The trade link of the Surat merchants with Persia had practically ceased in 1715 because of natural disasters and political upheavals in Persia. The Armenians could no longer obtain enough cargo to fill up a ship. Traders from India likewise did not want to risk their scarce resources. The VOC ceased its relations with Persia in the late 1760s.

After the English were driven out of the eastern Indonesian archipelago and the Malukan spice trade, they shifted their concentration to trade opportunities in India. At the outset they had hoped to sell English textiles in Asia, but that turned into the opposite; the English discovered a market for the Asian cloths in Europe. The Dutch, on their part, had been concentrating on capturing the China trade with its silks, porcelain, and other exotic goods in order to send those on the return fleets. However, in the early 1620s the Council in Batavia was notified about the success the English had selling Indian cloths from Surat in London, it ordered more cloths from India for the Netherlands. Soon the VOC caught up and surpassed the English in the sales of Indian cloths in the European markets.

The Dutch contracted for textiles with a group of weavers in Gujarat. The agreement usually stipulated the terms for delivery, limitations of the warranty, particulars concerning the textiles, and the price. Contracts did sometimes change due to varying circumstances. The percentage of advance payment fluctuated from case to case between 10% and 65%. If a contract was broken there was a penalty in the early period of the VOC, but it seems that when the demand increased because of the opening up of the European

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65 K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620-1740: 138
66 Almost 10,000 pieces of a variety of Chinese silks were requested in 1617. Between 1618 and 1621, 11,370 pieces were sent and in the 1630s an order was given for £100,000 of Chinese silk cloths. The invoice value for the Chinese silk textiles in 1697 amounted to £283,570, but that must have been one of the last sales because the Company ceased to include them in the textile imports around that time, because the profit on them decreased as the Bengal silks became fashionable. O. K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620-1740: 133-49
67 H.W. van Santen, De Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie in Gujarat and Hindustan: 188; Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat: 38
markets, the weavers became powerful enough to break contracts with impunity.

During the period of the VOC in Surat, two phases of decline affected the production of textiles profoundly. The first decline was of a temporary nature in 1630 when there was a prolonged period of drought followed by floods. Lacking water for twelve months, the harvests were destroyed; people and animals died in the streets. Prices rose 1200% to 1500%. In 1631 floods killed everything in the fields and millions of people were reported to have died; many also migrated. As a consequence Gujarat was short of weavers. The specialized weavers had migrated to an area east of Agra. An enterprising VOC employee went out there and succeeded in transforming a local cloth production area around Awadh into a textile supply region for the export market. The weavers changed the setting of their looms to accommodate the sizes of fabrics that the VOC traded in Southeast Asia and in Europe. This was an exceptional case. The demand for cloth was usually higher than the supply which gave the weavers the power to refuse the resetting of their looms. They could sell the type of cloths they had been weaving at any rate. However, in the case of Awadh, the local weavers were more isolated, had not been exposed to producing textiles for the overseas market, and were willing to cooperate, possibly encouraged by the presence of the Gujarat weavers that had fled there. Although the new groups of villages around Awadh had joined together to supply the market for export as a temporary relief for the shortages in Gujarat during the 1630s, the VOC continued to secure some types of textiles that they wove, for a long time afterwards.

A second period of decline was due to the loss of political stability through invasions of the Maratha. There were upheavals, disturbances and deterioration of public order causing dysfunctional commercial production

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68 F.W. Stapel, ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie, vol 2, part 3: 19

69 H.W. van Santen, "De Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie in Gujarat en Hindustan": 179-81
throughout the 1720s in Gujarat. The Mughal empire disintegrated by 1750, plunging the economy of India to its lowest ebb.\textsuperscript{70}

When there were interruptions in the production of textiles due to unforeseen circumstances such as droughts, war, famine, floods, etc. the Europeans often had problems buying sufficient supplies. They would try to motivate weavers in other production areas not affected by the impasse, to weave, bleach, decorate and finish the needed cloths. If the production involved resetting the loom width or preparing new lengths for the warp threads the Companies found the weavers usually unwilling to cooperate.\textsuperscript{71}

The Company regularly spread the production of a type of cloth over different places or groups of villages in one region and also across regions according to their needs. Take for example, a cotton chelas. The production of chelas predated the VOC. Chelas was woven in all three production regions: Coromandel, perhaps copied in Surat, and produced in Bengal for export to Europe. The chelas from Coromandel was basically for the Indonesian market and rarely was a chelas from Bengal sold in Indonesia. This is illustrated in Appendix B.

The timelines in Appendix B for Indian textiles imported in Indonesia by the VOC from 1602 to 1780 reflect in three sections the three major Indian production areas: Coromandel, Surat, and Bengal. A fourth section was added to reflect the timeline and places of destination of the non-Indian cloths that were traded by the VOC in Indonesia. The first column NAMES lists the types of textiles in alphabetical order. The varieties of a type are listed underneath the name of the type. The timeline is pictured by years.

\textsuperscript{70} Dharma Kumar ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, vol 2: 2, 3, 25. Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat: 68, 99, 104

\textsuperscript{71} The concept of standardization of cloth sizes were advanced by the VOC. For example, during the 1630s when cloth was scarce in Gujarat, the Company transferred many gessies, pieces of plain woven cloth from Awadh (east of Agra, to the weaving centers in Gujarat. The Company requested the owners of the weaving centers to tear the gessies to size, bleach, dye, or paint them to make them look like the original types of cloth that Gujarat usually supplies. Thus, the former gessies were sold as cannekins, baftas, asmanis and small chintz, all types of cloth regularly delivered to the Company. Hans W. van Santen, "De Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie in Gujarat en Hindustan": 177
Each year represents clusters of two years before and after the listed date from which data was gathered. The line behind the textile type indicates the length of time the textile is known to have been traded in Indonesia. The last column called DESTINATIONS lists in abbreviated form the branch offices where the types were sold. The key is found on the page preceding Appendix B.

Locating the *chelas* under the textiles listed in the section for Coromandel it can be noted that they were traded to Indonesia throughout the VOC period. The varieties of the type *chelas* are listed underneath as *chelas ordinary*, *fine with thin stripes*, *segoype-chequered*, *red mutewani-saya* (for women), and *chelas pakawenne*. The timeline indicates the duration of the type being traded, not of the varieties. Many varieties did not last as long as the type is known to exist. The column DESTINATIONS indicates that *chelas* from Coromandel were traded to Banda, Batavia, Java North Coast, Ternate and the west coast of Sumatra. Turning to the next section Surat, it shows that *chelas* were produced there for the Indonesian market only in the early part of the 17th century and distributed by the VOC to Ambon, Banten, and Batavia. Research in the history of the *chelas* could show if the production of the cloth was originally only in Coromandel, and promoted in Surat under influence of the Company or perhaps the reverse: the production of *chelas* ceased in Surat and transferred to Coromandel where it lasted.72 Among the textiles imported to Indonesia from Bengal no *chelas* are listed because they were primarily produced for the European market.73 More examples can be observed by comparing the timeline of types of textiles in different regions in Appendix B, see *bafta*, *boulong*, *chintz*, *fotas*, *parcalle*, *rumals*, *sailcloth*, etc. The

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72 The VOC archives could answer such type of questions, but it would take much research time to write a history of each textile type they traded, which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

73 The information about the length of time a textile was traded is gathered from the listings of the textiles in orders, invoices, bills of lading, and the accounts in the Negotie Boeken of Batavia. The accounts showed the transfer of textiles to destinations and when they were sold in Batavia. Although almost all types would have been recorded in Appendix B, not all varieties might be listed, because the production of textiles was very changeable like fashions nowadays.
guinees, the longest piece of woven cloth and the ones traded most frequently, spanned all three production regions. Guinees from all regions were sold in Indonesia.

From Surat the following textiles were exported by the VOC for sale in Indonesia between 1600 and 1780:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile A</th>
<th>Textile B</th>
<th>Textile C</th>
<th>Textile D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcatif</td>
<td>Chavonis</td>
<td>Gingam</td>
<td>Patolu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alegia</td>
<td>Chelas</td>
<td>Kamkani</td>
<td>Rumal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armosin</td>
<td>Chiauter</td>
<td>Kangan</td>
<td>Sailcloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asmanis</td>
<td>Chintz</td>
<td>Karikam</td>
<td>Salempore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlasses</td>
<td>Cindai</td>
<td>Longi</td>
<td>Sawagesie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bafta</td>
<td>Corroots</td>
<td>Madafon</td>
<td>Semião</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedcover</td>
<td>Couteins</td>
<td>Mamudis</td>
<td>Soosie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beiramee</td>
<td>Dongris</td>
<td>Mecanis</td>
<td>Taffachelas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanket</td>
<td>Doty</td>
<td>Negrocloth</td>
<td>Tapi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butidar</td>
<td>Dragam</td>
<td>Niquianias</td>
<td>Tercandia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambay(ti)</td>
<td>Flagcloth</td>
<td>Osmanis</td>
<td>Tokasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannekins</td>
<td>Fotas</td>
<td>Parcarle</td>
<td>Topseyls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Turias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Securing the Textiles at their Sources: Bengal

Bengal was the third region in India, after Coromandel and Surat, where the VOC established trading operations in order to obtain textiles and Indian goods. At about the same time that the VOC sent its second scouting party to Surat, a trade mission was also sent to Bengal, in 1607. Three years later an official representation on behalf of the directorate from the Netherlands was made by the merchant-captain Willem Jansz. from Amsterdam. The Dutch had not aspired to trade in Bengal after these first visits, partly because of the awareness that they were entering another Portuguese sphere of influence, partly because the region was perceived to be politically unstable. The more fundamental reason, however, was that the Dutch did not have the capital and precious metal necessary for exchange against Bengal goods. This metal scarcity changed after 1623 when the Dutch

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74 P.A. Leupe, "Willem Jansz. van Amsterdam, Admiraal en Willem Jansz. van Amersfoort, Vice-Commandeur der OIC in de eerste helft der 17de eeuw" in BKI, vol 19 (1872): 300-306
succeeded in acquiring silver from Persia through their factory at Bandar Abbas, and subsequently in the 1630s when they found additional sources of metal in Japan.\textsuperscript{75}

In 1629 the Company obtained its first official \textit{firman} (order written by a ruler) allowing the Dutch to trade in Bengal. Three trading permits followed successively: the first in 1632 from the Mughal \textit{subahdar} or governor of Bengal; a second a year later from his successor, and a third one from Shah Jahan, the Mughal emperor himself.\textsuperscript{76} The encouragement given to the Dutch to trade in Bengal and elsewhere in India was doubtless part of the policy of the Mughal ruling authorities, discussed under Surat, to welcome other European trading companies (Dutch as well as English, French, and Danish) in order to reduce the dominance of the Portuguese, who were beginning to irritate the various rulers because of their high-handed levying of tolls on Mughal vessels.\textsuperscript{77}

Bengal’s geographic position in relation to Surat and India’s hinterland was part of the reason for Dutch interest in it. Textiles, raw silk, opium, and saltpeter, the principal items of trade for the Company from India’s heartland, found two alternative coastal outlets, westward to Surat or eastward to Bengal. The Ganges River debouches into the Bay of Bengal, its mouth forming the major delta region where first Hugli and later Calcutta were founded as principal trading places. The river facilitated the movement of goods and people between Agra, the Mughal capital, and Bengal.\textsuperscript{78} While the VOC could procure hinterland goods through Surat, it was often easier and cheaper to obtain them through Bengal, especially from the principal Dutch bases in Coromandel. Moreover, Bengal was itself a productive region that offered many incentives to the VOC.

\textsuperscript{75} G.D. Winius and M.P.M. Vink, \textit{The Merchant-Warrior Pacified}: 21

\textsuperscript{76} F.W. Stapel, ed. Pieter van Dam, \textit{Beschrijvinge}, vol 2, part 2: 1

\textsuperscript{77} Winius and Vink, \textit{The Merchant-Warrior Pacified}: 20-3

\textsuperscript{78} Om Prakash, \textit{The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal 1630-1720}: 26-7
The importance of Bengal to the Dutch trade in Asia grew quickly once the VOC was established in Hugli in 1655. Until then such trading stations in Bengal as Kazimbazar, Balasore and Pipili were administered from Coromandel; after that year the Bengal operation was upgraded from a directie, headed by a director, to a gouvernement with a governor. The Company subsequently opened up factories in several locations; it leased for an annual rent payment of £3,500 some weaving villages like Chinsura, Baranagar, and Mirzapur. Batavia anticipated that the VOC office in Bengal "will be one of the most notable establishments in all the Indies." Batavia anticipated that the VOC office in Bengal "will be one of the most notable establishments in all the Indies." The export and import duties for Bengal were 2% on silver or gold bullion or coins, 4% on salt, 2% on textiles, 2% on the import of food items and 3% on export, and a scale for the other commodities. The Company imported predominantly Asian goods to Bengal until 1677: silver until 1668 and after that gold and copper from Japan; pepper and spices from Indonesia; tin, lead and spelter from the Malayan peninsula; sandalwood from Timor; and cinnamon, elephant tusks, shank shell, and areca nuts from Ceylon. Although the Company had a surplus of spices in the Batavia warehouses, only a very small quantity was exported and sold in Bengal. They were sold

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79 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 124-30

80 Ibid: 40

81 G.D. Winius and M.P.M. Vink, The Merchant-Warrior Pacified: 22

82 F.W. Stapel, ed. Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 3-4

83 Between 1677 and 1690 there was no import of precious metal from Japan to Bengal. The metal import consisted almost entirely of European silver bullion and coins. Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 132. From 1668 to 1700, the last twelve years of the 17th century, the Indian cottons had become very fashionable in Europe and export from Bengal tripled during these years compared to export in the twelve years prior to 1688. See table 7.1, p. 193 in Prakash, With the increase of the textile export to Europe the import of metals no longer came only from the inter-Asiatic trade, but also from Europe. All the silver that arrived in Batavia from Europe between 1680 and 1682 was shipped to Bengal. The decline of the Japanese supplies of precious metal to India and especially to Bengal set in after 1685 when the trade of the VOC in Japan became a limited trade and the raw silk was being appraised i.e. the pancado system of buying applied by the Japanese. However, there was an increase in the import of bar copper from Japan to Bengal, notably after 1680, see table 5.2, p 134, in Prakash.
as a luxury item for rich Muslims only. The Indonesian spices were beyond
the reach of the masses because of the price control imposed by the
Company, as happened elsewhere in Asia.84

It was most important for the Company to obtain more supplies of raw
silk for its trade to Japan. At the end of the 16th century Japan itself
imported 125,000 pounds of raw silk, but that amount had tripled by the time
the bakufu (Japanese government) banned foreign trade for Japanese
merchants in 1633 and closed Japan off in 1639.85 The Dutch brought the
first samples of raw silk (338 pounds) from Bengal to Japan in 1640, which
marked the beginning of a lucrative trade. Profits on the silk in Japan were
between 100 and 200 percent for many years.86 In 1604 the ituwappo (in
Portuguese pancado, setting the price for bulk buying) had been established
for the Portuguese trade whereby the leading merchants from Edo, Kyoto,
Sakai, Osaka, and Nagasaki were formed into an association that guaranteed
the purchase of raw silk. The shogunate had the first choice of the imported
raw silk. The remainder was distributed by the ituwappo, which also set the
price. When the Portuguese were expelled from Japan in the 1630s the
ituwappo had not been applied to the Dutch, Korean and Chinese traders that
were allowed to continue commercial relations. The export of raw silk from
Bengal to Japan grew from 20 - 30,000 in the 1640s to over 100,000 pounds in
the 1650s, and reached sometimes over 200,000 pounds in the next two
decennia. In 1678 the VOC experienced a set back when the pancado was
instituted again, that is, the raw silk was being appraised. In 1685 the bakufu
set a quota of imported raw silk at 100,000 tael or almost £350,000.87 This

84 Ibid: 158-9

85 Seiichi Iwao, "Japanese Foreign Trade in the 16th and 17th Centuries" in AA, vol
30 (1976): 4, 8, 13

86 Tapan Raychaudhuri, Jan Company in Coromandel: 178

87 F.W. Stapel, ed. Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 1: 535. The £350,000
was one third part of a total limit on the imports to Japan of £1,050,000 for the Dutch.
The Koreans were given the same trade limit as the Dutch, but the import limitation for
the Chinese was double that of the Dutch.
affected the metal export from Japan to India and especially Bengal. However, there was an increase in the import of bar copper from Japan to Bengal, notably after 1680.88 The delivery of Bengal raw silk diminished to a little more than it was in the 1640s, 30 - 40,000 pounds annually.89 Between 1724 and 1728 the Bengal raw silk disappeared from the list of imports to Japan.90

In addition to Bengal silk, raw silk was also purchased from the Chinese first in Taiwan, later in Tonkin. The Tonkin silk was highly valued in Japan, more than the Bengal silk, and always gave the highest returns, but in the mid-1670s the Japanese lowered the price they wanted to pay for the Tonkin silk, making it less worthwhile for the Dutch to deal in it.91

The raw silk from Bengal was important to the Dutch, not only as export to Japan, but especially for export to the Netherlands, which increased from 53,000 pounds in 1674 to an average of 83,000 pounds per year in 1675-80,-170,000 pounds in 1681-1700,—and 200,000 pounds until 1716.92 There is no evidence that Bengal raw silk was ever sold by the VOC in Indonesia. Opium was the export article for Indonesia par-excellence. Because of its compactness and high value it was also "smuggled" by others in quantities equal to or surpassing those carried by the Company.93 Textiles from Bengal do not figure prominently as an export to Batavia in the 17th century, but they came to form the largest import of textiles from 1704 to 1735,

88 Om Prakash, The Dutch East Indian Company: 134, table 5.2
89 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 126, Table 5.1
90 VOC 11841 (1722-23) still includes the import of 45, 410 pounds of raw silk. VOC 11843 (1729-30) and following years have no more import of raw silk listed
92 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 198-9
93 Ibid: 58, 154. By "smuggle" is meant the illegal export by private persons, for the greater part company employees, to Indonesia where the Company held a monopoly on the sale of opium.
however a relatively small proportion was for the Indonesian market. The largest share of the Bengal textiles were transferred to the return ships for Europe. They also made up the largest number of textiles imported to Japan after 1703 until 1760. The details of the quantities of pieces of textiles and value exported from Bengal will be discussed in Chapter 8.

In composing the list of import goods to Bengal, Batavia did not consider the percentage of profits that each trade item could deliver. The Company was willing to forego maximum profits in Bengal in order to sell as much as possible and receive the benefits of the sales of Bengal’s export products. Any commodity in demand in Bengal on which the Company would not sustain a major loss was imported, although a minimum sale price was usually dictated. Sometimes no profit was made on the large quantities of bar copper that were imported from Japan, but the total of the aggregate amount of sales gave the Dutch more purchasing power to buy the goods that sold at considerable profits in Europe.

During the last quarter of the 17th century a reversal of the relative role of inter-Asiatic trade compared to trade with Europe occurred. Prakash explains that the reversal "was the combined outcome of a declining role of intra-Asian trade in the overall pattern of the Company’s trading activities, and the emergence of textiles and raw silk as major items of export to Europe". The proportions of total exports from Bengal to 1) Asia and 2) Europe during the period 1675-1700 was changed from approximately 80:20 to 20:80.

In Bengal the Dutch also attempted to standardize the sizes and

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94 Ibid: 53


96 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal 1630-1720: 53

97 Ibid: 72-3. Table 3.5 (p. 76-7) gives actual figures which show in the year 1674-5 Bengal export to Europe to be £255,490 or 19.45% of the total export; the export to Japan and Batavia amounted to £769,326 or 58.56% in the same year.

