



Writing memoirs in the mid-eighteenth century- A comparative study in Ambon and Sri Lanka

Sujeewa Bandara

S 1574191

Writing memoirs in the mid-eighteenth century- A comparative study in Ambon and Sri Lanka.

**Sujeewa Bandara**

MA Thesis Archival Studies (Encompass Second Year)

Student Number s 1574191

University of Leiden

August 2016

Supervisor:

K.J.P.F.M. Jeurgens

## Contents

Introduction	5- 10
Chapter I	
Writing memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon	11
I.I The VOC in Asia	12- 13
I.II The VOC in Ambon: Imposing spice monopoly	13- 14
I.II.I Establishing the settlements	14- 17
I.III The VOC in Sri Lanka: They were here to get the cinnamon	17- 20
I.IV Memories van Overgave	20
I.IV.I Memoirs in Sri Lanka	20- 21
I.IV.II Memoirs in Ambon	21- 22
Conclusion	22
Chapter II	
What do memoirs contain?	23
II.I Sri Lankan Memoirs	24
II.I.I Jacob Pielat (1732-1734): An ‘Administrative’ type of memoir	24- 27
II.I.II Gustaff Willem Baron Van Imhoff (1736-1740): A role model for the future Sri Lankan memoirs	27- 30
II.I.III Julius Stein van Van Gollenesse (1743-1751): Natives are Important for making policies	30- 33
II.I.IV Joan Gideon Loten (1752-1757): The structure of the ‘ideal’ memoir followed	33- 35
II.I.V Jan Schreuder (1757-1762): The lengthiest memoir	35- 37
II.II Ambon Memoirs	37
II.II.I Johannes Bernard (1727- 1733): Planting young clove trees	38- 39

II.II.II	David Johan Bake (1733- 1738): Focus still remains on clove plantations	40- 41
II.II.III	Jacob de Jong (1738-1743): A lengthier memoir with a justification	42- 44
II.II.IV	Nathaniel Steinmetz: 1743- 1748: The emphasis shall remain on clove plantations	44- 45
II.II.V	Gerard Cluysenaar 1752- 1757: Control the decrease in clove production	45- 46
	Conclusion	46
Chapter III		
	Comparing the memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon	48
III.I	General Introduction for the comparison of Sri Lankan Memoirs	49- 51
III.I.I	Diplomatic relations: Relations with Kandy	51- 52
III.I.II	Land tenure: Thombo compilation	53- 56
III.II	General Description for the Ambonese memoirs	56- 58
III.II.I	<i>Hongi</i> expedition	58- 59
III.III	Comparison between Ambonese and Sri Lankan memoirs	59- 61
III.III.I	Differences between Sri Lankan and Ambon memoirs	61- 63
	Conclusion	65
	Conclusion	64- 66

### List of Tables:

Table 01	A general structure for the Sri Lankan memoirs (1730 - 1760)	49- 50
Table 02	A general structure for the Ambonese memoirs (1730 - 1760)	56- 57

### List of Maps:

Map 01	Dutch territory in Sri Lanka in the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century	48
--------	--	----

## Introduction

This study offers a comparative analysis of the memoirs (*Memories van Overgave*: Memoir of the outgoing Director) written by the outgoing governors of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Sri Lanka and Ambon Isles during the mid-eighteenth century. These memoirs were an important source of information for the incoming governors about the affairs of the VOC in those regions.

According to the resolution passed by the VOC on September 29, 1669,<sup>1</sup> it was mandatory for an outgoing governor to write a memoir for his successor. According to S. Arasaratnam, a colonial historian in Sri Lanka, memoirs deal with similar themes but differ from each other in terms of pattern, phraseology and, in some cases, the structure.<sup>2</sup> Diplomatic relations, details of the spice trade, religious affairs, land tenure system, revenues and profits of the Company, and laws and jurisdictions are some of the themes under discussion in the memoirs. G.J. Knaap, a historian who has worked on the memoirs, highlights the fact that not every outgoing governor could write a memoir because of a variety of reasons; for example, illness, premature death, and in some case, displacement affected the reporting of activities and created a gap.<sup>3</sup> Governor Van Imhoff (1736- 1740) also mentioned a gap among Sri Lankan memoirs because many of them have been lost, either by ravages of time or by carelessness.<sup>4</sup> Both Arasarathnama and Knaap

---

<sup>1</sup>Gustaff Willem Baron van Van Imhoff, *Memoir to his successor Willem Maurits Bruknink 1740*, Sophia Pieters (translator) (Colombo: E.C Cottle, Government Printer, 1911): 4. Van Imhoff mentioned about this resolution in his memoirs, further, he explained that the first set of the resolution was passed in the year 1681 and again revised in 1696. See, Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: 4. But the resolutions were not available in the National archives in Sri Lanka.

<sup>2</sup> He mentioned his ieabywritinganintroductiontothe translation of thememoir of Van Gollennesse. See, J, S. Van Gollennesse, *Memoir Julius Stein Van Gollennesse Governor of Ceylon 1743- 1751* S. Arasaratnam (translator) (Colombo: Department of National Archives, 1974): 1-4.

<sup>3</sup>G. J. Knaap (bewekt), *Memories van Overgave van gouverneurs van Ambon in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987): vii- x.

<sup>4</sup>Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: 4.

acknowledged the gap as a major disadvantage.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Knaap argues that the memoirs were not very similar in nature; some governors provided greater details, while others kept it as short as possible. Also, some memoirs were rich in details about inhabitants and their lifestyle, while some others remained dry and official in nature.<sup>6</sup> Arasaratnam categorised memoirs into the following two major groups: good and mediocre memoirs, but he did not mention the criterion for the above division. This vague classification inspired me to read more about the memoirs, and I found very few studies on this vital subject related to the VOC. Therefore, this study may be considered as an attempt to fill this historiographical gap and to get a better understanding of the administrative processes these memoirs were the result of this study.

Memoirs offer a compelling window through which a number of questions can be raised. The main research question that this study asks is: To what extent did the governors in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon ensure the continuity of knowledge through their memoirs during the mid-eighteenth century? In order to narrow down the focus of this study, I raise the following sub-questions: What was the administrative background of the memoirs in Ambon and Sri Lanka during the mid-eighteenth century? Did the VOC officers follow a conventional structure while writing their memoirs, and if not what made them different? To what extent did the Governors follow their predecessors while writing their own memoirs? How did the VOC Governors add their personal experiences to the governing knowledge?

## **Theory**

The linear way of transferring knowledge from one governor to the next in the VOC can be identified as a convenient way to educate the upcoming generation of high-ranking officers about the governing process. In this case, the model of reasoning and the structure of thoughts in the memoirs are analysed according to the linear approach.

Shawn Rosenberg, a political physiologist, asserted that linear reasoning involves the analysis of sequences of action that are directly observed or have been recounted by other people. The focus

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid: 4. ;Knaap, *Memories van Overgave*: vii- x.

<sup>6</sup>Knaap, *Memories van overgave*: vii- x.

is on concrete actions, the particular things that are done or said. These actions are abstracted from the sequential unfolding of events and are considered within a temporal frame of reference. Several actions can thus be considered at the same time, and the manner in which each follows from or leads to another can be examined.<sup>7</sup> He opines that those actions are understood by placing one in relation to other. Then the relationship constructed is imbalanced or unidirectional. It depends on the location of one action that serves as the conceptual anchor. Other actions are linked to this anchor, and thus defined in relation to it. As a result, the understandings produced by linear thought are grounded in the concrete particular of actions to be understood, and the specific links that are observed or reported to connect one action to the next.<sup>8</sup> In order to apply this approach, I do refer to Rosenberg's following questions related to the transfer of knowledge from one person to his successors: i) what is the consequence or what is the antecedent of an observed action? ii) What actions are the result of the same cause or produce the same effect? What is the correct sequence of actions that should unfold in a particular circumstance?<sup>9</sup>

### **Historiography**

There has been a range of scholarly research that has focused on the practice of writing memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon. R. G. Anthonisz, a former archivist (1902- 1921) in British Sri Lanka, listed all the memoirs available in the Sri Lankan archives and even noticed in 1907 that as a record series they remained incomplete.<sup>10</sup> In 1943, M.W. Jurriaanse, a Dutch archivist who worked in British Sri Lanka, briefly mentioned the contents of the memoirs while cataloging the VOC archival documents in Sri Lanka. According to her, memoirs were majorly written by the high VOC officers for their successors. It was an obligatory work which they had to perform.

---

<sup>7</sup>Shawn W. Rosenberg, *The Not So Common Sense: Differences in How People Judge Social and Political Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press. 2002): 80.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid: 80.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid: 81.

<sup>10</sup>R. G. Anthonisz, *Report on The Dutch Records in The Government Archives At Colombo* (Colombo: H. C. Cattel. Government Printer, Ceylon, 1907):17.

She did not find any strict rules for writing memoirs and saw it as a tradition which depended on the personality of the authors.<sup>11</sup>

In 1973, Arasaratnam also has mentioned that memoir writing was an obligatory duty of the stationed governors as it provided with a sketch of the ongoing Dutch activities in the conquered territories both to the High Government seated in Batavia, and the succeeding Governor. Memoirs were a comprehensive review of the administration, policy, and the problems that surfaced during the tenure of that particularly stationed officer. They were particularly drafted for the benefit of the successor, who would otherwise have to go through the piles of files housed in the Secretariat, in order to acquaint them with their duties and the status of things in the city where they would take charge as newcomers.<sup>12</sup>

In 1987, G.J. Knaap contributed to the study and wrote a detailed introduction to *Memories van Overgave* (Memoir of the outgoing Director) in Ambon. He asserted that these summary reports were written by the outgoing governors to inform their successors about the existing state of affairs in various regions of Ambon.<sup>13</sup> He highlights the clear cut differentiation between the regular correspondences of the VOC administration with the Batavian government and the memoirs which were left by the governors or other high ranking officers to their successors. Knaap further adds that memoirs carry with them personal ideologies, strategies, or experience which the Governors would have encountered in their tenure. Arasaratnam agreed with G.J. Knaap's line of thought and stated that the above-mentioned facts remained true in Sri Lankan memoirs as well.

Considering the Dutch occupation in Sri Lanka, Alicia Schrikker<sup>14</sup> has focused on the encounter between the colonial power and colonised, and its impact on the society from 1780 to 1815. She has initiated a new line of thought by studying Sri Lankan history with the help of Dutch sources.

---

<sup>11</sup>M. W. Jurriaanse, *Catalogue of the Archives of the Dutch Central Government of Coastal Ceylon* (Colombo: Department of National Archives in Sri Lanka, 1943): 172.

<sup>12</sup>J. S. van Gollennesse, *Memoir left by van Gollennesse*: 1.

<sup>13</sup>Knaap, *Memories van overgave*: vii- x.

<sup>14</sup>Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007).



Her attention on the Company policy and the relations with Kandy and the decisions taken by the Batavian government threw light on the mechanism of selecting particular subjects in Sri Lankan memoirs from 1730 to 1760. Regarding the Dutch occupation in Ambon, I closely refer to Muridan Widjojo's cross cultural study of Maluku.<sup>15</sup> Though his study is primarily based on depicting the historical background in Maluku, there are details that can be directly connected to the process of writing memoirs. He has explained the impact of decision-making process by the Dutch, and how the participation of the subjects minimised the resistance during the mid-eighteenth century. However, he offers no details about the process of writing memoirs in Ambon. As a result of these lacunae, this study seeks to shed light on the contextual and structural analysis of the memoirs during the mid-eighteenth century in Sri Lanka and Ambon Isles.

## **Material and Method**

My arguments are based on the above-mentioned theoretical understanding, which is combined with the analysis of primary sources. In attempting to answer my research questions, I have done a comparative study of the Sri Lankan and Ambon memoirs. The structural and content analysis of the memoirs, which was used as a tool to share knowledge of governance by the Company both in South and South-East Asia, will help in understanding the similarities and differences between them. I focus on the time period 1730-1760 because the memoirs written during this period have been employed as evidential references in the scholarly works in both regions. First, I have compared the two regions, Sri Lanka and Ambon, from 1730 to 1760, and then the common elements, similar structure or contents in the memoirs have been analysed and mentioned. Second, I have mapped the differences found in the memoirs by following the same criteria. However, it should be noted that the study is not limited to the analysis of similarities and differences; I have also aimed at finding the reasons that made some memoirs so unique and different from the others.

---

<sup>15</sup>MuidanWidjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku: Cross- Cultural Alliance-making in Maluku, c.1780- 1810* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

As far as sources are concerned, I made use of five published memoirs in each case. However, while analysing the structures, I have also followed the original sources to see whether any structural changes occur in the translated versions of the memoirs.<sup>16</sup> Besides memoirs, I used *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* to compare the laws which were mentioned in the memoirs.<sup>17</sup> For a better understanding of the memoirs, I use letters, yearbooks, and other relevant documents in both the cases.<sup>18</sup>

This study is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter of this study is called “Writing memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon.” It discusses memoirs in Dutch settlements in Ambon and Sri Lanka from the beginning of their rule. This chapter is based on the secondary sources which were written about the impact of Dutch occupation in both regions. Throughout this chapter, I attempt to answer the following questions: what was the historical background of Ambon and Sri Lanka in the mid-eighteenth century? How do memoirs fit in the administrative history of VOC in Ambon and Sri Lanka? These questions direct the research towards understanding the background history and the connection between the administrative history and memoirs during the mid-eighteenth century in above mentioned regions.

The second chapter titled “What do memoirs contain?” analyses the memoirs in Sri Lanka and Ambon from 1730 to 1760. In this chapter, I have used both original and published memoirs, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, unpublished letters, yearbooks records and other reports. Through these documents, I answer the following questions: was there a standard writing structure that was followed by the governors? What were the basic elements present in the memoirs? Why do the memoirs give a particular kind of information to its reader? This chapter investigates the selected 10 memoirs in order to understand their structure, content, and details.

The final chapter of this study is called “Comparing the memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon”. This chapter, first, summarises, the findings of the second chapter. According to the outcomes, I try to figure out a general structure for both the Sri Lankan and the Ambonese

---

<sup>16</sup> National Archives in The Hague 1.04.02.2483; 2482; 2635.

<sup>17</sup> L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* Deel I & II (Hilversum: Verloren, 1991).

<sup>18</sup> NL-HANA, 1.04.02.8958; 2482; 2492; 2458; 2772; 8522; 2379.

memoirs in the mid-eighteenth century. This chapter will trace the answers to some questions according to the general structure of the memoirs. Were there any significant similarities and differences in the memoirs written in Sri Lanka and Ambon? Were there any unique factors responsible for similarities and differences between the memoirs from the two regions? How far the knowledge about government in Sri Lanka and Ambon was transferred from generation to generation in a linear fashion?

The major difficulty in undertaking this research was the absence of any analytical study on either the Sri Lankan or Ambonese memoirs. Historians have used memoirs as a primary source for their research, but they don't deal with the administrative history of the memoirs themselves. Therefore, this study may be considered as a step towards the analytical study of memoirs written by the VOC governors in Sri Lanka and Ambon during the mid-eighteenth century.

## Chapter I

### Writing memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon:

The *Memories van Overgave* present the history of Dutch settlements in its colonies. Although the other VOC documents, for instance, resolutions, minutes or for that matter compendiums discuss the history in a formal format, the memoirs present to its readers the personal experiences of the governors, their governing process and the prevailing situation in the colonial societies. Later on, all these memoirs were primarily used to depict the historiography of the colonial settlements. The questions that can be raised here are what was the historical background of Ambon and Sri Lanka in the mid-eighteenth century? How do memoirs fit in the administrative history of VOC in Ambon and Sri Lanka? In order to explore the answers to these questions, this chapter will primarily focus on the background history of the Dutch settlements in Ambon and Sri Lanka. Such brief histories of two regions will basically build a foundation for a better comparison of the memoirs in the following chapters of this thesis. The short history of Ambon and Sri Lanka in the first two sections is based on the explanation on how the Company captured lands and ruled their subjects. Behind this, a huge bureaucratic mechanism was deeply embedded. The Company employees ruled the colonies and shared the knowledge of governance with the new generations. Considering the connectivity of depiction of colonial power through the documents which they produced, this chapter will question the role of the *Memories van Overgave* as a linear chain of shared knowledge of colonial governments.

The first section of this chapter is devoted to a brief explanation of the VOC in Asia. In the next section, strengthening trade monopoly and the governmental process in Ambon will be discussed. The following section explains the establishment of the VOC in Sri Lanka. In addition, it will be devoted to the discussion of the way the Company extended its power through

cinnamon monopoly and diplomatic relations with Kandy<sup>19</sup> being the new ruler in the coastal belt. The last two sections examine the practice of writing memoirs in both Ambon and Sri Lanka.

