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Spice War: Ternate, Makassar, the Dutch East India Company and the struggle for the Ambon Islands (c. 1600-1656)

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XI. CURED BY IRON (1643-1647)

‘In the province of Amboina, nothing remains for us to do but to exterminate the faithless Kakiali and his associates’, Van Diemen briskly wrote to the directors in December 1642.⁷¹² As we may recall, Van Diemen took the matter quite personally. In spite of several other major military campaigns against the Portuguese still underway on Ceylon, and in spite of receiving considerably less than the rather generous number of 6000 men he had requested from Europe, he was still able to muster a sizeable fleet for this purpose.⁷¹³ Antonio Caen, who had insisted on returning to the Netherlands, was persuaded to command it, and went back out to Ambon commanding 10 ships and 8 sloops, manned with 500 soldiers and 650 sailors, on the 23rd of December. While Van Diemen would have liked to send more men (in fact, he admonished the directors for not sending him the reinforcements he had requested, ‘or we could have made ourselves masters of Amboina and all of Spanish Ternate the next year’), it represented a sizeable force in addition to the total garrison of 466 soldiers and the 7 yachts already in the Ambon quarter – not to mention the local allies, whose ranks had rather swelled by the recent political shifts in the region.⁷¹⁴

This campaign, combined with Demmer’s heavy-handed, and, at times, outright devious style of governing, would finally ring the death knell of the independent Hituese state. Calling in Gowan intervention had been Kakiali’s last trump card. Now that it had failed, the Company was moving in for the kill. Looking back on the period, Rumphius would remark that Demmer, like a good surgeon, followed the rules of medicine, ‘curing by iron, and sharp corrosives, what could not be cured by art’ – and that his successor would even have to resort to fire.⁷¹⁵ While this assessment begs the question whether the methods of some of his predecessors did not actually revolve around fire and iron as much as those of Demmer, it does point out an important shift in the power balance

712 Van Diemen to Directors, 12 December 1642, in Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 41.

713 Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 42. The demand for 6000 men was, it should be added, unrealistically high. Over all of 1642, 3391 men, of whom, 1157 were soldiers, arrived in Batavia, which was above average. Even in periods of intense conflict, the amount of personnel sent tended to number somewhere in the 3000s or 4000s throughout the seventeenth century. For some comparative data, see D.A.S., I, 144 and 156; Tristan Mostert, ‘Chain of Command: the military system of the Dutch East India Company, 1655-1663.’ Mphil thesis Leiden University, 2007, pp. 41-46.

714 Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 42.

715 Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, 199.

in the region. With Demmer's governorship, the Company started doing what some of its employees had phantasized about, or even attempted, in the preceding decades but never actually achieved: dismantling the existing political structures and bring the region under effective Company control.

THE ATTACK ON WAWANI

On the 8th of November, Van Diemen had sent advance word to Ambon about the fleet he was assembling, ordering Demmer to also ready the hongis, and come out to meet the incoming fleet off Buru. The news reached Demmer at a delicate moment. He was just returning from a campaign with the Ambonese kora-kora, reinforcing the newfound understanding with his new allies and trying to block the Hituese coast and destroy any Makasar vessels hidden there. Crucially, he had also been able to make a peace agreement with Loki on Hoamoal's east coast, which had until recently been occupied by Makasar forces. The region around the settlement had been a major source of sago for the followers of Kakiali, who were therefore now cut off from their main food supply. The Ambonese kora-kora had only just returned from this tour, and a bumper crop of cloves was just about ready for harvesting, so the men were needed at home. Demmer, however, had his orders. He went ahead and advertised that all the subjects and allies of the Dutch should ready their kora-kora, on pain of being declared an enemy.⁷¹⁶ As the hongis gathered, he himself took three yachts to sail out and meet Caen's fleet, sighting it off Buru's northeast coast on the 18th of January. From there, they sailed to the Hituese coast together.⁷¹⁷

They wanted to head straight to Wawani, but the weather got in the way. The Hituese coast was a lee shore at the time, which made staying there with the large and fully laden ships difficult and dangerous. By the last day of January, the three largest ships, carrying the bulk of the supplies, sailed into the bay to Victoria castle, while some of the smaller ships were sent off to hunt for any foreign vessels that might arrive in the area. Commander Frans Leendertsz Valck was left on the Hituese coast in charge of the remaining yachts and the hongis, which, with all the new Dutch allies, comprised 50 kora-kora. He was to use these forces as weather permitted and opportunities presented themselves. Over

716 Demmer to Governor-General and Council, 27 of April 1643, fols. 150-183, specifically 168v-169r.

717 Caen to Governor-General and Council, 27 of April 1643, in VOC 1142, fol. 186-198, specifically 186v. Note that Rumphius erroneously states that they met off Buton: Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 207.

the subsequent weeks, Valck and his soldiers and local allies would be burning villages, ambushing followers of Kakiali, and mostly, extirpating their clove trees. Interestingly, as the VOC's intention was to crush all remaining Hituese opposition and definitively end the foreign trade that very season, it was effectively destroying its own prospective production capacity. As cloves were deemed too plentiful anyway, and the trees would regrow within a few years, this was not considered problematic.⁷¹⁸

Caen and Demmer, meanwhile, planned the final attack on Kakiali's stronghold at Wawani, and the surrounding fortifications occupied by Makasars and Butonese. As they learned from various defectors, the road leading up to Wawani was defended by three major fortifications at the time. Below at the shore was a massive elongated Makasar fort with two bulwarks. Although it would have been formidable when well-defended, the fort was only occupied by 200 Makasars by then, and all but five of its swivel guns were reportedly defunct, as were most of its muskets. The fort also held their means of escape: fourteen of their *pelong* vessels, along with six newly bought kora-kora. Further up the hill were several additional supporting fortifications, including a Butonese fortification commanded by Kaicili Buton. Perched on a cliff of what is still known as Gunung (Mount) Wawani, was Kakiali's own fort – large, rectangular, and defended with five swivel guns and some falconets. While all of these fortifications would have been formidable, both they and their defenders were reportedly in bad condition. By late April, when the wind had turned and the weather had improved, Caen and Demmer made their way to the coast below Wawani to make their final attack.⁷¹⁹

After the arrival of the assembled fleet at Wawani, Caen gave the Makasars and Butonese one last chance to surrender. Aware that they were, in many respects, a force of their own and that their presence would prevent the Hituese from surrendering, he offered them a chance to leave unharmed within 24 hours, if they would allow their ships to be searched and would turn over any cloves in them, for which they would then even get the price that the Hituese also received. He sent a lieutenant ashore to relay the message. The Makasars did not accept the offer, informing the delegate that their leader was up in Wawani with a wounded leg, and that they were unqualified to decide on the matter. Caen then had the fleet open fire, firing away at the bulwarks with the regular cannon, blowing the palisades away and attempting to weaken the stone walls under them, while also

718 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 207-210.