For the year 1700-1 Bengal export to Europe is £3,255,662 or 78.32% and to Japan and Batavia £706,130 or 16.98% of the total exports.
qualities of the textiles and greatly increased the production of raw silk and textiles in the region with their demand. They introduced new textile items from Bengal to the consumers in other markets, and likewise they provided new types of textiles for the weavers to reproduce.\textsuperscript{98}

The incredibly large production that was required from the weavers consequently had an effect on the organization of the textile weaving centers and caused localized social changes to take place. Caste barriers sometimes broke down and it happened that artisans became middlemen or even large dealers in the textiles. In some cases castes moved seasonally in order to assist other villages at cotton harvest times. Cotton supplies often fell short of the demand from the weavers. Some weavers contracted directly with the spinners, others bought cotton from peddlars.

The textiles that Bengal exported for the Indonesian market were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adati</th>
<th>Cassa</th>
<th>Geras</th>
<th>Rumals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcatif</td>
<td>Chavonis</td>
<td>Gingam</td>
<td>Sailcloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alegia</td>
<td>Chelas</td>
<td>Guinees</td>
<td>Salempore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armosin</td>
<td>Chintz</td>
<td>Gunny</td>
<td>Sanas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlasses</td>
<td>Commerband</td>
<td>Hamman</td>
<td>Satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betille</td>
<td>Coutesis</td>
<td>Longi</td>
<td>Silkcloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beiraram</td>
<td>Dongris</td>
<td>Malmal</td>
<td>Sologesie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanket</td>
<td>Doria</td>
<td>Milmil</td>
<td>Soosie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulang</td>
<td>Doty</td>
<td>Nicuanias</td>
<td>Tansjeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camelot</td>
<td>Fotas</td>
<td>Palampore</td>
<td>Therindais</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parcalle</td>
<td>Waxcloth</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Production History of Guinees*

The Dutch introduced two innovations—the Chinese *kangan* and the *guinees*—for overseas production in Broach and Coromandel (Pondicheri) in

\textsuperscript{98} T.Raychaudhuri, Jan Company: 145. There had never been any uniformity in weight or measure, and the cloths were also found in any length. W.H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar: 52
1616. Three years earlier the directorate in the Netherlands had sent two
samples of cloths that were being traded on the Guinea coast of Africa,
requesting that some samples be copied. The Portuguese had started the
export of guinees to Africa, but not in such large numbers as the VOC was to
undertake. Together with the sample cloths (monsters or "demonstration"
pieces) the directorate had enclosed specifications concerning dimensions and
quality. Coen had passed these samples on to Wemmer van Berchem, the
director in Coromandel, who transmitted an order to Surat.

The first quantities were being produced by a few weavers in
Pondicheri who promised to make a delivery within two weeks. Weavers in
Tirupapaliyur wove 3,000 pieces of the best guinees in 1617. They then cost
f6.00 per piece. The directorate in the Netherlands was very satisfied with
the delivery and the next year ordered double the number of pieces, which
they wanted repeated every year thereafter. The specifications disclosed that
a desirable length of the guinees for Europe would be no less than 50 ells (34
meters) and as long as possible, up to 70 ells (50 meters). Half the pieces
should be bleached, the other half coarse unbleached white. At the same
time Coen ordered about 3,000 pieces of white bleached guinees for Java too.
Three years later another 4,000 pieces were ordered for the Indonesians. This
time they were procured at Masulipatnam and Paleacat because the factory in
Tirupapaliyur had closed down due to ongoing wars, while Pondicheri's
guinees were not up to standard.

In July, 1619 Hans de Haze, textile expert and Director of the
Coromandel coast, left a memorandum on the eve of his departure from the
coast saying that the "long cloths" could be obtained now in larger quantities
and therefore were available for 20 cents per piece cheaper than the year
before. If there was enough money, he wanted the merchants to buy 300 to
400 bales for the Netherlands and 100 to 150 bales for Indonesia. Guinees sold
well in Maluku and also in Java. It seems that the Dutch persuaded the
Indonesians to buy this type of cloth. There are no records indicating guinees

was sold in Indonesia before the Dutch introduced it or that such a long cloth was known earlier under another name. Two years later it was found that guinees could be bought cheaper still in Narsapur near Tegenapatnam and was ordered there, so an order was placed.

In the meantime 588 bales of guinees arrived from Surat in Batavia in 1621. The "long cloth" had become a "best seller" in Java. The local people and the employees of the company, whose salaries were partly paid with this textile, liked them. The next order to the factories in India was for 20,000 pieces of guinees, all white-bleached and 50 ells long. In each place, Ternate and Ambon, about 1,000 pieces of guinees could be sold annually. Two years later, in 1623, 400 bales or 8,000 bleached white pieces and 1,000 unbleached guinees were needed for Indonesia. When the next shipment from India did not include guinees the Director-General was furious and mandated that the orders for this cloth always had to be met in full.

In 1622 the invoice to the Netherlands showed 481 bales of guinees and a few bales of fine muri. From Surat broad white bafta was requested for the Netherlands because the English had successfully introduced it there; samples of salemopore were also enclosed in the shipment, but only 15% of an order for 20,000 pieces of parcalles from Surat was met. Coen, the Director-General, encouraged the increase of production in Chinese kangans in Broach. The kangans were cottons the Chinese imported to Southeast Asia. He believed that they might follow the path of the guinees in popularity and if production could be boosted, the price would fall which had been the case with the guinees. As it turned out the kangans never became as popular as the guinees in Indonesia. It is possible that the Chinese traders were able to keep the market for this line to themselves and the kangans of the Company were only supplementary.

The guinees from Surat had become cheaper and of better quality than those from Coromandel in 1622. That year taffachelas, karikam, cannvkins, beiramee, and tercandia were also ordered from Surat including bafta for

Indonesia. The factor in Broach reported in December of 1623 that after a great deal of bargaining he could have a large quantity of guinees made for f5 per piece, one guilder less than in Coromandel. He waited for further instructions.

Throughout the VOC period it appears that all of the Surat's production of guinees was sent to the Netherlands. Surat became known mainly for its colored and dyed cloths, not for bleached white guinees or plain cloths. The production of guinees in Surat never reached the proportions that it did in Coromandel and Bengal. Coromandel became the only supplier of guinees for the Indonesian market until Bengal greatly increased the production of bleached guinees in the second decade of the 18th century, after which Bengal also supplied Indonesia with large quantities. The first recorded arrival in Batavia of guinees from Bengal in Batavia dated from 1652-2,100 pieces; from Coromandel in the same year there arrived--31,300 pieces; from Surat none.101 Guinees were still woven in Surat in the first quarter of the 18th century, but no record could be found of guinees thereafter.

It seems that the Company also called the guinees by a corruption of the placename, Capperia, where they were woven, corroot.102 The quantities that arrived in Batavia for the few years examined for corroot can be seen in Table 3 below.

The accounts for subsequent years do not record guinees, nor corroot, any longer. It appears that the Company had stopped trading them some time between 1734 and 1756. Comparing the Bengal and Coromandel production of guinees for the VOC in the 18th century with that of Surat showed the following pattern:

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101 VOC 10396 See Appendix C: Timeline. The timeline of guinees in Coromandel lasted throughout the VOC period. When pressure on production increased following the large demand in Europe, Bengal assisted and started to produce the guinees too in the 1650s. Om Prakash, The Dutch Factories in India 1617-1623: a total of 42 references throughout the book. Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal: 60 states misleadingly that production in Bengal was only begun at the end of the 17th century and "continued to be very small". H.T. Colenbrander ed., Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden vol 1 (1614): 59

102 Dagh-register, Batavia, vol 5 (1641): 315
TABLE 3
Quantities in pieces of *guinees* cloth exported from Coromandel, Surat, and Bengal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Export to Batavia</th>
<th>Bengal</th>
<th>Coromandel</th>
<th>Surat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in Years</td>
<td>Pieces</td>
<td>Pieces</td>
<td>Pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-25</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>48,700</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1734</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>30,500</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756-59</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>52,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>13,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13,500(^{103})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the *guinees* pieces of cloth were for export to the Netherlands. For example, the number of pieces of *guinees* and their value that passed through the warehouse in Batavia in 1703 and 1733 totalled:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of pieces</th>
<th>Value in guilders</th>
<th>Pieces sold in Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1703</td>
<td>169,665</td>
<td>1,758,996</td>
<td>12,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733</td>
<td>98,990</td>
<td>1,038,812</td>
<td>22,660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1703 there were 5 million square meters of *guinees* in stock, transferred or sold in Batavia. The large number of 169,665 pieces in 1703 is based on the stock the Company held for transfer of the Guinees to the Netherlands supplemented by the *guinees* that had arrived from Bengal, Surat and Coromandel that year. Most bales of *guinees* contained twenty pieces; only the bales with a very fine variety held 40 pieces. Hence, for many years approximately 5,000 bales of only *guinees* were stored for some time in the warehouses in Batavia. At the peak of production approximately 4,000

\(^{103}\) Accounts for *guinees* and *corroot* in VOC 10810; 10811; 10817; 10818; 10824
households in India were kept busy just weaving guinees for the VOC alone,\textsuperscript{104} apart from other Asian and European traders who also exported guinees. The sales of guinees in Indonesia ranged from 10- to 28,000 pieces annually after 1620. An overview of the quantity of pieces of guinees sold in the branch offices in Indonesia and differentiated by Bengal and Coromandel production, shows for the following years:

\begin{table}
\textbf{TABLE 4}

\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\hline
Year & Coromandel & Bengal \\
\hline
1617-20 & 3,500 & 0 \\
1621 & 10,000 & 0 \\
1622 & 20,000 & 0 \\
1623 & 28,000 & 0 \\
1653 & 10,650 & 0 \\
1703-4 & 12,140 & 40 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\hline
Year & Coromandel & Bengal \\
\hline
1723 & 20,621 & 3,480 \\
1733 & 12,703 & 9,957 \\
1757 & 24,410 & 0 \\
1758 & 24,082 & 2,734 \\
1770 & 10,347 & 80 \\
1780 & 12,183 & 0 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

The dynamics of the Company are apparent from the example above, which was not exceptional, but rather the norm. The price of a textile was an important factor for ordering textiles in a particular locality; sometimes the quality was more important than the price. Practically every year new types of textiles were introduced somewhere; new samples were sent; patterns were altered; colors added, subdued, or made brighter; cloth was woven tighter or looser; finer or coarser thread was used; gold or silver thread added, etc. Every shipment from India to Batavia included bales of "sample" (monster) cloths. These were then promoted and tested in suitable markets. If the

\textsuperscript{104} This number is based on the reported 1500 meters that an average weaving household produced in Golconda, the plain weaving area from where much of the guinees for Indonesia originated.
cloths sold well, more were ordered for the next year.

Closing the Circle: Precious Metals

Precious metals played a critical role in energizing and expanding Dutch participation in both the inter-Asiatic and the Euro-Asia trade. As mentioned earlier, Coen demanded from the directorate in the Netherlands a generous infusion of silver and gold from the Netherlands "to prime the pump" of the VOC trade in Asia. As it turned out, the Netherlands continued to export metals to Asia to capitalize the importation of Asian spices, coffee, tea, textiles, etc. for sale in European markets throughout the VOC period. The initial intent of buying spices and Asian goods meant paying for them in European silver and gold currencies available at that time in sufficient quantities. Dutch fleets also carried some European goods in the hope of selling them in Asia, but this was a secondary consideration, as evidenced by the proportion between currency and merchandise carried. In the cargo bound for Asia in 1615, only 6 percent was merchandise, the rest was precious metals.

A report on another shipment described the cargo as consisting of reals, unsorted coins of various valuations, packed in thirty chests, each chest containing four bags weighing 100 marks; the chests were doubled-locked, covered with canvas, and carefully stowed in the cabins of the ship’s officers. Even after the Dutch found Asian sources of precious metals the Asia-bound cargo from Europe continued to have a high proportion of silver and gold compared to European products. After the inter-Asiatic metals trade had begun to contribute to the purchasing power of the Company in the middle of the 17th century, the influx of precious metals from the Netherlands still constituted 55% of the total value of the cargo that arrived.

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105 F.S. Gaastra, "The Exports of precious metal from Europe to Asia by the Dutch East India Company, 1602-1795" in J.F. Richards, Precious Metals: 447
in Batavia in the 1650s.\textsuperscript{106}

Several rationalizations have been offered to explain both the continual flow of precious metals and the high proportion of metals to goods. Firstly, European products had no appeal for the Asians and were too expensive. This situation changed after 1800 as European industrialization produced items \textit{en masse}, including weapons and, ironically, attractive textiles (the "\textit{bontjes}", brightly colored cloths for the tropics) that were affordable among people in what became the colonies. Secondly, the silver metals were in great demand in two large economies in Asia: in China, where a paper money system had collapsed, silver provided a stable substitute, and in India, where the Mughal empire was monetizing and expanding, silver and gold were always acceptable. Thirdly, silver could, fortunately for the Dutch, be bought

\textit{Ingot and Coins from Shipwrecked East Indiamen}

\textsuperscript{106} Om Prakash, \textit{The Dutch East India Company}: 11
in the open market in Europe, thanks to the flow of American silver. The liaison of the Directorate of the VOC with the Bank of Exchange in Amsterdam allowed the Company to have relatively easy access to the necessary bullion and currency.

Dutch preoccupation with precious metals led to a complex of banks of exchange (wisselbanken), mints, and various forms of coinage in which the precious metals could be exported. The largest bank of exchange for Europe was the wisselbank in Amsterdam, under the direction of the mayor of Amsterdam. Of the eighteen bewindhebbers of the VOC in 1671, five had once, or more than once, been mayor of Amsterdam while others had served as commissaries with the Bank.

The Netherlands minted its own silver and gold coins, which meant that mint directors, known as Generaalmeestsers, were key players in supplying the VOC with its annual export of currency to Asia. There were also mints located in Asia, controlled either by the VOC or by local rulers, where silver or gold bars were transformed into currency forms comparable to those in local use, such as the Bengal silver rupee or the south Indian gold pagoda. It has been established that Asians often showed preference for particular silver reals with a familiar appearance and value, such as the Spanish, Sevillian, Mexican, or Peruvian reals. The VOC directors in Holland, consequently, also bought foreign currency from the metals market in order to satisfy the demand of the Asian people. In the 1620s, at a time when reals had become scarce and more difficult to buy because of the Dutch-Spanish war, the Dutch had created the negotiepenningen (Dutch coins minted mainly

107 F.S. Gaastra, "The Emergence of a World Economy 1500-1914" in Beiträge zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, band 33, no 1: 109


109 Both the present Indian rupee and Indonesian rupiah derive from Hindustani rupya, meaning silver.

110 Mexican reals-of-eight were preferred in 17th and 18th century Sumatra for the pepper. W.Ph Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 7 (1714): 76
for export), which came in several denominations such as the silver small coins like schellingen (value of about three stuivers, approximately f0.15) and the single stuiver of f0.05 (valued at f0.0525 after 1656 in Batavia) and double stuivers of f0.10, popularly known as payement. Not only did the Dutch continue to export precious metals to Asia, but they enforced a practical policy that money should be kept circulating in Asia. VOC employees and officers were not allowed to bring money back to Europe; they were allowed to transfer their accounts in paper, the assignaties which could be cashed on their return. This policy removed part of the risk that impeded the large shipments of coins and precious metals over long distances.

As was seen in the description of trade in spices and textiles, the Dutch used precious metals creatively in conjunction with textiles as a medium of exchange. They used coins instead of cloth and vice versa, in the purchases of spices or in the payment of salaries of employees, depending upon to the dictates of profitability. The Dutch used spices, textiles and metals both as commodities and as mediums of exchange. The export of precious metals from Europe to Asia, therefore, must be seen as meeting a demand for a marketable commodity and a demand for liquidity; both were essential for energizing the flow of the inter-Asiatic and the Asia-Europe trade.

There was a changing proportion in the export of gold or silver, including the addition of copper, according to the demands of the various trading regions in India and Indonesia. In general, silver went to the Southeast Asian archipelago, Ceylon and Bengal, and gold to the Coromandel coast, because of its relatively higher price against silver in India than in Southeast Asia. Sometimes a different pattern occurred. For example, Coromandel was normally a gold consuming area, but in the 1670s the gold export to Coromandel slumped because of a rise in the price of silver, prompting the

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111 F.S. Gaastra, "De Export of precious metal from Europe to Asia" in J.F. Richards ed. Precious Metals: 452

112 Ibid: 455
Dutch to export more silver and copper to that region to reap more profit.

A recurring problem for the Governor of Fort Geldria was the shortage of cash. In Coromandel the currency was in gold pagoda (used for transactions in textiles), fanums (used for payment of the weavers' wages) and small-value copper coins. Silver was a "dead security"; it could usually not profitably be exchanged or traded. The import market was subject to sharp fluctuations in bullion and specie, although generally gold sold for a profit. In the early years of the Company the pagoda was f4.00 in Masulipatnam, but f4.20 in Paleacat. When "light" money was introduced, which did not occur at the same time in all the VOC branch offices, the pagoda rated f4.80 and increased to f6.00 in 1705. Management in Batavia partly solved the problem of the cash shortage in India by importing large quantities of precious metals from Japan, where it was the cheapest. For the larger part (to 1680s) of the 17th century Japan was the biggest supplier of precious metals, exceeding annually one million

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113 W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven: vol 2 (1639): 42; T. Raychaudhuri, Jan Company: 49-50

114 F.W. Stapel, ed. Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge: vol 2, part 2: 109, 120

115 T. Raychaudhuri, Jan Company: 184

116 Om Prakash, The Dutch Factories in India 1617-1623: 36-9

117 J.P. de Korte, De Jaarlijkse Financiële Verantwoording in de VOC: 32. Light money came into existence when the directorate in the Netherlands ordered in 1622 that Dutch coins should be brought into circulation because the reals-of-eight were often difficult to come by. The silver real-of-eight had a standard value expressed in stuivers, another small silver coin. In 1622 that was 48 stuivers (1 stuiver equalled 1/20 part of one guilder regardless of the rate for stuivers to one rixdollar). Trade in the archipelago showed that the value of the real-of-eight and also the Dutch silver rixdollar, was not equivalent to 48 stuivers, but closer to 60 stuivers (25% increase), caused by the demand for silver in Bengal and Surat, and in China, to which silver was carried by Chinese traders in Southeast Asia.

What the directorate forgot to consider was that the stuiver also increased in value at the same rate, so that the profits in the books were artificial. Since the exchange rate was very sensitive to the normal rules of demand and supply, it invariably changed from one year to the next in the ports where the Dutch traded.

118 Realia, vol 1 (1664): 431

119 F.W. Stapel, ed. Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 123
guilders from the 1620s.\textsuperscript{120} When in 1632 the Company was waiting for the gold from Japan it anticipated losing 700 to 800 thousand guilders in business on the Coromandel coast where the gold was needed for the purchase of textiles.\textsuperscript{121} Supplementing the import of precious metals from the Netherlands and Asia were Dutch textiles, Chinese silk, and dyes.\textsuperscript{122} In 1643, for example, thousands of pounds of raw silk from Taiwan were shipped to Coromandel.\textsuperscript{123}

Of course, the Company attempted to increase the sale of their monopoly products: cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, and mace, because they could control their prices. Spices were sold at a price adjusted to the sales price in Europe so that it would not be worthwhile for other European traders to buy them in Coromandel, ship them to Europe, and compete with the VOC in the home market. There were other import products for which the Dutch tried to control the price, like tin, areca nuts, and copper. Successes were booked in the latter commodity until 1730, after which the sales consistently dropped.\textsuperscript{124} I think there was possibly a relationship between the inflation of copper prices in China, which reached crucial high levels between 1730 and 1770, and the consistent drop in the amount of import of this commodity in India.\textsuperscript{125} Whereas the company sold 400,000 to 500,000 pounds of copper

\textsuperscript{120} W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}: vol 1: (1629) 254, (1633) 369, (1636) 588, (1637) 659, (1638) 736; vol 2: (1639) 46; F.S. Gaastra, "The Dutch East India Company and its Intra-Asiatic Trade in Precious metals" in Wolfram Fischer et al eds., \textit{The Emergence of a World Economy 1500-1914}: 104, esp. table 2.