## **I.I The VOC in Asia:**

*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) was established after receiving the official Charter by the States General of the United Province in the Netherlands on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1602. The Company was formed as a private commercial trading company which aimed to continue expeditions in the Asian ocean networks. The Charter of the new Company granted the privilege of exercising sovereign rights on behalf of the Republic in the case of Asian powers, but it came to encourage values which the new Dutch nation had come to reject. One such conflict was the in toward freedom of the seas.<sup>20</sup> The new Company was divided into six chambers based in Enkhuizen, Hoorn, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Delft, and Zeeland, with Amsterdam being the foremost and most powerful chamber. Representatives of the six chambers were sent two or three times a year to the central body of the Gentlemen XVII. As a commercial Company, VOC wanted to become the pioneer of the spice trade in Asia and wanted to establish its power in the islands of Moluccas first. After that, they needed to build a central administrative point in Asia. To avoid problems with other European competitors, such as the Portuguese or English who had settled down in Bantam. They chose a place which was located at the Ciliwong River, later named Batavia (modern day Jakarta). From this main VOC establishment all outposts in Asia, as well as the post at Cape of Good Hope (presently Cape Town), stood under the supervision of Governor General and Councils in Batavia. This High Government (*Hoge Regering*) was controlled by the Gentlemen XVII in the Netherlands.

While settling its administration in Batavia, the Company continued its expansion by capturing or leasing more outposts in Asia. Coromandel ('Textile Coast', now Tamil Nadu in India) from

---

<sup>19</sup>The last kingdom of Sri Lanka. instead of conquering Company often tried best to keep good relations with this kingdom. However, Kandy was conquered by the English and a treaty was signed between the Singhalese nobles and the English on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1815.

<sup>20</sup>Leonardo Y. Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993): 41.

the very beginning was essential for the building up of 'intra-Asian trade'. Many outposts contributed to this Asian trade which was meant to earn money in the region itself, to finance export goods for the sale in Europe. Other settlements were important to extract precious goods, such as Sri Lanka, the place where the best quality cinnamon was grown. However, it should be noted that capturing these outposts was not limited only to trading activities; later, they were developed as the centers of the Dutch government in the East Indies. The VOC employees played quite important roles while establishing the power in these trading posts. Their correspondences with Batavia and the documents which were used for day-to-day administration reveal the history of the Dutch settlements in Asia. Among those documents, the memoirs which were left by the governors, commanders or other officers for their successors show the personal experiences of the Dutch governmental settings in the colonies. As mentioned previously, this study compares the memoirs in Sri Lanka and Ambon during the mid-eighteenth century. Before starting with the analysis of writing memoirs of both the regions, it is beneficial to have an overview of the Dutch settlements in Ambon and Sri Lanka. The main goal of these brief histories is to question to what extent writing memoirs depended on the situation of the Dutch administration in these regions during the mid-eighteenth century.

### **I.II The VOC in Ambon: Imposing spice monopoly**

Following the traditional route which was used by the Portuguese followed by the Spanish, the Dutch finally started two expeditions in 1595- 1599 to Southeast Asia. In the first expedition, four ships were sent under Cornelis de Houtman and Gerrit van Beuningen, but the result was not as profitable as they wanted. However, it gave promising propositions for starting trade in Asia.<sup>21</sup> These expeditions directly encouraged the establishment of trading posts in the Far East in the coming years. Jacob van Neck, who led the second expedition to the East, was the pioneer in building a trading post in the Moluccas, the well-known Spice Isles in Indonesia.<sup>22</sup> Before their arrival, the Portuguese who captured power in the Moluccas in the early sixteenth century, in 1522 built the first Portuguese fort in the North Moluccan island of Ternate. In 1575, the

---

<sup>21</sup> Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku*: 12.

<sup>22</sup> Irvin M. Modlin, *The Destiny of Dutch Medicine From Amsterdam to Ambon* (Zwanenburg: Beyond the Horizon, 2001): 57.

Portuguese were however expelled from Tidore and settled in Ambon, where they are not warmly received and they built their first fort on the Bay of Hila.<sup>23</sup>

The area of Dutch Ambon included 11 islands called Buru, Manipa, Kelang, Bonoa, Ceram Ceram Laut, Nusa Laut, Honimoa (or LIASE, Lease), Boang- Besi (or Grandma) and Ambonia during the VOC period.<sup>24</sup> On 23 February 1605, the VOC fleet of 12 ships under Steven van der Hagen conquered the Portuguese fortress Nossa Senhora da Anunciada in Ambon, Leitimor.<sup>25</sup> In return, soon after these promising expeditions, the Dutch were allowed to build a fort in Kaitetu, near Hila.<sup>26</sup> The Dutch intervention in these islands cannot be totally seen as a new European enterprise. For most of the local inhabitants, nothing had changed when the Dutch arrived. It was simply the one European power was replaced by the other; therefore, the Dutch became the successor of the Portuguese. The Portuguese and the Spanish captured Ambon because they wanted to have clove monopoly. E. G. Rumphuis (1627- 1702) an employee of the VOC and a famous researcher claimed that cloves had been introduced to Ambon (Ambonia) a short while before that arrival of the Portuguese (1512) and from there to Ceram, Buru, Soela (Sulu), Sulawesi, and probably Java.<sup>27</sup>

From the side of VOC, they assigned an official agreement with the local authority of Ambon that whole of the clove production shall be delivered to the VOC for a fixed price. They acted as a protector of the island from any attacks from the Portuguese. However, the commercial goal of getting the clove monopoly coerced the Company to establish a government in Ambon after some years. When we compare this history with the VOC settlement in Sri Lanka, there also we find a similar history. There too, the VOC expelled the Portuguese Dutch had to assign treaties and signed treaties with native Kings of Kandy and became the new master of the cinnamon trade in Sri Lanka. And in return, they safeguarded the coastal belt from the Portuguese, which will be discussed in the next section. Later on, in the course of building up their colonial

---

<sup>23</sup><http://www.vocsite.nl/geschiedenis/handelsposten/amboina>. Accessed April 28, 2016.

<sup>24</sup><http://www.vocsite.nl>. Accessed April 23, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku* :19. See more in G. E. Rumphuis, *De Generale Lanst- Beschrijvinge van Het Ambonse Gouvernement* (transcriptie) W. Buijze (Den Haag: CIP- gegevens Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 2001): 1.

<sup>26</sup><http://www.vocsite.nl/geschiedenis/handelsposten/amboina.html>. Accessed April 24, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> R. A. Donkin, *Between East and West* (Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 2003): 4.

administration, the practical development can be seen in the documents which the Company had produced. They contained the experience of settlement buildings which were handed over to the new generations. In that respect, to what extent memoirs contain the compact knowledge of governance? How do memoirs reflect the decisions of the Dutch administration? To find an answer to these questions, the next section will discuss some important elements of the Dutch administration in Ambon.

### **I.II.I Establishing the settlements**

As mentioned in the above section, soon after capturing power in Ambon, the VOC established its trading posts. The target of the Company was to earn as many profits as possible by controlling the clove monopoly. This could not be achieved without controlling the local subjects or interfering with the local authority. As the result, the Company realized the importance of expanding the political power in the captured areas. There were four Dutch governments in the East Indies in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries: Banda, Ambon, Ternate, and Makassar. Each of these governments was headed by a Governor and Council who dealt with the administrative and political matters and also managed the spice production and local trade.<sup>28</sup> Instead of the activities in trade, both the Governor and the Council represented themselves in the local administrative affairs in the subjected area. In this administrative process, there were other officers who followed the order of the Governor and the Council. For instance, among them, the upper merchants (*opperkoopman*), attorney (*fiscaal*), junior merchant (*onderkoopman*), accountant (*boekhouder*), clerk (*pennist*), clergyman and the other officers played important roles.<sup>29</sup> Besides the Dutch officers, the local chiefs like the sultans or other nobilities also were involved in the governmental affairs under the supervision of the Dutch authority.

Muridan Widjojo, a colonial historian, who researched the history of Ambon, mentioned Knaap's idea in his study; according to Knaap, during the establishment of VOC's spice empire in the Moluccas region in 1656, 4 basic elements can be identified; military predominance, strict

---

<sup>28</sup>Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku*: 27.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid:27.



surveillance of the inhabitants, a ‘divide and rule’ policy, and on ‘consensus.’<sup>30</sup> These elements also see the strategy, which was used by the Governors in Sri Lanka during the Dutch occupation (which will be discussed in the next section). Because of the military predominance, the Company was able to protect its territories by building garrisons or fortifications. It worked in two ways in Ambon, because at the one hand it kept away other European fleets from the Dutch areas and on the other hand, it discouraged the subjects from rebelling against the new master. The population was re-grouped into manageable formations, and by doing so, VOC could take immediate action in times of emergency.<sup>31</sup>

When, the Dutch wanted to keep the inhabitants under their authority, the policy of ‘divide and rule’ was the most efficient tool in the hands of the colonial government. How did this policy work in Ambon? The Dutch kept the natives in several ethnicities and religious groups and separated each by giving different tasks and social status. This policy often worked successfully seen from the Dutch side, without letting the indigenous people unite as one single force. Widjojo mentioned that the best example of this ‘divide and rule’ policy was seen during the period of the Ambon Wars in the 1640s and 1650s.<sup>32</sup> The unity among the Ambonese decreased during the wartime. The Company wanted to build a relationship with the local Christians and their elite groups; they were given opportunities to become a part of the colonial administration. This made the Christian indigenous elites more proud as they were a part of the colonial government and shared the same religion as their master.<sup>33</sup> In that way, the Company got an advantage of having local nobilities and local Christians who were loyal to the government. It was essential to have such a local authority that represented the Dutch government among the other inhabitants in a positive approach. These groups played a significant role while collecting spices, collecting land revenue or other taxes at the village level. However, such a consensus was not a common approach among the inhabitants. After the middle of the seventeenth century, the disparity between the ruler and the subjects increased to a great extent. The Company used the method of extirpation to control the growth of clove trees in the villages. This policy made a

---

<sup>30</sup>Ibid:28.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid:29

<sup>32</sup>Ibid:29.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid:29.

significant gap between the colonizer and the colonized because these islands produced nothing but cloves.

In the case of religious intervention in Ambon, both the Portuguese and Spanish had a conflict with Islam from the very beginning. It can be seen as an extension of their long-term struggle with Islam in the Iberian peninsula, in North Africa and finally in Asia. Leonard Andaya, a historian who wrote the book '*The World of Maluku*' mentioned that the Dutch took a different approach towards the Muslims in this area. They thought the Islamic religion as a threat to Calvinism, but no more than Catholicism.<sup>34</sup> Andaya stated that when the Dutch seized the Portuguese fortresses in Ambon in 1605, it was reported that they destroyed the Catholic churches, the crosses, desecrated the holy images, and had stolen the bells. In the eyes of these Company servants, the struggle against Spain took precedence over profit in the early years of the seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> With the overthrow of the Muslim authority, the population of Ambon lost their political power center. Although Muslim political channels were largely excluded, still the VOC left religious institutions without destroying them. However, village-wise, it was a majority of Muslims who lost power through the intervention of the Europeans. The Dutch realized that a combination of religious and political functions should be separated as much as possible. They understood that if this combination was linked together it would result in resurrection, as happened during the resurrection in Buru at the end of the 1670s.<sup>36</sup>

The above-mentioned power elements show briefly the way Dutch governed their settlement in Ambon. These decisions, emergencies and some approaches were directly connected to writing different forms of statements by the Governors. Before connecting the situation of governing with the themes of memoirs, it is more important to understand the structure of Dutch intervention in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the next section will be devoted to writing brief history of Sri Lanka under the Company rule.

### **I.III The VOC in Sri Lanka: They were here to get the cinnamon**

---

<sup>34</sup>Andaya, *The World of Maluku*: 152.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid: 152.

<sup>36</sup>G. J. Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1987): 80.

For the Dutch, their policy in the East was always that of gaining political control over spice-producing areas, and where ever possible securing a complete monopoly of trade. In Sri Lanka, their aim was the control of the cinnamon-producing areas of the island, which they had no intention of handing over to Rajasinha II.<sup>37</sup>

Dutch intervention in Ceylon can be seen as a result by the Kandyan King Raja Sinha II (r. 1635-1687) in order to expel the Portuguese from the coastal territory in Sri Lanka. The Portuguese did not control the entire coastal belt; they were mainly dominating the west, southwest and the Jaffna territory in the north. There they had eight fortresses, on the west coast Negombo, Colombo, Kalutere, and Galle, in the north Mannar and Jaffna, and at the east coast the isolated fortresses Trincomalee and Batticaloa.<sup>38</sup> First, Raja Sinha wrote a letter to Carel Rijniersz, the Governor of Pulicat 9<sup>th</sup> September in 1636 asking help to eliminate the Portuguese, soon after which the Dutch authority in Batavia had already made a decision to offer their help to the King.<sup>39</sup>

As a result of that, two years later the Company accepted the invitation and offered help to the king in May 1638. A treaty was signed between the King and the VOC-representative Adam Westerwald, who left Batavia and was appointed as a commander of the fleet in Goa. Officially the treaty was between Kandy and the States General. According to the agreement, the Dutch were allowed unrestricted trade without payment of any tolls and taxes.<sup>40</sup> It was agreed that after expelling the Portuguese, King would continue to be the only ruler of the island. He was liable to pay the military expenditure to the Dutch by supplying cinnamon, elephants, and other products.<sup>41</sup> At first, the treaty seemed profitable for both sides but the equal benefits were no more valid when the Kings had received the bills from the Dutch as their compensation for safeguarding them. The Dutch had got all the profits from trade in cinnamon, arecanuts, and

---

<sup>37</sup>K. M. de Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka* (Colombo: VijithaYapa Publications, 2008): 133.

<sup>38</sup>K. W. Goonewardena, *The Foundation of Dutch Power in Ceylon* (Amsterdam: Netherlands Institute for International Cultural Relations, 1958): 12.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid*: 13.

<sup>40</sup>L. S. Dewaraja, "The Kandyan Kingdom 1638- 1739: A Survey of Its Political History". In: *History of Sri Lanka* Vol.2, ed. K. M. de Silva (Peradeniya: University of Peradeniya, 1995): 183- 209.

<sup>41</sup>Els M. Jacobs, *Merchantin Asia: The Trade of the Dutch East India Company During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, CNWS Publications, 2006): 42.

elephants and also from the land revenue which they gained from the conquered regions.<sup>42</sup> Though the King did not get all captured area, still he had to pay the expenditure of the war which was extremely high. A sum of 7,265,460 guilders was asked which was simply unaffordable for the King. In addition, the Company had occupied the regions which had high growth of cinnamon and did not hand over the former Portuguese forts as promised by the Treaty of 1638. Their true intention was to take as much income as possible from the captured lands and to exploit the cinnamon monopoly. In order to do this, they established their administrative settlements around the centers of Colombo, Galle, and Jaffna. Similar to the situation in Ambon, the administrative or military decisions did not really meet the intention of the commercial view of the Company. For instance, the early admiral later promoted to the post of Governor Rijklof van Goens (1662-1663) wanted to exploit the Dutch boundaries and control trading posts by imposing economic barriers on the Kandians. However, his idea was no longer welcomed by the High Government in Batavia. The VOC primarily wanted to give attention to aggregating the maximum profit without showing interest in political power by expanding its boundaries. At the same time, they also did not want to show their ambition of being a master for a long time.

The VOC not only controlled the cinnamon monopoly but had added more profitable trade items like the export of elephants, arecanut, yarn, pepper, pearls, and textile dyeing that was also declared a monopoly under the Company. These implements led to a series of regulations on trade.<sup>43</sup> Though the Company followed the commercial expansion, its desire directly caused it to take administrative decisions. For example, Governor Laurens Pijl (1679-1692) used somewhat approachable policy without continuing Rijklof van Goen's congestive forward policy in the Kandyan kingdom. However, new resolutions and other strategic policies had dragged the Dutch forces into negotiation with the King to resettle their relationship and to consider the successor of Raja Sinha II. This led to the revision of the Treaty of 1638 empowering the Dutch sovereignty over the coastal belt and accepting the position of the Dutch as the protector from the foreign influence. In addition, keeping good relations with the Kandyan kingdom was mandatory to get annual permission for peeling cinnamon inside the Kandyan territory.

---

<sup>42</sup>De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*: 133.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid: 138.

