

# “The World’s Oldest Trade”: Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century\*

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“Compared with the Atlantic trade, none of this Indian Ocean flow of captive labor, legal or illegal, has been well researched, and there are no conclusive quantitative studies of its volume . . .”

P. Finkelman and J. C. Miller eds.,  
*MacMillan Encyclopedia of World Slavery*  
(New York, 1998), p. 851.

“In comparison with the literature on the trans-Atlantic slave trade, a number of topics in the slave trade in Asia and Oceania remain under-researched . . .”

S. Drescher and S. L. Engerman, eds.,  
*A Historical Guide to World Slavery*  
(New York, 1998), p. 364.

“The evidence of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean is scanty and periodic, and could reflect the nature of the trade. There are huge gaps in the evidence, which might reflect the spasmodic and periodic nature of the slave trade but also the sheer lack of information for long stretches of time.”

S. Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” in K. S. Mathew ed.,  
*Mariners, Merchants and Oceans: Studies in Maritime History* (New Delhi, 1995), p. 195.

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\* This article has profited greatly from the numerous discussions by the participants of the International Conference on Slavery, Unfree Labour and Revolt in Asia and the

Slavery, far from being a “peculiar institution,” has deep and far-reaching roots, stretching back at least to the beginnings of historical times in many parts of the world. In his five-volume magnum opus on the Dutch East Indies, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* (1724–26), Calvinist minister François Valentijn appropriately called the enslavement of human beings “the world’s oldest trade” (*den oudsten handel in de wereld*).<sup>1</sup> For most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Dutch were active participants in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades. For brief spells during the seventeenth century they even dominated the Atlantic slave trade, while for nearly two centuries they were “the nexus of an enormous slave trade, the most expansive of its kind in the history of Southeast Asia.”<sup>2</sup> Whereas the Atlantic slave trade has been mapped out in relatively great detail in numerous studies, its Indian Ocean counterpart has remained largely uncharted territory and overlooked in Asian colonial historiography. Indeed, the sufferings of the slaves in Asia occurred mainly in silence, largely ignored by both contemporaries and modern historians. Moreover, if we are to believe one Dutch colonial historian, Indian Ocean slavery “as a topic will never play such an important role as it does in the Caribbean.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> François Valentijn’s *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, S. Keijzer ed. (The Hague, 1856), volume II, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Johannes Postma argues that the Dutch dominated the Atlantic slave trade during their control of northeast Brazil (1636–48) and their (in)direct acquisition of the *asiento* contract for Spanish America (1662–75 and 1686–89). See J. M. Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815* (New York, 1990), especially pp. 302–303. For the statement on the Dutch involvement in the Southeast Asian slave trade, see 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 in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1983), p. 247. Arasaratnam states that “there was a brisk slave trade in maritime Asia.” See S. Arasaratnam, “Historical Foundations of the Economy of the Tamils of Northern Sri Lanka,” in S. Arasaratnam, *Ceylon and the Dutch, 1600–1800* (Aldershot, 1996), XIV, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> G. J. Knaap, “Slavery and the Dutch in Southeast Asia,” in G. Oostindie, *Fifty Years Later: Antislavery, Capitalism and Modernity in the Dutch Orbit* (Pittsburgh, 1996), p. 193. The standard work on Dutch slavery in Southeast Asia in general is still Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency*. For slavery in South Asia, see S. Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” in K. S. Mathew, ed., *Mariners, Merchants and Oceans: Studies in Maritime History* (New Delhi, 1995), pp. 195–208; A. K. Chattopadhyay, *Slavery in the Bengal Presidency, 1772–1843* (London, 1977); K.K.N. Kurup, “Slavery in 18th Century Malabar,” *Revue historique de Pondichéry* 11 (1973):56–60; U. Patnaik and M. Dingwaney, eds. *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India* (Madras, 1985); L. Caplan, “Power and Status in South Asian Slavery,” in J. L. Watson, ed., *Asian*

Two notable exceptions exist to the “history of silence”<sup>4</sup> surrounding the Indian Ocean slave trade: the east coast of Africa (though mostly centered on the period after 1770) and the Dutch Cape Colony (1652–1796/1805). The Afrocentric focus of Indian Ocean historiography is a derivative of the Atlantic slave trade in general, and reflects the takeoff of plantation slavery on the Swahili coast and the Mascarene Islands (Mauritius and Réunion) in the late eighteenth century<sup>5</sup> along with its obvious connections with the modern biracial system of apartheid in South Africa (1948–94) in particular.<sup>6</sup>

The underdevelopment of an Asian-centric historiography on colonial slavery and slave trade can be attributed to a number of factors.

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and African Systems of Slavery (Oxford, 1980), pp. 169–94. See also L. Hattingh, “Slavernij in die VOC-gebied,” *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 17 (1990):3–18.

<sup>4</sup> H. Gerbeau, “The Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean: Problems Facing the Historian and Research to be Undertaken,” in *The African Slave Trade from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (Paris, 1979), p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> P. M. Larson, *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Becoming Merina in Highland Madagascar, 1770–1822* (Oxford, 2000); R. B. Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (Cambridge, 1999); D. Scarr, *Slaving and Slavery in the Indian Ocean* (London and New York, 1998); V. Teelock, *Bitter Sugar: Sugar and Slavery in 19th Century Mauritius* (Moka, 1998); S. Fuma, *L’Esclavagisme à La Réunion, 1794–1848* (Paris and St. Denis, 1992); K. Noël, *L’Esclavage à l’Isle de France (Ile Maurice) de 1715 à 1810* (Paris, 1991); J. V. Payet, *Histoire de l’Esclavage à l’Île Bourbon* (Paris, 1990); W. G. Clarence-Smith ed., *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1989); U. Bissoondoyal and S.B.C. Servansing, eds., *Slavery in the South West Indian Ocean* (Moka, Mauritius, 1989); A. Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770–1873* (London, 1987); M.D.E. Nwulia, *The History of Slavery in Mauritius and the Seychelles, 1810–1875* (London and Toronto, 1981); F. Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa* (New Haven, 1977); R. W. Beachey, *The Slave Trade of Eastern Africa* (London, 1976); E. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa: Changing Patterns of International Trade to the Later Nineteenth Century* (London, 1975); J. M. Filliot, *La Traite des Esclaves vers les Mascareignes au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 1974). The workshop titled “Slave Systems in Asia and the Indian Ocean: Their Structure and Change in the 19th and 20th Centuries,” held at the University of Avignon, France, 18–20 May 2000, is illustrative of this modernist bias.

<sup>6</sup> A. Kieskamp, “De Wereld in één Land: Slavernij in Zuid-Afrika (1653–1838),” in R. Daalder, A. Kieskamp, and D. Tang, eds., *Slaven en Schepen: Enkele Reis, Bestemming Onbekend* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 76–84; T. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Cape Town, 1996); N. Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us: A History of Slavery at the Cape* (Kenwyn, 1996); C.-H. Shell, *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1838* (Hanover, 1994); E. Eldredge and F. Morton eds., *Slavery in South Africa: Captive Labor on the Dutch Frontier* (Boulder, 1994); E. Eldredge, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge, 1985); R. Ross, *Cape of Torments: Slavery and Resistance in South Africa* (London, 1983); A. J. Boësen, *Slaves and Free Blacks at the Cape, 1658–1700* (Cape Town, 1977); J. C. Armstrong and N. Worden, “The Slaves, 1652–1834,” in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee eds., *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1840*, 2nd ed. (Middletown, Conn., 1988), pp. 109–83; M. F. Katzen, “White Settlers and the Origin of a New Society, 1652–1778” in M. Wilson and L. Thompson, eds., *The Oxford History of South Africa*, Vol. I (Oxford, 1969), pp. 187–232.

First, a fragmented administrative superstructure belied the underlying unity of the Indian Ocean world system, making archival research a formidable task to any serious scholar. The archival materials of the major European powers of the early modern period (Dutch, British, French, and Portuguese) are deposited in the national archives at The Hague, London, Paris, and Lisbon, along with the numerous archives overseas in Indonesia, India, South Africa, and elsewhere. Despite the presence of a central Asian headquarters in Batavia (modern Jakarta), even the numerous settlements of the Dutch East India Company or VOC (1602–1799) had separate administrations and record keeping. Second, unlike the Atlantic slave complex, European and preexisting indigenous forms of bondage seemingly shared many forms of similarities. Except for South Africa, European colonial powers took over and interacted with existing Indian Ocean systems of slavery, rather than imposing their own system in a relative vacuum as in the New World. Third, though recently challenged by revisionist historians, Indian Ocean slavery, focused on the household, has been traditionally portrayed by apartheid apologists and other “settler historians” as paternalist, patriarchal, and relatively “benign” compared to its Atlantic plantation counterpart.<sup>7</sup> Fourth, the focus of Asian colonial historiography has been on indentured workers and coerced labor systems of a later period or “new systems of slavery,” such as the Indian, Chinese, and Javanese “coolie” and the Cultivation System and Liberal Period in nineteenth-century Java and Southeast Sumatra.<sup>8</sup> Finally, studies of the Dutch East India Company period (1602–1799) concentrate on

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<sup>7</sup> This issue is particularly controversial in South African historiography. For a good introduction to the debate, see N. Worden, “The Slave System of the Cape Colony and Its Aftermath,” in G. Campbell ed., *Slavery and Slave Systems in Asia and the Indian Ocean* (London, forthcoming).

<sup>8</sup> For an excellent survey of nineteenth-century indentured labor trades, see D. Northrup, *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism* (New York, 1995). For the Cultivation System (1830–70), see R. E. Elson, *Village Java under the Cultivation System, 1830–1870* (Sydney, 1994); C. Fasseur, *The Politics of Colonial Exploitation: Java, the Dutch, and the Cultivation System* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1992); R. E. Elson, *Javanese Peasants and the Colonial Sugar Industry: Impact and Change in a East Javanese Residency* (Kuala Lumpur, 1984). For the Liberal Period (after 1870), see V.J.H. Houben and Th. J. Lindblad, *Coolie Labour in Colonial Indonesia: A Study of Labour Relations in the Outer Islands, c. 1900–1940* (Wiesbaden, 1999); A. L. Stoler, *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra's Plantation Belt, 1870–1979*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, 1995); J. Breman, *Taming of the Coolie Beast: Plantation Society and the Colonial Order in Southeast Asia* (New Delhi, 1989); K. Pelzer, *Planter and Peasant: Colonial Policy and the Agrarian Struggle in East Sumatra, 1863–1947* (The Hague, 1978); K.-W. Thee, *Plantation Agriculture and Export Growth: An Economic History of East Sumatra, 1863–1942* (Jakarta, 1977).

trade, political economy, and, more recently, urban history.<sup>9</sup> Because slave trade was in general insignificant in monetary terms, most surveys and regional studies on the Dutch East India Company mention slavery and the slave trade only in passing. In the eighteenth century, for instance, when the volume of the Dutch slave trade was substantially larger than in the seventeenth century, slaves only accounted for 0.5% of the total value of company trade.<sup>10</sup> These works on the company history ignore the extensive slave trade of company servants as private individuals, along with European settlers or free burghers and Asian subjects of areas under company jurisdiction. Moreover, they obviously gloss over the crucial economic, social, and cultural significance of slave labor in Dutch colonial settlements, which, as we will see, were in fact true “slave societies.” As Hubert Gerbeau acutely observed more than twenty years ago, “The specialist in the slave trade is a historian of men and not of merchandise, and he cannot accept the silence of those transported.”<sup>11</sup>

This article is a first step to “unsilence” the history of the world’s oldest trade and to correct or “re-Orient” the historiographical imbalance by looking at the organization and numerical aspects of Dutch slavery and slave trade in the Indian Ocean in the seventeenth century. The term “Dutch” consists of three components: (1) the Dutch East India Company or VOC as a semi-official institution or chartered company with delegated government rights; (2) Dutch East India Company officials as private individuals; and (3) European settlers or free burghers and Asians in areas under Dutch jurisdiction. Despite the

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<sup>9</sup> For Batavia, see B. Sirks, “Het Recht om Huysselyk te Castyden: Slavernij in Oost-Indië, 1602–1860,” in Daalder, Kieskamp, and Tang, eds., *Slaven en Schepen*, pp. 85–91; H. E. Niemeijer, “Slavery, Ethnicity and the Economic Independence of Women in Seventeenth-Century Batavia,” in B. Watson Andaya, *Other Pasts: Women, Gender and History in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 2000), pp. 174–94; H. E. Niemeijer, *Calvinisme en Koloniale Stads Cultuur: Batavia, 1619–1725* (Almelo, 1996); P. H. van der Brug, *Malaria en Malaise: De VOC in Batavia in de Achttiende Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1994); L. Blusse, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht, 1988); S. Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: A History* (Singapore, 1989); J. Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia* (Madison, 1983). For Cape Town, see N. Worden, E. van Heyningen, and V. Bickford-Smith, *Cape Town: The Making of a City* (Hilversum, 1998). For Colombo, see R. Raben, “Batavia and Colombo: The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities 1600–1800,” unpublished dissertation (Leiden, 1996). For Galle, see L. Wagenaar, *Galle, VOC Vestiging in Ceylon: Beschrijving van een Koloniale Samenleving aan de Vooravond van de Singalese Opstand tegen het Nederlandse Gezag, 1760* (Amsterdam, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> E. M. Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië: De Handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie Tijdens de 18de Eeuw* (Zutphen, 2000), p. 277 n. 6.