719 Ibid., 209-210.

lobbing mortars and fireballs into the fortification. A storm attack was prepared, for which three squadrons, consisting of a total of 482 European soldiers, 286 sailors, and some 800 armed local allies and subjects, were formed.⁷²⁰

An additional plan was proposed by a lieutenant named Verheijden. He had been talking to a defector, who had pointed out a hill right behind the eastern bulwark from where one could command the entire Makasar fortress. The hill even had a small defensive structure, apparently meant to keep any attackers off, but it had been left unmanned. Verheijden proposed to quietly land a company of musketeers that night, occupy the hill, and fire into the fort from there. He got permission, and managed to quietly take the hill that night without any opposition.⁷²¹

As the day broke, the Makasars, having been battered by cannon fire the previous day and facing overwhelmingly superior numbers and firepower, now also found an enemy company commanding a hill at their back. They were not going down without a fight, however, and made such a fierce sortie onto the hill that they drove the surprised Company musketeers back. Caen and Demmer immediately sent two additional companies of soldiers ashore to come to their aid, and also sent 8 boats filled with soldiers to the shore further west to make a feigned attack on the western bulwark, hoping to divert the Makasars from the hill. It worked; the Makasars broke off their attack to meet the new threat and tried to prevent the Dutch from landing, which resulted in a fierce firefight across the bay. Meanwhile, Caen and Demmer were able to reinforce the Company troops on the hill with some artillery, enabling the Dutch to target the Makasars in the fort with it. This, then, made the defense of the fort untenable. The remaining Makasars abandoned it and fled into the hills.⁷²²

After the conquest, Caen and Demmer visited the fort. As they were walking around, they marveled at its strength, and noted that their bombardment from the ships had not done as much damage as they had expected. Had the fort been properly manned, and had the hill at its back been defended, the Dutch would have had a wholly different kind of fight on their hands, they mused.⁷²³

It is worth dwelling on their musings. The attack on Wawani is one of the case studies Knaap uses in his overview of warfare in the Ambon Islands. To

720 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, esp. 226r-227v.

721 Ibid., 227v-228r.

722 Ibid., 228r-v.

723 Ibid., 228v-229r.

him, they represent an example of the usefulness of European warfare within the Ambonese context.⁷²⁴ Looking at the specifics of the attack leads to a more qualified assessment.

In his description of the battle, Knaap remarks that it was rather unique for an indigenous fort to have been built directly on the shore. We have, of course, come across indigenous shoreline defenses before in this dissertation, for instance in Kambelo or Seram Laut. These coastal defenses were often, though not always, associated with foreign traders: at Kambelo, for instance, which was a trade- and sea-oriented settlement to begin with, the entire system of fortifications was near the shore, but those directly lining the beach tended to be the makeshift fortifications by Makasars and Malays, meant to protect their vessels and goods. This was also the case at Wawani. The fort was not, in a strict sense, indigenous. It was Makasar-built.

As a general rule, the various Makasar forts in the region served different purposes from the indigenous ones. The hilltop forts of the latter had their origin in providing protection against headhunting raids, and, evolving in response to European encroachment and the proliferation of gunpowder weapons, proved remarkably effective against European adversaries as well. Should one such hilltop fort fall, its defenders would flee into the hinterland and make their way to another, as we have seen throughout this dissertation. The Makasar forts, meant to protect the seagoing vessels and trade goods, served different purposes and also had their basis in a different fort-building practice. The town of Makassar was renowned for its massive and extensive shoreline defenses, meant to protect the large trading town and its court, and showing European inspiration and influence in their designs, with their seaside bulwarks and their massive walls filled with tamped earth. The shoreline forts the Makasars built in the Ambon region show a similar signature, although on a more modest scale: rectangular, sporting bastions, massively built.

Their Makasar defenders had a fighting style to match, and it is hard not to see the martial reputation of the Makasars vindicated in their sortie up the hill against massively superior numbers and firepower, threatening to drive the Dutch from their entrenched position regardless. Back in Makassar, with its massive resources and manpower, this helped make the sultanate a daunting military power. Here in Hitu, Makasar bravery could, however, also work to their disadvantage. Under the circumstances, it meant that they could actually be decisively

724 Knaap, 'Headhunting, carnage and armed peace', 175-179.

defeated in a confrontation, precisely because of what we might consider their bravery. The way of war of the indigenous inhabitants of the region, by contrast, often considered cowardly by the Dutch, relied much more strongly on having the landscape do the fighting for them. This turned them into an elusive adversary, and made them all but impossible to definitively defeat.

The road up to Wawani was beset with several more small fortifications, in addition to the larger Butonese one. In the afternoon and over the course of the next day, the troops under Caen and Demmer were able to conquer them all. The defenders tended to skirmish with the advancing Company troops and their allies for a while before abandoning their fortification and retreating further uphill. They did take care to set the warehouses full of cloves within them ablaze before fleeing. Particularly the last of the lesser fortifications the Company troops conquered was a rich prize. This palisaded position up on a cliff was conquered by using some iron cannon and swivel guns that the troops had found abandoned during their advance – a boon, as it would normally have been very difficult to bring cannon up into the hills. They were used to fire a barrage of grenades into the fort, surprising the defenders so much that they hastily abandoned what would otherwise have been an extremely defensible position. As they fled, they set ablaze some 12 warehouses, of which Caen would later learn that they had contained some 600 bahar of ‘cloves as pure and fine as have ever been seen in living memory’, in addition to a store of silks and other trade goods.⁷²⁵ 600 bahar, it may be recalled, was more than the total amount that came onto the market in Makassar in some years. Caen was mighty pleased and expected that this would also seriously hurt the relationship between the Makasars and Kakiali. The troops considered keeping the conquered position and using it as a base for the final attack on Wawani, but as evening fell and they got the impression that the enemy was preparing a nightly counterattack, they instead demolished the palisade and retreated back to the ships, bringing the conquered cannon with them as best they could.⁷²⁶

The next morning, the 4th of May, the troops once again disembarked and started climbing back into the hills for the final attack on Wawani. Over the past

725 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, esp. fol. 229v.

