations with Makassar. Maetsuyker then referred to De Vlaming's conduct of operations against Buton and Makassar during the war. The High Government "had wished that his Excellency had not shown up there and had abstained from hostile actions against the city."<sup>757</sup> This specific reproach was then expanded into a more general deliberation over whether resorting to violence actually was conducive to improving relations with Makassar. Maetsuyker's again argued that it was not; quite the contrary: "Such bravado just caused bitterness and contempt and thus jeopardized the state of peace that was so vital to the Company."<sup>758</sup> By implication, only tactful negotiations could secure a much-needed peace; provocative actions only worked against it.

*The basic assumptions in De Vlaming's argument for prolonged war until total victory*

As we have seen, Maetsuyker presents in essence a cost-benefit analysis, in which the argument against De Vlaming's plan is that the costs of

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<sup>757</sup> "Wij wenschten wel, dat sijne E. daer op die wijze niet en ware verschenen of tenminste op de stadt uytter zee geen hostiliteyt hadde geplecht." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>758</sup> "Also diergelijcke bravaden niet dan meerder verbitteringe en connen verwerken, tot verachteringe streckende van de vrede, die de Compagnie soo noodich is." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

sanctions would exceed the returns. De Vlaming used the same type of reasoning for his pro-war stand, but argued that long-term gains would surpass short-term losses. According to De Vlaming, the Makassarese were not really inclined towards peace.<sup>759</sup> From this it followed that the Company had “nothing to gain from negotiating a treaty under the present circumstances,”<sup>760</sup> that is before a total military defeat had been forced upon them. Although the sultan and court proclaimed themselves inclined towards peace, they harboured consistent expansionist ambitions in the Eastern Archipelago. The Company therefore had to be on constant alert for Makassarese aggression in the Spice Islands.<sup>761</sup>

For De Vlaming then, war, whether openly declared or not, was structurally built into the Makassarese–Company rivalry over the Spice Islands. No matter what came out of the negotiations, or whatever the terms of their agreement, the Makassarese would always pose a threat to Banda and Ambon. Therefore, the Company would be obliged to direct resources to defending its interests in the Spice Islands. De Vlaming

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<sup>759</sup> “Geen groote genegenheyt tot vrede en accommodatie van sacken te hebben.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>760</sup> “daer geen voordeel voor de Comp.e uyt gesien te connen worden.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>761</sup> “Omdat sij doch echter altijd sowel bij vrede als oorlog hare Oosterse conquesten tegen derselver attentaten sal moeten versekert houden.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

underscored his position with the cost-benefit argument that future commercial gains would outweigh the cost of war. The big volume of trade passing through Makassar was detrimental to the Company's commercial interests. A military defeat of Makassar would put an end to that.<sup>762</sup>

#### *De Vlaming's cost-benefit argument*

The cost-benefit argument in De Vlaming's argument for a military solution was also illustrative of the long-term expansionist thinking in which today's spending yields tomorrow's profits. In any case, both aspects of the argument are indicative of the primary concern of the Company's commercial balance sheet both in the republic and overseas.

#### *Maetsuyker on De Vlaming's cost-benefit argument for war*

Maetsuyker's counter-argument to war as a means of securing future gains turned De Vlaming's cost-benefit assumptions upside down. War would fall heavier on the Company than on Makassar, which could wage

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<sup>762</sup> "Sijnde besijden dien de vrede met Macassar de negotie tot Batavia schadelijck om de groote vaart, die sij hebben, dewelcke haer moste worden belet." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

war with fewer costs, claimed Maetsuyker,<sup>763</sup> supporting his assertion by reference to past experience. The Company had paid dearly for its past conflicts with Makassar.<sup>764</sup> Prolonged war was not a means to increased profit. Instead of spending money on war, Maetsuyker continued, the Company's resources would be more profitably deployed in other projects.<sup>765</sup>

So, sharing the same general pursuit, and within the same framework of reasoning, Maetsuyker flipped De Vlaming's conclusion on its head by a different reckoning of the prospected gains and costs. This difference over approach was not embedded in legal considerations; it was based on diverging assumptions as to what to expect from the Makassarese.

*De Vlaming and Maetsuyker on whether to trust the Makassarese*

De Vlaming mentioned unreliability and opportunism as inherent character traits of the Makassarese. They had well proven to be "people that would never wink at breaking their word if it served their own

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<sup>763</sup> "die hare oorlogen met seer cleyne costen connen voeren." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>764</sup> "Daer deselve daerentegen de Comp.e soo lastich vallen, gelijk dese jaren genoechsam gebleken sijn." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>765</sup> "Behalven dat ondertusschen andere exploiten, daer haer meer voordeel uyt soude connen toevloeyen." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

interests.”<sup>766</sup> The Company’s prior experience went to prove that: “Each time the Company lowered its guard, the Makassarese seized the opportunity to infringe on Company possessions.”<sup>767</sup> Considering the Company’s experience with Makassarese deceit in the past, there were no reasons for trust now.

