were annually shipped from there to Batavia. An average of more than 4,000 bales (140 pieces per bale), approximately 600,000 pieces of cloths were exported annually between 1670 and 1740. Not all textiles which Arasaratnam reported as export from Coromandel for this period were shipped to Batavia, a part—exact proportions are not known—left immediately to Europe or other destinations such as Melaka.

Total imports from Bengal, Coromandel, and Surat of more than one million pieces of textiles during the 1680s were enormous quantities and exceptional in that the Company was trying to capture the buying market for itself, but decided to stop it in 1687. It fought a losing battle; the competition was too large and it suffered losses from being overstocked. Moreover, chintz patterns or designs of tapi for Java were changing, thus the Company wanted to sell its stock before it became totally outmoded.

Figures for Coromandel in Table 8 are combined for cloths from northern and southern Coromandel, including the Madura region. The Company procured textiles wherever the market prices were best. There were agents in most of the leading weaving towns. When famine and drought, political upheaval and rising prices were disturbing the buying process in northern Coromandel, the Company increased its investments in Madura in the south, but returned to the north as soon as the market turned for the better. Arasaratnam informs us that the highest record occurred in 1738 when 6,718 bales were exported from north Coromandel and the lowest in 1717 with only 1,313 bales. The Madura district in Southern Coromandel had the capacity to match northern Coromandel in delivery of textiles to the Company for export. It was shown for the period from 1700-04 when more
than 4,500 bales were exported from each region, north and south Coromandel.

The exports from Coromandel by the Dutch East India Company diminished in the second half of the 18th century. The VOC was losing ground against the English Company which introduced a series of changes to bring the production of the Indian weavers under its control. At the same time an increasing number of European and Asian free traders exercised an uncontrollable competition to the Company. The French became more aggressive and opened a factory near the VOC factory in Karikal, south India. The Dutch had thought themselves safe in southern Coromandel where textiles were cheap and closer to their own power base in Ceylon than to other European competitors. The Company lost influence in the second half of the 18th century as the major European trader in the region through its defensive policies, passive stance and the financial constraints to which it was bound due to interference and control by the States-General, the highest governing body in the Netherlands. Aggression could cause complications in Europe. The Company's trade deteriorated "so far as to employ its French and English rivals as purchasing agents for the cloth it needed". The Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-4) had depleted the Company's financial resources in 1783 when it had to give 14 million guilders for assistance to the government in the Netherlands.

Surat was an important supplier of specific textiles such as bafta, cannekins, kamkani, karikam, and patolu. Also in this production area a decline set in after 1759. Table 8, page 279, shows that no textiles were sent to

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8 S. Arasaratnam, "Weaver, Merchants and Company: The Handloom Industry in South-eastern India 1750-1790" in S. Subrahmanyam, Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India: 190-214

9 G. Winius and M. Vink, The Merchant-Warrior Pacified: 111

10 Ibid: 117

11 Ibid: 88
Batavia from 1703 to 1705. The Dutch blockaded Surat’s harbor during that time as a reprisal for the stock of spices and fines that were demanded from the Dutch for their negligence in protecting Surat’s most prominent merchant. When the Great Mughal Aurangzeb died in 1707, the Marathas disrupted the countryside in northern India which affected the production of textiles and trade in Surat. By the 1730s Surat itself became unruly. The Dutch were still able to secure the textiles under difficult circumstances due to faithful brokers. However, when the English, during the confusion among indigenous power holders, succeeded in conquering the Mughal sultan’s Surat castle in 1759, the Dutch lost their independence as merchants and became subordinate to the English. Three lukewarm attempts at regaining their prestige were unsuccessful due to the same passive stance that was mentioned earlier. The aloofness was commanded from Batavia in response to orders from the directorate in the Netherlands. The Dutch avoided becoming embroiled in any wars in Europe and by extension in Asia.12 The English took over the textile trade from the Dutch first for a period during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War and ultimately in 1795 when the VOC textile trade was handed over to private and free traders.

Bengal textiles had been imported via Coromandel until the 1650s, but their number was few. Table 8 therefore does not reflect any textile import from Bengal until in the middle of the 17th century. Also in Bengal the decline of the textile trade set in after 1759 when the Dutch became dependent on the English Company. Even after the VOC was permanently established in Bengal most of the textiles purchased were for the European market and less than 10,000 textiles annually for the Indonesian market. The total quantities began to increase during the 1680s, reaching between 100 and 200,000 pieces annually in the 1690s.13 During the first half of the 18th

12 Ibid: 92-8

13 Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal 1630-1720: 138-9 Table 5.3; 146-7 Table 6.1; 194-5 Table 7.2. Prakash used invoices of exported goods from Bengal, but his figures amount to different quantities than those recorded as
century most of the cloths the Company needed were supplied by Bengal. Already during the last decades of the 17th century the part of the textiles in the return goods had increased from 15% to 55% of the total export to the Netherlands. Bengal’s textiles played a very important part in this increase.\(^ {14}\)

Procuring cloth in Bengal became very difficult after 1760. In 1757 the Dutch were approached for assistance in a battle and had to choose between an unpopular local ruler or an English-Bengali party who were at odds with each other. The VOC governor in Bengal kept a neutral stance, for the same reasons as the VOC had refused to go to war in Coromandel and Surat. The subsequent confrontation between the Indian and English army and that of the local unpopular ruler in the battle of Plassey in 1757, ended in favor of the combined Indian-English side. As a result of the victory the English were granted special privileges. A meek attempt on the part of Batavia to avenge itself on the English in Bengal turned out to be a disaster.\(^ {15}\) The worst condition in the subsequent peace treaty in 1759 was the directive given to the Bengali weavers that they first had to fulfill the orders for the English before they could accept the orders of the VOC. Whereas usually 12 or 13 VOC ships had left Bengal in the sailing season in the first half of the century, the Company now experienced difficulty sending two ships to Europe and one to Batavia. The export of textiles from Bengal diminished drastically after this episode, which can be seen in Table 8 where figures dropped from an import of several hundred thousand textiles to less than 100,000 during the troublesome years and only respectively 8,000 and 7,000 in arriving in Batavia according to the *Negotie boeken*. For example for the years 1703-4 and 1704-5, the totals of the three tables by Prakash for export to the Netherlands, Japan and the Indonesian archipelago add up to respectively 154,085 and 234,795 pieces of cloth. In Batavia was recorded respectively 120,000 and 784,000 pieces as import.

\(^ {14}\) F.S. Gaastra, "De VOC in Azië tot 1680" in Algemene Geschiedenis, vol 7: 214

\(^ {15}\) F.S. Gaastra, "De VOC in Azië" in Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol 9: 439
Two columns called "Other" consisted mainly of textiles imported from the Netherlands. Among the trade goods that the Netherlands exported to Batavia for the Asian market, laken was the most important item. In total 37 types of woollen, worsted, and silk items were shipped for sales in Batavia, Persia, Surat and Japan. The value of the textiles from Haarlem and Leiden that were sent in the 18th century averaged ƒ234,000 guilders annually. Increasing trade with China contributed to the largest import of polemits (polemieten), especially in the 1780s. Polemits, a simple woollen, usually black cloth, a grade lower in quality than the laken, was used for wintercoats.

The Chinese junks brought cargoes of textiles from China to the Indonesian archipel which have not been itemized in the VOC bookkeeping. One list of Chinese tradegoods from 1694 shows that 22% of the value of the cargo were textiles. I calculated from a listing by Blussé an average cargo value and number of junks that came annually to the archipel during the 18th century. Taking 22% of the value of the cargo showed an annual import of textiles to be roughly ƒ32,000.

The proportion of the total imports in Batavia which were destined for the Indonesian market is illustrated in Table 9 on the next page. Table 9 is based on the same source material as Table 8, but in order to know what part of the total import of textiles was for the Indonesian market, the figures were taken from the credit side of the Negotie Grootboek which showed the

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16 G. Winius and M. Vink, The Merchant-Warrior: 124-31

17 F.S. Gaastra, "De Geschiedenis van de VOC" in Algemene Geschiedenis, vol 9: 462

18 J.R. Bruijn et al., Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries: 182-3. The figures in the table of values of textiles bought by the Chamber of Amsterdam was doubled, because Amsterdam contributed 1/2 a share in fitting out the Batavia supply ships.

19 Leonard Blussé, Strange Company: 126, 146
Table 9: Textiles imported to Batavia in quantity (thousand pieces) and value (thousand guilders) for Indonesia only, 1624-1780

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Coromandel Quantity</th>
<th>Coromandel Value</th>
<th>Bengal Quantity</th>
<th>Bengal Value</th>
<th>Surat Quantity</th>
<th>Surat Value</th>
<th>Other Quantity</th>
<th>Other Value</th>
<th>Total Quantity</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>381</td>
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<td>310</td>
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<td>106</td>
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<td>303</td>
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<td>901</td>
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<td>316</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>1743</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>119</td>
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<td>332</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>1780-81</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82</td>
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shipments of the textiles to the branch offices and the sales in Batavia. By adding up all the shipments and sales it could be established what part of the import was used in Indonesia. The debit side only registered the arrival and stock of the textiles but did not separate bales for Europe from those for Indonesia until after 1766.

Table 9 includes the same figures as Table 8 for the years from 1624 to 1641 because the Batavia Dagh-registers from which they were collected did not select the incoming bales by destination which meant that a small portion of the import would have been exported to Europe. The imports from India in the Batavia Dagh-registers were sometimes given as the number of bales and also as the value of the cargo, thus, the averages given in the section "What is a bale" in Chapter 7 were applied to arrive at the number of pieces and values listed. Table 9 shows that the largest proportion of imported textiles came from Coromandel, followed by those from Surat and Bengal. Whereas Bengal was the main supplier of textiles for the total import to Batavia, its role of providing the Asian market with textiles was comparatively small. Only in 1734-5 when 79,000 were sold in Indonesia, was its share of the import larger than from Coromandel or Surat. Coromandel was famous for its chintz, but the Company sold more patterned and plain textiles from Coromandel in Indonesia than chintz.20 The textiles from "Other" areas could practically be neglected. In Indonesia very little woollen textile from Holland was sold. Reading down the columns of quantities it can be noticed that the textile sales in Indonesia decreased over time.

One of the reasons which has been advanced elsewhere for the decrease in the textile sales of the Company in Indonesia has been the levelling off of the Company’s spice trade under the monopoly and the decline in rewards to the Indonesians from it.21 In addition it has often been stated by the VOC officials themselves and researchers following their


21 E.C. Godde Molsbergen, Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië, vol 4: 43
reports, that the people in the archipelago became poorer and that textile prices in Coromandel were rising.\footnote{A Reid, Age of Commerce, vol 2: 14, 21, 299-302} The connection between the decline of the textile trade and price behavior is discussed in the next section, while other issues relating to this decline are examined in the subsequent chapters.

The important point to establish here is that a decline in the import for the archipelago set in possibly as early as the 1640s or early 50s when the imports were respectively 400,000 and 315,000 pieces. The import was larger in 1686 with 485,000 pieces, but that was exceptional and an aberration. There are three reasons to explain the 1686 higher import. First, the Company tried for a few years in the 1680s to monopolize the Coromandel textile trade and bought up as many textiles as possible in order to prevent competing traders from buying them. Second, it desperately attempted to sell the large stock that had been built up, especially the chintz as was observed above and the rice harvest in Java had been good that year.\footnote{W.Ph. Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1684): 745} Third, the Company had captured Banten and ordered all foreign traders expelled. The Company initially picked up the sales that the foreign traders had previously made there, but when Banten had adjusted to the new arrangements under Company control, the sales there diminished again as it had done in the case of Makassar after 1669. The buyers of the textiles looked for markets where the textiles were cheaper or reverted to making their own cloth. As Reid pointed out, "local cloth production in the Archipelago soared."\footnote{A. Reid, Age of Commerce, vol 2: 30}

The establishment of declining sales of Indian textiles in the archipelago is more clearly illustrated in the line-graph on the next page. It shows averages for two successive years between 1623-5, 1635-7, 1685-7, 1703-5, 1723-5, 1733-5, 1757-9, the other years are treated singly, because no
## Total Indonesian Textile Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1623-25</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1635-37</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1639-41</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1653</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
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<td>1685-87</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-05</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-25</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-35</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
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<td>1757-59</td>
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<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total VOC Textile Sales in Indonesia

![Graph showing the total VOC textile sales in Indonesia from 1623 to 1780.](image)
records were available to join them in pairs. The sources other than the *negotie boeken* do not give details concerning the production areas, the types, quantities, or value of each textile that was imported. Hence, I selected twelve years of the *negotie boeken* for a detailed analysis, which constitute 38% of the sample of the *negotie grootboeken* that have been preserved and are legible. The year 1652-3 was the only year preserved for the 17th century. The figures for the 17th century except for 1652-3, were taken from the sources listed under footnote 2 at the beginning of this section. I took clusters of two years (three-year-clusters were not available) roughly 15 years apart during the 18th century until 1759 after which the textile trade diminished to such an extent that it was not necessary to take two year clusters to show the decline during the second half of the 18th century for which the years 1770-1 and 1780-1 were selected.

The line-graph shows large sales in Indonesia during the first half of the 17th century of approximately 300,000 pieces annually. After mid-century the sales of Indian textiles in the archipelago declined. Some historians think that as textiles became more expensive, the local people started increasingly to weave and decorate their own cloth. This question of import substitution is examined in the last section of this chapter and chapter 10. The increase in sales of Indian textiles stands out during the years 1757-9 in this graph. Two possible explanations are the sales of the large stock from the warehouses in Batavia and the branch offices which were ordered by Governor-General Mossel and additionally that "after 1757 the main warfare

25 The graph is based on Table 6. Where possible, the years were clustered in pairs. The data for the 17th century is taken from the Batavia Dagh-registers except for the years 1685, in W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1685): 816, and 1653 which is like the data for the years in the 18th century based on the Batavia Negotie Boeken

26 Appendix F, "Bookkeeping for Textiles" states the reason why only one book had been preserved from that century.

was over" in Java. The pattern of the total import of textiles from India did not show a real increase. Therefore, the causes for an increase during the last few years in the 1750s must be attributed to happenings internal to Indonesia.

This section on the import of textiles by the Company in Batavia looked first at the total import illustrated in Table 8 and subsequently at the import for just the Indonesian market in Table 9. Although the import and sales in Indonesia were more clearly illustrated in the line-graph and Tables, neither of them set apart the proportions of imports for the archipelago from those for Europe. Table 10 below shows the percentage of Indonesian import in terms of number of pieces and value of the total import. Only those years that indicated a destination for the import were included. The figures indicate percentages of total VOC imports to Batavia which were destined for the Archipelago.

**TABLE 10**

Percentage of Total VOC Import Destined for the Indonesian Archipelago

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>import % pieces</th>
<th>import % value</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>import % pieces</th>
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<td>1686-87</td>
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<td>1734-35</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-04</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>1757-58</td>
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<tr>
<td>1704-05</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1758-59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1770-71</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724-25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1780-81</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>66</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


29 VOC 2945 (1759): 2181; Realia, vol 2 (1757): 156. Under January 18 a statement was made that "a large quantity of the Company's cloths sold for cash in Batavia."
The overview above shows that the importance of the Indian textiles for Indonesia in the context of the entire Company's textile trade in Batavia is not overwhelmingly high after 1650. As the Indian textile trade of the Company increased for the European market, it decreased for the Southeast Asian market. For most years after 1650 more textiles left Batavia for other destinations such as the Netherlands, Japan, and to a lesser extent Siam and Persia. Only half or less of the quantity and value of the textiles were distributed in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the figures in Table 9 showed that for the greater part of the VOC period several hundred thousand textiles were bought by the people in the archipelago or used for other purposes.

The largest quantity of pieces of cloth were sold in the first half of the 17th century. Those peaks in the VOC textile trade were never regained.

Decline of the VOC textile trade has been seen in context of a general lowering economic prosperity in the archipelago.\textsuperscript{30} The figures here might be taken to confirm that proposition. Close analysis of the Dutch records, however, suggests that the drop in the import trade figures, illustrated above was, in fact, part of a more complex picture. To pursue this subject it is necessary to investigate the buying power in the Indonesian market by studying prices.

\textit{Prices of Textiles: Macroview}

Conclusions on prices of textiles or any other commodity of the VOC cannot be considered in isolation from developments affecting first the economy of Asia, and secondly, the world economy. During the 16th century the process of arbitrage, a shifting of metals to find an equilibrium in the exchanges of silver and gold between China and the rest of the world, had put price indexes on the rise.\textsuperscript{31} The essence of global changes in prices

\textsuperscript{30} A. Reid, \textit{Age of Commerce}, vol 2: 301; S. Arasaratnam, \textit{Merchants, Companies, and Commerce}: 152-3

during the 16th and 17th century lay, as proposed by Dennis O. Flynn, in the "modernization" of China when it shifted from paper money to a silver based economy and the government tribute system changed to a tax collecting agency triggered off by mercantilist control of Chinese private trading communities along the coasts and rivers. Flynn’s observation that “the relocation of products from low-value to high-value areas roughly equalized its [silver] price everywhere”\(^\text{32}\) applies not only to the equalizing effect of the flow of metals between Europe and Asia and America and Asia, but also to the prices of textiles in China and India.

