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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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XIII. THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT HOAMOAL WAR (1651-1652)

The Great Hoamoal War would set the entire eastern archipelago ablaze for five years, on a scale surpassing the earlier conflicts in the region. The conflict is richly documented but has only been superficially studied thus far, and the available source material therefore remains largely untapped.⁸¹² Many authors who do write about it base themselves predominantly on the two published accounts of the war by Rumphius and Bor, already touched upon in the previous chapter. Both not only drew on the massive amounts of rich documentation the conflict generated, of which Bor himself already remarked that ‘it would take the quickest of readers about a year’ to go through them;⁸¹³ they could also write from experience, as both served under De Vlaming, who was to remain the commander of the Company forces throughout the conflict.⁸¹⁴

While the material therefore allows for a very detailed history and analysis of the conflict, writing such a history would be another book of and by itself, and this is not the place for it. Nor would such an analysis be necessary for the general thesis and analysis presented here: while pivotal for the subsequent political order in Maluku, the Great Hoamoal War followed the patterns of the earlier wars and power dynamics in crucial ways. The coming two chapters will therefore provide an outline of the conflict while highlighting such continuities, such as the use of deliberate ecological destruction, Makasar involvement, and the use of local allies and indigenous tactics.

INTERROGATIONS AND ANXIETIES

De Vlaming dropped what he was doing as soon as he received Cos’s letter in-

812 Notable exceptions are Jennifer Gaynor, *Intertidal history*, Ch. 3, which uses the specific archival documents pertaining to the attack De Vlaming’s forces undertook in Tiworo in January 1655, and Arend de Roever, *De jacht op sandelbout*, 260-263, specifically investigating an expedition to Timor that was part of De Vlaming’s campaign.

813 Bor, *Amboinse oorlogen*, iiiii. The remark is peculiar coming from him, as he would have written much of it in the first place, being De Vlaming’s secretary. De Vlaming’s dagh-registers alone span 1070 folia (VOC 1186, fol. 54-494; VOC 1193, fol. 308-434; VOC 1199, fol. 569-801; VOC 1205, fol. 761-1034), not including various books with outgoing missives, resolutions, interrogation reports etc. De Vlaming himself has cut his dagh-registers down to somewhat more manageable size in the form of several reports (VOC 1186 fol 1-51, VOC 1198, fol. 461-490, fol. VOC 1216, fol. 52-141).

814 Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’; Livinus Bor, *Amboinse oorlogen*.

forming him of the surprise attack on the Company outposts in Ambon. He sent the ship *Wolf* straight back to Ambon and sent the fastest ship in his own fleet after it the next day. While instructing governor Van den Boogaerde in Ternate how best to proceed in trying to stem the revolt against Mandarsyah, he readied another ship and gathered his forces. Four days after receiving Cos's call for help, he was on his way,⁸¹⁵ and another five days later, he arrived at Kambelo, where he was able to make his way to Fort Hardenberg with his troops. The fort had held out although its garrison was small and its supplies were dwindling. De Vlaming left some supplies and soldiers, and assisted in clearing the thicket around the fort, and with it, potential cover for attackers. These attackers were not far away: pot shots were continuously fired at the workers from the direction of Lesidi.⁸¹⁶

Meanwhile, De Vlaming had sent word to Castle Victoria of his arrival, with instructions to meet him at Kambelo with the *honggi*. The new prospective governor Van der Beeck arrived with twenty kora-kora by the fifteenth of April, with two from Hitu standing to follow. They resolved to proceed to Lesidi and attack it.

The twenty-two kora-kora that comprised the fleet were those from the communities on Leitimor, Hitu and the Lease islands, none of which had ostensibly joined in the revolt. There were concerns and rumours, however, that some among the Company's subjects were secretly in league with the kimelaha, biding their time – particularly those of Ureng in Hitu. For this reason, two of the orangkaya from Ureng had been required to come along on the fleet, so that Van der Beeck and De Vlaming could question them on the matter. It did not come to that. In an unguarded moment, one of the two orangkaya, named Hatibe, grabbed a *parang*, jumped at the Company officer on the kora-kora and lashed out, but failed to deal a deadly blow, only giving the Dutchman a large cut across the face. The orangkaya then jumped overboard and swam for his life, with several Ambonese in pursuit. One of them managed to overtake the culprit just as he reached the shore, and decapitated him.

To De Vlaming, this incident confirmed the earlier suspicions about Ureng's loyalties. He had the culprit's nephew and slave, as well as the other orangkaya from Ureng, brought up. As they initially denied any knowledge or involvement, he had them separately interrogated, making use of strappado torture, whereby victims were hoisted up with a rope around their wrists while their arms were