The divergence in opinion between De Vlaming and Maetsuyker rested on a fundamental difference in belief about Sultan Hasanuddin’s trustworthiness. With the conclusion of the 1655 war, a golden opportunity presented itself in which the Company’s aims could be achieved by negotiations alone.<sup>768</sup> This opportunity should not be spoiled by “adventurous war-making.”<sup>769</sup>

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<sup>766</sup> “Als lieden sijnde, die van het verbreecken van haer wort gants geen werck en sijn maekend, als se daer maer voordeel met connen doen.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>767</sup> “Gelijck se t’allen tijde connen, soo haest wij naelaten tegen haer op hoede te sijn ende onse plaetsen met genoeghsame macht beset te houden.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>768</sup> December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>769</sup> “Maer wij oordelen, dat de Comp.e nu haere saecken, God sij lof op soo gewensten voet gebracht sijn ende dat men hoope heeft tot een equitabile vrede te sullen connen geraken, niet van node en heeft soodanigen hachelijken cans te wagen.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

*Maetsuyker's counter-arguments to De Vlaming's "grand strategy"*

Maetsuyker declared that ending the war and concluding a peace not only constituted the better option, but were also of vital importance to the Company's interest in the long run.<sup>770</sup> Continuation of the war would only lead to fanatical, anti-Company sentiment in Makassar; it had to end to "preclude the further spread of ill-feeling against the Company."<sup>771</sup>

The argument that prolonged war would entrench a hostile attitude towards the Company was further underlined by the characterisation of the Makassarese as "stubborn and uncompromising."<sup>772</sup> One must therefore be careful not to provoke them. The plausible negative consequences of continued war necessitated a different approach than De Vlaming's provocative use of force.

Neither De Vlaming nor Maetsuyker appealed to legal arguments. Both of them appealed to cultural factors, understood as specific traits of the national character of the Makassarese. De Vlaming argued his position from an assumption of Makassarese ingrained deceit, Maetsuyker from a belief in their sensitivity and pride.

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<sup>770</sup> "dat de vrede de Comp.e niet alleen dienstich, maer ten hoognodich is." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>771</sup> "Om voor te komen, dat sij haer heylose concepten niet meerder ernst en comen te vernemen." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

<sup>772</sup> "gelijck het een obstinate, hertneckige natie is." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

*De Vlaming's grand strategy for Makassar rejected—a matter of differing expectations*

The next step in De Vlaming's line of argument was to show how total victory could be obtained. A vital element in his grand strategy was that the Company must encourage local dissent and join forces with local insurgents rising in rebellion against Makassar. He deemed the prospect of finding a local ally who could be used in the interest of the Company good.<sup>773</sup>

Maetsuyker rejected the idea of sowing discontent and division among the Makassarrese and so intervening on the side of the rebels on the grounds that it was unrealistic and, moreover, counterproductive in that it would only sow hatred against the Company and foment anti-Company feelings.<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>773</sup> “dat men bequamelijck twedracht onder de landsaten soude connen veroorsaecken ende daermet ons voordeel doen.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6–7.

<sup>774</sup> “dat eenige gemisconteerende landsaten dan terstont souden gereet staen met ons te spannen ende tegen de Maccasarse croone op te staen, dat soude t'eenemael op het onsecker gebout sijn. Sijnde eer te gelooven dat sij, haer van een uytheemse ende Christenen vijandt op haere eygen bodem besprongen siende, sich te vaster met den ander souden verbinden om denselven met gemene macht van het landt te drijven, gelijk men dat veeltijds soo heeft sien geschieden.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7

*Rejecting De Vlaming's war plan as costly, reckless and likely counterproductive—advocating soft diplomacy as an alternative*

De Vlaming's war-plan was simple and bold, namely to attack the southernmost Makassarese forts with 1,200 troops, 600 from Batavia and the rest from Ambon and Banda. All were to land "with a clear dedication to either conquering or perishing."<sup>775</sup> Maetsuyker, however, found De Vlaming's war plan not only costly and reckless, but also counterproductive. Typically, Maetsuyker's counter-argument started with a tactical consideration on the lack of realism in De Vlaming's plan. Prospects of success were deemed bleak because sowing discontent and tying up with local allies would be difficult as long as the Company did not have "a firm foot on land."<sup>776</sup>

*Opposing De Vlaming's grand strategy for its lack of long-term realism*

Added to the conviction that the present situation greatly favoured a settlement by negotiation was Maetsuyker's opinion that De Vlaming grossly underestimated the risks involved in settling the issues with Makassar by continuing the war. First, the transfer of troops from Banda and Ambon would jeopardise the security of these "valuable

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<sup>775</sup> "met resolutie te overwinnen of daer alle te sterven." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>776</sup> "hetselve beswaerlick sal wesen in 't werk te stellen, tensij alvooren voet op het landt hebben." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7



possessions” so that the “enemy would meet an open door to go about as he liked.”<sup>777</sup> Second, even if the war was successful and the Makassarese forts fell into the Company’s possession, the Company’s limited resources would prevent it from holding them for long. The sheer number of the Makassarese fighting men, their fighting spirit, and their swiftness of mobilisation spoke overwhelmingly against it.<sup>778</sup> Lack of military realism and long-term strategic thinking were thus Maetsuyker’s main arguments against De Vlaming’s grand strategy.