<sup>11</sup> H. Gerbeau, “The Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean,” p. 185.

problematic nature of the term “slave” in an Indian Ocean context,<sup>12</sup> its special characteristics included property or chattel status and the ensuing potential of re-isolation, institutionalized coercion and systemic exploitation, outsider status or essential kinlessness defined as “social death,” and lack of control over physical reproduction and sexuality.<sup>13</sup>

Two basic systems of Indian Ocean slavery can be distinguished. The “open system” of slavery could be found in the commercialized, cosmopolitan cities of Southeast Asia and elsewhere where the boundary between slavery and other forms of bondage was porous and indistinct and upward mobility was possible. In the “closed systems” of South (and East) Asia, with some notable exceptions, it was inconceivable for a slave to be accepted into the kinship systems of their owners as long as they remained slaves because of the stigma of slavery; instead they were maintained as separate ethnic groups. The term “slave” here includes so-called “true slaves,” those recently captured and sold in open systems, and those in closed systems of slavery, along with all other forms of bondage and ties of vertical obligation.<sup>14</sup>

This article discusses various aspects of Dutch slavery and slave

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<sup>12</sup> David Brian Davis observed: “The more we learn about slavery, the more difficulty we have defining it,” (*Slavery and human progress*, [New York, 1984]). For the Indian Ocean, see A. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680, Volume One: The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven and London, 1988), p. 132; B. Stein, “Slavery and Serfdom in South Asia,” in A. T. Embree, ed., *Encyclopedia of Asian History* (New York, 1988), III, p. 490; U. Chakaravarti, “Of Dasas and Karmakaras: Slave Labour in Ancient India,” in U. Panaik and M. Dingawane, eds., *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India* (Madras, 1985), pp. 35, 36–37, 48; T. Raychaudhuri and I. Habib, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Volume I: c. 1200–1750* (New York, 1982), pp. 30–32, 92–93, 530; M. I. Finley, “Between Slavery and Freedom,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6 (1963–64), p. 23; J. L. Watson, “Slavery as an Institution: Open and Closed Systems,” in J. L. Watson, ed., *Asian and African Systems of Slavery* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 12–13; A. Schottenhammer, “Slavery in Late Imperial China (17th/18th to early 20th century),” unpublished paper presented at the International Conference on Slavery, Unfree Labor and Revolt in Asia and the Indian Ocean Region, University of Avignon, 4–6 October 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Classical statements include O. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982); M. I. Finley, “Slavery,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 14 (New York, 1968), pp. 307–13; H. J. Nieboer, *Slavery as an Industrial System: Ethnological Researches*, 2nd ed. (The Hague, 1910); Watson, “Slavery as an Institution,” pp. 3, 8; P. E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (New York, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Watson, “Slavery as an Institution,” pp. 9–13; A. Reid, “‘Closed’ and ‘Open’ Slave Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia,” in A. Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependence in Southeast Asia*, pp. 156–67. The Slavery Convention signed at Geneva in 1926 (approved by the United Nations by protocol in 1953) defines slavery as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.” The slave trade includes “all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or dis-

trade in the Indian Ocean: the markets of supply and demand or geographic origins and destinations of slaves; the routes to slavery or the diverse means of recruitment of forced labor; the miscellaneous occupations performed by company and private slaves; the size of Dutch slavery and the volume of the accompanying annual slave trade; and the various forms of slave resistance and slave revolt. The findings presented here are tentative, illustrating broad contours in bold, sweeping strokes. Further research will be necessary to fill in the details and shed new light on the world's oldest trade in the Indian Ocean basin, but the protracted history of silence has finally ended.

The discussion that follows tries to transcend the ahistorical, incomplete, descriptive, static, one-dimensional picture and conventional generalized abstractions of slavery that characterize much of traditional scholarship. Instead, an alternative historicized, holistic, analytical, dynamic, and multi-dimensional, open model is suggested, sensitive to chronological and geographic variations, socioeconomic and political contexts, and cross-cultural interactions. To the extent that the effort has been (un)successful, it is to some extent a reflection of the current state of the field.<sup>15</sup>

## MARKETS OF SUPPLY: ORIGINS OF SLAVES

Inspired by the spatial and temporal geo-historical conceptualizations of Fernand Braudel and the "Annalistes," various studies have looked at the Indian Ocean basin as a meaningful unit of analysis.<sup>16</sup> Some-

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posal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him; all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged, and, in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves."

<sup>15</sup> I would like to thank Joseph Miller, Michael Salman, and Richard B. Allen for bringing up this important issue.

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, K. McPherson, *The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea* (New York, 1993); K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe: Economy and Civilization of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (New York, 1990); K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (New York, 1985); S. Chandra, ed., *The Indian Ocean: Explorations, History, Commerce and Politics* (New Delhi, 1987); A. Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson, eds., *India and the Indian Ocean* (Oxford, 1987); S. Arasaratnam, "Recent Trends in the Historiography of the Indian Ocean, 1500 to 1800," *Journal of World History* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1990):225–48. See also A. Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World* (Leiden, 1990–present). These works are all deeply indebted to Braudel and the methodology of the Annales school, characterized by interdisciplinary or "total" history, geohistorical structuralism—a three-tiered conception of historical time (structures, conjonctures, and événements), and an emphasis on quantification or rigorous statistical analysis.

time before 300 B.C.E., sailors of various nationalities began to knit together the shores of the Indian Ocean into a world-system by riding the seasonal monsoon winds blowing off and onto the Asian continent. The resulting multifaceted diffusionist process of “southernization” integrated the societies and cultures of what the Arabs styled *al-bahr al-Hindi* (“Indian Ocean”), the Persians *darya’i akhzar* (“Green Sea”), and the Chinese the *Nan-yang* (“Southern Ocean”).

Southernization is characterized by both multidimensionality of relationships and nonsimultaneity of geographic boundaries. Ross Dunn considers the concept of southernization as a useful “post-civilizational narrative” and possible new paradigm: “It is not enough simply to say that there was significant trade among the societies clustered around the South Asian center. The products and exchanges created broad regions of similarities which distinguished one distinctive ‘world’ from another.”<sup>17</sup> Thus a “world of slaves” emerges as a meaningful unit with interacting elements (e.g., “slave societies”) rather than a series of separate “worlds” that have relationships with each other. (In many ways, this post-civilizational narrative is commodity history, a variation on cross-cultural trade, taking a particular commodity as the starting point for the analysis of one or more societies, economic systems, groups involved in production, transportation, marketing, and consumption, and so forth.)

In his classic two-volume study on the Indian Ocean world, K. N. Chaudhuri convincingly demonstrates that capitalist, long-distance trade in luxury goods and bulky commodities provided an underlying unity of the region, cutting across geographical and cultural watersheds. Chaudhuri distinguishes “four significant expansionary forces” from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to the onset of European colonialism in the mid-eighteenth century: the emergence and spread of Islam from the Middle East, the massive presence of Chinese civilization and political power, the periodic migration of nomadic peoples from Central Asia, and (after 1500) European maritime expansion. During this life cycle, Chaudhuri argues, “[m]eans of travel, movements of peoples, economic exchange, climate, and historical forces created elements of cohesion.” Elaborating on Chaudhuri’s work, Janet Abu-

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<sup>17</sup> L. Shaffer, “Southernization,” *Journal of World History* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1994):1, 4. For a critique, see J. O. Voll, “‘Southernization’ as a Construct in Post-Civilizational Narrative,” in R. E. Dunn, *The New World History: A Teacher’s Companion* (Boston and New York, 2000), pp. 193–95. See also J. H. Bentley, “Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization in World History,” *American Historical Review* 101, no. 3 (June 1996): 749–70 and P. Manning, “The Problem of Interactions in World History,” *idem*, pp. 771–82.

Lughod styles the Indian Ocean as “that great ‘highway’ for the migration of peoples, for cultural diffusion, and for economic exchange.”<sup>18</sup>

The Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade precisely involved, among others, the movement of peoples, cultural diffusion, and economic exchange during the later stages of the Indian Ocean *ancien régime*.<sup>19</sup> The Dutch further integrated the Indian Ocean basin by creating direct and more extensive linkages across the region and incorporating previously isolated cultures and societies on the southwestern and eastern peripheries. In the seventeenth century, Batavia (Jakarta), the company’s central Asian headquarters and seat of the governor-general and Council of the Indies, became the hub of a flourishing intra-Asiatic or country trade. As the company directors intimated to the high government at Batavia in 1648, “The country trade and the profit from it are the soul of the Company which must be looked after carefully because if the soul decays, the entire body would be destroyed.”<sup>20</sup>

The Dutch Indian Ocean slave system drew captive labor from three interlocking and overlapping circuits of subregions: the westernmost, African circuit of East Africa, Madagascar, and the Mascarene Islands (Mauritius and Réunion); the middle, South Asian circuit of the Indian subcontinent (Malabar, Coromandel, and the Bengal/Ara-kan coast); and the easternmost, Southeast Asian circuit of Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea (Irian Jaya), and the southern Philippines.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, pp. 3–4, 10, 21; idem, *Asia before Europe*, pp. 104, 383–87; J. L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York, 1989), p. 261. See also McPherson, *The Indian Ocean*, pp. 3–5; Gupta and Pearson, eds., *India and the Indian Ocean*, pp. 11–20.

<sup>19</sup> Though the emphasis here is on demographic and commercial aspects of slavery and slave trade, cultural diffusion was an important by-product of the movement of captive labor. For instance, in spite of legislation that encouraged the learning and use of Dutch, Portuguese (in the seventeenth century) and Malay (in the eighteenth century) became the *lingua franca* in many VOC settlements throughout the Indian Ocean (including Batavia) due to the presence of large numbers of slaves and freed slaves (Mardijkers) from India and Indonesia. Even Afrikaans, which developed in the Cape Colony in the eighteenth century, was a Portuguese creole language deeply influenced by Portuguese and Malay and the medium of conversation between master and servant. Similarly, while Christianity made some headway, Islam was introduced to the subject populations of various Dutch conquests by Indian and Indonesian slaves along with political exiles.

<sup>20</sup> An example of a direct linkage is the Japan (Nagasaki)-Bengal connection: until 1685 large quantities of Japanese silver, gold, and copper were exchanged for (raw) silk and cotton textiles, sugar, and other commodities from Bengal. See O. Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630–1720* (Princeton, 1985), pp. 118–41.

<sup>21</sup> Based on Chaudhuri, Abu-Lughod distinguishes three “great cultural traditions” in the Indian Ocean, determined by the “monsoon imperatives” and centered on the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and South China Sea, respectively. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, pp. 34–36, 253–59. See also Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, pp. 103–105.

In general, the Dutch slave trade took people from segmented microstates and stateless societies in the East outside the “House of Islam” to the company’s Asian headquarters, the “Chinese colonial city” of Batavia (Jakarta),<sup>22</sup> and its regional center in the “western districts” of the Indian Ocean, coastal Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Other destinations included strategic emporia such as Malacca (Melaka) and Makassar (Ujungpandang), along with the plantation economies of eastern Indonesia (Maluku, Ambon, and Banda Islands), and the agricultural estates of the southwestern Cape Colony (South Africa). Though each company settlement had some specific catchment area, certain common patterns prevailed.