In both areas the prices of textiles were related to the influx of metals.\(^\text{33}\) In Coromandel prices appear to have begun to rise as early as the 1660s as a consequence of increased demand on the production of textiles for expanding markets in Asia and Europe and possibly the size of the import of metals. At the same time the Company was forced to lower prices of textiles in the archipelago because of the increased competition from both European and Asian traders.\(^\text{34}\) The Company had been in a position to command the prices of textiles in regions of the archipelago under their control. It attempted to work out the competition that sold the textiles at a lower price to keep their own prices high and derive increasing profits. However, the competition stopped the Company from increasing the prices at the rate it had done in the first half of the 17th century. Although the Company was successful in minimizing the influx of textiles by foreign traders it could not make the large profits it had at the beginning of the century because the buying prices of textiles increased. By the turn of the 18th century prices of textiles would never return to former levels.\(^\text{35}\) Throughout the first half of

\(^{32}\) Ibid: 8


\(^{34}\) J.K.J. de Jonge, Opkomst, vol 6 (1660): 88-9, (1662): 95

\(^{35}\) K. N. Chaudhuri in The trading World of Asia as referred to in S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce: 338-9
the 18th century prices of rice, cotton and wages increased which also affected the price of the textiles. In Bengal the price of silk increased along with wages and food prices. This in turn caused textile prices to rise. In order to expend the same amount the Dutch wanted lower quality cloths. They had also settled for inferior quality textiles in Masulipatnam in the 1680s when the price of textiles increased due to higher cotton prices and large orders from the English. The VOC had difficulty procuring silk pieces because the weavers did not want to work for less money and walked away. The Company was a big buyer, but notorious for paying lower prices than the free traders. As long as there were buyers of the higher priced quality cloths, the weavers could afford to supply the Companies at lower rates. They made more profit weaving high quality silk textiles. As the price revolution took place, they were less prepared to take on contracts for coarse textiles on which their profits were low or even negative. What can be seen is that the Dutch preferred to lower the quality of the cloth for the Indonesians rather than paying the higher prices for the textiles. The Company’s strategy of buying the quality textiles for Europe where good profits were made on quality Indian textiles and conserving the lesser quality textiles for the archipelago was still continued in the middle and second half of the 18th century. The decline of the Company’s textile trade is partly attributable to selling the inferior qualities to the people in the archipelago.

The same strategy was applied in the buying of textiles in China for the European market. In China the price index doubled between 1702 and

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36 Ibid: 338-41

37 W.Ph. Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, vol 4 (1680): 393; Om Prakash, The Dutch East India Company: 144


39 VOC 3208 (1768): 452; Realia, vol 1 (1762): 332

40 Realia, vol 1 (1762): 332 The order to Coromandel was not to accept low grade textiles for Europe, but to accept them for "Indië."
The VOC reacted by controlling the production of textiles to accommodate the inflation. It ordered its Cantonese merchants "to make the [silk] damasks lighter to lower the price" in 1764. Senior merchant Cruysse and silk expert Delavigne who returned to Batavia from China had proposed already in 1735 that the Company should abandon its system of heavy and light money. The decrease in the purchasing power of silver was being felt. The Company did evaluate the guilder by 20% on August 1, 1743 on instigation of Governor-General van Imhoff. The books were adjusted for 80% of the light money, but the goods that arrived from the Netherlands were still converted into light money in subsequent years. The revaluation brought much confusion because of the multitude of coinages that were going in the archipelago. The bookkeeping of the Company was further unaffected, because it continued in light money. However, on September 1, 1768 light money was abolished and all the amounts in the books rectified by deducting 16.35%. The intrinsic value of the Dutch ducaton against 66 stuivers was maintained from that moment onwards. In my analysis of prices I have not taken either evaluation into account. The figures have been taken as they appeared in the books.

The quantity of Total imports to Batavia fluctuated year by year, but the trend increased in both value and volume until the mid-1720s after which a decrease set in, shown in a summary of Table 8 and 9 (see Fig. 1 next page). The upward trend coincides with the importance of Indian textiles in the European markets after 1664. Until the end of the 17th century most ships left from Batavia for the return journey to Europe with an increasing

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42 Realia, vol 1 (1764): 273

43 W.Ph. Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, vol 9 (1735): 720

44 J.P. de Korte, De Jaarlijkse Financiële Verantwoording in de VOC: 39

45 J.R. Bruijn et al., Dutch-Asiatic Shipping, vol 1: 134-9
FIG. 1: Total Value and Volume of Textile Import

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total Indonesia</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Import</td>
<td>No. pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1652-3</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-5</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>223</td>
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<tr>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>196</td>
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<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>182</td>
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<tr>
<td>1757-9</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>272</td>
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<tr>
<td>1770-1</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Import No. pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1652-3</td>
<td>1725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-5</td>
<td>2470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>4979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>3937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757-9</td>
<td>3158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770-1</td>
<td>1549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Volume of Textile Import

Total Value of Textile Import
quantity of textiles destined for the Netherlands. When ships began to return directly from Ceylon, Coromandel and Bengal with the Indian cloth in order to reach Europe quickly to satisfy the demand for the latest fashions, total imports decreased in Batavia. The height of the export of textiles from Batavia to the Netherlands in the 1720s corresponds with the largest number of VOC ships that ever left Batavia in any decade, namely, 260 ships between 1720 and 1730. There is no record of the bales that went straight from India to the Netherlands or other destinations in the Batavia Negotie Boeken. All trade that did not pass through Batavia is reflected in the Generale boeken, but they were not a concern for this study.

In comparing the two graphs in Fig. 1: Total Value and Volume of Textile Import on the next page for which the data is based on the Negotie boeken only, the first columns in the tables and upper lines in the graphs show a steep rise till 1723, but thereafter a steady decline to 1780.

Between 1652-3 and 1703-5 the total textile import increased steeply from 461,000 pieces to 772,000 pieces or 67% while the value did not increase at the same rate. However, the value of the textiles doubled between 1703-5 and 1723-5 from £2,469,500 to £4,979,000, while the volume of the import increased comparatively little from 771,500 pieces to 872,500 textiles. The reason is that the price of textiles increased considerably in the first quarter of the 18th century as a result of rising prices in Coromandel and periodic increasing prices in the Surat hinterland because of disturbances there after the death of the Mughal Sultan in 1707. The textiles continued to increase in price. Taking the Total Import of pieces and the Total Import of the value in £1,000 in Fig.1, the average price of a textile in 1652-3 was £3.74 decreasing to £3.19 in 1703-5, but practically doubling to £5.70 in 1723-5, still increasing to

46 The increase in tonnages of home bound ships from the production areas is clearly indicated in J.R. Brujin et al., Dutch-Asiatic shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries: 176, Table 36. For the increased importance of Indian textiles see F.S. Gaastra, "De VOC in Azië to 1680" in Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol 7: 211

47 F.S. Gaastra, De Geschiedenis van de VOC: 105, Table 9 "Aantallen VOC-schepen van en naar Azië, 1602-1795."
f6.20 in 1733-5, dropping to f5.80 in 1757-9, but increasing again to f6.07 in 1770 and f6.52 in 1780-1. Prices of textiles before 1652 had been much lower than f3.74.

In comparing the value and the volume of the textiles for the Indonesian market (second columns, Tables in Fig. 1), two instances stand out. In 1723-5 and again in 1780, the volume of imported textiles drop while the values rise (second column in the tables and bottom lines in the graphs). The increase of prices in 1723-5 had also started much earlier. Calculating from Fig. 1, Indonesia Import No. Pieces and Indonesia Import of the value in f1,000, the average price of a textile in 1652-3 was f3.75, increasing to f4.66 in 1703-5, still rising to f6.01 in 1723-5, but dropping to f5.16 in 1733-5, increasing again to f5.69 in 1757-9, decreasing to f4.73 in 1770-1 and increasing steeply to f6.52 in 1780-1.

The price patterns for the Total textile import and the Indonesian textile import differ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Import</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Indonesian Import</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1652-3</td>
<td>decrease</td>
<td>1703-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decrease</td>
<td>1757-9</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>1770-1</td>
<td>decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reason for this difference is difficult to explain at this stage. A comparison between the types of textiles that were traded to Europe and the textiles sold in Indonesia would have to be made which was not part of this study. The graphs also show the proportional comparison in the import of the Total and Indonesian textiles. In 1652-3 the Indonesian textiles make up 68% of the total, but the lowest proportion is around the 1723-5 when the Total import is large, but Indonesia’s share is only about one quarter of this
total which explains the widest gap between the upper and lower graphs. The gap closes when the proportions come closer together again by the second half of the 18th century.

The price analysis in general was also applied to a number of individual textiles to look for patterns and relate them to the larger picture presented above.

Three invoices\(^48\) for 1619, 1620 and 1623 showed respectively an average price of £1.58, £1.83, and £2.01 per piece of cloth, confirming that textiles were much cheaper before 1652-3, the year of the first Batavia negotie boek. The cheapest textiles the Company imported during the period from 1619-23 were the ordinary gussies that were used as a doty in India which cost £0.05 per doty piece. The cheapest pieces of textiles in the lists were kamkani (£0.51), popeli (0.31), asmanis (0.46), chintz (0.98), cannekins (0.47), negrocloth (0.46), tapi cindai from Cambay (0.63). The textiles that cost between £1.00 and £2.00 were: tapi grande, gulong grande, tapi kecil, patta malayu, beiramee, sailcloth, karikam, chelas, chintz, taffachelas platadio, bafta (ordinary black, white and blue), kangan, beiramee, chelas, balaches, tercandia, betille, blankets and sarassa malayu. The most expensive textiles were fine pieces, black and blue bafta (£2.35-3.75), taffachelas (£7.18), silk patolu (£5.20 and £7.34), silk plat.adò (£3.67) and cherry bafta (£9.06). As the Company controlled a larger share of the market in Indonesia the prices of the Indian textiles increased because it could command the selling price.

Although the prices for textiles almost doubled between 1620 and 1650, the quantity of textiles that were imported did not drop. The VOC was expanding its market for textiles in the archipelago, most likely taking a share that formerly had been serviced by other Asian traders although the competition between the latter and the VOC in ports such as Aceh, Makassar, and Banten was stiff. The plentiful supplies of Indian textiles presented by the VOC and competing traders to the Indonesian people possibly increased

\(^48\) Om Prakash, The Dutch Factories in India 1617-1623: 120, 124-5, 290-1
the demand. Higher pepper and spice production paid for the textile import regardless of the price of the textiles in the first half of the century.\textsuperscript{49} Between 1650 and 1700 the price increased only about 25%, but the import decreased 30%. Reversals in price between 1723 and 1733 and again between 1757 and 1770 when prices dropped during both those periods, did not increase the sales of textiles. Therefore it might be concluded that the prices of the Indian textiles was not the prime factor for the decline of the textile trade in Indonesia.

The prices of the three invoices discussed above do not appear to have included the expenses the Company incurred in importing these textiles to Batavia. From the bookkeeping of the Company it is not possible to learn about the costing of the textiles or of any other tradegoods. However, instructions of 1617 stated that the buying price should be stipulated in the costs. It is not clear at which moment the expenses incurred in the packaging and shipment were incorporated. Perhaps before they were entered into the inventory books in Batavia. Stapel who interpreted a pricelist of around 1610 which showed three columns with increasing prices for nine textiles, thinks that the first column represented the cost price in India, the second the Company's computation of its cost after storage and transport to the archipelago, and the third column the sale price.\textsuperscript{50} If Stapel is correct the costing was not consistent and varied from 25% to 100% per textile which seems very high and the variability unlikely for a group of textiles that came in the same shipment from the same production area. There is no doubt that before the minimum profit was set to be made on a textile an amount above the buying price in India was added to cover costs. In 1696 the shopkeeper was told to add a cost compensation of 6%: 4% for the Indian offices and 2%

\textsuperscript{49} A. Reid, Age of Commerce, vol 2: 14 fig. 3, 21 fig.5 both figures support the increase of pepper till 1670 and spice production till 1620

\textsuperscript{50} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, part 1: 19
for Batavia which seemed much more reasonable.  

In 1644 the senior and junior merchants and assistants were required to adhere to the prices of the Coromandel and Surat textiles that were set by the Director-General in conjunction with the Governor-General and Council, but they had to consider the quality, fineness, width, length, etc. of the cloths in order to raise or lower the price. Almost the same instructions were issued again in 1696 to the shopkeeper of the large shop who paid the salaries to the employees of the Company. He had an old price list that showed a constant percentage of profit for each textile thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guinees</td>
<td>ordinary bleached (C)</td>
<td>52 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinees</td>
<td>brown/blue (C)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salempore</td>
<td>bleached</td>
<td>73 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcalle</td>
<td>ordinary bleached</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The shopkeeper was told to take note of the regulated price that was attached to the bale of textile that he received from the warehouse and do his calculations accordingly. It was thought that the unchanging percentage of profit that usually applied according to the list above did not do justice to the quality of the cloth, because

almost all types of cloths vary in their quality and cost price, although they are called by the same name. When they are sold according to the price list, they are treated as if they all appear to be the same.

Thus, the price of textiles must have varied from bale to bale depending on the quality and price that was paid for that particular variety.

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52 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 151
53 J.A. van der Chijs, Plakaatboek, vol 3 (1696): 413
54 J.A. van der Chijs ed., Plakaatboek, vol 3: 415
Clusters

Before an analysis of prices for individual textiles can occur the clustering of textiles requires clarification. In order to deal with more than 200 textile types (excluding the varieties) in the VOC trade it was necessary to categorize them. Historians who have dealt with Indian trade cloths have either neglected grouping them or have simply divided them into silks and cottons. A closer examination of the trade textiles shows, however, that quite a number of textile types were mixed fibres, cotton and silk. In some cases one type of textile was presented as both, all cotton or all silk. There existed a sharper contrast between textiles differentiated as being muslins, plain, chintz, and checked and striped textiles. Some textiles like the Gujarat silk *patola*, did not belong to any of the above, but were obviously luxury textiles if the price was taken into consideration. It was decided therefore, that, in view of the textile traditions still current in Indonesia today, it might be more useful to classify the Indian trade textiles into categories that stressed attributes that seemed most characteristic of a specific textile. A muslin could be striped, checked, printed, or plain, but other textiles that were striped, checked, printed or plain, were not muslin. The thinness and fineness of muslin, of which *betille* is the most frequently traded type, was the major characteristic in this category.

Other frequently traded textiles such as *bafta*, *muri*, and *parcalle* were predominantly plain textiles. Sometimes they might have a few golden or colored threads as a *kepala*, or a stripe along the selvedge, or a small decorative print (not chintz) on them but that was not characteristic of the cloth. The predominance of plain color in the cloth, rather than its lightly decorated part, was decisive in classifying it as plain. The *bleached* guinees, *parcalle*, *salempore*, which were very popular, are other examples taken to be plain cloths.

Many guinees, *niquanias*, *gingam*, *chelas*, (see Plate 1, 4) were striped textiles, or also came as a checked variety, in the likeness of *geras* and some *rumals* (Plate 3). Hence, these were classified as a type different to muslin or plain
textiles because of the predominant attribute being a stripe or check. The stripe or check in a blue, red, black or brown in the textile characterized that textile in the documents more than it being a cotton or silk. In the same way chintz seemed a category on their own, mainly because of their decorating technique using the wax resist method even if they were sometimes simple, rather crude and cheap as in Plate 2. The textiles with fine embroidery, or decorated woven silks, or with much gold thread, being very expensive, were classified as luxury cloth. That is not to say that there were no luxury cloths among the chintz and muslin, but the appearance was given priority over the classification of a textile by its price. I realize that this is an arbitrary decision and that a classification by price or simply in silk, cotton, or other fibre, would give different results in an analysis. I was most interested in knowing which types of cloths were predominant, and if there were patterns in clusters going to certain regions.

To make other types of analyses possible, I have entered all the textiles from the ledgers into a spreadsheet (Excel 4.0) in Appendix G while an average of their prices in the ledgers is listed in Appendix A. Hence, these textiles can still be rearranged according to other questions asked from the primary sources.

*Prices of Textiles: Microview*

After looking at the large picture of price behaviors, a microview of the unfolding conduct of prices for individual textiles will be presented. Prices of eight textiles for each of the five clusters (Appendix H) were studied, selected from Appendix A and plotted graphically. Prices are the buying prices set by the administration in Batavia. The bookkeeping tells us very little about the selling prices. Most textiles were credited for their buying price because they were not sold out of the warehouse, but transferred to the shop, to a branch office where the shopkeepers would set the selling price, or an auction where the bidders did so. For each of the five clusters of textiles—chintz, muslin, plain, luxury, and checked and striped—the results are arranged alphabetically
by cluster in Appendix H.

Most textiles show an increase in price if the first year of the textile price is compared with the last price. This is most noticeable for the prices of luxury, muslin and plain cloths; it is not as striking for the chintz, checked and striped cloths. However, among each cluster are types of textiles that do not show an increase, or if they did, the prices diminished again such as the *sarassa malayu* for the 17th century, the *palempore*, Bengal chintz, *niquanias*, *patta*, *guinees blue*, *gingam drongam*, *gingam penasse*, *hamman*, *cotton patolu*, white and black-blue *bafta*, and every variety of *betille*.

Among the chintz the cheapest textiles which did not vary much in price are the *sarassa* and *tapi cindai* between f1.20 and f2.37. Medium priced chintz like the *committer*, *sarassa gobar*, and Bengal chintz varied slightly more from f3.29 to f6.00, while the luxury chintz blankets, bedcovers and Coromandel chintz varied from f5.04 to f20.39.

The prices of the checked and striped cloths do not vary as greatly as the chintz. The most expensive are the *guinees*, but the length of the cloth of minimally 35 meters make up for the high price. The *niquanias* was the cheapest stripe. The *pattas*, *fotas*, and *gingams* were a medium price while the *chelas* was the level of the *guinees*, but it being a shorter textile, thus, more luxurious.

In analyzing the luxury textiles a striking pattern occurs where practically all textiles increased considerably in price except the *butidar*. Possibly a lesser amount of embroidery accounts for the cheaper price at the end of the 18th century which dropped from several hundred guilders to f189. The silk *patolu* became rarer in the 18th century as its price increased from f7.00 in the 17th century to about f16.00 in the 18th century. The cheap imitation cotton *patolu* substituted for the loss of silk *patola* at a price of between f1.50 to f2.00. The earliest mention of the cotton *patolu* in the ledgers was in the beginning of the 18th century. Clearly, the luxury cloths were distinguished from the other textiles by their price.

The Bengal *cassa*, *soosie*, *therindais* and *sologesie* were the most expensive muslins varying from about f8.00 to f20. Bengal was noted for its muslins
and almost all types came from that production area. The *adati* was a medium range muslin. The most popular *betille* show less variation in price than might have been expected from £4.00 to about £8.50.

