

# Slavery and the *perkeniersstelsel* on the Banda Islands in the 1690's

Master thesis  
Colonial and Global History  
Leiden University  
09-07-2020

J.J.H. Berends  
S2108860  
30ECTS

Supervisor: Dr. A.M.C. van Dissel  
Second reader: Dr. A.F. Schrikker



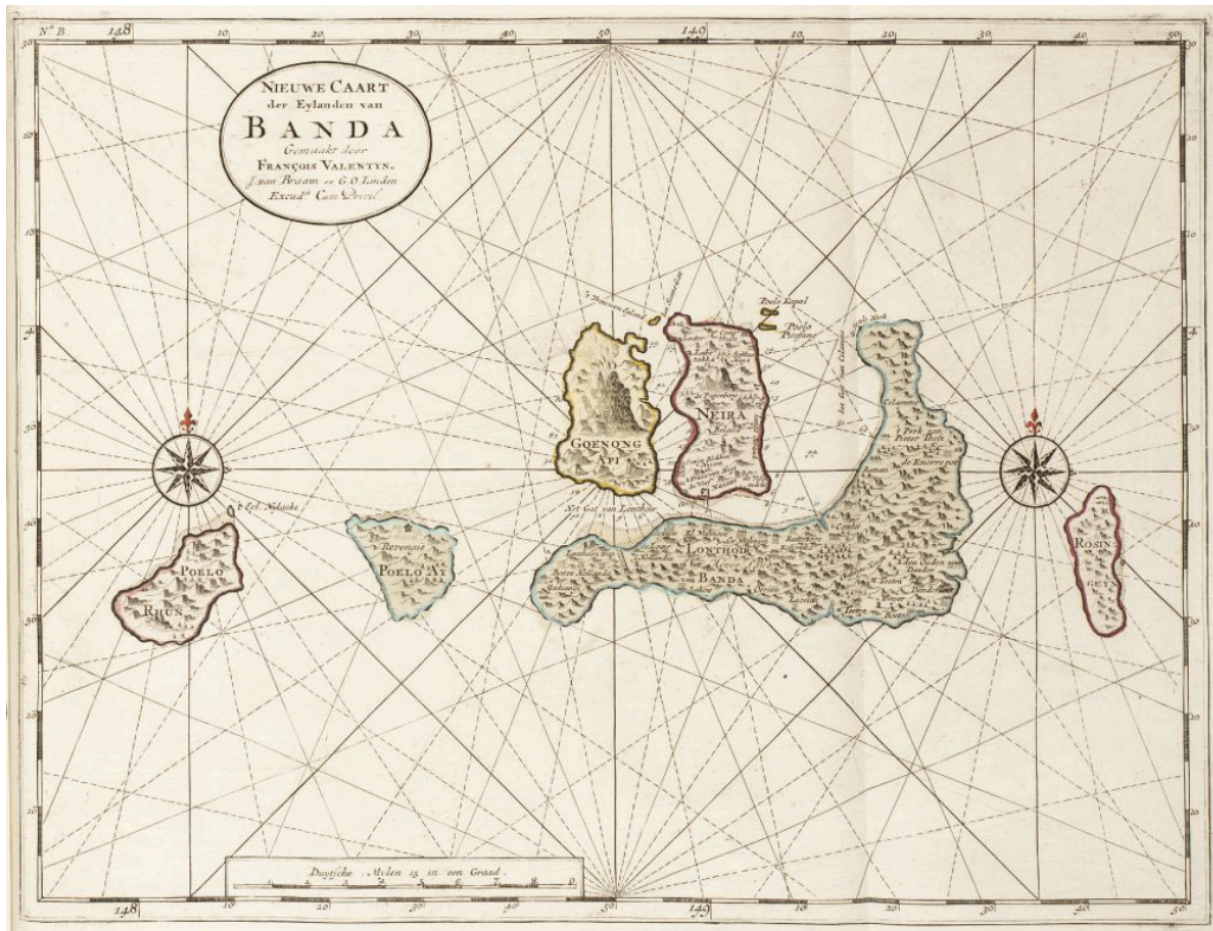


Figure 1. Map of the Banda Islands. G. onder den Linden, 1724-1726. Source: Scheepsvaartmuseum 109 06 kaart 173.

# Index

Introduction	1
Historiography	2
Relevance and research questions	5
Terminology	6
Methodology	7
Chapter 1. Dutch arrival and forming of the <i>perkeniersstelsel</i>	10
1.1 The conquest of the Banda Islands	10
1.2 Agricultural land- and slave distribution	12
Concluding remarks	17
Chapter 2. The Bandanese society	19
2.1 The relationship between the <i>perkeniers</i> and the VOC	19
2.2 The slave population	22
2.3 The duties of plantation slaves	23
2.4 Natural disasters, sickness and death	25
Concluding remarks	27
Chapter 3. Slave trade in the Dutch Indies	28
3.1 The total Dutch slave trade in the Indian Ocean	28
3.2 Desired and dangerous slaves	29
3.3 The slave trade on the Banda's	30
Concluding remarks	32
Chapter 4. Ethnic background and size of the plantation slave population	34
4.1 The size, growth and gender of the plantation slave population	35
4.2 The age distribution of plantation slaves	37
4.3 The origin of plantation slaves by geographical region	39
4.4 The ethnicities of plantation slaves	41
Concluding remarks	47
Conclusion	49
Bibliography	53
Appendix 1- The total number of plantation slaves by origin per year	57

## Introduction

When the first Europeans arrived on the Banda Islands in the sixteenth century, it was the only place on earth where nutmeg trees were found. These trees produced nutmeg and mace; two highly desirable spices in Europe. The world supplier of nutmeg and mace was however extremely modest in size, as the island group consists of ten small islands with a combined landmass of 172 square kilometres. The European market was already familiar with nutmeg through Asian traders before the Dutch arrived on the Banda Islands in 1599. The Dutch realized the potential profit of exporting the product on a large scale and the *Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) planned to control and monopolize the nutmeg trade, like it did before with clove on Ambon. The VOC proved to be highly efficient in maintaining their monopoly. Large scale production of nutmeg and mace remained solely on the Banda Islands until the early nineteenth century.

After the violent conquest of Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1587-1629) in 1621, the Banda Islands fell under total Dutch control. Unlike other areas that were exploited by the VOC, the Bandanese society was changed completely. Inhabitants were killed, deported or enslaved and the Banda's were transformed into a nutmeg and mace cultivation centre. Of the original population of about 15,000 people, only 1,000 survived.<sup>1</sup> The entire population of numerous towns had vanished. In the late seventeenth century, only graves remained that indicated a large settlement had vanished.<sup>2</sup>

The so called *perkeniersstelsel* (Bandanese plantation system) was introduced. Nutmeg plantations were formed on only three small islands (Lonthor, Pulau Ai and Neira) with a combined landmass of 46 square kilometres. Land suitable for cultivation was divided into *perken* (plots) and was assigned to former servants of the VOC who were installed as *perkeniers* (supervisors). The *perkeniers* were technically not landowners, as the VOC remained owner of the *perken*. About twenty to thirty slaves were initially assigned to each *perk*, whom would harvest the nutmeg and cultivate the land.<sup>3</sup> The *perkeniers* sold their products for a fixed price solely to the VOC. As compensation they were supplied by the Dutch trading company in slaves and products that were scarce on the Banda's. The VOC shipped the nutmeg and mace to Europe, where it was sold with extremely high profit margins.

Considering the total amount of nutmeg and mace (in pounds) the Banda Islands produced, the scale pales with the export of pepper. For example, in 1641 the VOC shipped 386,048 pounds of nutmeg and 163,579 pounds of mace to patria, while 5,7 million pounds of pepper was shipped to the Dutch Republic in the same year. However, nutmeg and mace were sold with such high profit margins, that it was a major source of income for the VOC. Nutmeg was sold in 1641 for 5335% of the original purchase price and mace for 1072%. Pepper was

---

<sup>1</sup> P.A. Leupe, 'De Verovering der Banda-Eilanden', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlands-Indië* 2:4 (1854) 385-386. V.C. Loth mentions the same statistics in: V.C. Loth, 'Pioneers and Perkeniers: The Banda Islands in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century', *Cakalele* 6 (1995) 18.

<sup>2</sup> F. Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën: Vervattende Een Nauwkeurige en Uitvoerige Verhandeling van Nederlands Mogentheyd In die Gewesten III:B* (Franeker 2002) 3.

<sup>3</sup> E.M. Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië: de handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tijdens de achttiende eeuw* (Zuthphen 2000) 24.

‘only’ sold for 270% of its purchase price.<sup>4</sup> The high price of nutmeg and mace in Europe compensated for the smaller market size, compared to pepper.

The nutmeg and mace trade depended on slave labour. The *perken* needed a steady supply of slaves, as natural disasters, epidemics and hard living conditions caused a low life expectancy.<sup>5</sup> The Banda Islands did not seem to acquire an intrinsic multiplying slave population. The VOC supplied the *perken* annually with slaves to maintain a high scale of production.<sup>6</sup> The export of nutmeg was at times prioritized over the interest of other VOC territories. In times of labour shortages, slaves in other VOC territories were relocated to the Banda Islands and special exceptions on slave trade regulations were given to the *perkeniers*.<sup>7</sup>

As almost the entire native population of the Banda Islands was killed in 1621, the demographic changed completely. The former VOC servants that settled on Neira, described as *burghers* (citizens), had a unique position within the VOC enterprise. In other forts and settlements, the European population consisted mostly of people under contract of the VOC. Only in South Africa, a similar class of *burghers* settled that were active in farming. But unlike the *perkeniers*, they were not a crucial component within a trade that generated large sums of money for the VOC. The *perkeniers* were the sole supplier of nutmeg and mace. The Dutch East India Company was thus dependent upon the *perkeniers*. Aware of their position and profit margins of nutmeg and mace in Europe, the *perkeniers* began living extravagant lives and dispute the VOC for ownership rights and higher prices for nutmeg and mace. This group of Europeans and their (often) mixed-ethnic offspring became the new elite on the Banda Islands. The middle class on the Banda’s stayed relatively unchanged. Prior to the Dutch takeover, Chinese, Javanese and Muslim merchants had already settled and maintained their position after the arrival of the VOC.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the *burghers* and the merchants, a large slave population was inserted that consisted of several thousands of people.<sup>9</sup> Although some statistics about the size of this group have been published, specifics as ethnicity, age, male-to-female ratio and other aspects that can provide insight into this population have remained largely unknown to academia. In this thesis, the above mentioned statistics will be analysed and discussed for the 1690’s.

## Historiography

Due to the large amounts of money the VOC generated with the trade in nutmeg and the notorious slaughter of 1621, the Banda Islands have attracted the interest of historians and the public since the eighteenth century. The frequent cited *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, written by François Valentijn (1666-1727) is an important source of information concerning the Banda Islands.<sup>10</sup> Valentijn was a Dutch preacher who was sent by the VOC to Southeast Asia for

---

<sup>4</sup> W.M. Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen: De opkomst van de VOC in Azië* (Amsterdam 2011) 358-359.

<sup>5</sup> W.A. Hanna, *Indonesian Banda: Colonialism and Its Aftermath in the Nutmeg Islands* (Philadelphia 1978) 83-84.

<sup>6</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26.

<sup>7</sup> W.P. Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie V: 1686-1697* (The Hague 1975) 657.

<sup>8</sup> J. Villiers, ‘Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century’, *Modern Asian Studies* 15:4 (1981) 727, 729, 731.

<sup>9</sup> In 1636, a total of 2190 slaves lived on Banda. See: Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 66.

<sup>10</sup> F. Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën: Vervattende Een Nauwkeurige en Uitvoerige Verhandeling van Nederlands Mogentheyd In die Gewesten III:A and B* (Franeker 2002).

religious purposes. He resided on the Banda Islands in 1687 and 1688. After returning to patria, Valentijn wrote *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, an extensive work that discusses many VOC territories in great detail and includes important contemporary witness accounts of Bandanese society in the late seventeenth century. However, this work is not unbiased. Valentijn did not hold the Bandanese in high regard: ‘The Bandanese are historically a stubborn, angry, disloyal and treacherous people, upon no state on earth could be build, which is why they needed to be exterminated.’<sup>11</sup> Another old, but insightful work was published in 1854 by P.A. Leupe. In ‘De Verovering der Banda-Eilanden’, Leupe describes with eyewitness accounts the gruesome way in which the Banda Islands were conquered.<sup>12</sup>

More recent literature has published on various aspects with regards to the Banda Islands. There have been archaeological studies done by Amy Jordan, who researched whether different types of foods and materials were used by slaves in comparison to the elite on plantations. Unfortunately, this research was rather inconclusive. The archaeological findings did not allow to distinct between elite- and slave materials.<sup>13</sup> She published another paper with David R. Carlson, which investigated social control on Bandanese plantations.<sup>14</sup> Carlson and Jordan conclude that there was less surveillance and control on the *perken* on the Banda’s in comparison to plantations in the Americas.<sup>15</sup>

Historians have also focussed on the *perkeniersstelsel* and important contributions on this subject have been made by Vincent C. Loth. In ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, he stresses unique aspects of the *perkeniersstelsel* and the large role the VOC played on all facets of Bandanese society.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, he sees extensive control over the slave population. Loth argues that the *perkeniersstelsel* was a plantation colony, that was based on the same European ideas that formed the plantation economy in the Americas.<sup>17</sup> In ‘Anglo-Dutch Rivalries’, Loth argues the conflict of the VOC with the East India Company over the Banda Islands gave reason for the violent military operation in 1621.<sup>18</sup> The conquest gave the Dutch total control over the Banda Islands and prevented the English to gain a foothold.

*Slavery, Bondage and Dependency*, a bundle edited by Anthony Reid, goes into depth about forms of slavery in Southeast Asia. Within the *perkeniersstelsel*, he sees a distinct form of slavery which was unique in Southeast Asia.<sup>19</sup> In his opinion, a slave mode of production can be found in the *perkeniersstelsel*. This entails that duties and living conditions of slaves are

---

<sup>11</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: ‘*Het is van ouds her een hardnekkig, boos, trouwloos, verraaderlijk en werderspanning volk geweest, op de welke geen staat ter wereld te maken was, waarom zy ook moest uitgeroeid, (...)*.’ In: Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 36.

<sup>12</sup> Leupe, ‘De Verovering der Banda-Eilanden’, 390-430.

<sup>13</sup> A.J. Jordan. *The Price of Spice: Archaeological Investigations of Colonial Era Nutmeg Plantations on the Banda Islands, Maluku Province, Indonesia* (Washington 2016) 86-87, 137-138.

<sup>14</sup> D.R. Carlson and A.J. Jordan, ‘Visibility and Power: Preliminary Analysis of Social Control on a Bandanese Plantation Compound, Eastern Indonesia’, *Asian Perspectives* 52:2 (2013) 213-243.

<sup>15</sup> Carlson, ‘Visibility and Power’, 240.

<sup>16</sup> Loth, ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, 32-35.

<sup>17</sup> Loth, ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, 32-35.

<sup>18</sup> V.C. Loth, ‘Armed Incidents and Unpaid Bills: Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Banda Islands in the Seventeenth Century’, *Modern Asian Studies* 29:4 (1995) 736-739.

<sup>19</sup> A. Reid, ‘Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in South-east Asian History’, in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Lucia 1983) 1-43.

clearly defined and separated. Phillip Winn, on the contrary, sees a more transcendent form of slavery. He argues that duties and space of slaves were more variable on the Banda's.<sup>20</sup>

A valuable monograph has been written by Willard A. Hanna, which encompasses the history of the Banda Islands, from pre-colonial era until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He presents the Banda Islands as a plantation colony and emphasizes on the relations between the *perkeniers* and the VOC and their activities.<sup>21</sup> John Villiers has published an article that gives insight into pre-colonial Bandanese society. He argues that the Banda Islands were part of an extensive regional trade network before the arrival of the Europeans, which resulted in an ethnically diverse population.<sup>22</sup>

The VOC's involvement in the Indian Ocean slave trade has also been subject of discussion among historians. Discussing these publications is important as it gives insight into the role of the VOC in the supply of slaves to the Banda Islands and whether this deviated from their general policy. Although the transatlantic slave trade has received far more attention from scholars and the public, recent studies have tried to assess the scale of the Dutch slave trade in Southeast Asia.<sup>23</sup> James Fox argues: 'the company [the VOC] as an institution and its officers as individuals were the nexus of an enormous slave trade, the most expansive of its kind in the history of South-East Asia'.<sup>24</sup> Markus Vink assesses the Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade to be 1,5 to three times the size of the *West-Indische Compagnie* (WIC) slave trade.<sup>25</sup> Rik van Welie considers between 675,000 to 1,150,000 slaves transported to VOC territories possible.<sup>26</sup> Matthias van Rossum mentions roughly the same numbers: 660,000-1,135,000.<sup>27</sup> These numbers illustrate the slave trade in VOC territories was significant in size. Robert Allen argues that between 1600 and 1850, about 67,387-91,687 slaves were directly traded by the Dutch.<sup>28</sup> With the term 'Dutch', Allen regards the VOC, company employees and Dutch entrepreneurs.<sup>29</sup> These numbers do not encompass all slave trade in VOC territories. He states that about 50% of all slaves who arrived in Batavia were traded by the Dutch.<sup>30</sup> Considering his estimation does not represent all slave trade in VOC territories, it still indicates far less people were traded than historians Van Rossum, Van Welie and Vink argue.

The degree of involvement of the VOC in the slave trade has been subject of debate. Els Jacobs does not consider the VOC actively involved in the slave trade. She mentions the slave trade only constituted to 0,5% of the total trade of the company.<sup>31</sup> In general, the VOC

---

<sup>20</sup> P. Winn, 'Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41:3 (2010) 367.

<sup>21</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*.

<sup>22</sup> Villiers, 'Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century', 726-727.

<sup>23</sup> R. van Welie, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire: A Global Comparison', *New West Indian Guide* 82:1&2 (2008) 47-96; M. Vink, 'Freedom and Slavery: The Dutch Republic, the VOC World, and the Debate over the 'World's Oldest Trade'', *South African Historical Journal* 59:1 (2007) 19-46.

<sup>24</sup> J. Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons: an Examination of Early Dutch East India Company Ordinances on Slaves and Slavery', in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency* (St. Lucia 1983) 247.

<sup>25</sup> M. Vink, 'The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of World History* 14:2 (2003) 168.

<sup>26</sup> Van Welie, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire', 71.

<sup>27</sup> M. van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt': De VOC, slavenhandel en slavernij in Azië', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 12:4 (2015) 54.

<sup>28</sup> R.B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800* (Athens 2015) 19.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 277.



considered the profits of slave trade negligible compared to the lucrative spice trade. Consequently, the Indian Ocean slave trade was never monopolized (in contrary to the WIC). This allowed groups as *burghers*, Chinese and Buginese to participate in this economic sector.<sup>32</sup> However, there is consensus that VOC employees privately traded slaves.<sup>33</sup> These slaves were transported on VOC ships and constituted to a significant share of the total slave trade.

In contrary to the VOC's general policy, historians consider the Company the main supplier of slaves to the Banda's.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, no extensive statistics about the annual supply of slaves by the VOC to the Banda Islands exist. Historians only found insignificant statistics in the VOC archives that do not resemble the demand for labour on the *perken*. Van Rossum found a total of 600 slaves that had been shipped to the Banda Islands by the VOC in the eighteenth century.<sup>35</sup> These records are presumably incomplete, because the slave population in the late eighteenth century was about 4,100 people in size<sup>36</sup> and an import of 600 slaves during the whole century is unable to replace sick, deceased and escaped slaves.

### Relevance and research questions

Although the *perkeniersstelsel* has been subject to historical attention/debate, an in-depth research into the slave population is lacking. On several topics academics have published: the bloody conquest of Jan Pieterszoon Coen, the *perkeniersstelsel* and (in general) the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. A research that focusses on the slave population is lacking; information regarding these groups is largely absent from the VOC archive. Regretfully, no written sources by plantation slaves remain. This complicates research into this marginalized group. Although the lack of sources may be problematic, gaining more knowledge about this group will enhance our view of the *perkeniersstelsel*, the mechanics of slavery and slave trade in the region.

The *perkeniersstelsel* that was introduced on the Banda Islands was a unique system, not existing in other VOC territories or Asia as a whole. Nowhere in Asia was the trade in a commodity so strongly intertwined and dependent on a system of slavery as on the Banda Islands. In Asia in general, household slavery was the norm. Privately owned slaves worked in the house of their master.<sup>37</sup> On the Banda Islands a slavery system existed that can be compared with plantations in the Americas. New research on the *perkeniersstelsel* is warranted as many remains unclear about the annually imported number of plantation slaves on the islands, as well as the total number enslaved and their heritage. Over a period of two centuries, the size of the plantation slave population is only known for a few years.<sup>38</sup> Contributions made by Hanna and Loth improve our knowledge of the *perkeniersstelsel* and give insight in many aspects but do

---

<sup>32</sup> Van Welie, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire', 67.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem, 70; Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 46.

<sup>34</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26; Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 59-60; M. van Ittersum, Empire by Treaty?: The role of written documents in European overseas expansion, 1500-1800, in: A. Clulow and T. Mostert eds., *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade and Violence in Early Modern Asia* (Amsterdam 2018) 160; M. van Rossum, 'Labouring Transformations of Amphibious Monsters: Exploring Early Modern Globalization, Diversity, and Shifting Clusters of Labour Relations in the Context of the Dutch East India Company (1600-1800)', *International Institute of Social History* 64 (2019) 29.