The first circuit or subregion, the Indian subcontinent (Arakan/Bengal, Malabar, and Coromandel), remained the most important source of forced labor until the 1660s (see Table 1). Between 1626 and 1662, the Dutch exported with reasonable regularity 150–400 slaves annually from the Arakan-Bengal coast. During the first thirty years of Batavia’s existence, Indian and Arakanese slaves provided the main labor force of the company’s Asian headquarters. For instance, of the 211 manumitted slaves in Batavia between 1646 and 1649, 126 (59.71%) came from South Asia, including 86 (40.76%) from Bengal.<sup>23</sup> Slave raids into the Bengal estuaries were conducted by Magh pirates using armed vessels (*galias*), joining hands with unscrupulous Portuguese traders (*chatins*) operating from Chittagong outside the jurisdiction and patronage of the Estado da India. These raids occurred with the active connivance of the Taung-ngu (Toungoo) rulers of Arakan. The eastward expansion of the Mughal Empire, however, completed with the conquest of Chittagong (renamed Islamabad) in 1666, cut off the traditional supplies from Arakan and Bengal.<sup>24</sup> Until the

<sup>22</sup> As Leonard Blussé observes: “[I]n the period from the establishment of the castle-city in 1619 to the so-called Chinese massacre in 1740, the city of Batavia was, economically speaking, basically a Chinese colonial town under Dutch protection. . . . Batavia castle with its warehouses functioned as the ‘keystone’ in the system of Dutch trading posts all over Asia, while Batavia town operated as a ‘cornerstone’ of the Chinese trade network in Southeast Asia.” See Blussé, *Strange Company*, p. 74.

<sup>23</sup> R. Raben, “Batavia and Colombo: The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities, 1600–1800,” unpublished dissertation (Leiden, 1996), p. 121.

<sup>24</sup> S. Subrahmanyam, “Slaves and Tyrants: Dutch Tribulations in Seventeenth-Century Mrauk-U,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 1, no. 3 (August 1997):201–53; O. Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India*, *The New Cambridge History of India* II:5 (New York, 1998), pp. 55, 144; O. Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal*, pp. 49–50; J. F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, *The New Cambridge History of India* I:5 (New York, 1993), p. 168; Raychaudhuri and Habib, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of India* I, p. 335; V. B. Lieberman, *Burmese Administrative Cycles: Anarchy and Conquest*, c. 1580–1760 (Princeton, N.J., 1984); G. D. Winius, “The ‘Shadow

Table 1. Company slave exports from the Indian subcontinent (Arakan/Bengal and the Coromandel Coast) in the seventeenth century

Arakan/Bengal		Coromandel*	
Years	Number of slaves	Years	Number of slaves
1626	380	1622–1623	1,900
1636	216	1645–1646	2,118
1644	600	1659–1661	8,000–10,000
1647	1,046	1673–1677	1,839
1654	311	1694–1696	3,859†
1655	1,803		
1656	288		
1658	153		
1659	407		
1660	421		
1662	101		

\* This list only represents Coromandel exports in so-called “boom” years.

† Exported by private traders to Ceylon.

Sources: See footnote 25.

Dutch seizure of the Portuguese settlements on the Malabar coast (1658–63), large numbers of slaves were also captured and sent from India’s west coast to Batavia, Ceylon, and elsewhere. After 1663, however, the stream of forced labor from Cochin dried up to a trickle of about 50–100 and 80–120 slaves per year to Batavia and Ceylon, respectively.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast with other areas of the Indian subcontinent, Coroman-

Empire’ of Goa in the Bay of Bengal,” *Itinerario* 7, no. 2 (1983):83–101; D.G.E. Hall, “Studies in Dutch relations with Arakan,” *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 26, no. 1 (1936):1–31; D.G.E. Hall, “The Dagregister of Batavia and Dutch Trade with Burma in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 29, no. 2 (1939):139–56; Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” pp. 195–99.

<sup>25</sup> VOC 1479, OBP 1691, fls. 611r–627v, Specificatie van Allerhande Koopmansz. tot Tuticurin, Manaapar en Alvatt.rij Ingekocht, 1670/71–1689/90; W. Ph. Coolhaas and J. van Goor, eds., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden van Indië aan Heren Zeventien der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (The Hague, 1960–present), passim; T. Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605–1690: A Study on the Interrelations of European Commerce and Traditional Economies* (The Hague, 1962), pp. 166–67; S. Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” in K. S. Mathew, ed., *Mariners, Merchants and Oceans: Studies in Maritime History* (New Delhi, 1995), pp. 195–208.

<sup>26</sup> For exports of Malabar slaves to Batavia, see *Generale Missiven* III, p. 433; VI, pp. 314, 450, 500, 520, 560, 630, 702, 789, 880. For exports of Malabar slaves to Ceylon, see

del remained the center of a spasmodic slave trade throughout the seventeenth century. In various short-lived booms accompanying natural and human-induced calamities, the Dutch exported thousands of slaves from the east coast of India. A prolonged period of drought followed by famine conditions in 1618–20 saw the first large-scale export of slaves from the Coromandel coast in the seventeenth century. Between 1622 and 1623, 1,900 slaves were shipped from central Coromandel ports, such as Pulicat and Devanampatnam. Company officials on the coast declared that 2,000 more could have been bought if only they had the money.

The second short-lived boom in the export of Coromandel slaves occurred during a famine in the wake of the revolt of the Nayaka Hindu rulers of South India (Tanjavur, Senji, and Madurai) against Vijayanagara overlordship (1645) and the subsequent devastation of the Tanjavur countryside by the Bijapur army. According to indigenous informants, more than 150,000 people were taken by the invading Decani Muslim armies to Bijapur and Golconda. In 1646, 2,118 slaves were exported to Batavia, the overwhelming majority from southern Coromandel. Some slaves were also acquired further south at Tondi, Adirampatnam, and Kayalpatnam.

A third short-lived boom in slaving took place between 1659 and 1661 due to the devastation of Tanjavur resulting from another series of successive Bijapuri raids, creating the usual "famine-slave cycle." At Nagapatnam, Pulicat, and elsewhere, the company purchased 8,000–10,000 slaves, the bulk of whom were sent to Ceylon while a small portion were shipped to Batavia and Malacca. A fourth boom (1673–77) was initiated by a long drought in Madurai and southern Coromandel starting in 1673, exacerbated by the prolonged Madurai-Maratha struggle over Tanjavur and resulting oppressive fiscal practices. Between 1673 and 1677, the VOC exported 1,839 slaves from

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*Generale Missiven* VI, pp. 312, 448; H.K. s'Jacob ed., *De Nederlanders in Kerala, 1663–1701: De Memorie en Instructies Betreffende het Commandement Malabar van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Kleine serie 43 (The Hague, 1976), pp. xl–lxv, 77, 321, 346; R. Barendse, "Slaving on the Malagasy Coast, 1640–1700," in S. Evers and M. Spindler, eds., *Cultures of Madagascar: Ebb and Flow of Influences* (Leiden, 1995), p. 142. See also M. O. Koshy, *The Dutch Power in Kerala* (New Delhi, 1989); K. K. Kusuman, *Slavery in Travancore* (Trivandrum, 1973); M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, *De Vestiging der Nederlanders ter Kuste Malabar* (The Hague, 1943), pp. 154–237; H. Terpstra, *De Opkomst der Westerkwartieren van de Oostindische Compagnie* (The Hague, 1918); E.M.E.P. Wolff, "Cochin: Een Mestiese Samenleving in India: Een Onderzoek Naar de Bevolking van een Vestiging van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie in de 18de Eeuw," unpublished M.A. thesis (Leiden, 1992), pp. 47–52.

the Madurai coast alone. A fifth boom occurred in 1688, caused by a combination of poor harvests and the Mughal advance into the Karnataka. Reportedly thousands of people from Tanjavur, mostly girls and little boys, were sold into slavery and exported by Asian traders from Nagapattinam to Aceh, Johor, and other slave markets. In September 1687, 665 slaves were exported by the English from Fort St. George, Madras. The Dutch decision to participate was belated for the boom ended as abruptly as it had started as a result of the abundant rice harvest in early 1689. Finally, in 1694–96, when warfare once more ravaged South India, a total of 3,859 slaves were imported from Coromandel by private individuals into Ceylon.<sup>27</sup>

After 1660 relatively more slaves came from the second circuit or subregion, Southeast Asia. Warfare and endemic raiding expeditions provided a steady supply of slaves from the region's stateless societies and microstates, especially after the collapse of the powerful sultanate of Makassar (Goa) in Southwest Sulawesi (1667/1669).<sup>28</sup> The slave trade network in the archipelago revolved around the dual axis of Makassar and Bali. Makassar was the main transit port for slaves from Borneo (Kalimantan), Sulawesi, Buton (Butung), and the northeastern islands, as well as the eastern Tenggara islands (Lombok, Sumbawa, Bima, Manggarai, and Solor).<sup>29</sup> The kingdoms of Bali were not only independent slave exporters, but also reexported slaves from eastern Indonesia as far as New Guinea (Irian Jaya). Of almost 10,000 Indonesian slaves brought to Batavia by Asian vessels between 1653 and 1682, 41.66% (4,086) came from South Sulawesi, 23.98% (2,352) from Bali,

<sup>27</sup> M.P.M. Vink, "Encounters on the Opposite Coast: Cross-Cultural Contacts between the Dutch East India Company and the Nayaka State of Madurai in the Seventeenth Century," unpublished dissertation, University of Minnesota (1998), pp. 165–69; Arasaratnam, *Ceylon and the Dutch, 1600–1800* (Great Yarmouth, 1996), XI, p. 387; XIV, p. 19; H. D. Love, *Vestiges from Old Madras* (London, 1913), pp. 545–46.

<sup>28</sup> J. Villiers, "Makassar: The Rise and Fall of an East Indonesian Maritime Trading State, 1512–1669," in J. Kathirithambi-Wells and J. Villiers, eds., *The Southeast Asian Port and Polity: Rise and Demise* (Singapore, 1990), pp. 143–59; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce I*, pp. 133–34, and 136; II, pp. 222, 224, 229–32, 278–80, 309, 320, 324; H. Sutherland, "Slavery and Slave Trade in South Sulawesi 1660s–1800s," in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency*, pp. 268–70; L. Y. Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka: A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague, 1981); C. R. Boxer, *Francisco Vieira de Figueiredo: A Portuguese Merchant in South East Asia, 1624–1667* (The Hague, 1967); F. W. Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag* (Leiden, 1922).

<sup>29</sup> VOC 1276, OBP 1671, fls. 684–1007, Notitie [Speelman] . . . tot Naerichtinge voor den Ondercoopman Jan van Opijnen, 17.2.1670; J. Noorduijn, "De Handelsrelaties van het Makassaarse Rijk Volgens de Notitie van Cornelis Speelman uit 1670," *Nederlandse Historische Bronnen III* (Amsterdam, 1983), pp. 96–123.

12.07% (1,184) from Buton, 6.92% (679) from the Tenggara islands, and 6.79% (646) from Maluku (Ambon and Banda).<sup>30</sup> Similar proportions could be found among Indonesian slaves in the other Dutch posts in the archipelago and at the Cape of Good Hope, where South Sulawesi contributed 46% and Bali 6.6% of the 166 Indonesian slaves imported in the last three decades of the seventeenth century. Between 1680 and 1731, 30.2% (201) of the 666 company slaves imported to the Cape came from Indonesia, 24.8% (165) from India, and 22.1% (147) from Madagascar and other parts of Africa.<sup>31</sup> Between 1620 and 1830, Hindu Bali, internally divided among various rival states after the collapse of the kingdom of Gelgel, exported at least 100,000 members of its own population and neighboring Lombok, Sumbawa, Sumba, and elsewhere as slaves.<sup>32</sup>

The third circuit or subregion, the African mainland, Madagascar, and the Mascarene Islands (with a few notable exceptions) remained a relatively insignificant basis of supply for slaves throughout the sev-

<sup>30</sup> A. Reid, "Introduction; Slavery and Bondage in Southeast Asian History," in A. Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency*, pp. 30–32; *Dagh-Registers Gehouden int Casteel Batavia vamt Passerende daer ter Plaetse als over Geheel Nederlands-India. Anno 1653–1682* (Batavia and The Hague, 1887–1928); Raben, "Batavia and Colombo," pp. 122–125.

<sup>31</sup> Boëseken, *Slaves and Free Blacks at the Cape*, p. 75; Shell, "Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope, 1680 to 1731," unpublished dissertation, Yale University (1986), pp. 352–53. Between 1652 and 1808 approximately 63,000 slaves (62,964) were imported to the Cape from four main areas: Africa 26.4%; Madagascar 25.1%; India 25.9%; Indonesia 22.7%. See Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 40–41. Worden has revised Shell's estimate upward from 63,000 to 80,000. See N. Worden, "The Indian Ocean Origins of Cape Colony Slaves: A Preliminary Report," unpublished paper presented at the Workshop on Slave Systems in Asia and the Indian Ocean: Structure and Change in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Avignon, 18–20 May 2000. Based on Cape inventories and auction sales, Worden concludes that between 1697 and 1750 48% (673) of the sample of 1,401 slaves came from the Indian subcontinent (mostly Bengal and Malabar), 20.5% (288) from Southeast Asia (Bugi/Makassar, and to a lesser extent Bali, Ternate, Timor, and Ternate), and 9.9% (191) from Madagascar and other parts of Africa (including Rio de la Goa, Mozambique, Natal, and Angola), whereas 17.1% (239) were Cape-born.