The plain textiles were the most current and profitable textiles for the Company which is why they were protected after 1759 when most of the textiles were given over to the free and private traders. It immediately shows in the price of the *bafta* that the additional gold thread used in the weaving made the textile jump in price. Whereas the white and blue plain *bafta* are in the price range of £4.00 to £6.00, the gold *kepala bafta* varies from £10.60 to £15.00 per piece. Among the plain textiles the *geras* was one of the cheaper varieties fluctuating between £3.00 and £5.50 in the 18th century. The *muri* and *parcalle*, presumably used for batik in Java sometimes, had a medium range price of £4.00 to £6.00 per piece, similarly to the *salempore* which were further decorated by the Indonesian women. 55

Arasaratnam has observed for the Coromandel textiles between 1650 and 1740 that "it is far more problematic to determine the price trends in textiles during this period, given the difficulty in matching the qualities of the product that went under the same brand names." 56 However, in the general analysis of the prices of the Indian textiles a rise in prices for these textiles was demonstrated across the board. An analysis of forty individual types and varieties of textiles shows that the luxury textiles increased noticeably more than the other clusters. There was no discernable overall pattern, for which two explanations can be given. First, the way the textiles were priced. It was ruled that the quality of a textile had to be a major consideration for the merchants and shopkeepers in prizing a textile for sale. Because the Company was aware of the increasing buying prices in India (and China) it compromised quality for price. However, it did not have to apply that strategy to the luxury textiles which showed the highest increases. The

55 KITLV: H717 a, b Th. Pigeaud, "Javaanse Beschavingsgeschiedenis": 311-6

56 S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Company, and Commerce: 138
buyers of the luxury cloths could afford the price anyway.

The grouping of textiles by their main characteristics which has been presented above is an innovation. This type of classification might offer associations with textiles that are still being produced by Indonesian women today. The method could also be used to the type of textiles that prevailed in certain areas in Indonesia. This is something that could not be done if the textiles were not classified or were simply grouped by their fibres, sizes, colors, dimensions, or other attributes.

Examination of the pricing and price behavior of textiles serves to illuminate fluctuating patterns. The difference in these patterns probably lies in the way the textiles are priced. In the case of Indonesia the pricing was based on the quality of the cloth and the buying price in India. Dutch sources reveal that the textiles suffered in quality at the gain of lower prices. This has never been adequately demonstrated in previous studies of the trade. More significantly we find that high prices are not the only factor for the decline in textiles in Indonesia. Although average prices for Indonesia show an increasing trend, the decline set in after prices had doubled in the first half of the 17th century, not at the same time that the prices were doubling during those first 50 years. The next interval of 50 years showed prices to continue to increase. However the decline in quantity of import was not proportional to the increase of the price; the decline was proportionally higher. Later intervals in the reverse confirmed the dissociation of price and quantity sold, that is, when prices dropped, the sales did not increase.

Cloth for Cloves

The focus here is on the textile trade of Ambon, consisting of cloth imported by the Company and the local cloth in the archipelago. It was observed earlier that the total volume of the VOC textile trade in the archipelago declined. How does one explain this decline at the micro level of Ambon? Was the decline caused partly by diminished demand at the local level? What effect did the decline have on the local economy. Was local
cloth substitution a function of decline? Who were the traders involved in strengthening internal trade when the external trade in Company textiles diminished? What was the price history of Company textiles during the decline, and how did prices of Indian cloth compare with local cloth prices? Did rival traders challenge the Company as provider of the Indian cloth? These questions will all be addressed in the following four sections.

Ambon was chosen as a case study of the textile trade in the 18th century not because of the size of its market for cloth—Ternate had a larger distribution—but because this was the area where the VOC had the most secure control. Ambon was also chosen because primary source material and published sources for the 17th century were available in Australia.  

**Trade and Traders of Ambon**

In the 15th century the Ambonese had played an intermediary role between the clove and nutmeg production centers by providing a base, provisions, and junks for foreign traders such as Malays, Javanese, Indian Muslims, Arabs, Persians and Chinese. They brought cloth from India which was in great demand. Ancient barkcloth and plaiting in the region showed *patolu* motifs and the *patola* cloths seem to have had special significance during the time that these foreign traders frequented Maluku. Some of the coastal people were Islamized at this time. Under the influence

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57 G.J. Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen* presents an extensive social history of the Ambonese from 1656 to 1696 which was of great assistance to this chapter.

58 Ch.F. van Fraassen, "Drie plaatsnamen uit oost-Indonesië in de Nagarakertagama: Galiyao, Muaar en Wwanin en de vroege handelsgeschiedenis van de Ambonse eilanden" in BKI, vol 132, no 2/3: 293-305

59 Cortesão, Armando ed. *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires: 207, 216*

60 F. Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw*, vol 2: 165, 220, 222; J.A. Chijs ed. *Dagh-register*, vol 5: 295. A snake is known as *ular patola*, a particular gourd or vine fruit as *sayur patola*. An individual could carry the name Patole and Hoamoal had a place called Batu-patola. Warleaders and priests wore a *patolu* sash during ceremonies and debt payment is known to have been in *patola*.
of Islam the dress code of the Ambonese began to change and was modified again when 650 Portuguese settled among them in the 16th century.\textsuperscript{61} The coastal inhabitants used Indian cloths for their costume and buried cloths as treasure in large quantities in handwoven baskets, chests of palm and pandamus leaves and in earthenware vessels in hinterland mountains and nearby forests.\textsuperscript{62}

The VOC cloth trade in Ambon stems from the time that Admiral Steven van der Hagen occupied Fort Victoria after defeating the Portuguese in 1605. The intermediary role the Ambonese had played in the local trade network before the Dutch arrived was suppressed by the middle of the 17th century. It was totally crippled in 1683 when a new regulation forbade Ambonese to leave their province as crew on the vessels of other traders who had been granted permission to trade by the Dutch. When Ambonese wanted to leave their residence for a journey, they had to inform the\textit{ raja pati} or\textit{ orangkaya} of their\textit{ negeri}.\textsuperscript{63} Under these restrictions the local Ambonese showed very little initiative in undertaking trading ventures, and the Dutch Governor in 1748 observed that the people had become impoverished because of it. Already in 1696 a VOC official had written that the Ambonese were too poor to undertake any trade. The same was again observed in a letter in 1768.\textsuperscript{64} Whatever small trade they undertook was restricted to the province of Ambon.

Ambon's provincial commerce was funnelled through the VOC stronghold, Castle Victoria, in Kota Ambon. It functioned as a small distribution center for Company cloth forwarded from Batavia, as the Ternate office did for northern Maluku in the VOC period. Kota Ambon was the only place where passes were given to free traders voyaging to subaltern

\textsuperscript{61} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam,\textit{ Beschrijvinge}, vol 2, part 1: 115

\textsuperscript{62} H. Jacobs,\textit{ Treatise}: 141; H. Jacobs,\textit{ Documenta Malucensia}, vol. 1: 601; G. Schurhammer, Francis Xavier, vol III: 74, 100, 174; F. Valentijn, vol 2: 175

\textsuperscript{63} VOC 3208 (1768): 532

\textsuperscript{64} VOC 2716 (1748): 333; 3208 (1768): 458
offices in the province, to other branch offices, and to Java.

The movement of Indian cloth from Batavia to Ambon and its surrounding markets, and the counter movement of cloves from Ambon to Batavia, is part of what I refer to as external trade. It is important to understand the historical policies which underlay this trade. In November 1650 the Dutch reissued a prohibition for all trade with Ambon by Chinese, Malay, and Javanese merchants; conditional permits were issued only to Europeans, burgers and the Chinese residing in Kota Ambon. I use the term external trade for the full trade circuit controlled by the VOC, in which free traders under strict surveillance by the VOC also participated. This trade linked Kota Ambon to other trading places lying outside Ambon province. Any trading within the provincial boundaries of Ambon, conducted by private traders, I refer to as internal trade.65 Company trade was confined to the external circuit, while free traders operated in both external and internal markets.

The most active traders were the Chinese, numerous enough to form an influential community in Ambon. There were also burgers, many of them of Dutch-Indonesian or Portuguese-Indonesian ancestry, who were also active players in this trade. The VOC policy of maximizing their profits through monopoly, i.e. the control of the production of spices and the control of the textile trade, could not be carried out in a vacuum. The policy had to adjust to the trading activities of the multi-ethnic free traders and to the needs of the population, all of whom had a stake in the exchange of goods and services—cloth for cloves—in the provincial economy.

The first Chinese, who were Christians, settled in Ambon in 1625 under the protection of the Dutch.66 Foreign residents permitted to settle permanently in Kota Ambon, like the Chinese, were exempted from trading

65 G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 44 map shows the boundaries of the province to include the districts of Ambon, Lease, western Islands, and southwest Ceram.

66 F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 436
restrictions. Their request for passes from the Dutch were not refused. It appears that there was a symbiotic relationship between the Chinese and burgers and VOC officials in Ambon especially in times when Batavia renewed regulations prohibiting private trade by VOC’s employees. Javanese, Malays and other non-Ambonese residents from Dutch townships in the archipelago were not allowed to trade to Ambon or Banda. The Dutch were suspicious of spices being smuggled out.

The Dutch had welcomed burgers and Chinese for the technological know-how they contributed to the community in Kota Ambon. Smithing, shipbuilding, ropemaking, sawmilling, for example, were done by the burgers; fishing, agriculture, tax collecting, making rooftiles, selling pork and arak by the Chinese. Burgers and Chinese both traded over long and short distances, carrying cloth among their cargo. The Chinese and burgers, a few Muslims, and an occasional Ambonese played a major role in the economic sector of the Ambon government throughout the two centuries of VOC rule. There was friction sometimes between the Chinese and the other traders because the Chinese were allowed to sail to places prohibited for free burgers or mestizos. The Chinese often enjoyed a privileged position vis a vis competing traders because of the extraordinary services they provided in the eyes of those in power. For example, no one could provide the province with much needed rice as well as the Chinese. The Chinese were also the largest clients buying textiles from the VOC in Kota Ambon. They bought up all the cloth that was paid in wages to the soldiers and VOC employees. As in Java and Sumatra the Chinese were the main cloth distributors on the local level. They brought the cloth to the outer island markets. That was of great benefit to the ordinary Ambonese because the Chinese merchants were willing to finance their purchases. When the people were paid after the clove

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68 G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 166, 177-8, 188, 218-27

69 G.J. Knaap, Memories van overgave van gouverneurs van Ambon in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw, (1662): 212
harvest they paid back their debt to the Chinese.\textsuperscript{70} In some villages the local headman or orangkaya resold cloth to the alfuras, the pagans in the hinterland, and farmers at 50\% profit. They wanted to prevent the people from going to the VOC shops, so that they could take the profits themselves.\textsuperscript{71} The headmen took a risk that some alfuras would not pay them. In such cases they enslaved the persons concerned including wife and children.

Company officials often entrusted their money to Chinese nakhodas to trade on their behalf in places the Dutch could not go themselves. They also lent substantial sums of money to the Chinese at interest rates of 30 to 50\%.\textsuperscript{72} There is no evidence that Ambon's Chinese traded without passes or that they conducted trade outside the legal system established by the Dutch. They were afraid of the consequences if they were caught.\textsuperscript{73}

In the first three decades of the 18th century the Company introduced indigo, pepper, rice, opium, cocoa, and coffee cultivation in Ambon. It was hoped that the sales of cloths would increase when the people were paid for these products, but the population did not take to the cultivation of new products and eventually the projects were given up.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Decline of the Company Textile Trade in Ambon}

The decline of the Company textile trade in Ambon is apparent from Appendix G, which shows that the 12,080 pieces of cloth from Coromandel imported in 1652-53 had fallen to 5,100 in 1703-05 (ave.) and 7,765 in 1723-25.
(ave.); from Surat the import had fallen from 6,550 pieces of cloth in 1652-53 to 3,255 in 1703-05 (ave.) and 1,460 in 1703-05 (ave). Further detail is available for the 18th century for which 18 order lists were studied, covering a period of 50 years from 1735 to 1784.75 Every year in June Ambon sent to Batavia a "provisional order" followed by a "formal order" in September. There was usually very little difference between the provisional and the formal order.76 Before sending them to Batavia they were first discussed and approved in the council.77

There were six scenarios that could occur when an order had to be made up. It was possible to order (1) the same amount, (2) less, or (3) more of the same textile than was ordered one year earlier, (4) drop a type or variety, (5) re-order a formerly dropped item or (6) choose to order a new item. An analysis of the data for Ambon shows all occurred in the above order of frequency. The most important textiles to the Ambonese always came from Coromandel. The types of textiles that were ordered did not change much over time. There were basically seventeen types, but some came in three, four or five varieties. The table on the next page shows salempore, guinees, paralle, and dongris to be the most popular types judging by the quantities that were ordered. A total of 260 pairs of cotton stockings78 were also ordered in the eighteen years under discussion. These stockings and the textiles in the table below were consistently on the list during the whole VOC period.

75 A provisional order or a formal order was used for the following eighteen years: 1735, 1736, 1737, 1738, 1739, 1740, 1741, 1758, 1759, 1767, 1768, 1769, 1772, 1773, 1774, 1782, 1783, 1784 from the Ambon material in the Overgekomen Brieven of the VOC.

76 VOC, 2464 (1739): resp. folios 626 and 981 or VOC, 3595 (1782): 37-8; 127-8

77 F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 362. The council consisted of the provincial Governor, the upper-merchant, the army captain, the supervising chiefs of Saparua and Hitu coast if present in Kota Ambon, the fiscal, and the paymaster. A secretary was also present, who was Ambon's specialist, and gave information when needed.

78 220 stockings were bought for men and forty pairs for women. They were probably worn to church on Sunday by Kota Ambon's elite.
COROMANDEL TEXTILE ORDER:  
ANNUAL AVERAGE NUMBER OF BALES  
FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS BETWEEN 1735 AND 1784

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile</th>
<th>Annual Average Number of Bales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bafta</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betille</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanket filled with cotton</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulang</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelas</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chintz</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dongris</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingam</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinees</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamman</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muri</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percalle</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salempore</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salempore</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailcloth</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlaggedoek</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some Coromandel textiles listed for Ambon in the 17th century were no longer available in the 18th century: *balatius, madops, poleng gobars,* and *sarassas.*

The VOC also promoted the import of Bengal textiles in Ambon. There were 14 types known to have been ordered and sold in Ambon, of which *geras* was by far the most popular as can be seen in the table:

BENGAL TEXTILE ORDER: ANNUAL AVERAGE NUMBER OF BALES  
FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS BETWEEN 1735 and 1784

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile</th>
<th>Annual Average Number of Bales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adatie</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armosin double pieces</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dongris</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fotas</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geras</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingam</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamman</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmal</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumal</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailcloth</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanas</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VOC numbers and folios 2312, 552-63; 2343, 739-43; 2379, 836-7; 2408, 306-7; 2464, 626-8; 981-2; 2499, 696-7; 2907, 128-30; 2931, 42; 3180, 257-8; 3208, 184; 3329, 99, 206-7; 3595, 37-8, 127-8. To approximate the quantity of textile pieces, number of bales was multiplied by 105 in accordance with Appendix E.
Three thousand bundles of gunny were also ordered in the time of the sample. Cassa, chavonis, blankets, gunnies, and those listed above except the gingam and malmal had also been part of 17th century shipments. The armosin were always ordered in Ambon a few pieces at a time and never by the bale.\textsuperscript{80} It should be noted that none of the Bengal textiles were in as great demand as the Coromandel salemnore, guinees, and parcalle.

The quantities of Surat textiles shown for the 18th century were not impressive, which shows in the following table.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\textbf{SURAT TEXTILE ORDER: ANNUAL AVERAGE NUMBER OF BALES} & \\
\textbf{FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS BETWEEN 1735 and 1784} & \\
\hline
bafta & 5.5 & cannekin & 0.8 \\
blankets & 1.4 & karikam & 1.4 \\
chintz & 1.1 & niquanias & 2.1 \\
ginam & 0.1 & palampore & 0.1 \\
kangan & 0.3 & vlaggedoek & 0.2 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries the trade in Surat-type textiles have been in smaller numbers than those from Coromandel. This was demonstrated in Table 1, Chapter 1, Tables 9 and 10 above, and again in Appendix G under the section Textile Sales in Ambon where the totals for textiles from Coromandel are always larger than for Surat.\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Bafta, niquanias,}

\textsuperscript{80} 250 Armosins came from Bengal in bales of 100 pieces, thus 2.5 bales.

\textsuperscript{81} G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagel en Christenen: 224, 253 examined the trade books for Ambon for two years from 1689-91 which showed that Gujerat textiles were the most popular. That was a temporary situation when supplies in Coromandel declined drastically between 1688-91 due to "the conflict with the Mughal empire over piracy on the seas, for which the emperor prohibited all European trade in his dominion. This was compounded by the destabilizing effects of the expansion of Mughal power southward, especially around Masulipatnam and the Godavari delta" Arasaratnam
and karikam were consistently the most popular. In the 17th century silk patola had been on order too, but were no longer shipped in the 18th century. Fotas were not on the list above, but were ordered from Surat in the last quarter of the 18th century, after procurement from Bengal became unreliable. When paralle were unattainable in Coromandel Ambon received some from Surat. Except for gingam, kangan, and cannekin, all the textiles in the list above were used throughout the VOC period.

There were no orders in the 18th century for Chinese textiles in Ambon, nor for silk thread. However, there was a steady request for Javanese cotton thread which in the years sampled ranged from minimally 5,000 to at least 10,000 pounds annually.82

The tables above give us an idea of the proportions in which the different Indian production centers could supply Ambon,83 the types of states in Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740: 151; T. Raychaudhuri, Jan Company in Coromandel: 70. Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 2, I: 16 points to the importance of Coromandel textiles for Ambon in 1609 and the large profits from the sales.

82 G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 193, pointed out the combination of using Java thread with local gemutu fibre in Ambon's weaving during the latter part of the 17th century. The sources that were examined for the eighteenth century, only mentioned that the thread was used for tying fishing nets.