<sup>35</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 57.

<sup>36</sup> Winn, 'Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands', 371.

<sup>37</sup> Van Welie, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire', 85.

<sup>38</sup> For some statistics, see: Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 66, 105, 111.

not discuss the slave population and their origin in detail.<sup>39</sup> The primary goal of this thesis is to reveal new insights of the *perkeniersstelsel* by researching the marginalized group of plantation slaves.

Therefore, this research aims to gain insight into the origin of this group in the 1690's. Primary questions this thesis attempts to answer are: (1) where did the plantation slaves on the Banda Islands come from? (2) How large was this population? (3) How many slaves were imported on an annual basis to supply the *perkeniersstelsel*? (4) What aspects can be allocated to the *perken* slave population and what does this reveal about the *perkeniersstelsel*? Furthermore, this article also wishes to make a contribution towards the role of the VOC in the slave trade on the Banda Islands. Therefore, the research will tend to the following secondary research questions: (5) was the VOC the primary supplier of plantation slaves and, to which degree was their involvement? Lastly, (6) why was the VOC more directly involved in the slave trade regarding the Banda Islands in comparison to the rest of their territories?

## Terminology

Considering the topic of this research and the many different forms of bondage in Indonesian society, it is important to clarify the term slavery. There is an extensive amount of literature about slavery and its characteristics. Forms of slavery can be identified by obligations and restrictions, but these can also apply to people who are dependant. Showing similar traits of slavery does not necessarily mean a person is enslaved. Although farmers in feudal Europe were tied to the land, they were not considered slaves. Therefore a few questions need to be answered: what is the definition of slavery and how can the labour system of the *perkeniersstelsel* be characterised? The specific duties can differ from region, place or owner, but an absence of free will is common. In a general sense, slaves were a commodity: they did not receive wages, were property that could be bought and sold, and were prohibited in their movement. But as societal circumstances differ between regions, slightly different forms of slavery can be distilled.

On the Banda Islands, three distinct groups of slaves can be identified: the plantations slaves, the house slaves and the company slaves. The plantation slaves were owned by the *perkeniers*. The majority was non-native and did not receive wages. They lived in slave quarters on the plantations and were restricted in their movement. Food and clothes were provided by the *perkeniers*. Their primary duties were the harvest and production of nutmeg and mace. On the Banda Islands, the majority of the slaves worked on the *perken*, but another type of slaves lived with the societal elite on Neira. In historical literature, this group is referred to as house slaves. Although both groups were private property, house slaves generally had better living conditions. The most skilled slaves were selected by the *perkeniers* and lived with them on their estates in Neira. They were assigned to varying jobs, as regional trade or fishing.<sup>40</sup> These type of jobs enabled freedom of movement and allowed people to be in a position to eventually buy their freedom. On the *perken*, this luxury did not exist. Until the late eighteenth century, the majority of slaves worked on the nutmeg plantations.<sup>41</sup> The third group of slaves were directly

---

<sup>39</sup> See Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*; Loth, 'Pioneers and Perkeniers'.

<sup>40</sup> Winn, 'Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands', 373, 378.

<sup>41</sup> H.R.C. Wright, 'The Moluccan Spice Monopoly, 1770-1824', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 31:4 (1958) 18, 94.

owned by the VOC. These company slaves consisted of a couple of hundred people and performed duties in and around the VOC forts.

Reid distinguishes ‘open’- from ‘closed’ systems of slavery.<sup>42</sup> In ‘closed’ systems, slaves remained distinct from the dominant group in order to retain their labour. In ‘open’ systems slaves were gradually assimilated in society.<sup>43</sup> Reid considers slavery in Southeast Asia to resemble more with serfdom: ‘Much more frequently slaves were put on a piece of hitherto unworked land, though in the absence of any concept of central management like that of Roman *latifundia* or West Indian plantation their status quickly came to resemble that of serfs, who had to remit a proportion of their production system from that of serfdom, [...]’<sup>44</sup> He regards the plantation system on the Banda Islands the only exception to this rule.<sup>45</sup> Winn disagrees: ‘The Dutch administration in the Banda’s seems to have been unable to isolate slavery within the *perkeniersstelsel* from the wider related socio-cultural practices that were long established in the region. *Perken* boundaries quickly became porous economically, demographically and culturally, as Company-purchased slaves intended for estates blurred with the privately owned slaves of perkenier households. I suggest that it ultimately becomes difficult to separate the use of slave labour in support of spice production from that which served household economies.’<sup>46</sup>

On the Banda Islands, the plantation slaves were both a person and a commodity. They were bought and sold and used in a labour-intensive system of nutmeg production. Simultaneously they maintained their identity. The *perken* slaves had names and various religions and ethnicities. After becoming property of the *perkeniers*, the individual identities were thus not revoked. However, in primary sources as the *Generale Missiven* and the inspection reports, the plantations workers are unmistakably considered as slaves. In most historical literature the plantations workers are also referred to as slaves.<sup>47</sup> In this thesis the same terminology will be used.

## Methodology

Balthasar Coyett (1650-1725), governor of the Banda Islands between 1694 and 1701, ordered detailed reports of the plantation slave population. Only the plantation slaves were registered; the company slaves and house slaves were excluded from the inspection reports. In these reports the total number of slaves per *perk* is given. In addition, the individual names, age, sex and heritage can be read. The inspection reports ordered by Coyett provide interesting and new insights into the *perkeniersstelsel*. It allows to analyse where the slaves originated from and thereby enables to reveal the scale and network of the slave trade. Unfortunately, only during Coyett’s governance extensive reports were made. Before and after Coyett, the reports state the number of slaves per *perk*, but lack additional data.<sup>48</sup> Inspection reports have been made in the

---

<sup>42</sup> A. Reid, ‘‘Closed’ and ‘Open’ Slave Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia’, in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency* (St. Lucia 1983) 156.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, 156.

<sup>44</sup> A. Reid, ‘Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in South-east Asian History’ in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency* (St. Lucia 1983) 23.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, 23.

<sup>46</sup> Winn, ‘Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands’, 370-371.

<sup>47</sup> See: Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 79; Winn, ‘Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands’, 366; Loth, ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, 13. However, Marcus Vink used the term ‘free *burgher* slaves’ in: Vink, ‘The World’s Oldest Trade’, 161.

<sup>48</sup> For the years 1695 and 1696, no inspection report was made.

years 1694, 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700. These are valuable for further research, as the source provides information on slavery and society which cannot be found elsewhere during the two centuries in which the *perkeniersstelsel* was active. Data of the inspection report of 1694 has already been researched by Linette van 't Hof.<sup>49</sup> With the use of the inspection reports of 1694, 1697, 1698, 1699, and 1700, this research is able to provide insight into several aspects: the slave trade network, characteristics of the plantation slave population and relations between the three actors (the VOC, the *perkeniers* and the slaves).

In addition to the inspection reports, early seventeenth century maps of the Banda Islands have been researched. These maps show how the VOC planned to reform the Banda Islands into a cultivation centre for nutmeg and mace. The required number of slaves of each individual *perk* is mentioned on these maps. In the first chapter these maps will help to illustrate how the plantation colony of the Banda Islands came to be. Also the *Generale Missiven* have been consulted for the late seventeenth century. The *Generale Missiven* is an extensive source in which the primary concerns and developments is discussed. It entails the correspondence between the governors and councils in the Dutch Indies with the *Heeren XVII* (VOC's board of directors).

The slave population on the Banda's was an assembly of many different cultures, religions and ethnicities. Jos Gommans and Remco Raben recently published articles opting for a new perspective on reading VOC archives. They call for more attention to the voice of the colonized people and raise awareness of European motivation, bias and perspective that created the archival record which is reflected throughout the correspondence.<sup>50</sup> The reports of Coyett are an example of VOC records that were made with a clear colonial motive. It was initially used to assess whether individual plantations had sufficient slaves and if redistribution between them was necessary. This is mentioned in the reports of 1694.<sup>51</sup> The detailed reports also provided the colonizers with additional knowledge of the colonized, which enlarges the control the former has over the latter. For academic purposes, the reports give understanding of the slave population and reveal aspects of this group and the society as a whole.

Throughout this thesis, the above mentioned aspects will be discussed. First, it is important to discuss the Banda Islands and its society before the conversion into the *perkeniersstelsel*, as it shows to what degree transformations were made. Thus, the demographic, together with the cultivation of nutmeg and trade will be briefly discussed. Also, the accessibility of the Banda Islands in addition to its modest size is important in the context of the *perkeniersstelsel*. Next, understanding how the *perkeniersstelsel* and the plantations were installed gives insight into how many slaves were required to run the plantations and reveals the strived scale of production. Early seventeenth century maps of the Banda Islands show the number and size of *perken*, and the required slaves. On a broader scale, the role and control of the VOC in the nutmeg production cannot be disassociated from the *perkeniersstelsel*. Throughout this thesis the role of the VOC must therefore be included. This also applies for the

---

<sup>49</sup> L. Van 't Hof, *Het Kansrijke buitengewest Aru: Hoe en waarom de VOC het beleid voor handel en religie uitvoerde op de Aru-eilanden in de periode 1658-1694* (Leiden 2019) 56-60.

<sup>50</sup> R. Raben, 'Ethnic Disorder in voc Asia: A Plea for Eccentric Reading', *Low Countries Historical Review* 134:2 (2019) 115-128; J. Gommans, 'Rethinking the VOC: Two Cheers for Progress', *Low Countries Historical Review* 134:2 (2019) 142-152.

<sup>51</sup> National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1551, f248-304.

*perkeniers* and especially their relation with the slaves. The inspection reports will be analysed and used to provide new data and insights into the plantation slave population on the Banda's. The size of this group, the ethnic background, the average age and sex will all aid in a better understanding of the *perkeniersstelsel*, slavery and the regional slave trade network.

## Chapter 1. Dutch arrival and forming of the *perkeniersstelsel*

Prior of European presence, the Bandanese were already trading nutmeg and mace with Asian merchants. During the middle ages nutmeg arrived in Italy via the spice route. The Bandanese did not only trade in nutmeg, but also slaves. Villiers states that slaves were both traded and acquired for private use in the sixteenth century.<sup>52</sup> Although it is not known if slaves were used in the harvest of nutmeg, the presence of slaves makes it plausible. The Bandanese were thus before the arrival of the Dutch part of an extensive inter-Asian trade network that stretched into Europe. The quantity of nutmeg and mace was however very limited, making it only available for Europe's elite. The leaders of the Bandanese, the Orang Kaya, were in control of this trade. They derived their authority from popular consent and were (relatively) wealthy due to a large share in the profits of Bandanese trade.<sup>53</sup> Since the sixteenth century, Europeans attempted to take over the spice trade. First came the Portuguese, who traded with the Bandanese but had minimal military presence on the islands. Although the Portuguese certainly tried to gain more control over the Bandanese, the indigenous leadership was too cohesive. This prevented the Portuguese to sow dissent among Orang Kaya, which was a proven tactic to weaken the power and resistance of natives.<sup>54</sup> The Bandanese maintained autonomous and traded with whom they pleased.<sup>55</sup> This changed after the conquest under supervision of Coen in 1621, when the population was decimated and the remainder enslaved.

The first Dutchmen arrived on the Banda Islands in 1599. Exclusive trade agreements and fort Nassau (1609) were promptly made. This was stimulated by the arrival of the Twelve Years' Truce with the Spanish king (1609-1621). The VOC was obliged to uphold the status quo prior of the Truce.<sup>56</sup> Building fort Nassau ensured the legitimacy of the VOC's claim on the island group. After two decades in which the local people managed to fend off Dutch attempts to form binding trade agreements, Bandanese autonomy came to a halt. With a large fleet and many soldiers, the VOC managed to subdue the Bandanese people and gain total control over the territory. A plantation system was formed that enabled the large scale shipment of nutmeg and mace to Europe.

### 1.1 The conquest of the Banda Islands

When Coen first arrived on the Banda Islands in 1609, he was part of a Dutch delegation attempting to set up trade with the Bandanese.<sup>57</sup> However, they were lured into an ambush and lost many lives. Among the casualties was the leader of the delegation, admiral P.W. Verhoeven (1573-1609). A depiction of this event is illustrated by figure 2. It is plausible this event influenced Coen's decision in the manner he wanted to conquer the Banda Islands almost twenty years later. Between 1609 and 1621 several trade agreements were made with the Bandanese that heavily favoured the VOC. However, the Bandanese did not abide by the rules of the agreements. They continued selling nutmeg and mace to other parties, although the trade

---

<sup>52</sup> Villiers, 'Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century', 729.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem, 729.

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem, 730.

<sup>55</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 9.

<sup>56</sup> Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen*, 83.

<sup>57</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 29.

agreements explicitly forbade this. As a consequence, the VOC considered the Bandanese not only violent, but also unreliable partners.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, after several minor military campaigns the VOC steered towards total conquest of the islands. This was also stimulated by the English East India Company who rivalled the VOC's claim on the Banda's. In order to gain the monopoly on the nutmeg trade, the VOC had to establish their dominance before the East India Company. An agreement was made between the *Staten-Generaal* (States General) and the king of England in 1619, which gave the East India Company rights to one-third of the spice trade if they paid one-third of the costs in return.<sup>59</sup> In reality, the East India Company could not cover the one-third share of the costs, leaving the nutmeg trade in the sole hands of the VOC.<sup>60</sup>



Figure 2. Admiral Verhoeven murdered. D. de Jong, 1785. Source: Koninklijke Bibliotheek 227 K 2 deel VI, 78.

During the conquest of 1621, the indigenous population including the Orang Kaya were slaughtered. After being tortured for several days on Dutch ships, the Orang Kaya were beheaded and quartered by Japanese mercenaries of the VOC.<sup>61</sup> It is estimated that the Banda Islands inhabited 15,000 people before Coen's campaign; only 1,000 locals remained after the

<sup>58</sup> This remained the dominant (Dutch) opinion of the Bandanese. See: F.W. Stapel ed., *Pieter van Dam's Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie 1639-1701* II:1 (Den Haag 1931) 166; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 36.

<sup>59</sup> Loth, 'Armed Incidents and Unpaid Bills', 730.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, 730.

<sup>61</sup> Leupe, 'De Verovering der Banda-Eilanden', 426-427.

genocide.<sup>62</sup> The majority was probably killed, but some escaped. Most Bandanese that fled went to the Kai Islands, some to Makassar or Ceram. Loth states that only few Bandanese managed to escape.<sup>63</sup> However, Roy Ellen observed a significant revival of Bandanese pottery on the Kai Islands, indicating numerous people managed to flee.<sup>64</sup> It is worth noting that many plantation slaves were imported from Makassar and the Kai Islands in the late seventeenth century, who may have been descendants of the native Bandanese that fled during the conquest of 1621.<sup>65</sup>

After the bloody conquest of the Banda Islands, society remained violent. Johann Wurffbain, a German employee of the VOC, witnessed 25 executions, 52 mutilations, 17 whippings, two beatings, six chainings, five expulsions from office, five chastisements and three banishments during his five year stay (1663-1668) on the Banda's.<sup>66</sup> The executions were performed in a variety of ways that included: beheading, burned alive, the breaking wheel, hanging, garrotted (in which a person is choked) and shot to death.<sup>67</sup> It could be argued the events of 1621 set a precedent for future violence. Although this thesis will not go in-depth into this slaughter, it does underline the sheer brutality and determination of the VOC in conquering the Banda Islands.

For the past century, historians and the public have debated whether Coen acted on his own or if he had mandate from the *Heeren XVII*. Historian Willem M. Witteveen has published correspondence between the board and Coen. The letters show the board instructed and authorised Coen of the bloody conquest of Banda.<sup>68</sup> In 1615, the board wrote to Coen: 'We would consider it wise [...] to use our forces and ships to inflict damage upon our enemy and to conquer the Bandanese, to kill and drive off its leaders and to re-populate the land with heathens'.<sup>69</sup> And as the board demanded, Coen delivered. The quote above illustrates that the VOC was determined to acquire the Banda Islands as their possession without constraint. This same resilience remained present for the next two centuries. The *perkeniersstelsel* created in the early seventeenth century remained in effect even after the VOC had gone bankrupt in 1796. The *Nederlandsche Handels-Maatschapij* (N.H.M.) replaced the VOC and retained the plantation system. Only after the abolition of slavery in the second half of the nineteenth century, the system began to fall apart.

## 1.2 Agricultural land- and slave distribution

After the Banda Islands were secured, the VOC began to allocate *perken*. Land suitable for agriculture was divided into 68 *perken*; 34 on Lonthor, 31 on Pulau Ai and 3 on Neira. Nutmeg cultivation was easier on the relatively flat island Pulau Ai. Lonthor, on the contrary, inhabited a very mountainous terrain. On the *perken*, nutmeg trees were systematically planted. In

---

<sup>62</sup> Loth, 'Pioneers and Perkeniers', 18.

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem, 18.

<sup>64</sup> R. Ellen, 'Pottery production and trade in the Banda zone, Indonesia: The Kei tradition in its spatial and historical context', *Indonesia and the Malay World* 47:138 (2019) 146.

<sup>65</sup> For statistics, see appendix 1.

<sup>66</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 67.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, 67.

<sup>68</sup> Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen*, 91.

<sup>69</sup> Translation: my own. Original phrase: 'Wy zouden nu geraden vinden [...] dat men nu deselve onse forcen en schepen mochte gebruycken omme yets groots tot affbreuck van den vyand tedaarmede uut te mogen richten ende de Bandanesen te ver-meesteren, de principale uut te doen roeyen ende verjagen, ende 't land liever met heydenen wederom te doen peupleren.' In: Witteveen, *Antonio van Diemen*, 85.



addition, Kenari trees were planted that provided shade and protection from the climate for the nutmeg trees. Each *perk* had in the beginning approximately the same size; about 3,9 square acres.<sup>70</sup> As a general rule, about 25 slaves per *perk* was the norm and considered optimal. Nutmeg plantations were small at the start, as *perkeniers* did not have enough capital to maintain large plantations and many slaves.<sup>71</sup> Over the course of the seventeenth century, *perkeniers* bought neighbouring lots which led to the creation of large plantations with more than a hundred slaves. For the first decade after 1621, plantation borders had not been surveyed. Several borders were disputed, which resulted in conflict between slave armies of the *perkeniers*.<sup>72</sup> Consequently, the VOC ordered the registration of each individual plantation border in the 1630's. This resulted in several maps of the Banda Islands that show the outline of the *perken*. In figure 3, the map of Pulau Run can be seen.



Figure 3. Map of Pulau Run. Anonymous, 1635. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f102.

<sup>70</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 60.

<sup>71</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 7.

<sup>72</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 62.

In the 1630's, similar maps were made for Neira, Rosengain, Pulau Ai and Lonthor. Each map illustrates how the land was divided into several *perken*. Unsuitable land for agriculture was also noted, as can be seen in figure 3. Many areas were unusable for farming, as steep mountain hills and a volcano inhabited the islands. The land was divided amongst former VOC employees. Calculations were made how many slaves each *perk* should have. As can be seen in figure 3, each lot was assigned a letter of the alphabet, along with an outline of the borders and the amount of slaves each *perk* required. In VOC documents as the inspection reports, slaves are often mentioned by the Dutch word *zielen* (souls). It is remarkable that the VOC preferred *zielen*, opposed to using the applicable term. Souls does not implicate slavery or any other type of labour and is therefore an improper term. Incidental, the *Generale Missiven* and inspection reports used other terminology: *lijfeigenen* (serfs) or *slaafen* (slaves). *Lijfeigenen*, *zielen* or *slaafen* were used interchangeably. The description given to the map of West Lonthor (figure 4) by the Atlas of Mutual Heritage states: 'the amount of people living [on the *perken*] is mentioned'.<sup>73</sup> This can be misleading, as these people were slaves who did not have a choice where to live. There was no misunderstanding with the *perkeniers* or the VOC that the people who worked on the plantations were in fact slaves, although they were not always named as such.