726 Ibid. Downhill was, of course, easier than up, and the troops, not too concerned with damaging the cannon, pushed them off the cliffs and rolled them downhill where possible. All the same, it took until midnight until the cannon were down on the shore and could be brought on board.

two days, their clearing of the various fortifications on the mountainside, while tedious and tiring, had given them the impression that Wawani itself would not be too fiercely defended. This turned out to be mistaken. The defenders had now all congregated at Wawani, and had nowhere else to fall back to. They defended themselves with a desperate and grim determination. As the Company troops climbed up, the defenders fired at them from ambush at every turn. When they had finally fought their way up to Wawani, a fierce firefight ensued, lasting for some two hours and causing casualties on both sides. As the Company troops began to tire, Makasar troops stormed out of the fort for a 'desperate sortie', coming in so close so fast that the Company troops had no use for their muskets and it came down to hand to hand combat. While the Makasars were eventually driven back into the fort, the resolve of the Company troops to continue the attack against 'this invincible stronghold, in which over 500 of these rogues had congregated' was waning. Caen and Demmer decided to withdraw back to the ships for the moment.⁷²⁷

Then, somewhat surprisingly, they decided to break off the campaign altogether for now. Some ships were left to blockade the Hituese coast; the bulk of the fleet returned to Castle Victoria; the hongis were disbanded. In his letter describing the events, Caen explained the decision by pointing to the defensibility of Wawani, the number of casualties among his officers and the fatigue of his troops (he mentions 43 wounded and 8 dead on the Company side), as well as the desire to return to Castle Victoria and 'tend to other important matters.'⁷²⁸ Caen made a point to emphasize what a major success the campaign as a whole had been, with the Makasar fort taken, the Makasar ships destroyed along with a huge store of cloves, and all of the Hituese coast now under control. With Wawani now the last hideout of Kakiali and his followers, Caen expected that famine and want would probably finish the job soon enough anyway. This would prove optimistic, and considering that Caen's instructions were to eradicate the Hituese resistance, and that he had been sent east at the head of an impressive fleet mainly for that purpose, it seems puzzling that he abandoned his attempts after an effective campaign of only three days.⁷²⁹

727 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, esp. fol. 230r.

728 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, quote on fol. 231r.

729 In late June, the troops remaining on the Hituese coast under commander Valck

EXECUTIONS, DEFECTIONS AND ASSASSINATIONS

Governor-general Van Diemen, however, was not complaining, as the ‘important matters’ that Caen and Demmer tended to in the wake of the campaign, would deal the final blow to the old political order in the Amboina Quarter. Before Caen’s arrival, Sultan Hamzah, after long correspondence with both Demmer and Van Diemen, had had himself convinced that it was best to confirm Majira as the new kimelaha, and to have Luhu and his family executed.⁷³⁰ He had authorized Demmer to do the dirty work if he could. Kimelaha Luhu had of course recently become rather more amenable to the VOC, and as Demmer had expected he might have need of his knowledge and services in the campaign against Wawani, had kept this letter secret for the time being. Indeed, Luhu, working in tandem with Majira, had assisted in the campaigns preceding the attack on Wawani. Now that Caen and Demmer considered the war against Kakiali practically won, they called the various orangkaya of Hoamoal and the surrounding islands to Castle Victoria for a meeting.

They informed the gathered orangkaya that they were all expected in Ternate to bear witness to the confirmation of Majira as the new kimelaha. The sultan had requested that they come there in their kora-kora; but what with the rather heavy recent appeals on the hong, Demmer and Caen were more than happy to excuse them of that obligation. They could instead hitch a ride on Caen’s fleet, which was set to leave for Ternate soon. After the business of the meeting was ostensibly concluded, and the gathered orangkaya were treated to some betelnut and took their leave to return later in the day, kimelaha Luhu and his half-brother Akiwani, who had taken part in the meeting, were asked to remain in the room, to their visible alarm – kimelaha Luhu had long dreaded something like this might eventually happen.⁷³¹ But it could not be helped. Company soldiers,

would make another attempt to conquer Wawani in a nightly surprise attack, but made a hasty retreat after being detected.

730 Sultan Hamzah to governor Demmer, no date, in: Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 156-157.

731 For instance, to show his good will and take his distance from Hamzah, he had shared some letters sent by Hamzah to various dignitaries in the Ambon Islands over the previous decade, ostensibly confirming long-held Company suspicions of his double-dealing. While these letters did show that Hamzah had not always been as ill-disposed towards the foreign traders as he had made the Company believe, and that he was in fact holding correspondence with the leaders in the region outside Company knowledge, they were not enough to exculpate kimelaha Luhu in the eyes of the Company. Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, I, 203-204, briefly summarizes the letters.

who had been waiting in the gallery to make the arrest, filed into the room and apprehended the two. The other orangkaya were informed of the arrest later that day. Majira, as the new prospective kimelaha, was asked to assist in also rounding up Luhu's extended family and gathering his possessions before leaving for Ternate, 'to be considered all the more praiseworthy by His Majesty' Sultan Hamzah.⁷³² After some hesitation, he agreed. He would deliver several of Luhu's female relatives and some of his possessions into the Company's hands before leaving for Ternate.⁷³³ The execution took place on the 16th of June; in addition to Luhu himself, his mother, sister, half-brother and one of the hamba raja's were beheaded in the courtyard of castle Victoria. After their bodies had been on display for a few hours, they were taken away to be buried at a spot near the Hituese shore.⁷³⁴

All the while, Demmer was receiving delegates from Hituese communities who came to sue for peace. In fact, many of these communities had already come to negotiate even before Caen's arrival, but Demmer had grown to consider such attempts mere stalling tactics, and had been refusing to meet with such delegates since last December. Now, with the campaign largely concluded, he was in more of a mood to receive them. Peace was made with Negerilima, Seit and other places along the western part of the Hituese north coast, but also the area around Kapahaha, ruled by Telukibesi, on the east side of Hitu, in the course of May. The communities were required to abide by the treaties and partake in the hong. The various communities along the south and west coast of Hitu, the Muslim areas that had originally resorted under the VOC but had sided with Kakiali in the recent trouble, followed suit in mid-June. Demmer, however, was not inclined to show any mercy to the defenders of Wawani itself. Aware that they were in increasingly dire straits up there, and determined to bring them entirely to their knees, he sent their delegates away empty-handed every time.⁷³⁵

Some of the Hituese orangkaya arriving to sue for peace brought valuable

Demmer to governor-General, 27 April 1643 in: VOC 1142, fol. 150-183, esp. 167r-v mentions that the letters were included in full in Demmer's journal.

732 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, quote on fol. 233v.

733 Ibid., fol. 238r-v.

734 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 216-217. Neither Demmer nor Caen describes the execution in any detail in their letters. The spot where they were buried was since washed away by the sea, Rumphius informs us.

735 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 207, 215-219.

information. The orangkaya of Lebalehu, for example, tried to make a good impression on Caen and Demmer by informing them that Kakiali's Makasar and Butonese allies, whose seagoing vessels had all been destroyed in the recent attack, were constructing two large sampans, hidden slightly inland near his settlement, right below Wawani. Kakiali, aware that the game was up, reportedly intended to go with them to Makassar. Caen and Demmer, resolved to prevent such an escape, immediately dispatched a large contingent of troops onto a flute ship, which sailed around Hitu, found the two sampans, and destroyed them.⁷³⁶

With their escape once again cut off, the hopelessness and misery of their situation moved more and more of Kakiali's followers to defect. Every new defector brought valuable information about the situation in Wawani.⁷³⁷ It was also a defector who finally brought about Kakiali's death: in early August, a Spaniard called Francisco de Toira approached one of the ships blockading the Hituese coast, to surrender himself to the Dutch.