815 Journal De Vlaming, 2 April 1651, in: VOC 1186, fol.168v-188r.

816 Journal De Vlaming, 10-14 April 1651, in: VOC 1186, fol.189r-194r.

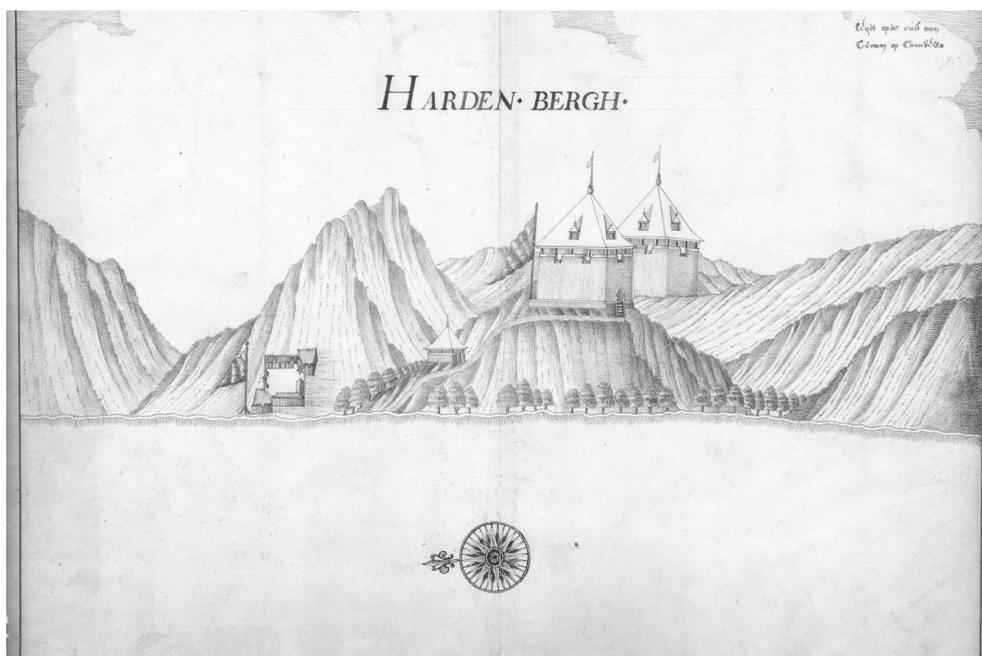


Fig 13.1 Fort Hardenbergh, near Kambelo, as depicted in an anonymous 1651 drawing which originally belonged with Arnold de Vlaming's report. The fort, on its defensible elevated position, held out during and after the surprise attacks in 1651. It was ultimately abandoned later during the war, in January 1654, when it no longer served a clear purpose and its garrison was needed elsewhere. Anonymous drawing, Collection Nationaal Archief, 4.VEL 1349.

behind their backs, dislocating the shoulders. All three separately confessed that there had been contacts with kimelaha Majira previous to the surprise attacks, with the now-dead Hatibe being the main contact. They all denied that they had been meaning to attack the Company fort at Ureng, but they had intended to make for safety by returning to the site of their old village up in the hills. They also separately told their interrogators that Majira had circulated a letter among the various communities of Hitu, purportedly written by the new sultan of Ternate, to the effect that the Dutch meant to Christianize them all and enslave them 'as with the residents of Banda in former times', so that this was the time to stand up to them and oust them from these lands. The sultan claimed he had already enlisted support from Makassar, Buton and Sula.⁸¹⁷

Perhaps at least as worrying to De Vlaming and Van der Beeck was that during the interrogations, the other orangkaya, named Lakotuli, also implicated

817 Ibid., 16 April, fol. 198r-199r.

the Christian communities on Ambon. The Dutch had already harboured suspicions about Joan Pais, an orangkaya at Hatiwe, the oldest Christian community in the islands, located right near Ambon town. He had been pre-emptively confined in Castle Victoria. Lakotuli told his interrogators that Pais, disaffected with Company rule, had been maintaining contact with the kimelaha, and had also been a central figure in secret meetings of the various Christian communities of Leitimor, who were also preparing to pack their belongings and abscond to the mountains. De Vlaming had heard enough. Shortly after the interrogations, Lakotuli was publicly 'cut to pieces' on the ship, and his head presented to De Vlaming, in a deliberate display of violence meant to strike fear into any other would-be traitors among the Company's subjects.⁸¹⁸

As to his confessions, we are, of course, warned to take them at face value.⁸¹⁹ De Vlaming also had some doubts, albeit perhaps for other reasons: he was not ready to believe that the Company's subjects in the region were ready to betray them on a large scale, and suspected these allegations to be an attempt to drive a wedge between the Company and their subjects and allies. All the same, the notion had him worried. While he had been meaning to sail right on to some of the other posts that had fallen victim to the attacks, he decided to change his plans, first seeing to the security of Ambon itself.

Not, however, before finishing the business of destroying Lesidi. The morning after the interrogations and the execution, the indigenous troops landed, finding the place deserted and all the Company goods gone. The rest of the day was spent razing the town to the ground, burning the vessels left on the shore and destroying 'an innumerable number of fruit trees of various kinds'.⁸²⁰

Van der Beeck and De Vlaming subsequently made their way to Ambon, where they spent the next two months trying to inform themselves of the sentiments among their subjects and allies, trying to shore up relations with them, and having them swear renewed oaths to the Company, including new promises to never affiliate themselves with the kimelaha. The Hituese orangkaya were gathered on board and feasted. The hongis were called together for an inspection tour through the Lease Islands. Efforts to keep these areas affiliated with the Company kept the superintendent and the new governor, who was sworn in

818 Ibid., 16 April, fol. 200r.

819 For an extensive analysis of an instance where Company officials got their own suspicions and fears confirmed by inadvertently feeding them to suspects who were tortured during interrogation, see Clulow, *Amboina 1623*.

820 Journal De Vlaming, 17 April 1651, in: VOC 1186, fol.200r.

during this period, occupied until early June. Only then did De Vlaming move out to his next target: the island of Manipa, one of the places where a Company outpost had been overrun three months previously.⁸²¹

‘SO THAT NO HUMANS CAN FEED THEMSELVES THERE’: ENVIRONCIDÉ ON MANIPA AND BEYOND

Rumphius and Valentijn write that Manipa was singled out first for reasons of revenge, as the attack on the fort there had been the most brutal, with the bodies of the dead mutilated, Captain Verheijden’s sister killed, her two daughters taken away, with one of them surviving and eventually being presented to the Burunese *kimelaha* as a sort of war trophy.⁸²² Whereas all of this had in fact happened, it played no role in the decision. The officials in Castle Victoria did not even know the details of the attack yet, as they were yet to find survivors to tell the tale. Manipa was simply picked first because it was considered the most strategically sensible target, as a major clove producing area, a historic staging area of foreign traders, an important supplier of sago to Hoamoal, and a target that, as opposed to the main fortified centres on Hoamoal, the Company could hope to take on with its limited means.⁸²³

De Vlaming had been compelled to send several of the larger Company vessel back to Ternate and Batavia, but employed practically all of the naval power he had left for the expedition: six VOC ships and a host of smaller craft, carrying 300 European soldiers and 1000 Ambonese. On 12 June, the force arrived before Manipa, at the northeastern settlement called Luhu (not to be confused with the much larger settlement of the same name on Hoamoal.) They found it deserted, and applied their standard procedure of putting the town and all and any vessels to the torch. That evening, De Vlaming called together his senior officers for a meeting on how to proceed from there. It was then officially decided to first destroy all the settlements, to then not only destroy all the clove trees on the island, but also eradicate the extensive sago forests, and all and any fruit trees, to the very last of them.⁸²⁴

The troops set to work the next day, moving towards Tuban and Tumalehu

821 Ibid., 18 April – 10 June 1651, in VOC 1186, fol. 200v – 285r; Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, II, pp. 15-17.