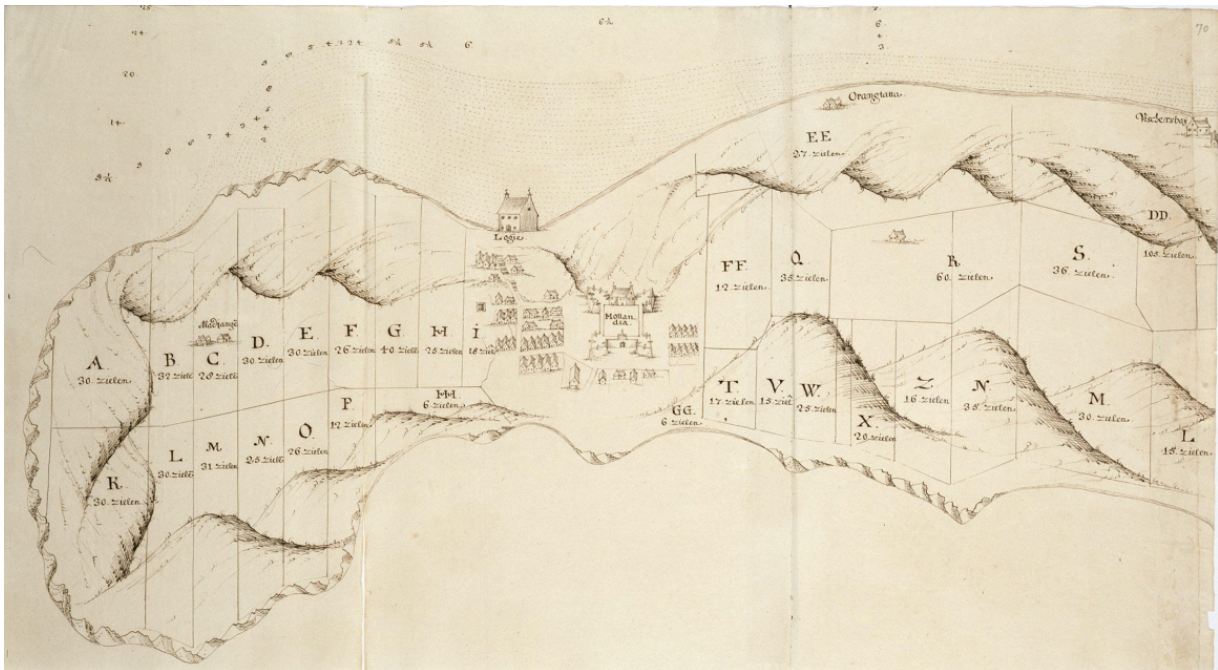


Figure 4. Map of West Lonthor. Anonymous, 1632. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K4777 f69-70.

The maps of the Banda Islands from the 1630's illustrate the number of slaves per *perk*. A clear correlation between the size of a *perk* and the amount of slaves cannot be found. For example, a *perk* that seems to be roughly the same size as another can have three times as many slaves. Except for size, there were more factors that would determine how many slaves lived on a specific *perk*, such as how much of the land was suitable for cultivation and the wealth of the owner to buy slaves and to provide sufficient food. However, the data can give insight into

<sup>73</sup> Original phrase: 'Wel staat overal aangegeven hoeveel mensen er wonen'. In: Map of West Lonthor. Anonymous, 1632. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K4777 f69-70.

the average number of slaves per *perk* in the 1630's. Unfortunately, the map of Pulau Ai lacks the data that specifies the number of slaves. The map of Pulau Ai only outlines the *perken* and its borders, which can be seen in figure 5.

Counting the number of souls in the original plans made for the *perken* on Neira and Lonthor results in a total of 1,847 slaves. From this sum 1,686 slaves were to be placed on Lonthor. Figure 4 shows the numerous *perken* on West Lonthor. Additional maps exist that illustrate the other parts of Lonthor. From the total of 1,847 slaves, only 161 plantation slaves were allocated to Neira. This is a small number and is disproportional to the number of *perken* shown on figure 6. In this figure, a total of nine *perken* can be seen on Neira. In reality, only three *perken* became operational. The total of 1,847 plantation slaves excludes the *perken* of Pulau Ai. According to Van Rossum, there were roughly 2,200 slaves on the Banda Islands in 1638, which would mean about 350 slaves from this sum lived on Pulau Ai.<sup>74</sup> The majority of slaves was thus allocated to Lonthor. By dividing the slave population over the total amount of plantations shown on the maps, it would mean that there were on average 28,6 slaves per *perk* on Lonthor, 14,6 slaves per plantation on Neira and only 11 slaves per *perk* on Pulau Ai.<sup>75</sup> From these numbers it becomes clear that not only the far majority of slaves lived on Lonthor, the plantations on were also the most dense with slaves.

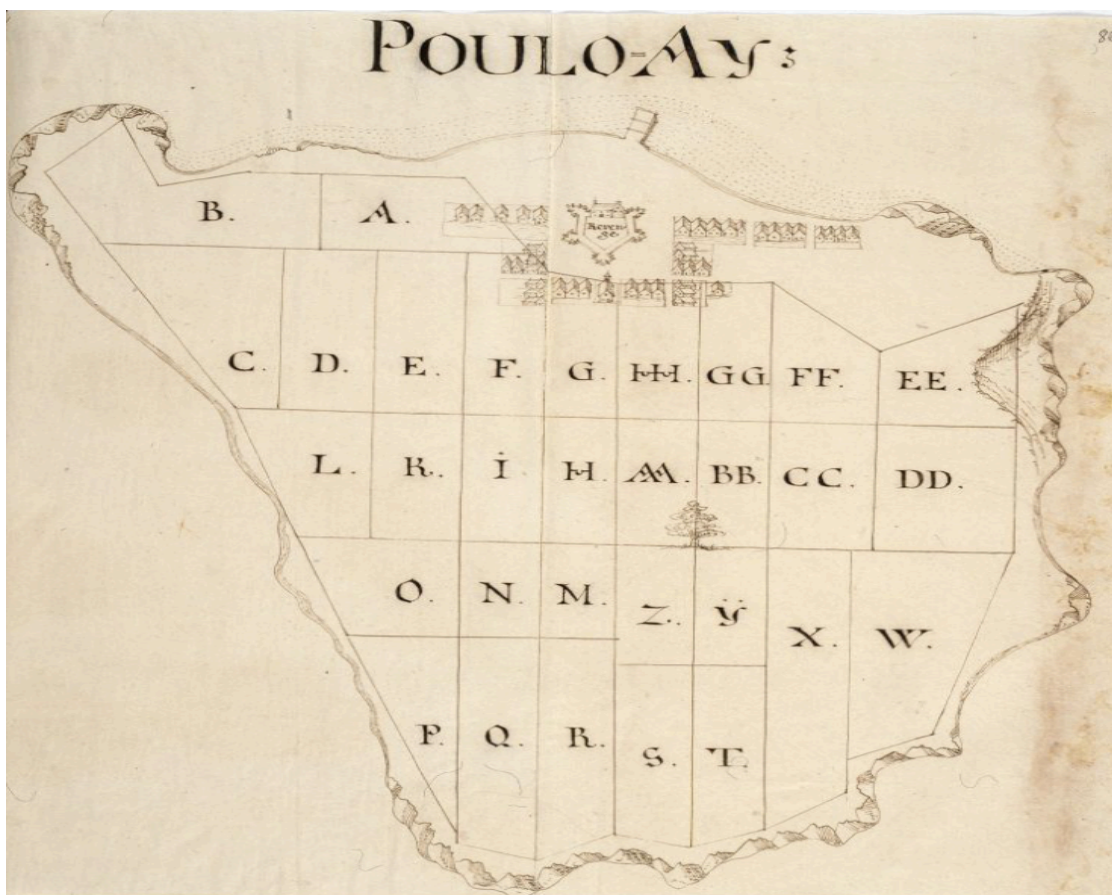


Figure 5. Map of Pulau Ai. Anonymous, 1635. Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f86.

<sup>74</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 39. If i subtract 1847 from 2200, 350 people remain. This is a rough estimation.

<sup>75</sup> This was calculated with the use of Van Rossum's estimate of the total slave population, divided over the total amount of *perken* on Pulau Ai which can be seen on the map of Pualo Ai in figure 5.

In the late seventeenth century, Lonthor remained the main production island and inhabited the largest share of slaves. The smaller islands Neira and Pulau Ai had significantly less plantation slaves. However, the desired size of the plantation slave population was increased to 2,501 people.<sup>76</sup> In addition, an increase in the average amount of slaves per *perk* can be found. In 1697, the plantations inhabited an average of 26 slaves, which increased to 31 in 1700.<sup>77</sup> The number of slaves per *perk* varied greatly; on some plantations there was only one slave working, but there were also plantations that had more than a hundred slaves.



Figure 6. Map of Banda Api and Neira. Anonymous, 1635. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f63.

Maps and plans were made for several islands, but only on three islands the *perkeniersstelsel* was inserted.<sup>78</sup> These islands were: Lonthor, Neira and Pulau Ai. Pulau Run was considered too remote from the VOC's centre of power on Neira. The two largest strongholds stood on this island: fort Nassau and fort Belgica. Especially fort Belgica was an important line of defence due to its strategic position.<sup>79</sup> The English East India Company had claimed Pulau Run and the VOC thought that they could not adequately defend their interests from the English threat. After the Treaty of Westminster in 1674, that ended the Third Anglo-

<sup>76</sup> W.P. Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie V: 1686-1697* (The Hague 1975) 715.

<sup>77</sup> NL-HaNa, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1595, f167-225 and inv.nr. 1637, f98-152.

<sup>78</sup> A similar layout was not made for the island Goenong Api. The island's volcano covered most of the island's ground and was in addition active.

<sup>79</sup> Fort Belgica was positioned on higher altitude than fort Nassau and could spot enemies from several angles.

Dutch War (1672-1674), the English revoked their claim. This did not change the stance of the VOC for the utility of Pulau Run. The same argument was made for Rosengain; it was too far removed from the centre of power on Neira. Instead of a production location, Rosengain became a detainment place where political enemies of the Dutch were transferred to. Pulau Ai did produce nutmeg and mace, while it was also relatively far away from Neira. Comparing the distance between fort Belgica on Neira and the islands Pulau Ai and Rosengain, the longer distance of Rosengain to Neira is negligible. Why the VOC did not chose for spice production on Rosengain is somewhat of a mystery. Reducing military costs was probably not the reason, as Rosengain became a detention place and the VOC still needed a force present on the island. Although the VOC was understaffed on the Banda Islands and many employees were incapable to work due to sickness, the location of Rosengain had the advantage of being further away from the active volcano and therefore had less risk of natural disasters compared to Lonthor and Neira.

During the 1690's, shortages of nutmeg and mace had risen. To increase production, the VOC allowed the cultivation of nutmeg and mace on Rosengain.<sup>80</sup> A detachment of soldiers and numerous *kettingangers* (chained slaves) were already present on the island. The island only needed overseers to start the cultivation process. Not many *perkeniers* were willing to embark on this endeavour. Only one European and one *Mardijker* (freed slave) volunteered.<sup>81</sup> People involved in spice cultivation were often wary when it relied on long term endorsement by the VOC, because whenever new incentives arose by the VOC to encourage people to plant new trees, an order for extirpation could be given when production was not satisfactory.<sup>82</sup> This made the longevity of new projects of the VOC highly uncertain for people. Due to the lack of *perkeniers*, the plans for plantations on Rosengain in the 1690's were soon disregarded. Already in 1697, the governor of the Banda Islands reports to the *Heeren XVII* that Rosengain will not be planted with nutmeg trees: 'there is, just as on Ai, no source.'<sup>83</sup> This argument does not seem logical as on Pulau Ai many nutmeg trees were cultivated. Rosengain could also easily be replanted with trees from other Banda Islands. It seems more logical that Coyett failed to stimulate sufficient people to volunteer for the position of *perkenier* on Rosengain. By presenting another line of reasoning, the governor of Banda may have masked his incompetence from the VOC's board of directors.

## Concluding remarks

The slaughter of the Bandanese allowed the VOC to create the extensive plantation system that became known as the *perkeniersstelsel*. After the conquest of 1621, it took the VOC about ten years to create order and to systemize the plantation system. The small size of the islands allowed all accessible land could be used for agriculture, while the VOC maintained a high degree of control. This enabled the VOC authority over both the *perkeniers* and the slaves, that would enable the Company to protect their monopoly. Land suitable for cultivation was identified and its borders outlined. The maps also show how many slaves were assigned to each

---

<sup>80</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* V, 782-783.

<sup>81</sup> Ibidem, 782-783.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, 'The Moluccan Spice Monopoly', 1.

<sup>83</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: '*Rosingain zal niet beplant worden, er is evenmin als op Ai een bron.*' In: Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* V, 836.

*perk*. This gives additional data into how the *perkeniersstelsel* developed, which ultimately led to the creation of numerous large plantations with over a hundred slaves by the end of the seventeenth century.

Upon forming the *perkeniersstelsel*, more Banda Islands were designed to cultivate nutmeg. However, the VOC initially wished to keep production centralized and was unable to effectively revise their earlier decision. Thus, on three islands nutmeg and mace was produced: Lonthor, Pulau Ai and Neira. By forming *perken* and determining the borders, an important precedent had been created that would lead to a new society that delivered nutmeg and mace for the world's population for several centuries to come. It also created a high demand of slaves, which will be further argued in the upcoming chapters.

## Chapter 2. The Bandanese society

Almost all aspects of Bandanese society revolved around nutmeg and mace. The production of these commodities created an economy that stimulated and enforced slavery. The three actors directly involved in this system, the VOC, the *perkeniers* and the plantation slaves form the *perkeniersstelsel*. In Bandanese society, a hierarchy developed that was based on wealth, status and ethnicity. The plantation slaves were the lowest group in society and private property of the *perkeniers*. The latter in turn had to comply with the Governor of the Banda Islands, associated councils and in general the VOC. This system was greatly influenced by the environment and landscape of the Banda Islands which had an enormous impact on the production of nutmeg. For example, natural disasters caused the death of many slaves, who had to be replaced by other unfortunate persons. The three groups participating in the *perkeniersstelsel*, their relation to each other and the influence of the environment and landscape will be discussed in this chapter. First, the relation between the VOC and the *perkeniers* is examined.

### 2.1 The relation between the *perkeniers* and the VOC

The plantation supervisors were part of a group that was classified as *burghers*. The VOC preferred the *perkeniers*, who were of Dutch descent, not to involve themselves in mixed-ethnic marriages and offspring. In theory, the VOC held a rather strict apartheid between Europeans and Asians. Marriages between Dutch VOC employees or *burghers* and the local population was not allowed and children of mixed-ethnic descent were neglected the right to inherit in the early seventeenth century.<sup>84</sup> Women from the Dutch Republic were shipped to the Indies in order to provide VOC employees and *burghers* with Caucasian partners. However, the Banda Islands were one of the last stations the woman attended, leaving only the undesirables for the *perkeniers*. These women were considered prostitutes and physically unattractive.<sup>85</sup> Due to the lack of suitable wives, the *perkeniers* valued female slaves even more. As a consequence, the *perkeniers* sought for spouses and mistresses among the slave population, which resulted in offspring. People from mixed-ethnic descent were called *mestizos* or *mixties*.<sup>86</sup> During the seventeenth century these children were legitimized. As a result, the *burghers* (and the *perkeniers*) became ethnically diverse. This happened not only on the Banda Islands, but all over the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>87</sup> Many Dutch men had native mistresses or wives. Over the course of the seventeenth century, this led to the existence of a large group of *mestizos*, of which some had considerable status and wealth.

The *perkeniers* controlled the *perken* on the Banda islands. The *perkeniers* could be assigned to several *perken*; some had more than others. Although the *perken* were officially leased from the VOC, land was passed down from generation to generation and the right to supervise was also sold.<sup>88</sup> This led to a development of several very large plantations. In 1701,

---

<sup>84</sup> U. Bosma and R. Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Athens 2008) 21-23.

<sup>85</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 63.

<sup>86</sup> Winn, 'Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands', 379.

<sup>87</sup> Raben, 'Ethnic Disorder in voc Asia', 125.

<sup>88</sup> Loth, 'Pioneers and Perkeniers', 21.

the *Heeren XVII* were compelled to restate their stance on plantation ownership: ‘The plantations may not be sold by the owners’.<sup>89</sup> It is remarkable that the *perkeniers* are mentioned in this phrase as owners and shows that ownership under VOC rule did not entail our modern view of the term. By not granting saleable ownership rights to the *perkeniers*, the VOC ensured that the land could not be sold or confiscated by undesired external parties. This enabled the VOC to control with whom they wished to trade. Over the course of two centuries, this proved a wise decision on the side of the VOC, as the *perkeniers* frequently became indebted to not only the VOC, but also to Chinese and Arabic merchants.

By retaining ownership of the *perken*, the VOC was able to revoke the position of *perkenier*. In general, only heavy offenses incited this punishment. Many regulations were in effect that ensured the authority of the VOC. For example, if a *perk* was not properly maintained a fine could be imposed. In 1698, a *perkenier* was fined for this offence with a sum of about 5000 guilders.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, the *perkeniers* payed an annual tax over the land they controlled and were obliged to sell nutmeg and mace exclusively to the VOC. This regulation was an important legal attribute that ensured the monopoly on nutmeg of the VOC. As compromise the VOC supplied the *perkeniers* with slaves and sufficient rice and clothes at cost price.

*Perkeniers* generated additional income through selling goods that were provided by the VOC. The annual two sets of clothes per slave the VOC delivered to the *perkeniers* was often not distributed among slaves. Instead, the *perkeniers* sold these clothes on the market and gave the plantation slaves cheaper clothes.<sup>91</sup> Another way of generating additional income was through smuggle. Although the VOC successfully defended their monopoly on the nutmeg trade from rival nations, the organization was less capable in preventing small scale smuggle. Carlson states that *perkeniers* who participated in regional trade networks used nutmeg and mace as currency to acquire products that were scarce on the Banda Islands.<sup>92</sup> Even when it was known who smuggled, offenders were not always apprehended. For example; in 1688 the Bandanese *perkeniers* Jacob Eding and Pieter Slager were presumable involved in nutmeg smuggle but were not punished.<sup>93</sup> More *perkeniers* were suspected several years later. In 1697, the VOC was unable to convict the *perkeniers* Jan Pauluszoon and Barent Anthoniszoon of smuggling mace. Although there were testimonies against them, punishment was not imposed. The testimonies had been given by the slaves of the accused *perkeniers*, which made them unreliable (according to the VOC). Due to the lack of evidence, only a fine was imposed.<sup>94</sup>

Some *perkeniers* were also involved in the trade of long nutmegs. Long nutmegs grew on Aru and many other islands in the region. Nuts from Aru were described as small, wrinkled and inferior to the Bandanese variety by the VOC.<sup>95</sup> On the European market, long nutmegs were sold for significantly less money compared to nutmegs from the Banda’s. Although the VOC had claimed a monopoly on nutmeg, it was indifferent regarding the long nutmeg trade.

---

<sup>89</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: ‘*De perken mogen niet door de eigenaars verkocht worden.*’ In: W.P. Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* VI: 1698-1713 (The Hague 1976) 144.

<sup>90</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* VI, 3.

<sup>91</sup> Carlson, ‘Visibility and Power’, 218.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, 217.

<sup>93</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* V, 203.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibidem*, 837.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, 836.



H.R.C. Wright mentions in ‘The Moluccan Spice Monopoly’ that the trade in long nutmegs probably facilitated the smuggle of Bandanese nutmegs.<sup>96</sup> These nutmegs could easily be hidden in a cargo full of long nutmegs. In addition, he mentions: ‘it was well known that every traveller, from slaves upwards, secreted a small quantity of round nutmegs if he could on leaving Banda.’<sup>97</sup> Smuggle was a real threat to the VOC’s monopoly, as there were many parties that wished to participate in the trade. Especially the British, Chinese, Buginese and later the French were keen on acquiring nutmegs from Banda. Eventually, the French succeeded and managed to grow nutmeg trees from Bandanese nuts on Mauritius in the eighteenth century.<sup>98</sup>

During the *perkeniersstelsel*, the relationship of the VOC with the *perkeniers* was troublesome. The *perkeniers* became aware of their powerful position, as the VOC relied on the *perkeniers* to supply nutmeg. In addition, the high profit margins of nutmeg and mace which the VOC generated in Europe created resentment. In defiance, the *perkeniers* began living extravagant lives. They disputed the VOC for ownership rights and higher prices for nutmeg and mace.<sup>99</sup> The *perkeniers* were often high in debt, which the VOC was forced to pay in order to prevent the collapse of plantations.<sup>100</sup> Although the VOC made the *perkeniers* promise to refrain from falling in debt, in reality, this was common practice. This continued to frustrate the VOC. Simultaneously, the *perkeniers* were agitated as the VOC did not provide enough slaves to cultivate the land.<sup>101</sup> Also, the interference of the VOC on plantations angered the *perkeniers*. The VOC had a policy of cutting nutmeg trees when demand was saturated. As the sale of nutmeg and mace was the primary income source for *perkeniers*, it undoubtedly led to resentment.

Throughout the lifespan of the *perkeniersstelsel*, there was a constant assessment whether more or less nutmeg trees were required. When warehouses became saturated with nutmeg and prices were kept artificially high, nutmeg trees were extirpated in order to limit production. This method of market influence was problematic, because when the need for nutmeg and mace increased, the VOC was unable to instantly increase production. The nutmeg trees namely needed about 10 years to bear fruits. Moreover, they were often the most productive between the age of 15 and 30 years old.<sup>102</sup> The following example illustrates this: VOC officials assessed a sufficient amount of nutmeg trees inhabited the Banda’s in 1688. There were 159,035 adult nutmeg trees, 185,794 adolescent trees and 315,354 young trees.<sup>103</sup> Between the 25<sup>th</sup> of May and the sixth of June in 1693, about 2,000 nutmeg trees had snapped due to a storm. The VOC ordered new nutmeg trees to be planted as replacement.<sup>104</sup> Just eight years later, the VOC already made assessments whether or not trees had to be cut down.<sup>105</sup> This illustrated that a change in policy was relatively quickly made. Considering the lengthy time nutmeg trees needed to reach adulthood, the trees that were planted after the storm of 1693 had

---

<sup>96</sup> Wright, ‘The Moluccan Spice Monopoly’, 19.

<sup>97</sup> Ibidem, 20.

<sup>98</sup> Pierre Poivre introduced nutmeg trees on Mauritius and successfully produced nutmeg (and clove) in the second half of the eighteenth century.

<sup>99</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 60-64.

<sup>100</sup> Ibidem, 82.