On the other hand, keeping good relations with the Kandyan King was needed to enjoy stable Dutch government in the low country. Sometimes, the cinnamon peelers from the *salagamacaste* rebelled against the Dutch, and crossed the borders and entered the King's territory to show their aggression to the Company and they were welcomed by the King. At the same time, the King's invisible power was there in the Dutch territory as he could provoke the cinnamon peelers or other natives against the Dutch government. These situations were triggered by both sides so that they should maintain a policy of co-existence. K.M De Silva, a colonial historian in Sri Lanka, stated that the reason for this co-existence was because no party was strong enough to gain a decisive advantage over the other. Therefore, they had to accept each other. The permission of the King was mandatory for peeling or collecting cinnamon in his territory and transporting elephants to Jaffnapatnam. Compared to the situation in Ambon, the Company controlled the power of local authority much more easily than in Sri Lanka. Their military predominance dominated the inhabitants in Sri Lanka. The Dutch used a somewhat friendly strategy while dealing with the Kandyans. For instance, they provided assistance while the royal family was keeping contacts with South Indian regions. Moreover, the Dutch naval fleet helped the Kandyan rulers to revitalize Sinhalese Buddhism, bringing monks from Thailand and Burma.<sup>44</sup> Such purification in the Buddhist institutions made a long lasting impact on the Sinhalese society in the mid-eighteenth century. Similarly, in Ambon, the Dutch continued demolishing Catholic churches and deporting missionaries as they considered them a grave threat.

The VOC expanded its control and economic exploitation in the island in the first half of the eighteenth century. This led to social unrest and new riots and rebellions erupted fuelled by the local cinnamon peelers in the southwest. The tension of 1757 led to fall of a rebel in 1760, which completely got out of hand when the King of Kandy chose the side of the rebels. Thereafter, the British sent an ambassador to Kandy hoping to take over the position of the Dutch, which made the situation for VOC even worse.

However, the stationed Governors had to control all these riots without losing power in their territories. Memoirs depicted the personal experiences of all these tensions, efforts or success. In

---

<sup>44</sup>Ibid:154.

order to have a closer look of memoirs, the next sections will be devoted to the analysis of the process of writing memoirs in both Ambon and Sri Lanka.

#### **I.IV *Memories van Overgave***

The *Memories van Overgave* the documents which were written for the successors before the transition of the service by the Governors, *commanders*, or any other upper ranked officers in the VOC Company. These statements gave periodical overviews of the colonial governments and lower government which were supervised by the Governor-General in Batavia or by the Directors in the six chambers in the Netherlands. Other than the governing instructions, they comprised of the details of political events, economy, the procedure of jurisdiction, stories about places, events, and the inhabitants of the region. Writing memoirs was crucial for sharing knowledge of the colonial government making such an intensive structure provided sufficient awareness for the new Governors before they began their duties.<sup>45</sup> In the next section, the way memoirs were written in Sri Lanka and Ambon during the Dutch era will be discussed.

##### **I.IV.I Memoirs in Sri Lanka**

As stated, these memoirs were reflections of the government and the governing process in the Dutch Indies. Taking such reflection as an example, this section will discuss how far the Sri Lankan memoirs represented details of its writing structure. Primarily, if the VOC memoirs in Sri Lanka are a record series, they cannot be considered as a complete because there is some gap between some of the memoirs. R. G. Anthonisz stated that though the governors were led to write memoirs, many of them evidently left no memoirs behind for their successors.<sup>46</sup> There were few reasons for such absence, like the premature death of the governors, the following Governors died before ending their service, Gerrit de Heere in 1702, Rumpf in 1723, Hertenberg in 1725, Van Domburg in 1736, Vreeland in 1752, and Iman Flack in 1785. Due to the reasons of treason or rebellions, other Governors were given instructions to vacate their position all of a sudden on the orders of the High Government in Batavia. Under such circumstances, it was

---

<sup>45</sup>M. G. H. A. de Graff, A. M. Tempelaars, *Inventaris van de Memories van Overgave, 1852- 1962* (1963) (Den aHaag, National Archive, 1990): 11.

<sup>46</sup>R. G Anthonisz, *Report on the Dutch Records in the Government Archives at Colombo*: 32.

impossible to leave memoirs.<sup>47</sup> Stephanus Versluys (1729- 1732) was one of best examples for a sudden demotion.

There are more than 43 (un)published memoirs which are housed in the government archives Colombo. Among them, most of them were written by the Governors. Besides the documents of Colombo, the document of Galle commandment also has fourteen memoirs which were written by the Commander or Dessave after their departure. The confusion of area of these Galle memoirs contains two kinds of documents. This means it has the memoirs which were written by the commander or other officers during the transmission of their position. At the same time, they wrote some instruction to the Political Council, if in case, they were out of the commandments. The details of these memoirs contain different instructions and details which were written to the successor while departing from their positions or ranks. However, above mentioned two categories were cataloged together under the heading of a memoir by the record creator without making any division or explanation. However, among all these memoirs of the commanders, the work of commanders in Jaffnapattam, Zwaardecroon in 1697, Floris Blom in 1690 and Anthony Mooyaart in 1762 had left exclusively written memoirs to their successors. In the commandment of Galle, commander Jacob de Jong in 1748, Arnoldus de Ly in 1783, and G. J. Vreelandt in 1751 also followed the same footsteps. Instead of the Commander, Dissave of Matara or Overseer of Galle Korale also kept their memoirs for their successors.

#### **I.IV.II Memoirs in Ambon**

Similar to Sri Lanka, writing memoirs for the successors became a part of the tradition for the Governors in Ambon. The main focus area of these memoirs was explaining the governing process, explicit details on trade, political situation, the geographical overview of the islands. Moreover, much attention has been given to explaining the details or stories of the inhabitants and their lives. However, all of the governors were not interested enough in explaining the above-mentioned themes. Some of them have written lengthy versions explaining more areas, while some of them follow a dry, official preferred style. Especially, in the mid-eighteenth century memoirs in Ambon got the shape of the official writings rather than the reflection of

---

<sup>47</sup>Ibid: 32.

personal characters of their authors.<sup>48</sup>It can, therefore, be seen that the structure or contents of the memoirs were different from each other. Such differentiation or similarities will be discussed analytically in the following chapters.

Considering the continuity of writing memoirs, it had started from the very beginning of the establishment of the Dutch settlement in Ambon, but as a record series, *Memories van Overgave* is incomplete. It does not have equal time intervals; which means the *Memories van Overgave* has certain gaps in-between. Similar reasons can be identified in Sri Lanka. In particular, the events of the premature death of governors made a large gap in the series. Among them, Johan Ottens, Simon Cos (had made a report at the beginning of his tenure), Pieter de Marville, Nicholas Schaghen, Adriaan van der Suppose Nicholas Jongsma, Meyert Johan Idsinga, and Johan Adam Schilling could not leave reports for their successors. Further, Knaap mentioned that with respect to deceased governors from the first half of their tenure of the seventeenth century, of which no memoirs are supplied, it can be noted that writing such a document was still not a common practice in VOC period in Ambon.<sup>49</sup>

## **Conclusion**

It seems that the history of Dutch settlement contain the documents which the Company produced while they governed both in Ambon and Sri Lanka during their ruling periods. For Instance, memoirs, minutes, letters, reports, compendium, *Plakkaats* and other administrative documents Among the other Company papers, memoir contains more personal experience about the administration, political decisions and the other affairs along with the information on the natives. Memoirs were used as a tool for educating the new generations and they transferred the knowledge of governance. The next chapter will analyze the writing structures of the memoirs in Ambon and Sri Lanka during the mid-eighteenth century.

---

<sup>48</sup> Knaap, *Memories van Overgave*: Vii- x.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid: vii- x.



## Chapter II

### What do memoirs contain?

This chapter analyzes in intricate details the practice of writing memoirs in Sri Lanka and Ambon around the mid-eighteenth century. I have examined the technical part of the writings, for instance, was there a standard writing structure which was followed by the governors? What were the basic elements present in the memoirs? In addition, I also intend to analyze the details present in the memoirs as to why the memoirs give a particular kind of information to its reader. In order to do so, I have taken note of the kind of classes, details, perspectives, information and examples have been incorporated in the memoirs. Besides that, I have underlined the words and the statements which were used at the time of the drafting of these memoirs. This chapter forms the backbone for the comparison of the memoirs which is presented in the following chapter.

As it is a comparative study, I have chosen five memoirs for arguing the Sri Lankan case which is as follows; Jacob Pielat (1732-1734)<sup>50</sup>, G.W Van Imhoff (1736-1740)<sup>51</sup>, J.S van Gollennesse (1743-1751)<sup>52</sup>, Joan Loten (1752-1757)<sup>53</sup> and Jan Schreuder (1757-1762)<sup>54</sup>. Regarding the memoirs in Ambon, I analyze Johannes Bernard (1727-1732)<sup>55</sup>, David Johan Bake (1733-

---

<sup>50</sup> Sri Lanka National Archives 1/2685. Text and translation published, Jacob Christian Pielat, *Memoir to his successor Diderik Van Domburg 1734*, Sophia Pieters (translator) (Colombo, Government Printer, 1905).

<sup>51</sup> SLNA 1/2687. Text and translation published, Gustaff Willem Baron van Van Imhoff, *Memoir to his successor Willem Maurits Bruknink 1740*, Sophia Pieters (translator) (Colombo: E.C Cottle, Government Printer, 1911).

<sup>52</sup> Original is missing, Photostats copy in Archives. Text and translation published, J. S. Van Gollennesse, *Memoir of Julius Stein van Van Gollennesse Governor of Sri Lanka 1743- 1751 For his successor Gerrit Joan Vreeland 28th February 1751*, S. Arasaratnam (translator) (Colombo: Department of National Archives, 1974).

<sup>53</sup> SLNA 1/2703. Text and translation published, Joan Gideon Loten, *Memoir of Joan Gideon Loten delivered to his successor Jan Schreuder Februry 28, 1757*, E. Reimers (translator) (Colombo: Sri Lanka Governemt Press, 1935).

<sup>54</sup> National Archives of The Netherlands 1.04.02.3052.in the Verenigde Oost Indische Compagnie (VOC) Text and translation published, Jan Schreuder, *Memoir of Jan Schreuder delivered to his successor Lubbert Jan Baron van Eck*, E Reimers (trans) (Colombo: State Printing Corporation, 1946).

<sup>55</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2283: 125-153. Text and published, Johannes Bernard, xxix, 'Memoire Wegen den Tegenwoordigden Toestand Der Zaken Van Ambonia', *Memoires van overgave van gouverneurs van Ambon in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, G. J. Knaap (bewerkt) ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987).

1738)<sup>56</sup>, Jacob de Jong (738-1743)<sup>57</sup>, Nathaniel Steinmetz (1743-1738)<sup>58</sup>, and Gerard Cluysenaar (1752-1757)<sup>59</sup>.

## **II.I Sri Lankan Memoirs**

The Dutch governors, commanders and another high officer in Sri Lanka left memoirs for their successors while handing over the office of them. There were around fifty-seven memoirs which contained in the documents of Colombo, Jaffna, and Galle commandments. Most of the governor's memoirs were translated into English and published from early the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the recent past. I selected five published memoirs related to the period of 1730- 1760.

### **II.I.I Jacob Pielat (1732-1734): An 'Administrative' type of memoir**

Jacob Pielat was served from 1732- 1734 as the Special Commissioner in Dutch Sri Lanka by the orders of the High Government (*Hoog Regarding*) in Batavia. He was appointed because of the great unrest which the preceding governor Stephanus Versluys (1729- 1732) was unable to curb down. Thus, Pielat came into the scene with a higher position and authority of a special commissioner. His memoir, therefore, without a doubt, contains more administrative details rather than a mere description of the Sri Lankan island. This memoir was produced in compliance with the latest instructions given by the High Government. Pielat summarizes the details of how the Company had conquered the island and what right they had here.<sup>60</sup>He did not have any contacts with the natives, their laws, and customs and neither does he speak about them. This memoir, therefore, is a reflection of the circumstances or situations, so to say, which he experienced during his commission.

---

<sup>56</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2436: 459-507. Text and published, David Johan Bake, xxx, 'Memoire Wegen den Tegenwoordigden Toestand Der Zaken Van Ambonia', Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2635: 91-162. Text and published, Jacob de Jong, xxxi, 'Memoire Wegen den Tegenwoordigden Toestand Der Zaken Van Ambonia', Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2716: 329-430. Text and published, Nathaniel Steinmetz, xxxii, 'Memoire Wegen den Tegenwoordigden Toestand Der Zaken Van Ambonia', Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2907 (tweede rigister):1-40. Text and published, Gerard Cluysenaar, xxxiii, 'Memoire Wegen den Tegenwoordigden Toestand Der Zaken Van Ambonia', Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Jacob Christian Pielat, *Memoir left by Pielat*: 3.

According to Governor Pielat, it was unnecessary to provide minute details in order to show how prejudiced the former arrangement was for the Company. For instance, the rule of issuing the same number of articles each year was totally inappropriate.<sup>61</sup> Also, in his opinion, some rules of the government were absurd. Secondly, he disliked how the sole authority of the fiscal was performed.<sup>62</sup>

Pielat had given attention to the reorganization of the military department. He stated that the Governor himself should occasionally visit the ramparts and fortifications along with the military captain. He should also visit the hospital, in order to see how the sick were treated, and what food they were offered.<sup>63</sup> Inspection of the arsenal, workshops, stores and warehouses were other major activities to be looked into by the governor. Pielat's focused on reorganizing the garrison in Colombo and other places because of the misrule and tyranny during the tenure of the preceding governor Pertrus Vuyst. In 1733, he wrote long recommendations which contained more than hundreds of instructions.<sup>64</sup> These instructions are divided into two main parts, a) general instructions for the garrison in Colombo, b) rules which were related to the disciplining of the garrison. All the above details came under the subject of management of the Company. The duties of the Dessave<sup>65</sup> were also rearranged during Pielat's time and he introduced personal visits to all the Korals<sup>66</sup> in the districts, in order to hear the grievances of the natives. Pielat made sure that the Dessave should pay attention to the granting of uncultivated lands to the people who had requested lands for cultivation and enter the details into a proper thombo.<sup>67</sup> He knew that the compilation of a new thombo would not be finished before his departure and therefore a special Mandate Ola was published on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1732 which was sent to all the native officers urging

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid: 6.

<sup>62</sup> supervisor of the maintenance of public order and public prosecutor

<sup>63</sup> Pielat, *Memoir Left by Jacob Pielat*: 14.

<sup>64</sup> L. Hovy, *Ceylonnees Plakkaatboek* Deel I (Hiversum:Verloren,1991): I 409-421.

<sup>65</sup>High office title in Ceylon, originally for governors of the local king, later acquired by the Company for European heads of district or Dessvany

<sup>66</sup> District or region in Ceylon; the best known cinnamon areas of the Company were "The four korlas" and "the seven korlas.

<sup>67</sup> A land registration which was compiled by the Portuguese at first, and then continued by the Dutch which included land belonging to the company, but uncultivated or have already been granted for cultivation and also which were held by the people as *paravenei* (inherited lands).

them to submit correct details of both cultivated and uncultivated lands which belonged to the Company. His memoir shows the inefficiency of the native officers posted in the interiors of the Island. He gives an interesting example of Chalias<sup>68</sup> who avoided peeling cinnamon because of their sheer laziness which directly affected the income of the Company, Pielat, did not pass new *Plakkaats* to control these cinnamon peelers. These details are entered into the subject land and revenue.

With regard to the subject of agriculture, the inhabitants were ordered to continue pepper cultivation through the Mandate Ola. Pielat ordered the native chiefs and residents in the Dessavany Colombo<sup>69</sup> and Galle commandment to extend the pepper plantation also to the private lands and Company lands.<sup>70</sup> In comparison, to the pepper cultivation, cardamom cultivation was not as profitable. Moreover, after examining the practical issues, he proposed the abolition of the post of overseer for the coffee plantation in 1733.<sup>71</sup> This was done, in order to reduce the extra financial burden which was incurred by the Company.

Various details are pointed out with regards to the Company's trade, for instance, with arecanut trade, he highlighted that the Company was not dependent on King's supporters for it. He issued a *Plakkaat* on June 1733, which forbade the private trade in arecanuts.<sup>72</sup> The individuals who indulged in the private trade were punished or fined; needless to say, this step was taken in order to keep this trade profitable for the Company. In the case of other commercial goods, he gives much attention to the cotton trade in Madurai, rice trade in Coromandel, and *cauris* shells trade in Maldives. Elephant trade in Sri Lanka which was very profitable for the VOC but was being affected by the misdeeds and criminals acts of the Wannias<sup>73</sup> is also elaborately mentioned. In addition, he briefly mentions other trading commodities like *runinas* roots (spices of dye roots), dye roots, *Kirman* goat and horse breeding. As the description shows, the subjects of cultivation and trade remained undivided in Pielat's memoir.

---

<sup>68</sup> The group was called 'salagama' and their occupation was to peel cinnamon.

<sup>69</sup> Colombo district

<sup>70</sup> Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* : 424-425.

<sup>71</sup> See the report, NL-HANA, 1.04.02.8958: 601- 607.