822 Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, II, pp. 11-12, 17.

823 Resolution of 31 May at Castle Victoria, in Journal De Vlaming, VOC 1186, fol. 277v-280v.

824 Journal De Vlaming, 12 June 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 287r-290r.

on the opposite coast, which were also burned. The old Company fortification was near the latter settlement, and the troops found that the rebels had been thorough: it had been razed to the ground, and nothing much was left. Now, however, the rebels remained elusive, using the landscape to stay at arm's length, only occasionally making small forays to then melt back into the forest. Near Tuban, they did notice Manipese fortifying themselves on a hill, and took to the attack. It was here that the Company troops liberated a surgeon who had been at the redoubt when it was overrun, and had since been a captive. He was the first to tell the story of the atrocities that had happened in the fort in the wake of the attack. Saliently, the surgeon also recounted how the attackers at Manipa, who had numbered many thousands and came from various islands, had shouted, 'We'll teach you to try to change our religion and turn us into Christians, you Christian dogs!', and threatened to circumcise and forcibly convert the prisoners they had made - an indication that the perceived threat to their religion, with all its connotations of identity and political affiliation, was an important grievance to the inhabitants of the kimelaha-ruled regions.⁸²⁵

Eradicating all the sago, clove and fruit trees on the entire island proved such a huge task that De Vlaming called for reinforcements from the Company's allies and the civic militia in Ambon town to finish the job – so many people that he had trouble provisioning them. He ended up spending six weeks on the island, until, as he would later put it, he 'lost track of how many times he had crossed the island, over and over again.' Even when he himself departed for Castle Victoria on the 20th of July, he left Captain Verheijden there with three companies of soldiers to finish the job. The result: some ten or twelve thousand clove trees, and 'countless thousands' of sago, coconut, banana and other trees destroyed, in addition to the destruction of every last settlement and seagoing vessel. 'Therewith, the island has been razed and devastated such that no humans will be able to feed themselves there,' he would later note with satisfaction.⁸²⁶

Soon after, De Vlaming left for Banda to inspect it as per his instructions, major revolt or not, and after briefly returning to Ambon in October, sailed back to Batavia. Of course, all was not well in the Ambon islands and Ternate as he sailed away. Van den Boogaerde had been less than successful in appeasing the rebels in Ternate – even the communities at Makian, who De Vlaming thought he had brought back into the fold, had absconded to the mountains after he had

825 Journal De Vlaming, 19 June 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 294v-296r.

826 Report De Vlaming, 25 October 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 5r-v.

left. This had prompted De Vlaming to have Mandarsyah brought to Ambon and, from there, on to Batavia, fearing that if left in Ternate with the revolt raging on, 'out of desperation, he might choose a different path, distancing himself from the Company and going over to the side of the villains'.⁸²⁷ While De Vlaming had been on Manipa with many of the Company's troops and allies, and just as Van der Beeck was having some additional fortifications built, the kimelaha had used the opportunity to send a fleet of fourteen kora-kora to attack the Hituese coast, killing and capturing dozens of people. It had been the first of a series of such attacks, keeping the inhabitants of Ambon in constant alarm.⁸²⁸ What's more, De Vlaming was concerned that these attackers were also getting inside help from Hitu itself.

However, in spite of the eastern archipelago being up in flames like never before, De Vlaming was remarkably upbeat and optimistic as he made his way back west. As he wrote in his report to the governor-general and council, 'in our opinion, the Company can also reap benefits from this revolt that are valuable beyond estimation.'⁸²⁹ He was talking, of course, about limiting clove production. While that had proven impossible to legally do during peace time, there was no obstacle to destroying all the cloves outside direct Company control now. He reckoned he had already destroyed a production capacity on the order of hundreds of bahar per year over the past few months (counting not only the trees on Manipa, but also some 15,000 trees that Verheijden had reportedly destroyed afterwards on Ambelau and Hoamoal's west coast). The war, in other words, was a blessing in disguise.

Of course, there was the problem that the clove trees would regrow, as they had in the past. The solution to that, De Vlaming proposed, was simply rendering all the clove-producing areas outside direct Company control uninhabitable

827 Report De Vlaming, 25 October 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 27v. Incidentally, De Vlaming's ships also carried two other people he wanted well out of the way of the Ambon region: the suspected traitor orangkaya Jan Paijs, as well as a new candidate kimelaha by the name of Tamin Amsara that had been sent to the Ambon region by Mandarsyah. De Vlaming, however, felt no inclination to confirm him in his new station, as there was no place for a kimelaha in his plans with the region.

828 Rumphius writes that, in the wake of the first attack on the Hituese coast, the various Ambnese communities took to the mountains. De Vlaming's reports and what little other correspondence survives from this year does not confirm this, and subsequent events seem to indicate that the communities stayed at the coast. Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', II, p. 17.

829 Report De Vlaming, 25 October 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 7v.

the way he had done at Manipa, so that the inhabitants would be compelled to leave and settle elsewhere. While this would be a complicated operation, he felt he could pull it off in a month or two if he would have some 1100 or 1200 European soldiers at his disposal.⁸³⁰ De Vlaming, it appears, not only shared the ideas Artus Gijssels had already formulated some two decades previously, but also his unwarranted optimism with regard to the feasibility of such tactics.