<sup>101</sup> Ibidem, 61.

<sup>102</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 25.

<sup>103</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven V*, 202.

<sup>104</sup> Ibidem, 608.

<sup>105</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven VI*, 144.

not even been able to bear fruits yet. In general, the VOC was incapable assessing future demand for nutmeg and mace. This short-term thinking affected the VOC financially and their relationship with the *perkeniers*.

## 2.2 The slave population

A large proportion of people on the Banda Islands were slaves. In the beginning of the *perkeniersstelsel*, the islands had a total of 2,200 slaves<sup>106</sup> which was 57% of the total population in 1638.<sup>107</sup> Probably most of these slaves were plantation slaves, as the *perkeniers* had not amassed the wealth to possess house slaves. In 1688, the total slave population was 3,700,<sup>108</sup> with 2,149 plantation slaves.<sup>109</sup> The slave population had slightly diminished in 1823, with 1,437 house slaves and 1,727 plantation slaves. Slaves still outnumbered free citizens as they were 67% of the total population.<sup>110</sup> In 1854, six years before the abolition of slavery on the Banda Islands, the slave population had significantly declined. A total of 1,182 plantation slaves and 708 house slaves remained, which was about 30% of the total population.<sup>111</sup>

As long as Banda produced nutmeg and mace on its plantations, many slaves were required to work on the *perken*. A steady influx of slaves was vital to replace sick, deceased and runaway slaves. Jacobs states that on an annual basis, approximately 100 slaves had to be imported in order to prevent a decline in the population.<sup>112</sup> Specifically in the late seventeenth century, the VOC deemed more slaves necessary. In 1680, the VOC calculated between 150 and 200 slaves had to be imported each year to replenish the *perken*.<sup>113</sup> Although the production of nutmeg was dependant on slave labour, the *perkeniers* did not facilitate a favourable environment for the slave population to grow inherently, since slaves frequently ran away. Valentijn mentions that sometimes in a single night as many as 20 to 30 slaves ran away from the nutmeg plantations.<sup>114</sup> That plantation slaves frequently ran away can mean that either the chance of a successful escape was significant or the living conditions of the slaves were in such a bad state that the risk of a failed escape attempt was worthwhile.

Slaves were often neglected in care and abused by the *perkeniers*; this was especially the case for older slaves. Older people were (logically) less efficient workers and thus more a burden than a means of income. The *perkeniers* gave a fraction of the supplied rations of rice (provided by the VOC) to the slaves or even replaced it with less desirable sago.<sup>115</sup> Slaves were also victims of harsh punishment. Hanna reports the torture of a female slave who had attempted suicide. She was branded and her cheek cut open from mouth to ear.<sup>116</sup> The reasoning behind

---

<sup>106</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 39

<sup>107</sup> A.J. Jordan, *The Price of Spice: Archaeological Investigations of Colonial Era Nutmeg Plantations on the Banda Islands, Maluku Province, Indonesia* (Washington 2016) 72.

<sup>108</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 39

<sup>109</sup> Vink, 'The World's Oldest Trade', 169.

<sup>110</sup> Wright, 'The Moluccan Spice Monopoly', 94.

<sup>111</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 111.

<sup>112</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26.

<sup>113</sup> W.P. Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie IV: 1675-1685* (The Hague 1971) 431.

<sup>114</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, III:B, 13.

<sup>115</sup> Carlson, 'Visibility and Power', 218.

<sup>116</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 69.

this sentence was that she had attempted to defraud her master of his property.<sup>117</sup> In theory, slaves were protected from receiving harsh punishment in the Dutch Indies. However, when slaves made false accusations towards their masters, a whipping followed.<sup>118</sup> The colonial court (*Raad van Justitie*) determined whether an accusation was false or true and was naturally more inclined to support the slave owners. This undoubtedly prevented slaves in making accusations towards their masters. More than a century later, the treatment of slaves had not improved. In 1824, Governor General of the Dutch Indies G.A.G.P. van der Capellen (1778-1848) visited the Islands. He had addressed the *perkeniers* of their poor treatment of slaves and demanded that they would be provided with sufficient rice and clothes. Furthermore, van der Capellen ordered the *perkeniers* to not drive the old and sick slaves in overexertion.<sup>119</sup> These circumstances gave the plantation slaves every incentive to escape the systematic abuse and neglect on the Banda Islands.

Although the Banda Islands were small, there was apparently enough space for escaped slaves to seek refuge. In 1702, a group of escaped slaves was captured and killed in the interior of Banda Neira. They actively rebelled colonial rule for several years.<sup>120</sup> The VOC feared a rebellion of slaves which forced the Company to retain many soldiers on the islands.<sup>121</sup> An opportunity to escape was to hide in one of the anchored ships that lied in the harbour of Neira or at the shore. In 1784, the VOC tightened regulations in order to prevent this form of escape.<sup>122</sup> The slaves who managed to escape were often not recaptured.<sup>123</sup> This could only add more incentive for slaves to flee, as they were likely to avoid punishment. Although occasionally the VOC managed to retrieve runaway slaves. For example, numerous slaves ran away in 1694. One year later, 64 were recaptured and distributed amongst the *perkeniers* that needed the man power the most.<sup>124</sup>

The 1690's was a crisis period for the *perkeniers* due to great shortages in the workforce. In order to use the available man power as efficient as possible, all *perken* were under assessment whether they had a shortage or surplus in slaves. As follows, slaves were re-divided among the *perken*. The *perkeniers* were forbidden to keep more slaves on the plantation than the *boschwagter* (forester), a VOC employee, had allocated.<sup>125</sup> The recaptured slaves in 1694 were not returned to their owner, but instead placed on *perken* with a slave deficit. During normal times, recaptured slaves remained property of their owners and were returned after a fine was paid to the VOC. The deviation from this policy reveals that in the case of a crisis *perkeniers* could be disowned of slaves that would otherwise remain their property.

### 2.3 The duties of plantation slaves

As the Banda Islands were transformed into a cultivation centre for nutmeg and mace, slaves were imported for the harvest of species. It is not difficult to see a resemblance with plantation

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibidem, 69.

<sup>118</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 256.

<sup>119</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 102.

<sup>120</sup> Vink, 'The World's Oldest Trade', 174.

<sup>121</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 79.

<sup>122</sup> Wright, 'The Moluccan Spice Monopoly', 17.

<sup>123</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 13.

<sup>124</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* V, 715.

<sup>125</sup> Ibidem, 715.

systems in the Americas, or as Loth describes the Banda Islands: ‘nothing less than a Caribbean cuckoo in an Asian nest.’<sup>126</sup> After the conquest in 1621, not enough indigenous people remained to cultivate nutmeg and mace on a large scale. The VOC shipped slaves from (predominantly) the Indonesian archipelago to the Banda’s to work on the nutmeg plantations. The Bandanese that remained on the islands were used to teach foreign slaves the production process of nutmeg and mace.

The work of *perken* slaves was probably less strenuous compared to labour on the plantations in the Americas. The nutmeg trees did not require a lot of maintenance. Also, an annual replanting of the plantations was not necessary as the nutmeg tree had a long lifespan. This meant that the land of the plantation did not have to be ploughed, which is a labour intensive duty. Although the nuts took eight to nine months to ripe, the trees did not give ripe fruits at the same time. The majority of nuts were ripe in: August, November or April.<sup>127</sup> During the harvest periods, slaves worked long days to gather as many nuts as possible.<sup>128</sup> As the nutmeg trees could grow as much as 18 meters in length, the slaves used long poles to poke the nuts from the trees. Baskets were used to gatherer and carry the nuts. After the fruits were harvested, the nuts were disposed of their shell. Next, a drying process began that took six weeks. The nuts were placed in a hut, in which a small fire on the ground created a mild temperature increase. After each week, the nuts were transported to another hut that had a slightly different temperature.<sup>129</sup> After the nuts had sufficiently dried, nutmeg could be retracted and prepared for transport to Europe.

In addition to their primary task of cultivating nutmeg and mace, plantation slaves were also used for secondary duties. In the off-season, when not many nutmegs were ripe, slaves were used to brew liquor, burn lime and produce food (primarily fruit) on the plantations. Arrack, a popular liquor in Southeast Asia, was brewed from rice or turak.<sup>130</sup> Lime burning was especially dangerous, as it damaged the health of numerous slaves.<sup>131</sup> These products were consumed or sold on the market by the *perkeniers*. Therefore, plantation slaves were always working and generating income for the *perkeniers*.

Plantation slaves were also utilized in many agricultural experiments. The VOC did not only prioritize the total volume of nutmegs; the quality was also important. Numerous experiments were made in order to improve and prolong the quality of nutmeg and mace. The nuts had to maintain their quality for more than nine months, since it was transported from the Banda Islands to Amsterdam. The VOC discovered that adding calcium to the production process had the desired results. Directly after gathering, slaves submerged the nuts three times in seawater mixed with calcium. After a drying process of six weeks, the calcium would show the degree of quality of the nuts. Valentijn mentions that the treatment of nuts with calcium not only showed the quality, it also protected against decay and ensured these nuts could not be used as seeds to plant new nutmeg trees.<sup>132</sup> The calcium dissolved the shell of the nuts, which was necessary to grow into a tree. In the 1690’s, a test was made with sulphur instead of

---

<sup>126</sup> Loth, ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, 35.

<sup>127</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:A, 202-203.

<sup>128</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 11-12.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibidem*, 11-12.

<sup>130</sup> Loth, ‘Pioneers and Perkeniers’, 27-28.

<sup>131</sup> Wright, ‘The Moluccan Spice Monopoly’, 21.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.

calcium, and was applied to a batch of 1,000 nuts.<sup>133</sup> Sulphur was in excess available, as the volcano Gunung Api was active at the time. By applying sulphur to the treatment of nuts, the VOC hoped less nuts would be lost due to decay. However, the experiment failed. A witness stated the nuts were treated with sulphur after great effort, but the same amount of nuts had decayed compared to normal treatment.<sup>134</sup> An experiment with ash as a fertilizer did however prove to be effective and increased production output.<sup>135</sup> The different experiments exposed the plantation slaves to numerous chemicals, of which some may have been toxic. The efforts to increase quantity and/or quality of this commodity through innovative and orthodox measures is example of the high degree of influence and authority of the VOC on the Banda Islands.

## 2.4 Natural disasters, sickness and death

Diseases on the islands ensured that a significant share of the plantation slaves was incapable to work. This plagued the VOC soldiers even more; at times 50% was sick.<sup>136</sup> Many soldiers had died in 1697, which required the VOC to send 100 new soldiers as replacement.<sup>137</sup> In addition to escapes and sickness, another factor weighted heavily on the growth of the slave population; the Banda Islands were frequent subjected to natural disasters, often caused by the active volcano Gunung Api on the island Banda Api. The eruptions of the volcano produced toxic fumes and ash that polluted the air on the Banda Islands. At times, these toxics lingered in the air for several years.<sup>138</sup> This led to sickness and death among the whole population. To make it even worse, the volcano eruptions were often accompanied with earthquakes and large tidal waves, which damaged the buildings and the *perken* on the Banda Islands.<sup>139</sup> The natural disasters of 1690-1696 were so great that the value of the plantations was diminished with two-thirds.<sup>140</sup> An eyewitness wrote an account about the destruction of buildings on Neira: ‘The burning volcano spits out so many ash, that several roofs of houses have collapsed. The land on Neira has [because of the ash] increased by two feet. The forts Nassau and Belgica are covered with piles of ash; all company slaves and 120 mercenaries are working every day to carry it away. However, the wind blows sometimes so hard, that in two hours more ash covers Neira than the men can carry away in five days.’<sup>141</sup>

Evidence of the inhospitable climate can be found in death statistics. A total of 2,149 slaves worked on the nutmeg plantations in 1688.<sup>142</sup> The inspection report of 1694 reveals 2,114

---

<sup>133</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven V*, 782-783.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibidem*, 837.

<sup>135</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven VI*, 18.

<sup>136</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 83.

<sup>137</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven V*, 824.

<sup>138</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 85.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibidem*, 82.

<sup>140</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, III:B, 18.

<sup>141</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: ‘*Den brandenden berg werpt soo ongelovelijcken quantiteyt asch uyt, dat eenige daacken der huysen door de swaerte instorten. Het lant van Neira is daer-door wel twee voeten verhoogt en werden de casteden Nassouw en Belgica, daerop gelegen, sodanig van beset gedurent het westerzaysoen, dat men met 120 huurlin-gen, alle des E. Comp.^ slaven, bandijten, daertoe aes stortwagens, die meer als 30 menschen ieder reys kunnen wegdragen, 30 kruywagens en groot getal manden in dien tijt over sondagen en al moeten arbeyden om daervan geene verdere becom-meringe off schade te lijden, \*tgeene temets, nadat de wint op Neira waaj^, soo sterck aangaet, dat er in twee uren tijts meer asch overcorapt, als men met al die menschen en toestellen in vijff dagen kan wegsiepen, [...].*’ In: Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven V*, 748.

<sup>142</sup> Vink, ‘The World’s Oldest Trade’, 169.

slaves worked on the *perken*.<sup>143</sup> Compared to the 2,149 slaves in 1688, the amount of plantation slaves had declined in 1694. Assuming the annual import of 100-200 plantation slaves continued, hundreds of slaves must have perished between 1688 and 1694. The volcano Gunung Api probably caused this. The volcano was especially active between 1690 and 1696, releasing large rocks, toxic fumes and ash on nearby islands. The anecdotal account of sailors in Valentijn's *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën* illustrate the terror the volcano installed on the population: 'I have talked to Sailors, who told me they witnessed the volcano spit out rocks larger than their ships, of which some were over 160 feet long. These rocks were were catapulted into the air with great force and rolled down the volcano, tearing down- and enflaming large trees and bushes.'<sup>144</sup> In Neira town, the toxic concentration in the air was the highest. Inhabitants of this town, mostly free men as *perkeniers* and VOC employees, suffered great losses. But the destructive effects of the volcano reached the slaves on Lonthor also. In addition to volcano eruptions, a smallpox epidemic plagued the Banda Islands in 1693, resulting in the deaths of 771 plantation slaves.<sup>145</sup> Nine years later (in 1702), smallpox reached the islands again causing the deaths of 351 slaves.<sup>146</sup> In 1715 another epidemic occurred, which increased the combined death toll of these three epidemics to 1,529 slaves.<sup>147</sup> These events provide insight into how dangerous and fragile life was on the Banda Islands. The natural disasters, diseases and the earlier described poor treatment of slaves explains why the population on the Banda Islands was not self-sustaining and remained dependent upon slave import.

Due to great losses, new slaves were requested from nearby regions in the 1690's. In 1692, 66 slaves were sent from Batavia to the Banda's to replenish the work force.<sup>148</sup> In addition, the VOC detachment on Timor was requested to send slaves. If the slaves from Timor did not satisfy the demand, restrictions could be lifted. For example, non-*perkeniers* were allowed to buy slaves from Bungku for the next two years.<sup>149</sup> The *Generale Missiven* does not explain why this measure was not directly granted to the *perkeniers*. This regulation made to *perkeniers* to rely on additional parties to acquire slaves for the *perken*. Maybe the VOC wanted the *perkeniers* to remain on the Banda Islands as the journey to Bunku (on Celebes) would take considerable time.

During the last decade of the seventeenth century, high priority was given to supply the plantations with additional slaves. A VOC official states in the *Generale Missiven* that a total of 1,739 plantation slaves resided on the Banda's in 1694 and that their number was greatly declining, while 1,879 were required.<sup>150</sup> One year later, a source in the *Generale Missiven* claimed the plantation slave population increased to 1,879 people, while 2,601 were required.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> NL-HaNa, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1595, f167-225 and inv.nr. 1622, f82-119.

<sup>144</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: 'Ik heb schippers, die toen op die Reede lagen, gesproken, die my verklaarden gezien te hebben, dat 'er steenen, in haar beslag grooter dan hunne schepen (waar onder 'er van 160 voeten lang waren) uit dezen Berg, zoo hoog boven den top, als de top van den voet van des Bergs was, geworpen, en zoo langs dien Berg nog gloeiend na beneden gerolt zyn, nemende nog swaare boomen en struiken, die 'er van in brand raakten, [...]'. In: Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 17.

<sup>145</sup> Stapel ed., *Pieter van Dam's Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie* II:1, 200-201.

<sup>146</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* VI, 190.

<sup>147</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 85.

<sup>148</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* V, 657.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibidem*, 657.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibidem*, 676.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibidem*, 714.

However, through analysis of the inspection report of 1694, it is now known 2,114 plantation slaves lived on the Banda Islands in that specific year.<sup>152</sup> This will be discussed more in-depth later in this thesis. The assessed requirement of 2,601 slaves in the *Generale Missiven* was met five years later in 1700.<sup>153</sup> This same year the VOC lifted the ban on the import of slaves from Banda.<sup>154</sup> This indicates the slave shortage had been solved. The *perkeniers* and the VOC managed to recover relative quickly from the tumultuous years of 1690-1696. The VOC had learned rapid replacement of deceased slaves was crucial for the longevity of the *perkeniersstelsel*. A total of 356 slaves from Makassar and Buton were brought to the islands to replace the 351 slaves that had died due to smallpox in 1702.<sup>155</sup> However, the *perkeniers* only bought half of the slaves. The Makassar and Butonese were considered stronger than the people from the *Zuidoostelijke Eilanden* (South-eastern Islands), which constitute of Ceram, the Kai- and Aru Islands and others, and therefore less desirable.<sup>156</sup> Fear of an uprising may have influenced their opinion. However, the import of slaves continued in the following years. In 1711, Valentijn reported that the plantations were prospering and in good quality, allowing the *perkeniers* to live in wealth once again.<sup>157</sup>

### Concluding remarks

Bandanese society can be viewed as a strict hierarchic community. A dichotomy in the level of authority was present on the Banda island. Although the VOC held control over the *perkeniers* in many aspects, it was less capable to prevent or punish them for smuggling. The poor relationship between the two parties was counter-productive and through resentment and frustration collaboration was often inefficient. *Perkeniers* had arguably more control over the slaves, but were not capable in preventing escapes. Although the duties of the plantation slaves were not extraordinary demanding, the poor treatment they received from the *perkeniers* probably explains the high incentive to escape among slaves. As the islands were remote and small, an argument could be made that escapes should not have been too hard to prevent. The landscape of the Banda Islands, with its many indigenous hostilities, was another aspect that formed the *perkeniersstelsel*. The erupting volcano on Banda Api, earthquakes, tidal waves and epidemics led to death and destruction among the population. The increase of the plantation slave population in the 1690's, while many had died through sickness and natural disasters, illustrates priority was given to resolve this problem. It also created a large stimulant in the regional slave trade.

---

<sup>152</sup> NL-HaNa, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1551, f248-304. Also, see appendix 1.

<sup>153</sup> NL-HaNa, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1637, f98-152. Also, see appendix 1.

<sup>154</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 259.

<sup>155</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* VI, 190.

<sup>156</sup> Ibidem, 190. Contemporary sources in the late seventeenth century use the collective term *Zuidoostelijke Eilanden* for the numerous islands south-east of the Banda Islands. See for an extensive description: Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 27-72.

<sup>157</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 13.

## Chapter 3. Slave trade in the Dutch Indies

As one of the most powerful and richest enterprises of all time, the Dutch East India Company was active during the seventeenth- and eighteenth century. The VOC controlled not only the sea, but also numerous colonies and people in Asia. Just like the WIC, the VOC was involved in slave trade and slavery. But unlike its counterpart, the slave trade was not of major economic importance for the VOC. The wealth of the VOC was accumulated through the trade in spices and other commodities. However, in VOC settlements a significant share of the population was enslaved.<sup>158</sup> The new elite created a large demand of slaves as they sought labourers to work on their properties.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, an already existing slave trade network was present in South East Asia. On Bali for example, local rulers enslaved people that were subjects of rival leaders. Also, subjects that committed an offense could be condemned to slavery.<sup>159</sup> Slaves were sold and distributed by traders, but in general remained in their land of birth. After the arrival of the Europeans, an intensification and upscaling of the slave trade was induced. Slaves were transported to distant regions. As production of Asian commodities increased, the need for labour was raised.

### 3.1 The total Dutch slave trade in the Indian Ocean

As mentioned earlier, the VOC was primarily not directly involved in the slave trade. Only 0,5% of their revenue was generated by slave trade.<sup>160</sup> However, these numbers can deceive the importance of the slave trade for the VOC and the Indian Ocean region as a whole. The VOC needed slave labour in the colonies for the production of commodities, otherwise not enough (cheap) labour was available. Large VOC colonies as the Cape of Good Hope, Batavia, Ceylon and Malacca inhabited a large slave population. In Batavia and the Cape for example, slaves formed the majority of the population during the seventeenth century.<sup>161</sup> Also on the Banda Islands slaves outnumbered other groups of inhabitants. During the seventeenth- and the first half of the eighteenth century, more slaves were present in VOC settlements than in Dutch territories in the West. Only in the late eighteenth century, the number of slaves in the West exceeded those in the East.<sup>162</sup>

Since the VOC did not monopolise the slave trade, private individuals fulfilled the demand. Several groups were active in the slave trade. In the Indies these were primarily Chinese, VOC employees, *burghers* and Buginese.<sup>163</sup> VOC employees used the slave trade as a means to increase their income. Also many *burghers* leaped into this market. The VOC regulated the slave trade in Batavia by rules and decrees to which the private slave traders were bound. In addition, a substantial fee of 10 *rijksdaalders* was mandatory payment if traders

---

<sup>158</sup> Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, 133.