83 In these eighteen years a total of 2,564 bales were ordered, not received. Half or less of what was ordered might actually have been sent. Sources for eleven years of a population count averaged about 68,000 adults over 15 years of age. If we do a rough estimate on how much textile that might be per person it allows for a little over one meter per person per year. (Workings: 2,564 : 18 = 142.436 bales per year; 142.436 : 68,000 = 0.002 bale per person. One bale, we will see later in this chapter, can roughly be estimated at 105 pieces of textiles, so that is 105 x 0.002 = 0.2 piece of textile. An average length of a textile is approximately 11.50 meters, thus 0.2 x 11.50 = 2.3 meters, but only half or less of the order was fulfilled which leaves a little more than 1 meter of textile for each person over 15 years of age.) The population figures are always taken of persons over 15 years of age and located in VOC 2343, (1734, 1735): 734-5 pop. 73,632 and 72,144; VOC 2464 (1738, 1739): no fol number pop. 70,750 and 79,749; VOC 2499 (1741): 378-9 pop. 57,544; VOC 3180 (1771): 147 pop. 57,544; VOC 3439 (1774): 140 pop. 60,419. The several drops in population count are as a consequence of a serious epidemic in the late 1730s, a serious earthquake in 1739, and epidemics in the following cases.

The average length of a textile for the Southeast Asian market was approximately 11.50 meters, see Chapter 7. W.H. Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb: 338-9; J. J. Brennig, The Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel: 47
textiles that Ambonese inhabitants desired, the popularity of certain types and clearly points to Coromandel as the crucial supply region. Ambon, as a VOC distribution point in central Moluccas, reflects a similar pattern in the types of cloths as Banda and Ternate.

Between 1666 and 1680 approximately 200 bales arrived each year. Between 1735 and 1784 the demand for textiles diminished. Table 11 on the next page clearly indicates a decline in the ordering of textiles. The orders were never fulfilled for 100% and often only half the quantity was supplied. In the 1770s only 70 bales were ordered on average, 86% less than in the 1730s. The table demonstrates a declining trend of imported textiles. The population in Ambon had decreased between the 1730s and 80s, but the textile orders declined faster. Orders for Bengal and Surat textiles, except for long broad black bafta, stopped by the middle of the 1770s.

Varieties can be seen to consist of fine, bleached, ordinary and/or coarse, and brown-blue textiles. No fine varieties lasted throughout the time under discussion. The last bleached muri, and guinees of fine quality were ordered in 1769. None of the other fine textiles were available after the 1750s. However, all the brown-blue, or coarse, bleached ordinary guinees, salempore, parcalle, bafta, and muri lasted until the end of the period. They were the common varieties continually in demand among the Ambonese, including the ordinary bleached dongris and broad black long bafta. In 1759 the last order for European textiles was made. Every year two to three pounds of Dutch gold and silver thread had been ordered, but in 1759 that ceased too.

Considering that an estimated seventy-five varieties of textiles had been shipped to Ambon during the VOC period, the Company sharply reduced the choice it had to offer to its customers. Between 1740 and 1759 alone, thirty-two varieties ceased to be re-ordered. 1759 showed a monumental drop in the quantity of textiles that were ordered for Ambon, and trade never recuperated. By the 1780s only twelve varieties had survived.

84 G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 220-2

85 G.J. Knaap, Memories van overgave van gouweurens van Ambon: 456
TABLE 11
NUMBER OF BALES OF TEXTILES ORDERED
FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS BETWEEN 1735 and 1784

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Coromandel</th>
<th>Bengal</th>
<th>Surat</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1738</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1739</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>219.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>153.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>100.06</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>119.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,949.36</td>
<td>380.5</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>2,563.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons for the decline lay outside the province of Ambon, but some observations may be made about factors that show evidence of change in the economic sphere of the Ambonese. Ambon was an office with a deficit
balance. One of the options Batavia prodded the governors to pursue to minimize this financial shortfall was to increase the sales of textiles. A standard reply of the Ambon Governors to Batavia was that it was impossible to force the sales of textiles, because it was correlated to the success of the clove harvests.\footnote{VOC 2760: 238, 244; VOC 3208: 450-2}

The clove production between 1653 and 1727 has shown to be an annual average of 637,500 pounds.\footnote{G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagel en Christenen: 235} The average clove production for six years between 1743 and 1748 was 668,405 pounds and for twenty years between 1760 and 1780, it had been 831,841 pounds.\footnote{VOC 2716: 335; VOC 3595: 200-1} Thus, the pattern in the 18th century showed clove production on the increase, but textile sales decreasing which rules out any direct correlation between sales of VOC trade textiles and the size of the harvests of the cloves.

One year after 1759 stood out in the table above. In 1772 the order was for 119 bales of textiles. An explanation seems to suggest a slight correlation between textile sales and the clove harvest, because the clove production a year earlier was the highest in the company's history, namely 2,268,126 pounds. Considering though that this harvest was more than three times the production of 1739 (702,718 pounds) when the textile order for the subsequent year had been 174 bales, this again strengthens the theory that textile orders and sales were sharply declining independent of the clove production in Ambon province. It is doubtful that the prices would have affected the sales, because on the average they do not appear to have changed much from former years (see price table on page 321).

The VOC paid for the cloves in the second half of the 17th century £3.00 per 10 pounds.\footnote{G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 253} In 1753 Governor-General Mossel stipulated the price to be
£2.40 per 10 pounds. Although the Ambonese were paid lower prices for the cloves the total income for the province was the same because of the increase in production. The population appears to have increased very little in the 18th century compared to the 17th century. In 1692 the adult population of Ambon province was 57,602, in 1729 it was the highest on record for the VOC period at 80,000, but in the 1730s this decreased to 70,000; in 1765 60,000; in 1766 55,000, in 1774 60,000 again. Thus between the end of the 17th century and the third quarter of the 18th century there was little difference in the number of people that would have shared the income the province derived from the clove production. However, the energy expenditure was larger for the Ambonese.

Governor-General Mossel in 1753 expressed a similar opinion about the well being of the Ambonese as Valentijn had done 60 years earlier. Valentijn said he had never seen a beggar and attributed it to the abundance found in the forests. Anyone was allowed to enjoy these forest foods, as well as the wood, without charge. A poor person could cut as much as 3 bunches of firewood and sell them for 2 stuivers, which was sufficient to live on for one day. In the 1750s VOC officials concurred that the payment for the cloves was small and might be considered a service (the document states heere dienst), but that did not matter because the Ambonese could easily make a living outside this [the payment for cloves] on the fertile lands and waters teeming with fish, so that the payment for cloves is only pocket money (speel-penning) that is spent again on a choice piece of cloth or other trinket in addition to some rice because the Ambonese became weary of eating sago and had no time to prepare it.

This description points to the subsistence level upon which the majority

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91 See note 82 for details after 1734
92 F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 183
of Ambonese lived. This was also the finding of the historian, Knaap, for the second half of the 17th century.\textsuperscript{94}

\textit{Price History of the VOC Trade Cloths}

The quantity of textiles sold in Ambon comprised from 4 to 8% of the total sales for the archipelago. Considering that the islands provided the whole world with cloves, the size of the office in terms of sales of textiles is not imposing. To appreciate the prices that the Ambonese paid for the most popular textiles which were selected because of the high frequency with which they occurred in the orders above, a table was constructed (see next page). These were the selling prices deduced from the returns (\textit{rendements}) after the auction.\textsuperscript{95}

The prices of these cloths that were continually being auctioned increased approximately 10 to 20%. The prices were highest in the years 1759 and 1767 which was the same pattern when the prices for the overall Indonesian textile sales were analyzed. It might seem that the sharp drop in orders in 1759 was related to these high prices, but that is not the case. The drop in orders was definitely related to the re-organization of the textile trade and policies issued by Governor-General Mossel in 1759.\textsuperscript{96} When the prices of the first year 1734 in the table are compared with the prices of the last year in 1781 the difference is not remarkable.

To put these prices for a piece of Indian cloth in perspective with the cost of living, a few prices of other commodities are presented. In 1766 one pound of rice cost f0.02; salt f0.007; tobacco f0.04; one candle f0.87; one earthenware \textit{martevan} f11.38; one bamboo container with coconut oil f0.50; one modern gun (\textit{snaphaan}) f8.20; one bullet for the gun f0.015; one silver \textit{cap}

\textsuperscript{94} G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 260

\textsuperscript{95} VOC 2312 (1734): 306-7; 2760 (1750): 229-32; 2962 (1759): 105; 3208 (1767): 172; 3329 (1771): 325, 426, 444, 504 [average of all four auctions held that year]; 3595 (1781): 295

\textsuperscript{96} VOC 2945 (1759): 2169-ff
Calculating that an adult consumes somewhat less than a pound of rice a day, the cost of the most popular cloth, the *guinees* (35 meters length) was therefore equivalent to a year’s supply of rice and salt for a whole family.

### Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile Name</th>
<th>1734</th>
<th>1750</th>
<th>1759</th>
<th>1767</th>
<th>1771</th>
<th>1781</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Karikam</em></td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bafta</em> (wh.w.bl)</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>7.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Guinees</em> (or.bl.)</td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>19.55</td>
<td>27.70</td>
<td>18.21</td>
<td>16.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(br.bl.)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20.80</td>
<td>39.09</td>
<td>19.82</td>
<td>20.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Salempore</em> (or.bl)</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>7.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(br.bl.)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>19.10</td>
<td>9.91</td>
<td>11.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Parcalle</em> (or.bl)</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(br.bl)</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Muri</em> (or.bl)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>7.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gingam pinas</em></td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>10.30</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>discontinued</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dongris</em></td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Geras</em></td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>13.63</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

wh-white, w-wide, bl-blue, or-ordinary, br-brown, --- price not available

If the price of an Indian cloth is compared to prices of a local piece of cloth, the local cloths are a little cheaper, but did not have the prestige as an imported Indian cloth for the local people. However, it is difficult to compare the qualities from documents. One blue cloth from Salayer, south of

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97 VOC 3180 (1766): sept. 20, no pagination
Makassar, cost £1.50 and a white one £0.71 in 1758. The difference in price was due to the extra labor that was involved in dyeing the cloth blue with indigo. The price of a blue Salayer cloth the size of a sarong was only one fifth that of the Indian blue bafta. It should be remembered that the bafta was four or five times the size of a local cloth thus making the cloths almost comparable in price. At the end of the 18th century a cloth from Sumanap (Madura near Java) cost between £1.00-£2.00 per sarong while a kain bērang (a square red handkerchief) in Bengali style, cost £0.50. A kain kasumbar, also a red square cloth, was the same price, £0.50. The cloths were also bartered for respectively 20 and 12 pounds of tobacco, that is one bamboo container of tobacco was 4 to 5 pound.

Ambon weavers could produce their own cloth. Poorer people who could not afford the relatively expensive Company cloth obtained local cloth through unofficial channels. The politics and economics of trade in local cloth will be taken up in the final section where the issue of free traders is discussed.

Some Ambonese women wove and dressed in the uti uti (see Chapter 2). Uti utis were also sold in very small quantities, usually under 5 pieces costing from £1.50 to £3.00. The province of Ambon did not produce cloth for export like Java, Makassar and surrounding areas, because the people lacked the ingredients for it. In some areas no spinning or weaving was even known. Hence, cloth had usually been an imported commodity. Dyes like kasumba and indigo as well as cotton thread were imported annually. Locally woven cloths which reached Ambon from other islands in the archipelago in quantities of thousands in the second half of the 18th century were:

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98 VOC 2907 (1758): 41

99 No other indication of the author's name than E. "Iets over Ceram en de Alfoeren" BKI, vol 5: 87

100 F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 372-4; G.J. Knaap, Memories van overgave van gouverneurs van Ambon: (1621): 31-2; (1635): 138

101 VOC 2931 (1759): 115; G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagelen en Christenen: 191, 193, 222
1) from Java: Javanese celas, Javanese striped cloth, batik, Javanese small cloths, Pekalongan cloth, Semarang cloth, Banten cloth and ontji
2) from Makassar: Makassar celas, Makassar pants, Makassar small cloths blue and white, women skirts, cele pangkajene, handkerchiefs
3) Salayer blue and white small cloths, Batu Batu-, Buton -, Mandarese-, Buginese -, and Toagese cloth. 102

The local cloth production had become so overwhelming by the middle of the 18th century that the Company in Batavia did not hesitate to order the branch office in Makassar to provide Ambon with blue Salayer cloth for the poor. 103 In Ambon province blue was generally worn by the coastal people and red by those living inland.

Naturally, the VOC was concerned about these local cloths, seeing them as competitors to their monopoly in Indian cloth. But the Company officials dared not stop the production and trade of the cloth for fear of the local population rebelling against them. Even if the Company wanted to disallow their production, the cost of maintaining a police system to enforce repressive laws would have been prohibitive. Moreover, local cloth was not seen as a total competitor to imported Indian cloth, since the local cloth's affordability biased it towards the poorer classes which were not the clients of the Company in Ambon. In general, local orangkayas, rajas, patihs and other elites as well as the populations of the coastal towns preferred imported textiles, while the poorer villagers and mountain peoples went for the lower quality Company cloth and less expensive local cloth.

**The Role of Free and Local Traders in the Ambon Textile Trade**

Free trade was regulated through VOC policy. It related to two major concerns. The first concern was striking a balance between a rigid monopoly

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103 VOC 2907 (1757): 40
that tolerated no competition from local cloth production and an uncontrolled textile market; and trade which carried the risk of undercutting the demand for company cloth which was relatively higher priced than Indonesian cloth. The second concern was with the prevention of smuggling of contraband textiles. The cloth policy issue over monopoly was company-wide and applied to all cloth-producing areas outside Ambon.

The cloth monopoly has parallels with Dutch policy on controlled production and export of spices. To maintain the monopoly, the company had to rely on policing the coasts of the spice producing islands as well as the waters in eastern Indonesia frequented by smugglers. This was the rationale for the annual hongi expedition, a costly institution in both socio-political and financial terms. It involved the annual extirpation of "illegal" planting and growing of clove trees in islands designated for cloves.

To apply the same strictness to the production and sale of Indonesian cloth was impossible. It would have caused untold suffering to both producers and consumers in the archipelago. The Company took a middle course of keeping registers of incoming and outgoing vessels of free traders. These registers lend themselves to reconstructing a picture of how the provincial shipping of cloth compared with that of the Company.

In Kota Ambon the registers listed chronologically the dates of arrival and departure of vessels; the name and ethnicity of the owner; the age of the vessels; their carrying capacity in last; their place of origin and destinations; and a list of the cargo aboard. Not all the registers were preserved, but some could be located.

With regards to the ethnic background of the owners of the vessels the pattern in 1766 was typical: 18 vessels belonged to the Chinese, 17 to burgers, 5 to Muslims, and 4 to local Ambonese. The next year 13 Chinese, 10 burgers, 3 Muslims, and 3 local Ambonese arrived and departed from Kota Ambon. The average age of a vessel was approximately 2.5 years. The

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104 Realia, vol 1 (1741): 202

105 VOC 3208 (1766): 382-92
average size of a few dozen small orembay and tjampang was 2-4 last and a few more than a dozen vessels between 20 and 60 last (1 last = 3,000 pounds).

I have separated the cloths into locally produced cloth and imported Indian trade cloths. The purpose was to find out if the local traders were buying large quantities of Indian cloth which would indicate that the demand was still strong or if there was a tendency to prefer the local cloth because it was cheaper and the quality satisfactory. The quantity of cloth involved in eight lists varied from approximately 1,500 to 50,000 pieces of cloth. The total quantity was taken to be 100%; and local or Indian cloth a part percentage.

The overview below presents the findings in percentage thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Local Cloth</th>
<th>Indian Cloth</th>
<th>EXPORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IMPORT</td>
<td></td>
<td>EXPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761-5</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766-7</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771-2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774-5</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions of local cloth to Indian cloth traded by the free traders is increasingly in favor of the local varieties. Whereas Indian cloth had made up the majority of the cloths traded in the first half of the 18th century, in the second half of the century the local cloth takes the upper hand. The free traders appear to fill in the vacuum created by the decline in the volume of imported cloth by the VOC. If the need for cloth was growing or decreasing is not possible to ascertain. The Governor of Ambon attributed the

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decreasing sales of Company cloth to the unreasonable price and poor
good quality.\footnote{VOC 3208 (1768): 452}

It seems to indicate that the local cloth was of reasonable quality. Import substitution was successful in capturing the local market for cloth. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 indicated the need for cloth and the presence in the archipelago of the knowledge and technology needed to produce cloth. Raw materials were locally available. The moving force behind the import substitution were the Dutch themselves. Through monopolistic policies they had infuriated the local trading communities. The increase of taxes further spurred the weavers on to produce more cloths and for the traders to "smuggle" them. The Dutch were reluctant to increase expenditures to maintain the monopoly system. Faster and better armed local vessels and lesser Dutch aggression opened up for the local production an opportunity to flourish. There was no central authority in Indonesia, but the ruling families seem to have encouraged the import substitution; weaving, decorating cloth and selling were localized activities, cottage industries that need no factories or government subsidies. It was a self-sufficient productive system that only needed to be freed from Dutch repression to become operative in the local island market place. Like a coiled spring or restrained animal, the production of cloth came to life, as the social pressure to buy imported textile from India was decreasing. Locally produced cloth in imitation of Indian cloth became acceptable substitutes. The pressure on the Company to sell the Indian imports also decreased as the VOC trade changed its character to a carrying trade and other products like coffee and tea became more important. This created the opening, the decrease in competitive pressure, which was all that was needed for the island textile production and trade to bounce off. Thus, the local cloth could take up the slack left by the decline of the Indian import.

The second concern was with the contraband smuggling of cloth. The
cloth trade to the eastern provinces was a monopoly of the VOC, but the Company killed its own trade by introducing higher import duties. In 1620 the import and export duty on the Indian cloth had been 5%. A few years later the directorate in the Netherlands ordered to raise the import tax to 10%; the export tax remained 5% for foreign and free traders. Complaints about the illegal imports from India never ceased. For the larger part of the 17th century these tax rates were maintained.