While they were at it, De Vlaming proposed, they might as well extirpate all the cloves within their reach in North Maluku too. His solution here was even simpler: the Ternaten sultan received a stipend of 4000 rials a year for doing his part in maintaining the monopoly. Perhaps, if the stipend was raised to, say, 12000 rials, he might be persuaded to allow the eradication of cloves in his domains altogether. He urged that, with the sultan on his way to Batavia and currently in a rather delicate and dependent position, this would be the time to do so, resorting to Latin to hammer home the point: 'Fronte capillata, post est occasio calva' – grab opportunity by its hairlocks as it approaches, the back of its head is bald.⁸³¹

There were, however, some more threats to the plans that De Vlaming envisioned. One of them was Makassar. Not only was it more than likely that a generous number of spice traders would once again swarm down on the Ambon region now that it had been thrown back into chaos, it was also very conceivable that the Gowan sultanate would use the opportunity to once again come to the kimelaha's aid and try to gain a modicum of political control over the region for itself. As we have seen, the kimelaha and the rival sultan in Ternate had already been loudly proclaiming that they had secured Makasar support. While that seemed to be bluster, some of the kimelaha's captives that had found their way back to the Dutch had reported that kimelaha Majira had already sent three letters to Makassar requesting such aid.⁸³² On his way back to Batavia, De Vlaming decided to do what he could to make sure such requests would fall on deaf ears.

830 Report De Vlaming, 25 October 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 6v-10v. Interestingly, De Vlaming hoped that the people of the region would move outside the area of Company control as he did not want the VOC to have to bother ruling them. As to preventing them from starting to cultivate cloves wherever they would resettle, he somewhat curiously hoped to achieve this by subsequently making treaties to that effect with them.

831 Report De Vlaming, 25 October 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 29v.

832 This specific information had come from three slaves that had been captured by the followers of the kimelaha during the attack, but later found their way back to the Dutch fort at Kambelo that still held out. Journal De Vlaming, 11 June 1651, VOC 1186, fol. 286r-287v.

'AFFAIRS OF STATE': DIPLOMACY IN MAKASSAR

Since the Makasar attempt to intervene in Hoamoal and Hitu in 1642, the entrepôt harbour of Makassar had gone through some interesting times. While other Europeans had still been bringing in textiles and hard currency in the hopes of securing a cargo of spices until at least 1647, and they were apparently trying to encourage Makassar-based traders sail to the Ambon region, virtually no traders were willing to risk it, as they were 'well aware that it will be hard for them to escape our continuous occupation, and will not be admitted by the region's inhabitants.'⁸³³ The few who did try often returned empty-handed. What few cloves did make it onto the Makasar market came from the Spanish-held regions in North-Maluku, which the VOC was powerless to prevent now that it was at peace with the Spanish and its local allies. The amounts produced in the Spanish-held regions, however, was negligible, and not a serious threat to the Company monopoly in Europe. The centre of gravity of the Makasar trade had shifted accordingly, with the trade to Manila becoming more prominent, as well as the trade in sandalwood. The loss of the clove trade, however, was felt by indigenous and European traders alike.⁸³⁴ De Vlaming wanted to do what he could to prevent that Makasar-based traders, let alone the rulers, would be compelled to re-join the scramble for the spices or respond to any calls for assistance.

De Vlaming's fleet arrived at Makassar on the evening of the seventh of October, and the official audience with the sultan subsequently took place two days later. De Vlaming's journal describes this audience, as well as the rest of the visit to Makassar, in detail, paying close attention to the spectacle and ceremony surrounding the reception of his embassy. He describes how they were accompanied from the Dutch lodge by the *shahbandar*, two translators and a large armed escort. De Vlaming had also brought a letter from Mandarsyah. This document from a fellow sultan received the highest honour in the procession. De Vlaming described how it

was carried in a golden vessel, made in the shape of a kora-kora, with a naval ram in front and two dragon's heads. This vessel was carried by a small boy

833 Van der Lijn and Council to directors, 16 January 1649, excerpted in Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, 363.

834 Tiele-Heeres, *Bouwstoffen*, III, *passim*, esp. 333-334, 341, 358, 363 and 368 give a general impression of clove trade in Makassar in these years. For a more general assessment of economic developments in Makassar in the wake of 1642, see Bassett, 'English trade in Celebes', 12-23.

dressed in a white robe reaching to the ground, who was seated in a sedan carried on two bars by men. On both sides walked a person with a parasol entirely made of embroidered silk. Then followed the King's gift, a roll of red damask covered with yellow armosin, ordered by us ourselves, carried on a silver basin, carried by a man over his head, this being a colour that is valued above all others by the Indian kings, so that no-one else may wear it.⁸³⁵

After that followed the VOC's gifts: red textiles, mace, nutmeg, cloves and Persian rosewater. Then followed sixteen VOC soldiers, and after that on horseback, De Vlaming himself, accompanied by the steward of Mandarsyah who had come to accompany the letter, and followed by the other merchants and officers.

Arriving in the court, De Vlaming mostly uttered diplomatic boilerplate, telling the sultan that he had come on behalf of the governor-general to kiss the sultan's hands, and thank him for the favour and friendship their state had enjoyed, humbly asking that this favour might continue so that the friendship might grow further. The only substantial thing he himself requested was that the specific favour they had enjoyed in the past few years, i.e. that a merchant might stay in the lodge outside the trading season, would also be granted this year. It was. The main reason for his visit, however, he did not convey himself. Instead, this was contained in the royal letter, which was read aloud in the court. In the letter, Mandarsyah requested that his fellow sultan of Makassar would not give heed to any requests for help from the rebels in Ambon and Ternate, and instead to arrest any envoys from there and hand them over to him. Sultan Malikussaid replied that no such envoys had come and that their requests would fall on deaf ears in Makassar.