<sup>159</sup> A. van der Kraan, 'Bali: Slavery and Slave Trade', in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency* (St. Lucia 1983) 322-323.

<sup>160</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 24.

<sup>161</sup> Van der Kraan, 'Bali: Slavery and Slave Trade', 330.

<sup>162</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 54.

<sup>163</sup> Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, 133.



wished to sell slaves on the market in Batavia.<sup>164</sup> Throughout the centuries, Batavia functioned as the largest slave market in the region. Slave traders brought people to Batavia, where they were sold and re-distributed. The majority of slaves were shipped to the Banda Islands, the Moluccas and Cape Town.<sup>165</sup>

In the past twenty years, efforts were made to estimate the scale of the slave trade in Southeast Asia. Allen estimates 67,387 to 91,687 slaves were traded by the Dutch between 1600 and 1850.<sup>166</sup> These numbers do not entail the entire slave trade, as it excludes other (Asian) parties from these statistics. Vink considers an annual import of 3,200 to 5,600 slaves in VOC territories during the late seventeenth century.<sup>167</sup> His calculation was based on the size of the slave population in VOC settlements (60,000) in 1688 and the annual import it required in order to maintain its size.<sup>168</sup> With a mortality rate of 20% in transport, which was common for voyages that crossed the Atlantic, he calculated the annual Dutch slave trade in the Indian Ocean between 4,476 and 7,716 slaves.<sup>169</sup> He considered the slave trade in the Dutch Indies to be part of this.<sup>170</sup> Van Rossum argues the estimated mortality rate of 20% is too high; the travel time of slave ships was shorter in Southeast Asia than in the transatlantic slave trade. He purposes a mortality rate of 12,5%, which would decrease the total annual import of slaves that was required.<sup>171</sup> Van Welie used Vink's estimations to calculate the total slave trade. He calculates the total slave trade in VOC territories may have been between 675,000 to 1,150,000 people. These numbers instigate that the Indian Ocean slave trade was larger than than the Dutch transatlantic slave trade (529,000 slaves).<sup>172</sup> However, this is highly speculative as the estimation is based on the known slave trade statistics of a single year (1688), multiplied by every year the VOC was operational.<sup>173</sup> Due to the lack of information in primary sources and the limited attention for the subject, only rough estimations can be made of the total slave trade in VOC territories.

### 3.2 Desired and dangerous slaves

In the first half of the seventeenth century, most work slaves in the Dutch Indies came from India.<sup>174</sup> Especially the regions of Bengal, Goram, Malabar and Goa were a major source. The caste system made these regions easy to operate for slave traders, as forced enslavement by (for example) acts of war was not required. The lowest classes in India already lived in slavery. Indian slaves were often skilled workers and had more social status than their Indonesian counterparts. Skilled slaves enjoyed some privileges, as they could marry and often received better care.<sup>175</sup> From the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, Indonesians replaced

---

<sup>164</sup> The value of one *rijksdaalder* was approximately three *guldens*.

<sup>165</sup> Van der Kraan, 'Bali: Slavery and Slave Trade', 331.

<sup>166</sup> Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, 17.

<sup>167</sup> Vink, 'The World's Oldest Trade', 176.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibidem*, 176.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibidem*, 176.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibidem*, 139-140.

<sup>171</sup> Van Rossum, 'Vervloekte goudzugt', 40.

<sup>172</sup> J.M. Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815* (Cambridge 1990) 119.

<sup>173</sup> Van Welie, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire', 71

<sup>174</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 249; Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, 112-114.

<sup>175</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 249.

the slaves from India.<sup>176</sup> The Indonesian slaves were not as skilled as their Indian counterparts. The unskilled slaves often performed simple duties, which lowered their social status within society.<sup>177</sup> Both trends were followed in the Banda Islands. By the late seventeenth century, less than fifty slaves from India lived on the Banda's.<sup>178</sup>

Not every island in the region that inhabited a slave source was proportionally targeted. The VOC forbade the enslavement of the Javanese and only allowed the sale of Balinese slaves to foreigners outside VOC territory.<sup>179</sup> These people and several other ethnic groups were considered less desirable as slaves and were added to a list of dangerous people.<sup>180</sup> The VOC considered them difficult to subjugate and unpredictable. Over the centuries, the Dutch had encountered numerous cases in which an Indonesian went into a murderous psychological state called 'amok'.<sup>181</sup> The frequency of cases in which natives went amok scared the VOC. This persuaded them to ban or restrict the enslavement of people of which they deemed unpredictable.<sup>182</sup> This list was quite extensive; Javanese, Balinese, Malays, Selayar, Buginese, Makassarese, Butonese, Bimanese and other slaves from Celebes were all classified as dangerous.<sup>183</sup>

These considerations possibly impacted which ethnicities were targeted to subtract slaves for the *perkeniers*. Although Bali inhabited many slaves and was an important export centre in the slave trade network, only few arrived on the *perken*. Also only a few Javanese slaves resided on the Banda's during the 1690's<sup>184</sup> However, many Makassarese slaves worked on the *perken* while they were also considered dangerous. In 1698 for example, about 19% of all *perken* slaves came from Makassar.<sup>185</sup> Valentijn states: 'For several years, the *perkeniers* have been allowed to import 400 Makassarese slaves [annually]. They brought [as of 1688] more than 1400 and are determined to import as many as they are allowed.'<sup>186</sup> The majority of slaves were from the Moluccas, of which its inhabitants were not considered dangerous. These islands had the additional benefit of being close to the Banda Islands, compared to for example Java or Bali. Overall, with the exception of Makassarese slaves, the policy of the VOC concerning dangerous people appears to have been largely held in practice in the *perkeniersstelsel* in the late seventeenth century.

### 3.3 The slave trade on Banda

As mentioned earlier, the VOC was for the most part not directly involved in the slave trade. Private individuals fulfilled the demand. However, the slave trade on the Banda Islands is an

---

<sup>176</sup> Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, 128.

<sup>177</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 249.

<sup>178</sup> Appendix 1.

<sup>179</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 258.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibidem*, 259.

<sup>181</sup> For more information about 'amok', see: 'Over Amok in Nederlands-Indische Rechtzaken' *Acta Historica* 3:4 (2014) 1-47; J.C. Spores, *Running Amok: An Historical Enquiry* (Athens 1988).

<sup>182</sup> K. Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge 2009) 247-248.

<sup>183</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 258-259.

<sup>184</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>185</sup> See table 6.

<sup>186</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: 'al voor eenige jaren was deze Perkeniers toegestaan, om 400 Macassarze slaaven na Banda te voeren. Zy hebben'er nu al over de 1400 gebracht, en zy haalen nog al, om dat getal van 400 (zoo zy zeggen) te vervullen.' In: Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 13.

exception according to historians.<sup>187</sup> The role of the VOC to directly and actively supply slaves to the plantations on Banda from Batavia and other regions is postulated.<sup>188</sup> This raises the question why the Banda Islands were an exception to the rule. Upon forming the *perken*, the VOC made several binding rules to attract *burghers* to serve as overseers and to guarantee a certain quantity of nutmeg and mace. The production quantity was directly influenced by the available workforce. More production meant a higher income for both the VOC and the *perkeniers*, therefore a steady supply of slaves to the *perken* was in both parties' interest. By giving the responsibility to private traders to supply slaves to the Banda's, optimal occupation of the nutmeg plantations could not be ensured. Upon forming agreements with the *perkeniers*, the VOC guaranteed an annual supply of slaves that were sold below market value. However, as Hanna states: '[...] it [the VOC] never supplied as many slaves as the *perkeniers* wanted, and it prohibited private slavers from meeting the demand'.<sup>189</sup> According to Jacobs, the *perkeniers* paid approximately 80 *guilders* per slave to the VOC.<sup>190</sup> Hanna mentions a price of 100 *guilders*.<sup>191</sup> Although there might not be an consensus about the exact price, historians agree that the VOC and the *perkeniers* had an agreement that slaves were sold at a fixed price.

Private traders managed to reach the Banda island never the less. For example, a traveling VOC employee sold seven of his personal slaves on Neira in 1720.<sup>192</sup> Also many traders from neighbouring islands brought war-captives for sale to the Banda's. The local populations of the islands Kai, Aru, Cauwer and Ceram were in constant conflict according to Valentijn.<sup>193</sup> For example, the Kai Islands were in war due to disputes over fishing rights and which type of equipment could be used.<sup>194</sup> He states: 'These people fight on a daily basis and enslave each other's war captives.'<sup>195</sup> This resulted in many raids and an increase of slaves in the region. The war captives were sold for a cheap price to the *perkeniers*; between 30 to 60 *guldens*.<sup>196</sup> On an annual basis, sometimes multiple times per year, natives from the *Zuidoostelijke eilanden* visited the Banda Islands with merchandise such as birds, woodwork, carrots and slaves.<sup>197</sup> They visited the Banda Islands frequently, as they were prohibited to sell slaves in other VOC territories.<sup>198</sup> This indicates that although the VOC supplied the Banda Islands with slaves, the demand was not saturated and was fulfilled through the influx of war captives from neighbouring islands. This is in contradiction to Hanna's statement that the VOC prohibited other parties to trade slaves.<sup>199</sup> The *perkeniers* probably favoured war captives from the *Zuidoostelijke eilanden*, as their price was far below the VOC's fixed price of slaves. Chapter 4 will show that the majority of plantation slaves came from the islands mentioned

---

<sup>187</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26. Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 59-60. M. Ittersum, 'Empire by Treaty?', 160; Van Rossum, 'Labouring Transformations of Amphibious Monsters', 29; Loth, 'Pioneers and Perkeniers', 26.

<sup>188</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 49-79.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibidem*, 61.

<sup>190</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26.

<sup>191</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 60.

<sup>192</sup> Fox, 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons', 246.

<sup>193</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 38, 41, 43.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibidem*, 40.

<sup>195</sup> Translation: my own. Original text: 'Deze volkeren oorlogen dagelyks tegen malkanderen, maakende malkanders oorlogsgevangenen to slaaven.' In: Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 38.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibidem*, 38.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibidem*, 43.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibidem*, 43.

<sup>199</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 61.

above, instigating that the account of Valentijn on the regional conflict and slave trade holds merit.

In Valentijn's account of the Banda Islands, he also mentions the Dutch had embarked on exploring *Nova Guinea* (New Guinea) in their search for slaves in the late seventeenth century.<sup>200</sup> Although many islands had become well known to the Dutch, New Guinea remained largely undiscovered. The island was difficult to control as it inhabited a dense forest and was large in size. Also, danger was present as many pirates roamed the area.<sup>201</sup> When visiting uncontacted natives, the Dutch were often anxious; not knowing if they were welcomed with hospitality or violence. On several occasions, the Dutch managed to come in contact with Papuans who offered them dozens of slaves.<sup>202</sup> Primarily pirates from the Raja Ampat Islands frequently raided the hinterland of New Guinea and could supply the Dutch with slaves.<sup>203</sup> Valentijn does not mention a substantial slave trade with the Papuans originated, only individual accounts are described. However, a large scale slave trade of Papuans probably originated between 1695 and 1697, after Valentijn had left the islands in 1688. In appendix 1 a sudden influx of Papuans on the *perken* from 1697 onwards can be seen.<sup>204</sup>

Not many estimations and statistics about the size of the slave trade on the Banda Islands exist. The estimation of Jacobs provides some insight. She mentions that an annual import of 100 slaves was necessary in order to replace sick, deceased and escaped slaves.<sup>205</sup> The VOC deemed an import between 150 to 200 slaves required in 1680.<sup>206</sup> If the estimations of Vink, Van Welie and others are correct, the Banda Islands had a minor share in the slave trade. With an annual import of several hundreds, the demand on the Banda's does not seem large enough to have enormous impact on the stimulation of the slave trade. The substantial increase of the slave population in the 1690's and the highly fluctuating number of slaves per origin does however indicate the annual import must have been greater. These numbers can be seen in appendix 1 and will be discussed further in chapter four.

## Concluding remarks

It remains difficult to assess the scale of the slave trade in the Dutch Indies. Estimations made by historians are speculative but due to the lack of sources it is the closest we can come. The same lack of sources renders it impossible to determine the scale and the role of the VOC in the supply of slaves to the Bandanese *perken*. It is therefore impossible to know if the VOC was the major supplier, which many historians assign to the Dutch company. As many slaves came from nearby regions which were in constant conflict, it makes more sense the majority of slaves were supplied by a variety of indigenous people, who sold their war captives to the *perkeniers*. The slaves from distant regions could have been supplied by the VOC. Large bodies of water needed to be crossed, which required the large ships of the VOC. As slaves from distant islands

---

<sup>200</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 46-47.

<sup>201</sup> G.J. Knaap, 'Robbers and Traders: Papuan Piracy in the Seventeenth Century', in: J. Kleinen and M. Osseweijer eds., *Pirates, Ports and Coasts in Asia: Historical and Contemporary perspectives* (Leiden 2010) 147-177.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibidem*, 47, 58-59, 60.

<sup>203</sup> Knaap, 'Robbers and Traders: Papuan Piracy in the Seventeenth Century', 168-170.

<sup>204</sup> Appendix 1.

<sup>205</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26.

<sup>206</sup> Coolhaas ed., *Generale Missiven* IV, 431.

lived on Banda (as Ceylon and Madagascar), the utilisation of the trade network of the VOC is apparent.

The activities of multiple slave traders mean that the VOC was not the sole supplier of slaves to the *perkeniersstelsel* and a regional slave trade network existed. As the *perkeniersstelsel* created demand for slaves, conflict generated income for populations of neighbouring islands. The *perkeniersstelsel* could have stimulated the creation of a chaotic and violent era for neighbouring islands, as an insatiable market for war captives came into existence.

## Chapter 4. Ethnic background and size of the plantation slave population

During the regime of Coyett (1694-1701), annual inspection reports were made that registered plantation slaves on the Banda Islands. Coyett was born and raised in Batavia, in a VOC household. His father Frederick Coyett (1615-1687) had made a career within the VOC and was ultimately the governor of Dutch Formosa, which is present-day Taiwan. Balthasar Coyett had several exalted positions during his time on the Banda Islands. From 1694 to 1696 he was *provisioneel gezaghebber* (temporary governor), from 1696 to 1697 *voorzitter* (president) and from 1697 to 1701 *landvoogd* (governor). His last position was *landvoogd* on Ambon from 1701 until 1706. According to Valentijn, Coyett was a strict and disciplinary governor.<sup>207</sup> For example, Coyett had revoked the title of *perkenier* from an individual in 1697. The *perkenier* was stripped of his plantation because his slave had allegedly attempted to smuggle mace. While the high government of the Dutch Indies in Batavia had judged that this revocation was unlawful, the plantation was not given back to the *perkenier*. It did not end well for the *perkenier*; he had lost everything and sought comfort in alcohol, which ultimately led to his death.<sup>208</sup>

Only during Coyett's governance the plantation slave population was registered in detail. During the reign of other governors, slaves were also counted, but far less detailed. In some cases, the origins of slaves were separated by general, unspecific areas, but precise locations were not included. More often, only the number of slaves was counted. It remains unclear why the inspection reports were not continued by the successors of Coyett. A reason can be found in the lack of data in the inspection reports that followed; maybe noting every individual slave with name, gender, age and origin was too time consuming. It is regretful, as the inspection reports contain valuable information that allow insight into Bandanese society. In Coyett's inspection reports, the heritage, sex, age and names of individual plantation slaves was noted, as well as the total number of slaves per *perk*. The slaves were divided in three categories: males, females and children. The gender of the children was often not specified, although in a few cases they were categorised by *meisjes* (girls) and/or *jongetjes* (boys), instead of *kinderen* (children).<sup>209</sup> This categorisation was most frequent in the report of 1694; in later years the gender of children was often not mentioned.

As part of this research, the data of the inspection reports was categorised. Each person was counted and categorised by ethnicity. This allows to know exactly how many plantation slaves lived on the Banda's. Furthermore, it enables to assess whether the population increased or decreased and at which rate. In addition, the origins of slaves show the reach and extent of the slave trade network. The size of each ethnicity group allows to assess to which degree regions were utilised as a slave source. The people are divided between between male, female and children. All data was sorted in an excel file. The gender division of the slave population can enhance our view of the dynamics of Bandanese society as a whole. It also allows to assess the physical toughness of working on the nutmeg plantations. In addition, the age distribution

---

<sup>207</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 93.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibidem*, 93.

<sup>209</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1551, f278.

on the Bandanese *perken* further illustrates this. The average age of slaves also reveal insight into the live expectancy and overall care. Concerning children, a general cut-off age shows when people were considered adult. This statistical information allows an in-depth look into slavery on the Banda Islands that has not been analysed by historians before.

During the research and processing of the data, minor issues occurred. Two separate folders were used per year to note the number of plantation slaves in an excel file. In the first file, the count of the writer of the inspection report was followed (after each *perk*, the writer tallied up the total amount of slaves). In the second file, my own count was followed as slaves were individually registered per origin in the inspection report. After the total amount in the second file were counted, a slight discrepancy occurred with the number of slaves stated in the first file. The authors of the inspection report occasionally made mistakes when the amount of slaves per *perk* was tallied up. Although it is possible that in my own count also errors were made, these statistics are a more accurate representation of the size of the population as this sum was reached through counting every individual slave. Furthermore, in some cases the handwriting was unreadable or no origin was mentioned. Whenever this occurred, the people were categorised under ‘unknown’. In the diagrams that show the major ethnicities on Banda, the ‘unknown’ group is incorporated in the ‘other’ group. This ‘other’ group consists of all the ethnicities which constituted less than 1% of the plantation slave population and the unknown origins. In this thesis, it was chosen to not explicitly mention these regions in the diagram, as it would become less transparent. These regions are included in appendix 1.

In this chapter, an analysis of the size, growth and the male-female-children ratio of the plantation slave population in the late seventeenth century will follow. Also, an examination of the age distribution of plantation slaves will be made for the year 1698. Next, the origins of slaves are categorised by geographical region, which shows the main slave export markets for the *perkeniersstelsel* in the 1690’s. To be able to analyse the data on a smaller scale, diagrams of the plantation slave population in 1694, 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700 illustrate the specific origins. First, the size and growth of the plantation slave population is discussed in the next paragraph.

#### 4.1 The size, growth and gender of the plantation slave population

Vink states that in 1694: ‘1,879 free burgher slaves laboured on the some 70 nutmeg gardens or *perken* of Banda’.<sup>210</sup> This same number of slaves is also mentioned by Jacobs and Hanna.<sup>211</sup> It is based on an account mentioned in the *Generale Missiven*.<sup>212</sup> The inspection report of 1694, incorporated in table 1, reveals the plantation slave population was in fact more than 200 people larger. As the inspection report is far more detailed than the single sentence in the *Generale Missiven* that simply states the number of 1,879 slaves without additional data, it is indisputable the inspection report holds more merit. The total plantation slave population of the years illustrated in table 1 are; (1694) 2,114, (1697) 2,361, (1698) 2,409, (1699) 2,434 and (1700) 2,637. The growth of the slave population in the 1690’s reveals insight into the annual import. As Jacobs assessed, the *perken* needed a minimum supply of 100 slaves to replace the dead. An

---

<sup>210</sup> Vink, ‘The World’s Oldest Trade’, 161.

<sup>211</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 24; Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 79-80, 85.

<sup>212</sup> Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven* V, 714.

increase in the slave population shows that an excess of that number had to be imported to explain the growth.<sup>213</sup> This means that as the population in 1700 grew with 203 people, more than 300 slaves were imported in that specific year.

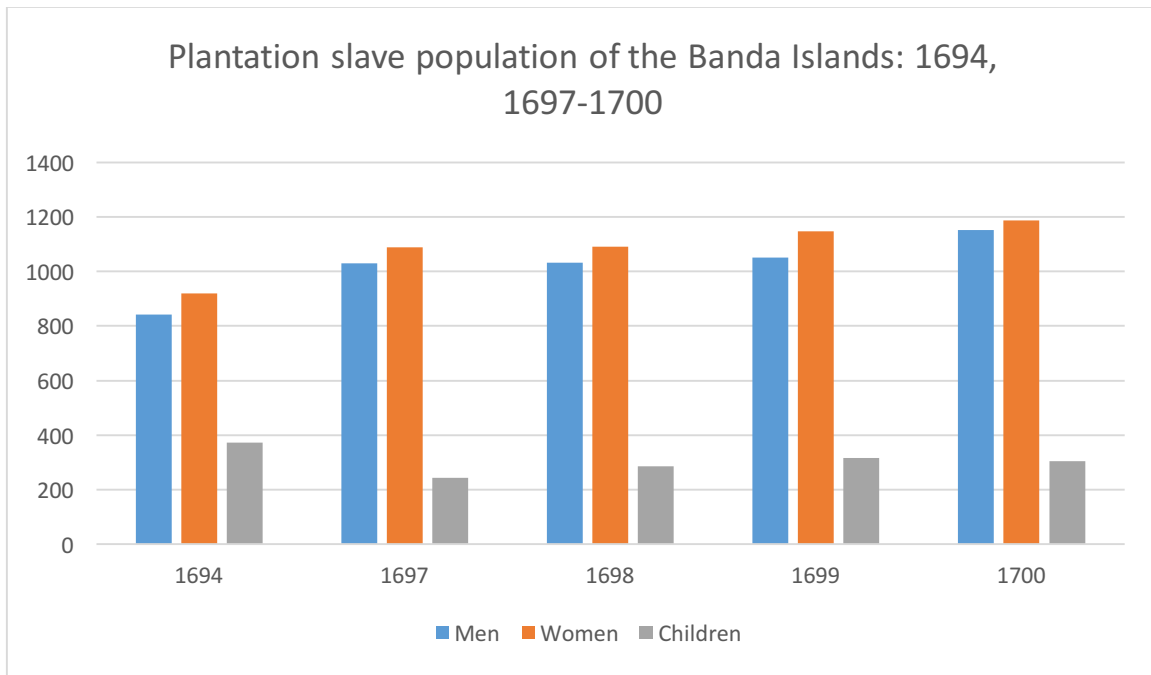


Table 1. The size of the plantation slave population on the Banda Islands: 1694, 1697-1700. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.