*Arguing the lack of realism in the belief in obtaining local allies*

Maetsuyker logically discredited De Vlaming’s belief in obtaining local allies within Makassar itself. In fact, De Vlaming’s assumptions were reversed. First, Maetsuyker and the High Government repeated their view that finding allies among local rebels was highly uncertain.<sup>779</sup> Then

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<sup>777</sup> “ende de viandt bij verlies van soodanigen getal krijghsvolck een deur geopent om in deselve te gaan grasseren na sijn geliefte.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>778</sup> “Ende genomen, den aenslach quam al te gelucken ende wij wierden van hetselve casteel meester, wat hoope om hetselve in te houden tegen de macht van soo menighte duysenden seer moedige menschen als den Macassar in minder dan een uyr tijts tegen ons soude connen op de been brengen.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>779</sup> “dat eenige gemisconteerde landsaten dan terstont souden greeet staen met ons aen te spannen ende tegen de Macassarese croone op te staen, dat sou ‘teenemael op het onseecker gebout sijn.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

they drew up a contrary scenario as the more likely outcome of involvement by the Company, namely that the people of South Celebes would join ranks and be all the more united in an attack by a Christian nation.<sup>780</sup> They concluded their argument by pointing out that this had been the prior experience with Makassarese internal mobilisation in the face of external aggression.<sup>781</sup>

Far from doctrinal legal arguments, the criticism of De Vlaming's policy and defence of the negotiation option were formulated on the basis of the nature of the Makassarese, their traits, and empirical, historical experience. The argument represented a form of realist tactical thinking; in a word, it was pragmatic. Having pointed that out, one should note the respective assumptions about the Makassarese. Maetsuyker and the Council implicitly characterised De Vlaming's approach as "military adventurism." But, significantly neither party clearly labelled their own or their opponent's position. Rather, they both assessed the situation in Makassar and weighed the options for Company action from a practical point of view. Maetsuyker's and De Vlaming's

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<sup>780</sup> "Sijnde eer te geloven, dat sij, haer van een uytheemsen ende Christen vijandt op haren eygen boden besprongen siende, sich te vaster met den ander souden verbinden om denselven met gemene macht van het landt te verdrijven." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>781</sup> "gelijck men dat veeltijds soo heeft sien geschieden." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

disagreement was one over means, and rested on diametrically opposing convictions about whether Hasanuddin could be trusted or not.

*Arguing permanent residency and information gathering by way of treaty as opposed to war*

Maetsuyker's diplomatic approach aimed for a negotiated peace that would provide the Company permanent residency and thus better access to information about goings-on in Makassar. The reasoning went like this: By obtaining a peace treaty without provoking the Makassarese into defiance, the Company would be granted a permanent establishment in Makassar and better access to information about Makassarese politics in the Eastern Archipelago. The need for keeping an enlarged garrison in the eastern quarters would be eliminated by the permanent residency of Company servants in Makassar itself, because based on the information by the Company's resident, resources and men could be transferred to Banda and Ambon when needed.<sup>782</sup>

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<sup>782</sup> "Ende waneer wij weder een residentie in Macassar nemen, gelijk, soo de vrede getroffen wort, sal dienen te geschieden, soo sullen wij door middel van deselve altijd een oog in 't seyl connen houden ende van haer doen en ondernemen tijdich advijs hebben om ons van te dienen ende in 't versorgen van deselve provintiën na te reguleren." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

Probably as a pre-emptive move against De Vlaming's argument that the Makassarese could not be trusted regardless of what they might agree on in writing, Maetsuyker went on to say that reliable information could be obtained, even if the rulers of Makassar must be deemed "the most civil and discreet of all Moorish princes in these quarters."<sup>783</sup> In brief, the argument against De Vlaming's proposal for strengthening the Company's military resources in Banda and Ambon on a permanent basis was that permanent residency in Makassar would "do the trick," and at a lower cost. Once again, this was a shared goal through different means, and put forward in practical, not ideological, terms.