\textsuperscript{121} W.Ph. Coolhaas, ed. \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 1 (1632): 364, ftn 2

\textsuperscript{122} T. Raychaudhuri, \textit{Jan Company}: 86-7 mentions Chay root from Ceylon.

\textsuperscript{123} Dagh-Register, Batavia (1643): 259

\textsuperscript{124} S. Arasaratnam, \textit{Merchants, Company and Commerce}: 183

\textsuperscript{125} S. Naquin and E.S. Rawski, \textit{Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century}: 104. After 1700 prices of copper in the trade to China had increased due to a shortage in supply relative to increasing demand. In China sales in grains were conducted in copper, taxes paid in silver. The Company found the copper-silver exchange no longer profitable and this I think was probably one of the major reasons why it had to increase the import of precious metals from the Netherlands. While the Company had exported from the Netherlands to Asia 125 million guilders from 1602 to 1700, it imported 449
in the 17th century, this dropped to below 200,000 after 1730. Approximately two thirds of Coromandel's total exports were paid for with precious metal. The Dutch actively attempted to reduce the trade imbalance, but Coromandel was known for the lowest demands of imported goods.

Surat and Gujarat were mainly silver-importing areas, but because of their proximity to Persia and a rise in the profits on cloves and copper around the 1650s, they were generally able to meet their needs from Persian sources and even exported silver and (Persian) gold to other Dutch-operated trade centers in Asia. The considerable profits on import goods modified the structure of trade for the Company in Surat, resulting in a favorable balance of trade. This was a unique situation compared to branches of the VOC in other Indian offices where bullion was practically the only acceptable exchange commodity. In addition to copper and clove the Company imported in Surat nutmeg, pepper, cinnamon, mace, lead, tin, elephant tusks, sandalwood, camphor, wax, raw silk from China, and European textiles. It exported primarily textiles, but initially also large quantities of indigo, and additionally cotton thread, silver, sealing wax, gallnut, gum, mustard seed, linseed oil, and soap.

In Bengal there was a high-demand for silver because of the high level of exportation that had to be financed. Bengal's exports included not only textiles destined for Indonesia and Japan, but much more so the goods (textiles and saltpeter) bound for Europe. At the end of the 17th century Bengal commodities accounted for 36% of the total returns to Holland, rising to 39% between 1710 and 1720. All this traffic out of Bengal was paid for in substantial amounts of silver.

million from 1701 to 1795, a marked difference, up 259%. F.S. Gaastra, "The exports of Precious metal from Europe to Asia by the Dutch East India Company, 1602-1795" in J.F. Richards, Precious Metals in the Later Medieval and Early Modern Worlds: 451. The commodity exchange of first silver and next copper from east Asia to India became a dried up source of profit.

126 Gaastra, Ibid: 452-5

127 Hans W. van Santen, "De Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie in Gujarat en Hindustan: 35
Bengal figured prominently in a major shift in the silk trade with Japan. When the silk trade of the VOC to Japan was diminishing in the 1670s, less gold and copper became available. Simultaneously the Company started to shift its emphasis in the composition of the return cargo to Europe from predominantly high-value spices to primarily textile products: textiles, silk, and cotton. This shift in commodity composition from spices to textiles increased the volume of metals entering Bengal, making Europe assume the role of supplier instead of Japan. The balance of trade always stayed in favor of Bengal; however, this picture may not apply when the VOC trade with Southeast Asia is viewed as a whole. One would need to study the sales prices of spices and Southeast Asian products in Bengal, against the Bengal textiles that were sold in Southeast Asia; this has not been undertaken yet.

In Table 5 is contrasted the import of metal to Bengal and the export of metal from the Netherlands to Asia to pay for the return goods. The second and third columns are based on Table 3.2 of Prakash (p.66). The first column indicates the decade for which the annual average is given in column 2 and 3. The second column gives the average percentage of metal import to Bengal for the decade indicated. The third column the actual amount in guilders. Thus in the 1660s the overwhelming part of metal import as opposed to the total import in Bengal is 90% metal and only 10% goods. The average metal import of 90% is equivalent to f 1,288,000. The total metal import in Asia from Europe is shown in column 4. It is possible to be a smaller average import than the import of metal reflected for Bengal because Bengal imported additional metal from Japan when it was available. During subsequent decades the metal imports from Europe increase. The share that Bengal receives is always lower because Japan banned the export of silver in 1668.128

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128 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 132
TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>BENGAL Metal Import</th>
<th>THE NETHERLANDS Metal Export from Europe to Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1660s</td>
<td>1,288,000</td>
<td>f 1,190,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670s</td>
<td>968,000</td>
<td>1,098,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680s</td>
<td>1,178,000</td>
<td>1,972,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1690s</td>
<td>2,006,000</td>
<td>2,900,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700s</td>
<td>2,435,000</td>
<td>3,927,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710s</td>
<td>2,870,000</td>
<td>3,882,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the critical years when the raw silk import to Japan was diminishing and vice versa the metal exports from Japan decreased in value, the composition of the cargoes to Bengal changed to a lower percentage of metals or "treasure". There was no recovery from the situation in Japan. The subsequent increases in the proportions of metal imports reflect the increase in the precious metal import from Europe which is shown alongside the amounts Bengal imported. Thus, when the large portion of metals provided by Japan in the inter-Asiatic trade dropped, the Company in the Netherlands injected its precious metal instead; the VOC had become a carrying-trade company. The infusion of profits for the Company from the inter-Asiatic trade diminished in the course of the 18th century, at least that appears to be so from the sales of Indian textiles in Indonesia.

Beyond the function as a commodity or a source of liquidity precious metals functioned as a measure of profitability. The VOC had to measure whether it was gaining or losing, and the key measure available to them in

Europe was ultimately the value from the sales of goods reduced by the costs for the *equipage* (total outlay of fitting out the ships to the Indies), converted into Dutch guilders, which were expressed in silver value of the banco guilder. In Batavia a similar value system was followed in which the goods arriving from Europe in addition to those from the outer offices reduced by the costs for the maintenance of the corporation in Asia were the basis for considering the gain or loss expressed also in guilders.

This is not the final episode. Although the bottom line in the three-way equation of spices, species, and textiles was, for the Dutch with their Europe-centered mental set of metals, in the mind of the Indonesians there was a residual and irreducible value in cloth which cannot be equated with money. This is because cloth has a fundamental connection with the socio-cultural fabric of Asian village life and court ceremonies. Cloth enters into the symbolic universe of social exchange between men and women, between groups, between rulers and subjects. Even more than precious metals changing hands in bazaars, cloth touched the body and soul of people. For the Indonesians, cloth was currency and more than currency, whether metal or fabric.
CHAPTER 6

PROCESS OF THE TEXTILE TRADE

A trade of millions of textiles every year demanded a system that could deal with the ordering and storing of large quantities. It should be noted that the textile shipments discussed here included substantial volumes of cloth produced and traded in Asia in addition to those for Europe. In India the finished textiles were delivered to warehouses where they had to undergo inspection, registration, and packing. Most bales of textiles were shipped straight to Batavia, but some found their way to the Netherlands directly. Occasionally a shipment might be ordered to go straight to another destination.

In Batavia the unloading was done efficiently. Large warehouses had been built to store the many thousands of bales of cloths. The textiles to be loaded onto the return ships were kept separate from those destined for Japan, Siam, or the archipelago. Books were kept to register the arrival, stock, sale or transfer of the bales of textiles to the branch offices of the Company in Indonesia. The largest sales took place in Batavia, where the textiles were handled in Company stores and at auctions.

The process of packing, shipping, receiving, bookkeeping, and transferring was subject to strict rules and regulations—too many to discuss in one chapter for all the offices during the time of the Company’s existence. The main details of what was involved will be presented.

Textile Orders and Specifications

All orders for textiles flowed into Batavia, the center of the Company operation. The orders belonged to three categories: 1) the vaderlandse eis (order from the Netherlands) which included the textiles that were to be sent on the return fleets, 2) the annual order from Japan, and 3) the cumulative order from Batavia and all the branch offices in Asia. Each category order
order from Batavia and all the branch offices in Asia. Each category order was tripartite, with separate requirements from each of the procurement areas: Coromandel, Surat and Bengal.

The European Order and Specifications

Every year the Directors of the VOC sent letters of correspondence known as the Resolutions of Heren XVII with the fleet that supplied Batavia with the goods from Europe. The Resolutions always started with the quantities of the different spices needed for next year's sales followed by an extensive list of textiles.

An example of an order in the Resolutions of Heren XVII dated March 4, 1718 will serve to illustrate the form of these instructions. The order in question consists of a list approximately sixteen folios long and arranged as presented, starting with Chinese silk textiles totalling 11,000 pieces for the next year:

Chinese pelings
800 or 1000 pieces: half plain, half with flowers; 16 el long; price no more than f 11

Chinese pangsi
1000 pieces: 20 or 21 cobido long; half plain, half very flowery; price as above

Chinese damask
1300 pieces: with armosins background; costing no more than f 20
1000 pieces: colored with satin background; shot with 2 or 3 bright colors; every chest must contain 8 or 10 of one color with flowers; price no more than f 30
1000 pieces: white with satin background; big flowers are popular; f 30 or less

1 The Resolutions are discussed in more detail in the Archival Bibliography

2 K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740: 149 claims that the Chinese silks were dropped from the orders in the 1690s when the silks from Bengal became the fashionable goods in Europe. However, the order under discussion, from March 4, 1718 and many others of a later date request the Chinese silks which the Company keeps importing during the VOC period in fluctuating quantities.

3 Quoted prices refer to one piece of textile.
Chinese gillams

400 pieces: 12 el long; costing no more than f 5
400 pieces: 16 - -; - - - f 7
400 pieces: 24 - -; - - - f 12

There was no need for Tonkin hockins nor for Chinese silk because the French had brought that to Europe, causing an over supply.

Tonkin pelings

3000 pieces: plain
2000 pieces: interwoven with elaborate flowers and vines; no more than f 7

Indigo Java

As much as possible in the form of tall [indigo] cakes. Too little had been sent while this variety was the most popular and gave the largest profits.

The textile order for Bengal which followed in a corresponding fashion was voluminous. First 256,000 pounds of three types of raw silk were requested. Each type had multiple grades of quality, some as many as six. A different quantity was wanted of each. Similarly 55,000 pounds of different types, qualities, and quantities of silk and cotton thread were needed. In addition to those goods by weight, 58 types of textiles of many different varieties and lengths were listed with plenty of specifications as to color, pattern, price, quality, lustre, weight, packaging, sewing, width, texture, and cleanliness. Some samples and patterns were attached. The total number of ordered textiles amounted to a maximum of 267,000 pieces or a minimum of 224,000. Among the fifty-eight textile types listed, ten carried the remark that they did not need reordering. In such cases a reason was given.

The textile order for Coromandel started with a complaint that needed to be investigated by the directorate in 1717. They had been told that the price of the Coromandel textiles had increased due to a bad cotton harvest, competition and a smaller supply than demand. However, they found those excuses hard to believe and wanted more evidence.
The order did not include a request for goods by weight, but for 21 types of textiles which should total between 160,000 to 169,000 pieces. Compared to Bengal the Surat order indicated very few specifications.

The textile order addressed to Ceylon concerned 7 types of textiles totalling 109 to 114,000 pieces produced in Madurai in addition to 16,000 pounds of cotton thread and an unlimited quantity of indigo. From Malabar 20,000 pounds of cotton thread were needed and from Surat 40,000 pounds in different grades.

The Surat order asked for the famous *Indigo Biana*, 100,000 to 150,000 pounds, and *Indigo Sarkhej* 30,000 pounds. The small textile order was for 91,500 to 96,500 pieces of 14 different types. The directors challenged VOC merchants in Persia to acquire raw silk in whatever quantity the court made available and 60,000 pounds of Kirman wool because the English had brought it to Europe a year earlier.

In total one quarter of a million pounds raw silk, 40,000 pounds silk thread; 91,000 pounds cotton thread, all the available indigo, and between 595,400 and 657,000 pieces of textiles were requested in the European order for 1719. However, much of the time the orders were only partially fulfilled. Arasaratnam, speaking of the Coromandel trade, states that the coast "could not supply the total orders made for Europe, the shortfall being in the region of between a third and a quarter of what was invoiced in Europe". Prakash suggested that the export for Bengal fell far short of the orders. Possible reasons he brought forward were the competition between the European companies and the shortage of cash often suffered by the Company in Bengal. The increasing demand led to lower product standards and higher prices.

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4 K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade: 144 shows for 1697 a similar proportion of geographical analysis of piece-goods.

5 VOC 7365: Resolutions Heren XVII: fiche 201 (There are no folio numbers on the manuscript pages of the fiches)

6 This was three times more than in 1654 when the Dutch bought raw silk in Bengal for the first time, F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 2: 206

7 S. Arasaratnam, Commerce on the Coromandel Coast: 135
which meant that the Dutch officers in India were not buying as much as requested. ⁸ In the case of Surat, the order for 1719 was surprisingly below the level of actual imports a few years earlier. Between 1699 and 1702 an average of 139,846 pieces of textiles had been imported from Surat. ⁹

The *vaderlandse eis* for 1724 had a sample book of Chinese textiles enclosed. The reason for that was that during the previous four years a political debate had taken place concerning the participation in Asian trade by the Company of Ostende under the Spanish flag in Manila and Macao. The VOC was alarmed about the textiles that the Company of Ostende had brought back from China which had been received well and given very high returns in Europe. The Directorate wanted its Batavian merchants to buy these same textiles, either from the Chinese who had just resumed trading in Batavia, or from the Company of Ostende itself. It suggested that Batavia could make the Ostende traders a deal by buying the Chinese textiles from them, reasoning that it would save them high transport costs to Europe. The idea behind the proposal was not so much for the VOC to make additional profit from selling the textiles in Europe, but to prevent the Company of Ostende from doing so. ¹⁰

Unfortunately, no sample books of orders from Batavia for the Asian market have been preserved in the archives in The Hague. There are only two sets preserved of a shipment of Indian textiles in 1787 to the coast of Guinea for the Dutch West India Company which contain samples of textiles that were also common in the trade to Indonesia (see the three illustrations of

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⁸ O. Prakash, Bengal 1630 - 1720: 187. However, the record shows a better order-export ratio, at least for this year. In 1718 the shipment of textiles to the Netherlands from Bengal had been 251,113 pieces which is close enough to the order for 266,700 pieces in 1719. Shipments of similar size had been made in 1698, 1700, and 1709 and ever since 1714 they had reached over the 200,000 mark. The figures were derived from a table of "Bengal Textiles Exported to Holland, 1665-1718" in O. Prakash, Bengal 1630-1720: 194-5. As a source Prakash used the invoices for the exported goods.

⁹ F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 3: 204-10

¹⁰ VOC 7365 Resolutions Heren XVII: February 22, 1723
folios). The other collection consisted of mostly tiny samples of cloth dispersed in orders with specifications for the Japanese market in the 1780s and 90s. In it are found, with among others, armosin with gold flowers, striped grein, and chintz from Bengal, 15 samples of Chinese silks, blue and red Dutch laken, and golden cloth.

**The Japanese Order and Specification**

The Japanese order was set off from the other Asian orders because of the large quantities involved, the timing of the transfer, and the specifications to Japanese taste. I have studied twelve sample years of textile orders between 1636 and 1781 for Coromandel, Bengal and Dutch textiles to Japan. The average annual shipment of these orders contained 17,175 pieces of textiles valued at f505,014 which made up 49% of the total value of the cargo to Japan. The averages would have been considerably higher if only the 17th century was taken into account. The textile trade to Japan was

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11 WIC 179, Monsterboek Nos 1-3, 7-10, 17-19 which are resp. 
no 1 Inland chintz white ground (Inlandsche Chitsen witte grond) 
no 2 " " purple " ( " " persse " ) 
no 3 " " red " ( " " roode " ) 
no 7 Red corroot (Roode Corroost) 
no 8 Blue " (Blaauwe " ) 
no 9 English red miscellaneous rumals (Engelsche Roode miscRoemaals) 
no 10 English Blue miscellaneous rumals ( " Blauwe " ) 
no 17 Chelas (Gellassen) 
no 18 Niquanias (Nicaneese) 
no 19 French Gingam from Pondicheri (France Gingans van Pondecherij)

12 VOC 54; 1408; 1409; 1410; 1412; 1413; 1414; 1418; 1422; 4553 all from the 1780s orders that were called "Japanese Eisen" and composed by the College of Interpreters from the collection of orders given by Japanese authorities.

diminishing in the 18th century. During the Tokugawa period, at least three million pieces of textiles, according to VOC textile accounts, valued at more than thirty million guilders buying price were shipped from Europe and India.\textsuperscript{14} That figure would be double if imports of private trade were taken into account too.

Japan's isolationist \textit{sakoku} policy from the 1630s to the middle of the 19th century limited the VOC trade to the island Deshima in the harbor of Nagasaki. The mercantile relationship that developed was mutually desirable and beneficial, but not publicly acknowledged by either party. The \textit{Japan-Jarakata oranda} relationship (between Japan and the Dutch in Batavia) was tense during the first half of the 17th century as a result of cultural misunderstandings on both sides. For the Dutch high financial gains were at stake, obliging them to participate in ceremonial display and gift giving which needed much patience. Some stormy times were bridged when one side tested the other's strength. By the middle of the 17th century the authorities in Batavia and Japan appear to have established their respective positions.\textsuperscript{15} The uniqueness of the Company as the only European presence in Japan warranted sometimes unprecedented actions on the part of the Dutch.\textsuperscript{16} Orders for Japan were taken seriously and sometimes given priority over other orders if Japan's precious metals were needed urgently.

Net profits from the sales of textile products, sugar, spices, hides (deer, cow, buffalo), rayskin, and sandalwood, etc. amounted to an average 70% of

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ruurdje Laarhoven, "Raw Silk and Textile Trade to Japan during Kaempfer's Time and Beyond": Table II. Paper Presented at the ASAA Bicentennial Conference, February 11-15, 1988, The Australian National University, Canberra.
\item Reinier H. Hesselink, "The Prisoners from Nambu: The Breskens Affair in Historical and Historiographical Perspective," a PhD dissertation submitted to the University of Hawaii, December 1992, 497 pages for an insightful treatise on the play between the Company factors in Deshima and all they stood for on the one hand, and the Japanese actors in the form of the Nagasaki interpreters who accompanied the Dutch delegation to Edo on the other hand.
\item Ibid: 389 The reference is to the annual visit to Edo and the audiences with the \textit{shogun}. In particular the "bogus ambassador" incident in 1649 fits well into the ceremonial display required to set a point straight.
\end{enumerate}
the import buying price or £651,520 a year during the last half of the 17th century. The Japan office started to show losses in the VOC account books after 1745. Until then Japanese payments, primarily in gold, copper or silver proved a lucrative exchange and vital to the growth and maintenance of the Company's inter-Asiatic trade for more than 100 years.

Most of the European woollens that were imported to Asia by the VOC were destined for Japan. The Nagasaki regents, interpreters and quartermasters submitted private orders to the Dutch that were added to the orders for the shogun and the Nagasaki large merchants. Popular were the crimson says, perpetuanas, laken, and lakenrassen. In 1760 not enough of them were brought to Japan and the order for red, black and blue woollen manufactures was doubled the next year. Although the import of raw silk had ceased in the 1740s, the silk textiles continued to sell, especially the alegia and armosins; also cotton guinees from Bengal and striped taffachelas from the Coromandel coast. Very few textiles from Surat entered Japan. The right color of a textile was, as in Indonesia, important to the Japanese. In the 1660s the red color of the crimson says was a little too dark and consequently did not sell very well.