<sup>72</sup> Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*: 406.

<sup>73</sup> Wannias were the native inhabitants who lived in the region known as Wanni.

In the case of religion, he noted, that Reformed Church remained in a weak position apart from some motivated ministers who successfully conducted sermons and preached for the natives. He asserted that stronger efforts need to be made in order to promote Christianity among the natives.

Lastly, this memoir also sheds light on the relations with Kandy<sup>74</sup>Pielat, in his memoir noted for the succeeding governor that this memoir remained unapproved by the High Government. Therefore, it should only be used as a guideline until instructions are sent from Batavia.

### **II.I.II Gustaff Willem Baron Van Imhoff (1736-1740): A role model for the future Sri Lankan memoirs**

Van Imhoff was appointed as the Governor of Dutch Sri Lanka from 2nd July 1736 - 12th March 1740, continuing with the practice, he wrote a memoir for his successor, Willem Maurits Bruininck (1740-1742), prior to his departure. While writing the introduction to Van Imhoff's memoir, Anthonisz mentioned that Van Imhoff wrote this memoir considering entirely the interests of the Sri Lanka and its people.<sup>75</sup> I have attempted to closely examine not only the contents but also the structure of the memoir, in addition, to how it was divided into various headings.

He starts with a brief introduction to Ceylon. In the introduction, he states why Sri Lanka was so important for the Company, how the Dutch expelled the Portuguese, and how the Company was able to establish rule over the island. He writes:

I ask to be allowed, on my resignation from the administration, to mention to you in the form of a Memoir, as required by the special orders of the Supreme Government of Indies, all that has transpired during my rule, with comments on the chief points of interest in the service of the Company.<sup>76</sup>

Van Imhoff's memoir became a model for the later drafting of memoirs in Sri Lanka. This memoir reflects his wider knowledge of previously compiled memoirs. By filtering the previously written memoirs, he asserted that the company had the right to possess Sri Lanka and

---

<sup>74</sup> The last kingdom in Sri Lanka, the city is still called Kandy.

<sup>75</sup> Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: iii.

<sup>76</sup> I used the word 'Indies' in this citation to avoid confusion, but in the published translation it was written as India. See, Van Imhoff, *Memoir Left by Van Imhoff*:3.

share in the profit which the country yielded. He further argued that the administration should be strong so that there is surplus instead of a deficit. His memoir acted as a guide for earning more profit for the Company.

Van Imhoff divided his memoir into four themes.<sup>77</sup> They were external relations of the Company, administration and land matters, the income of the Company, and management. These main themes were again divided into sub-themes. The above mentioned four themes were directly connected to the interest of the Company. He defined the Company's interests as the peaceful possession and exclusive occupation of the Company. Van Imhoff agreed with the definitions provided by the preceding Governor Cornelis Joan Simons (1703- 1707) who stated that as the Dutch have been ruling on the conquered territories since a long period of time, they, therefore, had the right to maintain their territory, it necessary even by way of force.<sup>78</sup>

Then, Van Imhoff gives a lengthy description of the King of Kandy, which comes as the first Sub-theme under the theme of external relations. Under this subheading, he discussed the details about the royal family, the rituals, general affairs, and the way the Company should send annual presents to him. His approach with regard to Kandy can be clearly seen in the letters and instructions which were given to the envoys of Kandy during his tenure.<sup>79</sup>

The second theme of Administration and land matters started with the setting up of *Landraad* (local courts of justice). The formation of these local courts was an important step taken in the interest of the Company so that the number of disputes over lands could be significantly reduced. *Landraad* was directly linked to the administration; this was because of its connection with *dessava*. *Dessava* was overburdened with several administrative duties which led Van Imhoff to assert that large amount of work could not be fulfilled by *dessava*, which later led to the

---

<sup>77</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2482. 'Copy for the summary of memoir by Van Van Imhoff. In this shorten memoir, the main sections were divided into four themes and each themes has its Sub-themes.

<sup>78</sup> Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: 8.

<sup>79</sup> See more NL-HANA 1.04.02.2492:1168- 1171, Ibid: 174- 177; NL-HANA 1.04.02.2458:1400- 14005. Those letter show Van Inhoff's instructions to encourage the company ambassadors Cramer and Steijger to keep good terms of relations with the king. Van Imhoff also continued the custom of sending annual gifts for the king (see more to know what the company has sent to the king NL-HANA 1.04.2492: 1237- 1238) All of these diplomatic relation was based on getting permission from the king to peel cinnamon from his territory, transport elephants trough king's territory and Van Imhoff had the idea to expand inland trade within the king's territory.

appointment of a lieutenant. In addition, it also did the task of compiling thombos. Van Imhoff, during his tenure, found that the amount of revenue collected by the native chiefs was considerably more than the amount handed over to the government. He was also able to understand the problem which the Company faced with regard to the native headmen who were misusing their powers to gain personal benefits and the Company remained unsuccessful in controlling them entirely. However, like Pielat he did not pass significant resolutions or Mandate-Ola to control the powers of the native headmen.<sup>80</sup> It should be kept in mind that this memoir was not just addressed to his successor, but was also intended to be read by the High Government and by the Gentlemen XVII seated in the Netherlands. Sending memoirs to the High Government was the usual procedure of Sri Lankan memoirs because the copy version of these memoirs can be found from the VOC collection in the National Archives in The Hague.<sup>81</sup> In the case of Van Imhoff, his memoir with the marginal notes which has been added by the Governor General and his short version of the departure memoir is such an example which was sent to the High Government.<sup>82</sup>

As the third theme, the income of the Company comes next. Similar to the previous memoir, trade received much attention and was further sub-divided into purchase and sale. He asserted on the importance of fixed price of the commodities, the promotion of trade in Sri Lanka, as was done in other VOC settlements. As an efficient Governor, he tried in every way possible to increase Company's profit. He suggested several measures, for instance, growing coconut on the Company lands, could increase the revenue if seen from a long-term perspective, he promoted the cultivation of cardamom, pepper and rice cultivation in Jaffnapatnam as the Company spent a large amount of money on the import of rice from Bengal or Java (Indonesia). Though Van Imhoff introduced new policies, the *Plakkaatboek* does not reflect any new land policy in Jaffnapatnam which directly indicates that his visionary planning of governance was not yet executed.

---

<sup>80</sup>Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*: 444-465. Van Imhoff did not include relevant rules for limiting the power of native officers.

<sup>81</sup>See, <http://www.gahetna.nl/collectie/index/Ceylon>. Accessed May 02, 2016.

<sup>82</sup>NL-HANA 1.04.02.2482: 1852-1865 Beschrijving Copia memorie door den raad ordinaris en afgaande Ceijlons gouverneur G.W. van Imhof aan zijn Ed. vervanger den here W.M. Bruijnink nagelaten voorsien met de marginale aantekeningen der Indische regeering; NL-HANA 1.04.02.2483: 1844-1850. 'Kort begrip van de memoir'

The important element of religious matters comes under the last main theme of the management of the Company. Similar to Pielat's memoir, Christianity had not gained popularity on the island yet. However, with the establishment of the printing press in 1737, it boosted the spread of Christianity as the printing of the religious book in Sinhalese and Tamil became much easier and the books were accessible to the larger public. Van Imhoff edited a Mandate-Ola, according to which school children in Colombo should not be taught just religion, but also should learn how to read and write.<sup>83</sup> He also suggested extensive preaching among the natives. The Sub-themes of other local bodies comes next. In this section, other institutions which are briefly mentioned are the Orphan Chamber, Commissioners of marriage cases, Civil Town Council and the School Board. Van Imhoff, similar to Peilat suggested the reduction of employees in order to cut down the costs increased by the Company. However, according to him, this rule did not apply in the case of handicraftsmen, as he personally believed their allocation was profitable for the Company.

### **II.I.III Julius Stein van Van Gollenesse (1743-1751): Natives are important for making policies**

Soon after the retirement of Governor Daniel Overbeek (1742-1743), Julius Stein Van Gollenesse was appointed as the Governor and Director of Sri Lanka in 1742 and started to serve from 1743. After, Van Gollenesse finished 8 years of his tenure; he left his memoir for his successor Governor Gerard Joan Vreeland (1751-1752). Van Gollenesse, started his memoir by stating that the description of Dutch Sri Lanka is not needed, as this had been already done by the preceding Governor Van Imhoff quite elaborately in his memoir which shall serve as a role-model for the future Governors appointed to the Company.<sup>84</sup> Van Gollenesse adapted both the idea and structure of Van Imhoff's memoir, which raises two questions: did memoirs contribute to the transferring of knowledge of the governing process in the Sri Lankan case as it passed from generation to generation? Secondly, did the VOC hold same interests even after fifteen years of Van Imhoff's government had passed? Van Gollenesse's memoir can be divided

---

<sup>83</sup>Hovy, *CeyloneesPlakkaatboek*: 464.

<sup>84</sup>Van Gollenesse, *Memoir left by Van Gollenesse*: 43.



into main four sections; a) External relations, b) Administration and Land, c) Income from trade and the land produce, d) management. His main focus areas were the internal and external affairs of Dutch Sri Lanka which included the relations with the King of Kandy and other neighboring Kings, the trade activities of the Company, the produce of the land, the administration of the Company, and the nature of the inhabitants.<sup>85</sup> I will explain Van Gollennesse's structure in more details as follows.

The first section of the memoir concerns external relations. Van Gollennesse, as a VOC-Governor, was well aware of the rituals which took place in Dutch Sri Lanka before his arrival like sending of annual gifts to please the King. Also, he was aware of the administrative setting of the Kandyan court which can be seen from the instructions he had given to the envoys Jan Godfried Pape, Arnoldus van Sprang and Jacob van Berchem in 1750.<sup>86</sup> Further, his policy was connected to Kandy which can be seen by the letters which were sent to the King, including the details of gifts through the above-mentioned envoys in the same year.<sup>87</sup> The *Chalias* caste, the notorious cinnamon peelers which were a problem for Pielat, were also a source of persistent difficulties for Van Gollennesse whose task was to put to rest tensions created by this group. He tried to control the situation by passing laws; the *Plakkaats* show enough examples of his attempts.<sup>88</sup>

The next theme deals with Administration and Land. It was divided into six sub-sections; a) Duties of the Dessave, b) Thombo registration, c) land taxes and manner of collection, d) the people inhabiting the island, e) native officers and their remuneration, f) land policy in Jaffnapatnam. Van Gollennesse contributed to the compilation of thombos which is quite evident from the *Plakkaat*.<sup>89</sup> In addition, land tax and its collection including other different taxes were separated like garden and paddy tax from money tax.

---

<sup>85</sup>Ibid: 43. See, NL-HANA1.04.02.2772: 494- 495.

<sup>86</sup> NL-HANA 1.04.02.2757: 1304-1312

<sup>87</sup>Ibid: 1292-1303.

<sup>88</sup>To reduce the issues he passed Mandate- ola to the cinnamon peelers with ordering to pay the mandatory fee for cinnamon. See, Hovy, *Ceyloneese Plakkaatboek* Deel II: 502. And : 526-527.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid: 501-502.

The next sub-section gave the description of inhabitants, consisted of two main parts. a) Who were the natives of Sri Lanka? b) How was the Sinhalese society stratified? He identifies sixteen major divisions in the caste system and some sub-division among the Sinhalese. This elaborate information about the natives can be identified as a new addition to his memoir when compared to Van Imhoff's memoir.

The last Sub-theme of this section is about the land policy in Jaffnapatnam. He does not give much attention to the discussion of the governing activities in Jaffnapatnam. Therefore, most of the examples or details in this memoir do not present the situation in Jaffnapatnam. Comparing this situation with the *Plakkaatboek*, he gave several instructions and passed Mandate-Ola for land issues/affairs in Colombo dessavony and Galle commandment but he did not mention any related issues in Jaffnapatnam. I found only one notice regarding the issues of agricultural land in the Wannu district.<sup>90</sup> Though he had given fewer details about the land policy in Jaffnapatnam, yet he was able to include the practical issues of finding suitable buyers to lands and the problematic areas of land surveying in his memoir.

The third theme of this memoir concerns the income from trade and land produce. S.Arasaratnam, the translator of this memoir had divided this main topic again into thirteen subdivisions. It starts with the statistics of the past eight years. Other important enterprises were of Chank fishery and salt trade. The elephant trade was carried on successfully and the participation of the chiefs the Wannu, Wannuars was highlighted in this section. The most explicit sub-topic was of cinnamon trade. Van Gollennesse's personal opinions were reflected as he discussed that the success of cinnamon trade depended on the role of *Mahabadda* (the Chief Officer of the Cinnamon Department). The way he treated the cinnamon peelers showed that the situation between the VOC and *Chalias* was still problematic. The situation which he had mentioned in his memoir can also be compared with the '*Plakkaatboek*'. One of the relevant ordinances was the ones prohibiting the destruction of cinnamon trees while preparing lands for

---

<sup>90</sup>Ibid:538.

chena (moving cultivation).<sup>91</sup> The end of this section was dedicated to the promotion of the cultivation of cardamom, pepper, coffee in addition to the expansion of the pearl fishery.

The theme of management also was divided into several Sub-themes. On the matters of religion, his ideas were in completely similar to Van Imhoff. Further, he similarly followed, on the matters of law, some details were provided on the Political Council, Orphan Board and School Board like Van Imhoff. Van Gollenesse was in the favor of fixed men to reduce the extracost incurred by the Company. Also, he directed his attention towards the deteriorating condition of the fortress which he urged to be repaired for a better security system. On the provisions of rice and spices, Van Gollenesse remained silent as Van Imhoff's memoir provided ample details on it. Further, he provided information on the storage of gunpowder in nine major ports. An important piece of information for his successor as his memoir contained a summary report of the last financial year. Overall, Van Gollenesse had simply used all the techniques that Van Imhoff had used while writing his memoir. He had updated the new details and fitted them into the same structure.

#### **II.I.IV Joan Gideon Loten (1752-1757): The structure of the 'ideal' memoir followed**

Governor Joan G. Loten was appointed as a successor of Governor Gerrit J. Vreeland in 1752. This memoir was drafted after five years, for his successor Jan Schreuder in 1757. Joan G. Loten successively pointed out that this memoir was written in accordance with the orders of the High Government in Batavia on 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1757. He takes note of the preceding Governors memoirs that is Van Imhoff and Van Gollenesse. As Van Imhoff's memoir served as 'ideal memoir', his ideas were also followed by Governor Loten.<sup>92</sup>

This memoir is divided into four themes. These parts were again subdivided into several Sub-themes that discuss subjects which the Governor wanted to transfer to his successor. The first theme of this memoir was divided into two Sub-themes about the King and the court of Kandy, and the princes and their territories on the mainland and their relations with Maldives. The beginning of the first heading gives a genealogical description of the King of Kandy. Loten had

---

<sup>91</sup>Ibid: 516.

<sup>92</sup> See more in Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: 6. And Van Gollenesse, *Memoir left by Van Gollenesse*: 43.

built up his information on the King of Kandy from the previous memoirs and updated it and added new information which was available. The relations with Kandy had changed in 1751 when Trincomalie and Batticaloa districts were closed for the Kandyans by the VOC. However, Loten had continued a positive relation with Kandy by helping it with the transportation of Siamese priests into the island in 1753.<sup>93</sup> Loten's treatment of cinnamon peelers and problems on the Pearl Bank of Chila are detailed as he believed that it was much more important than the other sections. The second Sub-theme of the memoir deals with Company's relations with the neighboring kingdoms. The relations with Madurai, Tuticorin, the Theuver and Travancore are described in lengthy reports, topics covered are power alignment, economic activities with the Company and statistics of the Company trade. Further, he explains how the Company continued its trade despite the continuous threats of the smugglers. Loten's work as compared to the works of Van Imhoff and Van Gollennesse provides the longest report on the outside relations.

Governor Loten did not elaborate on the Company's interest in administration, as it had been extensively covered by Van Gollennesse in his memoir.<sup>94</sup> In Loten's memoir, it is evident, that he wants to draw Schreuder's (his successor) attention to the works compiled by the previous Governors, with this evidence; it can be plausibly argued that it is an example of transferring the governance knowledge in a linear way. As an efficient governor, Loten included the details of a smallpox epidemic and the reactions of the inhabitants during this period. He asserted that the idea of tax collection was not a novel idea introduced by the Dutch. It was an old custom which had been practiced by the Kings of Kotte and as the successor; the Company followed the ancient system. Van Imhoff's or Van Gollennesse's section of revenue contains much more descriptive details, Loten, on the other hand, preferred to use statistics to show the differences and the progress made during his period. He also did not mention many details on the land matters in Jaffnapatnam, yet he did submit data which showed the heavy arrears of income due to the conditions of the uncultivated and unsold land. During his rule (1752- 1756) the Company had lost revenues from this region. He also described the inhabitants, the native headmen,

---

<sup>93</sup> See, NL-HANA 1.04.02.2812: 96-133.