De Toira was, one could say, a veteran defector. He had originally come into Dutch service by defecting from his Spanish employers in Ternate. Having been subsequently stationed at Ureng on the Hituese coast some two years previously, he had thought it expedient to disappear into the hinterland and offer his services to Kakiali instead. Now that the game seemed to be up for Kakiali, he saw no other option but to defect back to the Dutch. All too aware that defection was punishable by death, especially for repeat offenders, he knew it would be difficult to get back into favour with them. Fortunately he had something tempting to offer.

Having been brought to Castle Victoria, De Toira informed Demmer that he was a personal confidant of Kakiali, and had recently accompanied him on a trip to Loien, right below Kapahaha, to request that they prepare a vessel for him in which he could make his way to Makassar. Kakiali had been making grand promises about returning at the head of a relief force of Makasars, Englishmen, Portuguese and others. As preparations for such a ship and its crew were being made, Kakiali had returned to Wawani. De Toira, however, had decided 'that

736 Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, esp. fol. 239r-v, describing the early days of June.

737 A Makasar arrival on the 11th of June, for instance, not only informed Caen and Demmer of the increasing famine in Wawani, but also presented them with an overview of the number of deaths, and the names of the high-ranking Makasar casualties, in the earlier attack. Caen to Governor-General Van Diemen, 11 June 1643, in: VOC 1142, fol. 225-242, esp. fol. 241r-v

Kakiali's actions as well as his poor circumstances no longer pleased him, and did not bode to end well'. Along with a Pampanger⁷³⁸ who was of a similar inclination, he had decided to defect back to the Dutch, putting himself at their mercy, but hoping he could redeem himself in one way or another.

Demmer suggested that he might save his life by delivering Kakiali to him, or killing him. De Toira replied that the former would be tricky, but that he would happily have a go at the latter.

This was a terribly tempting thought to Demmer, although he also seemed to realize the moral implications of what he was about to do. In his letter detailing the episode, he spent almost an entire page laying out his various considerations – how it would remove Kakiali's pernicious influence from the world, eliminate the risk that he would escape, how it would almost certainly prevent the spilling of Dutch blood... In the end he decided that it was, perhaps, not too much of a misdeed 'that one villain should make the other pay for his treacherous deeds to save his own life.'⁷³⁹ Demmer accepted, and promised De Toira an additional reward of 200 rials of eight, should he return successfully. De Toira was stealthily smuggled back out of Ambon town to avoid being seen there that same night.

The surviving accounts of what transpired once he made his way back to Wawani differ in their details, but not in their outcome: De Toira was able to find his way back into Wawani, dug a hole into Kakiali's sleeping quarters, and stabbed him to death on the night of the 16th of August. Kakiali was able to call out before dying, and de Toira had to flee for his life with some of Kakiali's followers hot on his heels. He made it back to the shore, where Dutch boats were lying ready to pick him up and transport him to the safety of a Dutch yacht.⁷⁴⁰

738 Pampangers were Christians from the present-day Philippines who served as soldiers for the Spanish; this Pampanger would likely also have been a two-time defector.

739 Demmer and his council to Governor-General, 11 September 1643, in VOC 1142, fol. 249-266, quote on fol. 256r.

740 Demmer in VOC 1142, fol. 256r-v (letter to Batavia of 11 september) has him hiding in the forest for a few days before finding his way back in; Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 191, speaks of two Castilians executing the murder (apparently conflating the unnamed Pampanger and the De Toira himself – according to Dutch sources the Pampanger did defect but was not involved in the killing of Kakiali). Rijali, who was apparently present in Wawani at the time, also remarks that De Toira and his accomplice were simply let back into Wawani after claiming they had been lost in the forest. Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 220-221, among other small differences from the other accounts, adds the salient details that De Toira executed the murder with Kakiali's own criss, and took several items with him, including his silver Pinang

‘This, then, is the end of Kakiali, the end of and reward for his treacherous and pernicious acts, and the end, so we hope, and God willing, of the great and lengthy troubles’, Demmer somewhat histrionically concluded.⁷⁴¹ He added that Kakiali’s death had caused great dismay among the Hituese, and expected that it would break the resolve of the last resisting Hituese and dash the hopes of those ostensibly having submitted, but secretly still opposed to the Company. Indeed it did. Rijali describes how, as the Dutch fort and ships fired salutes in celebration, ‘all the Hituese communities were seized by a feeling of powerlessness after this terrible loss.’⁷⁴²

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE OLD POLITICAL ORDER

Just when Demmer had set in motion the assassination of Kakiali, Caen’s fleet returned from Ternate. Demmer sailed out and met him off the west coast of Hitu on the 16th of August. Unable to sail into the bay due to adverse winds, they eventually decided to join the blockading ships off Wawani, just as De Toira had returned there from his assassination mission. This gave Demmer and Caen the opportunity to get right on with it. De Toira had already informed Demmer that Wawani’s remaining defenders were down to a handful of people from the earlier intervention forces with nowhere to go: about a 100 Makasars, 10 Malays and 40 Butonese, in bad condition due to the want and disease that had Wawani in its grip. With Kakiali dead, he suggested that a new attack on Wawani was bound to succeed. Demmer and Caen wasted no time, sending four companies of soldiers up the hills under cover of darkness. They attacked at daybreak on the 21st of August. This time, the resistance was desperate but feeble: apparently down to two working swivel guns, the defenders, mostly Makasars, used their poisonous blowdarts to keep the Dutch at bay. After an hour or so, the Company troops were able to force their way in, giving no quarter to whoever they still found inside. Some 40 defenders were killed outright; the rest fled into the forests and scattered into the hills, many of them perishing there in the wake of the conquest.⁷⁴³

plate, a small halberd (‘pardesaan’), the jewel ornamenting Kakiali’s turban, and a ring which he cut from his finger.

741 Demmer and his council to Governor-General, 11 september 1643, in VOC 1142, fol. 249-266, quote on fol. 256v.

742 Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 191.

743 Demmer and his council to Governor-General, 11 september 1643, in VOC 1142, fol. 249-266, esp. 257v; Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, I, 221-222.

Caen felt that with the conquest of Wawani, his job was done. Anxious to return to Batavia before the imminent turning of the monsoon, he left the region on the 12th of September with the better part of the fleet. This was somewhat to the chagrin of Demmer, who was left to tie up the loose ends by himself, with far fewer ships and men than before.⁷⁴⁴ Undeterred, however, he wasted no time in consolidated the Company's control over Hitu. He pursued two related policies: changing the settlement patterns in Hitu, and dismantling its political structure.