*The concluding appeal to the Directors*

The Council's point-by-point refutation of De Vlaming's arguments for war ended with an appeal to the Heeren XVII that it shared a clear and unqualified conviction that negotiation would best serve the Company's interests under the current circumstances. The credibility of the negotiation option rested on the premise that after years of warfare, in the fall of 1655 there was a sincere Makassarese wish for an enduring peace.

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<sup>783</sup> "Behalven dat die van Macassar altijd gehouden sijn geworden wel de civielste ende discreetste te sijn van alle de Moorse vorsten, hier omtrent gelegen." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.6.

This basic assumption was argued in contextual terms, namely that “Given the Makassarese lack of success over the last years, it is to be hoped that they had learnt the lesson not to once again ‘stick their noses’ into matters that were none of their business. Their interference so far had gained them nothing but had cost them a lot.”<sup>784</sup>

The message to the Directors was clear: Now was the time for negotiations, not provocations. It was, in fact, an opportunity that the High Government already had seized by approaching Hasanuddin for a treaty.<sup>785</sup> The argument for the negotiation option had come full circle. The centre of that circle was a conditional trust in Hasanuddin.

The High Government believed an acceptable, negotiated solution to be imminently at hand.<sup>786</sup> As the final decision on whether to employ De Vlaming’s hard-line or the diplomatic approach lay with the Directors, Maetsuyker underlined, he awaited and would follow the

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<sup>784</sup> “Sijnde te verhopen, dat den Macassar door de quade successen, die hij in dese laeste jaren heeft behaelt, de lust oock sal sijn vergaen om voorerst hem weder te steecken in saecken, hem geensints raekende ende die hem tot noch toe geen voordeel, maer wel groote schade hebben toegebracht.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

<sup>785</sup> December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.8.

<sup>786</sup> “Invoegen dat wij van geloven blijven dat de Compagniee in alle maniere de vrede, soo daer onder goede conditiën toe comen can, behoort te amplecteren om eens een een eynde van dien lastigen oorlogh te maecken.” December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.7.

Directors' further instructions.<sup>787</sup> Still there could be no doubt about the governor-general's preference: He had already sent Van der Beeck for negotiations to Hasanuddin's court.

*Considerations of context primary to considerations of law*

Judged by the standards of international law in Europe at the time, De Vlaming's grand strategy represented a clear breach of the rules since his plan involved outside interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. If Andaya's proposition about the doctrinaire legalistic obsession of VOC diplomacy were correct, one would expect some comments on the legal dimension on this point. But legal considerations were not mentioned in Maetsuyker's counter-argument to De Vlaming's original proposition. Practical considerations as to chances of success were what mattered. Both men argued within a shared pragmatic framework; their difference lay in the prospects of success for their respective proposals.

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<sup>787</sup> "ondertusschen daerop afwachten de ordre die U Ed. Ons dienangaende sullen gelieven te geven." December 24, 1655, *GM* 3.5.

*The significance of dismantled trust after 1655 and its significance in interpreting the 1655 context*

In De Vlaming's version of "divide and rule" as applied to Makassar, we might see embryonic features of a "greater scheme" for restructuring the political geography of South Sulawesi. As we know, this was what actually happened after the joint Bugis–Company victory in the 1667 war. De Vlaming's grand strategy came to mature in the five years after 1655, to reach a full explication in the *missive* of December 1660, when it was at last presented as a viable option. In fact, the Makassarese's continued infringement in the Spice Islands and fluctuations of opportunity for the Company's direct intervention in Makassar came to dictate a continued discussion and drove opinion in Batavia towards a military approach.

But in 1655, Maetsuyker still favoured negotiations based on his trust in Hasanuddin's sincere intention for a lasting peace, and a commitment to non-interference in the eastern quarters.

*Opposing standpoints within a shared conceptual framework—the source of differences in policy preferences*

As we have seen, none of the policy preferences were argued with reference to law. Both sides considered the problem with an eye to costs and benefits. Both sides considered their choice of tactics in terms of the overall context and pragmatism, not on the basis of legal principals. The question remains, however, as to how much the above-sketched divergence in opinion could be explained by differences in personality.

There is a recurring trait in the historiography to ascribe differences in the formulation and execution of policy to differences in personality. Maetsuyker's approach is thus explained by his being a "cautious person," while De Vlaming is judged a "man of action."<sup>788</sup> This might reflect a difference in temperament, yet the evidence of their arguments suggests that what really divided them were their different assumptions about possible outcomes. The difference between Maetsuyker's and De Vlaming's positions was marked more by diverging perceptions of the situation at hand than in psychologically fixed policy preferences. I stress this point because when we come to the period after 1655, Maetsuyker gradually came to express points of view

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<sup>788</sup> Maetsuyker would not use the sword as long as there was another way out, while De Vaming's fury was "repudiated"; Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Indië*, 338 and 306.



and arguments that were closer to De Vlaming's in 1655. It would be irrational to assume that Maetsuyker changed personality after 1655. His appreciation of Hasanuddin as a trustworthy treaty partner did change, and, consequently, so did his view about what constituted an appropriate policy. Too much emphasis on personality in the analysis of diplomatic behaviour may lead us to underappreciate historical context and the role of learning by experience.