<sup>94</sup> Loten, *Memoir left by Loten*: 21.

obligatory services and *accomodessans* (accommodation).<sup>95</sup> Regarding the inhabitants, Loten did not differ from what Van Gollennesse had written. Anything new about the duties of the native headmen and their accommodations was not added.

The last main theme of this memoir contains the details of economic administration. Regarding the church affairs, Loten wrote less as compared to Van Gollennesse, like him he did not discuss the teaching of religion in the schools or how to promote the religion among the natives. Considering other administrative elements such as the storage of gunpowder, the strength of the garrisons and the fortification he gave updates on what has been done during his period. These updates can be found in detail in the secret dispatches of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September in 1756.<sup>96</sup>

From this analysis, it is clear that Loten had added these subsections in order to keep the same structure used by Van Gollennesse and Van Imhoff. However, he was bold enough to add his comments when he found something irrelevant or less important. Like his predecessor, Loten had updated the details according to what he had experienced during his tenure.

#### **II.I.V Jan Schreuder (1757-1762): The lengthiest memoir**

Jan Schreuder's memoir is one of the lengthiest memoirs which was forwarded to his successor Jan Baron van Eck the Governor of Dutch Sri Lanka. This memoir consists of an introduction and four chapters; mainly focusing on the Company's rights of possession which includes its territories in the island, its objectives, what was necessary for it to stay there and to continue with its position of a sole master of the Maritime Provinces of Sri Lanka, its products, and trade.<sup>97</sup>

Schreuder gave many examples from the memoirs of previous governors. Among all these, he found Van Imhoff's memoir as a guiding model. He organized his work including a few subjects in accordance with the above-mentioned guiding model. The main subjects were a general description of the island, the interest of the company, the maintenance of the government, what his duties were and what he actually could perform during the past five years. Besides Van

---

<sup>95</sup> Accommodation= land given to *inlandsehoofden* (native chiefs) as a remuneration for their administration

<sup>96</sup> Loten, *Memoir left by Loten*: 46.

<sup>97</sup> Jan Schreuder, *Memoir of Jan Schreuder delivered to his successor Lubbert Jan Baron van Eck*, E. Reimers (Colombo: State Printing Corporation, 1946): v.

Imhoff's memoir, Schreuder also builds upon Loten's memoir like his predecessor. Also, the resolutions of the Council of Ceylon, the general and secret letters sent to the outstations, the successive *plakkaats*, ordinance and regulations are added.<sup>98</sup>

As mentioned above, the first theme discusses the importance of the possession of Dutch Sri Lanka by the Company. He finds that possession means the right of the Company's to expel the Portuguese and establishing Dutch order. Schreuder goes beyond the beginnings of the Portuguese era. The story creates a suitable point of departure to discuss the legal rights of the Dutch settlement from the treaty between the King of Kandy and the Dutch in 1638. It was most important to be the sole master and to keep away other vying nations from Sri Lanka. Then in the next Sub-theme, he discusses the relations with the kingdom of Kandy, he writes about the right the Company to keep the territories under them and at the same time to continue good relations with the King. That also was needed to get permission to peel cinnamon from the King's territory and to transport the elephants to the northern part of the island. As compared to the statements of Van Gollenesse or Loten, Schreuder's statements about the relations with Kandy serve as a justification for his policy towards the High Government in Batavia. The problems with cinnamon peelers remained unsolved because they often rebelled by refusing to peel cinnamon for the Company.

Further, Schreuder discusses in depth the necessity of fortifications, strengthening of the military and marine forces. He extracts the details from the Provincial Resolution in 1757-1758 and summarizes it under the headings of military, artillery, and marine in each port. All these details show the way he tried his best to justify the policies which were implemented during his period. Though there were some problems in his approach, his report about the natives and their behavior was much clearer as compared to the other governors. He wrote, "the Sinhalese in general, that they have never shown themselves so cunning and conversant with the Company's affairs since they become familiar with the Nayakars and the Moors".<sup>99</sup> For him, the Sinhalese

---

<sup>98</sup>Ibid: 4.

<sup>99</sup>Schreuder, *Memoir left by Schreuder*: 25.

were lazy, lousy and unpolished people who had to be civilized by the Dutch.<sup>100</sup> All of these statements show the nature of his negative relations with the natives of Dutch Sri Lanka. In this matter, Governor Van Gollennesse and Loten had taken a more flexible approach, which was reflected in the lives of natives in a much more positive sense. But Schreuder lost his grip and could not continue the diplomatic relations with Kandy because the War started in 1761. However, it should be noted, that the War had started at the end of Schreuder period, but the tension between the Dutch government and Kandy was high from the beginning of his governing period. Finally, he was dismissed from his governorship, as he violated Company's policy and maintained aggressive relations with Kandy. It seems that Schreuder had used this memoir as a tool to express his personal experience while encountering the problems with the king of Kandy and the native. With this analysis, I agree what Knaap mentioned as those memoirs carry with them personal ideologies, strategies, or experience which the Governors would have encountered in their tenure.

Due to the riots that arose against the Dutch government in Matara Dissvany, he passed a Mandate-Ola which explicitly stated the duties of the native heads and other inhabitants.<sup>101</sup> In addition, Schreuder had immense problems in appointing trustworthy officers, except a handful of senior officers like the commander in Galle and Dessava of Matara, all others remained disloyal to him.<sup>102</sup> In the memoir, he states several examples of such disputes, for instance, with regards to the growing of coffee and coconut, Schreuder and *opperkoopman* of Galle, Casparus de Jongh had major disagreements. Schrikker asserted that VOC had suffered a loss as a result of Batavia's sudden check on Sri Lankan pepper and coffee which led Casparus de Jong to sell his pepper as an unprofitable product. As soon as the upper merchant returned to the Netherlands, he criticized Schreuder's policy of protecting the cinnamon tree and stopping cultivation in the wastelands by writing an angry pamphlet.<sup>103</sup> However, this criticism did not

---

<sup>100</sup>Ibid: 26.

<sup>101</sup>L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*: 597-607.

<sup>102</sup> Schreuder, *Memoir left by Schreuder*: 49.

<sup>103</sup>Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform* (Leiden:Koninkelijke Brill, 2007): 36.

affect Schreuder's policies, as he continued imposing heavy punishments and fines on people who practiced illegal Chena cultivation which resulted in the destruction of cinnamon trees.<sup>104</sup>

Unlike the preceding governors, Schreuder underlined the importance of compilation of thombos to the maximum which is evident by an elaborate introduction to his work. In addition, his knowledge about the various categories of lands, their sub-divisions was noteworthy, and he wisely used it to increase the profits for the Company, moreover, this knowledge helps the readers in understanding the Sinhalese land tenure system of the century.

Following that, the later structure of describing trade goods is similar to that of his predecessor; Van Gollennesse, the only difference is that Schreuder remained more descriptive in his approach and used annual compendiums in order to measure the progress made during his tenure.

## **II.II Ambon Memoirs**

*Memories van Overgave* contains thirty-nine memoirs which were written by the Dutch governor in Ambon from 1605 to 1788. Among those memoirs nine memoirs were not available due to the drifted reasons. In this study, I selected the period from 1730- 1760 which contains six memoirs but memoir left by the governor Cornelis Rosenboom (1748- 1750) was not available. Therefore, I used only five memoirs which were already edited and published by G. J. Knaap but still these memoirs only remain as transcriptions.

### **II.II.I Johannes Bernard (1727- 1733): Planting young clove trees**

Johannes Bernard begins his memoir by explaining the clove plantations in Ambon. He focuses on its development as previously explained by the former Governor Stephenus Versluys as he believed in its potential to yield long-term benefits for the Company.<sup>105</sup> This memoir is divided

---

<sup>104</sup> L.Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*: 596- 597.

<sup>105</sup> Stephanus Versluys was a governor in Ambon during 1725-1727, after his retirement from Ambon he was appointed as the governor in Sri Lanka 1729-1732 but there he left no memoir for his successor.



into three themes; income of the Company, inland affairs, and management. These themes were again sub-divided into several topics that discuss subjects which the Governor wanted to transfer to his successor. The neglected clove plantations were redeveloped and converted as a profitable crop under the supervision of Gentlemen XVII. The clove plantations thrived under Bernard's tenure, as he introduced some order into the plantations. According to the new plan, 30 young clove trees were to be planted in every clove garden, and with this plan the size of the harvest would remain unfluctuating. He noted that if the trees were not maintained in accordance with the harvesting system the clove trade would suffer. Bernard noted that by using the services of the natives in the plantation of new trees shall allow optimum clove production. However, this resolution of 6<sup>th</sup> September 1727 stating the same could not be found. Although his memoir does not provide any statistical details but his secret correspondence with High Government in Batavia shows that he was aware of the extent to which clove plantation in Ambon had developed.<sup>106</sup>

In the case of other crops, he writes that due to the interferences created by the employed laborers, coffee, and indigo plantations remained unsuccessful. He explained why coffee plantations did not reach the expected level in Ambon. He gave some instructions which could be used to develop the coffee trade in future. He reasoned that for the success of such projects, factors like distrust, laziness of the native should be kept in mind.<sup>107</sup> The behavior of the natives, their food habits were elaborately described. It can be safely assumed that these descriptions were not only helpful in controlling the natives but also how the colonized master identified his subject. The reason for the criticism and the colonial attitude are subjects dealt in the following chapter.

Like the predecessor, Bernard also focused on things which could earn a profit for the Company. For instance, he suggested that attention should be paid to black ebony as it was profitable for trade. He also kept in mind the geographical location, as Buru and Kelang were highly suitable

---

<sup>106</sup>The current situation on clove plantation was informed through the secret letter which has been sent by the governor Johannes Bernard and the Council of Ambonia to the Higher Government in Batavia on 25 May 1730. See, NL-HANA 1.04.02.8522: 137-140.

<sup>107</sup>J. Bernard, *Memoir achtergelaten door J. Bernard*: 324.

for the plantation of 'jattij' tree very useful for carpentry work. All above details can be categorized under the heading of the income of the Company.

Following the heading of local administration, he discussed why the VOC needed clove extirpation in some regions. As I previously discussed in the first chapter, the VOC as the new master wanted to own the clove monopoly in Ambon. After conquering Ambon, it realized that it was not easy to own the monopoly as smugglers always indulged in illegal clove business with the natives. Certain unknown places in the countryside were examined to find such illegal plantations and the Company got the support of a native head called *Manoeroe* (Manuru) to destroy such plantations. In return, the chief was rewarded with gifts.<sup>108</sup> This example shows how the Company used the services of the natives to strengthen their position by shunning the smuggling activities on the island. According to Knaap, the native elites and headmen always supported the governing policies of the VOC even in the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>109</sup>

In the case of sago trees, very dear and important to the natives, the areas where it grew were leased to the Chinese by the Company which yielded them a profit of around 1500 Rix daalders. In Bernard's opinion, his predecessor's policy resulted in the decrease of income earned from sago trees; this is because he highly undervalued it. However, the situation was amended in Bernard's tenure, as he focused on sago trees to increase Company's profit.

The last theme contains brief details on the maintenance of forts and other Company buildings. The vessels remained in a good condition. Both the number of native Christians and the schoolmasters have recorded annually. To summarize, his memoir contains what he had achieved, a list of instructions to his successor, criticism of previous governors and justifications about what he could not achieve. Comparatively speaking, the content of his memoir was different from the previous one but the structure remained the same.

---

<sup>108</sup>Ibid: 325.

<sup>109</sup>G. J. Knaap, *Kruidnageleen en Christenen de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de bevolking van Ambon 1656-1696* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1987): 144-146.

### II.II.II David Johan Bake (1733- 1738): Focus still remains on clove plantations

David Johan Bake was the successor of Johannes Bernard and was appointed as a Governor in Ambon during 1733-1738. This memoir, which has been analyzed below was left for his successor Jacob de Jong. Governor Bake also followed the structure of his predecessor which contains main three subjects; income of the Company, inland affairs, and management. Keeping with the tradition, Bake started his memoir by explaining the importance of the clove plantations.

He saw that the annual Plakkaat mentioned the rich harvest of clove as the ‘heart nerves’<sup>110</sup> of the Company’s possession. However, the production remained fluctuating due to uncertain weather conditions such as the monsoon. However, Bake amended the situation to some extent. The summary reports of the clove production reveal the way clove plantation was organized in each district, the extent of the harvest and number of trees planted.<sup>111</sup> But, taking care of the plantations was a daunting task which Bake’s descriptions aptly show how the planning of the plantations was a significant step to control its production. Also, his memoir revealed how difficult it was to completely achieve Company’s expectations. Though he does not mention much, still he continued with the plantation system with the ‘*datis*’.<sup>112</sup>

Bake used the words like ‘admonition’, ‘serious admonition’, now and then while explaining the duties of the new governor. It seems he was trying to highlight his image and at the same time share his experience and knowledge which he had gained from the High Government. To protect their monopoly, the Governor had to remain attentive and always keep good contact with the Company employees, regional heads or native managers to minimize sudden attacks or any illegal businesses involving the natives, which led to extra expenditure.

Such protective measures were not limited to clove plantations; they were extended to sago growing areas as well. Bake, unlike his predecessor, was not much interested in detailing the

---

<sup>110</sup>David J. Bake, *Memoir achtergelaten door Bake*: 327.

<sup>111</sup>See, NL-HANA 1.04.02.2379: 1260- 1261.

<sup>112</sup>original meaning in Ambon: family or household. According dati system, that dated for the Company, had on Ambon each family cede a portion of its land or harvest as a tax, or one of its members for certain amount of time per year to work for the sovereign. In, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/pdf/vocglossarium/VOCGlossarium.pdf>, accessed July 16, 2016.

destruction of clove plantations. Though he did not mention these uprooting activities in the memoir, he had received a report from Corporal Pieter Metsdorp about the uprooting in the island of Kelang with Manuru, in 1736 and 1737.<sup>113</sup> At the end of this section, he mentioned the condition of the sago forest, and the receiving of the right to lease them, and also the other trading activities like textiles. The coffee cultivation had ceased to exist during Bake's period. His statement proves it, as I found only two documents which have been written mainly on the coffee plantation. In one it was clearly mentioned about the loss of attention on growing coffee.<sup>114</sup> The last portion of this agriculture and trading section reveals the reason why Ambon region was limited only to the clove plantations. Hence, the other plantations like coffee or indigo were not successfully grown in this region. He mentions his opinion, by adding examples from previous memoirs, the obstacles such as heavy rains, floods, heat, congenital inertia and 'laziness' of the residents were directly affecting the clove production.<sup>115</sup> Again, the idea of transferring governing knowledge is evident. This example can be seen as referring the predecessor's work, in a linear way. In addition, the memoirs were used to justify the governing activities or explaining indirectly the vision of the colonial master about his subjects.

This is followed an elaborate description of the natives and his wide knowledge about them is visible, especially, his observations on both Christians and Moor natives on the island. On the other hand, it reveals the condition of 'Orangkayas',<sup>116</sup> who served the Company without being obstinate. He identified the differences between the natives in terms of region or religion. At the same time, he notes the problem of outsiders getting married to the natives. Therefore, he urged immediate action to be taken about all these matters.

The last section of memoir discusses the damage caused by the earthquake of 1736. He notes which VOC establishments were affected and to what extent the repair work was done. As a

---

<sup>113</sup>NL-HANA 1.04.02.2408.: 260-263 and Ibid:1736 ; NL-HANA 1.04.02.7912.: 274-277.

<sup>114</sup>NL-HANA 1.04.02.2343: 602-603, and 1735.

<sup>115</sup>J. Bake, *Memoir achtergelaten doorBake*: 331.

<sup>116</sup> title for village or Landschapshof. Malay, literally rich Mensa: rich man; title a village head, standing below Raja \* or patih \* [also: orancayo, oremcay].

result of the earthquake, the Company had to change some activities like *hong*.<sup>117</sup> Further, he focuses on wood cutting and the repairing of vessels in the northern or southern side of Ceram.

### **II.II.III Jacob de Jong (1738-1743): A lengthier memoir with a justification**

Jacob de Jong was appointed as the successor of the Governor David Johan Bake. After his tenure was over, he left the memoir for his successor, Nathaniel Steinmetz (1748- 1750). This memoir remains important because of its lengthy descriptions. Because of the fact that Governor De Jong was dismissed by the High Government because of the disappointing clove production during his tenure. Keeping this in mind, this section will analyze his memoir, in order to find how the structure was arranged, what technique was used and what details were inserted in the compilation of this memoir.