For the Indonesian traders the import had been 6% and export 4% for local cloth, but in 1691 this was raised to respectively 10% and 5%. In 1754 the import of all locally produced cloth rose to 15%. The same duties applied to all branch offices. Indonesian woven cloth had become very desirable and its importance in the inter-island trade was growing. The measures show the distance that existed between the Company and the local population. It was not in the interest of the Indonesians to have such an aggressive mercantile policy imposed upon them. The Company seemed to act out of fear; it hoped to curtail the competition of the locally made textiles which were sold for lower prices than those of the VOC. Raising such a high tax would necessarily have increased the selling prices which antagonized members of the trading communities. In Europe, similar measures had been applied in different countries during this period provoking animosity and retaliation. Being managed from the Netherlands the Company possibly acted in an ill informed manner. It hoped that with a higher retail price of the local cloths, the consumer would still prefer the Company's selection which the people had been used to buy for such a long time even for a little

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108 Realia, vol 2 (1744, 1753, 1768): 156-7


111 J.A. van der Chijs, Plakaatboek, vol 6 (1754): 706-7, 798-9; Realia, vol 1 (1766): 33

112 Elisabeth Mikosch, "The Manufacture and Trade of Luxury Textiles in the Age of Mercantilism" in Textiles in Trade: 62
higher price.

The policy did not achieve the anticipated results. It increased the smuggling of cloths to such an extent that it could not be controlled, however much the Company policed the shores. The new rulings applied to Batavia, Banten, Ceribon, Ambon, Banda, Ternate, Makassar and Timor with regard to cloth produced in or near any of those places including Bali. There is no mention of Sumatran places in this edict although the bringing of any textiles of whatever type from Melaka to the east coast of Sumatra was strictly prohibited.

The VOC was unable to suppress this rampant smuggling and tried to keep all local traders out of Maluku. The other measure mentioned earlier to fight insurgent traders in Ambon was the annual hangi. The Company, however, did not have the right vessels to outsail the fast local craft which caused one frustrated fleet Commander to remark:

These large [Company] vessels are nothing more than ballast. I wished I had 30 orembays instead.

The VOC vessels were too sluggish and big and the local vessels with many rowers outraced them all the time. VOC officials were well aware of their losing battle against the "smuggling" by local traders. In 1748 the Governor of Ambon wrote to Batavia that the VOC supplied only one quarter of the cloth that the province consumed. He was reluctant to fight the illegal traders in Ceram. There were too many of them. They brought mainly cloth, and rice which they traded for spices, tripang, masoy, junks, etc. The cloth was dispersed to other outlying areas. The Governor estimated that for every Sulawesi trader that was caught at least ten went safely through the

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113 Realia, vol 1:98; vol 2: 62,169, 274; vol 3: 29 All proclamations were sent in in November and December 1763

114 VOC 3186 (1767): 74

115 VOC 3186 (1767): 50
Dutch surveying fleet.\textsuperscript{116}

In 1767 a deserting slave of the Buginese, Bappa Samma, sought the protection of the Dutch in Ambon. He informed them that he had been captured in 1763 with eight other men while fishing off the shore of his home in Tegal, central Java. They were taken by the Bugis to Bengkulu where the English were stationed. The Bugis traded there rice, oil and cloth. After one year Bappa Samma left on a Bugis vessel that sailed with 50 other Makassarese, Mandarese, and Bugis in a fleet. They sailed along the south coast of Java to Balambangan, Bali, south of Sumbawa to Buton and Calidupa while taking on provisions in those places. The rulers in Sumbawa gave protection to these Sulawesi fleets in their harbors and organized hide outs. The Sulawesi people smuggled in slaves and opium.\textsuperscript{117} From Calidupa they sailed straight to Ceram where the 50 vessels dispersed to different villages (\textit{negeris}).

After two years in Tobo on Ceram’s south coast, Bappa Samma was able to reach the Dutch. He gave many details about the places, prices and products the Bugis traded. They sailed to Johore and Aceh from Bengkulu and exchanged gold from Aceh with the English for Indian cloth. They traded local cloth on their voyage back to Ceram. These local traders brought spices around the archipelago.\textsuperscript{118} They left the eastern archipelago in May and returned from Bengkulu in October and November.\textsuperscript{119}

The value of the goods they traded amounted to a few hundred guilders or several thousands.\textsuperscript{120} Sometimes they stayed over for a season in Ceram where they pulled up their vessels at least one mile inland onto supports so high that the Dutch wondered how they did it. When the Dutch

\textsuperscript{116} VOC 2716 (1748): 58-9

\textsuperscript{117} VOC2716 (1749): 148

\textsuperscript{118} J.A. van der Chijs, Plakaatboek, vol 6 (1754): 671 in Banjermasin.

\textsuperscript{119} VOC 3208 (1767): 215-23

\textsuperscript{120} VOC 3208 (1768): 487-94
found them they burnt the Bugis vessels.

The Ceramese were afraid of the Sulawesi traders because they were heavily armed with swivel cannons and knew how to use them.\textsuperscript{121} Quite understandably, the antipathy towards the Dutch was very strong among the Bugis traders. They told the Ambonese that "they came to cut the Dutch down to size (wij komen de Hollanders de maat te nemen)."\textsuperscript{122}

A trading network from Ceram to Bali and Banjermasin was also known to VOC officials in 1741 as a very large fleet of local craft, so numerous, fast, and well armed that the VOC vessels felt intimidated and quickly looked for safe harbors.\textsuperscript{123}

The Dutch and the local population in Ambon also feared the Ceramese because they sailed in fast craft and sometimes used a gun. They sailed by night and at dawn would send a slave, often captured from a far away place, swimming to the shore to contact the local population and demand delivery of cloves. The Ceramese undertook these voyages very early in the harvesting season before the Dutch patrol boats appeared.\textsuperscript{124} The Dutch tried unsuccessfully to bribe the Ceramese with cloth. Every season the Ceramese sailed to the clove islands "with vessels full and sweet of cloth."\textsuperscript{125} The Ceramesese sometimes put out cloth to the Ambonese and returned later to collect the cloves.

Not only were traders from outside Ambon province and the Ceramese engaged in smuggling in what was thought to be tightly Dutch controlled territory. Local Ambonese also challenged the Dutch. They used the hongi expeditions as an opportunity to trade. In their korakoras they hid cloth torn to lengths (vaams gewijs) of 1.70 meters and made arrangements with other

\textsuperscript{121} VOC 3186 (1767): 83, 3208 (1766): 54

\textsuperscript{122} VOC 3208 (1768): 56

\textsuperscript{123} VOC 2499 (1741): 48-9; 345-6

\textsuperscript{124} VOC 3329 (1771): 3, 59

\textsuperscript{125} VOC 3208 (1768): 494; 3186 (1767): 74
Ambonese to trade these cloths for cloves.\textsuperscript{126}

The sales of textiles in Ambon reflected the same decreasing trend as the patterns demonstrated above for the total textile trade and the Indonesian sales in general. The figures for Ambon in the eight registers for incoming and outgoing vessels indicate a definite pattern of local cloth replacing Company cloth in the trade. The quantity of cloths that free traders reported for taxes in Kota Ambon varied considerably from year to year. It is clear, however that more cloth was traded by free traders than by the Company. Local trade was reviving and challenging the Company's trade. The aloofness of the Company noted for the areas of production in Coromandel was also a characteristic of the Dutch in Ambon. Cooperation between VOC officials and local traders was common.

\textsuperscript{126} VOC 3208 (1768): 67
The stock held by the Company guaranteed distribution of the Indian cloths year after year. The immense quantities of the stock influenced the prices of the textiles as will be shown in examples below. When stock was released in auctions or sales it also affected the prices of the textiles and the profits that the Company made on them. However, the issue of how much profit the Company made on the textiles remains obscure in the same way the Company's profit on the exchange of metals or other products in Asia is unclear. The level of profits in the inter-Asiatic trade and exchange rates of metals influenced the prices of textiles, but to what extent and how is still a question open to debate.

Exploring for this chapter the question of distribution of the textiles my perusal of the use of textiles by the Company itself led to a pivotal discovery. The Company used enormous quantities, of roughly 100,000 pieces of textiles annually, to pay its own expenses in Asia. These textiles are reflected in the clusters which will be discussed for Batavia and the branch offices.

The Company's Stock of Textiles

The quantity of textiles stored in the warehouses of the Company is an important subject for study in view of the implications it had in running the business. No sales or distributions could take place if there was no stock in the warehouse. When regional production in India stood periodically at a standstill, the Company could supply the markets from its stock and command the price, making larger profits than usual. In Chapter 8, Table 8 it was shown that there was no import from Surat between 1703 and 1705, but the entire Indonesian market was supplied with 118,000 pieces of Surat cloth from the warehouse in Batavia (Chapter 8, Table 9).
Earlier it was seen that a large warehouse complex was built and run as a modern bureaucracy. The stock was a resource fluctuating in value as prices of trade goods changed. Its size influenced the selling price. It appears that neither the Company itself nor historians working with Company records have considered some of the cumulative effects of this large stock of trade goods. In discussing the profits of the Company, that is the surplus over and above expenses, it is not always clear that the Company’s large stocks are taken into account.\(^1\) If the Company sold during a given year part of its stock, the profit was greater than if the Company added the newly imported trade goods to its stock and did not sell them then, but much later. It is not possible to conclude a profit for any one year by deducting from the value of the import the sales and expenses of an office unless the value and sales of the stock have been taken into account.

During most years the Company stock of textiles in Batavia was two or three times the size of the annual sales in the archipelago. Each branch office also held a stock of textiles, but the proportions of sales and stock is not known there. Keeping half to one million pieces of cloth in stock made the Company the most powerful wholesale dealer in Asia.

Company officials aware of the profit making aspect of the stock in times of scarcity, also believed that a large stock would prevent competing traders from penetrating their markets. The Company would be more vulnerable if it was known that a shortage of desired textiles was common, as sometimes happened during the early years of the VOC.\(^2\)

Just as employees in any large Company stand to gain from inside information, so the upper echelon of the VOC benefited from opportunities afforded them to buy exceptional textiles when they had just arrived. A superior quality or a cheaper assortment than usual was often bought up quickly by insiders. The Batavia Council was not in favor of this practice because of the likelihood that lesser quality or dearer textiles would be lying

\(^1\) S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce: 180-1

\(^2\) W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 3 (1674): 905
for years on the shelves and eventually have to be sold in an auction for small profits. Accumulated dead stock in Batavia was in the 18th century always sent on the return fleets to the Netherlands.

The competition from rival foreign merchants in Southeast Asia during the 17th century had motivated the Company to build up these large stocks. As soon as the trading season began the Company would release large quantities of cloths for competitive prices. Utilizing this tactic the Company thought to minimize the profit for foreigners and discourage them from returning.

People near the Dutch in the eastern provinces (a collective name the VOC used for the provinces of Makassar, Timor/Solor, Ternate, Ambon and Banda) were very dependent on the Company to provide them with sufficient Indian cloth. The VOC officials regularly requested shipments of much needed supplies. For example in 1757 Ambon sent a request to Batavia urgently needing salempore, muri, parcalle, guinees, betille, and dongris with red kepala. It was added "for the people's clothing." The Company's hold on the market and manipulation of prices in the eastern provinces was demonstrated in an average gross profit of 163% that year with dongris and parcalle being the most lucrative textiles.

In 1757, the directorate in the Netherlands were making inquiries about the profitability of the textile trade. Governor-General Mossel was spurred to investigate and improve the textile trade in Asia. Using the bookkeeping records he investigated every office. In his findings he accused the employees of the branch offices of thoughtlessly ordering textiles and having excessive quantities (restanten) stored in the warehouses everywhere that did not make any profit. He ordered them to sell superfluous stock,

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3 VOC 2716 (1747): 56-7
4 Batavia Negotie Grootboeken
5 VOC 2907 (1757): 26-7; Letter of Governor Idsinga, Sept. 24, 1757; 126-7: Letter from the outgoing Governor Cluysenaar and the incoming Governor Idsinga;
6 VOC 2944 (1759): 2169r-v
even if it was 10% below the minimum profit, or send it back to Batavia. This produced a sharp increase in sales in the archipelago in 1759.\(^7\) He issued a second edict in 1759\(^8\) ordering every office to include exactly the number of bales for each textile variety that had been sold during the last four years, how many had been received and sold the current year, the quantity of textiles in stock, and how many were needed for the next year.\(^9\)

As a consequence of Mossel's businesslike attitude the stock of the Company was kept under control as can be seen in Fig. 2 on the next page. The graph illustrating the number of pieces of textiles in stock in Batavia for the years the ledgers were examined, clearly shows the large stock in 1652 when the Company was at its height; the stock decreased as the textile trade was changing its character when many textiles were shipped straight to Europe from the production areas. After Mossel's edict in 1759 the stock was kept to a little over 1/3 of the volume from previous years. This is another indication that the VOC textile trade in Asia was declining.

Fig. 3 on page 336 illustrates the value of the stock. It confirms the observation made in Chapter 8 that the buying prices of the textiles were relatively low in the middle of the 17th century compared to prices in the beginning of the 18th century. Whereas the quantity of textile pieces in stock in 1703-5 years is 2/3 of the stock in 1652-3, the value of the stock in 1703-5 is about 60% higher than in 1652-3, thus, a significant increase in the buying price had occurred and this trend did not reverse.

\(^7\) VOC 2944 (1759): 2169-2231

\(^8\) J.A. van der Chijs ed., Plakaatboek, vol 7 (1759): 352-3

\(^9\) Many examples can be found in the Overgekomen Brieven. For example, compare VOC 2312 (1734): 552-63; VOC 3180 (1766): 257-8; VOC 3595 (1782) part 2: 37-8. Examples of orders early in the 18th century are much simpler than in the 1730s and again more complex after 1757. The amount of stock that could be kept was closely watched and controlled after Mossel's edict issued on Sept. 9, 1757. Edicts were often repeated. The edicts of 1757 and 1759 are the same document.
Fig. 3
Textile Stock of the VOC in Batavia

### Quantity of Textiles in Stock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Quantity 1000 pieces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1652-3</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-5</td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756-9</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770-1</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Value of Textiles in Stock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Value 1000 guilders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1652-3</td>
<td>2255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703-5</td>
<td>3635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>2941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>2913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756-9</td>
<td>1461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770-1</td>
<td>1452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Profits

The minimum profit for textiles was not the same in all offices, nor was it the same throughout the VOC period. In 1639 Governor-General van Diemen judged the textile trade unprofitable unless 60-70% profit was made over and above the buying price in India and expenses. However, it appears that much larger profits of at least from 100 to 200% were made in the first half of the 17th century. In the second half of the century the Company could not maintain these profits, given the higher prices they had to pay for the textiles in India. The Company was forced to accept lower profits, beginning in the 1660s. By the second decade in the 18th century profits of 20% were not unusual and by mid-century an edict was issued to make sure that a minimum profit was made on the Dutch woollen goods of 50%, on Coromandel textiles of 60%, Bengal 50%, and Surat 40%.

During a few years in the 1750s targets had to be set even lower—respectively for Coromandel, Bengal and Surat, 50%, 40%, and 30%. Ternate and Padang were given lower minimums still of 40%, 25%, and 20%. It was rationalized that profits on gold from those two branches would compensate for the lower profits. In practice the VOC officials exceeded these minimum rates because in 1745 the Company gave an incentive over and above the salary of 5% from the annual gross sales. This was to be divided among the highest officers

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10 W.Ph. ed., Generale Missiven, vol 2 (1639): 33


12 G. Vinal Smith, The Dutch in Seventeenth Century Thailand: Chapter 3; J. van Goor, Kooplieden: 29; Tapan Raychaudhuri, Jan Company: 125; S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies, and Commerce: 352

13 Realia, vol 3, (1744): 278; vol 2 (1759): 115
The higher the profit the bigger the allowance they enjoyed. With overall higher possible profits on the sale of textiles it was hoped to reduce the expenses of keeping branch offices. In general profits rarely exceeded 100% in the 18th century. Dutch records are not systematized in a way that total profits made on trade goods, including textiles, can be determined.

The Company is its Own Best Customer

It is self evident that the Company would consume cloth for its own use, but the quantities involved are surprising. Textiles were used for sailcloth of various qualities and sizes, depending on the type of sails and ships; on uniforms for mounted cavalry, guards, funeral rites, processions and other company related ceremonies that required pompous regalia. These expenses were sometimes questioned by Heren XVII, such as the f5,275.49 for the funeral of Governor-General van Diemen in 1645. Ironically, van Diemen himself had led a life of exceptional austerity. His account from the first five years in Batavia showed a total expense of f1,481.88. Apart from f12.60 as a donation to the building of a new church and f591.60 for a lottery held to raise money for improvement plans for Batavia, the whole remaining amount, f877.68 consisted of a long list of textiles. Presumably he paid his household help in textiles for his

16 VOC 2312 (1734): 396; 3329 (1771): 213
maintenance, and gifted other people with textiles. His account underscores an observation that employees were the Company's own best customer.

Textiles were also consumed by personnel in the line of duty in their residences. An inventory of an outgoing governor's residence for the next occupant showed 133 slaves, 42 firebuckets, 199 cows, 5 clocks, 32 chairs, 22 paintings, etc. It also included: 8 table cloths and 125 serviettes in the castle, 36 red laken pillows and 2 matching tablecloths in the governor's residence, and 1 large red laken tablecloth, 2 small blue ones: one with fringe, one without and 9 blue pillows in the garden house and flags, banners, and pennants for the armed forces.

During two hundred years the VOC paid more than one million pieces of cloth to its slave population. The Company distinguished three categories of slaves: the slaves it bought or bonded slaves; slaves the company hired from civilian owners permanently or temporarily for certain projects; and slave prisoners in chains, found guilty of a crime after their case had been tried. Sometimes these were slaves that were offered by their owners to be taught a lesson for misbehavior or escaped slaves that had been caught and were in transfer.