The Company's grasp of the high status of a royal letter in Asian diplomacy, and the use of 'diplomacy by proxy' by the Company when engaging with Asian courts more generally, have been touched upon several times in this dissertation. It is interesting, however, to dwell upon the circumstances of this particular diplomatic engagement. Officially, Mandarsyah was sultan and therefore of higher status than De Vlaming, and his letter was accorded all the honours proper for a royal letter. The inhabitants of Hoamoal and the rebels in Ternate were officially his subjects, so that, formally speaking, he should make the request to pay no heed for their calls for assistance, rather than De Vlaming. The contrast between this formal hierarchy and protocol and the actual power relations, of course,

835 Journal De Vlaming, 10 October 1651, in: VOC 1186, fol. 482r:

could not be more stark. Sultan Mandarsyah, was, at the time of the audience, on one of the Company ships riding at anchor before the roadstead of Makassar, as the members of the Gowan court were well aware. He had lost all actual control over his domains and was now entirely dependent on the Company, which was shipping him to Batavia to make sure he did not do anything contrary to its wishes. In practice, De Vlaming was the architect of the entire diplomatic engagement, having dictated the content of the letter and having picked and procured the royal gifts.

The reading of the letter and Malikussaid's response concluded the official part of diplomacy, and the VOC-Ternate embassy took its leave of the sultan. Negotiations continued with a slightly lower profile the next day, however, when De Vlaming made a visit to the private residence of Pattingalloang.

We have already come across chancellor Pattingalloang as the man who likely commissioned Rijali to write his history of Hitu. Karaeng Pattinagloang had become chancellor when Sultan Malikussaid of Gowa had ascended to the throne in 1639. The court chronicles inform us how Malikussaid, after the death of his father, would only accept the throne if Pattingalloang would become his *bicara-butta*, 'speaker of the land'.⁸³⁶ In addition to being the Gowan chancellor, Pattingalloang would also become the ruler of Tallo from 1641 onwards.

Karaeng Pattingalloang is invariably praised in European sources as a sensible and prudent ruler, and is the Makasar official we know best from the European sources, as he was fluent in several languages and had a particularly active role in government and foreign policy, in addition to being an ardent collector of European books and curiosities.⁸³⁷ De Vlaming's description of him is very much in line with that of other European reports:

836 William P. Cummings, *A chain of kings*, 45-47.

837 The chancellor had a good command of Latin, Spanish, and Portuguese, the latter so good that, in the words of the Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes, '[t]o hear him speak without seeing him one would take him for a native Portuguese.' Rhodes visited Makassar in 1646. Quoted in Reid, 'Great Indonesian family', 147, which also contains a general sketch of Pattingalloang based on European sources. Andaya, *Heritage*, 39 states that Pattingalloang was also fluent in English, French and Arabic. For information on Pattingalloang as a collector, see Reid, 'A great seventeenth century Indonesian family'; Tristan Mostert. 'Ick vertrouwe dat de werelt hem naer dien op twee polen keert': De VOC, de rijksbestuurder van Makassar en een uitzonderlijk grote globe. In: Lodewijk Wagenaar (ed.) *Aan de overkant: ontmoetingen in dienst van VOC en WIC (1600-1800)*. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2015, pp. 77-96.

‘[He is the one] on whom the entire government of this kingdom rests, and truly exceeds every other Indian I have met thus far, speaking Castilian and Portuguese so fluently that, hearing him speak while out of sight, one would take him for a native of either nation. He also, quite wondrously, has a knowledge of Latin, or at least to such an extent that he can read and understand the Bible in this language, and this with such specific knowledge that he can discuss the differences within the Christian religion such as the Popish, reformed and Martinic [=Lutheran] faiths. Besides this, he is very learned and has accurate knowledge of most of what has been published about events in Europe or the wider world.’⁸³⁸

De Vlaming had ample opportunity to experience the extent to which Pattingalloang was aware of global politics, and his report really adds to other descriptions of Pattingalloang in its detailed rendering of the discussions that followed. De Vlaming privately repeated a request publicly made the day before, that no ships from Makassar would sail to Maluku, as their trade would inevitably support the rebellion there. Pattingalloang answered that ‘this was impossible, as Makassar was a *bandar*, or a trading port free and open to all merchants, and that they did not feel qualified or in the position to give orders or lay down the law to those coming from outside, and who often only stayed for some two or three weeks, as to where they could or could not sail’. However, he added he would see what he could do, as the friendship with the Company and the sultan of Ternate was dear to him.⁸³⁹

De Vlaming and Pattingalloang subsequently discussed European politics, about which Pattingalloang turned out to be remarkably well-informed. He inquired after such things as developments in the conflict between Spain on the one hand, and Portugal and France on the other, and the debts of the Spanish crown with Italian bankers and the possible effects this would have on this war. He seemed particularly interested in the truce between Portugal and the Dutch Republic, which had been agreed upon ten years earlier and which had officially expired a few months ago. News of whether the war had resumed had, however, not yet reached Asia. Pattingalloang was very much aware of the effect that renewed hostilities between the VOC and the Portuguese might have on Makassar, which was home to a large Portuguese population, having settled here largely in

838 Journal De Vlaming, 10 October 1651, in: VOC 1186, fol. 483v.

839 Ibid., fol. 484r.

the wake of the Dutch conquest of Melaka in 1641. De Vlaming answered that events in the western hemisphere (where Portugal had all but openly supported a revolt against the Dutch in Brazil) made it highly probable that war would once again break out, and that if no news of a prolongation of the peace would reach Batavia soon, the VOC intended to continue its conquests of Portuguese territories in Asia.⁸⁴⁰