The lesson of the disagreement between De Vlaming and Maetsuyker in 1655 and the later shift in policy demonstrates on the one hand that deliberations on policy in Batavia were remarkably vivid, and that policy-making was dynamic. Both features deny fixity to legal principles or fixed personality traits as prime determining factors in policy deliberations and decisions. Both features were illustrative of a pragmatic approach. The determining factor was an appreciation of the situation on the ground. In 1655, Maetsuyker still deemed that the sultan's behaviour warranted a soft approach. That was also the defining trait of the December 28, 1655, treaty.

## Section 4: Analysis of the 1655 treaty as a typical product of “soft diplomacy”

### *Historiographic positions*

Arguing from his “non-Eurocentric” point of view, Andaya holds that the 1655 treaty “clearly demonstrates the influence of treaty making” and that its contents “read like a typical South Sulawesi treaty.”<sup>789</sup> Then again, taking the whole treaty body into account, this was an exception.<sup>790</sup> Seen from the Company’s perspective, the 1655 treaty came to be judged in rather harsh terms, both by contemporaries, and by later Dutch historians, particularly on the grounds of the concessions made to Hasanuddin.<sup>791</sup> But it remains a fact that the treaty to which Van der Beeck agreed in Makassar on December 28 was countersigned in Batavia on February 2, 1656.<sup>792</sup>

### *Propositions, analysis of the 1655 treaty*

I present a somewhat different view of the 1655 treaty. As for Andaya’s proposition of its “typical” South Sulawesi nature, a good argument

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<sup>789</sup> Andaya, “Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions,” 287.

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid.* 287–88.

<sup>791</sup> See for instance Valentijn, *Beschryvinge van Oost Indiën*, 1.322 and Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 54 referring also to Speelman’s negative evaluation of it.

<sup>792</sup> Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, 53.

can be made to the contrary, namely that the Company's concessions to Makassar can be read as specific regulations protecting Makassarese interests, in other words that they were conceived in a framework of secular power politics. Seen from the Company's side, although the treaty was made as a result of pressure for peace from the Netherlands, it can just as well be seen as an exemplary product of the "soft diplomacy" advocated by Maetsuyker. That is my proposition. Hence I aim to demonstrate that the wording and regulations in the 1655 treaty were wholly consistent with the basic policy assumption held by Maetsuyker at the time, namely that Hasanuddin would indeed ban Makassarese sailings to the Spice Islands. Thus, the governor-general and Council's later criticism of both the treaty's terms and Van der Beeck's performance in Makassar should be seen in light of a shift in thinking a year later,<sup>793</sup> when these optimistic assumptions turned out to be wrong.<sup>794</sup> The concessions made by the Company in the 1655 treaty made perfect sense considering that the Company obtained acknowledgement by Hasanuddin that Makassarese should stay out of

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<sup>793</sup> See below.

<sup>794</sup> See chapter 6 for elaboration.

the Spice Islands, and that the Company was free to handle third parties who broke the sailing ban at its own discretion.<sup>795</sup>

### *Textual analysis*

One of the most telling parts of the 1655 treaty<sup>796</sup> is the preamble in which Sultan Hasanuddin presents the background and general conditions for the agreement. After having stated who the treaty parties are,<sup>797</sup> he places the initiative for peace with the Company. The treaty has been concluded “because the governor-general is inclined towards peace.”<sup>798</sup> His own reasons for an agreement with the Company Hasanuddin depicts as a necessity due to the imbalance in strength between him and the Company.<sup>799</sup> He has agreed to the peace because “the governor-general is a strong and powerful man”<sup>800</sup> while he himself, “is so much inferior in strength and power.”<sup>801</sup> The message is clear: it is the Company who has approached Hasanuddin with an offer for peace, and the sultan, considering his relative weakness, has no other option

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<sup>795</sup> See analysis below.

<sup>796</sup> I follow the text as reproduced in the *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82–84.

<sup>797</sup> The ruler of Goa and Lord of Tello and Ambassador Van Der Beeck on behalf of the Company, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

<sup>798</sup> “Om dat den Gouverneur Generael will vrede maken.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

<sup>799</sup> As was done by Alauddin in 1637, see chapter 3.