As discussed, most of the settlements in the region at large were originally up in the hills rather than directly at the coast, which made them more resilient to attacks and outside control. In times of trouble, war and conflict, the inhabitants additionally tended to move further into the mountainous interior, to fortified hideouts of which Wawani and Kapahaha are the most prominent Hituese examples. As a consequence, in a development rather neatly in keeping with the analysis of James C. Scott, the Company had come to equate further uphill and inland with more resistant to their rule and influence. Over the preceding years, this had increasingly translated into the Company trying to convince its followers to move to the shoreline, and considering it an act of sedition to move back up into the interior, even if merely out of self-preservation.⁷⁴⁵

After the conquest of Wawani, this perception translated into policy on an unprecedented scale. As representatives of the various Hituese communities came down to negotiate with Demmer, who remained at the Hituese coast in early September, they were all ordered to move out of the hills and down to the coast. Some of the communities retained their own distinct settlements; many more congregated at existing settlements with a Dutch fortification, such as Seit, where a fort had recently been constructed, as well as Hila and Hitulama. When Demmer subsequently went around the region with the hongis in October, he saw to it that his orders were executed as intended; where the move to the coast was already completed, he sent groups of soldiers into the interior to burn the abandoned settlements; where the move was not yet completed, the communities

744 Demmer to Governor-General, 25 april 1644, in: VOC 1147, fol. 156-206, esp. fol. 156v; *Dagh-register Batavia, 1643-1644*, 88.

745 For some examples predating 1643 see Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 182 (the people of Asaudi moving to the Dutch fort on the shore in 1640) and 205-206 (the inhabitants of Kaibobo being promised a schoolmaster if they would move down to the coast, and the inhabitants of Hutumuri, a Christian village on the east side of Leitimor, being ordered to relocate to a new location on the shoreline.) Also see above, chapter VIII.

were admonished and their progress inspected. The Hituese, their leaders dead, their outside allies gone, saw no other option but to comply. As this major migration to the coast took shape, the Hituese landscape suddenly looked a whole lot less complicated to the Company.⁷⁴⁶

This also applied to the political landscape, both in Hitu and Hoamoal. With Caen's fleet, Majira, had returned to Hoamoal, now officially sworn in. Sultan Hamzah, however, also authorized the governor of Ambon to rule the region in his name, drastically weakening the position of the kimelaha. He authorized Demmer to execute a good number of other 'traitors' in Hoamoal; many beheadings were to follow in the subsequent months. Additionally, one such order had been dispatched to Batavia, where the erstwhile kimelaha Leliato was brought from his cell and publicly beheaded on the 9th of November. Hamzah and Demmer, between them, were decapitating what was left of the resistance against Company control.

As no foreign traders had apparently come to the region to buy cloves over the past year, and the Dutch were otherwise also very pleased with Hamzah's recent cooperation, he received the yearly 4000 rials he had been promised by Van Diemen for the first time this year.⁷⁴⁷ Indeed, with the recent changes in the region, the Dutch really did appear to have secured a clove monopoly for the time being. What little cloves arrived onto the market in Makassar came from the Spanish-held regions in North Maluku, which produced a modest amount - the Spanish, rather than hoisting their cloves across two-thirds of the globe over their trade route from Manila to Spanish America and then on to Europe, sold them in Makassar, buying, among other things, English gunpowder there. As a consequence, the English and Danes were able to secure negligible amounts of cloves from 1643 onwards - nowhere enough to be a threat to the Dutch hold over the European market.⁷⁴⁸

As news of the events percolated through to the Netherlands in the course of 1644, the directors were confident that they could change their market strategy in Europe accordingly. As we have seen, from 1635 onwards, dividends in cloves

746 Demmer to Governor-General Van Diemen, 25 April 1644, as summarized in *Dagh-Register Batavia*, 1643-1644, 88-97; Rijali, *Historie van Hitu*, 62-63. The most complete and insightful inventory of the changes in the Hituese communities and their locales is Rumphius, *De Ambonse eilanden onder de VOC*, 23-42.

747 Van Diemen to directors, 23 Dec 1644, as excerpted in Tiele-Heeres, *Boumstoffen*, III, 184.

748 Some numbers and context in Bassett, 'English trade in Celebes', 19-23.

had regularly been paid out in order to flood the market and drive down prices. The last of such dividends in kind was paid out in November 1644; from then on, the shareholders had only hard currency to look forward to. European clove prices responded by veering back up.⁷⁴⁹

While both the Company and Sultan Hamzah were thus reaping the benefits of the newly attained monopoly, the people of Hoamoal, destitute after years of war, cut off from the foreign traders and now wholly dependent on the Dutch, did not exactly share in the pickings. To make matters worse, Hamzah then also made a point of levying a huge fine on his subjects for their open revolt in the wake of his 1638 visit, officially totaled at 73000 rials of eight. The inhabitants of the region, unable to resist under the circumstances, paid up mostly in goods, including a good number of small guns and other weapons, which the Company, unsurprisingly, did not mind. Although the paid goods were taxed at several times their true value by the delegates, so that the official height of the fine was mostly symbolic, the delegates still extracted a significant amount of material wealth, further adding to the destitution of the region which had been so affluent only a decade ago.⁷⁵⁰

As to the political order in Hitu: after Kakiali's death, both the perdana Tanihitumesen and Sultan Hamzah immediately started manoeuvring to have the now vacant position of Kapitan Hitu filled. The perdana Tanihitumesen fully expected that he would be reinstated as Kapitan Hitu, and started looking for support among the Hituese the moment that Kakiali was dead. Demmer, however, immediately made it clear for anyone to hear that he had no intention of maintaining the old Hituese political order.⁷⁵¹

The perdana Tanihitumesen did not immediately take this to heart. When Demmer heard that he had been meeting with a large group of orangkaya at Hitulama, apparently to win their support in order to be elected, he went there

749 Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic trade*, 95-96; Pim de Zwart, *Globalization and the colonial origins of the great divergence*, 64; Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, 1.I, p. 434-435 (listing the various payments of dividend).

750 Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, 190 (Van Diemen and Council describing the levying of the fine, in General letter of 23 December 1644) and 204 (Hamzah to Demmer, 25 feb 1644, announcing the fine.)

751 By early 1644, he received clearance from Batavia to go ahead with this policy, as well as a letter from Sultan Hamzah recognizing the Company's ultimate authority. Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 204-210. Note that the sequence of events as described in Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 221pp., cannot be entirely reconciled with the VOC documents for this particular period.

in person and had both the perdana Tanihitumesen and Telukibesi called to the Dutch redoubt. He told them in no uncertain terms that they were absolutely not allowed to call together a meeting of any orangkaya without his consent, and that if Tanihitumesen imagined 'succeeding Kakiali as Kapitan Hitu... he could entirely put that out of his mind for good.'⁷⁵² Demmer was going to abolish the old Hituese government entirely, not only the function of Kapitan Hitu but also the four perdana's, and if the perdana Tanihitumesen wanted to remain an orangkaya at all, he'd better cooperate. If perdana Tanihitumesen was outraged or dismayed, he was apparently able to hide it. He politely excused himself for the risen misunderstanding about his intentions.