De Jong also wrote his memoir under above mentioned three main themes but he added new subheadings and more statistical reports into work. He does not amend the standard way of beginning a memoir and thus starts with the clove plantations in Ambon. Therefore, the ordinance in *Plakkaat* was published mentioning the importance of clove plantations. In his period, the coasts of Hitu, the islands of Honiam, Nussaluwt, Boeangbessi and Larique had the highest clove harvest.<sup>118</sup> The decision of growing 30 young trees in each plantation or clove garden was introduced in 1727 and was later increased to 55 new trees in each small clove garden in 1741. In this lengthy process, the contribution of the *datis* was mandatory. De Jong's period reveals significant attention to clove supervision, as the native clove supervisors were dismissed in 1736 and European clove supervisors had replaced them. However, the European supervisors could only do their work until 1742 because the native heads requested the government to reappoint them again to their previous positions. The Batavian government decided to reappoint the native headmen as the new supervisors, and with this decision, they were ordered to continue the plan of planting new 25 clove trees in each clove garden.

---

<sup>117</sup>Fleet of armed canoes or kora-kora boats in the Moluccas, which on command the Company held once a year 'visit' was, in the extirpation or extinction of clandestine planted spice trees.

<sup>118</sup>NL-HANA 1.04.02.2565: 225-226.

With regard to the subject of administration, uprooting of clove plantations remains important. The memoir contains details of how the native heads contributed in the extirpating process and how the Company used the services of the natives to fulfill this task. The contribution of native headman Manuru became significant in the uprooting task during De Jong's period, but still, his work was questioned by Ensign Commander in Manipa Andreas Muller.<sup>119</sup> This situation reveals the high tension between the Company and the powerful natives who created problems in attaining a profitable situation.

As I previously mentioned De Jong's memoir is like a narrative, and therefore, fewer instructions being forwarded to the successor can be found. For instance, he mentions the requirements for conducting a *hong*i tour every year and traces the importance of continuing *hong*i tours by citing examples from the last 3 instances from 1740-1742. These extensive stories of *hong*i expeditions give many details of the participants, their duties, the decisions of the High Government and the role of the Governor when in supervision.

Further, the theme of administration incorporates details about the native elites and their different matters. Among them, a few examples reveal how hard it was to keep a good relationship with the natives. The Raja of Kilang, the orangkaya of the village Hatalaand Abraham Muskita were other examples to understand De Jong's relations with the native heads. Although he mentioned the Political Council in a small paragraph, the details are not enough to give a clear idea of its working process.

He like his predecessors also focuses on the sago trees and suggests that the services of the natives be used to save the plantations from being attacked illegally.<sup>120</sup> In addition to the above-mentioned Sub-themes, he also gives interesting details on the annual *orankaya* feast celebrated by Christians and Muslims. The work of the schoolmasters is also discussed but he does not mention any further details about the School Board.

---

<sup>119</sup>De Jong, *Memoir achtergelaten door De Jong*:338.

<sup>120</sup>NL-HANA 1.04.02.2499: 78-79.

Brief details about a business relationship with Chinese residents should be considered as a new subject added to the memoir. He gives only a few details, but in his opinion, the relations were positive during his time. He points out the ways in which different class of people should be governed and how to react to their misconducts or misbehavior. Further, he discusses the subject of management in a few headings, like the man of the deacons, the natives, welfare affairs, the condition of the leper hospital, the correspondence with Batavia, Ternate, and Makasar, the strength of the garrison and amount of gunpowder stored in the fortresses. Finally, he winds up his memoir by listing all key Company employees and their tasks. This list reflects the hierarchical structure of the government of Ambon in the mid-eighteenth century. These lengthy explanations of the transmission not only bring to light the Company decisions, but also the problems De Jong had encountered. As he was dismissed, in the memoir, he justified his governing policy and his abilities as much as he could in this manner.

#### **II.II.IV Nathaniel Steinmetz: 1743- 1748: The emphasis shall remain on clove plantations**

Like his predecessors, N. Steinmetz also followed the same structure and started his memoir by explaining the importance of the clove plantations in Ambon. He also used the famous quotes used in relation to clove ‘the nerve and the heart income’ of the Company’s possession, confirming that the production of clove was one of the core businesses of the VOC in Ambon. The memoir included subjects like the income of the Company, administration, and management.

The description of the clove plantation included details about clove production, the maintenance of its gardens, environmental factors, Company policies, the contribution of the natives and the uprooting activities. A close look, at the content of the memoir, shows that N. Steinmetz followed the structure of his predecessors. However, the memoir is not as elaborate as his immediate predecessor De Jong. He begins with a short summary report of the clove harvest which shows the rapid increase in the yield of cloves although it again decreased in 1746, however, overall the production had doubled at the end of his governing period. He also controlled the excess of clove production, by using the method of extirpation. Apart from this, environmental factors like a monsoon wind, and untimely rains directly affected the production. Therefore, it was necessary to always keep the amount of trees in a stable condition. Steinmetz’s period is also important to understand the work done by the European and native officers and the

way they performed their duties in the clove plantations. Although uprooting was to be surveyed by the head but in Manipa and Kelang it was done by native heads Ridhas Apij van Assahoedij, and Reynier Goes.<sup>121</sup>

Like the previous governors, Bernard, Bake and De Jong, Steinmetz wrote that the attacks by Papuan robbers should not be neglected in Bouro, Manipa and Boana. Therefore, the *hongi* voyages had to be continued annually. He was also very well aware that the Papuan robbers could affect the plantations in North Ceram and they must be counter attacked by use of the *hongi* fleets. To add to the situation the natives “*Waroeneese*”<sup>122</sup> also attacked the Dutch fleet with bows and arrows. He also mentions few more incidents which were related to *hongi* fleets and the *Negorijin* the nearby regions and the section of the *hongi* tour ends with a proud statement, ‘Truly a result I could get by mastering these rascals out.’<sup>123</sup>

Following section deals with the details of revenues and other incomes of the Company, in addition to the clove plantations. Sago trees and the leasing of the Company domains had resulted in the increase in income. In the case of indigo plantations, he believes it should be enlarged; for instance, he mentions that the Javanese seeds should be planted in Buru to improve the cultivation. N. Steinmetz clearly knows what he was explaining as his five-year income reports highlighted to what extent Company had achieved its goals.

In the theme of management, he dwelled on the work of deacons, the progression of the new church for the Malay-speaking inhabitants, the maintenance of the fortifications and other buildings and the number of Company vessels. In the case of the economic administration, all details were related to the Company projects. He gave examples of the heavy woodwork involving rafts in Bouro and Manipa with lengthy descriptions of the building processes. Lastly, he mentioned about the duties of the administrative officers.

---

<sup>121</sup>Steinmetz, *Memoir achtergelaten door Steinmetz*: 352.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid: 352. It was written in the memoire, ‘Dese Waroenessen warden soo stout, datsijookbegeonnen met pijl en boogen op onsteschieten.....’

<sup>123</sup>Steinmetz, *Memorie door Steinmetz*: 354. ‘Gevolgelijkkondeikmijndesenschelmennietbemeesteren, dog.....’



## II.II.V Gerard Cluysenaar 1752- 1757: Control the decrease in clove production

Keeping in line with the other governors, he began with the discussion and what steps were to be taken to control the decrease in clove production. Cluysenaar (1752-1757) noted ways of stabilizing the supply of cloves, firstly, by controlling the surplus harvest by destruction, and, secondly, by the planting of trees. The precautions were suggested intended to stabilize the supply of cloves without creating fluctuations in the European and Asian markets. In addition, he discussed the ways of harvesting which again showed the services performed by the natives. Not only the day workers but also other native communities called the '*Negorij*' were asked to work in these plantations during the harvest season. However, descriptions show that natives from other regions showed reluctance to join the work, however, the Company used force against them. This policy of statute labor can be directly compared with the labor of cinnamon peeling in Dutch Sri Lanka, which shall be analyzed in the next chapter.

Like most of the predecessors, Cluysenaar description also reveals his condescending attitude towards the natives. His brief explanation of the problems that the Company encountered gave an idea of the prevailing tensions and struggles he had to face to make the plantation work efficiently in Ambon. In my opinion, the details in this section are not specifically meant as instructions, but what problems he faced during his tenure. He notes that it is important to keep good contact with the native heads and special attention was given to the *Negorij* heads as their contribution was essential in solving the problems.

In the case of other crops, the improvement in the indigo plantation was traced under Cluysenaar. He stated what he had done in order to increase its production and what his successor should do in order to continue yielding good profits for the Company. The Batavian government gave the order to continue with pepper cultivation in Ambon in 1751. His attempts were successful in 1753, as he tried to extend pepper plantations to other lands of the Company with the help of a captain in Manipa.

In the section on trade, Cluysenaar focuses more on textiles, as he personally believed that it was profitable for the Company. Apart from it, leasing of Company lands, timber cutting were other profit yielding enterprises noted by him. Similar to the previous memoirs, the concern about the institutional management, building, and maintenance of fortification remained important.

Following the military administration, artillery, ammunition, strengthening of the garrison played a significant role. Besides the general structure, Cluysenaar followed a different approach in mentioning the details which were directly related to the administration and its safety. He explains in much depth, the necessity of *orankayas* in the village Haloli in Cerams. The explanation of the problems, the behavior of natives and the diplomatic approach of the government were written quite elaborately.

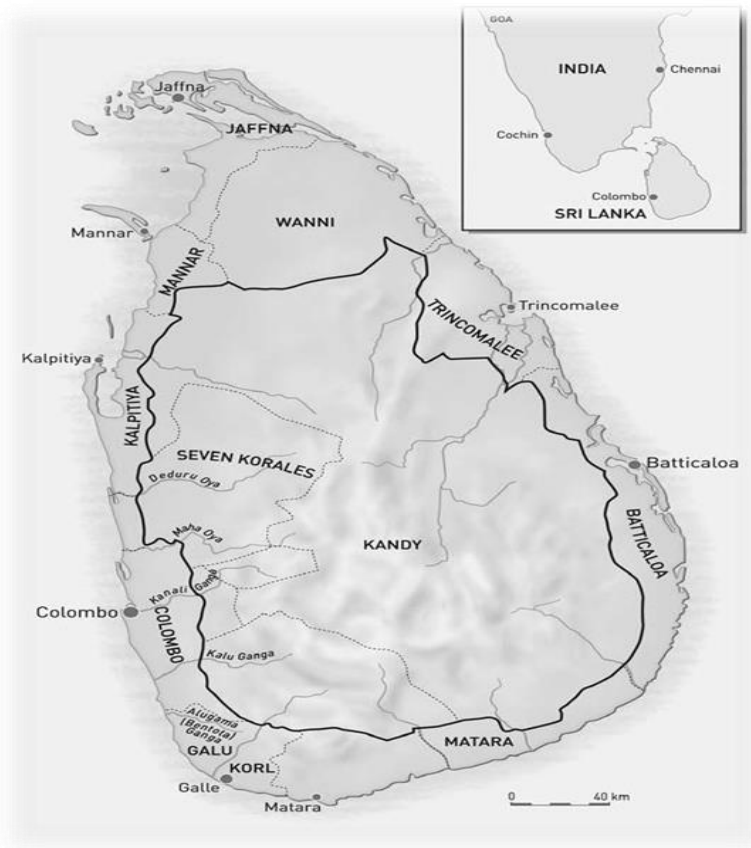
### **Conclusion**

In the case of Dutch Sri Lanka, the structure was almost similar to one another. The difference was in placing the subject in the same order or not. On the other hand, in the case of Ambon memoirs, I argue that they also follow the same structure but differences are identifiable. The governors did not select the themes of writings on their own, the memoirs were always sent to Batavia, but I could not find any archival document which mentions a standard structure of writing memoirs. Each memoir gives us particular details which are reflections of the other documents created by the Governors, the other upper-class officers during their period. It should be noted that *plakkaats*, minutes, secret letters, annual compendiums and other Company documents contain the details which the memoirs contain. Thus, memoirs are a summary version of all the above-mentioned documents. Hence, the selection of particular details always depends on the Company interests, situation or the personality of the Governor but all these selections underwent the supervision of the High Government or Gentlemen XVII. In the case of the classes, memoirs always represent the classes which have been subordinated by the Company. Some classes were more evident in the memoirs like daitis in Ambon and Chalias in Sri Lanka because they were directly linked to the Company's economy. After the analysis of the details, it can be plausibly argued that they were always male dominated and do not talk about the stories of women, only in rare cases like marriage.<sup>124</sup> Considering the linearity in knowledge transferring, both Sri Lankan and Ambon memoirs showed their linearity. In next chapter, the linearity of both memoirs will be discussed in depth.

---

<sup>124</sup> Bake, *Memoire door Bake*: 333.

**Map 01: The Dutch territory in the 18<sup>th</sup> century**



Source: Dewasiri, N. R. 2007. *The Adaptable peasant* (Leiden: Brill).

## Chapter III

### Comparing the Memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka and Ambon

This chapter offers a deeper analysis of the memoirs analyzed in the previous chapter. The object is to find out the common factors between the Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs written during the mid-eighteenth century. Therefore, the primary tool of this chapter is based on the method of comparison. I have focused on the structure, context, and details of the memoirs in both the regions. A comparative method has been employed in order to find out the main similarities and differences between the Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs. The investigation of the similarities and the differences between the memoirs would allow us to shed light on the following important questions: Were there any unique factors responsible for similarities and differences between the memoirs from the two regions? How far the knowledge about government in Sri Lanka and Ambon was transferred from generation to generation in a linear approach?

The contents of this chapter are discussed three main sections; the first two sections compare the Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs individually and find the similarities and differences among them. The third section deals with the comparison between the two VOC settlements. Two charts have been used for a better comparison.

#### III.I General Introduction for the comparison of Sri Lankan Memoirs

The following chart shows the general structure for writing memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka during the mid-eighteenth century

General structure for the Sri Lanka memoirs (1730- 1760)

J.Pielat      Van Imhoff      Van Gollenesse      J. Loten      J. Schreuder

Relation with Kandy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relation with Madura	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relation with Thevar	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relation with Travancore	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relation with Maldives	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## II Land and revenue (Administration)

Land registration	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thombo compilation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duties of Dissave	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Land revenue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The native officers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Details of Chalias	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cultivation/ Land matters in Jaffnapatnam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Details of Inhabitants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## III Company Income

Cinnamon	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pepper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coffee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes-stopped	Yes-stopped

Cardamoms	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indigo	Yes	Yes- stopped	N/a	N/a	N/a
Elephant trade	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arecanut trade	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chunk Fishery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pearl Fishery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cowries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Textile	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
dying roots	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Horse breeding	Yes	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
<i>Kirman</i> Goats	Yes	Yes- stopped	N/a	N/a	N/a
Silk-worms	Yes	Yes- stopped	N/a	N/a	N/a
Land revenue	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

#### IV Management

Religion & education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Law and jurisdiction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other local Institutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Military power	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gunpowder	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

provision of rice	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Naval establishment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repair works	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employees	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Economy	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 01:

Yes = details available in the memoirs

Yes (unsuccessful) = details available, but mentioned as unsuccessful

Yes (stopped) = details available, but mentioned as already stopped functioning

N/a = not available (details were not mentioned in memoir)

The above-analyzed memoirs show more similarities in their structure and the content than differences. As I mentioned in the second chapter, a general structure of Sri Lankan memoirs in the mid-eighteenth century can be divided into four main themes; i) diplomatic relations (external and internal), ii) land and revenue, iii) income of the Company (trade and cultivation), iv) management (administration and economy). In general, the core concept of Sri Lankan memoirs was to write about Company's interests. As I have mentioned in the second chapter, four memoirs identify the peaceful possession and exclusive occupation in the island as the main interest of the Company. Therefore, external and internal affairs played a much more important role. Considering the second theme, land, and revenue, the above-mentioned Sub-themes in this theme showed the direct intention of collecting land revenue and legitimizing the right for being the sole master in the coastal belt of Dutch Sri Lanka. Regarding the income of the Company, major attention was given to cinnamon because the Company had the monopoly over cinnamon trade. Besides cinnamon, arecanuts, elephant trade, and land dues were more important Sub-themes. The coffee and pepper cultivation were not stable in the country; the reason will be discussed in the next section. The last theme of management consists of several subjects which represent the economic and administrative perspectives of the Company. Among the Sub-themes, the information on religious matters and details about security played a much vital role.

The above-mentioned general structure clearly shows the similar themes and sub-themes in the structure of memoirs in Dutch Sri Lanka during 1730- 1760. Among all the themes under consideration in the memoirs, we will focus on only two of them, which made the Sri Lankan memoirs unique and also can be identified as major differences *vis-a-vis* Ambonese memoirs.