Considering 1694 as starting point, an increase of 11,68%, 2,03%, 1,04% and 8,34% of the plantation slave population followed in the years illustrated in the graph. This rapid increase was likely induced by a shortage of labour. The mentioned natural disasters and epidemics had plagued the islands in the 1690's. The *Generale Missiven* explicitly states the VOC made the supply of new slaves to the Banda Islands a priority.<sup>214</sup> In the 1690's, the *perkeniers* and the VOC restored the production output as to where it was before the misfortunes. This is supported by table 1. A constant increase of the slave population can be seen. There were significantly more adults in 1700 than in 1694, thereby increasing the maximum obtainable nutmeg and mace. The substantial increase of the slave population was not the result of a high birth rate. The epidemics and disasters most likely had a negative effect on the birth rate and caused a higher child/infant mortality rate. Table 1 illustrates this, as a decline in the number of children can be seen comparing 1694 with the subsequent years. Also, the import of (young) children lacked direct cause, as they were unfit for adult work on the plantations. This can especially be argued, as people were considered a minor for only a brief period. As the nutmeg plantations had a shortage of labour, *perkeniers* imported people that were capable to work.

On the Banda Islands, legislation that enforced the rights of children was absent. Individual plantation holders determined when a child was capable of performing adult work. For example, on the plantation of Jan Pieterszoon in 1698, one female of 11 years old was

<sup>213</sup> Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, 26.

<sup>214</sup> Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven V*, 657.



considered adult, while another slave of the same age was still classified as child.<sup>215</sup> Sometimes notes were made by the composer of the inspection report if a child was ready for work. If they were (still) unfit, it would state: ‘*tot dienst onbekwaam*’ (incapable for service).<sup>216</sup> Presumably, individual characteristics and overall body development affected at which age a child was put to work. Out of all the *perken* in 1698, only 1 person with the age of 13 was still considered a child.<sup>217</sup> Thus, after the age of 12, almost all children on the plantations were considered adult and are categorised as males or females in the inspection reports.

In all the inspection reports (1694, 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700), there were slightly more female- than male plantation slaves. For example, in 1699 41,8% was male and 45,7% was female (the remaining 12,5% were children). The *perkeniers* seemed to favour females over males. This is in contrary to many other forms of plantation slavery. It often demanded hard labour, which men are naturally better suited for. This indicates the work on the nutmeg plantations was not extremely physical, as both males and females could do the work efficient. There may be an underlying reason why *perkeniers* did favour females over males. As mentioned earlier, the *perkeniers* had difficulty finding suitable wives. A large female slave population created more potential wives/mistresses. Valentijn states that especially Makassarese females were highly sought after by the Dutch.<sup>218</sup> They are described as handsome, light skinned, well-mannered and graceful clothed. This made them stand apart from most other Indonesians, who, according to Valentijn, were darker skinned and often barely clothed.<sup>219</sup> If Makassarese women were commonly regarded as more beautiful, it could explain their numerous presence on the Banda Islands.

In all four years, this same male-female ratio was roughly maintained. In 1699, a slight increase in the female population -in comparison to the male population- can be seen. However, the next year the balance was restored. The sudden increase of 101 male slaves in 1700 suggests that *perkeniers* were able to select which slaves they wished to buy. Overall, the population in 1700 grew with 126 persons, while the number of children decreased. This indicates that a large majority of slaves was imported, as no increase of infant children can be found in the VOC documents.<sup>220</sup>

## 4.2 The age distribution of plantation slaves

The year 1698 was chosen to illustrate the age distribution, as in the respective inspection report all ages of slaves had been noted. In other reports, the age of several people was not recorded and would therefore be an incomplete representation of the slave population. In table 2, the age groups each span 13 years. This allows to differentiate between children (0-12), adolescents or young adults (13-26), adults (27-40), semi-seniors (41-54), seniors (55-68) and elders (69-82).<sup>221</sup> This specific division was chosen as most children were adults after the age of 12. In addition, it differentiates between (in general) healthy and fit age groups (young adults and

---

<sup>215</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f200.

<sup>216</sup> For example: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1662, f109.

<sup>217</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f205.

<sup>218</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 137

<sup>219</sup> Ibidem, 137.

<sup>220</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1637, f98-152.

<sup>221</sup> The hyphen symbol means (regarding table 2) up to and including.

adults) and groups more naturally inclined to suffer from illness and/or body deterioration (children, semi-seniors, seniors and elders). The partition of age by 13 years also allows to include all reported ages of plantation slaves in table 2.

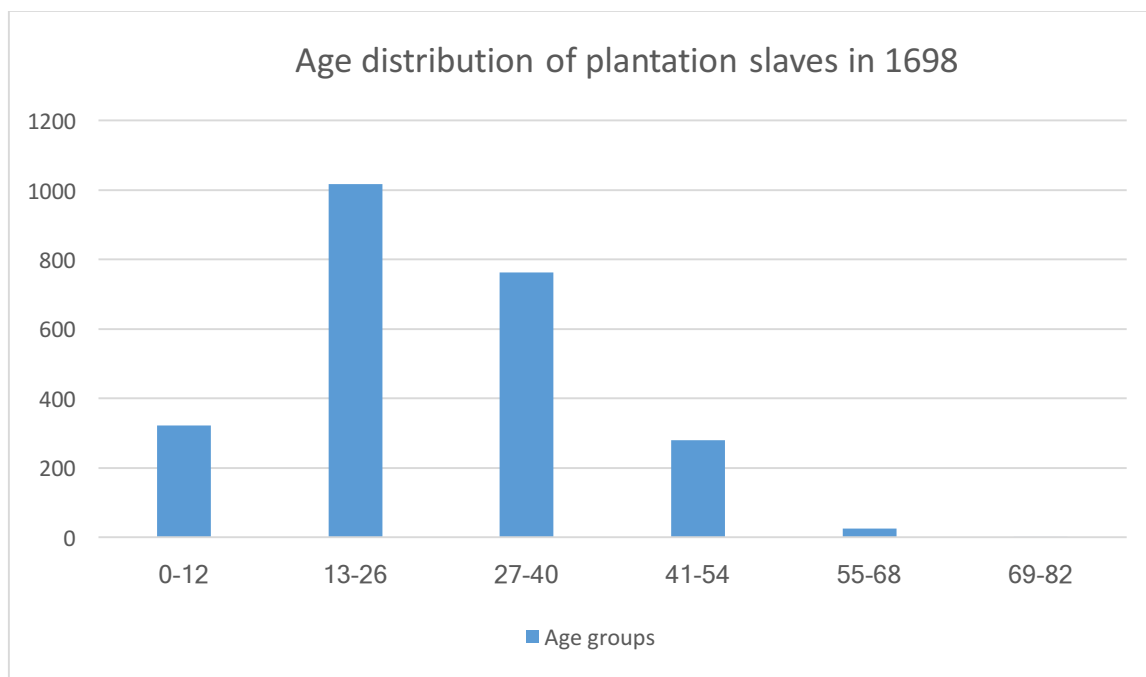


Table 2. The age distribution of the plantation slave population on the Banda Islands in 1698. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f185-235.

As stated earlier, a specific age that determined whether a slave was considered an adult was absent on the Banda Islands. Analysis of the inspection report of 1698 revealed that the youngest adult slave was only 10 years old.<sup>222</sup> On several plantations, children under the age of 13 were put to work. For example, a *perk* had several 10, 11 and 12 year olds working as adults.<sup>223</sup> Another plantation had 3 children of 11 years old registered as adults.<sup>224</sup> On some plantations, children seemed to enjoy more protection. For instance, a *perk* with probably a more empathetic *perkenier*, had 6 slaves between the age of 10 and 12 that were still registered as children.<sup>225</sup>

When observing table 2, it stands out that the majority of plantation slaves were young adults (13-26). A total of 1,018 slaves belong to this category. The age group of adults (27-40) is also significant in size, with 763 people. Considering plantation work demanded physical labour, people belonging to these two age groups were presumably the most productive and healthy. Very few slaves older than 54 worked on the plantations. Only 26 slaves were between 55 and 68 years old. In 1698, the oldest plantation slave was a male of 82 years old.<sup>226</sup> The oldest female was 79 years old.<sup>227</sup> These were the only slaves in the age group 69-82. Thus, the seniors and elders combined were only 28 people. The semi-seniors group (41-54) had a total

<sup>222</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f214.

<sup>223</sup> Ibidem, f214.

<sup>224</sup> Ibidem, f220.

<sup>225</sup> Ibidem, f188.

<sup>226</sup> Ibidem, f222.

<sup>227</sup> Ibidem, f231.

of 280 people. These slaves were arguably less efficient and capable in harvesting nutmeg. This is in contradiction to Carlson, who claims that *perkeniers* tended to install old and unhealthy slaves on the plantations and use younger slaves for other tasks (in trade or in/around the house).<sup>228</sup> As the majority of slaves was within a (in general sense) healthy age range, this claim does not appear to be true for the late seventeenth century.

It is remarkable that there were more children (0-12) on the plantations (323) than slaves in the last three categories combined (308). This could mean the life expectancy of plantation slaves was low. The *perkeniers* may have driven the older slaves into exhaustion. The account of Governor General of the Dutch Indies Van der Capellen on mistreating and neglecting older slaves indicates this was the norm.<sup>229</sup> In addition, the hostile nature of the Banda Islands, with its active volcano releasing toxic fumes, was taxing on the body. Also older people were probably less mobile to seek shelter from reoccurring earthquakes or flee when large tidal waves spread destruction on the islands. Old slaves could however also be transferred to other work or sold if they were not capable of cultivating nutmeg.

In chapter 2, the production process of nutmeg and the work of slaves on the plantations have been discussed. By understanding which duties the slaves had to perform, it could be argued the physical aspect of labour was not highly demanding. This is emphasized as a large proportion of plantation slaves were females. The relative few amount of older people can however indicate that vitality and mobility was important. This leads to wonder why almost only (relatively) young and fit people were present on the *perken*. As the landscape of the Banda Islands is very mountainous, the land of the *perken* was generally not flat. In 1688, Valentijn visited several *perken*, which he found very difficult to navigate due to steep inclines.<sup>230</sup> This can be the reason why not many old slaves worked on the nutmeg plantations; they are not as agile and quick as younger people and had more difficulty navigating through the mountainous terrain. The work on the plantations was therefore not as easy as described by Carlson.<sup>231</sup> It also explains why there was no preference of males over females; only vitality and a young age was required.

### 4.3 Origins of slaves by geographical region

About 60% of plantation slaves on the Banda Islands came from the Moluccas, which can be seen in table 3. The spice production on the Moluccas was extremely profitable for the VOC. On many Moluccan islands, the population was suppressed and in some cases enslaved by the VOC. Compared with other regions slaves originated from, the Moluccas lie closest to the Banda Islands. This is especially the case for islands in the South-Moluccas, as Aru, Kai and Ceram. Most of the Moluccan slaves that lived on the *perken* came from these islands. The Aru and Kai people comprised about 40% of the total plantation slave population on the Banda Islands in the late seventeenth century. Other registered Moluccan origins on the plantations were: Tenimber, Ternate, Ceram, Leti, Ambon, Babber, Kisar, Nila and Tamboeco. These islands can be found in the inspection reports between 1694 and 1700.<sup>232</sup> The demand for slaves

---

<sup>228</sup> Carlson, 'Visibility and Power', 218.

<sup>229</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 102.

<sup>230</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 8-10.

<sup>231</sup> Carlson, 'Visibility and Power', 218.

<sup>232</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs.1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.

probably increased the relevance of several Moluccan Islands that lacked a valuable indigenous commodity. The Aru and Kai Islands for example, are well represented by slaves on the plantations on Banda but other than that do not have a major economic importance. The contribution of the slave trade by these islands enhanced their importance for the VOC, which is also argued by Van 't Hof.<sup>233</sup>

Other regions relatively close to the Banda's were also well represented in the data. A significant amount of plantation slaves were Papuans. These people must have been brought to the *perken* between 1695 and 1696, as no Papuans were present in 1694. As stated in the previous chapter, the VOC and the Bandanese had begun to explore New Guinea in their search for slaves in the late seventeenth century. The inspection report of 1694 suggest that a large slave trade with natives on New Guinea had originated after that year. Table 3 shows about 7% of the total plantation slave population was from New Guinea between 1697 and 1700.

The number of plantation slaves that came from the Greater Sunda Islands (about 18%) can be misleading. Almost no slaves were from the large islands Java or Sumatra. The majority of slaves from the Greater Sunda Islands came from Makassar, a kingdom on Celebes. At the time, Makassar was a major slave trade centre. This could explain why the relative long distance between Makassar and the Banda Islands was of no influence, as it was compensated by convenience and accessibility that a slave trade centre provides. Also other regions on Celebes were included in the inspection report: Butan, Banggai, Toraja and Mandar.

About 10% of the slaves came from the Lesser Sunda Islands. In the inspection reports, the islands Timor, Bali, Damme, Solor and Bima can be found. However, almost all slaves came from Timor.<sup>234</sup> Several Lesser Sunda Islands inhabited a large potential source for slaves, but they were not transported to the Banda's on a large scale. This is especially true for Bali, which had a society in which slavery and enslavement were part of its indigenous culture.<sup>235</sup> However as mentioned earlier, Balinese people were considered dangerous by the VOC and were largely sold outside of VOC territory. In addition, the distance between the Lesser Sunda Islands and the Banda Islands is also greater compared to the Moluccas.

Although the majority of the slaves came from islands in the Dutch Indies, people from Africa and India were also present.<sup>236</sup> However, they constitute to only a small percentage of the total slave population. In the reports, people are registered that originate from Ceylon, Bengal, Malabar and Goa. A few slaves from the east coast of Africa were present. Although there were many more Indian- than African slaves, relatively few lived on the plantations, indicating it was not an important slave source. Indian slaves were in Asia popular in the early seventeenth century, of which the group in the late seventeenth century may have been a residue. The former use of India as a major slave market allowed traders in the late seventeenth century to utilize existing trade networks. Africa was however never a popular region for slaves in the Indonesian archipelago. This can explain why a small, but significant amount of Indians -and a negligible number of Africans- were imported to the Banda Islands in the late seventeenth century.

---

<sup>233</sup> Van 't Hof, *Het Kansrijke buitengewest Aru*, 63.

<sup>234</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>235</sup> Van der Kraan, 'Bali: Slavery and Slave Trade', 315-340.

<sup>236</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1637, f98-152.

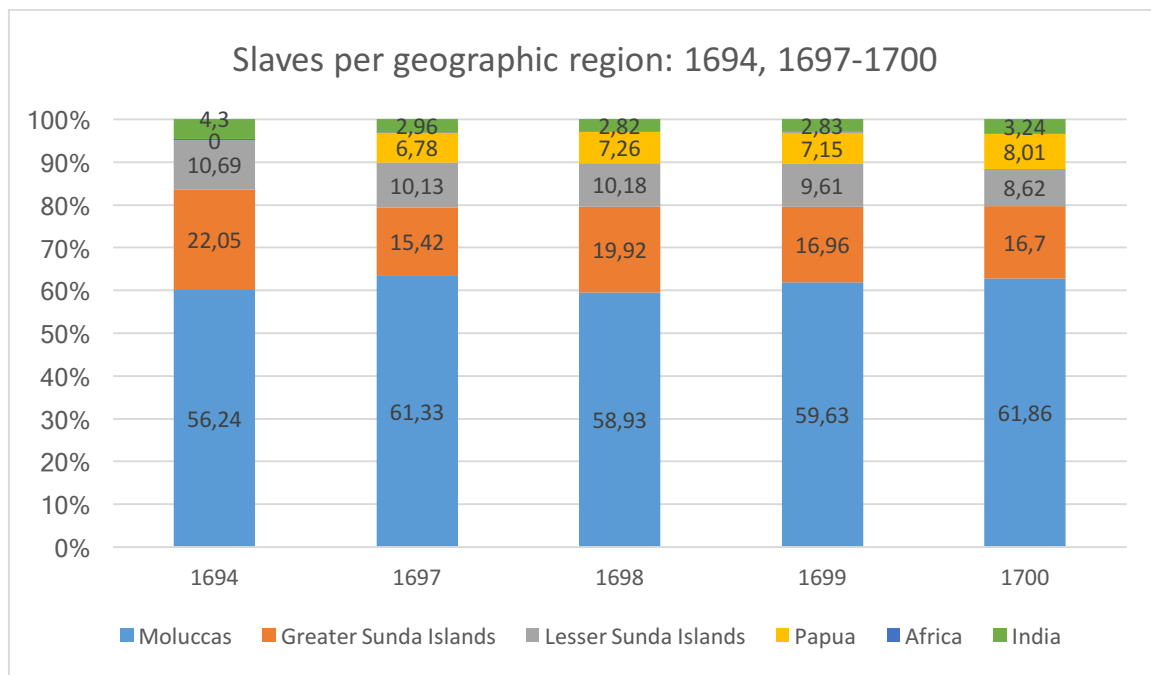


Table 3. The origin of plantation slaves per geographical region in 1694 and 1697-1700. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.

Analysis of the origins of plantation slaves illustrated by table 3 shows which regions were popular as a slave source and whether the distance between Banda and a slave export region was of any significance. For the years 1694 and 1697-1700, it can be concluded the majority of the slaves came from nearby regions. This had a logistical advantage, as shipping time and costs would therefore be minimized. A comprehensive view of the numerous origins can be found in appendix 1. In the upcoming paragraph, diagrams of each inspection report will be discussed that illustrate separate ethnicity groups and their size.

#### 4.4 The ethnicities of plantation slaves

Although many locations have previously been mentioned of which slaves originated from, about 85% of the slaves on the plantations came from six islands or regions. The diagram in table 4 depicts the largest ethnicity groups of plantation slaves on the Banda Islands in 1694. In 1694, these were Makassar, Aru, Timor, Kai, Ceram and the Banda Islands. Most slaves had the Makassarese ethnicity, comprising to almost a fifth share of the total population. Apart from the six largest groups, most slaves came from Tenimber (2,89%) and Butan (3%). About 4% came from India, from the regions Bengal and Malabar. Almost 10% of the slave population had a highly diverse background, which can be found in appendix 1.

From the 14,52% of slaves that were native Bandanese, the majority was underage.<sup>237</sup> This deviates from other ethnicity groups, of which there were always more adults than children present. The relative few children in origin groups (apart from the Bandanese) was in proportion to the average age of plantation slaves, which can be seen in tables 1 and 2. In general, most child-slaves were registered as Bandanese. Although it is not noted within the inspection reports, it is logical to assume the majority of these children were born on the Banda's but did

<sup>237</sup> With the term underage, the former local interpretation is ment (in general below the age of thirteen).

not necessarily have ancestral ties on the islands. These could have been children born out of a union between slaves that worked on the *perken* and were subsequently given the Bandanese ethnicity by the inspection report editors or *perkeniers*. Another explanation –that Bandanese people were extreme fertile and other ethnicities were not- is less plausible.

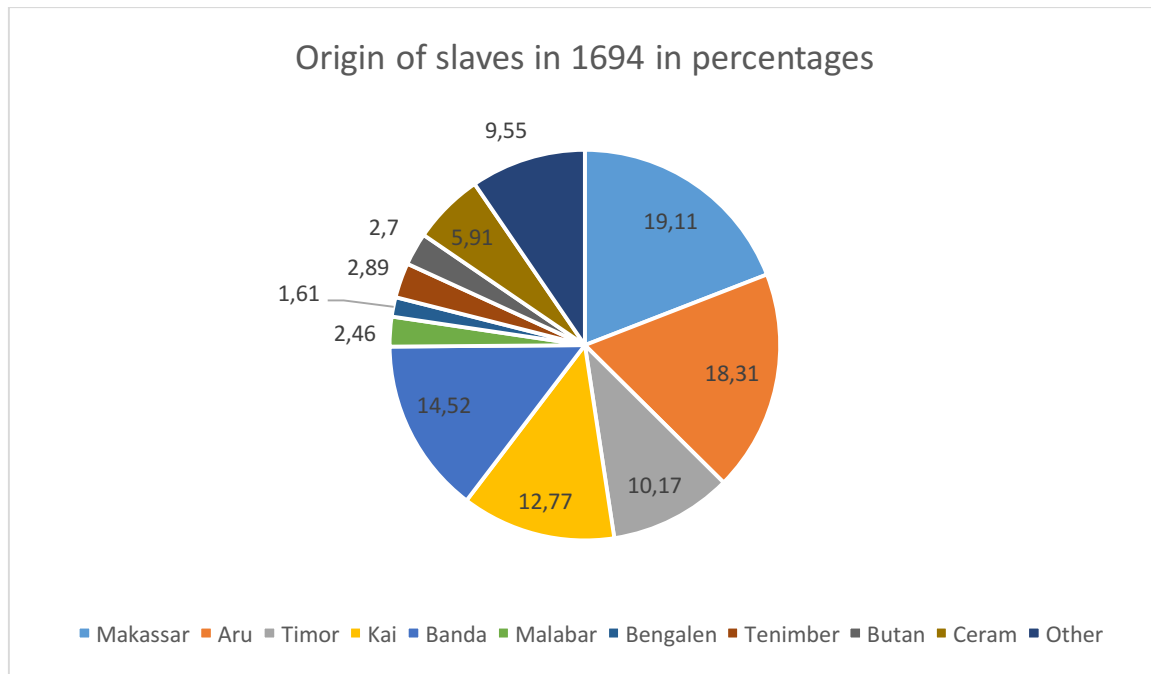


Table 4. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1694. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, f248-304.