<sup>32</sup> H. Hägerdal, "From Batuparang to Ayudhya: Bali and the Outside World," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 154, no. 1 (1998):55–94; A. van der Kraan, "Bali: Slavery and the Slave Trade," in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency*, pp. 329–37; H. J. de Graaf, "Lombok in de 17de Eeuw," *Djawa* 21, no. 6 (November 1941):355–73; Reid, "Introduction," in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency*, p. 30; H. J. Schulte Nordholt, *The Spell of Power: A History of Balinese Politics, 1650–1940* (Leiden, 1996); H. J. Schulte Nordholt, *Bali: Colonial Conceptions and Political Change, 1700–1940: From Shifting Hierarchies to 'Fixed Order'* (Rotterdam, 1986); H. J. Schulte Nordholt, "Macht, Mensen en Middelen: Patronen en Dynamiek in de Balische Politiek, 1700–1840," M.A. thesis, VU Amsterdam (1980); R. Needham, *Sumba and the Slave Trade*, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Working Paper 31 (Clayton, 1983); C. Lekkerkerker, "De Baliërs van Batavia," *De Indische Gids* 40, no. 1 (1918):409–31; W.G.C. Bijvanck, "Onze Betrekkingen tot Lombok," *De Gids* 58, no. 4 (1894):134–57, 299–337; 59, no. 2 (1895):141–77.

enteenth century. As long as supplies from the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia could meet demand, slaving voyages to the southwest Indian Ocean were avoided because of the region's peripheral location and marginal commercial importance in the VOC's overall intra-Asiatic trade network. East Africa and the islands off the continent's coast, however, were occasionally tapped into by the Cape Colony and by other company settlements for special projects. Several hundred Bantu-speaking slaves from West and Central Africa were imported in the Cape Colony after 1652 in the first decades of the colony's existence. In addition, 502 slaves were exported from Madagascar between 1641 and 1647. Between 1652 and 1699, 12 company-sponsored voyages were undertaken to Madagascar returning with 1,069 Malagasy slaves and one voyage to Dahomey with 226 slaves, a total of 13 voyages with 1,290 slaves. Malagasy slaves made up 24.1% of all slaves imported into the Cape during this period.<sup>33</sup> In comparison, Madagascar supplied about 70% (31,076) of all 44,394 slaves reaching French Mauritius and Réunion between 1670 and 1769. The balance of imports came from Mozambique and the Swahili Coast (19% or 8,435), India (9% or 3,995), and West Africa (2% or 888).<sup>34</sup>

Dutch exports of Malagasy slaves pale in comparison with the French, Arab, Portuguese, and English slave trades from Madagascar in the seventeenth century. During the so-called "age of troubles," the French carried approximately 1,000 slaves from Madagascar to the Mascarene Islands between 1670 and 1714. Arab traders exported as many as 3,000 slaves per year from northwestern Madagascar, includ-

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<sup>33</sup> N. van der Zwan, *Madagascar: The Zebu as Guide through Past and Present* (Berg en Dal, 1998), pp. 25–36; P. J. Moree, *A Concise History of Dutch Mauritius, 1598–1710: A Fruitful and Healthy Land* (London, 1998), pp. 27 et seq.; Barendse, "Slaving on the Malagasy coast," pp. 137–55; J. C. Armstrong, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade in the Seventeenth Century," *Omalý sy Anio* 7/8/9/10 (1983–84):211–33; G. de Nettancourt, "Le Peuplement Neerlandais à l'Île Maurice (1598–1710)," in *Mouvements de Populations dans l'Océan Indien* (Paris, 1979), p. 224; N. Worden, "Slavery and Amnesia: Towards a Recovery of Malagasy Heritage in Presentations of Cape Slavery," in Rakoto, ed., *L'Esclavage à Madagascar*, p. 55; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 41–42; P. van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, F. W. Stapel, ed. (The Hague, 1929), Eerste Boek, Deel II, pp. 653–70; J. C. Armstrong and N. Worden, "The Slaves, 1652–1834," in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652–1840* (Middleton, Conn., 1989), pp. 111–14; D. Sleight, *Die Buiteposte: VOC-Buiteposte onder Kaapse Bestuur 1652–1795* (Pretoria, 1993); K. Heeringa, "De Nederlanders op Mauritius en Madagascar," *Indische Gids* 17 (1895):864–92, 1005–36. In total 33 company voyages (1654–1786) were dispatched for the benefit of the Cape and a few more for slaves at its Salida gold mines, carrying 2,820 to the Cape.

<sup>34</sup> R. B. Allen, "The Mascarene Slave Trade and Labor Migration in the Indian Ocean during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in Campbell, ed., *Slavery and Slave Systems* (forthcoming).

ing 800–1,000 slaves to Oman, while at least 40 English voyages (mostly interlopers evading the monopoly of the Royal African Company on the west coast of Africa) left Madagascar to the New World between 1675 and 1700 with slaves as cargo.<sup>35</sup> Apart from Batavia and the Cape Colony (including Mauritius), a significant portion of Dutch slave exports from Madagascar were intended for the company-operated gold mines along the west coast of Sumatra, where between 1670 and 1696 some 200–500 slaves toiled at Sillida and a few other mines nearby.<sup>36</sup>

### MARKETS OF DEMAND: DESTINATIONS OF SLAVES

Influenced by “central place theory” or “location theory” of the German geographers Walter Cristaller and August Lösch, Fernand Braudel asserts that preindustrial world trade was urban-centered, consisting of an “archipelago of towns.” A complex hierarchy of central places, from multifunctional “world-cities” to less specialized regional and local centers, serviced and drew on their respective hinterlands. Applying these concepts to the Indian Ocean, Chaudhuri points to the dominant role of the region’s great trading emporia from the Swahili and Red Sea coasts to Southeast China littoral. This thalassic network of Indian Ocean port cities was linked by the sailing ship.<sup>37</sup> In the case

<sup>35</sup> Armstrong, “Madagascar and the Slave Trade in the Seventeenth Century,” pp. 214–18; J. M. Filliot, *La Traite des Esclaves vers les Mascareignes au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 1974), pp. 54–69; H. Gerbeau, “Histoire Oubliée, Histoire Occultée? La Diaspora Malgache à la Réunion: Entre Esclavage et Liberté,” in Rakoto, ed., *L’Esclavage à Madagascar*, pp. 9–10. Allen argues that the number of slaves imported into the Mascarenes before 1810 was approximately 203,000, 12–27% higher than Filliot’s estimate of 160,000 (5,000 for the period 1670–1728). See R. Allen, “The Mascarene Slave Trade,” (forthcoming).

<sup>36</sup> The number of healthy adult slaves at the mines increased from 150 (1677), 165 (1679), 225 (1680), and 325 (1682), to peak at 510 (1687) and 469 (1692). In 1687, there were also 90 sick adult slaves (*impotenten*) and 70 slave children. See *Generale Missiven IV*, pp. 222, 385, 426, 556; V, pp. 136, 180, 593, 758. See also Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, Eerste Boek, Deel II, pp. 653–70; N. MacLeod, “De Oost-Indische Compagnie op Sumatra in de 17de Eeuw. IV: De Westkust van 1671 tot 1683,” *De Indische Gids* 27, no. 1 (1905):125–42, 470–86; J. E. de Meijer, “De Goud- en Zilvermijnen ter Sumatra’s Westkust,” *De Indische Gids* 33, no. 1 (1911):28–67; D. Verbeek, *Nota over de Verrichtingen der Oost-Indische Compagnie bij de Ontginning der Goud- en Zilverraden te Salida op Sumatra’s Westkust* (The Hague, 1910); S. P. L’Honoré Naber, ed., *Reisebeschreibungen von Deutschen Beamten und Kriegsleuten im Dienst der Niederländischen West- und Ost-Indischen Kompagnien, 1602–1797, Volume 10: Elias Hesse, Gold-bergwerke in Sumatra, 1680–83* (The Hague, 1931).

<sup>37</sup> Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism III*, p. 30; Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, p. 224. See also Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, p. 13. For the theoretical ground

of the Northern European chartered companies, these central places in the East became, in the words of Philip Curtin, an integral part of “trading-post empires” and tightly controlled “militarized trade diasporas.”<sup>38</sup>

During its first centuries, European expansion had a markedly, almost exclusively urban character. Port cities were the nexus of the maritime power of the Iberian state-run enterprises and the Northern European chartered companies. The Dutch Indian Ocean slave system was therefore urban-centered, concentrated around a small number of central places in areas where they exercised political authority “out of conquest,” usually designated as “governments.” Like the markets of supply, these markets of demand can be divided in three groups: Southeast Asia (including Malacca, westcoast of Sumatra, Jambi, Palembang, Bantam, Batavia and Java’s north coast, Makassar, Ambon, Banda, and the Moluccas) South Asia (Surat, Malabar, Ceylon, Coromandel, and Bengal), and “greater South Africa” (Cape of Good Hope and various “outer factories”).

The Southeast Asian group included Neira Town and the government of Banda (Banda and the southern Maluku Islands), Kotah Ambon and the government of Ambon (Ambon and neighboring islands), Ternate and the government of the Moluccas (northern Maluku Islands), Vlaardingien and the government of Makassar (Makassar and southwestern Sulawesi), Batavia, seat of the governor-general and the Council of the Indies (west and north Java littoral), and the city and government of Malacca (Melaka and its immediate environs on the Malaysian peninsula).

The South Asian group included Nagapatnam and Pulicat and the government of Coromandel (east coast of India), Colombo and the government of Ceylon (Jaffnapatnam and the lowlands of southwestern Sri Lanka), and Cochin and the “commandement” of Malabar (Cochin and several forts and guard stations in coastal Kerala). Greater South Africa consisted of the single case of Cape Town and (after 1690) the government of the Cape of Good Hope (the southwestern Cape and increasing sections of the dry interior of South Africa).<sup>39</sup>

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work, see W. Cristaller, *Central Places in Southern Germany* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966); A. Lösch, *The Economics of Location* (New Haven, Conn., 1954).

<sup>38</sup> Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (New York, 1984), pp. 3–5, 8–9, 152–54.

<sup>39</sup> During the company period, the commander (after 1690, governor) of the Cape also exercised jurisdiction over the company settlements of Mauritius (1638–58; 1664–1710), St. Helena Island (1673), and Rio de la Goa, Mozambique (1721–30).

Table 2. Total population and slave population of various Dutch central places in the Indian Ocean in the late seventeenth century

Urban settlements	Year	Total population	Slave population	Percentage
Batavia (Java)	1673	27,068	13,278	49.05
	1679	32,124	16,695	51.97
	1699	21,966	12,505	56.93
Cape Town (Cape Colony)	1731	3,157	1,333	42.22
Cochin (Malabar)	1686	1,749	621	35.51
	1687	1,845	649	35.18
	1697	2,216	938	42.33
	1701	1,943	696	35.82
Colombo (Ceylon)	1694	3,300	1,761	53.36
Kotah Ambon (Ambon)	1694	5,487	2,870	52.31
Malacca (Malacca)	1678	5,379	1,962	36.48
	1680	4,486	1,134	25.28
	1682	4,624	1,853	40.07
Vlaardingen (Makassar)	1676	1,384	921	66.55

Sources: See footnote 40.

All of these urban centers and their surroundings were true slave societies, in which slaves played an important part in both luxury and productive capacities, empowering particular groups of elites, deeply influenced cultural developments, and formed a high proportion (over 20–40%) of the total population (see Table 2).<sup>41</sup> Slaves accounted for

<sup>40</sup> Archief VOC, Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren; *Generale Missiven*, IV, pp. 138, 438, 554, 676–77; “Report of Governor Balthasar Bort on Malacca 1678,” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 5, no. 1 (August 1927):39–44; Tarling, ed., *Cambridge History of Southeast Asia* I, p. 371; s’Jacob, ed., *De Nederlanders in Kerala*, pp. lii, liv n. 189; s’Jacob, “De VOC en de Malabarkust in de 17de Eeuw,” in M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, ed., *De VOC in Azië* (Bussum, 1976), p. 88; R. J. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas, 1640–1700* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 59, 70; G. J. Knaap, “A City of Migrants: Kota Ambon at the End of the Seventeenth Century,” *Indonesia* 51 (April 1991):120, 124; G. J. Knaap, “Europeans, Mestizos and Slaves: The Population of Colombo at the End of the Seventeenth Century,” *Itinerario* 5, no. 2 (1981):88; N. Worden, *Cape Town: The Making of a City* (Hilversum, 1998), p. 50.