17 F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvingen, vol 2, part 1: 383-551. The figures for profit margins were deduced from van Dam's listing year by year adjusted for errors detected by the editor, Dr. F.W. Stapel.

18 G.C. Klerk de Reus, Administrativen, Rechtlichen und Finanzielen Entwicklung: Beilage IX

19 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal: 128-30. Prakash points out that 84% of the silver import was of Japanese origin. When silver export from Japan was again banned in 1668, (It had also been banned between 1636 and 1645) the gold kuban replaced the silver and profits of up to 37%, were made in India, while copper, another substitute for silver, earned a profit at times of up to 150%. The trade relationship in Japan brought profits twice: first the profit made on the sale of the imported textiles and silk/cotton pound goods, and secondly, the profit made with the sale of the exported precious metal. An analogous situation is found in the Maluku spice exchange, where considerable profits from the sales of textiles traded for the spices were followed by the profitable sale of the spices.

20 Ibid: 408, 432-3

21 Realia, vol 2: 46
Occasionally the shogun would issue a policy to stop the conspicuous consumption of textiles. Although sales slightly decreased, there were no dramatic drops, because the Chinese traders of Nagasaki would buy up the bulk of the import-textiles.\textsuperscript{22}

**The Asian Order and Specification**

Not many specifications concerning the Asian order are known, fewer than for the *Vaderlandsche eis*. In the example above of the Dutch order, the name of the type of textile was listed first, followed by the quantity, expanded upon with many remarks about the size, color, quality, packing, price, etc.\textsuperscript{23} This structure did not occur in the orders from Batavia for Indonesia and other Asian branch offices. It simply showed the number of bales or pieces of the textile, the name, and the price per bale or per piece.\textsuperscript{24} An illustration of an order to Surat from Batavia for Asia shows:

*Specification*\textsuperscript{25} and request of the bales of different textiles and other wares, which for the year 1686 have been ordered for Batavia and India, as follows:

- 50 bales black broad *baftas* of 80 pieces each, at f350 @ bale f17.500:-
- 30 " narrow ditto of 120 pieces at f350 @ bale f10.500:-
- 1 " white narrow ditto with gold *kepala* for Sumatra’s West Coast f2.500:-
- 30 " black *cannekins* of 400 pieces each bale for as above at f400 @ bale f12.000:-

\textsuperscript{22} F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 1: 436, 441, 525, 525, 528, 537

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, vol 2, part 2: 71-3, bijlage V gives a good example for details in the Dutch order from 1682

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, vol 2, part 2: 79, 220-1

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, vol 2, part 3: 104-5; On pages 204-23 is a list of imports for Batavia from Surat for only three consecutive years: 1699-1702. During these three years the average value of the textiles per year was f 362,540.15.4, for an average 128,275 pieces of textiles. That is f 2.83 per piece, a little higher price than the average I estimated to be f2.50 in Chapter 5, section: What is a bale?
10 " tapi-cindai large, of 250 pieces
   at f400 @ bale f4,000:-
1,000 pieces silk patola of 5 asta, on green backgrounds f6,000:-
100 " gold, silver and silk balaches, such as
   40 pieces with gold stripes
       at f72 @ piece f2,880
   20 " with silver stripes
       at f60 @ piece f1,200
   40 " silk dito
       at f7 1/2 @ piece f300

Eight more non-textile trade goods were listed. Often the same textiles
were ordered year after year, but the quantity or price might differ. If there
had been no complaints about a former delivery, no elaborate remarks were
made and the order was forwarded as in the example above.

A VOC policy stipulated that if a textile usually on the order list was to
be omitted, or the production stopped or reduced, the merchants in India had
to be given a reason.26 For example, in 1762 the Batavia government
ordered that chintz consignments for Japan had to be stopped because they
sold at a loss.27 Sometimes orders differed much from one year to the next.
Some textiles were not reordered and new types mentioned. Quantities could
occasionally greatly vary too.28

In the Surat order above, the textiles made up 55% of the value of the
total order, f103,945. It should be remembered that other orders went that
same year to Bengal (Hugli) and Coromandel (Paleacat). The structure of
these orders was usually as simple as the one above for Surat or for all Asian
orders to India.29 Not all orders were fulfilled, but some types of textiles

26 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 2: 112
27 Realia, vol 3: 228
29 Ibid: vol 2, part 2: 220-22 which includes in 1686 the tripartite order to
Coromandel for the Netherlands, Batavia and Japan, summarized as:
   7,236 bales varied textiles for Patria f 2,035,038
   4,621 dittos ditto for Batavia 1,199,175
   1,130 dittos varied textiles for Japan 346,190
The sum of which amounted to f 3,580,403
The size of these orders for Coromandel had been like this for some years and
would be substituted for others if the requested quantity could not be reached. An explanation of the changes was usually given in accompanying letters. As in the case of the European order the order for Indonesia was also not always fulfilled. A dramatic shortage, for instance, occurred in 1633, when only 150 bales of textiles were received instead of the 700 ordered. Occasionally the Company was short of cash to pay for the Indonesian textiles, resulting in missed opportunities and losses.

The samples cited above did not include any textiles for distribution to offices other than those in Indonesia and Japan. However, the orders for Indian and Dutch textiles from the Persia, Siam, Tonkin and other, sometimes short-lived, VOC branch offices, and after 1674 also Ceylon, were incorporated with the larger order from Batavia. The final order from Batavia was based on the stock left in the Batavia warehouse that supplied all the outlying offices and filled the requests that had come in from the branch offices. The Persian order, for example, showed some varieties that were not used in Indonesia or Japan such as the deriabados, jalaessy, septhanga, and lechouris. In 1656 the Persian office requested via Batavia, in addition to a

continued for a few more years until flooding, pestilence, starvation, and wars wiped out many weaving villages and those remaining evacuated and moved. The Coromandel textile orders never again achieved those heights again for the VOC.


31 Dagh-Register, Batavia, vol 2 (1633): 169. There are numerous accounts of what the order had been and how much the merchants had been able to procure—sometimes more, sometimes less—and often the right amount. See for example, Dagh-Register, Batavia, vol 7 (1644): 314.


33 Dagh-Register, Batavia, vol 4 (1637): 88-9, shows an order of March 14 for 899 bales of 48 different types that are to be distributed to places in Indonesia and outside the archipelago. Delivery is expected in August. Dagh-Register Batavia, vol 8 (1644): 254-5. One month later the Governor-General received letters from the old and the young king of Tonkin, with requests for a total of 66 pieces of lakens: 30 fine red, 20 black, 10 carmosine red, 3 green, and 3 sky blue, 30 figured satins with large flowers of all kinds of colors, 20 pieces of clothing with large flowers, 50 sarassen with large flowers and 100 pieces fine white kangans.
few Dutch textiles, 11 varieties of Surat textiles totalling 160,000 pieces and from Coromandel 49,000 pieces, mainly bleached textiles.\textsuperscript{34} The VOC office in Siam could sell no more than approximately 15,000 pieces of cloth annually.\textsuperscript{35} Except for a short period between 1680 and 1689 when no textiles were traded in Ayutthaya, the Coromandel and Surat textiles made up, as in Japan, approximately 50\% of the import value. A specific textile for the Siamese market was \textit{socketocken}.\textsuperscript{36}

It was very important that the orders arrived at Batavia in time to be communicated to the respective production centers in India before the sailing season ended, so that the textiles could be ordered, prepared and shipped to Batavia for further transfer to the respective destinations. Frequently a provisional order was sent early in the sailing season, followed by a confirmed formal order later on. For example, provisional orders from the Netherlands were changed or confirmed on arrival in Batavia no later than April or May. They were then speedily sent off to India. Between September and November the fulfilled orders were sent to Batavia for the return fleet that left for the Netherlands in November, or December 15 at the latest.\textsuperscript{37} The textiles would reach Europe early the next year in time for the spring auctions.

In early 1621 the Dutch in Masulipatnam waited anxiously for the Bengal merchants to arrive, with whom they had contracted for a large order of cloths the year before at the time they successfully traded with them. The Dutch were on tenterhooks for the delivery of \textit{gingans} urgently needed for shipment to Batavia with Ternate, Ambon and Banda the final destinations.\textsuperscript{38} If they did not come soon the sailing season would have passed.

\textsuperscript{34} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol. 2, part 3: 362

\textsuperscript{35} George Vinal Smith, Dutch in Thailand: 92


\textsuperscript{37} F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 500

\textsuperscript{38} Om Prakash, Dutch Factories in India, 148
Unfortunately, three Portuguese fusts attacked the 12 small Bengali vessels.\textsuperscript{39} Some were captured and others run aground and no textile delivery took place in time. Getting the textiles to a given place at a given moment, was often a challenge and large profits were sometimes missed through the lack of sufficient textiles. As the Company expanded and regular large shipments arrived in Batavia, the Company built up a large stock to safeguard itself against missed opportunities.

In Aceh the next year (1622) the Company merchant missed a chance to make lucrative profits when the English had profitably sold 150 bales and were left with nothing. He wished that he had been stocked with a good variety of Gujarati cloth. He thought he would have made large profits.\textsuperscript{40} Sometimes the Company's textiles were stocked in the wrong place. A large quantity of Kangans was needed in Jambi to buy pepper, but these were in stock in Ternate.\textsuperscript{41} When there was a large harvest of cloves or nutmegs a shortage regularly occurred in the textiles that were in high demand, such as white and blue guinees, salempores, and parcalles, black broad muris, brown-blue and small baftas, niquaniases, and karikams.\textsuperscript{42}

Missed opportunities were comparatively few. They occurred more often during the Company's infancy. As the textile trade expanded the Company took great care to build up large stocks to make its deliveries fit the markets.

\textit{Preparing the Textiles for Shipment}

In preparation for the contracts, the VOC merchants in India negotiated with the brokers all the elements that made up the quality of a cloth, the

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid: 160-1

\textsuperscript{40} H.T. Colenbrander ed., Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden, vol 7 (1622): 934

\textsuperscript{41} H.T. Colenbrander ed., Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden, vol 2: 465

\textsuperscript{42} VOC 3208 (1768): 450
price for a certain quantity and the date for delivery.\textsuperscript{43} The results of these negotiations were presented in the regular council meetings in the fort or lodge, where decisions concerning the contracts were made and consequently laid down in formal resolutions. Merchants and bookkeepers paid a £3,000 bond to the Company as security for the position they held. If the buyers made mistakes in their presentation of the contract or in quality control through inspections, they were held responsible and the neglect charged against their account, at least for the amount that the production value differed from the overcharge on the invoice. The merchants could not deny the accusations held against them because they had to sign their initials on the invoice and the packing slip after they had finished their inspection.\textsuperscript{44}

When the merchants did not check well they could be deceived. It happened that pieces of delivered textiles would be folded in such a way that they appeared on the surface to be identical to the sample, but when the textile was unfolded it revealed sections in the weaving that were only half the density. In order to avoid lengthy debates about the quality, the contracts recorded the caal (thread count of the warp) and the exact length and width.\textsuperscript{45} The broker or his representative was present when the delivery was made and stayed to observe the textiles being checked by Company-delegated staff who were supervised by the merchant in charge of that order. The thread had to be the same thickness throughout the woven piece. If the closeness of the weaving was not of the desired caal, or weaving mistakes and miscoloring were noticed, the textile would be declassified accordingly and the price adjusted in consultations between the VOC merchant and the broker who was present. Sometimes the textile delivery was rejected altogether. The weight of a textile if known was also used as a measure of checking the quality of the cloths. Since many orders were repeated seasonally, the details

\textsuperscript{43} Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib eds., Cambridge Economic History of India, vol 1: 405

\textsuperscript{44} Realia, vol 1: 169, 332, 334, 407; vol 2: 277

\textsuperscript{45} Hameeda Hossain, The Company Weavers of Bengal: 41, Table on p. 53. An explanation of caal is given in Chapter 7, in the section "A Piece of Indian Cloth."
used in checking helped standardize the textile production.

VOC personnel and their Indian assistants working in dispatch sorted the many textiles that arrived in the packing room. Workers counted and stacked the textiles for packing. There were at least eight supervising inspectors on the Coromandel coast, who all had to be contracted VOC personnel. If a supervisor found a discrepancy he was to make a correction in the books and the bookkeeper assigned the error to the broker responsible. It seems that the Dutch accepted substandard cloth more readily than the English, because they could dispose of it in Asia if the quality was not good enough for the European market. After the checking and adjusting of accounts, the textile orders were wrapped and baled or laid in chests. A final packing slip or *afpak briefje* was attached to the textiles that were ready for shipment. A typical slip read as follows:

No. 276
For Batavia
Containing 80 pieces (*pees*) ordinary *cassas*
long 38, 39 and 40; width 2 1/8 - 2 1/4; ?*
Hoogli, d. 17 July, 1747

Measured, counted, packed, and sealed

Signed by A.D. Arnaud
M. Isink
D. Verbeek

* two abbreviations that are unclear
[In the margin added in Batavia]
Traded through the honored Mr. Director Jan Huyghen and Council
On whose behalf signed: M. Bastiaanse J.L.47


47 VOC 2716 (1748): 289-91 This packing slip and bale were received in Kota Ambon which lodged a complaint to Batavia about its contents of some bad *betilles*. Kota Ambon rebuked Batavia for signing the slip (in the margin) without proper inspection, because the bale had not been opened and the neck of the bale had an unbroken seal. An extenuating circumstance was that the correct weight of 248 pounds
The VOC merchant who had contracted that delivery, or his deputy, and the warehouse supervisor had to be present at all times while the bales were being weighed, numbered and their contents described before packing. The same procedure was also used with other trade products. For example, Java cotton thread, which came in four to five grades, was supplied with a packing slip. It occurred regularly that when the bale had reached its final destination and was opened, the content on the packing slip did not reflect what was found inside.\footnote{VOC 2343 (1736): 246; VOC 2379 (1736): 94, 213; VOC 2760 (1750): 34; VOC 2931, set 2 (1759): 77-78; H.T. Colenbrander, Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden, vol. 1 (1615): 137; vol. 2 (1617): 299-300; vol. 7 (1618): 362}

Early in the 17th century it was already a problem to keep the different types of textiles separated in the packaging. For example, Malay style sarassa were mixed with sarassa intended for Java, which were different in size. Each valuable textile seems to have been separately wrapped in paper. The form of the package after it was wrapped has been compared to a house brick. On the back of the wrapping, as on the spine of a book, a golden seal could sometimes be found which apparently guaranteed the quality of the textile, at least in the case of bafta and cannekin.\footnote{J.P. Rouffaer, Indische Batikkunst, Bijlage III: XI} The specialization of the textile production, therefore, was to an extent reflected in the packaging, too. The Company also wanted a textile from one locality to be packed separately from the same type of textile that came from another town or village. Each type of textile had to be baled individually and each brand of one type was marked separately. For example, a new variety of tapi-sarassa in 1686 was marked with a letter "Q" on the bale.\footnote{Om Prakash, Dutch Factories 1617-1623: 250; T. Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, Cambridge Economic History of India, vol 1: 282; W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1683): 622; F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 221}
In 17th century Coromandel, and Dacca (Bengal), the Company bought up ox and cow skins for baling the cotton textiles (Illustration in Chapter 7). Very coarse cotton or linen was used as inner wrapping for the ordinary mass-produced textiles. Later, with better regulations in place concerning the transport of textiles, gunny bags from Bengal seem to have replaced many types of wrapping and became popular with the Company for baling the textiles, too. Valentijn tells us that the cloth in which textiles had been wrapped was kept for the army captain in Kota Ambon. In the garrison they cleaned the guns with it, and if it was not needed there, the Governor would designate other uses for it. The guinees was regularly wrapped in dongris and textiles from Europe arrived in Batavia in a coarse linen called toletten. On the toletten was written the name of the type of cloth that it contained. When the linen wrapping was discarded the name was lost, so in the course of time it became customary to hang a name-tag from the bolt of textile. Sometimes the packers were careless sewing up the bundles in rough gunny wrapping and pierced the very costly textiles with their large bent needles.

In the 18th century and probably earlier the VOC offices in India offered facilities for agents to send packages of textiles on the seasonal ships to people in Batavia. The packages were subject to strict regulations on size, not larger than 1.42 x 0.56 x 0.56 meters. The service was also available in Batavia, where private individuals could send packages at a charge via the

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51 VOC 11207: 30; Om Prakash, Dutch Factories, 1617-1623: 38 ftn 5; Commelin, Begin ende Voortgangh, vol 3, no 12, Voyagie Steven van der Hagen: 16 where it is claimed that receivers at the warehouse in Pegu kept the skins and knew how to prepare them so that they could eat them. The same is reported from Masulipatnam and Paleacat in 1631, when there was a great famine, W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 1 (1631): 296

52 F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 358


54 Dagh-register, Batavia, vol 4 (1637): 122
Precious textiles such as expensive chintz, raw silk and silk textiles were usually packed in cases or chests. The slippery texture of some silk textiles made it necessary to clamp them between planks of wood, for which *calitur*, a pleasant-smelling, red variety of sandalwood was preferred. Dutch woollen textiles that arrived in Batavia were also packed this way, with ropes around them and set into the chests. Chinese and other carpenters in Java made these chests from Chinese wood. Early in the period the insides of the chests were covered with lead, which preserved the textiles well during long voyaging. A letter from the English factor Peacock in Japan in 1613 reported a mishap: the English cloth had been eaten by worms because the chest had not been dry enough and the cloth not sufficiently covered; he requested that leaded chests be used in the future as the Dutch did. However, the VOC itself eventually found a better method than heavy lead chests. In 1745 an order was sent to the office in Canton requiring the wrapping of silk cloths first in oiled paper, then successively in a cloth bag and a wooden chest, the way the French did it. Prior to 1745 the Chinese *pelings* that came from Tonkin in the 17th century had been wrapped in sailcloth. Sometimes there was a shortage of supply of oiled paper for wrapping the precious silks. The oiled paper gave the textiles a pleasant fragrance due to brushing of the paper with absinthe oil essence of the wormwood or

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55 *Realia*, vol 1: 336; vol 2: 115

56 *Calitur* was named after the city Calitore on the Coromandel coast. It was commonly used for inlay or to make a red dye.

57 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 637

58 Pratt, *History of Japan*: 94, 117; Meilink-Roelofz, *Asian Trade*: 195 also remarks that the Dutch packed their goods better than the English did.

59 *Realia*, vol 1: 270

60 W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven*, vol 5 (1692): 624

Artemisia absinthium, native to Europe, or with lavender oil essence, known as spike oil and produced in the Netherlands and England from the Lavandula spica.62

A chest in which the raw silk from China came to Batavia weighed approximately 104 pounds. When raw silk was being packed, oiled paper or dongris were used to cover the inside of the chest so that the silk would not be damaged by the roughness of the wood. The chests had to be of very dry wood, otherwise the wood would shrink further and seams would open up that could expose the valuable contents to the elements. The joints and seams in well-made dry wooden chests were filled with resin or tar. On one occasion charcoal was used instead and became wet, which not only opened the seam, but also caused coal to smudge the luxurious armosins inside. The Batavian authorities complained that it would have been better if there had been no filler at all.63

In the middle of the 18th century the cost of packing materials for a bale of ordinary textiles was set at ten guilders, but more was allowed to be spent for the finer pieces. All bales had to be weighed immediately after the packing was done and the total written on the packing slip. If a ship carrying textiles was on a voyage for an extended period of time, the silk and cotton pieces had to be regularly aired.64 Batavia sent repeated reminders that the textiles were to be loaded aboard ship in dry weather and that they should be packed only after they had been thoroughly dried. A fine of 150% of the cost price was set for the merchants in the Indian offices who disobeyed.65

62 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1: 559, 638 claims that spike oil-brushed paper preserved textiles better than absinthe.