What is interesting and unique about the inspection report of 1694, is that it includes remarks whether each individual *perk* had sufficient slaves. Major shortages in slave labour demanded not only a high import of slaves, but also a redistribution of labour between individual *perken*. What becomes clear from the inspection report of 1694, is that there was a major misbalance on the division of plantation slaves. Some *perken* had dozens of slaves in excess, while others lacked slaves. This can be explained by a difference in wealth, which allowed rich *perkeniers* to buy plenty of slaves, at the cost of the poor *perkeniers*. This was apparently a problem that had gone on for years. In *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, Valentijn reports on these problems.<sup>238</sup> During his stay on the Banda Islands, Valentijn visited every individual *perk* and made comments in his comprehensive work. When discussing the *perken*, he reports a similar major misbalance in the division of plantation slaves in 1688. Just as in 1694, almost all *perkeniers* had too many or too few slaves.<sup>239</sup> If the shortage or surplus of every individual *perk* is tallied up, the inspection report of 1694 reveals a total shortage of 405 people.<sup>240</sup> Unfortunately, there are no similar remarks in the other inspection reports that mention an excess or shortage of slaves. The lack of these comments could instigate that efforts have been made to solve the problem. Also, in the *Generale Missiven* of 1695 a redistribution of plantation

<sup>238</sup> Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III:B, 4-10, 28-29.

<sup>239</sup> Ibidem, 4-10, 28-29; NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1551, f248-304.

<sup>240</sup> Ibidem, f248-304. In fact, the total shortage was 405,5 people. One *perk* had a shortage of 4,5 people. It is unclear when people would be regarded half a person.

slaves was ordered.<sup>241</sup> It can be assumed that six years later, in 1700, all previous shortages were solved. The total slave population had grown with 523 people, which should enable all *perkeniers* to have sufficient slaves if a proper redistribution had been executed.

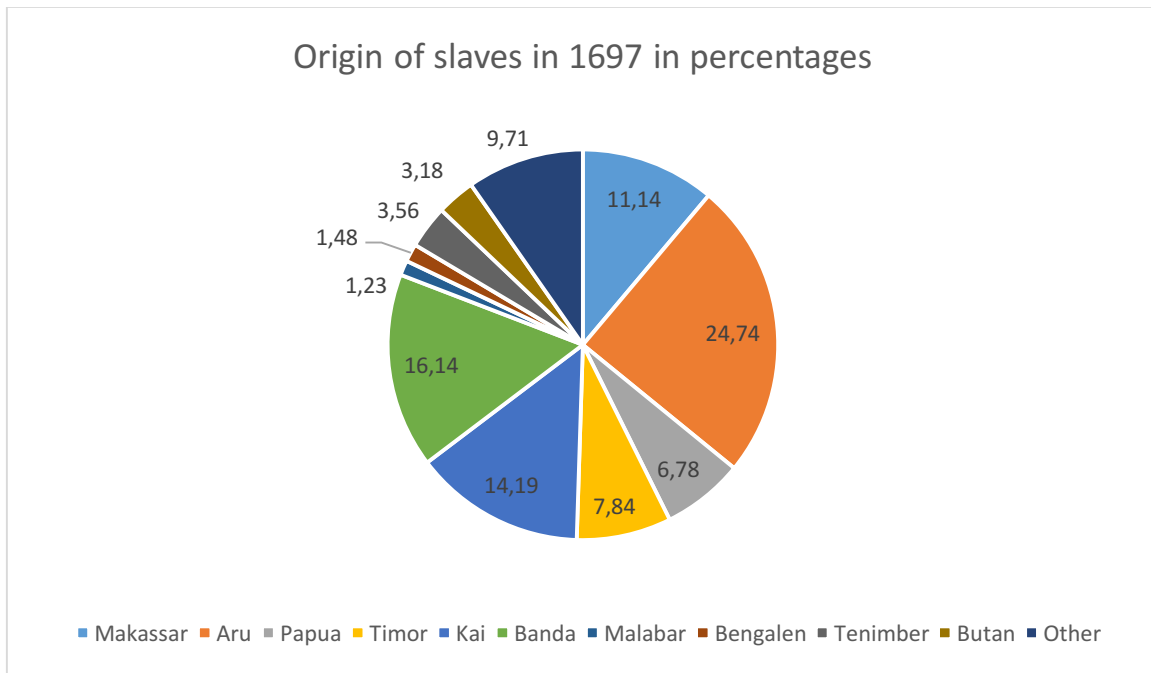


Table 5. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1697. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1595, f167-225.

Table 5 shows the ethnicity of the *perken* slaves for the year 1697. The most frequent origins in descending order were: Aru (24,74%), Banda (16,14%), Kai (14,19%), Makassar (11,14%), Timor (7,84%), Papua (6,78%), Tenimber (3,56%), Butan (3,18%), Bengal (1,48%) and Malabar (1,23%). The ‘other’ origins, combined with the ‘unknown’, sum up to 9,71%. Comparing the population of 1697 with 1694, a few changes in the demographic stand out. Most significant is the sudden influx of Papuan slaves. In 1694, no slaves from New Guinea were present. Three years later, a total of 160 Papuans appear to have worked on the plantations, constituting to almost 7% of the total plantation slave population. The need for labour may stimulated the slave traders to seek untapped slave sources in the region. This indicates the nutmeg trade directly resulted in the enslavement of Papuans and created a new slave trade network. The relative late exploration of New Guinea aids this argument. Furthermore, Papuans from the Raja Ampat Islands have been known to perform raids in the region and enslaved their captives.<sup>242</sup>

In addition to the appearance of the Papuans, more changes occurred between 1694 and 1697. The disappearance of a lot of people from Ceram in the inspection report of 1697 is remarkable. Where as many as 125 Ceramese were present in 1694, only 16 remained in 1697. Also, there were substantial less Makassarese in 1697. This group decreased with 141 people, leaving a remainder of 263. The fate of these people, if they died, escaped or were sold is unknown. The Arunese on the contrary, significantly increased in numbers. Their group had a

<sup>241</sup> Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven* V, 715.

<sup>242</sup> Knaap, ‘Robbers and Traders: Papuan Piracy in the Seventeenth Century’, 168-170.

6% increase in total share of the population, due to 197 new arrivals. The plantations on the Banda's had also become more diverse, with an increase in ethnicity groups. In 1694, 27 distinct ethnicities were reported. A total of 33 origins can be found in the inspection report of 1697.

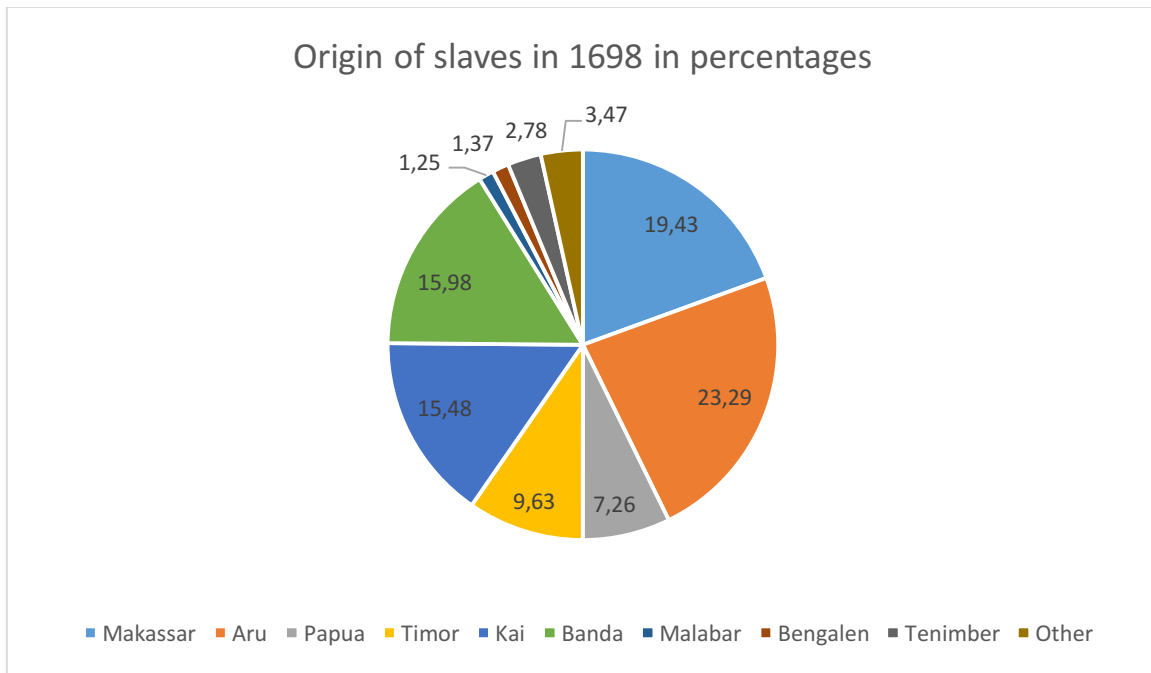


Table 6. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1698. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f185-235.

Derived from the inspection report of 1698, the most frequent origins of plantation slaves were: Aru (23,38%), Makassar (19,5%), Banda (16,04%), Kai (15,54%), Timor (9,67%) and Papua (7,29%). Compared with the previous year, the origin of the slave population changed significantly. Most noticeable are the fluctuations among the Makassarese, Butanese, Timorese, Bimanese and Arunese. Comparing tables 5 and 6, a large increase in the number of Makassarese slaves can be seen. The group of slaves from Makassar grew with 77% (205 people) compared to the year before. This increased their share of the total plantation slave population with almost 8%. The number of Timorese also increased. A total of 47 additional slaves from Timor were noted, expanding their size to 232 people. There were far less Butanese, as their group declined to 0.08% of the population. Only one year prior, they made up 3,29% of the population. The inspection report reveals that a total of 73 Butonese were no longer present on the plantations in 1698. The Bimanese disappeared as a whole, as from the eighteen people present in 1697 none remained a year later.<sup>243</sup> Lastly, the group of Arunese declined slightly from 584 the year prior, to 561 in 1698.

What becomes apparent, is that the plantations became less heterogeneous in 1698. The number of different ethnicities declined to 26; a decrease of 7 origins. Interestingly, there are far less 'unknown' origins in 1698. The group 'other' is less than half the size in 1698 (3,16%) compared to 1697 (6,59%). As the ethnicities of more people are recovered, an increase in the number of origins would be logical to follow. However, the inspection report of 1698 shows

<sup>243</sup> Appendix 1.



another trend. The data suggests large ethnicity groups expanded, while smaller groups decreased or even disappeared from the plantations.

The changes in composition reveals much more information than what can be read from the size and growth of the plantation slave population alone. Although the slave population grew with 2%, which were 48 people, the composition change within the slave population was far greater. This means that the number of slaves imported to the Banda Islands was greater than what can be seen from the annual increase of the total slave population.

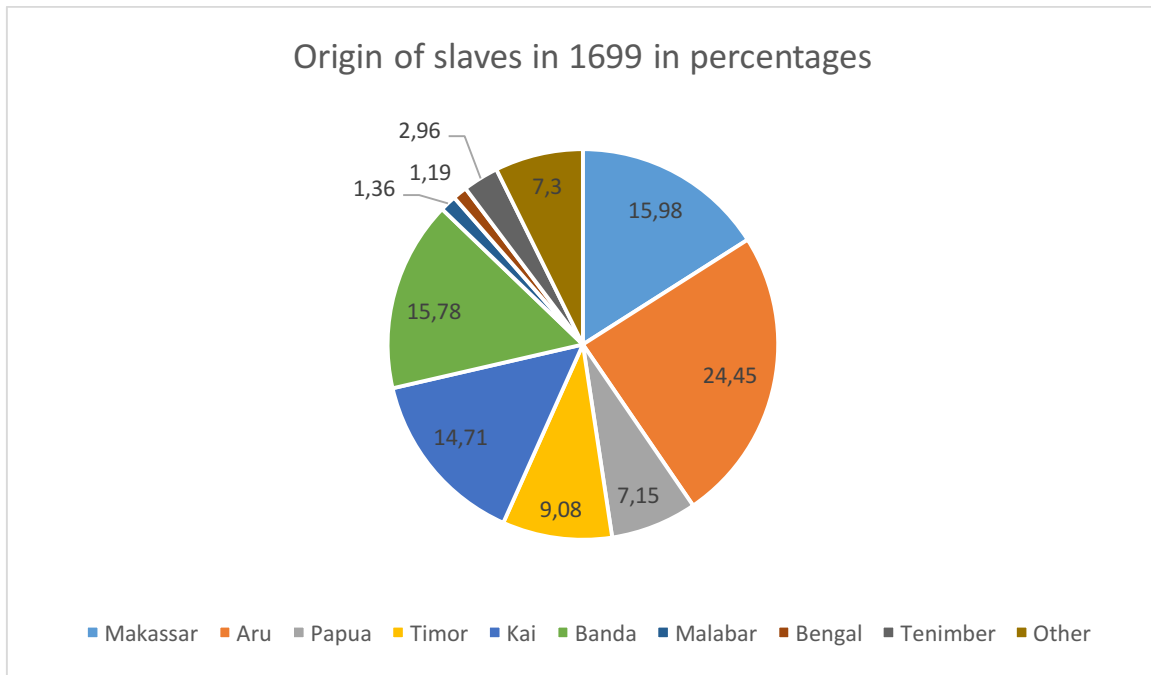


Table 7. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1699. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1622, f81-120.

The composition of the plantation slave population in 1699 can be seen in table 7. The same six ethnicities as previous years remained the largest in 1699. Overall, no significant changes occurred. The diversity of the population increased slightly to 28 distinct origins. The previous high fluctuation in the number of slaves within distinct groups stabilized in 1699. Still, slight increases and decreases remained prevalent. Compared to the year before, changes in the group of the Makassarese is most noticeable. The number of Makassarese declined with about 17%, as 79 people from this group disappeared from the report. The highest increase in absolute numbers was in former inhabitants of the Aru Islands, as an additional 34 people were added. The data shows the ‘other’ group more than doubled compared to the previous year. The changes within the demographic that occurred in 1698, were somewhat restored in 1699. However, it must be mentioned that this year’s inspection report had more unknown origins than previous years. One large *perk* lacked any information about the origins of the slaves and only the total amount was registered.<sup>244</sup> These were a total of sixty people, which have been categorised in the ‘unknown’ group. These ‘unknown’ people increased to 3,615% in 1699,

<sup>244</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1622, f111.

compared to only 0,167% the year prior. In table 7, the the increment of the ‘unknown’ group can be seen.

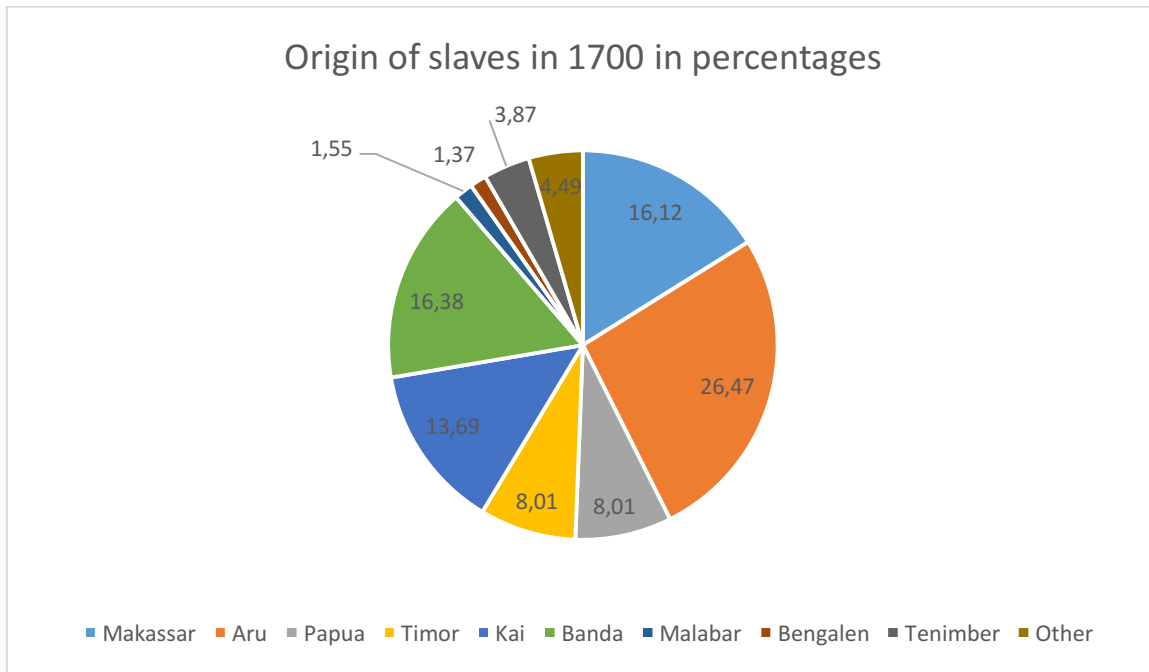


Table 8. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1700. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1637, f98-152.

Just as all the previous inspection reports that have been discussed, the majority of plantation slaves in 1700 were from the same six regions as before, although their share increased to 88,68%. Apart from the 8,34% increase in population, an additional shift in the demographic can be seen. Compared to 1699, most new slaves came from Aru and New Guinea in 1700. In this year, the Arunese grew with 103 people and the number of Papuans increased with 38 slaves. Less people from Timor are mentioned in the report. In absolute numbers the group lost eight persons; a decrease from 221 persons in 1699 to 213 people in 1700. Due to the large increase of the total population, the share of the Timorese declined with about 1%. Most noticeable is that the share of the ‘other’ group was significantly decreased by almost 3%.

The regions of Malabar, Bengal and Tenimber continued to maintain a significant and stable population on the *perken* throughout the 1690’s. In 1700, all three regions show an increment compared with the year prior. The group from Tenimber (in total 102 people) grew the most with 30 additional slaves. Eight new people from Malabar arrived, resulting in a total of 41. From Bengal a total of 36 people were registered; seven more than the inspection report of 1699 accounts for.<sup>245</sup> This proves that during this period, slaves from India were still imported to the Dutch Indies and the Banda Islands specifically. Although the far majority of slaves came from nearby regions, early seventeenth century slave sources were still utilized in the 1690’s. The demand of slaves exceeded the supply, which may have been compensated with slaves from more remote locations. In letters to VOC officials, *perkeniers* often complained about an insufficient amount of slaves and demanded more.<sup>246</sup>

<sup>245</sup> NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1622 and 1637.

<sup>246</sup> Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, 61.

The number of distinct ethnicity groups was the highest in 1700.<sup>247</sup> During this year, a total of 33 different ethnicities were present on the plantations.<sup>248</sup> Apart from the nine regions illustrated in table 8, there were 24 origins that constituted less than 1% of the total slave population. From these 24 regions, 10 groups had very few people living on the Banda Islands. These were often slaves from distant regions, as Angola and Madagascar for example. Also, one slave from Savo (Salomon Islands) and one slave from Komo (Fiji Islands) were registered in 1700. The Fiji- and Salomon Islands lie east of New Guinea, on considerable distance from the Banda Islands. When few people from a specific location were present, it is more plausible they had arrived on the plantations by coincidence, rather than an indication that a region was systematically utilized to acquire slaves for nutmeg cultivation.

### Concluding remarks

The inspection reports of the late seventeenth century allow to make several new observations. The slave population managed to recover and even increase while suffering great losses due to natural disasters. This was through efforts by the VOC to increase import and lift restrictions. In 1700, the population had increased with 24,7%, compared to 1694. The majority of plantation slaves were females, although this did not differentiate much with the number of males. The age distribution of 1698 show that in general, plantation slaves were in the prime of their life. *Perkeniers* did not rely on old slaves for the production of nutmeg, but instead on younger people. Also, a large redistribution of slaves among the *perken* was made to improve efficiency and production in the 1690's.