Provisions given to slaves were standardized. Only the first category of bonded slaves received cloth from the Company. In February and August a male slave was given one piece niquanios a boy slave half a piece niquanias, a baby a quarter piece, a female slave one quarter piece fotas and 3.40 meter guinees lywaet, a girl slave also one quarter fotas and 1.70 meter guinees. The

20 W.Ph. Coolhaas, "Gegevens Antonio van Diemen" in BKI, vol103: 508


22 This is a conservative estimate based on F.S. Gaastra, De Geschiedenis van de VOC: 96, Table 8, which shows that in 1687-8 the Company employed 2,860 slaves and 3,605 indigenous employees. The slave population would have doubled in the 18th century. Thus at two pieces of cloth per year for say 3,000 slaves for 190 years is over one million pieces.
textiles were the coarser varieties.\textsuperscript{23} Coromandel blue \textit{boulang} for headdresses was distributed conditionally. An edict in 1641 forbade slaves to wear a headdress until they could speak Dutch.\textsuperscript{24} By the middle of the 18th century most of them did, or what passed for it, because a \textit{boulang} was commonly worn.\textsuperscript{25}

Dressed in the textiles that were given, males must have worn blue and white striped \textit{sarongs} like \textit{lurik}, held by a belt in which guns or knives were tucked. In 1734 a new regulation ordered the \textit{sarong} to be worn differently and guns forbidden.\textsuperscript{26} Female slaves wore a checked or striped \textit{sarong} of a combination of colors: red, blue, and brown. A plain white shirt of \textit{guinees} was worn while around their waist they tied a strong piece of \textit{fotas} to hold it up. \textit{Fotas} were colored, dyed in the thread, checked material.\textsuperscript{27} The slaves could not be distinguished from the ordinary indigenous people.\textsuperscript{28}

The slaves had not always been dressed in this way because in a letter in 1623 a VOC officer in Batavia asked his colleague in Masulipatnam to look for a cloth that could be woven cheaply for the slaves because to dress them in the old style was becoming very expensive.\textsuperscript{29} What the old style meant is not clear.\textsuperscript{30}


\textsuperscript{24} Realia, vol 3: (1641) 206; F. de Haan, Oud-Batavia, vol 1: 467


\textsuperscript{26} Realia, vol 3: (1734) 208


\textsuperscript{28} F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 467

\textsuperscript{29} Om Prakash, Dutch Factories, 1617-1623: 250

\textsuperscript{30} G.C. Klerk de Reus, Ueberblick: 129. He describes the male slaves to go around in a black tunic and the females in white and some color.
In 1700 more than twelve hundred company slaves were in Batavia housed with the department of public works or the *ambachts kwartier* and on the island Onrust. Each VOC office was allotted a certain number of slaves. Ambon's government was allowed 75 slaves in 1758, but often needed and maintained many more. In the west Sumatran offices only 63 were allowed in 1777. There used to be many hundreds of slaves working in the goldmines. Every year Makassar had to send 50 slaves to Banda.

Knaap, who gave a thorough accounting of the slave population at large for the second half of the 17th century in Ambon, showed that they made up 13% of the indigenous population. From the last quarter of the 17th century until about 1770, some 24-30,000 slaves lived in Batavia. The majority of Makassar's population were also slaves. Many of these slaves were involved in textile production, either as weavers, spinners, painters, embroiderers, or seamstresses. To my knowledge, the company did not own slaves for that purpose in the Indonesian islands, but had hired many slave-workers in India for their textile production. The company gave the impression of being "benevolent" to its slave population. When by accident some slaves' quarters burnt down in 1733, the slaves were given

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32 In the eighteenth century there were more than one hundred slaves in Ambon. In 1758 there were 122, in 1766, 145 slaves, which cost the company an average of £ 7.77 per person. VOC 2962: (1759) 116; VOC 3208: (1767) 583

33 *Realia*, vol 3: (1777) 211

34 Approximate figures on the number of slaves in service of the company and as part of the population at large could be collected for the Dutch occupied areas. They are regularly reported in the Overgekomen Brieven.

35 G.J. Knaap, Kruidnagel: 128-30; Also Valentijn's figures gave the same result after computing it. F. Valentijn, Oud en Nieuw, vol 2: 366

36 Anthony Reid, ed, Slavery: 29

37 Ibid, 23; E. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 459-60;

38 G.C. Klerk de Reus, Ueberblick: 128-31
extra cloth on their payday at the end of that month.\textsuperscript{39}

Company institutions such as the leprosy colonies, the hospitals and
the medicine shops consumed Indian cloths. The leprosy colony on Molana,
south of Saparua island cost the Ambonese government in the 18th century at
least f300 annually.\textsuperscript{40} The Lazarus Home and four hospitals in Batavia and
medical facilities in Ambon, Banda, Banten, Padang, Makassar employed
VOC doctors (\textit{chirurgijns}) from Europe, and since 1686 also indigenous
doctors. Doctors received three pieces of ordinary bleached \textit{guinees} for use as
lint and swathing band each month.\textsuperscript{41} A ship’s doctor received the same
necessary cloth. If a doctor needed more than he was supplied with, he was
permitted to buy what he needed at a discount price. Regularly, the hospitals
were provided with sailcloths to make pillows, the slips were sewn from
\textit{niquanias}.\textsuperscript{42} When Batavia suffered from a high death rate in the 1730s, 1,350
new straw mattresses were made for which 675 pieces of sailcloths and 862
\textit{pikul} of kapok were supplied in addition to 480 Indian blankets.\textsuperscript{43} Sailors
recovering in a hospital were given clothing like an undershirt, trousers and
handkerchief for cost price from the company store.\textsuperscript{44} Being sick and
feverish, they suffered more from the cold ashore than others, because they
missed the protection of their bunkbeds aboard ship. As patients (\textit{impotenten})
running high fevers they could rent a Coromandel blanket for eight heavy
\textit{stuivers} per month.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{39} VOC 2283: (1733) 86

\textsuperscript{40} VOC 2379: (1735) 254; 3595: (1781) 320

\textsuperscript{41} D. Schoute, \textit{Geneeskunde Oost-Indische Compagnie}: 145, 188; VOC 3180: (1766)
119; \textit{Realia}, vol 1: (1773) 48. The apothecary shop was also given as much cloth as
needed

\textsuperscript{42} VOC 2962: (1759) 103-4

\textsuperscript{43} E.C. Godee Molsbergen, \textit{Geschiedenis Nederlandsch Indië}: 305

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Realia}, vol 1: (1776) 491

\textsuperscript{45} VOC 2283: (1733) 147
A considerable expense for the company were also all the gifts that it was expected to reciprocate, maintain, or initiate in relationships and negotiations with local kings, rulers, dignitaries, and chiefs in order to receive favorable receptions and, subsequently, trade concessions. Between 1613 to 1790 more than nineteen million guilders were spent on gifts.\textsuperscript{46} A large proportion, possibly one million pieces of cloth, were consumed for this purpose alone.

Instructions of 1617 stipulated that the salaries of personnel were to be paid, half in cash and half in cloth (\textit{halff gelt, halff goed}).\textsuperscript{47} The Company tried to cut down expenses by paying salaries as much as possible with cloth.\textsuperscript{48} Employees who did not want to sell the cloth themselves could do that through a broker, an \textit{apostado}, first appointed by Pieter Both in Banten in 1614. He wanted the selling of cloth to stay under the control of the Company.\textsuperscript{49} This function was later taken over by the shopkeepers. In Batavia it was the \textit{groot-winkelier} or shopkeeper of the large shop who paid the salaries and kept every Company employee’s account.\textsuperscript{50} The soldiers in Timor had been paid totally in textiles before 1687, a change was decreed to accord with regulations.\textsuperscript{51} The Timorese community regretted it because they needed the Indian textiles which were easily bartered. With the salaries half in cash they had to leave their place of residence to buy things elsewhere. Thus, cloth obtained through the Company’s personnel had created goodwill for employees and the Company alike. In neighboring Flores people also eagerly collected textiles that they could use in exchanges

\textsuperscript{46} J.P. de Korte, Financiële Verantwoording: Bijlage 11A
\textsuperscript{47} P. Mijer, Verzameling van Instructiën: 26, art. 75
\textsuperscript{48} H.T. Colenbrander, Coen, Levensbeschrijving: 238
\textsuperscript{49} W.Ph. Coolhaas ed., Generale Missiven, vol 1: (1614) 34
\textsuperscript{50} F. de Haan, Oud Batavia, vol 1: 187-91
\textsuperscript{51} J.A. van der Chijs ed., Plakaatboek, vol 3: (1687) 197
for other goods when the need arose, especially in the case of weddings.\textsuperscript{52}

Half of the European employees were military people. Without counting the Indonesians employed in military service, as sailors or locally hired labor.\textsuperscript{53} The impact of these employees regional economics in Maluku was considerable. Several times the Company changed its policy concerning the payment of salaries and paid the army and navy either entirely in textiles or cash. When prices of textiles went down because the market was overflowing with the textiles of these employees, the Company reverted to total payment in cash. It was reasoned that the residents could buy cloth from the Company with the cash and as the demand for cloth rose because of scarcity, prices would increase. In the end the Company would reverse its former decision and decide it would be cheaper to pay the soldiers again with textiles. These alternations are most visible in the strictly controlled offices of the eastern provinces.\textsuperscript{54}

The clothing of soldiers and sailors was their own responsibility.\textsuperscript{55} The Company gave them the opportunity to buy for cost price the uniforms of Dutch \textit{graauwdoek} and undershirts that came from the Netherlands in early times, but were soon made locally or in India of bleached \textit{guinees}. The Chinese cotton shirts were not popular because they were expensive and not

\textsuperscript{52} Roy W. Hamilton, "Trading Systems in Indonesia: An example from Flores Island" in \textit{Textiles in Trade}: 194

\textsuperscript{53} Indonesian employees were not paid with textiles or "halff goed", but with cash. Their numbers varied. In Java's north east coast were from 2,450 in 1684 to 747 military men employed in 1689. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 324, 304. Besides the salaries all employees, including the Indonesians received "rantsoenen" or "maandgelden" which can be compared to a standard of living allowance. It included minimally rice, vinegar, salt and a viand. The higher one's rank the more free extras one could expect, such as European beers and wine.


\textsuperscript{55} F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1 (1607): 588
strong enough. The ready-made clothing from the company store could be charged to their account.

The amount the employees were charged for their clothing appears to have been high. In 1758 thirty soldiers who were asked to work on the restoration of dilapidated fortifications in Ambon protested that their payment of three *stuivers* per day was not enough because their clothing disintegrated faster from the heavy work than they could earn to buy new ones. As a disciplinary measure they were given the cane.\(^{56}\) Another incident involving the Company's textiles happened in Malabar in 1741, where an estimated 300 to 400 soldiers deserted to join an Indian warlord. The soldiers were enraged about the 25% they lost in their pay because of the exchange rate, and secondly the bad quality of the textiles they were paid with.\(^{57}\) Under Governor-General van Imhoff a very liberal policy was issued to the manager of the large shop in Batavia, stipulating that salaries could be entirely in cash or textiles or any other product the company carried with the only restriction that there was no shortage of the item.\(^{58}\)

Amongst all these disbursements the largest and most important were the employees' salaries. The Company lawyer, Pieter van Dam, underlined the company's policy to pay salaries *halff gelt, halff goed*, pointing out that the part of the salary taken up in the East was debited on an employee's account for the amount in light money even though the payment was calculated in Dutch currency or heavy money. For example, a soldier had contracted for a salary of four rixdollars per month or ten guilders. One guilder was counted as 20 "*stuivers*" or five cents in the bookkeeping of the VOC, but one rixdollar was equal to 48 *stuivers* of heavy money during the greater part of the seventeenth century. If the soldier wanted to take up one eighth or 12\(\frac{1}{2}\)% of his monthly salary in cash and textiles during one of the pay-months he

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\(^{56}\) VOC 2931: (1759) 57

\(^{57}\) George D. Winius and Marcus P.M. Vink, *Merchant-Warrior*: 104

\(^{58}\) J.A. van der Chijs ed., *Plakaatboek*, vol 5: (1746) 406
would receive half cash, that is f0.60 in *stuivers* or six dubbeltjes (double *stuivers* or 10 cents) and 12 *stuivers* worth of cloth (his salary being four rixdollars of forty-eight *stuivers*, $4 \times 48 = 192$ *stuivers* per month of which $12\%$ is 24 *stuivers*). His account would have been debited in light money—the currency calculation used in the islands among the Dutch—of one rixdollar in light money, that is 64 *stuivers*, four *stuivers* higher (charge) than the going rate of 60 *stuivers*. The employee ended up being charged f1.60 instead of f1.20. The Company considered it a service charge. His account was debited because from the company's point of view, he was paying to the company what the company owed him. The company rightly owed him money. After his contract was over and he repatriated, the company would accredit him the balance of his account.

What the company actually did, was to let a person spend in Asia as if he were in the Netherlands, not taking any exchange rate into account until after the transaction. This unfairness was not left unprotested, but all efforts to have it corrected were in vain. It was not changed and the company pocketed the difference which was shown in the profit and loss statement in the books, albeit with dubious results.

No single employee of the company was paid immediately in full in the eastern offices after completion of his contract. His records first had to be verified and approved by the paymaster/bookkeeper in the Netherlands of

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59 As van Dam points out, the difference of an employee’s payment in Asia and the Netherlands was 25%. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 227. De Haan confirms that and also explains like van Dam the sorry situation for all the soldiers and sailors with small salaries and who were left with very little to exist on. Oud Batavia, vol 1: 211

60 It is the same principle that Mansvelt explained in the case of the personal account of the Participants. W.M.F. Mansvelt, Rechtsvorm: 75


62 W.M.F. Mansvelt, Rechtsvorm: 13
the Chamber under which he had sailed out. It could take two years before he received his final settlement if he was not repatriating. It was a way in which the company kept a hold on its servants.

The number of employees in service at any one time is impossible to account for exactly, but Gaastra indicated that the generale monsterrol (payroll) was instituted in 1680 and sent to the Netherlands which made a more accurate estimation possible. In the 18th century the Company counted roughly 20,000 employees excluding slaves, indigenous military, labor, and hires on a daily basis, employees in transit on the fleets and in inter-Asiatic voyages. For these last two categories Gaastra added figures of another 10,000 more or less, thus totalling 30,000 Company servants.

Since half the salaries were to be paid in textiles, the above figures underline the magnitude of the amount of textiles that would have been brought into circulation by employees of the Company. However, nothing is more striking than the figures and by implication the sales of textiles, published by de Korte in his Appendix 11A summarizing the costs of salaries in Asia from 1613 to 1790:

| Monthly payments, Indonesian personnel | f 24,362,382 |
| General salaries on land               | 217,524,905 |
| General salaries on the ships          | 21,612,442  |

63 The paymaster's office gradually expanded and reached in 1700 in Batavia 56 persons at least. At the end of the financial year extra people were hired. F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 3: 186-91. The paymaster's office integrated the payrolls with the VOC outlying offices. VOC 1622, (1700): 9 Ternate sent some payrolls, protected and sewn up inside gunny to Batavia. According to Mansvelt, the paymaster's office in Batavia was the office that cooperated closest with its counterpart in the Netherlands. W.M.F. Mansvelt, Rechtsvorm: 93, ft 2

64 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 708


66 J.P. de Korte, Jaarlijkse Financiële Verantwoording in de VOC: Bijlage 11A. G.C. Klerk de Reus, Ueberblick: Beilage V, see ft c., also lists monthly payments from 1640 to 1798 paid in the Netherlands with a few gaps in the data. Since salaries paid in The Netherlands were not subject to the "half textile, half cash" rule it is of no concern for the effect it had on the textile consumption in Asia.
Would there be any doubt that the company was its own best customer in the sales of textiles? Is it possible to make an estimate of the number of pieces of textiles involved based on the figures presented here by de Korte? There is no reason to doubt that half of the salaries were indeed "sold" in textiles, in the sense that the company added from 50-75% profit on these textiles before charging the employee's account with them. Indonesian military men were often paid in cash, so we will disregard their payments. The sailors, soldiers and other crew were usually paid when they berthed.

The sum of the salaries for personnel on land and ship is £239,137,347. Twenty five percent needs to be deducted for the exchange rate and the four stuivers that the company charged as mentioned above. That leaves £179,353,010 for the combined salaries. Assuming that indeed half was paid in cash and half in textiles and the latter charged with a profit of 50-75% of the buying price, half or £89,676,505 should be reduced by 38.34% i.e. taking the median of the 50-75%. Reducing the half part of the salaries by 38.34% (equals £34,381,972), left £55,294,533 worth of textiles minimally sold to company personnel.

Utilizing the information worked out earlier for the price of a bale of textiles where a distinction was made over time before and after around 1730, the account of accumulated salary expenses can also be divided into Period A (1613-1730) and Period B (1730-1790) and worked out in actual amounts:67

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67 F.W. Stapel ed., Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge, vol 1, part 1: 638; vol 2, part 2: 348; vol 3: 227 where van Dam lists percentages of profit that are much higher for the payment in "... kleden, which are cotton cloths, necessary for clothing and other things, and on which the Company makes a profit of 60, 70, 80, 90 per hundred, one type more, another less, and which has been the custom since olden times. ..." H.T. Colenbrander ed., Jan Pietersz Coen, Bescheiden, vol 2: 432

68 J.P. de Korte, Jaarlijkse Verantwoording: Bijlage 11A was used to work out the proportions. The amounts in the third column under 1730 are in congruence with the detailed breakdown of Bijlage 10. Figures for salary expenses were also checked with Klerk de Reus, Ueberblick, Beilage Xlc and found to be almost identical. Finding the difference between the total salaries of 1790 and 1730 (bijlage 11A in de Korte, fourth and eleventh columns) equals £64,029, 207 which is 26.775% or 27% rounded off of the total £239,137,347 in 1790.
The earlier discussion on "What is a bale?" offers two ways to estimate the quantity of textiles that the company paid its employees: by bale or by piece of cloth. The shortest method, would be to divide the total amount of salary payments by the average price of one piece of textile. The measurements are crude tools, but useful in the absence of other gauges. The results for the average of the long and the short method for period A were 17,491,500 pieces of cloth and for Period B, 2,850,100 pieces. Translated in terms of annual expenditure for the Company, it paid out roughly at least 150,000 pieces of textiles during Period A, and 48,000 pieces during Period B. In addition to these figures should be considered the textiles bi-annually given to the slaves, the outfitting of ships with sails and curtains, of residences and entourage, the supplies to the medical teams and hospitals, the textiles used in wrapping and packaging, the gifts of textiles, etc. A low estimate is an additional 10,000 pieces annually for the instances just listed. Thus in conclusion it may be stated that the Company consumed for its own use an average of roughly 100,000 textiles annually. Comparing this figure with the import figures of Table 6 in Chapter 8 it shows that the Company's use of the Indian cloth comprised almost half of the Indonesian consumption. The company could not have built-in a better and larger guaranteed customer in the operation than its own employees. In the eyes of the people in the archipelago the employees of the Company must have appeared wealthy with cloth.