Pattingalloang, apparently aware of what had happened in Brazil, replied that yes, the Portuguese had acted most unfaithfully towards the Dutch there, and added that it would be wise for the Portuguese to try and make peace with the Dutch Republic, as the Portuguese position in Asia had become extremely weak, and Macao had become very poor so that the Company might easily conquer it, 'although I cannot say that the Company should care all that much for Macao, as they have Taiwan and Japan and therefore open trade in those regions, and after [the fall of] Malakka, Macao has become worthless [*een dood effect*] to [the Portuguese], because they are now unable to trade between this city and Goa'. Pattingalloang also argued that the Dutch might not want to press Portugal too hard, and might want to make peace with Portugal rather than trying to fully take their right, as a weak Portugal might once again fall into Spain's hands, which might then once again become too powerful. '[S]ometimes, out of considerations of state, one has to do something, which one otherwise would have desisted from', concluded the chancellor.⁸⁴¹ Pattingalloang's questions about the relations between Spain, Portugal, France and the Netherlands, and his observations about the risk of Portugal once again falling into the hands of Spain should they be pressed too hard, betray not only his detailed and up-to-date knowledge of both Asian and European political affairs, but also an acute awareness of how these developments might influence the situation Makassar itself. Resumption of the war, after all, might bring Makassar, which housed a large Portuguese community but also traded with the VOC, in a difficult position. It is with good reason that Pattingalloang would prefer the two to remain at peace.

Pattingalloang then inquired after the state of affairs in Maluku – locations of forts, areas under Dutch control, numbers of ships and troops, the amount of spices produced – and De Vlaming largely answered him truthfully, 'as the resident had informed us that what he asked was principally already known to

840 Ibid., fol. 484v-485v.

841 Ibid., fol. 485v.

him'.⁸⁴² He did make a point, however, of slightly exaggerating the strength of the Company's forces, the whole reason of the visit, after all, being to discourage the Makasars from assisting or joining the rebels. Pattingalloang uttered his surprise over the huge troop strength the VOC kept in the region: after all, 'who could harm you there now? Nobody, neither Asians nor Europeans, because you are now so well and strongly established there, that no-one could disturb you in your possessions.'⁸⁴³ De Vlaming answered that the VOC needed to have its troop strength anyway, and as long as there was no open war, it did not really matter where all these soldiers were stationed, 'to which, in order to keep them from sailing there and give them the impression that we did not care much about the rebellion, I added that in the period that those places need to be reinforced extraordinarily, that is from the month November until June, we could do so without any inconvenience to our other affairs or any remarkable costs, as we had no use for the personnel or the ships elsewhere', as most of the ships involved in the intra-Asian trade would only sail in June anyway.⁸⁴⁴

From there, the conversation drifted into the general nature of the military strength of the VOC compared to that of the Southeast Asian states: '[I]f we should come to lose any people here, we would not really lose anything but the time until new ones would arrive (and we could get as many as we wished right away, due to the general peace between the Christian princes)⁸⁴⁵ The Asian princes, by contrast, had to fight with their own people, often even their serfs ('lijffeigenen'), which could not be as easily replaced by recruitment. De Vlaming, all in all, apparently used every argument he could think of to emphasize the military strength of the VOC, thus hoping to dissuade Makassar from getting involved in the war in Maluku. Pattingalloang apparently went along in his reasoning, but added that 'all the same, sometimes some trouble or discomfort will still be inflicted on you, such as has happened right now in Ambon and Maluku, as Asians are restless by nature, particularly these eastern peoples, but it will always end to their disadvantage.'⁸⁴⁶

Subsequently discussing the VOC's attempts to limit clove production, the

842 Ibid., fol. 485v.

843 Ibid., fol. 486

844 Ibid.

845 Ibid., fol. 487r.

846 Ibid., fol. 487r. This remark is difficult to interpret, but fascinatingly, it strikes me as Pattingalloang feeding back a European stereotype about Southeast Asian peoples to De Vlaming.

chancellor was, at least outwardly, remarkably understanding of the VOC's policy, feeding back a standard Company statement to De Vlaming, saying that 'I do not believe the entire world can consume much more than 1000 *bahar* per year. Everything you buy up above that, might be counted in the same way as when you had simply thrown your money in the water.'⁸⁴⁷ He also brought up, however, the small production in Spanish Ternate and Tidore. This, Pattingalloang said, might be a real problem for the VOC, because 'unless you get this [clove] trade under your lock and key the way you have with nutmeg and mace, I'm not sure whether the yearly expenditures you make for it can be made up for.'⁸⁴⁸ But, he added, you Hollanders, having come this far already, will surely think of something. In making these statements, the chancellor showed a very full understanding of the VOC's policies in Maluku. His ostensibly understanding attitude in this matter is particularly interesting because Makassar was the main market for the Spanish cloves, and Makassar's trade had of course been hurt, and might be hurt more, by the Company's increasing control over clove production and trade.

Finally, Pattingalloang remarked upon the fact that the Dutch were now bringing the Ternaten sultan Mandarsyah to Batavia, 'undoubtedly not without reason', and asked them to greet him on behalf of 'this crown'. He observed that there still remained some differences between the two realms about the ownership of certain areas, but assured that 'we are not inclined to go to war with them, but hope, that God the Lord will make everything turn for the best.'⁸⁴⁹

These soothing words about Ternate concluded the meeting, and De Vlaming set sail the next day. Whether his efforts had anything to do with it remains an open question, but in the immediate wake of his visit, the Gowan sultanate would pay no heed to any requests for assistance from the Ambon region or North Maluku, and stay out of the conflict – for now.