### **III.I.I Diplomatic relations: Relations with Kandy**

Out of all the regions, I have selected relations with Kandy because of following two major reasons: a) each governor had to give more attention on explaining the relations with Kandy, and b) more generally, Kandy was the major factor that had an impact on the peaceful possession of the Company. As a result, relations with Kandy directly affected the Company's income. As mentioned in the first chapter, K. M. De Silva argued that both the king of Kandy and the Dutch co-existed with each other during the mid-eighteenth century; no party could overthrow the other. Consequently, both the parties had to accept each other.<sup>125</sup> From the Dutch side, it was essential to have good relations in order to get permission for peeling cinnamon, and for the transport of elephants over King's territory to Jaffna (from where the elephants were sold to the South Indian traders). However, Schrikker mentioned Arasaratnam's argument that the Dutch did limit and control the power of the kings of Kandy by isolating them in their own territory. The result was that they were kept away from the outer world, and especially from external trade, and communications with South India.<sup>126</sup> At the same time, Schrikker asserted that from the 1740s onwards the tension between the two powers increased. The Kandyans became more and more determined to have their sea ports back, and they wanted no hindrances in their South Asian trade and overseas contacts. At the same time, the Dutch began to consider their position on the island as a more significant one than only being a mere vassal, and they felt that they ought not to be forced to perform the submissive rituals at the annual embassies.<sup>127</sup> It is obvious, that the memoirs, which I have selected, reflect the high tension between the Company and the kingdom of Kandy. Until the 1750s the VOC was dependent on the Kandyan king for the

---

<sup>125</sup> De Silva, *History of Sri Lanka*: 152.

<sup>126</sup> Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform.*: 38.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*: 38.



legitimacy of its power on the island and was therefore formally considered his vassal.<sup>128</sup> This situation can be seen from both memoirs of Pielat and Van Imhoff. Such power relation was seen as follows:

Even if relied on the ownership of the coastline, which as tacitly admitted on various occasions by the Kandyan Court. Our rights have been legalized by the undisputed exercise of them by the Company possession on the West and East [coasts]. Besides, it is on account of our exclusive occupation that we send our yearly gifts to the king and give ourselves so much trouble to keep on good terms with him.<sup>129</sup>

From the side of Kandy, the kingdom largely depended on the Company in terms of keeping relations with South India. Van Gollennesse, Loten and Schreuder had given enough examples for the Company's involvement in this matter. These memoirs reflect the approach and the vision of the power relations from the Company's side, that is, how the Company interacted with the kingdom of Kandy, and how the governors interpreted Kandy and passed the information to their successors. Besides the uniqueness, this matter of subject reveals us the linearity of transferring knowledge of the Company policies and interests from generation to generation. Rather than the linearity in the structure, this approach can be considered as the linearity in the content of memoir because it represents more about the Company policy on power relations.

### **III.I.II Land tenure: Thombo compilation**

The other important theme discussed in the memoirs was that of land registration and shows the Company's expectations from its territories. After conquering the Maritime Provinces, the Company kept its high expectation on cinnamon trade, but at the same time, it engaged in collecting more inland-related revenues in order to increase the Company's profit. Land registration was not newly introduced to the island by the Dutch; the Portuguese took the first step by following the Sinhalese land registration system called *lekammitti* which contained the information about land holdings, revenue, and history of inheritance. The Dutch followed both Sinhalese *lekammitti* and Portuguese thombos and started making land registers in Colombo, Jaffna, and Galle at the end of the seventeenth century. However, efforts of the Company failed.

---

<sup>128</sup> Ibid:38.

<sup>129</sup> Van Imhoff, *Memoir left by Van Imhoff*: 8-9.

The Company wanted to register all cultivated, uncultivated and granted garden and fields in order to estimate the revenues which could be generated from those lands. For the purpose of accurate registration, the Company gave the order to submit deeds or other proves for the inhabitants in the coastal area.

Van Imhoff (1736-40) restarted the whole procedure by expanding the Landraad for the compilation of proper thombos during his tenure. Van Imhoff asserted that such compilation directly tended to promote peace in the region, which in his view was necessary for the interests of both the inhabitants and the company.<sup>130</sup> In the process of compilation, either people were summoned to come to the Landraad or thombo commissioners were sent to the villages. In this matter, he believed that sending commissioners in the presence of the native chiefs would not be successful as it would create trouble for the commissioners. Sending out commissioners was a second step in the process of investigations, and the final decision was left to the few honest native chiefs.<sup>131</sup> The first set of instructions was issued on 16 November 1745 for compiling the information related to the districts of Colombo, Galle, and Matara. Subsequently, two other instructions were issued on 20 December 1759 and 5 September 1766. Van Gollennesse had issued the first set of instructions in 1745, and he ordered that the land owners must present their land deeds and other evidence to the Landraad. Further, he underlined the importance of perfection and the accurate survey.<sup>132</sup> Governor Loten closely followed the instructions of Van Imhoff and Van Gollennesse, and he continued the work by compiling thombos that had not been taken up earlier. He engaged with mapmaking, which made it possible to discover the kind of data required for land registration. The second revision was conducted by Governor Schreuder, and he wrote a lengthy description of the process of the compilation of thombos in his memoir. He clearly stated that the purpose of compiling thombos was to provide clear definitions about the land and head thombos and the extent to which the Company had already registered its territory. In Sri Lankan case, we can discern connections between successive memoirs in terms of the subjects discussed by the governors. Schreuder noted that his details on thombos were

---

<sup>130</sup>Ibid: 23.

<sup>131</sup> Van Imhoff, *memoir left by van Imhoff*: 23.

<sup>132</sup> Gollennesse: 54-56.

much more useful because they dealt with the subject in much more depth, and he made useful references to the memoirs of Governors Van Imhoff, Van Gollennesse and Loten.<sup>133</sup> Not only Sri Lankan memoirs are connected to each other through the subjects under discussion, but also the adoption of the knowledge generated by their predecessor. The above chain of linearity led us to discuss the notion of Rosemberg: the correct sequence of actions that unfolds in a particular circumstance<sup>134</sup>. The task of thombo compilation also formed a subject matter of memoirs. Each governor started from where his predecessor left. Thombo was the common connection between the memoirs.

Besides the above-discussed similarities, the memoirs also reveal some differences. These differences can be identified in the settings of the structure, content and the examples given. As I have already discussed in the second chapter, Pielat's memoir differ from other memoirs in its structure and content. As far as contents are concerned, he did not discuss the details of external affairs and diplomatic relations with the neighboring states like Madura, Thevar, and Travancore. But at the same time, he did correspond with the states mentioned above.<sup>135</sup> However, he mentions the trade relations with Maldives, but the description is clearly different from what Van Imhoff and Van Gollennesse wrote in the section about external relations.

When we compare Pielat's memoir with those of his successors, we find more information about local institutions because he was given the task of reorganizing the local institutions by the High Government in Batavia. Therefore, the structure of his memoir differs from other four Governors. Among the others, Pielat was the first one who discussed the theme of management which contained details about military, fortifications, and strength of garrisons, and this subject was discussed by Van Imhoff and others at the end. Pielat started writing his memoir considering his first task. This example clearly shows that the selection of the order of themes for discussion in the memoirs was highly dependent on the task for which a governor was appointed, and as a result, he decided about the subjects in the memoir according to their urgency. For the

---

<sup>133</sup> Schreuder, *Memoir left by Schreuder*, 54.

<sup>134</sup> Rosenberg, *The Not So Common Sense*: 81.

<sup>135</sup> See, NL-HANA 1.04.02.8965: 620-638.

structure of his work, Pielat was inspired by his predecessor, Governor Cornelis Joan Simons (1703- 1707).

Considering the new land policy, Van Imhoff added his plans for the future in his memoirs. He introduced new land based policies, especially in Jaffnapatanm, which were specifically related to agriculture; especially, cultivating rice in order to reduce the high expenditure of the Company. He also followed his predecessors J. Pielat and J. Simons, but his main focus was to provide information about the new land policies, the discussion about these policies cannot be found either in Pielat's or Simons's memoirs. Although this approach was somewhat different from early memoirs, his policies became a prominent subject in the Sri Lankan memoirs. His policies reveal the mechanism that was the governing process. What was the utility of introducing such policies? The mid-eighteenth century brought economic instability in the Company; a decrease in the trading activity and growing expenditure created a significant gap in the income and the expenditure in Sri Lanka. As a result, Van Imhoff chose the option of increasing the income of the Company through agriculture. Schrikker asserts that Van Imhoff's policies were followed even after his departure from Sri Lanka. Further, she mentions that his policy focused not only on the increasing the production of coffee and pepper but on subsistence agriculture as well. Van Imhoff started stimulating people to grow cash crops, and his successors Van Gollennesse and Loten continued his policy.<sup>136</sup> I use this continuation to answer the following question of Rosenberg: what actions are the result of the same cause or produce the same effect?<sup>137</sup> From Van Imhoff to Loten, the VOC faced the same cause of economic instability which led them to follow the same action of continuing agrarian policy. Finally, the memoirs ended with the details on agricultural expansion in their content. Therefore, the details of above mentioned sub-theme portrait the linearity in the content of memoirs.

However, during the 1750s the Batavian government started to undermine the Sri Lankan cash crops cultivation because they wanted to protect the more profitable Javanese cash crop production. This situation was discussed by Schrikker pointing out the idea of D.A. Kotelawele

---

<sup>136</sup>Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform*: 35.

<sup>137</sup>Rosenberg, *The Not So Common Sense*: 81.

and K.Goonewardena that how this led to disappointing the islanders because many inhabitants had started to grow these crops in their gardens and had even started real plantations.<sup>138</sup> As discussed in the second chapter, Governor Schreuder mentioned the problems he had encountered while executing the instructions of the High Government. His endeavors to implement the instruction resulted in bitter relations with the high ranked officers in the Galle commandment.<sup>139</sup> Regarding the political decisions, memoirs reflect the condition of subordination to the Batavian government. Therefore, memoirs do always reflect the process of transferring governing knowledge: they also discuss the real tensions and subordination to the Higher Government during the mid-eighteenth century.

### III.II General Description for the Ambonese memoirs

The following chart shows the general structure for writing memoirs in Ambon during the mid-eighteenth century

A general structure for the Ambonese memoirs (1730 - 1760)

	J. Bernard	J. Bake	Jacob de Jong	N. Steinmetz	G. Cluysenaar
I Company income (trade and cultivation)					
Clove	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coffee	Yes- unsuccessful	Yes- stopped	Yes	N/a	N/a
Indigo	Yes- unsuccessful	Yes- Stopped	N/a	Yes	Yes
Pepper	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes
Timber	Yes	N/a	N/a	Yes	Yes

<sup>138</sup> Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform*: 35.

<sup>139</sup> Schreuder, *memoir left by Schreuder*: 49.

Jattij	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	N/a
Sago	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Leasing Company domain	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Textile	N/a	Yes	N/a	N/a	Yes
Bead stone	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes

## II Internal affairs

Hongi tour	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The native officers	Yes	yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Details of inhabitants	Yes	Yeas	Yes	Yes	Yes
Details of Datis	Yes	Yeas	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extirpation	Yes	Yeas	Yes	Yes	Yes
Orangkaya	N/a	Yeas	Yes	Yes	Yes

## III Management

Religion & education	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strength of garrison	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes
Naval establishment	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fortification & other Buildings	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repair and wood work	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/a
Other local institution	N/a	N/a	Yes	Yes	N/a

Company employees	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	N/a
-------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Table o2:

Yes = details available in the memoirs

Yes (unsuccessful) = details available, but mentioned as unsuccessful

Yes (abandon) = details available, but mentioned as already stopped functioning

N/a = not available (details are not mentioned in memoir)

The above details give us the general idea about the structure, content, and usage of various subjects in the Ambonese memoirs during the mid-eighteenth century. The main structure can be divided into three themes: a) income of the Company (trade and cultivation), b) internal affairs, and c) management (administration and economy). A comparison between the memoirs shows that there are more similarities than differences. The main task of the Company in Ambon was the maintenance of clove plantations, and this was at the core of the memoirs. Therefore, the subject of clove plantations comes first in each memoir. Next, the other cultivations and trade articles were discussed. Next in importance to cloves came sago plants because the rice cultivation was not successful in the Ambon region. Coffee and pepper cultivations were not given any attention because they were identified as unsuccessful plantations. As the second theme, every governor mentioned inland affairs and elaborated on this important aspect. Internal affairs mostly related to the maintenance of the clove plantations and extirpation activities. Therefore, these details contain the information about the natives and the Company's relations with them. Especially, the smugglers like Papuans were a direct threat to the clove and sago plantations; the Company always wanted to handle this matter with the participation of natives. Therefore, every Governor had given attention to internal affairs. Regarding the management, Governor De Jong and N. Steinmetz gave attention to all the tasks but J. Bake and G. Cluysenaer were only inspired to write about few subjects. However, all these Governors mentioned the economy and administration in the last part of their memoirs.

Though there are significant similarities, I have selected only one subject which shows the uniqueness of Ambonese memoirs. Among the similarities, I have selected the following a major subject which was mentioned in the memoirs.

### ***III.II.I Hongi expedition***

The indigenous groups in the eastern archipelago organized their fleet with the vessels called *kora-kora*, in order to safeguard their territories conducting sudden attacks. These expeditions were famous in Ambon even before the arrival of European into the archipelago. A colonial historian, Muridan Widjojo asserted the VOC conducted *hongi* expedition with the assistance of their subjects. He further mentioned that after 1658 a more or less complete *hongi* ritual was instituted. Every two years, forty-six out of around sixty *kora-kora* vessels were fitted out once for police actions.<sup>140</sup> All memoirs mentioned above explained the utility of *hongi* while extirpating the illegal clove or sago plantations. As discussed in the second chapter, Governors Bernard, and J. Bake mentioned the way the Company used the natives for controlling the smugglers. They mentioned about the actions taken during the *hongi* expedition. According to governors, the *hongi* expedition was mandatory because in this way the Company could directly control the local forces, which in return controlled the natives. Governor De Jong wrote an explicit description by explaining the reason for the *hongi* in another aspect. Besides the extirpation activities, the Company conducted *hongi* as the colorful carnival fleet which included decorated *kora-kora* vessels, flags, drumming and musical events. The other two Governors also mentioned their contributions in the *hongi* expeditions annually and the final outcome of surrender by the Papuans or other natives like “*Waroeneese*”. Each family in the village was expected to deliver one able bodied man for *kora-kora* as a rower or a warrior, and in return, they received rights to use a certain plot of land from the village council.<sup>141</sup> This labor work was called ‘*hofdienst*’ by the Dutch. This situation shows the Company used *hofdienst* as an instrument of power to constantly control their subjects. On the other hand, *hongi* is a strong example of using natives against their own brethren who did not follow the rules of the Company. These five governors transferred knowledge about *honghi* to their successors

---

<sup>140</sup>Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku*: 34.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid*: 34.



explaining the importance of its, and this provides linearity in the content of memoirs, Therefore, details on *honggi* can be discussed according to the idea of Rosemberg, which reflected the consequences of an observed action.<sup>142</sup> If *honggi* is taken as an observed action, the consequence was the regularity of depiction this Company rule in the content of memoirs because it shows how the memoirs always mentioned and started with the sub-themes of *honggi*. So the linearity is in the way of keeping *honggi* as content in memoirs, and even in front portraying its importance. Therefore this description in each memoir becomes the linearity in the case of Ambon.

### **III.III Comparison between Ambonese and Sri Lankan memoirs**

In this section, I offer a comparison of the main similarities and differences between Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs. The similarities can be divided into two main categories: the general factors, and similarities in structure and context.

Under the general factor, the main similarity in these memoirs is the background of the compilation. As I mentioned in the first chapter, both Sri Lanka, and Ambon were occupied by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century, and their main goal was to achieve the spice monopoly. The Dutch established their settlements after defeating the Portuguese in both regions and brought them under their control. Therefore, the memoirs reflect the concerns of the High Government in Batavia. Though the subjects discussed are different in both the Sri Lankan and the Ambonese memoirs, they always referred to the resolutions and orders passed by the high authority. The second similarity relates to the basic requirement of writing memoirs. Both Governors in Ambon and Sri Lanka wrote the memoirs as the last note before their departure. They followed the tradition of leaving memoirs to their successors, and it was obligatory for governors to send a copy of the memoir to the Higher Government, and this was clearly stated in Pielat's memoir.<sup>143</sup>

Besides the general factors, this study mainly focuses on finding the similarities in memoirs by focusing on the structure, content, and details. When we compare the two tables provided above

---

<sup>142</sup>Rosenberg, *The Not So Common Sense*: 81.

<sup>143</sup>Pielat, *Memoir left by Pielat*: 39.

we find both Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs mainly focused on similar main themes; for instance, the income of the company, inland affairs, and management.