Telukibesi, however, was not swallowing his pride. He was, it may be remembered, also a member of the Tanihitumesen family, not too enthusiastic about Kakiali's heavy-handed style of rule, but also unwilling to assist the Dutch in anything harmful to the integrity of the Hituese state. He had therefore often taken his distance from the perdana Tanihitumesen, and had steered a middle course throughout the past years of conflict. Now that worst had come to worst, he was not about to meekly cooperate with the dissolution of the Hituese state. Fortunately, he was the head of Kapahaha, the mountain fort towards the east of Hitu, even more unassailable than Wawani. He also happened to personally be a gifted maker of gunpowder, and knew where to find the necessary sulphur in the Hituese interior.⁷⁵³ As most of the Hituese communities were coming down to the shoreline, he took to his hilltop stronghold.

Telukibesi remained absent from the various meetings Demmer held with the Hituese orangkaya, even when specifically called for. He likewise did not join the hongis as it set out in October, using the time to gather up the remaining Butonese and Makasars and provide them with whatever smaller seagoing vessels he could find. Most of them were thus able to finally depart from Hitu and make their way back home. He invited the various Hituese refugees from Wawani into

752 Demmer to Governor-General, 25 April 1644, in VOC 1147, fol. 156-206, quote on fol. 161r.

753 Company officials would only learn of this after the end of the siege from their interrogations. Surprised that so much of the European-made gunpowder from Makassar remained in the fort after three years of periodic skirmishing, they found out that Telukibesi had been producing his own gunpowder, sourcing the necessary ingredients from the surrounding area, teaching others the procedure, and saving the Makasar gunpowder for when worst came to worst. Demmer to Governor-General, 17 August 1646, in: Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 290-291.

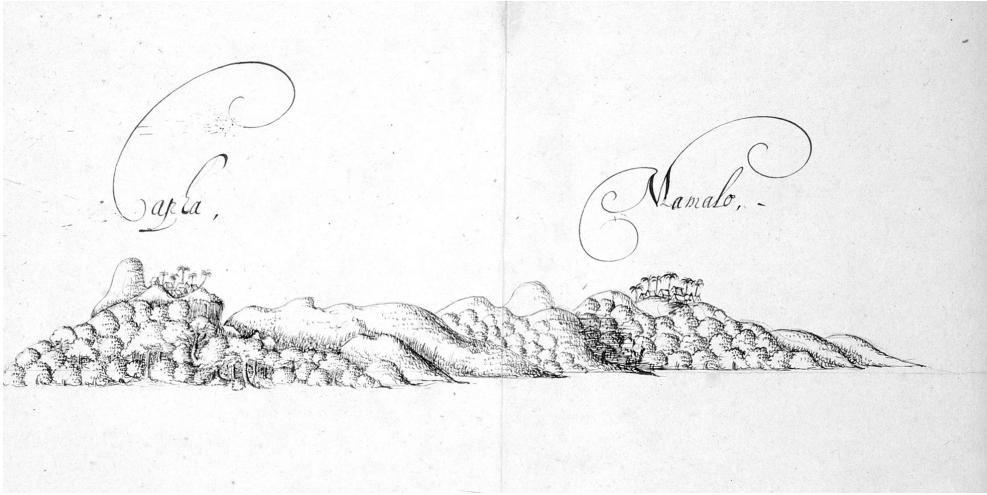


Fig 11.1 Kapahaha and Mamalo as depicted in an anonymous drawing, c. 1635. Note that this image dates from before Demmer's policy of moving everyone to the coast. Mamalo, on the right side, was forced down to the coast in 1643. Telukibesi, however, refused and instead entrenched himself uphill in Kapahaha, depicted on the left. Badische Landesbibliothek, inv. K 477, fol 29-30.

Kapahaha, including such prominent figures as Rijali and Patiwani. When the hongi called at the settlements below Kapahaha, and Demmer used the opportunity to try and make contact, his overtures went unanswered.

Arriving back at Castle Victoria in mid-November, and hearing all the latest news about Telukibesi's recent activities, Demmer concluded that the war was not over yet. He resolved to attack Kapahaha as soon as the weather allowed.

REMEMBER KAPAHABA!

Kapahaha would ultimately hold out for three more years. Its struggle against the Company is a story in itself, which has already been the subject of some scholarly scrutiny.⁷⁵⁴ It is also remembered to this day by the people of Hitu. Particularly the people of Morela, still in the location where it settled in 1643, at the shoreline right below the remains of the fort, take pride in their role in this last-ditch resistance against the Dutch. The siege has become the subject of much local lore, and found its way into dramatic stories in colonial literature.⁷⁵⁵

754 E.g. Knaap, 'Headhunting, carnage and armed peace', esp. 179; Rijali, *Historie van Hitu*, 63-65, 201-205.

755 For a wonderful analysis of how the story of the siege of Kapahaha inspired nine-

The remains of the fort, up in the steep hills above Morela, are considered an important Hituese heritage site today.

When I climbed up to Benteng Kapahaha in March 2019, escorted by three Morelese, I was told a story of how the fort was ultimately conquered. The people of Morela were secretly helping the besieged by bringing rice over the hidden paths leading up into the hills. A traitor cut a hole into one of the bags of rice, which then left a trail leading up to the fort. The next day the Dutch troops, much like the Tom Thumb of European lore, could simply follow the rice grains to the fort, unexpectedly storming it.⁷⁵⁶

While the details of the story cannot be reconciled with what we know from contemporary sources, its themes strongly resonate with important aspects of the siege. Company troops really did have trouble finding a route up to the fort, which, while only a few hundred meters from the coast and only some 250 meters up from sea-level, is situated on a steep cliff, surrounded by a craggy, inhospitable and densely forested landscape. The three available paths leading up there are full of narrow passages and ridges that provide excellent natural fortifications, leading the defenders to boast that the Dutch would never be able to conquer the fort unless they grew wings.⁷⁵⁷ The Company's first attempt to conquer Kapahaha by going around it and attacking it from the land side went nowhere, and the 200 Company soldiers led by Jacob Verheijden roamed the forests aimlessly before returning empty-handed. Instead, they resorted to their usual scorched earth tactics, destroying the clove trees and all edible plants and trees in the surrounding area. With a couple of makeshift fortifications at the coast and a permanent presence of ships holding guard, they expected to starve the defenders out soon enough.

This, however, proved more difficult than anticipated. While the Hituese had had little choice but to cooperate with Dutch demands, the abolition of the four *perdanas*, in particular, had created great resentment. In negotiations between the besieged and the Company in April 1644, it was brought forward as the

teenth-century colonial literature, which in turn fed back into local lore about the siege, see Hans Straver. *Vaders en Dochters: Molukse historie in de Nederlandse literatuur van de negentiende eeuw en haar weerklink in Indonesië*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2018, pp. 229-321.