THE SIEGE OF LOKI AND THE SCOURING OF HOAMOAL

In the wake of his report and his return to Batavia, De Vlaming got pretty much everything he had asked for in his report. Governor-general Van der Lijn, with whom he had had a generous amount of disagreements, had recently been succeeded by Karel Reiniersz, who had apparently already lent a more receptive De

847 Ibid., fol. 487v.

848 Ibid.

849 Ibid.

Vlaming's arguments when the latter had come to Batavia the previous year.⁸⁵⁰ By February 1652, De Vlaming was heading back out to the eastern archipelago with a fleet of 11 ships. The governor-general had been unable to fulfil his request for '1100 or 1200 European soldiers', only having some 800 at his disposal at the moment, but had otherwise sent De Vlaming on his way with *carte blanche* to do exactly as he pleased. Whereas VOC instructions for such huge expeditions were usually extremely detailed, with specific instructions for every possible eventuality, those for De Vlaming were remarkably open. 'We leave all this entirely to Your Honour's wisdom, knowledge and judgment... as we are well aware that matters of war, with their manifold unexpected turns, can hardly be confined or determined beforehand.'⁸⁵¹ He was allowed to keep most of his ships there until the very latest moment before the turning of the monsoon, and, if need be, could even stay over and keep his troops there for another season. The only specific instructions he did get came right out of his own earlier recommendations: 'Those who persist in their stubbornness... should be persecuted until not only the remainder or their cloves are ruined, but all their lands are razed and turned into wastelands.'⁸⁵²

To achieve this, De Vlaming also came armed with a new treaty between the governor-general and Sultan Mandarsyah, which the latter had been persuaded to sign while in Batavia, just as De Vlaming had suggested earlier. It stipulated that the Company could punish all those who had risen in rebellion against his Majesty, both in North Maluku and the Ambon region, by exterminating their cloves and forbidding them to ever start cultivating them again. If that should succeed, the sultan could expect his yearly stipend to be raised to 12000 rials, exactly as De Vlaming had suggested, with some additional smaller sums for The sultan's brother and other high-ranking Ternatens who had remained loyal, and who De Vlaming hoped to convince to eradicate their cloves 'voluntarily' in exchange for a fee. Importantly, the sultan had also agreed to the abolishment

850 E.g. directors to governor-general, 14 October 1651, in VOC 317, fol. 229r, which is the first reference to limiting clove production in Amboina in years. Also note that remarks such as those in L.P. van Putten, *Ambitie en onvermogen: Gouverneurs-generaal van Nederlands-Indië, 1610-1796*. Rotterdam: ILCO-productions, 2002, pp. 76-79, to the effect that governor Reiniersz had been instructed to limit clove production right at the start of his governor-generalship are not borne out by the sources.

851 Instructions for De Vlaming, February 1652 (date left open), in: VOC 118, fol. 588-603. Quote from fol. 591r.

852 Ibid., fol 590v.

of the function of kimelaha, with the Company henceforth being his sole representative in the region.⁸⁵³

While De Vlaming had been away, kimelaha Majira had made some attempts to extend his influence while the Company forces in the islands were temporarily reduced. He had also received some support from Ternate: some of the main rebels from there, most notably Ternaten *kapita laut* Kaicili Saidi, who had also been so important in the original coup, had made their way to Hoamoal, bringing ten well-armed kora-kora, to throw in their lot with kimelaha Majira. Governor Van der Beeck had gathered the hongis to await De Vlaming's fleet at Luhu, but as the latter had left Batavia much later than originally envisioned, the hongis waited and waited, using the intervening time to raid some of the area around Lusiela. After that, however, Van der Beeck had seen no choice but to once again disband it, as waiting in vain for too long caused unrest and discontent as always.⁸⁵⁴

De Vlaming finally arrived in the Ambon region in late March. His first order of business was to see whether the inhabitants of Buru were still on the Company's side. Landing on Buru's west coast, he found they were not, and proceeded to destroy all the settlements there. As the inhabitants had had the good sense to hide inland, the brief campaign mainly consisted of destroying the buildings and the fruit trees. He then proceeded to the coast of Hoamoal and, learning that the hongis had already disbanded, made for the Hituese coast.

Conferring with the governor, De Vlaming decided to first attack the kimelaha's headquarters at Loki, on Hoamoal's east coast, arriving there with his entire force on the 15th of April. Finding that it would be very difficult to storm and conquer it outright, a fortification was erected on the shore instead, isolating the kimelaha's uphill fortifications from the shore. Meanwhile, parties were sent into the forests around the area to destroy the sago trees and anything else that was edible. Captives were pressured into revealing paths up to the fort. As this siege of sorts was underway, most of the force was sent out to raid and destroy settlements, vessels, and fruit and clove trees throughout the region – first north of Loki, then on the opposite coast around Kaibobo, and then finally, on Hoamoal's west coast around Erang. Returning to Loki with the entire force by late June, he went up and attacked the kimelaha's fortifications in the dark early

853 Treaty between governor-General Reiniersz and Sultan Mandarsyah, 31 January 1652, Printed in *Corpus Diplomaticum*, II, 37-42.