<sup>41</sup> As several historians have observed correctly, the distinction between “luxury” and “productive” slavery is often an artificial one; see Watson, “Slavery as an Institution, Open and Closed Systems,” pp. 8, 14; Caplan, “Power and Status in South Asian Slavery,” p. 190; Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa*, p. 2. For different definitions of slave societies, see M. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York, 1983), pp. 80–81, 86; and C. Meillasoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold* (Chicago, 1991), pp. 69–77.

51.97% (16,695) and 56.93% (12,505) of the urban population of Batavia in 1679 and 1699, respectively. In 1694, the cities of Colombo and Kotah Ambon consisted of 53.36% (1,333) and 52.31% (2,870) slaves. In 1687 and 1697, 35.18% (649) and 42.33% (938) of the households in Cochin consisted of slaves. The only figures available for Cape Town fall somewhat outside our time period, but are nevertheless revealing. In 1731, 42.22% (1,333) of the urban population of Cape Town were slaves. Somewhat deviant from the median are the cases of Malacca and Vlaardingen (Makassar). On the low end, Malacca (and its immediate surroundings) had a slave population of “only” 25.28% (1,134) and 40.07% (1,853) in 1680 and 1682, respectively. At the other extreme, 66.55% (921) of the population of the “hamlet” Vlaardingen consisted of forced laborers.<sup>42</sup> In comparison, in the typical sugar islands of the Caribbean, 75–95% of the population were slaves, and most of the free people were of African descent. In the American South, generally, most people were not slaves at all, but colonists of European descent.<sup>43</sup> No statistically significant differences in regional patterns can be discerned between the urban slave societies of South Asia (Cochin and Colombo), Southeast Asia (Batavia, Kotah Ambon, Malacca, and Vlaardingen), and South Africa (Cape Town). Slavery was a defining component of Dutch colonial settlements throughout the Indian Ocean, grafted on the preexisting open system of slavery in the commercialized, cosmopolitan cities in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the Indian Ocean.

## ROUTES TO SLAVERY

Arriving in the Indian Ocean in the late sixteenth century, the Dutch took over and interacted with preexisting systems of slavery and

<sup>42</sup> ARA, Archief VOC, Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren; *Generale Missiven*, IV, pp. 138, 438, 554, 676–77; “Report of Governor Balthasar Bort on Malacca 1678,” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 5, no. 1 (August 1927):39–44; Tarling, ed., *Cambridge History of Southeast Asia* I, p. 371; s’Jacob ed., *De Nederlanders in Kerala*, pp. lii, liv n. 189; s’Jacob, ed., “De VOC en de Malabarkust in de 17de Eeuw,” in M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, ed., *De VOC in Azië* (Bussum, 1976), p. 88; R. J. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas, 1640–1700* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 59, 70; G. J. Knaap, “A City of Migrants: Kota Ambon at the End of the Seventeenth Century,” *Indonesia* 51 (April 1991), pp. 120, 124; G. J. Knaap, “Europeans, Mestizos and Slaves: The Population of Colombo at the End of the Seventeenth Century,” *Itinerario* 5, no. 2 (1981):88; N. Worden, *Cape Town: The Making of a City* (Hilversum, 1998), p. 50.

<sup>43</sup> Ph. D. Curtin, *The Tropical Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade* (Washington, 1991), pp. 2–3, 6.

dependency.<sup>44</sup> Indigenous sources in the Indian Ocean prescribing the “peculiar institution” originated from three major traditions: Hindu, Muslim, and Southeast Asian. Throughout the Indian Ocean basin, however, there were significant geographical and chronological variations within each of these traditions.

The normative texts circumscribing routes to slavery in Hinduism were the law books (*dharmasastras* or *smritis*) of Manu and Narada. Manu “the Lawgiver” (third century B.C.E.), author of the prototypic dharma text, recognized seven types of slavery: persons (*dasas*) captured in battle; those enslaved in return for food; those born in the house of the master; those who are bought; those inherited as part of patrimony; those who are given away by their parents; and those enslaved for not paying a fine or in execution of a judicial decree. In one of the latest of the major *dharmasastras*, Narada (c. 300 C.E.) subdivided and added categories to bring the number up to fifteen, including a child whose adoption was defective, while another resulted from a lost wager. In addition, bondage for debt and nonpayment of taxes were introduced as separate categories.<sup>45</sup>

In Islam, the authoritative sources, the Qur’an, Shari’a, and (to Sunni Muslims only) the innumerable *hadiths* (traditions), recognized four main ways of recruitment of slaves (*‘Abd*): capture of infidels in holy struggle (*jihad*) against the “Abode of War” (*dar al-Harb*), tribute (*bakt*) required from vassal states beyond the Islamic frontiers, offspring from or birth to slave parents, and purchase by slave merchants known as “importers” or “cattle-dealers.” Raids and petty warfare by Muslims could at best be interpreted as a genuine *jihad* or holy war to extend the faith. In 1669, for instance, the Pangeran Dipati of Jambi, a Muslim port city on the east coast of Sumatra, justified the equipping of armed vessels for a slave raid against Ujang Salangh on the Malaysian Peninsula arguing that the inhabitants “were heathens, and hence [the raiding] could not be considered an injustice.” At worst, however,

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<sup>44</sup> For the problematic nature of the term “slave” in an Indian Ocean context, see note 12. Though the term “slave” is used in the text, relations of dependency and inequality normally ran across a continuum from freedom to slavery with permeable boundaries between various categories or population groups.

<sup>45</sup> *The Laws of Manu*, Vol. 8, G. Buhler, trans., *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 25 (Oxford, 1886), p. 415; *The Minor Law-Books, Part I: Narada*, Vol. V, J. Jolly, ed., *The sacred books of the East*, Vol. 33 (Oxford, 1889), pp. 26–28, 29, 31–36; B. Stein, *A History of India* (Malden, Mass., 1998), pp. 216–20; U. Chakravarti, “Of Dasas and Karmakaras: Servile Labour in Ancient India,” in U. Patnaik and M. Dingwaney, eds., *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India* (New York, 1985), pp. 40–42, 51–54.

these expeditions represented ruthless raiding for helpless human prey and continued on all the boundaries of Islamic communities throughout the Indian Ocean basin.<sup>46</sup>

The Southeast Asian legal codes (Bugi, Malay, Javanese, and other texts, such as the *Undang-undang Melaka*, *Agama Djawa*, or *Adat Aceh*) were based on ancient Indian *dharmasastras*, Islamic law books, decrees issued by the ruler in power, and numerous local traditions (*adat*). Though widely differing, they commonly acknowledged five paths by which a person could enter a state of bondage: inheriting the bondage of one's parents; sale into bondage by parents, husband, or oneself; capture in war or raids; judicial punishment (or inability to pay fines); and, most importantly, failure to meet debts. Debts were acquired through trading, gambling, inability to pay for the ceremonies associated with rites of passage (naming ceremony, initiation, marriage, funeral, and so forth), and crop failure or other calamity.<sup>47</sup>

Grafting on these preexisting indigenous traditions, the Dutch brought with them an intellectual, theoretical *mentalité* steeped in Christian humanism mixed with a healthy doses of pragmatism.<sup>48</sup> In the Dutch Republic, majority apologists (moderate Calvinist ministers, theologians, and jurists) used biblical references and sources of classical antiquity to produce a specific slaving discourse with a Protestant face. The so-called "Ham ideology" based on the curse of Canaan (Genesis 9:25–27) served as the most important biblical justification for the enslavement of Africans and Asians until the nineteenth cen-

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<sup>46</sup> B. Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Inquiry* (Oxford and New York, 1990), pp. 3–15; R. Brunschvig, s.v., "Abd" in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Leiden, 1986), pp. 24–40; M. Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World* (New York, 1989), pp. 18–47; H. Müller, "Sklaven," in *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, B. Spuler ed., Part 1, *Der Nahe und der Mittlere Osten*, Vol. 6, *Geschichte der Islamischen Länder*, Sec. 6, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Vorderen Orients in Islamischer Zeit*, Part 1 (Leiden and Cologne, 1977), pp. 54–83. For the Jambi apologia, see W. Ph. Coolhaas, J. van Goor, and J. E. Schooneveld-Oosterling, eds., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren Zeventien der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (The Hague, 1960–present), III, p. 710.

<sup>47</sup> Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce I*, pp. 129–46; Reid, "'Closed' and 'Open' Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia," pp. 158–59, 169–71. For specific Southeast Asian legal codes, see M. C. Hoadley and M. B. Hooker, *An Introduction to Javanese Law: A Translation of and Commentary on the Agama* (Tucson, 1981); Y. F. Liaw, ed., *Undang-Undang Melaka: The Laws of Melaka* (The Hague, 1976); I. Takeshi, "The World of the Adat Aceh: A Historical Study of the Sultanate of Aceh," unpublished dissertation, ANU (Canberra, 1984).

<sup>48</sup> The following discussion is largely based on M.P.M. Vink, "Suffering in Silence: Dutch Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," unpublished paper presented at the World History Association, Ninth Annual International Conference, Boston, 22–25 June 2000.

ture emancipation.<sup>49</sup> The authority of the Old and New Testaments was supplemented by the writings of Greco-Roman authors, condoning slavery “within natural limits” or under certain safeguards stated in company ordinances. Dutch jurists, such as Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), recognized voluntary sale in order to escape famine and starvation, capture in a just war (*bellum iustum*), judicial slavery as an alternative to execution, and inheritance or birth from a female slave.<sup>50</sup>

Whereas ideological motivations on a theoretical plane dominated discourse in Europe, in Asia slavery found virtually universal acceptance on a practical level among self-righteous religious, military, and civil officials of the Dutch East India Company. Using reasons of state or pragmatic politics to defend the trade, these company servants rather opportunistically resorted to a variety of ad hoc arguments in an unsystematic manner. These arguments included Christian humanitarian compassion (saving the body and soul of the slave), the need to establish and populate settlement colonies (“peuplatie”), the right of war and conquest (*bellum iustum*), the “uncivilized” nature of the “servile” indigenous peoples, natural, contractual law (*pacta sunt servanda*), and financial-budgetary considerations (“mesnagie”). To God-fearing Calvinists in patria and overseas, the enslavements of African and Asian peoples did create a serious moral predicament for both opponents and apologists alike. Torn between gain and godliness, or the practical temptations of the “Dutch trading empire” and the principle requirements of the “Empire of Christ,” the “peculiar institution” was carefully circumscribed, permissible only “for good and sufficient

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<sup>49</sup> G. Groenhuis, “Zonen van Cham,” *Kleio* 21 (1980):224; G. J. Schutte, “Bij het Schemerlicht van Hun Tijd: Zeventiende-Eeuwse Gereformeerden en de Slavenhandel,” in M. Bruggeman et al., eds., *Mensen van de Nieuwe Tijd: Een Liber Americum voor A. Th. Van Deursen* (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 193–217; P. C. Emmer, *De Nederlandse Slavenhandel, 1500–1850* (Amsterdam and Antwerp, 2000), pp. 30–39; L. R. Priester, *De Nederlandse Houding ten Aanzien van de Slavenhandel en Slavemij, 1596–1863: Het Gedrag van de Slavenhandelaren van de Commerce Compagnie van Middelburg in de 18de Eeuw* (Middelburg, 1987), pp. 43, 74 n. 28. See also S. R. Haynes, *Noah’s Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery* (New York, 2001); B. Braude, “The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 54 (January 1997):103–42; W. McKee Evans, “From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea or the Strange Odyssey of the Sons of Ham,” *American Historical Review* 85, no. 1 (February 1980):15–43; M. Adhikari, “The Sons of Ham: Slavery and the Making of Coloured Identity,” *South African Historical Journal* 27 (1992):95–112. For an interesting discussion of the “Ham ideology,” see Valentijn, *Oud- en Nieuw Oost-Indiën II*, pp. 371–72.