<sup>800</sup> “en een grootd man is ende sterck.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

<sup>801</sup> “ende ik, die zoo veell cleiner ben en onmaghtigh.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

than to accept. But at the end of the preamble, he states he has managed to secure a treaty that does no harm by rhetorically asking “should I not agree to a peace that clearly implies no harm to my people and subjects.”<sup>802</sup>

*Comments, Preamble*

The inclusion of Hasanuddin’s wish for the Company to stand out as the party asking for peace might have been perceived as a face-saving device addressed to the sultan’s home audience with no serious consequence for the Company. The transaction of prestige involved here represented a concession that the Company could afford. Given the High Government’s willingness to please Hasanuddin on this point, it seems reasonable to believe that the sultan’s ambiguous remarks on the peace as being forced on him because of his relative weakness, was accepted for the same reason. The transaction was however counterbalanced by Hasanuddin’s positive depiction of the peace at the end of the preamble. He had agreed to a treaty that was not harmful to his people. My point is

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<sup>802</sup> “Zoude ick geen vrede maeken wanneer geen quadt aen onse onderdanen doet.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

that with the possible exception of his remark about his relative inferior strength, Hasanuddin's presentation of the treaty has as much to do with concerns of secular power as with traditional South Sulawesi concepts of symbolic power.

Seen from the Company's side, both the transfer of prestige to Hasanuddin and the expressed ambiguity about the peace itself were tactical concessions that the High Government could accept as long as it obtained a formal declaration of commitment to stay out of the Moluccas from the Makassarese. Hasanuddin's trustworthiness on this point was, as we have seen, what Maetsuyker had consistently argued for in his rejection of De Vlaming's hard-line approach in 1655.

### *Concessions*

If Dutch concessions could be made on presumably insubstantial issues such as Hasanuddin's prestige in Makassar, making them on regulations that could well be interpreted as creating loopholes in the Company's privileges in the Spice Islands was another matter. Yet the 1655 treaty was full of such. The first clause, for instance, confirmed that the sultan's subjects still residing in Ambon should be allowed to return to

Makassar.<sup>803</sup> Most of these were people who had taken part in the rebellion against the Company in Ambon.<sup>804</sup> Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5, all offered loopholes in the ban on Makassarese sailings to the Spice Islands on religious grounds. The Makassarese appeal to religion was probably why the High Government accepted them, thinking them insubstantial. But for the Makassarese, this appeal may well have been interwoven with, and thus have served, political purposes. I shall analyse these articles in detail to highlight the function as well as the probable thinking behind the Company's acceptance of them.

*Article 2, 1655 treaty*

The second article in the treaty *allowed* Muslims residing in Ambon to sail to Makassar: “all Muslims wishing to go to Makassar should be allowed to do so.”<sup>805</sup> The explicit rationale for the concession, clearly coming from Hasanuddin, was presented in terms of religion in the following manner: “According to the Makassarese Religion it would be a

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<sup>803</sup> 1655 treaty, art. 1, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82.

<sup>804</sup> *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.82, n5.

<sup>805</sup> “Dat alle Mooren, die met haren vrije will near Maccassar willen, hem zullen toegestaen werden.” 1655 treaty, art. 2, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

grave sin to leave them [i.e., the Muslims in Ambon] in Christian custody.”<sup>806</sup>

Heeres regards the Company’s agreement to open up for traffic of Muslims from Ambon to Makassar as a “dangerous concession,” since some the Ternatense and Ambonese would qualify as “Muslim.”<sup>807</sup> The concession would only appear to be dangerous assuming that Hasanuddin harboured expansionist or aggressive plans. The prevailing thinking in Batavia at the time was that he did not.<sup>808</sup> It is more likely that the High Government interpreted Hasanuddin’s request for the exception regarding the free trafficking of fellow Muslims as another quest for prestige, this time with a religious twist. If so, the High Government was acting on assumptions that fall within Andaya’s perception of the symbolic or metaphysical nature of South Sulawesi diplomacy. Contrary to Andaya’s assumptions about Company diplomacy then, it was not acting on principles of international law, but, rightly or wrongly, on perceptions of local context and culture.

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<sup>806</sup> “om dat het voor haer wegens hare religie een grootde gesonde i, die onder de Christenen te laten.” *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

<sup>807</sup> *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83, n2.

<sup>808</sup> See the foregoing discussion of Maetsuyker’s advocacy for the soft diplomacy approach.



Goals and means in Makassarese and Batavian policy may not have been identical, but their power politics overlapped. As long as both parties laid claims to influence and sovereignty in the same territory, in the end the agreement had to fail. But if in 1655 the High Government assumed that prestige recognition for internal use was Hasanuddin's primary motive, this could well be traded against guaranties for the Company's monopoly rights. I think such assumptions go a long way to explain all the concessions made in the 1655 treaty.

#### *Articles 3 and 4*

Another concession that was also based on Makassar's role as a protector of its co-religionists was made in article 3, which simply states that none of the Muslims in Ambon would be punished.<sup>809</sup> In effect, the article offers a de facto general amnesty to the rebels. Once again, this was a Makassarese claim that could be explained by motives of prestige, and in that light the concession made perfect sense given the belief that Makassar would from now on not interfere in matters relating to Ambon.