756 This story was told to me by the assistant of the raja of Morela, en route to Kapahaha, on the 21st of February 2019. I wish to thank him for sharing his knowledge, and my guide Avin for making the arrangements and translating on the many occasions that my Indonesian proved insufficient.

757 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 231.

main grievance of Telukibesi and his followers, and they would only come down if this decision was reversed. This demand predictably went unheeded. It seemed, however, that many Hituese quietly felt the same way, as the besieged had little trouble getting food or leaving and entering the fort. After sending out delegates to Seram, they were even able to organize provisioning expeditions to some of the villages there. In response, the Company implemented a fishing ban at Morela and Mamalo, and organized punitive raids on the villages at the Seramese coast. Latu, Hualoi, Rumahkai and Kamarian were all destroyed in late 1644 and early 1645. The state of Kapahaha, at this time, was such that, hearing of the attacks, they were even able to send a relief force of 70 warriors to Seram, led by Patiwani. The kora-kora carrying Patiwani himself, however, had a run-in with a Dutch-led urembai patrolling that part of the coast. A fierce skirmish ensued which left both Patiwani and the Dutch commander of the urembai dead. After Patiwani, who had jumped onto the urembai with his parang, was shot off the rear of the ship by a wounded Dutch musketeer, what remained of the urembai's crew made a run for it, disengaging the much larger and better-manned kora-kora.⁷⁵⁸

In order to starve out the besieged, the Company also took another tactic back out of the drawer: in October 1645, after several failed attempts at conquering Kapahaha or negotiating its surrender, Demmer took the hongi to Seram, picking up some seventy Alfurs from the kingdom of Sumit, the old allies of the Dutch. These were then deployed into the area around Kapahaha to hunt for people bringing food to the castle. The Alfurs heathunted through the forests around the fort for a month, leading to hunger and want among the besieged. In the wake of this month of headhunting, the besieged were able, and compelled, to organize another food-gathering expedition along the coast of Hitu and to Hoamoal. Additionally, there remained a lot of secret support for the besieged, and smuggled food supplies periodically made it into the fort, despite the Company's efforts to stop them. On the other hand, Hituese communities trying to take away Company suspicions about their loyalties, often sent out headhunting parties to the vicinity of the fort as well. In the long run, the supplies reaching Kapahaha were insufficient. As Rijali recalls, towards the end of the siege, 'as a divine tribulation, hunger and disease came, as all the other communities had become our enemies.'⁷⁵⁹

758 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 238-239; Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 199-201.

759 Rijali, *Historie van Hitu*, 203. With regard to the famine, it bears mentioning that a fair amount of sago was found in Kapahaha after it fell, but there was practically no fish

The final blow was, once again, brought about by a defector. 'A certain boy... announced he would show them a passage into Kapahaha', as Demmer later described, which, if all went well, would lead them into the fort undetected. The boy was happy to guide them up there in person. Demmer, aware that the besieged still had eyes and ears throughout Hitu, amassed a small expeditionary force in the Dutch fortified posts along the shoreline as quietly as he could, sending additional soldiers there in small groups. Captain Jacob Verheijden, who had been involved in attempts to conquer Kapahaha for the last three years, was to lead them.

In the late evening of the 24th of July, under cover of darkness, the column of 100 soldiers, supported by 60 sailors, set itself in motion into the forested hills. The operation had been planned to coincide with the full moon lighting their ascent, but the weather happened to be cloudy and rainy. In the utter darkness, on the small and craggy paths in the jungle, many lost their way and the column was separated. A severely thinned-out advance guard, led by an ensign, guided by the boy, and otherwise consisting of only some eight musketeers and a handful of grenadiers, eventually found itself right below two bulwarks guarding the entrance to Kapahaha as day broke. There was no sign of the rest of the Company force, but the impressive defensive works towering over them appeared unguarded. Then, an old woman spotted them, calling out 'Hollanda! Hollanda!' in alarm.⁷⁶⁰ The ensign, aware that they had been detected and that the whole operation would have been in vain if they waited or retreated, felt that he had but one option. He and his small force rushed into Kapahaha, shooting as they went.

Entering the settlement beyond the walls, the Dutch troops caused great alarm among the unsuspecting inhabitants. Only very few of them were able to muster themselves and defend the fort; most fled immediately. Telukibesi's brother was among those who got shot as he rushed out to meet the attacking

or other 'toespijs' (accompanying food.) Sago, while rich in carbohydrates, is extremely poor in vitamins and minerals, even for a staple. A diet exclusively made up of sago, even when having a sufficient energy value, would have led to a range of deficiency diseases, in turn making the besieged vulnerable to infectious disease. Demmer to Governor-General, 16 August 1646, in Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 290.

760 The detail of her specifically shouting 'Hollanda! Hollanda!' comes from Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 254. Rumphius largely seems to base himself on Demmer's description of the events, but has certain details that Demmer does not. This one is among them, and it seems possible that Rumphius got such details from other sources, such as oral accounts of the attack as they were later told in Ambon. With that disclaimer, I am happy to repeat the detail here.

Dutch. Two of Telukibesi's other brothers, one suffering from a leg wound and the other paralytic, were among the small group that got captured. Most of the inhabitants ran for their lives, jumping over the walls, sometimes with their children in their arms, and tumbling off the steep cliffs on which Kapahaha was perched. The Dutch soldiers later found a great number number of them in the forests down below, dead or too wounded to continue their flight.

Among those who did make it out unscathed were Telukibesi himself and our chronicler Rijali. The latter described what happened to those who had survived the tumble down the cliffs: 'Some of them died along the way, some of them died under the trees, unable to continue walking because they were famished. Some took their refuge in the forest, some in caves: wherever they went, they stayed there and died on the spot.' Yet others, as he described, were tired of running and hiding, and went into the one of the Hituese settlements. 'These were all delivered to the Governor.'⁷⁶¹

Demmer was now in a position to be forgiving. He gave all the refugees from Kapahaha who had ended up in the Company's custody permission to leave, settle and get on with their lives. He himself remarks that 'they showed themselves to be glad, and, at least outwardly, thankful for this, as they had imagined nothing but how all them, great and small, would be held captive and enslaved.' While at Mamalo, Demmer also gathered the orangkaya of all of Ambon there, treating those of Hitu to a thunderous and threatening speech in the presence of the rest. From his interrogations of the prisoners, Demmer had taken away that the Hituese had been even more supportive and encouraging of the armed resistance at Kapahaha than was already his impression. He took no additional measures, however, only emphasizing that the name of the four *perdana*'s should not be uttered in the island from now on.⁷⁶²

He did, however, hold a few highranking prisoners in his custody, including three of Telukibesi's brothers as well as Pati Tuban, one of the erstwhile *perdana*'s, as collateral for Telukibesi and Rijali, who were still at large. He forbid anyone in the Ambon Islands to hide or aid them on pain of death. Telukibesi remained at large for another month, but ultimately decided that he would 'rather die an orangkaya in his land, than to live ignominiously in exile elsewhere.'⁷⁶³

761 Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 203-205.