<sup>50</sup> H. Grotius, *The Law of War and Peace: De Jure Belli ac Pacis Libri Tres*, F. Kelsey, trans., J. Brown Scott, ed. (Indianapolis and New York, 1925), pp. 255–59, 690–91, 718, 761–69.

reasons” and “within natural limits” under certain safeguards punctiliously stated in company ordinances.<sup>51</sup>

The Dutch acquired the majority of their slaves indirectly through purchase from indigenous suppliers, which, similar to the other universal religions of Buddhism and Islam, was rendered in religious humanitarian terms as a “work of Christian compassion” (*christelijcke mededogenthey*) based on the alleged material and spiritual salvation of the individual slave’s body and soul. Apart from saving people from physical starvation in instances of severe famine, enslavement also allegedly saved the soul of infidels ensnared in the trappings of the devil.<sup>52</sup> Enslavement of company subjects via debt bondage, however, was prohibited (with little success) in numerous ordinances as “contrary to all divine and Christian laws and unacceptable to the high authorities.”<sup>53</sup>

Numerous armed conflicts with indigenous societies also provided a major source of captive labor. In accordance with prevailing mercantilist thought and a paranoid siege mentality, these conflicts were invariably depicted by the righteous Dutch as just wars. In theory, the company only accepted legally acquired slaves and rejected those acquired via outright kidnapping and robbery. In practice, however, the Dutch distinction between legal acquisition and illegal kidnapping and robbery was as nebulous as the Muslim differentiation between “true slaves” (Arabic ‘*abd*’) resulting from genuine *jihad* and ruthless raiding for helpless human prey.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Vink, “Suffering in Silence.”

<sup>52</sup> VOC 1232, OBP 1661, fl. 383, Miss. Gouver. Pit en Raad van Coromandel aan H. XVII, 9.8.1660; VOC 884, BUB 1660, fl. 1703, Miss. Gouver. Genl. en Raad aan Comms. Van Goens te Colombo, 4.11.1660. The purchase of slaves in exchange for rice earned the Dutch the condemnation of local members of the Society of Jesus (an active participant in the Indian Ocean slave trade itself). See J. Bertrand, *La Mission du Maduré d’après des documents inédits* III. Paris 1848, pp. 124–25. For Jesuit and Portuguese apologies of the slave trade, see J. Correia-Affonso, *The Jesuits in India, 1542–1773: A Short History* (Anand, 1997), pp. 114–18; A.J.R. Russell-Wood, “Iberian Expansion and the Issue of Black Slavery: Changing Portuguese Attitudes, 1440–1770,” *American Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (February 1978):16–42.

<sup>53</sup> For instance, L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek: Plakkaten en Andere Wetten Uitgevaardigd Door het Nederlands Bestuur op Ceylon, 1638–1796*, 2 vols. (Hilversum, 1996), I, pp. 20, 62, 97–98, 293. The fact that the ordinance had to be reissued several times indicates the ineffectiveness of the prohibition.

<sup>54</sup> V. Matheson and M. B. Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts: Categories of Dependency and Compensation,” in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency*, pp. 185, 192–93, 198, 203, 205; Reid, “‘Closed’ and ‘Open’ Slave Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia,” in idem, pp. 169–70; K. Endicott, “The Effects of Slave Raiding on the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula,” in idem, pp. 216–18; D. J. Steinberg, ed., *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History*, 2nd ed. (Honolulu, 1987), pp. 15–16.

In addition, “rebellious” peoples, once subdued, were often forced at gunpoint to sign treaties with slave clauses, promising the delivery of a fixed number of slaves and other commodities as fine or tribute (*boete ofte amende*). The symbolic exchange of gifts reestablished relationships and reordered the proper hierarchy between individuals, groups, and the “honorable” company. Between 1650 and 1675 alone, the Dutch concluded numerous slave-clause agreements with indigenous chiefs and headmen (*orangkayas*, *penghulus*, *sangajis*, and so forth) on and near the islands of Sumatra, Timor, New Guinea, and Sulawesi.<sup>55</sup>

According to Dutch Roman law, slavery was hereditary through the female “on the principle that the fruit follows after the womb.” Offspring from female slaves, however, was a relatively insignificant source of captive labor due to low levels of reproduction among slave populations. Despite several “moments of creolization” (when the slave population was more than 50% locally born), the gender imbalance among slaves (i.e., an overwhelming preponderance of male slaves especially among non-company slaves), high mortality rates, and poor living and working conditions limited female fertility and weighed heavily against natural reproduction.<sup>56</sup>

In 1682, for instance, the slave population of Malacca consisted of 1,589 adults (880 men and 709 women) and 264 children, an adult-to-child ratio of 6.0:1 (see Table 3). In 1687, the Cape slave population consisted of 758 adults (503 men and 253 women) and 145 children (ratio 5.2:1), while the Dutch settlements along the Malabar coast (Cochin, Quilon, Cannanur, Cranganur, and Pallipuram) had 716 adults (536 men and 180 women) and 137 children (ratio 5.2:1). In 1688, the slave population of Ambon consisted of 8,335 adults (4,446 men and 3,889 women) and 2,381 children (ratio 3.5:1), whereas Banda had 3,213 adults (1,631 men and 1,582 women) and 503 children (ratio 6.4:1). In 1689, the slave population of Batavia consisted of 22,570 adults (12,557 men and 10,013 women) and 3,501 children (ratio 6.4:1).<sup>57</sup>

Judicial punishment, in the form of political exiles and convicts

<sup>55</sup> Heeres, ed., *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum* II, pp. 500, 678–79, 749–50; III, pp. 320, 384, 490, 529, 602, 605, 620, 845–46, 850, 881.

<sup>56</sup> Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 46–48; Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I, pp. 309–10, 395; De Haan, *Oud Batavia* I, p. 456.

<sup>57</sup> VOC 1434, OBP 1688, fls. 263v–265v, Samentrekking Huijsgezinnen Cochin . . ., 17.12.1687; *Generale Missiven* IV, p. 554; idem V, pp. 202, 203–204; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, p. 445.

Table 3. Gender and age composition of slave populations in various company settlements in the late seventeenth century

Settlement	Year	Adult men	Adult women	Total adults	Children	Adult/child ratio
Ambon	1688	4,446	3,889	8,335	2,381	3.5:1
Banda	1688	1,631	1,582	3,213	503	6.4:1
Batavia*	1689	12,557	10,013	22,570	3,501	6.4:1
Cape	1687	503	253	758	145	5.2:1
Malabar	1687	536	180	716	137	5.2:1
Malacca	1682	880	709	1,589	264	6.0:1

\* The Zuidervoorstad (southern suburbs) excluded.

Source: See footnote 58.

(*gecondemneerden* or *bandieten*), represented a small, but distinct category.<sup>59</sup> The ordinances issued by company authorities in Batavia, Ceylon, the Cape, and elsewhere contain numerous references in which transgressors, such as captured runaway slaves, are condemned to chain labor for specified terms at the public works (*ad opus publicum*).<sup>60</sup> Batavia, Colombo, Robben Island off the coast of South Africa, and Rozen-gain, one of the Banda Islands, served as special penal colonies for several hundreds of convicts.<sup>61</sup>

Throughout the Indian Ocean, war captives came largely from animist, stateless societies of shifting cultivators or hunter-gatherers and microstates too weak to defend themselves against the stronger and wealthier societies of the cities and the rice-growing lowlands. Sometimes non-Muslim societies and hill peoples sold the victims of their

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> K. Ward, "The Bounds of Bondage: Forced Migration between the Netherlands East Indies and the Cape of Good Hope in the Eighteenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation (Michigan, forthcoming). Nigel Worden is currently working on company convicts and exiles sent to the Cape.

<sup>60</sup> J. A. van der Chijs, ed., *Nederlandsch-Indisch Placaatboek, 1602-1811*, 17 vols. (Batavia and The Hague, 1885-1900); K. M. Jeffreys and S. D. Naudé, eds., *Kaapsch Plakkaatboek, 1651-1806*, 6 vols. (Cape Town, 1944-51); A. J. Boëseken, ed., *Resolusies van die Politieke Raad 1651-1715*, 3 vols. (Cape Town, 1957-62); Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, 2 vols. For a compendium or brief summary of ordinances issued at Ambon in the seventeenth century, see Valentijn, *Oud- en Nieuw Oost-Indiën II*, pp. 652-60.

<sup>61</sup> In 1684, there were 6 convicts in Ambon, whereas Banda housed 21. In 1710, Ceylon had 174 resident "bandits." *Generale Missiven VI*, pp. 653, 694; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge I*, pp. 134, 200.

own internal warring; more often they were simply raided for slaves by outsiders. In Southeast Asia, these so-called "victim societies" included, among others, the Papuas of New Guinea; the Alfurs of Maluku, northern Sulawesi, and Mindanao; the Torajas and Mandars of Southwest Sulawesi; the Dayaks of Borneo; the Minangkabau and Bataks of Sumatra; and the Orang Asli (lit., "original peoples") of Malaysia. These groups enslaved each other in low-scale, endemic intercommunal conflict or were enslaved by neighboring (often Muslim) states, such as the sultanates of Ternate and Tidore in eastern Indonesia; Magindanao on the island of Mindanao; Makassar (Goa) and Bone on Sulawesi; Aceh, Jambi, and Palembang on Sumatra; and Johore on the Malaysian peninsula.

Oftentimes, the slaving frontier coincided with the juxtaposition of upstream and downstream (*ulu-ilir*). Somewhere between 500 and 200 B.C.E., coastal communities in Sumatra, Borneo, Malaya, and elsewhere started acting as downstream, "gatekeeper" polities for the upstream interior in the larger drainage systems of the region.<sup>62</sup> Upstream and downstream communities were distanced by geography, language, and customs, but nonetheless drawn together by politico-economic ties between the interior and coastal centers.<sup>63</sup>

South Asian slavery appears to have originated in the Aryan conquest (after 1500 B.C.E.) and assimilation into the caste structure of autochthonous peoples who were enslaved as *dasas*. Similar to the upstream-downstream division in Southeast Asia, the "inner frontier"

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<sup>62</sup> J. Wisseman Christie, "State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia: A Consideration of the Theories and the Data," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 151, no. 2 (1995):249–50, 270–71, 276–78; B. Bronson, "Exchange at the Upstream and Downstream Ends: Notes toward a Functional Model of the Coastal State in Southeast Asia," in K. L. Hutterer, ed., *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia: Perspectives from Prehistory, History and Ethnography* (Ann Arbor, 1977), pp. 39–52.

<sup>63</sup> B. Watson-Andaya and L. Y. Andaya, *A History of Malaysia*, 2nd ed. (Honolulu, 2001), pp. 3–4, 129, 163–64; L. Y. Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (Honolulu, 1993), pp. 192, 196, 210; B. Watson-Andaya, *To Live as Brothers: Southeast Sumatra in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu, 1993), pp. 13–20, 95–97, 100, 103, 222, 225; L. Andaya, "Local Trade Networks in Maluku in the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries," *Cekalele* 2, no. 2 (1991), pp. 73–74, 88; T. Bigalke, "Dynamics of the Torajan Slave Trade in South Sulawesi," in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency*, p. 343; R. Laarhoven, "Lords of the Great River: The Magindanao Port and Polity during the Seventeenth Century," in Kathirithambi-Wells and Villiers, eds., *The Southeast Asian Port and Polity*, pp. 163–64, 169, 172–73; N. Tarling, ed., *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia, Volume I: From Early Times to c. 1800* (New York, 1992), pp. 407, 439, 480–81, 520, 560; Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*, pp. 114–15.

in South Asia separated tribal peoples (*adivasis*) of hunter-gatherers, shifting cultivators, and pastoral nomads in the interior forest and hill tracts from the sedentary wet-rice farmers of the coastal and riverine floodplains. With the expansion of the agricultural frontier in the medieval and early modern period, these forest and pastoral peoples were reduced, along with war captives and other outsiders without community protection, to various degrees of dependency upon landed households of higher standing.<sup>64</sup> Slaving also occurred intermittently along the Muslim-Hindu “frontier” in South Asia, starting with the numerous pillaging expeditions of Mahmud of Ghazni into the subcontinent between 1000 and 1025 C.E., and continued throughout the periods of the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526) and the Mughal Empire (1526–1857). Mughal policy alternated between pragmatism and orthodoxy, represented most clearly in the reigns of Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707), respectively. The term “Muslim-Hindu frontier,” however, should be used with caution. It implies a rather precise line where none existed. Muslims ruled over Muslims and non-Muslim subject populations all over South Asia. In fact, the Indo-Islamic *ulama* was deeply divided between pragmatism, personified by “Akbar’s intellectual” Abu’l Fazl Allami (1551–1602), and orthodoxy, represented by the leader of the Muslim opposition to Akbar, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624), over how non-Muslims should be treated.<sup>65</sup>

Frequent warfare among the major confederations and kingdoms on Madagascar (Sakalava, Tsitambala, and Merina), compounded by the rise of militant Islamic sultanates such as Maselagache on the northwest coast of the island, led to a steady stream of captive humanity throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The hereditary slave caste (*andevo*) of the highland Merina, for instance, was supplemented by war or slave-raiding, judicial punishment, and debt bond-

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<sup>64</sup> J. C. Heestermann, “Warrior, Peasant and Brahmin,” *Modern Asian Studies* 29, no. 3 (1995):637–54; J. C. Heestermann, “The Hindu Frontier,” *Itinerario* 13, no. 1 (1989):1–16; J. C. Heestermann, “Littoral et Interieur de l’Inde,” in L. Blussé, H. L. Wesseling, and G. D. Winius, eds., *History and Underdevelopment: Essays on Underdevelopment and European Expansion in Asia and Africa* (Leiden, 1980), pp. 87–92. See also J. Gommans, “The Silent Frontier of South Asia, c. A.D. 1100–1800,” *Journal of World History* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1998):1–23; B. Stein, *A History of India* (Malden, Mass., 1998), pp. 115, 280–81.