Shipping the Textiles

According to van Dam, the Company prided itself on knowing how to stow its ships efficiently.\textsuperscript{66} There was a constant effort to organize the procedures pertaining to loading ships. The instructions for Governor-General Both in 1610 ordered "that the skippers draw up a complete bill of lading of everything they take aboard and give a precise declaration of the quantity and the quality of the trade goods."\textsuperscript{67} In 1617 the directorate demanded once again that the ships be fully laden and well stowed. Compact stowage of cargoes on board ship could make a difference of 150 bales. Sometimes a sailing was held up because of the poor way in which the cargo was placed aboard or a ship did not leave as scheduled because it did not have enough cargo. The reverse is true too. Hundreds of bales of textiles were left in Bengal in 1721 because there was no cargo space for them, and in Surat textiles were left behind because the continual rain prevented loading them aboard ship. It happened regularly that textiles became stained when

\textsuperscript{66} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 524. The company had ordered research on how to stow ships efficiently, amplified in a publication called "Middelen om uyt te vinden de ware ladingh der schepen na haere groote" of which copies were sent to Batavia in 1689 with orders to use it as a guide. Figuring out the most efficient method of stowing on the basis of calculations appeared too cumbersome and time consuming. The publication was little used.

\textsuperscript{67} P. Mijer, Verzameling Instructien: 11, 36. VOC 1684 (1705) no 15: 2247v-2248v The bills of lading are the stugie lijste in the VOC archives. A sample list of the fluyt Oestgeest, starts with 105 chests of Japanese bar iron and some preserved ginger and nutmeg which were stowed in the water-hole. The list continues with the large hold. From the bulkhead to the mainmast were 20 chests of Japanese iron bars, 1400 bags of saltpeter. In one layer spread across the whole hold to the tailboard, 271 crates of powdered sugar were placed. From bulkhead to tailboard were stowed 16 layers of textiles; each layer listed the quantity of bales separately, and every type of textile was specified, up to a total of 170 bales. Beginning high at the bulkhead, another 17 layers were listed with 188 bales of textiles, and again for each layer the number of bales of each textile type is specified. Likewise under the after hatchway against the bulkhead a last stowage is listed for 121 bales. Seventeen chests with silk and indigo were stored in a room at starboard and 13 more textile bales in a room at port-side.
they were loaded in the rain, hence the strict regulations about loading.\textsuperscript{68}

The recommended place for cloth was one on top of the other in the large hold between the bulkhead and tailboard above the ballast goods. The textiles should definitely not be stored on the bottom nor on top in the hold, but somewhere in the middle away from anything that could make them wet, smell, or spoil.\textsuperscript{69} Coen, in a report in 1621, wondered what could be done about improving the way cargo was loaded so it would not be ruined. It had just happened that butter and arak in the ship Enckhuysen from Coromandel had been placed above an assortment of the finest textiles and spoiled all of them as well as the rice. A year earlier textiles had been transported lying in sweating rice so that practically all of them had caked together (agglutinated) and others were sweltering on arrival in Ternate.\textsuperscript{70} Other pests were the caddis worms that settled, it was believed, in the paste of the cottons. Silks were eaten by white ants and woollen scarlets by moths. In general there were complaints about insect destruction in the textiles at regular intervals.\textsuperscript{71}

When textiles were packed together with wood that was still wet or pearls that had not been cleaned, or on ships that leaked, they were likely to show some form of damage. One policy prohibited textiles from being transported from Coromandel and Bengal on ships with only one deck.\textsuperscript{72} Another banned the carriage of elephants when the cargo consisted for the greater

\textsuperscript{68} VOC 2760 (1750): 34, 187-8  Muris received in Ambon were covered with dirty spots and given to the surgeon to use as bandages. In response to a complaint lodged in Batavia about this, the Ambon government was notified that they had been loaded in Coromandel in the rain. W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 1 (1633): 371; vol 7 (1721): 564; vol 8 (1728): 157; H.T. Colenbrander, Jan Pietersz. Coen Bescheiden, vol 4 (1618): 393-4;

\textsuperscript{69} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 529; part 2: 133-4


\textsuperscript{72} W. Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 5 (1694): 684; F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 528-9; Realia, vol 1 (1759): 139; vol 3: 12
part of textiles. Presumably it was feared that leakage from the deck would spoil the precious cloth.

While the cargo was loaded aboard under the supervision of the captain, water fiscal or other judiciary administrator and a council committee member, it was being checked off the invoices and listed on the bills of lading which were then given to the captain. After the stowing was finished, the captain went to collect letters, maps and instructions for the voyage; the ship’s doctor received a medicine chest containing from 70 to 100 drugs; the boatswain his equipment; the bookkeeper his papers and petty cash which consisted of coinage and textiles; and other ship’s officers the tools of their profession. Every item on the ship was accounted for on someone’s list and all those concerned signed their respective receipts. On the day the ship was ready to leave the captain was obliged to sign in the presence of the fiscal a prepared final statement in which he confirmed that he had found everything in order and provided for without having further requirements.

When cloth was needed for the crew’s wages during a voyage, a bale could be opened only with the permission of the highest ranking merchant or bookkeeper aboard. The latter also kept accounts for each textile and noted the quantities and prices for which they were sold in the harbors that were visited. Most Company ships carried clear instructions telling which route to sail. It could happen that the captain of a ship leaving the Indian coasts late in the season was requested to sail along the west coast of Sumatra to pick up pepper while another captain was to pass by Melaka to take textiles there.

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73 Realia, vol 1 (1764): 333. In a shipment to Batavia from Coromandel on April 23, 1740, 30 bales of textiles were, nevertheless, shipped together with three elephants, namely, the male Tickeran, 3.66 meter high, costing f 1,668.45; the female Dornagodie, 3.82 meter, f 1,506.— and the female baby, Soobawie, 1.44 meter at f 270.—. The charge for transport was f 1,236.42 in VOC 11853 (1740): 570

74 VOC 1684 (1705): nos 15-26, fol 2247v-2259v

75 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 123-4
To prevent illegal trade, the Dutch ordered that in Batavia all vessels had to pass through the river's gate and the toll house. No goods were allowed to come ashore between the Tangerang and Krawang rivers in any other way. The gate opened at 5:00 am and closed at 7:00 pm, which later changed to 6:30 pm. At the first calling from the gate-master the captain had to moor his ship and was visited by a designated person. When a shipment with textile goods arrived all the bales and chests were weighed under the supervision of the "counter of trade goods" who signed his approval in the margin of the packing slip. The weight on the packing slip naturally had to agree with what the bale weighed at its destination. After 1742 this weighing took place at the Rotterdam Gate, which had been renovated for this purpose.

When the ship was being unloaded the cargo was checked against the invoices by one of the senior merchants and at least one administrator who was a fiscal, member of the committee from the Council of Justice. Smuggled goods could not pass unnoticed because the gate-master was the one responsible for assigning small vessels and workers to unload the bales and take them to the warehouse. If smuggled goods were found, the workers were ordered to confiscate them. One half of the illegal goods captured went to the gate-master, and one quarter each to the checking authorities and the Company. There is reason to suspect that an understanding might be reached between the gate-master, workers and smugglers.\(^\text{76}\) However, contraband goods were being unloaded before arrival in Batavia, away from the shore at sea.\(^\text{77}\) Of course, this was forbidden too, under penalty of

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\(^{76}\) There was a policy, Plakaatboek, vol 3 (1697): 421, of dividing the booty captured from smugglers among three parties: fiscal, gate-master and workers. There would be a greater advantage to all parties concerned in accepting bribes for neglecting to search and find illegal goods. A refusal to pay bribe money usually resulted in goods being taken away. This was the custom in many places in the archipelago.

\(^{77}\) J.K.J. de Jonge, Opkomst, vol 6 (1676): 165
confiscation of the goods and a fine at the discretion of the judge. The illegal unloading off-shore was probably the motive that led to a new policy, issued in 1767, which stipulated that the fiscal had to inspect the ship on arrival and no longer only after it had been unloaded. The policy added that checking the ship for the illegal import of goods after it had been unloaded had not helped control the illegal import of textiles. Two parties, each consisting of one senior merchant and one fiscal, took on the task of supervising the incoming and outgoing textiles respectively. Since ships were not allowed to stay overnight inside the gate there was always a rush to unload them. If ships needed to stay, they were to moor near the Anchor Wharf.

When the assigned senior merchant discovered a discrepancy on examination of the invoices between the types of textiles that were ordered and those that had arrived, he had to report it immediately to the Director-General. The persons who had signed the invoices and bill of lading were to be questioned and held responsible.

The Warehouse

In 1616, after some frustrating efforts at negotiations to build a warehouse in Banten, the Dutch built a square brick tower-house in Batavia instead. Besides being eight meters high, the second floor was surrounded by a gallery on all sides, a strategic advantage in case of an attack. The

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78 J.A. van der Chijs, Plakaatboek, vol 3 (1699): 470


80 Realia, vol 1 (1729): 174


building functioned as a watchtower, living quarters and warehouse in which the Company's trade goods, especially the textiles, would be safe. Subsequently, some fireproof warehouses modelled after the Chinese ones in Batavia were built in Ternate, Banda, and Ambon.

The warehouse in Ambon was erected in 1627 from hewn stone and coral near Castle Nassau, with dimensions of 9 x 25 meters. The wall was 85 centimeters thick downstairs and 57 centimeters upstairs. The building also included the living quarters for the merchants and other officers. Food items were kept downstairs and textiles dry and airy upstairs. Textiles were placed on shelves in the warehouses, type by type, variety by variety; chests and bales with the same number of pieces were kept together to give a tidy appearance. 83

New warehouses were also built in 1631 in Batavia Castle between Safier and de Parel salients, facing the sea. Many more storage places still needed to be established outside the castle, because no storage could be found for 285 lasts of pepper and 150,000 pounds of best-quality cloves. Temporary accommodation was eventually found for these in respectively, the Women's Court and the Town Hall. For cargo that had newly arrived from Surat some new wooden buildings were quickly erected, but because of flammable roofs none of those storage places was safe. 84 Finally in 1652 a large new brick warehouse, the Westzijdse Pakhuis, was built inside Batavia's city wall between Punt Zeeburch and Punt Cuylenburch. Part of the fireproof complex contained the kleedenpakhuis for the textiles that eventually had to be transferred; it also included the Company's own administration next to the ships' wharf. 85 The textile warehouse in Batavia originally had one administrator or warehouse

1280, 1410. The problem in the negotiations in Banten had been the height of the building, two stories, and the verandah the Dutch wanted around the second floor.


84 J.K.J. de Jonge, Opkomst, vol 5 (1631): 179-80

manager who employed slaves and free laborers as carriers, sorters, and counters. An assistant administrator who took over one third of the responsibilities of the manager, was appointed additionally during the 18th century.

As soon as textiles arrived in the warehouse they were written into an inventory book which was also used to update the negotie boeken. In turn, when textiles were moved out of the warehouse to the Company's retail shops or shipped for transfer, they had to be written off the inventory. To make sure that the transfer from inventory lists to the negotie boeken was accurate, the invoices were used to check the accounting books. As soon as textiles arrived in the warehouse they were written into an inventory book which was also used to update the negotie boeken. In turn, when textiles were moved out of the warehouse to the Company's retail shops or shipped for transfer, they had to be written off the inventory. To make sure that the transfer from inventory lists to the negotie boeken was accurate, the invoices were used to check the accounting books. Every month, or at least every two months, the inventory records had to be checked against the actual count of textiles in the warehouse. In order to inspect the negotie boeken, keep the inventory in agreement with them, and check the cash received from sales, the bookkeeper, cashier, senior merchants and administrators all had to cooperate, especially when something seemed amiss. The inventory list, with a final detailed count of all the types and varieties of textiles that were still in stock, was presented to the Director-General. He needed the information for his commercial report to the Council meeting and for setting the next year's order quotas.

During the first half of the 17th century the Company's management worked at systematizing quality control of the textiles in response to the buyers. Sales of textiles were made only to wholesale dealers, most of whom were Chinese and some burgers. Leonard Blussé remarked that the Company "did not want to open the warehouses for a mere trifle." The wholesale dealers frequently returned to the Company with complaints about textiles that were damaged, for example textiles with stains on them, and demanded a hefty discount for such goods. But even with a discount the buyers did not like the extra trouble that selling such textiles caused. Therefore, in 1666, it was decided that all the cloth bales had to be opened,

87 Leonard Blussé, "Testament to a Tawkay" in All of One Company: 34
spread out, and inspected by the purchaser prior to billing. No more discount could be claimed after the sale was closed.88

From the middle of the 17th century auctions were held as a way of selling textiles, including damaged and outdated ones. When some bales arrived wet or stained, they were to be sold by auction immediately. However, if a large quantity of more than five bales or chests was involved, the matter had to be reported to the Council.

Ships from foreign nations arriving in Batavia were visited by the syahbandar or water fiscal before they were allowed to pass the gate. Almost immediately beyond the gate on the right stood the toll-house where they paid taxes for the imported trade goods. All cargo had to pass through the warehouse where it was inspected by a committee for illegal imports before it could be forwarded to the owner. All outgoing foreign vessels were inspected too and taxed an amount according to the goods they exported.

The Company's own textiles that were being transferred from the Westzijdse Pakhuis to a VOC buitenkantoor, or branch office elsewhere in Southeast Asia, also had to pass through the river's gate. The gate-master would cut a cross in the gunny or stamp the linen of the wrapping so that the receivers at their destinations could immediately distinguish such bales from unmarked non-Company textiles that should be taxed or confiscated, depending on the contents. At the gate, the passes of outgoing vessels not belonging to the Company were also checked for irregularities.89

When a shipment of ordered textiles arrived at a branch office, the warehouse manager and a fiscal or other Justice Committee member were obliged to open randomly one or two bales of each type of textiles, report on its condition and issue a receipt for delivery to the captain of the vessel. Each ship was supplied with two calibrated scales from Batavia, one to be used on the ship while the cargo was hauled on deck from the hold and the


89 J.A. van der Chijs, Plakaatboek, vol 5 (1646): 386; vol 7 (1756): 199
other to be used when the same goods were received at the warehouse. Before 1732 textiles and cloves had gone astray between the ship and the warehouse and the difference between the ship’s balance and the on-site balance had been blamed. It was hoped that using identical scales would prevent the theft of goods in this short distance in transfer.

If for some reason the newly imported textiles were found to be unacceptable, this had to be noted on the packing slip and the textiles with the slip returned to the captain immediately. All these measures had developed to prevent tinkering with cargo in transport. There are many recorded incidents that indicate that these precautions were essential. Some of the punishments for theft were whipping, demotion, confiscation, chaining for a number of years, and payment of fines.

The Dutch had no control over the opening and closing of the warehouses in Japan. They had suffered some losses in the early 1660s because the warehouses had been dilapidated for some time and full of leaks. In 1666 one large fireproof building was erected at great expense. After the trading season was over the warehouse was closed and sealed until next season’s ships arrived. In one instance the Japanese discovered some textiles in the warehouse after the Dutch ships had sailed away. They confiscated and burnt them.

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90 Realia, vol 2, (1723, 1732, 1733, 1743): 128


92 The fireproof warehouse was completed in 1668. W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 3 (1667): 542. It cost f11,900. The lease rent for the island Deshima was f19,250. Repairs and new carpentry work were also charged to the Dutch. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 1: 431 ftn 5, 436, 440 and ftn 2, 500, 531
Private Trade

It frequently happened that vessels which were transferring textiles from Batavia to a branch office picked up private cargo along the way and arrived overloaded at their destination. Suspicion of such cases prompted Batavia to give strict orders to the branch offices to check the Plimsoll mark on the vessels. The Governor of Ambon, for example, was advised in a letter in 1733 of the measurements taken in Batavia from the waterline to the fore and aft of the ship which had to be checked on arrival at Castle Victoria in Kota Ambon. It was against regulations to take on additional cargo along the way. The letter in response to this order stated that nothing unusual had been detected. The Governor did not confirm the measurements, which made it an evasive answer. It was usual for vessels with the destination Ambon, to pass by one of the harbors along Java's northeast coast and take passengers and extra cargo of rice and provisions, some raw cotton, or textiles aboard. When the Governor reported "nothing unusual", one suspects that the "usual" stopovers were made. Two years earlier the directorate, in correspondence to Batavia, had questioned the Council suspiciously about the necessity of sending two ships to Ambon if the cargo of bales of cloth and cash, according to the records, was only valued at 171,500 guilders. That transport should only need one ship.

The likelihood is that a substantial private trade was conducted by local residents within the Indonesian archipelago, and that this increased after the first shock wave of the monopolistic policies over the fine spices subsided.

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93 In Banda in 1629, a ship arrived from Batavia with extra cargo aboard. The goods were confiscated of the three persons involved. H.T. Colenbrander, Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden, vol 7 (1629): 1596

94 VOC 2283 (1733) set 2: 7

95 VOC 1733, (1731) set 1: 33-4; A similar incident had occurred in correspondence pertaining to Japan in 1675 when the copper had been left behind because the ships were fully loaded, but according to the Directors in the Netherlands there should have been plenty of room for it. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 1: 452
Those who had connections with the Company used the Company's ships as their carriers, while the non-Company traders, many of whom were Chinese, had access to markets beyond their own territories through the international, Malay-speaking, trading networks that operated their own vessels. The volume of Indian cloth sales by the Asians and Europeans can only be guessed. In 1731, for example, the Council in Batavia complained about the English country traders who sailed along the coasts of Java selling out of their ships which was estimated to cost the Company f500,000 in sales annually lost because the English sold for lower prices. This thesis did not analyze the private trade, but the multitude of edicts concerning illegal trade amply confirm that it was rampant and included large volumes of textiles.

In 1670 a Dutch lower employee died on Deshima which caused some scandal when it was discovered that he had been involved in private trade on behalf of Governor-General Maetsuycker's wife and others. The Batavia elites had requested him to buy golden *kubans* to trade for precious stones in India because the exchange rate of gold was so advantageous in Coromandel. When the incident became known in Batavia, it sparked an investigation of two vessels that were on the point of leaving the harbor for Japan. The two fiscals assigned to compare the bill of lading against the cargo found 85 bales and two chests of textiles which had not been accounted for. The captains were held responsible and ordered to pay a fine of an amount equivalent to

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96 J. van Goor ed., *Generale Missiven*, vol 9 (1731): 253; The English traded in Sumbawa and had an understanding with rulers on Bali's southern coasts, VOC 3329 (1768): 291; Pieter van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, vol 2, part 1: 24, part 2: 19-20 speaks with disdain about the private trade from Bengal to the archipelago during the 17th century. He estimates half the trade to be conducted on behalf of the Company and half for the benefit of the employees. In 1727 two vessels with contraband goods were confiscated in Pariaman; J. van Goor, ed. *Generale Missiven*, vol 8 (1727): 113. The decrease of the profits for the Company in 1692 was attributed to the large volume of smuggled cloth, W.Ph. Coolhaas, ed. *Generale Missiven*, vol 5 (1692): 525; A year earlier a vessel from Johore with illegal trade cloths was caught blaming this kind of "smuggling" for the decrease of the Company's textile sales. Ibid, vol 5 (1691): 396; In 1673 there were complaints about the smuggling in the Gulf of Boni, Ibid, vol 3 (1673): 844

several months of wages, and the bales were confiscated. 98

Outlets for Textiles in Batavia

In 1619 a pasar (market) was located west of the kali (the Great River), but as soon as Castle Batavia was built, a market was held in front of it. However, by 1627 another market, referred to as the Nieuwe Markt (new market) was located in the square before the Town Hall. The convenience of a Town Hall and a large market place so close together seems to have attracted people at all times of day and night, some of whom were not ashamed to relieve themselves in front of the bicara (discussion) room. A burger (Dutch civilian) surveillance group kept watch and cleaned up the place.