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69 The first method applied to period A gives 40,363,009 ÷ 300 (the price of one bale) x 140 (the number of pieces per bale) = 18,837,000 pieces of textiles. The second method gives 40,365,009 ÷ 2.5, the price of one textile = 16,146,000 pieces.

The first method applied to period B gives (14,929,524 ÷ 525, the price of one bale) x 105, the number of pieces per bale = 2,985,905 pieces of textiles. The second method gives 14,929,524 ÷ 5.5, the price of one textile = 2,714,459 pieces.

70 Period A comprises 117 years. The total number of textile pieces 17,491,500 ÷ 117 = 149,500. Period B comprises 60 years. The total number of textile pieces 2,850,100 ÷ 60 = 47,500.
The Distribution of Textiles:

An examination of the distribution shows that each variety of cloth has its own trajectory—indicating when they appear and disappear in the records—plotted in Appendix B which is based on the records examined for the archipelago, not the records found for the Indian production centers. Many textiles imported from Surat in the 17th century dropped out of the trade in the 18th century: alegia, atlases, asmanis, chelas, chavonis, coutenis, doty, dragam, madafons, kamkani, negroscloth, sailcloth, semiano, taffachelas, turias, and tercandia; two new types of cloth, tokasse and golgasse, emerged; in Coromandel the brown-blue banary-sucorton (details unknown) and in Bengal the therindais surfaced.

Textiles that are typical for certain production areas and consistently sold in the archipelago, are the cassa, adati, armosin, geras, hamman, malmal, and sanas from Bengal; bafta, beiramee, chintz, cindai, karikam, kangan, and patola from Surat; and from Coromandel boulang, betille, chelas, blankets, chintz, dongris, committer, gingam, guinees, muri, parcalle, salemporte and tapi.

In Appendix G, the print-out of a spreadsheet, the quantities of each type of cloth the Company had sold in the archipelago for the years that were researched, is recorded. The first column lists the textiles by regions of production. The second column presents a code for each textile-c (chintz), g (striped and check), l (luxury), m (muslin ) and p (plain)-which best fits the criteria of the cluster. The next twelve columns display the year and quantity of the variety sold in the branch offices and Batavia. Excel 4.0 multiple range selections in the add mode of the worksheet totalled the clusters for all production areas. With the help of bar graph selections and editing features I created the series of charts found at the end of this chapter.

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71 The manuscript for the 1756-7 bookkeeping became illegible and had to be stopped reading. The data collected were the import and the distribution of the Dutch textiles after which it was impossible to go on.
Patolu

People in Batavia bought the valued patola which were expensive cloths, but not extraordinarily dear compared to other luxury cloths. Patola had certainly been imported several centuries prior to Dutch involvement in the Indian textile trade. The patolu design and motifs had become important status markers to the nobility and the elite people in the archipelago.

There are at least two competing opinions on imported patola. One is that patola, as defined by contemporary scholars, was made of silk of which the warp and the weft threads were tie-dyed (double ikat) before the weaving to form designs and patterns that were characteristic of this patola cloth. With this interpretation, the essence of the patola was derived from its fibre and design. These cloths were imported throughout the VOC period from Surat. In 1617 patola was considered a priority cloth. However, in early Indonesian textile trade the name patola was applied also to cloths that were neither silk nor double ikat designed cloth, but made of cotton with printed designs, that is, decorations applied on finished cloth, as in batik technique. Gittinger, who has amongst many interests, researched the origin of Indonesian textile designs, reports that at the beginning of the sixteenth century Indian ships bringing trade goods to the southeast Asian mainland and to the Indonesian islands brought an abundance of printed Cambay (and Pulicat) cloth, both cotton and silk, that were called patola. Cambay was then the preeminent seaport of Gujarat, and Pulicat on the Coromandel coast

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72 Appendix H, Luxury

73 A. Bühler, "Patola Influences in Southeast Asia" in JITH, vol 4: 5

74 The most comprehensive definition of a patola has been given by Alfred Bühler and Eberhard Fischer, The Patola of Gujarat, vol 1: 1-13; Om Prakash, Dutch Factories: 21; Robyn Maxwell, Textiles of Southeast Asia: 25

75 Om Prakash, Dutch Factories: 22. It was stated in an order to Surat that priority should be given to buying "white and black coarse bafta, coarse cannekins, patolas, and poulopodys (used for making sailcloth)."
was famous for its mordant-painted and dyed cottons, not ikat.\textsuperscript{76}

In this second definition of \textit{patola}, its essence is neither silk or ikat; it was based on its mottled or speckled appearance, irrespective of material or technique of decoration. The "spotted or many-colored" appearance of a cloth was also the meaning for chintz and was referred to as \textit{cindai} or \textit{cinde}. The question of the difference between a \textit{cindai} and a \textit{patolu} I have documented in Appendix A, under the textile type \textit{cindai}.\textsuperscript{77} It is true that \textit{cindai} and \textit{patola} sometimes were used indiscriminately in the early Dutch trade; the \textit{patola} only later became exclusively associated with the Gujarati double ikat silks.

The sales figures of Batavia also seem to confirm the wider definition of \textit{patolu} that includes the chintz. It is striking, however, that a cloth like the \textit{patolu}, that has had so much influence on the design and patterning of Indonesian textile production, was traded in relatively small quantities. If the silk double ikat \textit{patola} from Gujarat had been such an important cloth it would have shown up in the sales figures. I therefore believe that the \textit{patolu} influence is derived from its designs, patterns, and colors that were typical of \textit{patola}, not from the material and technique and that the painted chintz cottons that came from Surat and the Coromandel coast, especially those from Pulicat, had a larger bearing on the Indonesian textile designs. It appears that the \textit{tapi cindai} of which 45,653 pieces were sold in 1652, was a "patolu" \textit{tapi}. In 1703 another 38,430 were sold in Batavia, but in 1723-5 only 540 during those two years. No more \textit{tapi cindai} are mentioned in the sources after that. Had they successfully been imitated by the Javanese batik makers? Could the \textit{tapi cindai} be related to the "sarongs with gaudy patterns" mentioned in 11th century sources (Chapter 1) and be a \textit{patolu} pattern which would help explain the significance of these designs and motifs in local cloth

\textsuperscript{76} M. Gittinger, \textit{Cindai: Pengembaraan Kain Pattola India}: 55

\textsuperscript{77} My conclusive statement on the \textit{patolu} and \textit{cindai} in Appendix A was reached independently from Gittinger's statement which I encountered later. Both research results seem to agree that the term \textit{patolu} referred to the design and multicolored aspect of the cloth, not to the technique or the material.
production? If the tapi cindai figures are compared with the sales of the silk and cotton patola, one is struck by the comparative small quantity of the latter. Looking under the Batavia-Surat sales, cotton patola reached its highest sales figures in 1757-9. The average sale for those years was 14,300 pieces, but much fewer before or after. The sales figures for the silk patola were even lower. The highest on record was in the early part of the 18th century when approximately 10,000 pieces at f7.50 per piece were sold.\textsuperscript{78} Looking at the sales figures for silk patola in Batavia over time they do not stand out as much as the tapi cindai and the tapi sarassa.\textsuperscript{79} Much more research is possible by examining the primary source materials.

Batavia

Batavia sold by far the largest selection and also largest variety of textiles. Most striking are the sales of twenty-eight varieties of Coromandel chintz on the first page of Appendix G. More chintz was sold in 1652 and 1703-5 than any other type of cloth, but the sales of chintz drastically declined to 28\% of the level of former years in 1723-5 after which it tapered off to a few thousand annually and only 365 pieces in 1780. Sales in 1704 of about 50,000 chintz tapi demands attention. More than 60,000 tapis had been sold in 1652 of which 45,653 tapi cindai. In 1703 there still is a large sale of 38,430 tapi cindai and a same amount of gobars. A year later many more varieties of tapis appeared on the market doubtlessly due to changes in patterns and designs that the batik in Java had introduced in the latter part of the 17th century. The Dutch had these copied. This issue is further addressed in Chapter 10. The details of the change are not known because it would take much research to look for the specifics about such changes. After 1723-5 chintz almost disappeared from the sales in Batavia (see row Total (C) Batavia-Coromandel in Appendix G). A graphic representation of the sales of

\textsuperscript{78} Appendix E, List A, Table II.

\textsuperscript{79} Appendix E, List A, Table I; Appendix G, Textile Sales in Batavia.
chintz compared to that of non-chintz cloths in Batavia is found on page 355. The increase of chintz cloth seen at the end of the 1750s is not chintz from Coromandel, but from Surat. It would be necessary to look at the archives for Surat and Batavia to find out what this indicates, but those are not available here and no published study exists about the textile trade of the VOC during that period in Surat. The evidence is clear in this graph that the import and sale of textiles that were not chintz to Batavia, where most chintz was sold, is larger than chintz items. The graph is substantiated by the figures in Appendix G.

The quantities of chintz in 1652 amount to 79,336 pieces or 48% of the total sales, 64,851 plain, 17,369 muslin, 3,755 checked and striped, and 320 pieces luxury cloth from Coromandel. The sales of Bengal and Surat cloth comprise only 33% of the quantity of Coromandel cloth sold in 1652.

Considering the population of Batavia to have been less than 27,000 people in 1652,80 most of the almost 200,000 pieces of cloth that were sold that year were exported to surrounding areas or taken into the hinterland of Batavia. Evidence in the Batavia Dagh-registers show the textiles to be exported from Batavia to many coastal towns along the coast east of Batavia.81 Coromandel did not supply people with luxury cloth. In Batavia people bought luxury muslins that were imported from Bengal.

The Eastern Provinces

The VOC labelled the eastern provinces the region of Indonesia beyond Bali. The branch offices Makassar, Ternate, Banda, Ambon, and Timor were nodes in a distributive network of goods and communication. For example, a

80 M.C. Ricklefs, War, Culture and Economy in Java 1677-1726: 15. The population of Java as a whole was estimated to be no more than three million in around 1650, Ibid: 5.

81 J.A. Chijs ed., Batavia Dagh-register has at the end of each month a listing of the vessels that had arrived and left Batavia. It gave the contents of the cargo in value and quantity. Gabriel Rantoandro, "Commerce et Navigation dans les Mers de l’Insulinde d’après les Dagh-Register de Batavia (1624-1682)," Archipel 35: 61
regulation dated November 21, 1768 sent to all eastern branch offices stipulated that free traders from Banda were to be given passes for a journey between Banda and one other branch office without further detour.\textsuperscript{82} The VOC viewed the region as an economic unit where prices of textiles should be kept in equilibrium.\textsuperscript{83} In 1733 Makassar wanted to raise the prices of cloth but it was refused by the Council in Batavia to prevent traders from other eastern provinces to take advantage of it.\textsuperscript{84} Prices were not the same in the eastern provinces, measures were taken to protect each branch from unbalanced trade conditions.

Free traders sometimes took advantage of low prices of textiles in one branch office causing the sales in the trader's home branch to drop. Governors who saw their sales drop in an unbalanced price market corresponded to Batavia their grievances. Batavia immediately would send letters with new regulations to the other branch offices to protect the market for the disadvantaged province. There was no sense of a common market for textiles. The branches of the eastern provinces were departmentalized in the eyes of the Governor-General and Council in Batavia.

Governor Fockens (1764-67) in Ambon was an exception to this parochial thinking. The prices of Indian textiles in Ambon were very high during his governorship. According to a resolution of August, 1753, traders were not allowed to buy cloth more cheaply in Banda, Ternate and Makassar and take it to Ambon to sell. It would be confiscated, even if it was bought from the Company. Fockens totally disagreed with this point of view and opined that the traders should be allowed to buy the cloth wherever it was cheapest and make a profit. He defended his viewpoint by pointing out that the Company is the loser in two ways. First the Company misses the sales in the branch office where it is cheaper, and secondly it loses the income from the export and import duties of the textiles at both ends of the journey.

\textsuperscript{82} Realia, vol 2 (1768): 274

\textsuperscript{83} W.Ph. Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, vol 9 (1729): 20

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid: 468
Fockens was a promoter of a free trade system. By allowing the traders to buy cloth in a branch where cloth was cheaper and bring it to another province, the commerce of the Company would flourish and not decline, he argued. He also questioned the rights of the Company to force the Ambonese to buy cloth from the Company at high prices—cloth being a necessity for daily living; it was not being locked up in chests or closets according to him but worn on the body. Did the Company have the right to make such high profits from the local Ambonese and prohibit others to come to trade with them? He referred here to the 1753 resolution. 85

When the sales of Indian textiles from all the branches in the eastern provinces are tallied for any one year, they add up to only 30 to 50% of the quantity of textiles sold in Batavia.

It was noted above that chintz was very significant to the Javanese. That was not the case for the eastern provinces. 86 The graphs at the end of this chapter clearly indicate that plain cloths, possibly with a minimum of decoration, were preferred. There are two exceptions: Makassar in 1757-9 and Banda in 1770-1 show higher than usual sales of chintz. The reasons for such manifestations are not clear.

It can be observed that muslins were important textile types in Makassar and to a lesser degree in Ternate. In Banda and Ambon muslin is practically absent in the 18th century. It was, however, part of textile purchases in the 17th century. Whereas checked and striped cloths are practically absent in the sales to the Makassarese and Timorese, they are always in demand in Maluku. An explanation for these fluctuations in the clusters is not available in published sources, but it is tempting to relate the fluctuations in the clusters to fashions—not in the way of cut clothing, but a particular stripe, check or color change? Research of this type has never been

85 VOC 3208 (1768): 457-8

86 J.A. van der Chijs, Batavia Dagh-register, May 14, (1644): 304
Western Indonesia

The VOC itself did not delineate a territory called the western provinces as they did for the eastern provinces. For the convenience of discussing the textile clusters in Sumatra and Java these branch offices were grouped together. It is realized that this arrangement does not do justice to the idiosyncratic nature of the cluster variations in these regions. There is no uniform pattern, but striking is the high quantities of chintz sold in Palembang in 1723-5. From Coromandel came 1,620 pieces tapi diverse new type which indicates a change in dress, but it is not clear what is referred to and 900 tapi telpocan which have gold decoration. A year earlier 2,040 tapi sabagay and 400 committers from Coromandel were imported. During the same years 2,280 pieces of chintz from Surat were sold (see figures in Appendix G, Textile Sales in Palembang), the average of two years 1723-5 totalling almost 4,000 pieces of chintz (second column of graph, page at the end of this chapter). Sales in Surat silk patola were very high in the early part of the 18th century. For four years between 1703 and 1725 alone 3,520 pieces were sold. In Batavia for the same years it amounted to 18,481 pieces. No other period witnessed the distribution of so many Surat silk patola. Compared to the eastern provinces Palembang bought very little plain cloth. Besides chintz it seemed to have been attracted to striped or checked cloth. Small sales were recorded for Jambi in the 18th century, but in the middle of the 17th century the people had a selection from 28 varieties and 33,000 pieces of cloth were sold.

Some of the graphs at the end of this chapter do not reflect the sale of textiles for every year researched, which means there was enough cloth in

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87 Chances of finding satisfactory answers soon in the VOC archives are not very high. To explain the fluctuations in quantities thorough research needs to be done in the archives of each branch office. There are no published historical sources that could answer questions pertaining to socio-economic conditions in the 18th century—a dark age in Indonesia's history in many ways.
stock and no shipment was necessary. In Palembang the Company stopped selling cloth because the profits were too small. The preference of the people on the west coast of Sumatra was plain cloths, not chintz. For example, in 1758-9, 51,070 pieces bafta with a gold kepala were sold. The average sales for the years 1757-9 was close to 90,000 pieces consisting mostly of plain and checked and striped wear, some muslin and luxury cloth. This is in great contrast to Banten which sold predominantly chintz during the same years. On the Java north coast the textile sales were relatively small. The highest sales were in 1757-9 of close to 20,000 pieces. It may be assumed that special cloth was bought in Batavia and taken to the coastal towns from where it was distributed inland. Moreover, east Java had increased its own production and was exporting cloth to other islands in the archipelago, thus there was no longer much need for Company cloth.

**Distribution to Japan**

Every year throughout the VOC period Indian cloths were exported from Batavia to Japan. The varieties of textiles can viewed in Table 13 on page 360. Notable is the absence of textiles from Surat. Because the Company carried very few textiles from Surat to Japan they were listed in the last column under OTHER. The most popular cloths from India came from Bengal. The VOC imported Japanese silver and copper to Bengal and returned raw silk and textiles. Tens of thousands of pieces of cloth from the Bengal factories were shipped via Batavia each year. For the quantities involved for 33 years that shipments were recorded in the *Batavia Negotie Journaal*, see page 361 after Table 13.