<sup>65</sup> In 1562, Akbar abolished the practice of enslaving prisoners of war, no longer even forcibly converting them to Islam. In the following two years, he also did away with the pilgrim tax and remitted the hated *jizya* or non-Muslim poll tax. All these measures were reversed by Aurangzeb.

age.<sup>66</sup> On the African mainland, non-Muslim, Bantu-speaking peoples of the interior of east and central Africa fell victim to slave raiding by rival Muslim and Afro-Portuguese coastal networks. The real takeoff in the southwest Indian Ocean, however, did not occur until the late eighteenth century with the rapid expansion of Omani and French agricultural plantations, the demand of Brazilian merchants, and a series of severe droughts and epidemics.<sup>67</sup> No slavery existed in South Africa prior to the arrival of the Europeans among the local Khoikhoi and San populations. Slaves therefore had to be imported from outside. In the pastoral region of the Cape Colony, however, increasing numbers of Khoikhoi and San on the interior "highveld" were dispossessed and employed by Dutch colonists as indentured laborers in the eighteenth century. Though this system of "inbooking" (*inboekstelsel*) was not formalized until 1775, local company magistrates approved of the practice long before this date.<sup>68</sup>

Inheritance and judicial punishment were the most common sources of forced labor in the closed systems where a money economy was little developed. There existed, however, no institutional obstacles against the sale of slaves on a massive scale once a strong external demand made itself felt along with the spread of a money economy in the absence of a strong state. All major indigenous powers prohibited

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<sup>66</sup> Van der Zwan, *Madagascar*, pp. 26–37; Armstrong, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade," pp. 213–16; Barendse, "Slaving on the Malagasy Coast," pp. 149–50; I. Rakato, "Etre Ou ne pas être: L'Andevo Esclave, un Sujet de Non-Droit," in I. Rakato, ed., *L'Esclavage à Madagascar: Aspects Historiques et Résurgences Contemporaines* (Antananarivo, 1997); P. M. Larson, "A Census of Slaves Exported from Central Madagascar between 1775 and 1820," in idem, pp. 131–46; S. Evers, "Stigmatization as a Self-Perpetuating Process," in Evers and Spindler, eds., *Cultures of Madagascar*, pp. 158, 166–67; M. Bloch, "Modes of Production and Slavery in Madagascar: Two Case Studies," in Watson, ed., *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, pp. 104–107.

<sup>67</sup> S. Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700: A Political and Economic History* (New York, 1993), pp. 196–200; A. Isaacman, *Mozambique—The Africanization of a European Institution: The Zambezi Praios, 1750–1902* (Madison and Milwaukee, 1972); Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, pp. 128–35, 220–30; Manning, *Slavery and African Life*, pp. 52–54; Cooper, *Plantation Slavery*, pp. 38–46; Sherriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory*, pp. 33–76; Beachey, *Slave Trade of Eastern Africa*; Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves*.

<sup>68</sup> S. Newton-King, *Masters and Servants on the Cape Eastern Frontier, 1760–1803* (Cambridge, 1999); E. Boonzaier, C. Malherbe, et al., *The Cape Herders: A History of the Khoikhoi of South Africa* (Cape Town, 1996); C. Malherbe, "Indentured and Free Labour in South Africa: Towards an Understanding," *South African Historical Journal* 24 (1991): 15; H. Giliomee, "Processes in the Development of the Southern African Frontier," in H. Lamar and L. Thompson, eds., *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared* (New Haven and London, 1981), p. 85; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, p. 136; Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us*, pp. 44–45, 49; and Elphick and Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Society*, pp. 3–65, 134–39, 185, 299–301.

the export of slaves as an intolerable loss of the country's most precious resource and a violation of the collective moral code of society. On the Indian subcontinent, for instance, the Dutch encountered difficulties with the Mughals and Marathas in the north and the Nayaka rulers in the south opposing the slaving activities of the Europeans. In 1643, for instance, the ruler of Senji, Krishnappa Nayaka, lectured a visiting Dutch envoy—Calvinist minister “that selling human beings was not only disgraceful to the world, but was also considered one of the greatest sins by our gods.” In Southeast Asia, with the completion of the process of Islamization of Java and expansion of the state of Mataram in the sixteenth century, the island ceased to export its people. No slaves were exported from South Sulawesi during the height of the sultanate of Makasar (1600–68).<sup>69</sup>

Sale and indebtedness were more important routes to slavery in the cities and other areas open to the money economy. Debts were, as we have seen, an important source of bondage, whether acquired through trading, gambling, inability to pay for the ceremonies associated with rites of passage, crop failure, or other calamity. The prominence of debt and judicial slavery seems to be distinctive in the Southeast Asian pattern. Sale into bondage in times of famine was more prevalent in South Asia and China.<sup>70</sup>

Slaves were transported to Dutch settlements by company ships or other European slavers, free burgher vessels, and Asian craft. Special slaving voyages were occasionally undertaken by the company in times

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<sup>69</sup> For problems with Mughal authorities, see *Generale Missiven* II, pp. 624, 718, 791; III, pp. 32, 132, 497; IV, p. 352; Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean,” pp. 195–99; Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Trade*, pp. 104–105, 210–11. For problems with the Marathas, see *Generale Missiven* IV, p. 291; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge*, II, ii, p. 114; Heeres, ed., *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum* III, pp. 65, 125; Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean,” pp. 195–99; Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Trade*, pp. 104–105, 210–11. For objections from the Nayaka rulers, see VOC 1151, OBP 1645, fl. 764r, Miss. Gouver. Gardenijs van Coromandel aan Batavia, 3.4.1643; VOC 1324, OBP 1677, fl. 12r, Miss. Gouver. van Goens de Jonge en Raad van Ceijlon aan Batavia, 5.3.1677. See also *Generale Missiven* I, pp. 185–86, 196, 199, 201. For Mataram and Makasar, see Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, I, p. 133.

<sup>70</sup> For Southeast Asia, see Reid, “Introduction,” in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependence*, pp. 8–19; Reid, “‘Closed’ and ‘Open’ Slave Systems in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia,” in Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependence*, pp. 156–77; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, pp. 120–21, 129–36. For South and East Asia, see J. N. Sarkar, *Mughal Economy: Organization and Working* (Calcutta, 1987), pp. 250–53; Chaudhuri and Habib, *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, pp. 30–31, 92–93, 503; Watson, “Slavery as an Institution,” pp. 9–13; Caplan, “Power and Status in South Asian Slavery,” pp. 169–94; J. Watson, “Transactions in People: The Chinese Market in Slaves, Servants, and Heirs,” in idem, pp. 223–50.

of great demand or for special projects, though normally “pieces” of slaves were stowed as supplementary cargo on board Dutch East India ships along with other commodities. Company officials as private individuals also engaged in the legal and illegal slave trade. Foreign slavers would occasionally sell some of their forced labor when calling at one of the VOC ports en route to their ultimate destination. Free burgher and Asian merchants (rulers, nobility, and commoners) routinely carried slaves throughout the Indian Ocean as part of the so-called country or intra-Asian trade.

### SLAVE OCCUPATIONS

Slaves were general laborers and used in a wide variety of occupations in the Dutch slave societies across the Indian Ocean basin. Specialization among private and company slaves, however, occurred in accordance with the size of the individual slave household and the particular position the settlement occupied within the company’s overall trade network. The majority of slaves acted as domestic servants in small or large slave households of company officials, free burghers, and Asian subjects in areas under Dutch jurisdiction. They served as cooks, lamp-lighters, houseboys, housemaids, concubines, seamstresses, bread bakers, tea makers, coachmen, musicians, masseuses, honor guards, valets, and so forth.<sup>71</sup> They performed menial labor as coolies in the construction of fortifications, buildings, roads, canals, and trenches, and as porters and stevedores in the ports and warehouses.

In agriculture, slaves grew food crops (rice, wheat, potatoes, and vegetables), cash crops (pepper, nutmeg and mace, cloves, sugar, cotton, tobacco, and grapes), and herded cattle and sheep. In mining, slaves dug for gold, tin, and other minerals, and broke coral stone for the burning of lime. They served as fishermen, sailors, and country traders in the intra-Asiatic trade. In manufacturing, slaves labored in artisan workshops as carpenters, furniture makers, coopers, tailors, cobblers, gold-, silver-, and blacksmiths, and numerous other artisanal occupations. They worked in gunpowder mills, sulfur and saltpeter refineries, arak distilleries, sawmills, shipyards, and sugar mills. In the service sector, they were active in retail, (lower) administrative functions, medical professions (nurses, midwives, etc.), and so forth. Polit-

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<sup>71</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia I*, pp. 458–60. For a good example, see Valentijn, *Oud- en Nieuw Oost-Indiën II*, pp. 369–70.

ical exiles and criminals (*gecondemneerden* and *bandieten*), the result of judicial punishment, formed a small but separate category. Invariably, they were condemned to perform hard physical labor at the public works (*ad opus publicum*) at the company's fortifications or elsewhere often as part of a chain gang.

In Batavia, the administrative center, central rendezvous, and port of transshipment of the VOC in Asia, several hundred company slaves served on the island of Onrust's (Pulau Kapal) shipyards to repair and service the visiting Dutch East Indiamen, while others worked in the company hospitals. In the environs of Batavia, thousands of Asian and free burgher slaves cultivated the sugar, rice, and pepper gardens in the late seventeenth century.<sup>72</sup> In eastern Indonesia, the center of spice production, thousands of free burgher and Asian slaves worked the clove gardens in Ambon and the nutmeg plantations in Banda. In 1694, for instance, 1,879 free burgher slaves labored on the some 70 nutmeg gardens or *perken* of Banda, though 2,500 were deemed necessary.<sup>73</sup>

At Malacca, a vital port of transshipment in the VOC's intra-Asiatic trade network, the majority of the 207 company slaves in 1662 were held in the "Slave Castle" (*Slavenburgh*) as a flexible pool of labor "for the loading and unloading of the ships and elsewhere where needed." In 1678, 53 out of 187 company slaves were directly employed "in the chain gang on the common works." It was recommended, however, that "[a]ll slaves, both men and women . . . shall, if occasion arises for something to be done quickly, whether the unloading or loading of ships or anything else, be united with the common gang and employed where they are needed."<sup>74</sup>

In the 1660s and early 1670s, when the company tried to achieve self-sufficiency on Ceylon, over 2,000 company slaves worked the fields around Galle and Colombo in the southwest of the island, growing rice, nacheri (fine cereal), cotton, tobacco, potatoes, and other crops. In Colombo, seat of the Dutch governor and council of Ceylon, 533 adult slaves (including 348 females) and 196 slave children served as

<sup>72</sup> *Generale Missiven* IV, pp. 97, 234, 467–68, 644; De Haan, *Oud Batavia* I, pp. 446–47; Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, p. 177; Sirks, "Het Recht om Huysselyk te Castyden," pp. 85–87. There were 170 sugar mills in the Ommelanden around Batavia in 1710.

<sup>73</sup> *Generale Missiven* V, pp. 582, 674–76, 714–15; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge* II, I, p. 199; Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, pp. 79–80, 85; Van Goor, *De Nederlandse Koloniën*, p. 113; Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, p. 24.