There were many specialized pasar such as the Chinese market with stalls selling goods from China and a kleeden pasar (textile market) northwest of the Nieuwe Markt. Two blocks further towards the castle along the kali Indian Muslims conducted a pasar where textiles, silver work and exotica from India could be bought. Fish markets, and markets selling rice and vegetables were also in the vicinity. A sitsen market was opened in 1690 that specialized in selling chintz. In the meantime, the kleeden pasar had been discontinued in 1677 because it was believed that too many Indian textiles were entering Batavia illegally and being sold in the kleeden pasar. 99 All the markets were located between Castle Batavia and the Town Hall, inside Batavia’s city walls. 100 For reasons of peace and order it was ruled in 1729 that business was to be conducted between the hours of 5:00 am and 8:00 pm;

98 Chijs, J.A. van der Dagh-Register, Batavia, 1670-1): 415, 441

99 Marie-Sybille De Vienne, "La part des Chinois dans les ferme fiscales de Batavia au XVIIème siècle" in Archipel 22: 119

100 The Captain of the Chinese leased the collections of the kleeden pasar. At his request the pasar was rebuilt in 1658 and the Company donated the building materials. Realia, vol 1 (1658): 277; Plakaatboek, vol 2 (1648): 124; F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 360
nothing was to be sold at other times. If one was caught selling at night, a first warning was given with a fine of 25 rixdollars. The fine was doubled for a second trespass.\textsuperscript{101}

Every pasar was farmed out to the highest bidder. The auction for that was an annual event during the 17th century on the last day of December; bidding was by drumbeat. By 1734 the bidding was done bi-annually and for some categories of tax-farming (the farming out of tax collections) the contract was for an even longer time. The bid for the kleeden pasar in 1654 was 100 rixdollars a month. One year later the bid had increased ten percent. The captain of the Chinese ran the kleeden pasar.\textsuperscript{102} Money was usually collected from the vendors in the pasar once a week. They were charged one double-stuiver or f0.10 per day in 1658, which meant that at least 80 vendors had to sell in the pasar every day to have the lessee come out even.\textsuperscript{103}

Besides the pasars, the Dutch also started to farm out to middlemen, often the Chinese, the revenue collection of shopkeepers in 1658.\textsuperscript{104} Before that time the owners of shops had been paying the same amount monthly as the pasar vendors paid to the Batavian Office of the Receiver. They were given a receipt for the two-rixdollar payment which functioned as a license to operate their shop or warung, a store in front of their residence. It had to be obtained before the sixth day of each month. The reported income from shops and vegetable stalls, in rixdollars per month for the Batavian government, increased steadily:

\textsuperscript{101} Realia, vol 1 (1729): 170

\textsuperscript{102} Dagh-Register Batavia, (1641): 352. When in Ambon some Chinese tax farmers died in one year, lease rents were reduced because there would not have been bidders otherwise. W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 9, (1735): 672. When one of the Chinese pasar captains died, his wife, a Balinese woman, continued to take charge for several years. Mijer and Hoëvel "Chronologische Geschiedenis" in TNI, vol 3, no 2: 20-23

\textsuperscript{103} W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 3 (1654): 737; Realia, vol 1 (1658): 277

\textsuperscript{104} Plakaatboek, vol 2 (1658): 299-301; Realia, vol 1 (1658): 277
### TABLE 6

Income in the City of Batavia from Farm of Shopholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rixd. per month</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rixd. per month</th>
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<tr>
<td>1684</td>
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<tr>
<td>1708</td>
<td>3080</td>
<td>1730</td>
<td>5150(^{105})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The progressively higher collections were related to the increasing population, business and number of shops. Decline in trade, inflated prices, and high mortality were given as reasons for a decline in the money raised from tax farming in the 1730s.\(^{106}\) In January, 1743 the Chinese were forced to pay 3 rixdollars per month for their stalls or shops. Artisans or crafts people such as saddle-makers, tailors, smiths, etc. or those selling prepared food items, were exempted from payment, but everyone else who sold something, however small, was subject to the tax. Until 1687 all the tax farms fell into seven categories. On the last day of that year the auction raised 9,614 rixdollars (1 rixd. = £3.00 in Batavia in 1687). The total for the next year was £346,104. In 1688 Governor-General Camphuis instituted five more categories and ways to raise taxes and Governor-General Imhoff added four

\(^{105}\) W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1684): 677, 775; vol 5: 282, 374, 665, 815; vol 6: 148, 524, 586, 656, 731; vol 7: 63, 335, 532; vol 8: 109, 232; vol 9 (1730): 89. The part contributed by the *kleeden pasar* alone is small from 6-15%. See the listing of the monthly taxes collected in the *kleeden pasar* from 1644 to 1677 which was over one hundred rixd. in 1644, 1648 and 1653, but decrease to 80 rixd. in 1670 and 65 in 1677, the last year recorded in the Dagh-register Batavia according to Marie-Sybille De Vienne, "La part des Chinois" in Archipel 22: 118

\(^{106}\) The collection of the shop and vegetable tax had decreased to 4,540 rixdollars per month in 1736. Ibid, vol 9 (1734): 565, (1736): 700
more categories of tax farming in 1743. During the increase of the 1680s a Chinese chronicler wrote: "in this manner taxes [to be paid] multiply every day and the profits [made] in business decrease. The Chinese and the number of indigenous people also swell daily, and the Company becomes rich while the people become poor." 107

In the 1640s many pasar vendors and shopkeepers apparently experienced difficulties paying their fees. This was partly caused by the stringent competition from the peddlers and street vendors, who carried pieces of textiles and clothing-for-sale around town. The vendors felt shortchanged and complained. Thus, in August, 1648 a proclamation was issued that forbade the peddling of cloths, clothing, gold or silver lace, rolled up materials or any other kind of textile item. Only a licensed owner was allowed to sell textiles inside a residence. Non compliance with the order resulted in confiscation of the textiles or clothing, even if the seller was wearing them, and a fine of 20 rixdollars. 108

Outside Batavia's wall, west of the Great River and beyond the toll-gate, were a few dilapidated wooden shops, where textiles were also sold. The Dutch believed that "escaped slaves, scum and rabble" were hiding and hanging around there making the area unsafe. 109 Thus, in 1728 the land was cleared and 39 plots sold for 83,339 rixdollars. This is only one example among many that illustrate massive clean-up efforts the government of Batavia undertook in the early part of the 18th century. It cleared the edges of beaches, river banks, streets, bridges and roads of unwanted vendors and demolished the unseemly small stands, booths and stalls in which they conducted their business, even though this had been the way the indigenous population had been selling for centuries. The selling of textiles in the hinterlands and beyond the immediate surroundings of Batavia continued by

107 Mijer and Hoëvel, "Chronologische Geschiedenis van Batavia door een Chinees" in TNI, vol 3, no 2: 55

108 Plakaatboek, vol 2 (1648): 125, 299-300; repeated in Realia, vol 1 (1743): 280

109 Realia, vol 1 (1723): 119
means of barter, peddling, itinerant trading and village markets.

The Company Shops

The Batavian traders and shopkeepers were obliged to go through the castle gates to the central corridor (between G and N on the map) where the kleine winkel or small-shop, the kleeden winkel, and storage were located and the auctions held. Raw silk and some bales of textiles for transit were stored above the watergate (O on the map) fronting the sea.\textsuperscript{110} The textiles stored inside the castle consisted of the types sold for local consumption. One could buy the

\textsuperscript{110} F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 148, 182; Realia, vol 1 (1662): 113
smallest item by the piece or ell in the Company’s small-shop. The _grote winkel_, where the Company’s personnel was paid, was located in the south corner of M. If one entered the castle from the city through gate E, it was to the right in the courtyard G. The price list hung on the wall and was updated after every auction.\footnote{VOC 2907 (1758): 40} Between the Company as a wholesaler and the small _pasar_ trader and shopkeeper were medium-sized traders who bought textiles not by the piece, but by the bale from the small-shop.\footnote{Plakaatboek, vol 3 (1678): 13} The Governor-General and Council members sometimes took excessive liberties sending their servants to the shop or warehouse to take supplies. During a period of four years in the 1680s they had used up goods valued at £159,565 for which they were reprimanded.\footnote{It had been 25% less ten years earlier. F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3, part 2: 459-64} There was a regulation that allowed people in the higher echelon of the Company to buy goods at cost price plus 30 % for Asian imports and 50 % for European goods.\footnote{Realia, vol 1 (1706): 231; vol 3 (1747): 279}

The accounting in the _kleeden winkel_ had to be done by a competent person appointed by the top senior-merchant.\footnote{F.W. Stapel, Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 62-3, 155. In the hierarchical personnel structure of the company the shopkeeper could be promoted after a satisfactory term of service to sub-merchant and take off from there to higher positions. One such example was Cornelis Chastelijn, “an able young man, sharp and quick with the pen,” who cleared a backlog in the cloth shop’s bookkeeping of more than two years very quickly and was promoted first to shopkeeper and one year later to sub-merchant in 1685. He eventually became upper-merchant and advisory council member. W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1683-5): 592, 750, 777; another case is Stephanus Versluys, Ibid, vol 7 (1719): 451} The administrator of the small-shop needed to keep a shop-journal in which the incoming and outgoing goods of the shop were noted. The books were balanced every two weeks and compared with the bookkeeping in the _negotie_ books of Batavia Castle, located at M on the map. The frequency of these checks and balances was different for the outer offices and proportional to the volume of business
that was conducted. The shopkeeper could not obtain goods from the
warehouse without a warrant. He also kept a separate account for all the
textiles and other wares extended to each government department: the
shipbuilding wharf, the boatswains' provisions, the artillery, the medicinal
shop, the supply rooms for grains, provisions, weaponry, metals, the slaves' quarters, etc. A separate cash receipt book existed for the textiles sold for
cash to merchants and traders.

In 1696 the shopkeeper of the grote winkel was relieved from also
distributing cash payments when this became the task of the cashier's
department. All the small items such as sewing cotton, needles, buttons,
paper, dye, paint, soap, butter, wines, beers, and starch were listed in two
price categories: a low price that included a 50% profit margin for high
Company officials and a high price of 75% above the buying price for the
citizenry. Attempts at theft and burglary occurred regularly, even though
the shopkeeper lived on the premises. In 1713 a 50 rixdollar reward for
information that would lead to capturing the criminals was unsuccessfully
offered.

Some shopkeepers were careless and sizeable shortages could show up
when their books were examined and compared with the negotie journaal by
the Bookkeeper General, or the Upper-merchant. Such a shopkeeper was
immediately disqualified and obliged to pay back the shortage and, if
necessary, sell his assets to raise the money. He was also demoted to a
position of soldier's rank or altogether dismissed. In one case the shortage
was discovered after the shopkeeper's death. The Upper-merchant who had
not supervised him strictly enough was held responsible and forced to pay

(1696): 412-20. This did pertain to textiles, as noted earlier.

in Padang, west Sumatra, stole 32 pieces of textiles in 1730. They tried to escape to the
English with them, but were pursued by locals. Two sailors escaped, the others either
drowned or were hanged. Ibid, vol 9 (1732): 306
back the amount.\textsuperscript{118}

The \textit{kleeden winkel} for the public in Ambon was outside "just opposite the castle and singularly in a large square". It was well built of bricks and the shopkeeper and supervisor, who also lived on the premises, opened for business daily except Sundays. The isolated location of the brick building guarded it from fire hazards and was very convenient to the textile vendors in the \textit{pasar} along the water west of the castle.\textsuperscript{119}

\textit{Auctions}

Auctions might be held in the street in the open with a tarpaulin stretched out above the stalls, under a shelter, or in the \textit{kleeden winkel} itself.\footnote{W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 7 (1733): 460}

In 1651 the Company began to hold auctions in Batavia on a weekly basis.\footnote{W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 5 (1687): 104; (1691): 396; vol 6 (1702): 208; (1704): 277; vol 7 (1715): 265, 293 (1721): 554; vol 9 (1734): 622, (1736): 768. The locations and amounts concerned were respectively: Banda, 2,673 rixd., Makassar, 861 rixd., Gale, 577 rixd., Ternate, unknown, Ternate, 1,004 rixd., Banda, 1,608 rixd., Batavia, 23,968 rixd., Colombo, 10,195 rixd.} The frequency of auctions depended upon their success. They were announced orally in different languages, in the same way as edicts were issued in Dutch, Malay, Portuguese and Chinese.\textsuperscript{120} In the early part of the 18th century these public announcements were supported by written notices with the details and prices given in printed form.\textsuperscript{121} The Dutch prohibited private citizens from organizing auctions, but those who needed to sell things could do so through the judiciary department's auctioneers. In 1730 the Company had given warnings to the auctioneers that they should not conduct

\textsuperscript{118} W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 7 (1733): 460

\textsuperscript{119} VOC, 2283 : 232-3; F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 147; H.J. de Graaf, Ambon: 139. De Graaf gives an additional reason for the location of the shop outside the castle, namely, that the authorities did not want every Tom, Dick and Harry to have a reason for entering the castle at will.

\textsuperscript{120} W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 7 (1733): 460

\textsuperscript{121} The Company owned a printing establishment in Batavia from at least 1668. It was leased until 1719 when it was divided into a private and a Company establishment. F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 2: 283-4; W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., \textit{Generale Missiven}, vol 3 (1672): 811
any business for the public while the Company held their own auctions.

The private auctions competed with the textile auctions of the Company. The citizens ordered the Indian textiles from a liaison who sent the packages by ship with the freight paid. The Council called in the shipping department to check this out and put restrictions on the number and sizes of the packages. Even though the costs of freight were covered and the import duties paid, the cumulative effect of this "postal service" that the VOC ships conducted for the private citizens was harmful to the sales of the Company. The citizens nevertheless continued to "sell." When the auctions were restricted they resorted to a lottery system.122

The VOC auctions often served to sell outmoded and damaged textiles and dead stock and to raise money. Auctions regulated the sales.123 A special auction was held before the return fleet left, so that repatriates could buy fine, very special Indian cloth, as much as they were allowed, to take back in their chests. In Europe the fine cloths gave good profits, but when the prices of textiles were increasing and restrictions on the amount of luggage enforced, it became less lucrative. Interest in the pre-departure auctions lessened in the early 1730s and stopped altogether in 1735.124

In early 1690 the Chinese and others protested to the Company about the bad quality of textiles in some auctioned bales. A sample of the textile, attached to the bale on the outside, had misled them to believe that the content was like the sample in quality, but upon opening the bale, the material was found to be much inferior.125


123 VOC, 2716: 239. In 1748 in Ambon it was decided to put 33 pieces of taffachelas, spoilt from long storage, up for auction. In 1720-1, topitis or cloths for making a headdress, in this case with a square design in the weaving, had been sent to Ceylon but could not be sold, and 40 pieces were returned to Batavia, where they were auctioned. However, no buyer stepped forward, so they had to be written off. J. van Goor ed., Generale Missiven, vol 9 (1729): 50, (1730): 173


125 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 637
Payments for what was bid at an auction were not always received immediately. Some shrewd Chinese traders would collect the textiles on credit, turn them over quickly and then pay. In outlying branches this seemed the norm. Others never came to collect them, although six weeks were allowed. If not collected, the textiles would be re-auctioned. Ambon's local chiefs from towns like Saparua, Nusalaut and Oma would not even attempt to buy at an auction, because the Company would not give them credit. Thus, there seem to have existed double standards with regard to giving credit. Those who gave the appearance of credit worthiness could benefit from the trust, but people suspected of having little credit were definitely excluded. The Ambonese relied on the Chinese to give them credit and supply their needs for cloth.

Returns

After every auction a rendement, or accounting, of the results was made up. In seven columns it listed the date, the quantity and particulars about the textile, the buying price, the selling price, the profit or the loss, and the percentage of the latter two for each item that was sold. The first page of a rendement, for auctions held on specific days between April 1 and May 14, 1703 is shown on the next page. At the end of each section on a particular textile a remark explained the reason for putting it up for auction. A few exact translations might accentuate this point. The first example appears at the bottom of the illustration on the next page, and is transcribed in the

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126 Luc Nagtegaal, Rijden op een Hollandse Tijger, 110-132

127 VOC 3208: (1767) 457; Realia, vol 2: (1745) 155; L. Blusse, Strange Company: 51; F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 77-8, vol 2: 371, 373; VOC 2931: (1759) 8

128 VOC 11205: fol 1-36. This rendement from Batavia in 1703 concerned the sale of imported goods, mostly textiles from the Netherlands which were predominantly bought by the Chinese in Batavia, who sold them again in China. The Dutch community and Indonesians associated with the Company also purchased some of these textiles. It was a rare occasion to find such a document among the Overgekomen Brieven, but with more research time possibly other rendements might have been found.
### Latenestuive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jaargang</th>
<th>Menge (stuk)</th>
<th>Prijs (gulden)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1702</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2091</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2441</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1894</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Alle deze laken zijn (uitgezonderd de 5 stukken uit de kast no 39 1701 per Brandenburg van Amsterdam aangeboden) oogst van de beste kwaliteit, en daarom te koop aan de beste prijs. De 5 stukken uit de kast no 39 1701 zijn van uitstekende kwaliteit, en worden verkocht aan de beste prijs. De nadeelen van deze laken zijn hun lange gebruikstijd en hun hoge prijs."
bottom right corner.