762 Demmer to Governor-General, 16 August 1646, in Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 298-299.

763 Ibid., 302. Also note that Rumphius' incorrectly states that Demmer held all the Hituese orangkaya hostage in order to get his hands on Telukibesi ('De Ambonsche

He presented himself at Castle Victoria on the 19th of August, 'putting himself at the mercy of the Dutch.'⁷⁶⁴ He was not to get any. Demmer's council condemned him to death, as the chief mutineer in the last war. On the 3rd of September, he was brought to the central square of the castle and beheaded. His family members and other high-ranking members of the resistance, rather than being released, were sent into exile in Batavia.

As to Rijali, his history ends with his account of how he aimlessly wandered the land of Hitu as a fugitive: 'I will not discuss his hardships, or the misdeeds that he was accused of', he writes of himself, but merely tells the reader how, afraid to go into any of the settlements, he 'wandered through forests and fields, going up one hill and down the other,' actively trying to keep away from the search parties that had been sent out for him, and finally meeting a former servant of perdana Patih Tuban, who kept him company for a while. At one harrowing occasion, the two happened upon a Dutchman walking his dog, but were not recognized, and simply passed each other on the road.

Rijali eventually took his chances and went into Hila, where a local dignitary and imam, who was sheltering several other refugees, assisted him. One of the refugees, incidentally, was still a toddler: one of Kakiali's sons was hidden here with his Papuan nurse. Torn about what to do with them, the others ultimately decided that taking a small child along on their flight was too much of a liability. With heavy hearts, they left them in Hila and continued on their way to look for a way off Hitu. Ultimately, the orangkaya of Hatunuku provided them with a boat with which they first crossed to Seram and then went to Kelang, which over the past years had become a hideout for Ternatans and Hoamoalese opposed to Majira and the newly established Dutch control over Hoamoal. When Demmer and Majira, with orders from Hamzah to back them up, came to Kelang to eliminate this last hotbed of sedition, forcing the renegades to move to Luhu, under the walls of the Dutch fort there, Rijali and two of his fellow Hituese refugees fled into the interior, once again finding themselves alone. As Rijali himself put it: 'I cannot describe his sorrow, only that he put his faith in God, the most holy.'

Ultimately, the Burunese kimelaha Hasi gave them passage to his own do-

Historie', I, 258). While this resonates with notions from Morelese oral culture about how Telukibesi sacrificed himself for the greater good of Hitu (Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 64-65), it is not congruent with either the *Hikayat Tanah Hitu* (Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu*, 205) or with the correspondence from Demmer.

764 'Op genade en ongenade overgegeven', as the expression went. Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 259.

main, Buru. This large island comprising the westernmost part of the Ambon region, it bears reminding, had its own Ternatan *kimelaha*, and had, as yet, largely been spared the increasing Dutch influence in the region. Staying there for a while, out of sight of the Company, but increasingly aware that there was no point in staying around and undertake anything against Company control, Rijali and his fellow refugees ultimately made their way west, abandoning their home. After more harrowing adventures at the coast of Bone, Rijali and his fellow refugees ended up at Buton, where a Gowan dignitary arranged for their passage to Makassar. Rijali was received at court, and recounted the fate of Hitu, and his own adventures, to the sultan and his chancellor. He specifically points out that it was chancellor Pattingalloang who made sure he was given a home there. It was here, in exile, that he wrote his history of Hitu, most likely commissioned to do so by the same chancellor Pattingalloang.⁷⁶⁵

AN UNUSUAL PEACE

By the time Rijali would have arrived in Makassar, Governor-general Demmer felt his task in the Ambon Islands was more or less done, and he had asked the governor-general to send his replacement. Sure enough, some work still remained to consolidate the newly established Dutch control. For instance, Demmer continued his attempts to accomplish a complete move to the coast, and the destruction of all indigenous fortifications, throughout the region, also beyond Ambon proper. On Saparua, for instance, he tried to force the inhabitants of Ihamahu to abandon their unassailable coral platform. This was met with an understandable lack of enthusiasm, and in the end, a compromise was reached in which the defensive walls around the platform were thrown down, but the inhabitants could continue to live there. Additionally, there were some rearguard battles with Sultan Hamzah, who, among other things, felt that the Dutch move to abolish the Hituese government altogether was somewhat of an overreach of his acknowledgment of their power there.

There were also the abovementioned disaffected Ternatans still in the region, numbering about 300. Demmer wanted to be able to keep an eye on them, rather than seeing them pardoned and disappear to Ternate beyond his reach. With the

765 That is, in any case, what Rumphius tells us: Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 257-258. Given what we know about Pattingalloang's interests and predilections, this is more than plausible.

help of Majira and the blessings of the sultan, he was able to get them to move to Luhu in December 1646.

The newly found control over most parts of the region also came with its own challenges and responsibilities. Whereas Gijssels, more than a decade ago, had tried to employ the various antagonisms and rivalries in the region for the Company's purposes, Demmer now found himself soothing such conflicts as they kept on rearing their head under the umbrella of Company control.

Finally, the region beyond the Company's control now started to pose new challenges – particularly Buru, the large island at the far western side of the Ambon region, still largely outside the Dutch sphere of influence. As we saw, its kimelaha was very much determining his own agenda, having no qualms about aiding and sheltering Rijali, for instance. Burunese communities had lately tried to expand their influence into nearby Ambelau. Although Buru's coasts had, in the past, been visited and sometimes attacked by the Company and its allies as it was used as a waystation by foreign traders, the island as a whole, originally not a clove-producing region, had been largely disregarded by the Company. However, clove saplings had in fact been planted there, and by the late 1640s they started bearing fruit (or, more to the point, flower buds). The people of Buru had no intention to sell these to the Company, threatening to become a new leak in the monopoly.

This, however, all appeared rather manageable from a Company perspective, compared to the decades of crisis, bloodshed and paranoia that had gone before. As Demmer's successor, Arnold de Vlaming van Oudshoorn, arrived in Ambon in April 1647, a 'peace and quiet reigned, such as the region had not seen under the previous eight governors', Rumphius noted.⁷⁶⁶ Not dwelling on the Company's rather substantial role in turning the region into a bloody mess in the first place, he took his medical metaphor back out of the drawer and described Demmer as 'an experienced surgeon, who, by cutting and with strong corrosives, had taken the rotting flesh out of the corrupt body of Ambon.'⁷⁶⁷ He also mused, however, that 'as always, some smoldering coals remained hidden under the ashes here and there.'⁷⁶⁸

766 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 265.

767 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 266.

768 Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', I, 259.

The policies of Demmer's successor would go a long way to fan these into the biggest blaze the eastern archipelago had seen yet.