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<sup>809</sup> "Dat alle de Moren, die in Ambon zijn, niet sullen gestraft zijn." 1655 treaty, art. 3, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

Continued contact between Makassar and Ambon was also implied in the following article, which concerned the sultan's right to collect his debts in Ambon.<sup>810</sup> As in the above, the concession must be explained as part of a "good faith" attitude on behalf of the Company.

### *Article 5*

In article 5, which concerned the exchange of prisoners, Hasanuddin achieved another advantage with an agreement for the exchange of prisoners: all prisoners being held in Batavia should be returned to Hasanuddin, as likewise all Company prisoners held by Hasanuddin should be returned by him with the exception of those who had converted while in Hasanuddin's custody.<sup>811</sup> This was still another concession to Hasanuddin made for religious reasons. Again there is every reason to believe that the High Government primarily regarded this as a pure prestige transaction, and thus of secondary significance.

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<sup>810</sup> "Dat den Coningh zijn schulden, die in Ambon heft uijtstaende, zall mogen doen inmanen." 1655 treaty, art. 4, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.93.

<sup>811</sup> "Excepto die Moorse geworden zijn." 1655 treaty, art. 5, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

*A brief speculation on Hasanuddin's use of the religious argument in articles 2–5*

If Hasanuddin was appealing to his role as defender of the faith for secular reasons and simply to buy time, as there is reason to believe judging by his later actions, there is every reason to admire his manoeuvring in 1655. The sultan succeeded in creating loopholes in the treaty to protect his own power position in the Eastern Archipelago by “playing the religious card.”

This interpretation, however, implies that Hasanuddin's tactics were not based on the South Sulawesi treaty tradition à la Andaya, but that he exploited the Dutch assumptions that he was in pursuit of religious prestige. A feeling of having been outsmarted in 1655 may help explain Batavia's uncompromising tone in its later hard-line approach.<sup>812</sup>

*Prestige and religion as motives in Company diplomacy*

In maritime South East Asia, the Company obviously was a Christian intruder in an environment in which Islam was dominant. This meant that local powers could always appeal to religion as a mobilising force

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<sup>812</sup> See chapter 6.

against the Company. One should not, however, underestimate the psychological role of religion as an identity-marker for the Company. But it may have taken the form of the merger between Company honour and divine providence, as I have found in the General Instructions.<sup>813</sup> Makassar and Batavia differed not in whether, but in the degree to which they used religion to mobilise their supporters. In any case, in the August 1660 treaty, which was negotiated from a different balance of power, the 1655 ruling on converts was reversed, although with qualifications.<sup>814</sup> A parallel instance on reversal with respect to the issue of converts is also found in the negotiations and contracts with Banten in 1659 and 1684. In 1659, Maetsuyker conceded that two converted former Company servants could stay in Banten.<sup>815</sup> In 1684, in a situation where the tables had turned completely, the ruling was reversed.<sup>816</sup> Viewed in this light, it seems reasonable to assume that the concession made with Makassar in 1655 on the issue of converts was not made with a light hand, but made from the conviction that the issue was secondary and must be subsumed to the strategic goal of getting a viable treaty at last.

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<sup>813</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>814</sup> See chapter 6.

<sup>815</sup> See treaty with Banten, art. 1, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.156.

<sup>816</sup> See treaty with Banten, art. 6, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 3.340.

*Articles 6 and 7: Regulating relations with the Portuguese and other third parties*

Article 5 represented the final modification of the Company's monopoly and sovereignty in the Spice Islands. The Company's privileged position in the Spice Islands itself was confirmed in the final article of the treaty, article 8. The two articles in between concerned how Makassar and the Company should act in relation to the Portuguese and other third parties in general. It is important to note that as we turn from bilateral to multilateral relations from article 5 onwards, the terms in the treaty increasingly favour the Company.

Regarding the issue of the Portuguese, the regulation was closer to a draw than a win for either party. Article 6 simply stated that "The Company's enemies should not be regarded as the king's enemies."<sup>817</sup> For one thing, this meant that the Company's aspirations to oust and replace the Portuguese in Makassar were blocked. On the other hand, although only by implication, the Company was still free to fight the Portuguese anywhere else. Still, the reality was that the continued Portuguese presence in Makassar implied continued smuggling with the

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<sup>817</sup> "Dat de vijanden van d'E. Compagnie des Conings vijanden niet sullen wesen." 1655 treaty, art. 6, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

Spice Islands. In article 7, the recognition of Makassar's autonomy in its policy towards the Portuguese was extended to apply to a general autonomy in its relations with all third-party actors "below the winds."<sup>818</sup>

*Comments on the regulation of the Makassar–Company positions in the multilateral interaction regime set down in articles 6 and 7*

It may seem puzzling that the Company, having gained the upper hand in war, not only made serious concessions regarding continued contact between Makassar and Ambon but also agreed to terms that guaranteed full autonomy for Makassar's foreign policy. One factor was the pressure for peace from the Netherlands. Nor can the blame be put on Van der Beeck's poor negotiating performance, because the treaty was, after all, countersigned in Batavia. A better explanation is to regard this puzzle as one that primarily arises in a realist and hard-line frame of thought.