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88 Realia, vol 3 (1743) 15

89 Barbara Watson Andaya, "The Cloth Trade in Jambi and Palembang" in Indonesia, no 48: 33

90 VOC Batavia Negotie Grootboek: 10396 (1653); VOC Batavia Negotie Journaal: 11832 (1700), 11833 (1702), 11834 (1703), 11835 (1704), 11836 (1705), 11837 (1707), 11838 (1714), 11839 (1721), 11840 (1722), 11841 (1723) 11842 (1730), 11844 (1732), 11846 (1733), 11847
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Types of Textiles</th>
<th>No. of Years Imported</th>
<th>Types of Textiles</th>
<th>No. of Years Imported</th>
<th>Types of Textiles</th>
<th>No. of Years Imported</th>
<th>Types of Textiles</th>
<th>No. of Years Imported</th>
<th>Types of Textiles</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1. Baayen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1. Bleached Baftas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Alkatijven</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1. Chitzen (S)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Berakanen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2. Blue Bafta</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. Allegias</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2. Damast (Ch)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Carsayen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5. Chelas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5. Charradarijs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5. Fangsjes (Ch)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Felpen</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7. Chitzen (printed)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7. Garassen</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7. Pelangs (Ch)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Ras de Marocco</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17. (fine bleached)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17. Hammans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Stamatten</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20. (ordinary bleached)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20. Restassen</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(S) = Surat (Ch) = Chinese</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21. (red)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21. Sail Cloth</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22. (blue)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22. Salem Pouris (bleached)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>23. Salempouris: (fine bleached)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23. Taffachelas D'Hermes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. (ordinary bleached)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24. Tesser Checkered cloth</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. (blue)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25. Various Silk Cloths</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>26. Salpicados</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>27. Flag Cloth</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28. Sail Cloth</td>
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N.B. No Dutch Textiles shipments in 1702 and 1703.
### NUMBER OF PIECES OF TEXTILES IMPORTED TO JAPAN BY THE VOC

with their Invoice Prices in Guilders during the Years sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NETHERLANDS</th>
<th>COROMANDEL</th>
<th>BENGAL</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
<th>TOTAL TEXTILE IMPORT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Textile pieces</td>
<td>Amount in guilders</td>
<td>No. of Textile pieces</td>
<td>Amount in guilders</td>
<td>No. of Textile pieces</td>
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<td>1653</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>71,014</td>
<td>7,945</td>
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<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>69,230</td>
<td>11,460</td>
<td>85,756</td>
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<tr>
<td>1702</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3,164</td>
<td>37,233</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
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<td>1703</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14,580</td>
<td>67,993</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,244</td>
<td>76,764</td>
<td>6,240</td>
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<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>35,956</td>
<td>3,580</td>
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<tr>
<td>1754</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10,111</td>
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<td>12,376</td>
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<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17,493</td>
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<td>40,891</td>
<td>3,050</td>
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<td>1756</td>
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<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>335</td>
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<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>52,220</td>
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<td>36,901</td>
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<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>30,979</td>
<td>4,252</td>
<td>45,599</td>
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<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>377</td>
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<td>1771</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>62,251</td>
<td>4,480</td>
<td>57,628</td>
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<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>35,034</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>38,454</td>
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<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>30,212</td>
<td>2,610</td>
<td>31,903</td>
<td>1,510</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 9,532 | 1,137,981 | 164,175 | 1,374,122 | 383,933 | 3,322,496 | 27,526 | 274,295 | 585,166 | 6,108,894
The Dutch textiles which are listed in the first column of Table 13 were a very important commodity for the Company in its trade to Japan. To no other branch were so many ells of woollen cloth distributed. Behind the textiles that are listed a number indicates the shipments (out of the 33 years under analysis) that contained that particular variety. Thus it is easy to see that *laken*, *lakenrassen*, *croonrassen*, *perpetuanen*, *grijnen*, and *felpen* were the main types of cloth imported by Japan from the Netherlands via Batavia. In Coromandel the usual types for Southeast Asia are also important to Japan: *gingam*, *guinees*, *parcalle*, and *salempore*. Large numbers of *armosins*, *alegia*, *gingam*, *geras*, *salempore* and chintz, gunny, and silk cloths were also imported from Bengal.

Engelbert Kaempfer, who wrote *The History of Japan* and gave many details about the handicraft of the Japanese, did not record with the same fine precision his observations about textiles and their production in Japan. He gave glimpses of the importance of textiles to Japanese society and sparingly described how some classes of people were dressed. 91

Silk was traditionally very important to the Japanese. Silkworms had been introduced from China very early, but the Dutch also shipped 33 cases of silkworms from Patani to Hirado in 1612. 92 However the raw silk that the Company imported was of better quality than what Japan produced itself. 93 In the Shoso-in, an 8th century repository, many examples of weft and warp silk brocades, silk gauzes, embroidered silks, stencil-dyed silks and painted silks are still found. 94

Besides the silk and cloth import to Japan the Company also carried
Javanese cotton thread. In 29 years out of the 33 years that were researched 138,000 pounds were imported at a value of £35,000. This is an average buying price of £0.25. To put this quantity in perspective the demand from the Netherlands for Javanese cotton in 1721 was 130,000 pounds.95

It was observed that textile prices increased in Indonesia. The same is true for the Coromandel textiles for Japan. An average price from the shipment in 1653 was £5.68, but in the early years of the 18th century the average price of a Coromandel cloth to Japan is between £8.00 and £9.00. In mid-century the price increased to £10.00. The textiles from Bengal show a similar pattern: prices increase, but sales decrease which is demonstrated in the columns under Coromandel and Bengal.

The distribution of trade textiles by the VOC took place mainly through its own personnel. There was no larger built in customer than the Company's own employees. Ultimately these cloths were consumed by the people in the archipelago. The major impact of the large stock the Company kept was that it helped to keep the price for Indian textiles high. The Company could command those prices in the branch offices where the people were relying on the Company's provisions.

The graphs showing the clusters with the different varieties of cloth that were distributed indicated the wide disparity in taste of cloth. Whereas the chintz was very popular in the areas around the Java Sea, comparatively few chintz tapi were distributed to Maluku. Places more remote from Java seem to have had a preference for plainer cloth.

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95 Resolution Heren XVII (1719): 12, Sept.12
Textile Sales in Batavia by Clusters, 1652-1780

Diagram showing textile sales by clusters over the years 1652-1780, with different categories represented by different patterns and colors. The categories include Chintz, Checked & Stripes, Luxury, Muslin, and Plain.
Textile Sales in Ambon by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Striped
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1652-3</th>
<th>1703-5</th>
<th>1723-5</th>
<th>1733-5</th>
<th>1757-9</th>
<th>1770-1</th>
<th>1780-1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Textile Sales in Banda by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Striped
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

Years:
- 1652-3
- 1703-5
- 1723-5
- 1733-5
- 1757-9
- 1770-1
- 1780-1
Textile Sales in Ternate by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Striped
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

Years

1652-3  1703-5  1723-5  1733-5  1757-9  1770-1  1780-1

Pieces

0  5000  10000  15000  20000  25000
Textile Sales in Makassar by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Etch Chintz
- Checked & Stripes
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chintz</th>
<th>Checked &amp; Stripes</th>
<th>Luxury</th>
<th>Muslin</th>
<th>Plain</th>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757-9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773-5</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Textile Sales in Timor Solor by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Striped
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Chintz</th>
<th>Checked &amp; Striped</th>
<th>Luxury</th>
<th>Muslin</th>
<th>Plain</th>
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<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1770-1</td>
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<td>1780-1</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Pieces

0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000
Textile Sales in Java North Coast, 1652-1780

Chintz | Checked & Stripes | Luxury | Muslin | Plain

Years

Pieces

1652-3 | 1703-5 | 1723-5 | 1733-5 | 1757-9 | 1770-1 | 1780-1
Textile Sales in Banten by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Stripes
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

Years
1703-5 1723-5 1733-5 1757-9 1780-1

Pieces
0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000
Textile Sales on the Sumatran West Coast by Clusters, 1652-1780
Textile Sales in Palembang by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Striped
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Years</th>
<th>Pieces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1723-5</td>
<td>5000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1733-5</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>1757-9</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<td>1770-1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Textile Sales in Jambi by Clusters, 1652-1780

- Chintz
- Checked & Stripes
- Luxury
- Muslin
- Plain

Pieces

1652-3
1723-5
1733-5

Years
CHAPTER 10

THE POWER OF CLOTH: THE BATIK REVIVAL

Introduction

It is impossible to obtain a thorough understanding of the VOC cloth trade within the scope of a four year project. The trade of the Company is from an economic viewpoint a very complex enterprise. To explain the major issue of the decline of the Company's trade in general—not in particular the textile trade—has been attempted by many historians, but no satisfactory answers have been found. Gaastra explains the diminishing profits from the inter-Asiatic trade as a major factor that drained large sums of metals from the Netherlands to Asia. He adds to this important factor the weakness of managing the Company by the directorate, shortcomings in the bookkeeping, corruption and bad management of affairs in Asia, increasing costs to maintain the corporation, defective financing, and the Fourth English-Dutch war. All of these factors are indisputably valid and the accumulative effect attributed to the decline of the VOC if viewed from a European historical perspective.¹

Steur disagrees with Gaastra in some ways by giving emphasis to the very high costs of maintaining an institution like the VOC with most branches constantly operating on a deficit.² Klerk de Reus contributes the decline to the continual maintenance of the monopoly, the untrustworthiness of employees who were terribly corrupt and the increased competition of the English Company. Colenbrander's ethnocentric viewpoint attributes a decline to the awkward bookkeeping and payments of unaccountable and irresponsible dividends. Fasseur and Lequin offer variations on the same themes. Steur makes a point that in evaluating the Company's operation one should make a distinction between the way the VOC thought and acted in

¹ F. Gaastra, "De VOC in Azië, 1680-1795" in Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol 9: 464
² J.J. Steur, Herstel of Ondergang: 28-9
the Netherlands and in Asia. In my view the correspondence between Batavia and the Netherlands reflects a process of action and reaction. The management in Asia was caught between an Asian way of doing business and Dutch commercial dealings ordered by the directorate in the Netherlands. Batavia management usually handled correspondence diplomatically while it kept a parallel interest in the operations in Asia which included the "excessive" private trade by the employees: a mechanism to survive in the Asian environment. That corruption of the employees and the private trade caused the decline of the Company's trade is unlikely because those offenses, continually complained about in letters from the Netherlands, occurred from the earliest beginnings throughout the VOC period. When a Council member in 1630 was reprimanded by the Governor-General over his private trading activities, he answered that he did not come to the Indies to eat hay (in India niett was gecoomen om hoij te eeten). The upper echelon in Batavia was very much ingrained into an Asian way of living, as made clear in Taylor's The Social World of Batavia. Eventually the Indonesian people reacted to the foreign competition and dominance, especially the oppressive commercial policy of the Dutch in a silent war: import substitution.

Some VOC officials in the mid-18th century were enlightened and understood that the Company was heading towards its downfall. Governors Van Imhoff (1743-50) and Van der Parra (1761-75) both attempted to change the Company's tack. On a lower level Governor Fockens had pertinent ideas about what would be good for the Company in the archipelago, as discussed in Chapter 8. He wanted to throw the trade in his Ambon province open to free traders and argued that the Company would benefit from it. This was supported by Governor-General Mossel, who wanted to streamline the Company's operations into a modern business enterprise.

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3 Ibid: 36

4 Anthony van Diemen, "Letter 1630" in Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap: 82

5 Realia, vol 3 (1743-6): 23 Both Governor-Generals opened trade to free traders in many products that were previously monopolized.
However Governor-General van der Parra, born and raised in Asia, thought more along the lines of Fockens. Thus the wind was beginning to blow from a different direction, but the demise of the textile trade had gone too far to recuperate.

Having analyzed the VOC trade from Asia to Europe, Glamann pointed out:

Historians have in too high a degree fastened on the provision in the octrois for trade west of the Cape of Good Hope and on the great profits on spices, but have overlooked that also on markets where there were few competitors price competition and other forms of competition might break out, just as it has been forgotten that spices did not dominate the export from Asia and that gross profits were one thing and net profits something else.⁶

Glamann continues to refer to other products that had an impact on the markets, namely silks, textiles, indigo, but he references these products like most European historians do, to the territories of the European economic markets, not being familiar with Asian markets. Arasaratnam has through his many writings shown the strength of the Indian traders who competed with the VOC and other Europeans wherever possible. In this chapter I want to point to the Indonesian competitive forces opposing the Dutch monopoly, in particular the trade in cloth.

Both the Dutch and the Javanese state interfered with the longstanding Indonesian textile production, each according to its strategic interests. In describing these two contrasting strategies, it becomes clear that Java was following a calculated retrenchment policy on the trade activities of the north coast, in contrast to the Dutch policy of trade suppression to destroy or at least weaken competitors in Batavia, Banten, Makassar, and Sumatra. In this interplay of Javanese retrenchment and Dutch suppression, the surplus production of cloth and the popularization of batik developed into a major political and economic battleground involving all parties—the Indonesians

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⁶ K. Glamann, Dutch Asiatic Trade: 262. Emphasis was added.
actively promoting the trend as a weapon, the Dutch opposing it as a threat. What follows is an account of (1) how the pattern of war and politics between Java and Batavia involved the issue of the import of Indian cloth; (2) how Company suppression of local trade in Banten, Makassar, and Sumatra contributed to the revival of local productive capacities; and (3) how batik-making—and the commercialization of batik cloth as an imitation of and import-substitute for Indian chintz—came to epitomize an organized campaign by Java to fight the Dutch monopoly in textiles.

_Dutch Suppression Policy: Makassar, Sumatra, and Banten_

In Chapters 1, 2 and 3 it was shown that Indonesian women had a long history of cloth production and trade. The Dutch ignored the existing Indonesian cloth trade that went both eastward to the islands that produced the spices and north to Melaka. Participation in buying and selling local cloth did not satisfy the Dutch profitability equation. Profit on the Indian cloth was double that on local cloth.

At the height of the pepper and spice trade the VOC severely curbed the commercial activities of the trading communities in the archipelago: Banda, 1624: Melaka, 1641, Ambon 1655; Makassar, 1669; Aceh, 1668; the Java north coast, 1678; Ternate, 1680; and lastly Banten, 1682. These commercial blows tended to shift these societies towards a mere subsistence pattern, at least for a period immediately after the VOC pressed trading restrictions upon them.

The commercial downturn did not last. It was not mandatory to buy imported Indian cloth. The cloth was attractive as long as it was reasonably priced. However, the ingredients for cloth making were all available, as shown in Chapter 1 and 2. As prices of the Indian import-cloth rose, a growing number of women reverted to weaving, dyeing and decorating their own cloth. Their production expanded as local trade picked up. The Dutch often complained about the increase of the Sulawesi trade because it affected
their own cloth trade.7

Also in Makassar people started to weave more than before.8 At the height of its commerce in the middle of the 17th century traders in Makassar sailed with Indian cloth to Timor, Flores, Solor, Tanimbar, Alor, Sumbawa, Buton, Tambuku, Banggai, Ceram, Tawi-Tawi, Sibutu, Macao, Manila, Cebu, Cambodia, Patani, the Java north coast, Johore, Melaka, Aceh, Banjermasin, Brunei and the north-west coast of Sulawesi from Menado to Mandar. The wealth of Makassar rulers was demonstrated in a list of the treasure cloths that were reclaimed after the war (Appendix D). The Indian cloth was imported from India by the Portuguese, English and Danish or obtained by intermediary traders in places on the way from India to Makassar from where it was distributed to the eastern provinces and Manila. The tribute-cloth to the royal families from Selayar, an island southeast of Makassar, was annually traded in Kutai and Pasir, east Borneo. Selayar cloth of different types (white, white- and blue-striped, gabar, marbyssang) was shipped to Banjermasin, west Flores, Tanimbar, Alor, Sukadana, and Ceram. Woven cloth from Sumbawa was traded to Manila, and also to Kutei and Pasir; Madurese cloth to Manila; red cotton thread to Cambodia and, curiously, a cloth called sarassa jumpandang, described as a painted and dyed cloth, to Manila. Bali also used to export large quantities of coarse cotton thread and multi-colored woven cloths to Makassar, but had stopped doing so by the 1660s.9

When the Dutch occupied Makassar, Batavia’s largest competitor, they thought to take over this lucrative trade. They expelled all foreign traders in order to take over their trade. That proved to be a grave tactical error because it crippled Makassar’s rich international trade, which was tied to the


9 J. Noorduyn, "De handelsrelaties van het Makassaaarse rijk volgens de Notitie van Cornelis Speelman uit 1670": 103-16
resident foreigners. For example, one Portuguese trader had always supplied Indian cloths he bought in Makassar for Manila. The value of the cargo was about 100,000 reals-of-eight or £300,000. When he died, a Makassarese and an Indian Muslim took over this route.\textsuperscript{10} After Makassar came under Dutch control, in 1670 Manila initiated a new route directly linking Madras and Manila, cutting out Makassar. The new trade route was serviced first by Indo-Portuguese merchants from Madras and San Thome and later by Coromandel Hindu and Muslim merchants to whom the English also entrusted their cargo of cloths.\textsuperscript{11} This trade in Coromandel cloth and Manila silver grew by the latter quarter of the 17th century to more than one million guilders per year. The preparation of an order of such magnitude took time. Coromandel dyers (schilders) gave preference to the order for Manila as opposed to the order for the VOC in Batavia because the Manila traders paid better prices for the painted chintz.\textsuperscript{12}

Thus, as a consequence of their suppression policy, not only had the Dutch lost this Makassar trade, but now they had to witness an increasingly lucrative trade to Manila carried out by their competitors in Coromandel. From 1670 onward the Makassar trade was reduced to the size the Dutch allowed the royal families to maintain. Under the auspices of the Company's pass system other traders were allowed to trade, but were severely restricted in the products they could carry. The whole 1667-9 warring episode had depressed Makassar's affluent society, impoverishing both royal families and their subjects. The Company allowed Makassar based Asian merchants to trade with Bali, Java's north coast, Batavia, Banten, Palembang, Jambi, Johor, Aceh, Malaka, Borneo and Patani.\textsuperscript{13} With more restricted commercial opportunities the Makassarese no longer received large quantities of Indian cloth, and lacked the money to buy the cloth from the Company which was

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid: 106-7

\textsuperscript{11} S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce: 129, 154

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid: 208

\textsuperscript{13} J. Noorduyn, "Handelsrelaties Makassaaarse rijk": 110