The income of the Company was mainly based on trade and cultivation, but the importance of various crops differed in both the regions. Both Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs contain the details of inland administrations; they mostly discuss the native officers and details of the inhabitants. Details of *Datis* in Ambon and *Chalias* in Sri Lanka reflect the primary interests of the Company. Among other natives, these two groups received greater attentions in memoirs because *Datis* were the key workers of clove plantations in Ambon. In Sri Lanka, *Chalias* engaged with cinnamon peeling and their activities were directly linked to the annual output of cinnamon. As compared to *Datis*, dealing with *Chalias* was a hard task for the Company because they could any time shift their loyalties to Kandy after refusing to work. The Kandyan king used *Chalias* to regain his lost glory by disrupting the Company's main income generating activity. As a result, the Company's policy on both *Datis* and *Chalias* differed significantly. It was, therefore, obvious for the Governors to special attention to these key workers in their memoirs. As the last theme, details of management were commonly placed at the end of the both the Ambonese and the Sri Lankan memoirs. The interesting feature is that the contents of the Sub-themes were also similar; it can clearly be identified from the above mentioned general memoir structure. The theme of management includes the details on the economic and administration activities of the Company. This section shows the general activities of the Company while governing the territories. When we compare memoirs, it becomes clear that the general administration of the Company remained similarly in both regions.

As another similarity, the governors in both Sri Lanka and Ambon gave ample justifications in their memoirs about the kind of work they undertook in their tenure. We will discuss only one example from both the regions to show the similar approach in this matter.

Jacob de Jong wrote a long memoir, and he added all information and statistic details into it. As I argued in the second chapter, his memoir takes the shape of a narrative rather than giving instructions. Governor Jong was dismissed because the High Government was disappointed with the dismal output of cloves. The Company couldn't secure the estimated harvest of cloves and blamed Jong for his insufficient efforts. As a result, Jong wrote an explicit memoir explaining his experience related to clove plantations, which I have already mentioned in the second chapter.

Therefore, I argue that memoir was also a means for providing justification for the work which a governor undertook during his tenure.

The situation of Jan Schreuder, the governor in Sri Lanka, is comparable for he was also dismissed for violating the Company policies with Kandy. In this case, Schreuder wrote the lengthiest memoir in which he offered the justification for his work. Schreuder mentioned the troubles which he had encountered from the king of Kandy and the natives. However, the Higher Government did not prevent the transfer of these two memoirs to their successors, but a lot of information was added to their comments. The notes which were added to Schreuder's memoir showed the reaction of the High Government.<sup>144</sup> Overall, it can be argued that the memoirs do not only contain the process of knowledge transfer, but also the justifications for the tenures of the governors.

### **III.III.I Difference between Sri Lankan and Ambon memoirs**

I have already mentioned a major similarity in the theme of management which comes under the structure, but still, the general structure in both the Sri Lankan and the Ambones memoirs contain significant differences. Ambonese memoirs differ from Sri Lankan memoirs in their structure because only three major subjects were discussed, while the Sri Lankan memoirs were divided into four subjects. The missing theme in the Ambonese memoirs is that of the diplomatic relations. The main reason for this was the location of the region; the geographical location of Sri Lanka played a vital role in keeping a connection with India and controlling the trade on the south coast of India. In Ambon, the situation was completely different, because it contained a group of islands. The Governors had to face the challenge of making connections between the various islands, and therefore, they paid more attention to the inland affairs in Ambon. The other main difference relates to the details provided on the religion. Before the Dutch, both Sri Lanka, and Ambon were colonized by the Portuguese, and consequently, the Company had to wipeout Roman Catholic religion from both the regions. As a result, both the governments

---

<sup>144</sup> See, NL-HANA, 1.04.02.3052: 1669- 1696. Beschrijving Summarium ofte t'zamentrecking van de marginalen staande op de memorie van overgave van 17 Maart 1762.

framed policies for promoting Protestant. This attempt can be seen in Ambon and Sri Lankan memoirs. What I have found as the differentiation is that the Sri Lankan memoirs directly mention the religious policy of the Company and explain the extent to which the Governors had contributed during their governing period. In Ambon memoirs, fewer details can be found on religion. Normally, the religious matters were marginalized, and only find mention of the construction of a church for Malay-speaking people and little mentions of deaconries. No other information regarding the religious policy of the Company can be found in the Ambonese memoirs.

Sri Lankan memoirs contain a model memoir. Van Imhoff's memoir became a 'model' memoir among his successors. They followed the structure that was laid down by Van Imhoff. All the governors recommended their successors to use Van Imhoff's memoir as a model. In Ambonese case, there is no such idea of 'model memoir' during this period. This can clearly be noted in fewer references to their predecessor's work.

Considering the linearity, the Ambon memoirs remain linear to each other with similarities in their content and structure. They show some differences in their details, and this is because of the changes in time and situation on the ground. They used similar structure but the order in which they discussed various subjects differed from each other. For instance, Jacob de Jong mentioned the coffee cultivation at the end of his memoirs, but J. Bake and J. Bernard mentioned it in the beginning under the subject of Company income. However, the structure remains linear. Both the Ambonese and the Sri Lankan memoirs follow the linear approach while transferring the governing knowledge, but the frequency of linearity differ in both the cases. The Ambonese memoirs reveal less frequency in their linearity, though the governors in both the regions followed linearity in following the same structure. Governors fairly recommended and directly connected to their predecessor's work, but in some case, the correct sequence of actions that unfolds in a particular circumstance was missing. Governor N. Steinmetz and G. Cluysenaer mentioned early Governors like R. van Padtbrugge (1683-1687), W. van Wijngaarden (1697-1701), B. Coyett (1701-1706) and P. Gabrij (1721-1725). The Ambonese governors mentioned their predecessors work but did not connect their memoirs as a part of a chain. When we compare these with the memoirs in Sri Lanka, they follow a different approach. From Governor Pielat to Schreuder, they mentioned, recommended and referred to the content of their predecessors in depth. Governor Loten directly recommended Van Imhoff's and Van

Gollennesse's memoirs to his successor, and he made extensive use of their memoirs in writing his own. Therefore, Sri Lankan memoir was seen as a part of a chain and should be used together. With these findings, I argue that Sri Lankan memoirs during 1730- 1760 contained a high frequency of linearity in several ways, for instance, in the case of structure, close references and the idea of a model memoir.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, this chapter discussed the major similarities and the differences in memoirs in Sri Lanka and Ambon in the mid-eighteenth century. With the help of the two tables discussed above, I extracted major similarities and differences and discussed the relevant reasons which based on the structure, content, and details in both memoirs. Though there were some similarities, I found major differences in writing memoirs in Sri Lanka and Ambon during 1730- 1760. What was the cause of the differences in the Sri Lankan and the Ambonese memoirs? The answer lies in the differences in the Company's core interests. In Sri Lanka, the core interest was to have control without any violence and to maintain a monopoly in the region. In the case of Ambon, the main focus of the Company was clove plantations. These differences are reflected in the memoirs. The diplomatic relations in Sri Lanka were because Kandy was an independent kingdom, and the Dutch only could conquer the coastal (map 1) The land policy in Sri Lanka was geared towards increasing the income of the Company. Therefore, Sri Lankan memoirs contain ample details related to land registration, land revenue and the manner of collection of revenue; we don't find these details in the Ambon memoirs.

The VOC had complete control over all the territories in Ambon Isles, and therefore, the theme of diplomatic relations was omitted from the memoirs. Clove production was important in Ambon Isles, and in the case of Sri Lanka, cinnamon had some significance. Cinnamon grew in the wild forest, and as a result, the Company had to keep good relation with the King of Kandy. King's permission was necessary for peeling cinnamon in his territory, and therefore, diplomatic relation found a place in Sri Lankan memoirs.

## Conclusion:

This research on memoirs reveals the system of knowledge transfer between the VOC Governors of Sri Lanka and the Ambon Isles during the mid-eighteenth century. In chapter one, I discussed the background of the Dutch settlement in Ambon and Sri Lanka, and how the VOC expanded or revised the Company's interests during the mid-eighteenth century. These interests were recorded in the Company documents; memoirs, in this respect, contained a significant amount of details.

After describing the general history of memoir writing, I examined the structure and content of the memoirs in-depth. I focused on ten memoirs in total, five each from Ambon and Sri Lanka, written between 1730 and 1760. The memoirs were selected only if the governor's tenure was more than two years. In the case of Sri Lanka, the memoirs of Stephanus Versluys (1729-1732), Diederik van Domburch (1734- 1736), Jan Macare (1736), Willem M. Bruininck (1740-1742) and Gerard Johan Vreelandt (1751- 1752) were not available due to various reasons. The memoir of Daniel Overbeek (1742- 1743) was not selected for study because he governed only for one year, and because his memoir was similar to that of Imhoff's. In Ambon, the memoirs of Cornelis Rosenboom (1748- 1750), Nicolaas Jongsma (1750- 17552) and Johan van Idsinga (1757- 1763) were not available.

The Sri Lankan memoirs focused on four main themes, whereas the Ambonese memoirs dealt with only three major themes. For content analysis, I also used the official documents produced by the Governors during their period and compared them with the content of memoirs. In the case of Sri Lanka, I closely referred to the *Plakkaats*. After comparing the *Plakkaats* with the memoirs, it was found that most of the new laws were included in the memoirs. Besides the *Plakkaats*, I used some official letters and reports to check whether memoirs represented the details of those documents. I followed the same approach in the case of the Ambonese memoirs and concluded that they also represented the information of other official documents produced during a governor's tenure. The memoirs contain a particular type of information because they include a brief summary of the official documents. To answer the question related to the extent to which the governors repeatedly used the same structure, content, and details, I prepared a table for the general structure of the memoirs in both the cases.

The final chapter of this study dealt with the comparison between the Sri Lankan and the Ambonese memoirs. In first two sections of the chapter, I compared Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs separately; finally, I compared memoirs from both places with each other. The following four themes are discussed in the Sri Lankan memoirs: diplomatic relations, land and revenue, Company income and management. Further sub-divisions were listed according to these main themes. The analysis of the general structure revealed more similarities than differences in the Sri Lankan memoirs. The Ambonese memoirs contained the following three major themes: Company income, internal affairs, and management. The structure of the Ambonese memoirs also showed similarities.

In Ambon, the Company focused on clove plantations, and therefore, this subject formed the core of the Ambonese memoirs. The core conce of the Sri Lankan memoirs were the peaceful possession, and exclusive occupation of the Company. Considering both memoirs, structurally, there were more similarities in the theme of management as compared to other themes. Management refer to the administration and economic activit of the Company. Therefore, management was a theme common to both Ambonese and Sri Lankan memoirs. The main goal of profit-making was also common to both regions; the description of *Chalias* of Sri Lanka and *Datis* of Ambon revealed the extent to which the VOC had used their labor while setting up the spice plantations. The interaction between the VOC and these two labor groups showed enormous tensions between them; memoirs from both regions depicted this matter clearly. The idea of justification, which has been discussed in last two chapters, showed us another angle of the utility of memoirs. Memoirs were also used by the governors to justify any measures undertaken during their tenure. Most often the issues were related to the personal experience that the Governors wanted to share with their successors. I have extracted some phrases—to show their tension, anger or disappointment—that reflected their personal experiences. I argue that this justification also was an indirect method of informing their successors about their personal experiences, and their interaction with the High Government. Therefore, these memoirs did not only transfer knowledge but also revealed the various situations which were justified by the governors.

The significant differences between the two sets of memoirs have opened the space to examine the Company's core interest in both regions. In Sri Lanka, the core interests were peaceful possession and exclusive occupation in the territory. Therefore, Sri Lankan memoirs were written focusing on these different interests. In the case of Ambon, clove plantations were the core interest. Therefore, diplomatic relations and land matters were marginalized in Ambon memoirs but they formed the main subjects of Sri Lankan memoirs. This major contrast can be seen in the general structure of Sri Lankan and Ambonese memoirs in the mid-eighteenth century.

Considering the main argument of the system of knowledge transfer, I found that both memoirs followed a linear approach. But the frequency of linearity in the subjects of structure, content, and details remain different in both memoirs. For example, in the Sri Lankan memoirs, there are constant references to the work of predecessors, and these references made them quite similar and directly linked to each other. Therefore, memoir was seen as a part of a chain to be used together with others in the series. With these constant references, Sri Lankan memoirs contain a high frequency of linearity which is lower in the Ambonese memoirs. In the case of Ambon, the Governors also followed the same structure and content, but the governors referred to their predecessors in fewer themes. Therefore, linearity is less frequent in memoirs from Ambon. The reason for this main difference depends on the concept of 'model/ideal memoirs'. In the case of Sri Lanka, Van Imhoff's memoir had become the model for his successors, which is not visible in Ambonese memoirs. The concept of 'model memoirs' made it necessary to refer to the predecessor's work; one memoir is linearly connected to the other.

Therefore, I conclude that in the mid-eighteenth century, the transfer of knowledge relating to governance tended more towards linearity in the case of the Dutch governors of Sri Lanka, whereas in the case of the governors of Ambon this tendency to linearity was selective and can be seen in particular themes rather than as a whole.



## **Bibliography**

### **Unpublished primary sources**

National Archives of The Netherlands

Archives of the Verenigde Oost Indische Compagnie (VOC): 1.04.02

NL-HANA (VOC) 2483; 2482; 2635; 8958; 2482; 2492; 2458; 2772; 8522; 2379; 2716; 2709; 2757; 2408; 2343; 2499; 8965; 3052

### **Inventory**

Graff, M. G. H. A. de, and A. M. Tempelaars. 1990. *Inventaris van de Memories van Overgave, 1852- 1962* (1963) (Den aHaag, National Archive).

Jurriaanse, M. W. 1943. *Catalogue of the Archives of the Dutch Central Government of Coastal Ceylon* (Colombo: Department of National Archives in Sri Lanka).

### **Source Publications**

Gollennesse, Julius Stein van. 1974. *Memoir Julius Stein Van Gollennesse Governor of Ceylon 1743- 1751* S. Arasaratnam (translator) (Colombo: Department of National Archives).

Imhoff, Gustaff Willem Baron Van. 1911. *Memoir to his successor Willem Maurits Bruknink 1740*, Sophia Pieters (translator) (Colombo: E.C Cottle, Government Printer).

Knaap, G. J. (bewekt). 1987. *Memories van Overgave van gouverneurs van Ambon in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff).

L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* Deel I & II (Hilversum: Verloren).

Loten, Joan Gideon. 1991. *Memoir of Joan Gideon Loten delivered to his successor Jan Schreuder Februry 28, 1757*, E. Reimers (translator) (Colombo: Sri Lanka Government Press, 1935).

Pielat, Jacob Christian. 1905. *Memoir to his successor Diderik Van Domburg 1734*, Sophia Pieters (translator) (Colombo, Government Printer).

Rumphuis, G. E. 2001. *De Generale Lanst- Beschrijvinge van Het Ambonse Gouvernement* (transcriptie) W. Buijze (Den Haag: CIP- gegevens Koninklijke Bibliotheek).

Schreuder, Jan. 1946. *Memoir of Jan Schreuder delivered to his successor Lubbert Jan Baron van Eck*, E Reimers (translator) (Colombo: State Printing Corporation).

## Secondary sources

Andaya, Leonardo Y. 1993. *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press).

Anthonisz, R. G. 1907. *Report on The Dutch Records in The Government Archives At Colombo* (Colombo: H. C. Cotel. Government Printer, Ceylon).

Dewaraja, L. S. 1995. "The Kandyan Kingdom 1638- 1739: A Survey of Its Political History". In: *History of Sri Lanka* Vol.2, ed. K. M. de Silva (Peradeniya: University of Peradeniya).

Donkin, R. A. 2003. *Between East and West* (Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society).

Goonewardena, K. W. 1958. *The Foundation of Dutch Power in Ceylon* (Amsterdam: Netherlands Institute for International Cultural Relations).

Jacobs, Els M. 2006. *Merchantin Asia: The Trade of the Dutch East India Company During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, CNWS Publications).

Knaap, G. J. 1987. *Kruidnageleen en Christenen deVerenigdeOost- IndischeCompagnie en de bevolking van Ambon 1656-1696* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications).

Modlin, Irvin M. 2001. *The Destiny of Dutch Medicine From Amsterdam to Ambon* (Zwanenburg: Beyond the Horizon).

Rosenberg, Shawn W. 2002. *The Not So Common Sense: Differences in How People Judge Social and Political Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

Schrikker, Alicia. 2007. *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka 1780- 1815 Expansion and Reform*, (Leiden: Brill).

Silva, K. M. de. 2008. *A history of Sri Lanka* (Colombo: VijithaYapa Publications).

Widjojo, Muidan. 2009. *The Revolt of Prince Nuku: Cross- Cultural Alliance-making in Maluku, c.1780- 1810* (Leiden: Brill)