Samples from subsequent pages are:

black laken

All of these lakens (except the 5 pieces from chest no. 39, 1701 brought in the Brandenburgh from Amsterdam) were of unusual thick and heavy material, which is why they were not wanted and traded in these hot countries, yes, [not] in China either. Therefore, they should be of as light a fabric as possible in the future, or left out altogether and instead thereof drapes de dames be sent in compliance with what was remarked about them in last year's rendement.129

scarlet-red laken

It appears that the market for this type, although earlier very much in demand, also among the Chinese, is beginning to decline, probably because of the English who bring these in large quantities to China too and, thus, cause the prices to decrease

drapes de dames

In contrast, this type has, because of the reasonable buying prices and the light weight of the materials, delivered such a fair profit that quite a number can be traded, which is why the shopkeeper, to the benefit of the community here, has given several pieces for purchase to them and so [they] have bought the whole lot

pearl color, ashgrey, celadon laken

These three varieties are not in demand because of their light color which smudges too easily and also because of the thickness and coarseness of the material. . .

colored barrakan

is a type that is in demand as long as good quality and reasonable buying price are taken into consideration

In order to attract customers at the auction, the shopkeeper would throw a bait, here the drapes de dames, into the collection. Taking all the remarks in

129 VOC 11205 (1703): 1 It should be noted that the exceptional five pieces of black laken mentioned in the remark, and which had arrived on the ship Brandenburgh, were also auctioned on April 26 and made the largest profit of f 359:10:8 or 28½ percent; see under that date.
the *rendement* into account, primarily the color was a determining factor why European imported textiles were not sold earlier in the shop. They sold in the auction primarily because of the cheaper price.\textsuperscript{130} Other factors affecting sales negatively were the heaviness or coarseness of the fabric. In the case of scarlet *laken* the price was considered too high; the Chinese who voyaged between Batavia and China discovered that the English sold this European cloth cheaper in Canton, which had opened up to foreign traders in 1684. Therefore, the Batavian Chinese no longer needed the higher priced Dutch imports which caused this line of trade gradually to diminish.\textsuperscript{131}

The last line of the *rendement* showed in one glance the net profit for each textile (see illustration above): all columns were added up; the third column (buying price, *inkoop*) was deducted from the fourth column (selling price, *uytkoop*); and the sixth column (loss, *schade*) from the fifth column (profit, *advance*); thus showing the same amount under the fourth and fifth columns. The net result for all textiles in this auction, held on specific days between April 1 and May 14, 1703, showed a profit of $9,720: 1: 8 or 5 1/8 percent. The net results were summarized by listing the last line of each type of textile. The first line on the illustration (next page) summarizes the result of the sales of the black *laken* discussed and shown above—"50 pieces black *laken* cost and have sold for (*kosten en hebben gevendeert)," followed by the

\textsuperscript{130} VOC 11205: 4-9, 13, 16, 18-24 Many detailed remarks throughout this *rendement* testify to color being the factor in the unsalability of the cloth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Laten en Materiaal</th>
<th>Gewicht (kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Laten en Sierlijke</td>
<td>1808.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Laten en Zware</td>
<td>2660.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Laten en Groene</td>
<td>1570.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Laten en Legoort</td>
<td>2562.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Laten en Rood</td>
<td>1049.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Laten en Blauwe</td>
<td>946.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Laten en Glans</td>
<td>2957.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Laten en Zalm</td>
<td>2952.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Laten en Violette</td>
<td>2952.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Laten en Violette</td>
<td>2952.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Laten en Violette</td>
<td>2952.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Laten en Violette</td>
<td>2952.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transponeren: 139460.4578 / Nacja 601
columns' sums. The next line shows the loss \((\textit{door elkander is hier op verlooren})\) £1293:11:00 or seven percent. The summary entry for this type of textile says simply: "50 pieces black \textit{laken} | 18387:18:08 | 17094:07:08 | | | 1293:11:00 | 7% | "r"\(^{132}\)

The same system of recording was followed for all the \textit{rendementen} that were examined. When textiles had been lying on the shelves unsold, as was the case with some five-year-old faded Persian velvets in the Ambon shop, the shopkeeper offered them in a public sale. This took place in front of Burger Anthony Michielsz 's house on August 19, 1734. Captain Streyhagen bought 1 1/2 ells blue velvet, Master Counet 7 ells of the same and Mr Muller 1 1/2 ells of green velvet. The sale still averaged a 20% profit for the Company.\(^{133}\) A bale of fourteen-year-old, unopened, \textit{chavonis} did not sell. It was decided to send it back to Batavia together with some unsalable \textit{muris} that were too narrow and short. Batavia circulated regulations that textiles that could not fetch the fixed price, or stayed unsold, had to be returned to Batavia to prevent spoilage.\(^{134}\)

It was not uncommon to send textiles back from a branch office to Batavia, especially if a branch office had a large stock and did not anticipate that an auction would yield a reasonable profit. In another branch of the

\(^{132}\) VOC 11205: 30. In the last column showing the percentage are found the letters "r" or "s", referring to the percentage. They stand for, respectively, \textit{ruym} (= ) more than) and \textit{schaers} (= (less than). The bookkeepers did not have the advantage of calculators and wrote part of one percent in fractions. These fractions consisted usually of halves, quarters, and eighths, but the actual percentage fraction could have been a little more or less. This was, therefore, indicated by the "r" and "s". (see illustration)

\(^{133}\) VOC 2312 (1734): 373-4

\(^{134}\) VOC 2283 (1731): 15; 2312 (1734): 373-4;
Company it might sell better. In 1637 Ambon returned eleven bales of Coromandel cloths and five pieces of gold pattas at a value of f 6,505:16:-; Batavia ordered Malaka to send textiles worth f 109,199:14:10 to Indaragiri, while fotassen that could not be sold in Ambon were ordered transferred to Ternate. In 1750 Ambon experienced difficulties again in selling 1,932 pieces of ordinary broad painted chintz from Surat, 177 pieces of chintz on muri with a red background, 20 pieces of fine chintz bed-covers, and 60 pieces of painted chintz from Coromandel. Even at a profit margin of 30% they would not sell and were returned to Batavia.

This chapter has illustrated some of the facets of the textile trade. It is by no means an exhaustive account. Various additional regulations and details of the trade were in force in specific branch offices. Nevertheless, one is struck by the organization and attention paid to every detail, and the consequences that were in place for trespasses of the law. In order to keep such a big Company running the application of the law and the judiciary department had to function actively and effectively by putting culprits to justice. Policing commerce and citizens was a major occupation for which the hierarchy in the set-up of the Company had a functional role. There was always another boss above each boss. The check on accuracy in record keeping will be amplified in the next chapter when the negotie journalen are discussed.

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136 VOC 2760 (1750): 54.
CHAPTER 7

RECORDS OF THE INDIAN CLOTH IMPORTS

Introduction

In this chapter the details concerning the textiles immediately are examined which were not part of the movement and process of the trade discussed in the last chapter. For example, how the textiles were recorded in bookkeeping books. How did the Company account for the cloth? The manner in which it administered the textile trade in the *Negotie Grootboeken* (ledgers) and *Journalen* (journals) will be explained. The path of a few types of textiles from the production areas via Batavia to their destination in Ambon has been traced in the bookkeeping.

A multitude of pieces of Indian cloth are discussed in this study, but what does a piece of Indian cloth entail? What do the VOC stamps, still seen on antique Indian textiles, mean? What is the standard measure the Company uses to measure cloth? What are the dimensions of the trade cloths? An average width and length will be arrived at. Thousands of bales of cloth are traded each year. Is it possible to give a definition of what constitutes a bale of cloth? The resulting answers to these questions were necessary to serve as a device to deal with the complexities of the textiles themselves and incompleteness of quantitative data in the VOC sources which did mention bales and pieces.

The Cloth Measure

The Dutch introduced a measuring-stick, the ell,1 in 1626 in Batavia

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1 The ell measure was not always in general use. The *hasta*, a Sanskrit term measuring the distance from the top of the middle finger to the elbow, often synonymous to the cubit of 18 to 22 inches (45 to 56 cm), was also used in writing the measurement of a cloth. VOC 11207: 25; R.J. Wilkenson, Malay-English Dictionary, vol 1: 401. This was not to be confused with the *covado*, a Portuguese term sometimes used
and its trading towns for the purpose of standardizing the measurement of various commodities and to reduce fraud. The "Amsterdam" ell of 0.68781 meters was the oldest Dutch measurement against which the standard measure in Batavia had been calibrated. The ell-stick consisted of 16 notches that were divided into one half, one quarter, and one eighth, as it was done in the Netherlands. A Dutch merchant, Willem Lodewijckz describes the covado as a measurement at the end of the 16th century used by the Portuguese in Melaka. To him the covado was equivalent to twee ende een half vierendeel (two-and-a-half quarter). The Dutch used this expression regularly by which they understood two plus half of one quarter, which is one eighth, thus 2 1/8 feet. One Dutch (Rhineland) foot was 31.4 cm making this sometimes puzzling figure 66.725 cm, close enough to one ell or one covado.

Everyone using an ell-stick was obliged to take it twice a year to the Town Hall's magistrate in Batavia and have it calibrated against the standard measure that was then kept there. Two or three hours in a specified week in January/February and July/August were set aside for that purpose. No fee was charged until 1635 when a payment of six stuivers was introduced. A new ell-stick or an old one needing calibrating at a time outside the specified week cost double the price. Borrowing an ell-stick from someone else and using an "unburned" stick was not allowed in VOC townships. The calibration master burned a letter of the Dutch alphabet into the wood on the stick as proof that it had been taken to the Town Hall at the appropriate time. When the calibration master ran out of letters, he began anew with the letter "A", adding a line through the top of it. When the alphabet came around for the third time, a number was added after the letter so that in August 1681, he

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2 Plakaatboek, vol 8 (1765): 18
3 Plakaatboek, vol 7 (1764): 790
was up to "L2". Surprise inspections on site of weights and measures were held throughout the year. If someone was caught using an ell-stick that had not been taken to the Town Hall, or to the master of the wharf in branch offices, a fine of 25 rixdollars was charged for the first offence, 50 for the second. If it happened a third time, one was out of business for one to three years. The practice of calibrating weights and measures two times per year lasted throughout the VOC period in all offices of the Company.\(^5\)

In order to obtain uniformity in the measurements of the Indian textiles throughout this study the measurements such as the ell, \textit{covado}, \textit{cobido} and \textit{hasta} were converted to the present Dutch standard of a meter.

\textit{The VOC Cloth Stamp}

During my fieldwork in museums I noticed that a number of antique textiles from Indonesia exhibited the VOC stamp. I attempted, therefore to discover the historical significance of them. It appeared that there were two categories of stamps used during the VOC period.

The first category lasted for approximately twenty years only and was applied throughout Dutch townships in the archipelago. After Governor-General Imhoff returned from the Netherlands in 1743, where he had been advocating limited free trade for Indonesia, many types of Indian textiles were given to the private sector to trade while white, red, blue and unfinished coarse cloths remained the prerogative of the Company.\(^6\)

Although the Company's protected cloths were usually referred to by color, they included the \textit{guinees, geras, salem pore, cassa, haman, sanas, bafta, dongris} and any other types belonging to this category from Bengal and Coromandel,


\(^6\) Realia, vol 2 (1746): 155
qualified as 12 caal or 2,880 warp threads and less. The silk and cotton textiles from Surat were also reserved for the Company. The new regulations gave rise to much confusion as to which textiles were and were not included. In order to prevent the smuggling of the Company-protected textiles and distinguish them from the non-Company textiles, it was ordered on November 8, 1746 that each Company cloth be marked at one end with a brass stamp (cap). Sometimes clients bought cloth from the Company without a VOC stamp on it. It was their responsibility to get it marked before exporting it. If they did not do so their merchandise would be suspect and confiscated.

In 1746, the "stamping" was done by the fiscal (public pros ecutor) in the presence of a committee member of the judiciary at a specified time and place, but after 1756 by two VOC representatives who were sworn into office with an oath before the senior merchants in Batavia’s headquarters. The stamp, like the mark on the ell-stick, was changed from year to year. The letter representing the VOC office where stamping took place and the date had to be part of it. When textiles were transported to another area under Dutch jurisdiction, they had to be stamped a second time on arrival. The shopkeepers of the branch office of the VOC in that region were usually in charge of it, but they could not keep the implements (notebook, stamp, stamp-ink and seal) in their stores. The senior merchants of the head office gave the equipment to them when they needed it. The notebook served for keeping a record of the types and quantities of textiles stamped. There was no charge for the stamping, but if one were caught without it on Company-protected textiles, the textiles were confiscated and a fine of four times the value of the cloths had to be paid.

The opening up of the trade in Indian textiles in 1743 did not apply to cloth sold on the Sumatran West Coast under the VOC. There, private and

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7 J.A. van der Chijs ed., Plakaatboek, vol 7 (1759): 358
8 Realia, vol 2 (1756): 156
9 VOC 2760 (1750): 255
free traders were prohibited from importing any type of foreign or local textile. VOC personnel in the Padang branch office were requested to stamp not only the Company protected red, white, blue and unfinished cloths, but also every other piece so that illegal trading could be easily detected.\(^\text{10}\)

In 1766, twenty years after the stamping of textiles had been introduced, orders were issued to stop it and the implements returned to headquarters in Batavia. Stamping proved to have been ineffective in controlling the smuggling of Company cloth for several reasons. First, the fiscals in charge of checking the traffic of cloth for duty payments complained that not being textile experts they were unable to differentiate Company protected cloths from non-Company cloths. Second, the illegal use of perfectly forged stamps became widespread. The policy had become a fiasco.\(^\text{11}\)

The second category of stamping took place in the procurement offices in India. Cloths that had been woven for the Company but were unfinished (referred to as *ruw* cloth in the documents) needed washing, bleaching and firming up with *kanji* or rice-water.\(^\text{12}\) Before the cloths were taken to the washers and bleachers, they were measured and identified as textiles that belonged to the Company by stamping them with the VOC signature and the initial of the authority-in-charge. After the process was finished, two Company inspectors examined the job at the washery and stamped the finished cloth again. The date of manufacture was not required as it was

\(^{10}\) **Realia**, vol 1: (1763) 196, 434, (1746) 293; vol 2: (1747) 57, (1746) 155, (1764) 277; vol 3: (1746) 27, (1763) 29; Plakaatboek, vol 5 (1746): 417-8, 508, 614. The stamps discussed above are not related to the stamps found on some trade textiles in museums and illustrated in publications: T. Yoshioka & S. Yoshimoto, *Sarasa of the World*: 47; R. Maxwell, *Textiles of Southeast Asia*: 355

\(^{11}\) J.A. van der Chijs ed. *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek*, vol 8 (1766): 186; VOC 3208 (1766): 36

during the 20 years of compulsory stamping during Governor-General van Imhoff's time in Indonesia. The identification of the Company's cloth at the production sites started from at least the mid-17th century and was still practiced in 1767. The English Company appears to have had a similar practice of stamping the Indian textiles which included an initial that stood for the region it originated from.\textsuperscript{13}

\textit{A Piece of Indian Cloth}

Because the Company records constantly referred to trading cloth in terms of bales and pieces of Indian cloths, it will be meaningful to this study to find out what these terms entailed. The term a piece of cloth and a bale have never been defined. Why were the Indian trade cloths being traded in quantities of pieces? In the Netherlands the textile merchants commonly sold cloth by the ell in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Dutch order in 1616 clearly requested 300,000 ells \textit{guinees}, however, a few years later the orders began to be expressed in quantities of pieces.\textsuperscript{14}

It was found that in India wholesale trading customary was conducted in quantities of pieces of cloths, not by the ell or some other measure. The Indians used bundles of twenty pieces in their trade, called a \textit{corge}.\textsuperscript{15} Sometimes half a bundle might be added. Textile pieces seem to have been loosely stitched together with a thread—it is not exactly clear how—at one end, the "top-end" as Coen calls it, so that the pieces could be evenly wrapped in a bale and one piece of cloth did not stick out from another.\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Baker, G.P. Calico Painting and Printing: 32
\item \textsuperscript{14} F.W.Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 41-2, Dutch primary archival or printed sources abbreviate the ell measure occasionally with the symbol "$\oplus$", as in "Note 500 pieces of 2 $\oplus$ wide, five hundred pieces."
\item \textsuperscript{15} S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce: 98. The word \textit{corge} was derived from the Telugu \textit{khorjam}. The invoices in Appendix E clearly show the shipments of bales with quantities of textiles in multiples of twenty.
\item \textsuperscript{16} H.T. Colenbrander ed., Jan Pietersz Coen, Bescheiden, vol 2: 293
\end{itemize}
large quantities of cloths, the VOC in Batavia adopted the Asian way and always ordered cloth in quantities divisible by 20. The Company sold the Indian cloth by the piece, and occasionally, except for bafta, by the half-piece.

Prior to the Dutch, the Portuguese in Gujarat, Sind, and northern India knew the Hindi guz, a cloth measure used in the markets, as a covado. The length of one guz in the 16th century varied from 0.68 to 0.80 meters, though occasionally as much as 1.02. The guz might be related to the common plain weave, undyed, undecorated cotton cloth referred to as gussies (gessies), measuring up to 30 meters, sold everywhere in the local markets. The cloth measure for the Coromandel coast was the Sanskrit hasta or asta of 0.46 meter. Dutch personnel on the Coast in India sometimes slipped into the invoices or bills of lading the word hasta or cobido, but in the records of the VOC the ell was in general use.

A confusing practice in the trading of Indian cloth was the use of one name when talking about the "mother cloth" before it was cut into predetermined subsections and another thereafter. For example, a length of cloth called bafta, when cut up would produce "daughter cloths" called cannekins. Thus, it could be said that one bafta yielded three or four cannekins; or alternatively three or four cannekins make one bafta. The size of a cannekin was predetermined by division markers indicating where to cut it off from a whole bafta cloth. Similarly, one length of catche made four sarongs. In south India in 1690 one catche equalled two chelas or four muris.

A change of name accompanied not only the dividing but other processes as well such as dyeing, bleaching, and printing. Anything, in fact, that transformed the appearance (and value) of the "daughter cloth" in relation to the raw, "mother cloth." For example, in an emergency situation

17 W.H. Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb: 338
18 Measures for cloth in ENI, vol 2: 686
19 VOC 11207 "Uytrekkening van de Goude en Silvere Munts Waardye, Inhout der Maten en Swaarte der Gewigten, in de Respective Gewesten van Indiëren," Zeeland, Anno 1768 and 1769, Cattoene Lywaten Der t’Huis gekomen Officieren. Both manuscripts have multiple examples of the mother-daughter cloths varieties.
the gessies could be cut-and-torn to size, dyed, bleached, printed, i.e. transformed to make cannekins, ardias, baftas, assumanis and chintz tapi. Transformation by cutting or value-adding treatment which resulted in different cloth-names does help make sense of such statements as: one piece of guinees consisted of 8 dongris and one piece of salempore formed 4 dongris in Tegenaptnam. The salempore was 5-7 ells longer than half a guinees, thus the dongris of the salempore must have been an ell longer than those made from a guinees. From one piece of guinees 15 shirts or 48 pairs of stockings could be made. Weavers seem to have marked the cut-off points in a whole cloth with a stripe of colored thread or finishing edge. Sometimes the cut-up indicators appeared on the warp threads which were left unwoven at those points; or were woven in such a way as to make them stand out. In 1619 Coen ordered 60 corge (1,200 pieces) of negrocloths that were to be woven in tapi designs (60 c. Negroscleeden, tapissche wyse gewrocht). Another alternative was to indicate desired lengths or areas by designing repeated patterns on the mother cloth. Hence references are found to cloth varieties that indicate the length of the cloth, not by the ell or covado, but by the number of lengths of tapis that it contained. For example, a tapi daung costing £2.90 was three "cleeden" long.

A very clear example of one piece of Indian cloth being subdivided into smaller subsections were the rumals. A square was generically called a rumal. They came striped, checkered, colored or as chintz. The square was again part of a larger piece of cloth which the Company identified also as rumal, but consisted of 8, 10, 12, ... 20 uncut rumal squares. The Company

20 Hans Walther van Santen, "De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie in Gujarat en Hindustan": 177, 181

21 VOC 11207 (1685): 35

22 VOC 11207 (1685): 46

23 Ibid: 37


bought pieces of *rumals*, and many other woven pieces, uncut, just the way the cloth came from the loom. The uncut *rumals* varied in size from about 5.00 to 14.00 meters long and 0.50 to 1.35 meters wide.

There were two cloths called *muri* and *parcalle* which were plain woven and sold that way, but they also were ideal for transformation into chintz tapi or chintz rumal or other chintz.26 When the Company ordered chintz tapi, a length of 2.70-3.40 meters, the design was repeated on the *muri* or *parcalle* mother-cloth three or four times. Thus, one *parcalle* or one *muri* would make multiple chintz tapi. The same principle was applied in producing *rumals*. The only difference is that a *rumal*, by definition a square, could be repeated twelve times on a single *parcalle*, whereas a tapi would fit only 3 or 4 times.27 After the *parcalle* was painted into 12 square cloth designs, it was no longer a *parcalle*, but transformed into a *rumal*, still uncut. The same principle of name-change applied to all cloth transformations.

At the end of the 17th century print blocks were often used for producing multiple chintz cloths.28 Block printing was not a new technique in India. The historian Habib suggests it developed from an inked seal printer for textiles.29

The Company had always judged the quality of a cloth by several criteria: the type of thread that was used, such as silk, cotton, hemp; the technical quality of the thread, that is if it was finely and evenly spun, or coarse; the skill of the weaving and decoration; the strength of the thread and

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27 Zeeland, Anno 1769 Cattoene Lywaten Der t’Huis gekomen Officieren: 10-11

28 Irfan Habib, "Indian Textile Industry in the 17th century" in Essays in Honour of Professor S.C. Sarkar: 185

29 T. Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, The Cambridge Economic History of India, vol 1: 80. Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: 671-3 shows that woodcut printing was common in the Netherlands before the 17th century, though first on paper, the Dutch also applied it to cloth like the Indians apparently. European influence on the development of woodcut printing for chintz production, which had to be mass produced under pressure should not be excluded. The European demand for chintz was increasing since the late 1660s; pressure was exerted to make the chintz faster. More research is needed to establish the history of chintz printing in India with certainty.
therefore of the fabric, and the weight of the cloth. The weight, however, could be mislead by adding water on the silks, a trick the Chinese sometimes applied. In India cloth was given more substance by starching the threads before weaving while other cloths such as the sarassa were starched after the weaving.