As the shortages on the plantations needed to be restored, an efficient distribution of slaves among the *perkeniers* was warranted. The inspection reports directly provided this information for the VOC. Furthermore, if we neglect the possibility of corruption, the inspection reports gave an accurate account of the situation that was not falsifiable. It did not matter if individual *perkeniers* had more money or power to arrogate slaves. The surplus or shortage was reviewable by the VOC. This enabled the VOC to assess which *perken* were most in need of slaves. The need for more insight into the state of affairs of the *perken* could be the instigating factor for making the inspection reports. However, the reports of 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700 lack the remarks on a surplus or shortage of slaves. It could be that the misbalance was restored after 1694 and a redistribution of slaves among the *perken* occurred. Still, the inspection reports continued to provide information to the VOC that was reviewable. The shortage of labour, in addition to the misbalance, could have been the primary reason for a more detailed annual account of the plantation slave population. It was however abandoned after Coyett's reign. Direct cause had passed and the process was maybe too time consuming.

It is interesting that the slave population on Banda inhabited many different cultures and origins. A total of 39 distinct ethnicities are mentioned in the reports of the 1690's. However, the different origins of slaves does not mean a global slave trade network was utilized in the acquirement. Although slaves from distant regions could be found on the *perken*, most came from nearby islands. Regional slave trade was dominant. This was stimulated through the demand that had arisen from the nutmeg plantations. Especially the Aru- and Kai Islands and

---

<sup>247</sup> This is shared with the year 1697, which also had 33 distinct origins.

<sup>248</sup> Possibly more when considering the unreported origins entailed in the 'unknown' group.

New Guinea can be linked to this development. These islands were among the six major origins of which plantation slaves came from. In general, the population of these six primary slave sources was also the most stable. The population of other ethnicity groups could highly differentiate on a year to year basis. For example, whereas inhabitants of Ceram and Butan maintained a significant presence on the Banda Islands in 1694, several years later their importance as a slave source disappeared. These groups show a great decline in numbers after the arrival of Papuans, which implies a shift was made in slave sources.

The plantation slaves became inherently less heterogeneous. In 1700, 88,68% of slaves came from six regions, whereas in 1694 this was 80,79%. As the VOC was an important supplier of slaves and had a high degree of control over the *perken*, the organization could decide which ethnicities worked on the plantations on the Banda Islands. It appears that the benefits of regional trade prevailed. Also, a trend can be seen in significant differences in the size of ethnic groups on a year-to-year basis.<sup>249</sup> This indicates that the import of slaves on the Banda's in the late seventeenth century was far greater than what was indicated by the VOC. When only considering the total number of plantation slaves, the growth of the population shows an increase that somewhat matches with the estimate of an annual import of 100-200 slaves. If we observe the additional data that is revealed through the origin of slaves, it becomes apparent a far greater annual import of slaves occurred than what was previously assumed.

---

<sup>249</sup> For more examples, view appendix 1.

## Conclusion

The plantation system of the Banda Islands in the 1690's was discussed in the chapters of this thesis. By focussing on the plantation slave population, with the aid of primary sources as the *Generale Missiven* and the inspection reports, new claims can be made about the *perkeniersstelsel*. At the start of this thesis several research questions were posed. These will now be answered.

As the origins of plantation slaves was unknown, the scope of the slave trade network regarding the Banda Islands remained unclear. This invoked the question: where did the slaves on the Banda Islands came from? The data shows the far majority of slaves came from six regions. In the 1690's, about 85% of plantation slaves came from: the Aru Islands, the Kai Islands, Makassar, Timor, New Guinea and the Bands Islands. The supply of slaves from New Guinea may have been instigated through the high shortage of labour on the *perken*. While no Papuans were present in 1694, from 1697 onwards about 7% of the plantation slaves came from New Guinea.

Valentijn stated the people of the *Zuidoostelijke Eilanden* were in constant conflict with each other. This is an important cause and explanation for the many *perken* slaves from the Kai- and Aru Islands. The remaining 15% of the plantation slaves came from more than 25 different regions. While the six largest groups grew (in absolute numbers and relative to the total plantation slave population), the smaller groups declined or stagnated. The 1690's show a trend in which plantation slaves originated increasingly from a few select locations. However, the population was highly heterogeneous as no ethnicity had a majority in share. The largest group were the Arunese, with about 25% of the total plantation slave population. The ethnicities reveal most slaves came from islands near the Banda's. This indicates that the *perkeniersstelsel* was primarily supplied with slaves from the region, instead of the (larger) Indian Ocean slave trade network.

Only for a few years the size of the plantation slave population on the Banda Islands was known. However, the inspection reports revealed the size of the plantation slave population in the 1690's. This instigated the second question: how large was the plantation slave population? The first year that was analysed (1694) shows a population of 2,114 slaves. Vink's statement that 1,879 plantation slaves lived on the Banda Islands in 1694 is therefore invalidated. From 1697 to 1700, the population was in succeeding order; 2,361, 2,409, 2,434 and 2,637 *perken* slaves. The population of 2,114 people in 1694 increased to 2637 in 1700. This was an increase of 24,7%. This was stimulated by the reassessment of the total number of slaves required on the *perken*. Initially, the number of 1,879 slaves was considered ideal, in the 1690's this was reviewed and increased to 2,601 slaves. As the total number of plantations slaves was 2,637 in 1700, the newly set goal was met in just a few years.

Although the population increased significantly in a few years, which is in a general sense an indicator that the group is prospering, we know from contemporary sources the 1690's was a tumultuous decade. Many natural disasters plagued the islands. The volcano erupted frequent; releasing large rocks, debris and toxic fumes in the air. In addition, earthquakes and tidal waves occurred. Also smallpox infected the islands, resulting in many sick and deceased people. Overall, the natural disasters and epidemics in the 1690's were highly destructive and

caused many deaths, also among the *perken* slave population. In general, these conditions do not stimulate a high birth-rate. It is therefore remarkable the plantation slave population rapidly increased. This summons the question: How many slaves were imported on an annual basis to supply the *perkeniersstelsel*?

Considering the mentioned circumstances, a large decrease in population would be logical. Jacobs stated an import of 100 was required to maintain the size of the plantation slave population. Considering the 1690's had more deaths than usual, this number (to maintain the status quo) was probably higher for this specific period. The *Generale Missiven* of 1680, before the eruptions of the volcano, mention a total import of 150 to 200 per year. This was before the proposed size of the slave population was increased to 2,601 in 1694. Furthermore, appendix 1 shows that ethnicity groups could rapidly diminish in size. Since ethnicity groups were scattered and divided over plantations, it indicates origin could have a role in the absence of people. Maybe they were sold, as the *perkeniers* and the VOC considered some ethnicities undesirable as slaves. While the reasons for the absence is speculative, the disappearance of groups is proven by the inspection reports. Thus, to rapidly increase the size of the plantation slave population, while dealing with many deaths and departures of slaves, the annual import of slaves must have been far higher in the 1690's than the statement mentioned in the *Generale Missiven* of 150-200. Without the data of the annual imports, a more precise assessment is unfortunately impossible.

Characteristics of plantation slaves have not been extensively analysed by academics. Therefore, the question was posed: What aspects can be allocated to the *perken* slave population and what does this reveal about the *perkeniersstelsel*? The data shows that the gender division of plantation slaves was pretty even divided, although in all years slightly more females were present. This tells us that the work on the plantations was not very physical. However, the high number of female slaves can also be explained by the *perkeniers*' urges to acquire mistresses and/or wives, as not many Dutch women were available. The data also reveals the far majority of slaves were within a healthy age range, in contrary to Carlson's statement that *perkeniers* tended to use old slaves on the plantations. Plantation slaves were constantly working, producing nutmeg and mace or performing secondary tasks. These tasks did not rely on physical strength; more on endurance. Although the duties of plantation slaves did not demand hard physical labour, the landscape could be rough to navigate. This can explain why there was no preferred gender of slaves while at the same time a preference for young or fit people existed. Not many plantation slaves were present in 1698 that were above the age of 40 and almost none were older than 54.

In addition to what the data of the inspection reports revealed about the gender and age of plantation slaves, other primary sources as *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* and the *Generale Missiven* point towards the problem of escape and rebellion of slaves in the *perkeniersstelsel*. The fear of rebellion was present among both the *perkeniers* and the VOC. This also explains why the *perkeniers* and the VOC disapproved of certain ethnicities that they considered stronger than others. While some slaves rebelled, for example the group that was killed in Neira in 1702, most tried to escape. *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* and the *Generale Missiven* indicate that slaves that fled often managed to regain their freedom. Apart from the basic urge of people to live in freedom, the abuse and neglect that was present in the *perkeniersstelsel* stimulated slaves to escape and/or rebel.

This thesis also aimed to assess the involvement of the VOC in the slave trade on the Banda Islands in the 1690's. Therefore, was the VOC the primary supplier of plantation slaves and to which degree was their involvement? Statistics of the slave trade in VOC territories in the Indian Ocean region instigate that maybe between 675,000 and 1,150,000 slaves have been traded over the course of several centuries. These numbers include the participation of numerous slave trading parties, as *burghers*, VOC employees and many Asian merchants. However, due to the lack of sources, substantial proof is lacking. Allen has made an assessment more directly founded on primary sources and reaches an estimation of 67,387 to 91,687 slaves. The exact share of the VOC within this trade is however unclear, as multiple parties were involved in the trade. It is known the VOC (as a company) traded slaves, but their participation cannot be compared with the share of the WIC in the transatlantic slave trade.

Historians (Hanna, Carlson, Loth) claim the VOC was the primary supplier of plantation slaves to the *perkeniersstelsel*. Several accounts of slave shipments performed by the VOC in the *Generale Missiven* prove the Company was directly involved. However, evidence that supports the claim that the VOC was the primary supplier is absent. Agreements between the VOC and the *perkeniers* do in fact suggest the Company was tasked with the supply of slaves. How many slaves were supplied by the VOC remains unknown. Van Rossum states that 600 slaves were supplied to the Banda Islands in the eighteenth century by the VOC. The high annual imports in the 1690's strongly indicates that the supply of 600 slaves over the duration of a whole century is far too less if the VOC was in fact the primary supplier.

In general, *perkeniers* often complained that not enough slaves were provided by the VOC and demanded more. It is more likely that the VOC was originally tasked with the supply, but failed to meet demand. This thesis has argued the evidence of several other parties that traded slaves on the Banda Islands. Most importantly, the merchants from nearby islands (as the Aru- and Kai Islands) are likely to have provided the *perkeniers* with many slaves. These merchants were explicitly forbidden to sell their slaves on other islands then the Banda Islands. In addition, the slaves from the *Zuidoostelijke Eilanden* were desired by the *perkeniers*, as they were sold cheap. It is therefore more plausible the VOC was, at least in the 1690's, not the primary supplier of slaves, as other data that proves otherwise is absent. The VOC did influence the slave trade by regulations, but direct participation in the supply was marginal.

Next, the position of the VOC in the slave trade towards the Banda Islands needs to be put into perspective. This invokes the question: why was the VOC more directly involved in the slave trade regarding the Banda Islands in comparison to the rest of their territories? This answer lies in the concept of the *perkeniersstelsel*. This system was fairly unique in Southeast Asia and resembles more with the plantations in the Americas. As a large proportion of the population on the Banda Islands was slaughtered in 1621, almost no foundation remained upon which an economy could be built. This required direct supervision and interference of the VOC in order to realize their plans to produce nutmeg and mace on a large scale. The sources indicate that at the start of the *perkeniersstelsel*, the VOC was more directly involved in the slave trade in order to ensure longevity of the new project which allowed to attract sufficient people for the position of *perkenier*. Without this insurance, not many people would have been willing to embark on the production of nutmeg as their profits were highly dependable on the amount of slaves available to gather nutmeg and mace. However, as the *perkeniersstelsel* had matured and

other parties appeared that could supply slaves, the VOC's responsibility of providing slaves diminished.

As a final note, many new insights can be derived from the inspection reports. However, this only encompasses a short period of the *perkeniersstelsel*. The VOC archives could potentially contain more valuable information which has not been discovered yet. Therefore, more research into slave populations could not only aid our understanding of the *perkeniersstelsel*, but also the mechanics and size of the slave trade in the region.



## Bibliography

### Primary sources

#### Archives

*National Archive, The Hague*

Archive of the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), 1602-1795, access nr. 1.04.02.

Heren Zeventien en kamer van Amsterdam

Overgekomen brieven en papieren uit Indië aan de Heren XVII en de kamer Amsterdam (deel 1/E.5.a):

1551; 1595; 1608; 1622; 1637; 1662.

#### Printed primary sources

Coolhaas, W.P. ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie IV: 1675-1685* (The Hague 1971).

Coolhaas, W.P. ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie V: 1686-1697* (The Hague 1975).

Coolhaas, W.P. ed., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie VI: 1698-1713* (The Hague 1976).

Stapel, F.W. ed., *Pieter van Dam's Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie 1639-1701 II:1* (Den Haag 1931).

Valentijn, F., *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën, Vervattende Een Nauwkeurige en Uitvoerige Verhandeling van Nederlands Mogentheyd In die Gewesten III:A* (Franeker 2002).

Valentijn, F., *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën, Vervattende Een Nauwkeurige en Uitvoerige Verhandeling van Nederlands Mogentheyd In die Gewesten III:B* (Franeker 2002).

### Secondary sources

Allen, R.B., *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800* (Athens 2015).

Allen, R.B., 'European Slave Trading, Abolitionism, and 'new systems of slavery' in the Indian Ocean', *Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* 9:1 (2012) 1-21.

Bosma, U., and R. Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Athens 2008).

Carlson, D.R., and A.J. Jordan, 'Visibility and Power: Preliminary Analysis of Social Control on a Bandanese Plantation Compound, Eastern Indonesia', *Asian Perspectives* 52:2 (2013) 213-243.

Ellen, R., 'Pottery production and trade in the Banda zone, Indonesia: The Kei tradition in its spatial and historical context', *Indonesia and the Malay World* 47:138 (2019) 133-159.

Fox, J., 'For Good and Sufficient Reasons': An Examination of Early Dutch East India Company Ordinances on Slaves and Slavery', in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Lucia 1983) 246-262.

Gommans, J., 'Rethinking the VOC: Two Cheers for Progress', *Low Countries Historical Review* 134:2 (2019) 142-152.

- Hanna, W.A., *Indonesian Banda: Colonialism and Its Aftermath in the Nutmeg Islands* (Philadelphia 1978).
- Hof, L. van 't, *Het Kansrijke buitengewest Aru: Hoe en waarom de VOC het beleid voor handel en religie uitvoerde op de Aru-eilanden in de periode 1658-1694* (Leiden 2019).
- Ittersum, M. van, 'Empire by Treaty?: The role of written documents in European overseas expansion, 1500-1800', in: A. Clulow and T. Mostert eds., *The Dutch and English East India Companies* (Amsterdam 2018) 153-179.
- Jacobs, E.M., *Koopman in Azië: de handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tijdens de achttiende eeuw* (Zuthphen 2000).
- Jordan, A.J., *The Price of Spice: Archaeological Investigations of Colonial Era Nutmeg Plantations on the Banda Islands, Maluku Province, Indonesia* (Washington 2016).
- Knaap, G.J. 'Robbers and Traders: Papuan Piracy in the Seventeenth Century', in: J. Kleinen and M. Osseweijer eds., *Pirates, Ports and Coasts in Asia: Historical and Contemporary perspectives* (Leiden 2010) 147-177.
- Kraan, A. van der, 'Bali: Slavery and Slave Trade', in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Lucia 1983) 315-341.
- Leupe, P.A., 'De Verovering der Banda-Eilanden', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlands-Indië* 2:4 (1854) 384-430.
- Loth, V.C., 'Pioneers and Perkeniers: The Banda Islands in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century', *Cakalele* 6 (1995) 13-35.
- Loth, V.C., 'Armed Incidents and Unpaid Bills: Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Banda Islands in the Seventeenth Century', *Modern Asian Studies* 29:4 (1995) 705-740.
- Mbeki, L., and M. van Rossum, 'Private slave trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean world: a study into the networks and backgrounds of the slavers and the enslaved in South Asia and South Africa', *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 38:1 (2016) 95-116.
- Postma, J.M., *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815* (Cambridge 1990).
- Raben, R., 'Ethnic Disorder in voc Asia: A Plea for Eccentric Reading', *Low countries Historical Review* 134:2 (2019) 115-128.
- Reid, A., 'Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in South-east Asian History', in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Lucia 1983) 1-43.
- Reid, A. "'Closed' and 'Open' Slave Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia", in: A. Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Lucia 1983) 156-181.
- Rossum, M. van, "'Labouring Transformations of Amphibious Monsters: Exploring Early Modern Globalization, Diversity, and Shifting Clusters of Labour Relations in the Context of the Dutch East India Company (1600-1800)'", *International Institute of Social History* 64 (2019) 19-42.
- Rossum, M. van, "'Vervloekte goudzugt': De VOC, slavenhandel en slavernij in Azië", *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 12:4 (2015) 29-57.
- Rossum, M. van, et al., 'Over Amok in Nederlands-Indische Rechtzaken' *Acta Historica* 3:4 (2014) 1-47.
- Spores, J.C., *Running Amok: An Historical Enquiry* (Athens 1988).
- Villiers, J., 'Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century', *Modern*

- Asian Studies* 15:4 (1981) 723-750.
- Vink, M., 'Freedom and Slavery: The Dutch Republic, the VOC World, and the Debate over the 'World's Oldest Trade'', *South African Historical Journal* 59:1 (2007) 19-46.
- Vink, M., 'The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch slavery and slave trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of World History* 14:2 (2003) 131-177.
- Ward, K., *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge 2009).
- Welie, R. van, 'Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire: A Global Comparison', *New West Indian Guide* 82:1&2 (2008) 47-96.
- Winn, P., 'Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41:3 (2010) 365-389.
- Witteveen, W.M., *Antonio van Diemen: De opkomst van de VOC in Azië* (Amsterdam 2011).
- Wright, H.R.C., 'The Moluccan Spice Monopoly, 1770-1824', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 31:4 (1958) 1-127.

### Sources figures

- Figure 1. Map of the Banda Islands. G. onder den Linden, 1724-1726. Source: Scheepsvaartmuseum 109 06 kaart 173.
- Figure 2. Admiral Verhoeven murdered. D. de Jong, 1785. Source: Koninklijke Bibliotheek 227 K 2 deel VI, 78.
- Figure 3. Map of Pulau Run. Anonymous, 1635. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f102.
- Figure 4. Map of West Lonthor. Anonymous, 1632. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K4777 f69-70.
- Figure 5. Map of Pulau Ai. Anonymous, 1635. Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f86.
- Figure 6. Map of Banda Api and Neira. Anonymous, 1635. Source: Badische Landesbibliothek K477 f63.

### Sources tables

- Table 1. The size of the plantation slave population on the Banda Islands: 1694, 1697-1700. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.
- Table 2. The age distribution of the plantation slave population on the Banda Islands in 1698. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f185-235.
- Table 3. The origin of plantation slaves per geographical region in 1694 and 1697-1700. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.
- Table 4. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1694. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1551, f248-304.
- Table 5. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1697. Source: National Archive, The

Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1595, f167-225.

Table 6. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1698. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1608, f185-235.

Table 7. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1699. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1622, f81-120.

Table 8. The origin of the plantation slave population in 1700. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nr. 1637, f98-152.

Table 9. The total number of plantation slaves per origin in the years: 1694, 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700. Source: National Archive, The Hague (Na), Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), access number 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.

## Appendix 1 - The total number of plantation slaves by origin per year

	<b>1694</b>	<b>1697</b>	<b>1698</b>	<b>1699</b>	<b>1700</b>
<b>Makassar</b>	404	263	468	389	425
<b>Aru</b>	387	584	561	595	698
<b>Papua</b>		160	175	174	212
<b>Malabar</b>	52	29	30	33	41
<b>Timor</b>	215	185	232	221	213
<b>Kai</b>	270	335	373	358	361
<b>Butan</b>	57	75	2	13	7
<b>Banda</b>	307	381	385	384	432
<b>Tenimber</b>	61	84	67	72	102
<b>Ternaten</b>	10	2	8	9	8
<b>Ceram</b>	125	16	19	24	25
<b>Bengal</b>	34	35	33	29	36
<b>Couwer</b>	8	4	7	2	5
<b>Java</b>	4	5	9	4	5
<b>Moa</b>	4	1			
<b>Ambon</b>	2	2	1	1	1
<b>Kissar</b>	5	1	1	1	
<b>Bali</b>	7	15	5	7	7
<b>Ceylon</b>	2			1	2
<b>Madagascar</b>	4	1		1	2
<b>Damme</b>	4	7	4	3	3
<b>Goram</b>	3	4	3	4	4
<b>Babber</b>	2	3	2	1	2
<b>Bima</b>	5	18		1	1
<b>Angola</b>	4	1	1	1	1
<b>Nila</b>	2	2			1
<b>Batavia</b>	1	3	1	2	1
<b>Komo</b>					1
<b>Leti</b>	1	10	2	6	
<b>Solor</b>		14	4	2	5
<b>Banggij</b>		5		5	1
<b>Tamboeco</b>		2	1		1
<b>Toraja</b>		12			
<b>Mandar</b>		1			
<b>Goa</b>		2	2	2	2
<b>Bagasa</b>				1	
<b>Aula</b>					1
<b>Savo</b>					1
<b>Benai</b>					1
<b>Unknown</b>	134	99	13	88	29
<b>Total</b>	2114	2361	2409	2434	2636

Table 9. The total number of plantation slaves by origin in the years: 1694, 1697, 1698, 1699 and 1700. Source: NL-HaNA, VOC, 1.04.02, inv.nrs. 1551, 1595, 1608, 1622, 1637.