854 For an overview see Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', II, pp. 21-26.

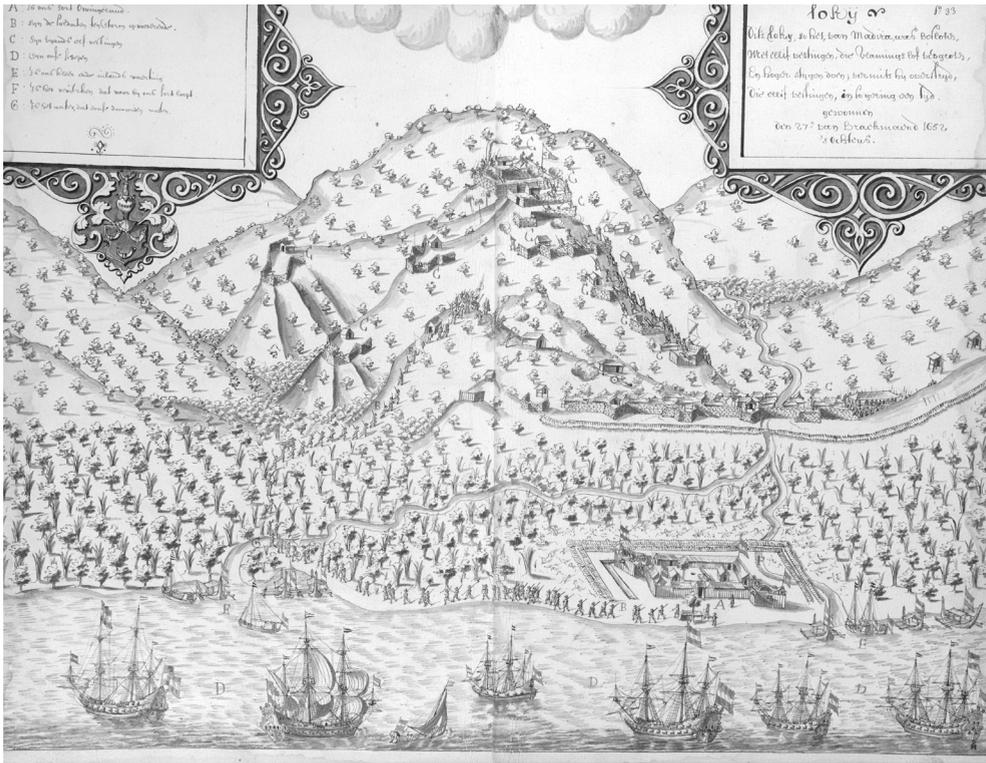


Fig 13.2 The conquest of Loki as depicted in the manuscript version of Bor's Amboinse oorlogen in the Royal Library in Brussels. Below on the shore we see the Dutch fortification built for the siege; to the left we see soldiers stealing up a hill overlooking the fortified settlement, bypassing the town's defences. In the village itself, we see Company troops surrounding a building, and towards the top, we see the various indigenous fortifications and the Company storm attack which took them all before their defences were readied. Collection Koninklijke Bibliotheek Brussel, Ms. 17982, fol. 24. The anonymous maker of this pen drawing probably based himself on an original by Joan Van Nessel: cf. Nationaal Archief 4.VEL 1352 and 1353. Johannes Vingboons depicts the same attack in a watercolour: Austrian National Library, Van der Hem 40:15.

hours of the 30th of June – with a much diminished force as disease was rampant among the European soldiers. De Vlaming only had 400 healthy troops available for the attack, and was also sick himself once again.

The main fortification was supported by ten smaller ones around it, and conquering it looked to be a daunting task. The attackers had the advantage, however, that their main goal was to capture or kill kimelaha Majira and Kaicili Saidi, both of whom apparently felt secure enough to sleep in their houses in

the fortified village below, rather than in the fortification higher up. Company scouts had reconnoitred a path leading up to a tobacco garden right near the village, providing ample cover and bypassing the wall that defended the village on its lower side. De Vlaming hoped that they could simply sneak into the village, surround the houses and kill the leaders.

The plan almost worked out as envisioned, but not quite – the Company troops were spotted by guards on the walls just as they were quietly making their way through the sleeping village. ‘Holanda, Holanda ada!’, the guards cried, and started beating their tifa drums. De Vlaming’s journal vividly describes how Majira jumped out, only partially dressed, and made a run for it together with his wife. He fell as he was shot at by the Dutch soldiers, but got back up and made it out of the village and into the forest. Apparently, this near escape became ever more miraculous in the telling later on, as Rumphius informs us that an entire line of musketeers fired on the kimelaha, but that he survived the volley because he had been hardened against injury by ‘devilish arts’.⁸⁵⁵

The kimelaha was not the only one running: the entire village was in turmoil and trying to get away, most of them making their way up the hill where the fortifications were, and where the warriors of the kimelaha were now trying to prepare their defences. De Vlaming ordered an immediate storm attack up the hill to make sure the defences, which would be capable of driving the Company troops back out of the village, could not actually be readied. This was successful: all of the fortifications were overrun before an effective defence could be mounted. The Company took the entire hill without losing a single soldier.

In the wake of the attack, the Company troops, as always, went about destroying the clove trees in the region. Meanwhile, reports reached De Vlaming that Majira and Kaicili Saidi had moved their base of operations to the settlements further inland in Hoamoal, at Hulong and the mountains above Erang on the opposite coast. He therefore decided to mount an expedition through the interior of Hoamoal. While he would lead troops from Loki, basically following the refugees in their tracks, captain Verheijden would sail to Erang and move towards the troops in the other direction. The operation started on the 23rd of July, and over the next few days, Hulong, Tapinalo, Nulaha and Erang were destroyed and captured. Many of the followers of Majira and Kaicili Saidi were scattered throughout the forests; some were later caught and killed by Dutch patrols, some

855 Journal De Vlaming, 29-30 June 1652, in: VOC 1198, fol. 392v-396v; Cf. Rumphius, ‘De Ambonsche Historie’, II, p. 31.

were found starved. Many of the communities on the peninsula subsequently rushed to try and reconcile themselves with the Company. This also gave occasion to once again start the kind of resettlement scheme it had earlier performed at Hitu: all these communities were ordered to move to Luhu, where some 1500 people subsequently resettled. The campaign on Hoamoal, and the ouster of Majira and Kaicili Saidi, had apparently made an impression elsewhere as well: when Company forces, only some 300 of them, subsequently made it to the virtually impregnable town of Ihamahu in September, the inhabitants of the town surrendered outright, delivering all their weapons and a number of hostages to the Company and promising to move down from their unassailable hillfort to the coast.⁸⁵⁶

Kimelaha Majira and Kaicili Saidi, however, were still at large. The latter found it prudent to make his way back to North Maluku for now and see if he could obtain reinforcements there. Majira and some of his following, for their part, made their way to Kelang, and from there to Manipa, where they established a fortification deep in the interior of the scarred island. Majira instructed his followers to hold out and wait for him there. As for him: he was going to get help.

856 Bor, *Amboinse oorlogen*, 91-108; Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', II, 33-39. The Company would subsequently try to get its population to move to the area around Luhu, just like those from Hoamoal who had surrendered. Unwilling to do this, the negeri of Iha and Mahu moved across the water to Seram, just west of Latu. Their region on Saparua was subsequently given over to Christian communities by the VOC. Rumphius, 'De Ambonsche Historie', II, 52, 55.