In order to systemize quality control the Dutch used at least by the second quarter of the 18th century the caal. The number of caal indicated the amount of thread used in the weaving of a cloth. The guinees cloth type in Appendix A, p. 31 was graded in this way. A higher caal number indicated that more thread had been used for a tighter weave. It goes without saying that the price was also higher. Caal is a European derivation "one call [col]" of what seems a local word meaning two punjams of cloth. In Tamil punjam and in Telinga punjamu literally means collection or group. In Telinga that is 60 warp threads, in Tamil it is 120 threads. These threads came skeined, ready for warping. A cloth is denominated 10, 12, 14, etc. up to 40 punjams depending on the number of skeins or collections of 60 [or 120] warp threads used to warp the loom. Thus, a cloth of 12 punjams is called six call or caal. In a table on cloth production in Bengal, the textile historian, Hossain, indicated the quality of each cloth by the number of its warp threads, that is its caal.

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30 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 64
31 G.L. Adhya, Early Indian Economics: 70
32 J.J. Brennig, "Textile Producers and production in late seventeenth century Coromandel" in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India: 76
33 Verhandeling der Munten, Maaten en Gewichten, (1786): 473; Hobson-Jobson: 708
34 Hameeda Hossain, The Company Weavers of Bengal: 53
Average Length and Width of an Indian Cloth

Students of textile history have observed that many pieces of "calicoes" or cotton chintz, which were shorter pieces of cloth than the plainer bafta, salemore, guinees, betille, parcalle, dongris, niquanias, and other non-chintz textiles, made up the larger part of the export to Southeast Asia. It is true that many chintz textiles were shipped to Batavia and that they were usually shorter in size than the cloth that went to Europe, but they did not make up the majority of pieces of cloth and definitely not the largest proportion in terms of yardage. The specified chintz for Southeast Asia constituted a smaller part than the plain, checkered, striped, and colored muslins, that were imported. In Tables 6 and 7 below I have indicated with "(c)" behind the textile type that they are chintz or could have been a chintz as in the case of rumal. Of the 64 textiles listed, 13 were chintz and the majority of these chintz fell in the shortest type of textile of less than 5 meters.

Amongst scholars who have concerned themselves with the Indian trade textiles, only the economic historian, Moreland, gave any thought to their average dimensions. To some extent Brennig did a similar analysis for the textiles produced in northern Coromandel. Moreland, however, summarized his findings for Southeast Asia with the following observation:

As to the export to Sumatra, Java, and beyond, the number of varieties of cloth is far too great for any accurate average to be deduced from the few records available; some of the common cloths were of the length given for calicoes, very few were longer, and a large number were much shorter, ranging from lengths of 8 yards down to what we should call handkerchiefs. Probably the average of an ordinary cargo for the southward was much less than 15 yards, but how much less cannot be calculated with precision.

Cloth sizes varied in lengths from a blanket of 0.60 meter to a guinees which sometimes reached the length of 47.00 meters. The widths also varied


36 Ibid: 339
from, for example, a dragam of 0.35 meter to a palampore of 2.80 meters.37

Some of the Indian textiles were produced with the intended function and size of the cloth clearly delineated. Kain gulong, patta, poleng, tapi, atlas, and salalu came in fixed sizes. All these cloths except the atlas were meant for clothing of the body. The long and narrow atlas with measurements of 5.50-8.25 x 0.35-0.50 meters, was used, among other things, to make pennants in Indonesia. Textile measurements are conventionally written as warp-length times weft-width. K.N. Chaudhuri gave as an average for a piece of Indian cloth traded by the English Company—not to the Asian market—1.14 x 13.71 meters (1 1/4 x 15 yards).38 To bring some order into the chaos of what is known about the measurements of Indian cloth, two tables have been constructed. Tables 6 and 7 on the following pages list the textile types of which a length and width were known.39 More details on the measurements are found in Appendix A.

37 The cloth sizes imported from Europe seemed to vary less. The Dutch woollens averaged 35 meters in length, but the width could be narrow or broad, respectively 0.50-0.80 to 1.50 meters. The Chinese cloth sizes appear to have been comparable to the average Indian cloth sizes of about 12 to 15 meters. William S. Beck, The Draper’s Dictionary. Max Heiden, Handwörterbuch der Textilkunde aller Zeiten und Völker.

38 K.N. Chaudhuri, The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760: 472

39 Appendix A was used as the basis for the tables. The data was gathered from a multitude of sources. The major ones are listed in the glossary for Appendix A.
TABLE 6

Indian Textile Types Grouped in Length Units of Five Meters

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**TABLE 7**

Indian Textile Types Grouped in Width Units of Half a Meter

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The comparison of cloth lengths in Table 6 resulted in a mode, meaning the frequency with which an interval occurred, of 6-10 meters. The average length of an Indian textile from the same sample is 11.50 meters. Naturally, an average measure is relative to the number of the textiles that were most frequently traded. The relativity of the measure follows the same explanation that will be given in the next section on the parameters of one bale of cloth, more fully treated in Appendix E.

The mode of the width of a textile in Table 7 is from 0.51 to 1.00 meter. It appears that although the chintz were the shortest textiles generally, they were not necessarily also the narrowest textiles and fall within a wide range of width measures. I marked the textile types in the second column with a constant width of approximately one meter with an asterisk thus "x*" for easy identification. The average width of Indian textiles in Asian trade is approximately 0.93 meter.

These lists of measurements were collected to make it possible to measure a cloth content of a bale in terms of square meters of fabric. It would be a time consuming task to do this accurately, but not impossible for specific varieties with a more or less constant length and width measure.

What is a Bale (Pack) of Textiles?

Frequently the VOC sources report numbers of bales, with no further details. For example, "60 bales have to be bought for the Sumatra Westcoast"; a factor representing a Manila trader in Siam received much needed cash from the Company by "pawning forty-five bales"; personnel in Surat experienced frustration about delivery of "78 bales of textiles and clothing" by

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40 The 11.50 meter average length was calculated by multiplying the number of occurrences in each column by the medium length for the column. The sum of all columns was divided by the total number of occurrences. The same method applies to establishing an average width. Independent from this table Moreland came to a similar measure. He stated that a cargo from Surat of "100,000 pieces would represent from 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 million yards, which also would represent an average for one cloth, respectively 11.50 to 13.80 meters. W.H. Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb: 339
cafila (caravan). The documents repeatedly provoke the historian to ask what constitutes a bale of textiles. Is there a way to define a bale to approximate the quantity of cloth it contains or assign a value to it in cases where bales are reported to have been lost, sent, received, and pawned?

A facing brick from a shop selling chintz in 18th century Amsterdam. It shows merchants in India trading bales of guinees and salempore, plain cottons used for printing in the Netherlands.

Bales were identified as having particular dimensions, weight, content and value. Around 1700 the Company itself defined a bale as consisting of piece goods that "were usually packaged according to their length and width; every bale contained as many pieces as made the bale manageable to handle, without having any observed regulation about it." A contemporary publication by the chamber of commerce in Zeeland listed many types of textiles from the different production centers with information about the number of pieces that one bale contained including the length and width of

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42 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 2: 93
each cloth. No weight or price was listed. Information about the dimensions of a piece and the number of cloths packed in a bale seemed more important. Almost a century later a bale was again defined in a similar way:

"Pak In one bale of textile is counted:
On the Coromandel Coast
50 pees (pieces) Sailcloth or
200 pees Parcalle or
100 pees Gingang, etc. . . ." the list continued.

Weight, price and physical dimensions of a bale were still not listed. A bale was defined by the number of textile pieces it contained. The quantity varied from 20 to approximately 200.

The lengths and thickness of the cloths influenced the number of pieces that could be packed in a bale. For example, only 20 pieces of ordinary coarse guinees of more or less 35 meters would be packed in one bale. If the guinees was of fine quality, the bale contained 40 pieces. The salempore, bafta, and betille measured approximately 20 meters and were of a thinner cotton. They were packed in bales of 80 or 100 pieces; dongris, gingam, muri, parcalle, taffachelas, sestines, about 10 meters long, came in quantities of 100 to 160 pieces per bale depending on thickness. Much shorter cloths were the patola, rumals, many chintzes, and all varieties of tapi from 2.15-6.00 meters long which could be packed 160 to 600 pieces per bale. One would assume that finding an average number of pieces from the figures for the many types of textiles, would establish a basis useful for estimating quantities per bale wherever they occur in the reports. Part of the assumption is predicated on the fact that there was little change in the

43 VOC 11207 (1691): 24-74
44 VKBG, (1786), vol 4, section 8: "Verhandeling der Munten, Maaten en Gewichten, van Neerlandsch India": 397-514 in the margin at the beginning of the section.
computation and methods of packing bales throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Admittedly, there are problems with using such a substitution method, because of the uneven distribution of cloth types in shipments. Some cargo lists consisted predominantly of bales with small pieces, others with many large cloths. Nevertheless, extrapolation from bale-units can be used for arriving at approximations. Because the explanation of the methodology for arriving at the bale measure and its application is rather long and complicated it was separated from this text and relegated to Appendix E.

A decrease in the Company's shipments of chintz tapi influenced the number of pieces of textiles to be found in a bale. The tapis were small cloths. The decrease in the volume of the small tapi occurred between 1705 and 1722. After 1735 a chintz tapi was rarely traded by the Company. What accounts for this decline and eventual disappearance from the records? Was it the rise of import-substitution batik? This will be further explored in Chapter 10. The disappearance of the short chintz tapi and sarassa after 1735 and the limitation in trade of plain red, blue, and white cloths by the Company in the 1740s which will be explained in following chapters influenced the average number of pieces per bale and consequently the yardage of woven cloth that was imported into Indonesia. I decided to divide the period for averaging a bale size to one before 1735 and one after 1735. The change occurred gradually, but from bookkeeping records it became clear that a permanent change had occurred between 1723 and 1735.

The results of the calculations in Appendix E show that before 1735 approximately 140 pieces of cloths per bale could be counted at an average value of f300 per bale, while after 1735, 105 pieces of cloth would be more accurate at a value of f525 per bale. An average price for a piece of cloth was respectively f2.50 and f5.50. A bale definition should also take into account average weight and dimensions. In a sample of 209 bales, the average weight was found to be 240 pounds and the average dimensions: height, 0.53 meter; length, 1.22 meter; and width 0.75 meter. The calculations and explanations for these results are shown in Appendix E which includes examples of a few
dozen lists of textiles to illustrate the difficulty in establishing averages.

The Bookkeeping of the Cloth Trade

The VOC's highest level of bookkeeping consisted of the Generale Boeken which reflected every financial transaction of the entire VOC trade in Asia. They were based on the Negotie Boeken (trade books) that were received in Batavia at the Generaal Comptoir from every branch office. Subsidiary offices supplied information concerning commercial transactions to the branch office where the trade journals and accounts were consolidated. The Negotie boeken consisted of two sets: the Negotie Journaal (trade journal) and the Negotie Grootboek (ledger). In the Negotie Journaal of the Company all financial transactions were entered on a daily basis without references to accounts, debits or credits. The latter was applied in the Negotie Grootboek where an account was kept for each trade item, expense, debtor or creditor, and the financial transactions that transpired were debited or credited.

Batavia maintained its own set of trade books, the Batavia Negotie Journalen (trade journals) and Batavia Negotie Grootboeken (trade ledgers). These two sets were extensively used for this and the following chapters on which most figures concerning stocks, imports and sales of textiles are based. The Batavia trade journal contained every cargo list, including shipments of textiles, that arrived or departed from the port Batavia. Because Batavia was the hub from which all branch offices were supplied, the cloths that arrived from the production areas in India can be traced to the end destinations in the branch offices via Batavia. A sample of tracing the records of shipments from India to its final destination in Ambon has been demonstrated in Appendix F. In the twelve ledgers examined no incongruities were found. Shipments with bales of textiles arriving in Batavia could always be traced to their end destinations. The ledgers reflected the buying and selling for the Company only, not for its employees. Although the Company might have been the biggest trader in Indian textiles during the larger part of the VOC period in Indonesia, the aggregate of the employees' share in the textile trade
was considerable; also the sales of textiles and other trade goods by Asian and European free traders to the people in the archipelago must definitely not be underestimated.

Arbitrarily opening a leger on any page, invariably the left page of a ledger showed the debit side and the right page the credit side of an account. Each account was headed by its name. For samples, see Appendix F.

The debit side began with the inventory at the beginning of the financial year on September 1. Underneath were dated entries with the names of ships carrying cargo of the account's textile variety. The quantity of textiles were always expressed in pieces and the value in guilders.

The credit side, on the right page, reflected the sales and shipments. It closed with the balance of the number and value of the textiles that were left at the end of the financial year on August 31. All shipments and sales were chronologically entered. Appendix F also demonstrates, for example, how the two sets of books interrelated, and details concerning the Company's bookkeeping have been added.

The accounts in the ledger were, until the 1766, grouped by the place of origin of production; thus, records of textiles from Coromandel, Bengal, Surat, the Netherlands, China, and Persia were kept separately. For the sake of clarity, this manner of recording was preserved in the analysis, except that the textiles from non-Indian origin were added together and labelled "other" because they formed a distinct minority and were of less importance to the Indonesians. After 1766 the accounts were re-grouped according to textiles destined for Europe separating them from textiles for Asia.

The averages pursued in this chapter of the length and width of a cloth, the number of pieces in a bale, the price of a bale and the price of a textile will be helpful for calculations concerning shipments of textiles or amounts of cloth. They were applied in parts of chapters that follow.
CHAPTER 8

TEXTILE TRADE DECLINE

Introduction

To calculate the quantities of Indian cloth in the archipelago the definitions arrived at in the last chapter will serve as a device for dealing with the incompleteness of data in the earlier sources which mention bales and pieces, but for which no bookkeeping materials were preserved. There are some problems in finding accurate figures in sufficiently long sequences pertaining to the textiles that were traded. Fortunately, one 17th century and almost thirty years of 18th century negotie groootboeken (ledgers) and negotie journalen (journals) from Batavia enable a researcher to collect figures on the Company's trade that are useful to indicate trends. On the basis of figures deduced from the Batavia Daghregisters, it is possible to extrapolate additional figures to fill the gaps in the 17th century data. One of the aims of this chapter is to illustrate and demonstrate the increase and decrease of the VOC textile trade, first as a whole and separately for the archipelago. The question of "explanation" for the decline should be considered as a separate issue from the demonstrated fact that there was a rise and a fall.

The total of the quantities of textiles that were exported from India by the VOC are still unknown. A large portion was brought to Europe via Ceylon on the return fleets. The other part was taken via Batavia on the return fleet to the Netherlands. The focus of this study is the quantities traded to the archipelago. In this chapter the import from all three production areas has been tabulated.

Interesting questions follow from the results. Why did the textile trade in the island world decline? Did the whole textile trade of the Company decline? Claims have been made that the textiles became more expensive. Was that a reason for the decline? Could the Indonesian people not afford to buy the textiles? In order to find answers to these questions, a study of the
prices was undertaken. However, what do prices mean if it is not known what types of textile have been considered. Thus it was necessary to group the several hundred of textiles into manageable units which I called clusters. An explanation of the clusters will follow.

In order to assess how the Company textile sales were affected on a microlevel, a case study was undertaken for which Ambon province was selected. The commercial community in Ambon has been described and a trend of the projected textile sales examined. It was found that the Ambonese market for textiles changed. As the sales of the Company declined the sales of local cloth increased. The Company's trade was intruded upon and challenged by large fleets of well armed local vessels in the second half of the 18th century which traded along coastlines not in the power of the Company to control.

**Textile Imports to Indonesia: Overall Decline**

The evidence indicates that the overall picture of the VOC textile trade shows increasing imports to Europe from 1670 till 1730 after which a decline began. A different pattern for the import to Batavia indicates fairly high imports during the first half of the 17th century (30% more than for Europe between 1650-1670), after which a steady decline sets in. The textile trade started in 1605 as an enterprise to finance the purchases of spices and pepper directed to the Asian market, but during the last quarter of the 17th century the European market took over. By the turn of the 18th century, the European trade far overshadowed the import for Asia.

Table 8 on the next page shows the import of textiles at Batavia for certain selected years. The first column, indicating the year, is followed by

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1 K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620-1740: 143, Table 26

2 VOC Negotie Grootboek, 10396 (1652-3), 10810 (1703-4), 10811 (1704-5), 10817 (1723-4), 10818 (1724-5), 10823 (1733-4), 10824 (1734-5), 10835 (1756-7) in this book only the debit side was eligible, 10836 (1757-8), 10837 (1758-9), 10675 (1770-1), 10679 (1780-1). For the years 1624, 1625, 1636, 1637, 1640, 1641, 1644, 1647, 1657 the Batavia Dagregisters were used to arrive at the totals of imports for Coromandel and Surat. Bengal
Table 8: Textiles Imported to Batavia in quantity (thousand pieces) and value (thousand guilders), 1624-1780

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Coromandel Quantity (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Coromandel Value (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Bengal Quantity (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Bengal Value (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Surat Quantity (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Surat Value (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Other Quantity (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Other Value (in 1000s)</th>
<th>Total Quantity (in 1000s)</th>
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</table>
three sets of two columns for the imports from the Indian production areas: Coromandel, Bengal and Surat. The first column in each of the three sets gives the quantity in units of 1,000 pieces of textiles, the second column the value of the imported textiles in units of 1,000 guilders. The fourth set of two columns concerns the import from other regions of production such as Persia, China and the Netherlands. It is apparent that the textiles labelled "other" were a minor category compared to the Indian textiles. The last two columns give the total of all textiles imported into Batavia for the given years in terms of quantity and value. All values represent the buying prices in Batavia, the way they were entered in the books on arrival.3

The VOC textile trade in the three production areas in India have one phenomenon in common, namely fluctuations of buying patterns ending in a definite decline after 1760. Until about 1670 the archipelago leads as the major consumer of the imported Indian textiles compared to other markets to which the VOC exported the Indian textiles. After 1670 a reverse occurs when the market in Europe expanded. A majority of textiles leave on the return ships to Europe and a smaller share is carried by the Company ships for inter-Asiatic trade, the island world, Japan, Siam, Melaka, and a few other places.

During the 17th century Coromandel was the main supplier of textiles to the Company. For most years between 1646 and 1687, 400-800,000 textiles

was not listed separately and is still under Coromandel imports. The Dagh-register did not separate the textiles destined for the Netherlands from those for Asia or Indonesia, but during that period the majority of imported textiles was for Asia. Moreland, W.H. "Indian Exports of Cotton Goods in the Seventeenth Century" in Indian Journal of Economics, vol V, Part 3 (1924-5): 244 did an analysis of the import to Batavia from the Dagh-register from which the total for 1680 has been obtained. W. Ph. Coolhaas ed, Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1683): 633 states the import of 9,898 bales of textiles at £2,725,672:4:15; vol 4 (1685): 816 gives an import of 644 bales at a value of £234,982 for Batavia. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 2: 78-80, vol 2, part 3: 103-5, 218-22 orders were used for the 1686-7 import. The orders for Bengal and Surat were reduced by 1/3 and the order for Coromandel by 7/24 because the orders were rarely supplied in full, see Chapter 6, The European order specification section.

3 F.S. Gaastra, "De Voc in Azië 1680-1795" in Algemene Geschiedenis, vol 9: 450