Viewed in the idealistic, soft diplomacy approach of 1655, the concessions made to Makassar all made perfect sense. Makassar got no more than the standard rights prescribed by category 3 of the General Instructions of 1650. The concessions made were the price to be paid for

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<sup>818</sup> "Dat zoo den Coningh met dese off gene natien benedenwints in questie (is), dat d'E. Compagnie haer daermede niet sall mogen bemoeijen." 1655 treaty, art. 7, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

what the Company got in the final article of the treaty, namely Makassarese recognition of the Company's monopoly and sovereignty in the Spice Islands.

*Securing the Company's monopoly and Sovereignty by treaty: Article 8*

The first part of the eighth and concluding article of the 1655 treaty reads “The Honourable Willhelm van der Beeck requests of the king that no Makassarese, nor subjects of the king, be allowed to sail to Ambon, Banda or Ternate.”<sup>819</sup>

This was what the Company's envoys had come for in the first place, the issue on which the Company would not concede. Still it was phrased as a “request.” The phrasing clearly entailed yet another prestige transaction and once again in favour of Hasanuddin. But that was in line with the general tenor of the treaty as such.

Still more was working in Hasanuddin's favour in the content and wording of Article 8. The “request” was also modified by the qualification that the sultan could be held responsible for his own

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<sup>819</sup> “D'H Willhelm van der Beeck versoekt op den Coningh datter geen Maccassaresen offte andere natiën, onderdanen van de Coningh, near Amboijna, Banda offte Ternaten sullen mogen varen.” 1655 treaty, art. 8, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

subjects,<sup>820</sup> but that he could not ban the sailing of the many foreign subjects residing in his country.<sup>821</sup> Even so, the Company was recognised as free to deal with such third parties as it might please. This was put in the voice of the Company: “But if we [the Company] should catch them [the non-Makassarese intruders, we] are free to detain and handle them at our own discretion.”<sup>822</sup> The Company’s liberty in this matter was further emphasised by a confirmation that such sanctions would “neither be considered a breach of the peace, nor would the sultan look upon them in anger.”<sup>823</sup> In other words, the Company’s exercise of sanctions against third-party infringement of its rights in the Moluccas was not to be regarded as a cause for war.

### *The conclusion of the 1655 treaty*

From the Company’s viewpoint, article 8 was the crux of the 1655 treaty. It fulfilled the High Government’s primary aim at the time, as it guaranteed Makassarese recognition of the Company’s commercial and

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<sup>820</sup> “dat hij zijn volk can inhouden.” 1655 treaty, art. 8, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83.

<sup>821</sup> “maer dat hij veell vremdelingen en cooplyden in sijn landt hadt, die hij t varen niet can verbieden.” 1655 treaty, art. 8, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.83–84.

<sup>822</sup> “maer zoo wij desellve connen krijgen, mogen vrijelijck nemen ende daermede handelen, sulx als wij cunnen.” 1655 treaty, art. 8, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.84.

<sup>823</sup> “soo en sall ‘t noghtans dese vrede niet verbreeken ende sall den Coningh daerom niet quat wesen.” 1655 treaty, art. 8, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, 2.84.



political rights in the Moluccas, obligated the Makassarese not to interfere, and guaranteed the Company's right to prevent third parties from doing so. These were Batavia's primary aims in 1655, and securing these goals was what made the treaty acceptable. Maetsuyker's stand on this must have rested on his belief that Hasanuddin would honour the rulings of article 8, and not misuse the concessions he gained in articles 1 through 5. None of this came true, but it was the basic assumption upon which the 1655 treaty rested. Given this background, it seems fair to say that later historians have either misunderstood or too harshly judged the 1655 treaty. At the least it deserves to be considered in terms of the assumptions from which it sprang.

### *Chapter conclusion*

The 1655 treaty and regulations make perfect sense within the framework of a soft diplomacy approach in which the defence and protection of the Company's possession of the Spice Islands was the primary goal. It sprang from a conviction that the context and the Company's position were such that more ambitious plans were unrealistic, too costly, and otherwise counter to the Company's interests.

Considering that Hasanuddin would no longer interfere with the Company's interests in the Spice Islands, a negotiated peace was the better option. Maetsuyker's positions and policies in 1655 were part and parcel of a pragmatic diplomatic approach, built on trust and good faith.