<sup>74</sup> VOC 1240, OBP 1663, fl. 1438r, *Memorie Gouver. Thijssen van Malacca aan Van Riebeeck*, 1.11.1662; "Report of Governor Bort on Malacca," pp. 93–94.

fortification workers in 1685, carrying bricks, lime, and earth to the city's and castle's ramparts.<sup>75</sup>

At the Cape of Good Hope, the vast majority of the 300 company slaves tilled the 40-acre urban vegetable garden in Cape Town, while hundreds of free burgher slaves worked on the intensive wheat and wine farms in the southwestern Cape. Smaller numbers herded the free burgher livestock in the pastoral regions to the north and east, though the preference here was to recruit the local Khoikhoi and San populations.<sup>76</sup>

The division of slave labor roughly followed ethnic, gender, and age lines based on colonial taxonomy and preexisting indigenous beliefs and practices that characterized local slave systems. Comparative psycho-physiology decided the typical qualities and defects assigned to representatives of the various races and, in consequence, the functions for which they were considered best suited. Administrative ethnography and categorization, however, should be treated with caution since labels could be deceptive or misleading due to miscegenation, political expediency, and other reasons. Moreover, ethnic stereotyping or racial profiling differed in each company settlement and changed over time. Nevertheless, Indian and Southeast Asian slaves in general were deemed to be cleaner, more intelligent, and less suited to hard physical labor than African slaves.<sup>77</sup> Indian and Southeast Asian slaves therefore frequently worked as artisans or domestic servants, while African slaves commonly served as field laborers. Despite the importance of "context-dependent particulars" and local variations, slave women were not used regularly in fieldwork, but were mostly involved in domestic labor as housemaids, specialized seamstresses and knitters, laundresses, or wet-nurses.<sup>78</sup> Slave children could be employed in sea-

<sup>75</sup> VOC 1234, OBP 1662, fl. 125v, Miss. Comms. Van Goens te Colombo aan Batavia, 5.4.1661; *Instructions from the Governor-General and Council of India to the Governor of Ceylon, 1656–1665*, S. Pieters, trans. (Colombo, 1908), pp. 3, 4, 18–19, 27, 70–71, 96–98; Hovy, *Ceylones Plakkaatboek I*, pp. 68–72, 77, 129–30; Arasaratnam, *Dutch Power in Ceylon*, p. 131; Knaap, "Europeans, Mestizos and Slaves," p. 94.

<sup>76</sup> *Generale Missiven V*, pp. 675, 714–15; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, Tweede Boek, Deel I, p. 199; Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, p. 177; VOC 1234, OBP 1662, fl. 125v. Miss. Comms. Van Goens te Colombo aan Batavia, 5.4.1661; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, p. 136; Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us*, pp. 44–45, 49; Elphick and Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Society*, pp. 134–39, 185, 299–301.

<sup>77</sup> Niemeijer, "Slavery, Ethnicity, and the Economic Independence of Women," pp. 174–78, 194. For an example of the hierarchical typology of "national characters," see Valentijn, *Oud- en Nieuw Oost-Indiën II*, p. 370.

<sup>78</sup> B. Watson Andaya, "Introduction," in Andaya, ed., *Other Pasts*, p. 25; Niemeijer, "Slavery, Ethnicity, and the Economic Independence of Women," pp. 159–60.

sonal work, such as sheaf-binding or domestic occupations, serving as “companions” to their master’s children, guarding younger white children or babies. At the Cape, older farm slaves often worked with the livestock either as shepherds or leading the oxen in plowing.<sup>79</sup>

#### SIZE OF DUTCH SLAVERY AND VOLUME OF THE SLAVE TRADE

The number of company and total Dutch slaves and the accompanying volume of the annual slave trades were subject to great volatility and varied greatly from year to year. Famine, wars, epidemics, and natural disasters could wreak havoc among local slave populations, already tending to melt away due to high mortality rates, low levels of self-reproduction or creolization, manumission, and widespread desertion. As has been noted by many scholars, there is no slavery without the slave trade because of the long-term demographic imbalance. Mortality rates in most of the company settlements in Southeast Asia were significantly higher compared to those at the Cape, and, to an even greater degree, in South Asia.<sup>80</sup>

In Ambon, ruthless wars (1618, 1625, 1636–37, 1641–46, 1650–56, 1658–61, 1680–81) and recurring malaria epidemics (1633–34, 1651, 1656–58, 1666, 1671–72, 1677–78, 1682–84, 1689–91) occasionally ravaged all groups of the population, including slaves. Continuous raiding by Alfuresé “headhunters” in southwest Ceram, outward migration, and a massive earthquake followed by a tidal wave (1674) further exacerbated the existing demographic problems. Between 1643 and 1671, the population of Ambon (Hitu, Larike, Hitu Tenggara, and Leitimor), the Lease Islands (Haruku, Saparua, and Nusalaut), Western Islands (Ambelau, Buru, Boano, Manipa, and Kelang), and southwest Ceram declined with approximately 30,000, or 37%, recovering only moder-

<sup>79</sup> Caplan, “Power and Status in South Asian Slavery,” pp. 170, 173, 182, 189; Reid, “Introduction,” pp. 14–17; Knaap, “Slavery and the Dutch in Southeast Asia,” p. 197; Allen, “The Mascarene Slave Trade and Labor Migration in the Indian Ocean,” pp. 21–22; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 49–54.

<sup>80</sup> In 1768/69, mortality rates among company servants were highest in Southeast Asia (Batavia, 33%; Java’s north coast, 27%; Bantam, 19%; Banda, 16%), medium at the Cape (17%), and lowest in South Asia (Bengal, 8%; Malabar, 5%; Coromandel, 4%; Ceylon, 4%). Van der Brug, *Malaria en Malaise*, p. 29. Mortality rates among slaves differed of course from those among Europeans due to different working and living conditions. Allen assumes an average net slave mortality in eighteenth-century French Madagascar and Réunion somewhere between 1.74 and 2.54%. Allen, “The Mascarene Slave Trade and Labor Migration in the Indian Ocean.”

ately until 1691 (approximately 1% growth annually), and stabilizing in the period afterward (1692–1708).<sup>81</sup>

In Banda, the original population was deported, driven away, starved to death, or massacred by the company in 1621 and replaced by Dutch colonists or *perkeniers* using slave labor. The worst malaria epidemics generally followed volcanic eruptions. In 1638, 375 people died in Neira Town alone. In 1678, 376 people died in the Dutch government of Banda altogether. In 1693, 771 people died, including “very many slaves” in the nutmeg gardens or *perken*. In 1702, 351 free burgher slaves died and subsequently 356 had to be imported from eastern Indonesia in order to replace them.<sup>82</sup>

Southwestern Ceylon was plagued by intermittent warfare and hostilities with the interior kingdom of Kandy (1670–75) and recurrent droughts or floods (1659, 1661, 1664, 1669, and 1673), spreading famine and disease across the island. In 1661, for instance, 900 slaves died, including 400 “old and nearly worn out people.” In 1669, large numbers of people were dying in the lands of Colombo. The 100 Dutchmen and 800 slaves reportedly being treated in the local company hospitals were hardly better off, since these facilities were often virtual death traps.<sup>83</sup>

Batavia and its environs were the scene of several wars involving the Javanese states of Mataram (1628–29, 1677–81) and Bantam (1619, 1633–39, 1656–59, 1680–83), and increasingly virulent diseases (especially malaria) due to natural and human-induced changes in the local environment. Between 1676 and 1677, for instance, during hostilities involving Mataram, the slave population inside Batavia declined from 17,279 to 15,776. Between 1688 and 1690, diseases reduced the number of slaves inside the city (excluding the *Zuidervoorstad*) from 12,125 to 11,172. In August and September 1688 alone, over 1,000 people “of all nations” died in Batavia due to “an evil form of measles and smallpox.” High mortality rates in Batavia were com-

<sup>81</sup> Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*, pp. 100–22; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, Tweede Boek, Deel I, pp. 132 et seq.

<sup>82</sup> *Generale Missiven* IV, p. 242; idem VI, p. 190; Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*, p. 85; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, pp. 177, 200–201.

<sup>83</sup> VOC 1236, OBP 1662, Miss. Gouver. Laurens Pit en raad van Coromandel aan Batavia, 11.2.1661; VOC 1234, OBP 1662, Miss. Comms. Van Goens te Colombo aan Batavia, 5.4.1661; *Generale Missiven*, III, p. 716. See also S. Arasaratnam, *Dutch Power in Ceylon, 1658–1687* (Amsterdam, 1958), pp. 132–34; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge*, p. 208; VOC 1292, OBP 1674, Miss Gouver Van Goens de Jonge en raad van Ceijlon, 29.5.1673. In 1709, 300 slaves perished within 6 months allegedly due to overconsumption of alcohol. See *Generale Missiven*, VI, p. 622.

pounded by cramped living conditions and the practice of housing domestic slaves in rooms without air circulation.<sup>84</sup>

Barring unexpected high mortality, the number of company slaves was overall relatively stable. At times, however, drastic changes could occur as a result of policy decisions. Following the completion of the local fortifications, the number of company slaves at Batavia between 1664 and 1671 was reduced by one-third from 1,519 to 1,008. The cuts apparently were too deep and the company was subsequently forced to hire 500 slaves from private persons. To reduce expenses, the high government in January 1678 decided to employ more company slaves.<sup>85</sup> More permanent was the decision to decrease the number of company slaves in Ceylon as part of a series of budgetary measures. Between 1677 and 1679, the number of company slaves at Ceylon was slashed almost in half from 3,932 to approximately 2,000, respectively. Some old slaves were manumitted against payment, while the rest were sent to Batavia and Malacca. Even in Colombo, the company was subsequently forced to hire 500 Christian Paravas from southeast India as coolies to help strengthen Ceylon fortifications.<sup>86</sup>

Whereas the slave population of the company and its officials as private individuals was relatively stable, that of European and Asian subjects in areas under company jurisdiction displayed a distinct secular upward trend, growing throughout the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries. Only in the late eighteenth century did the number of slaves in Dutch “conquests” drop dramatically along with the declining fortunes of the VOC.

A sample from the late seventeenth century provides some valuable insights into the number of company and total Dutch slaves and the accompanying volume of the annual slave trades. The numbers

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<sup>84</sup> *Generale Missiven V*, pp. 252, 382; De Haan, *Oud Batavia I*, pp. 453–54. Mortality rates among newly arrived company servants before and after 1733 grew from 5–10% to 40–50%. Natural and human-induced changes included the deforestation of the Ommelanden and subsequent increased sedimentation after 1659, a volcanic eruption in 1699, and the digging of the Mookervaart in 1733. Van der Brug, *Malaria en Malaise*, pp. 39 et seq.; Blusse, *Strange Company*, passim.

<sup>85</sup> For the debate among the company directors surrounding these measures, see F. S. Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC: De Financiële en Commerciële Politiek van de Bewindhebbers, 1672–1702* (Zutphen, 1989); Niemeijer, *Calvinisme en Koloniale Stads cultuur*, p. 47.

<sup>86</sup> VOC 1333, OBP 1679, fl. 12r, Miss. Gouver. Van Goens de Jonge en raad van Ceijlon aan Batavia, 30.4.1678; VOC 1343, OBP 1680, fl. 19r, Miss. Gouver. Van Goens de Jonge en raad van Ceijlon aan Batavia, 3.3.1679; *Generale Missiven IV*, pp. 164, 226, 294, 354, 367, 370; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge* pp. 297, 344–50; *Memoir Left by Rycklof van Goens, Jun. Governor of Ceylon, 1675–1679, to his Successor, Laurens Pyl, Late Commandeur, Jaffnapatnam*, S. Pieters, trans. (Colombo, 1910), pp. 5–6, 11.

Table 4. Number of company slaves and total Dutch slaves along with estimates of the size of the accompanying annual slave trades, ca. 1688

	Year	Company slaves <sup>a</sup>	Year	Total Dutch slaves	Size of annual company slave trade	Size of annual total Dutch slave trade
Ambon	1687/88	74	1688	10,569	6–7	800–900 <sup>b</sup>
Banda	1687/88	166	1688	3,716	10	150–200 <sup>c</sup>
Batavia	1687/88	1,430	1689	26,071	70–140	1,300–2,600 <sup>d</sup>
Cape	1688	382	1688	931	20–40	45–60 <sup>e</sup>
Ceylon	1687/88	1,502 <sup>f</sup>	1688	c. 4,000 <sup>g</sup>	75–150	200–400 <sup>d</sup>
Makassar	1687/88	112	1687/88	c. 1,500 <sup>h</sup>	6–11	75–150
Malabar	1687/88	32	1687	c. 1,000 <sup>i</sup>	2–4	50–100 <sup>j</sup>
Malakka	1687/88	161	1682	1,853	8–16	90–180
Moluccas	1687/88	0	1686	c. 400 <sup>k</sup>	0	20–40
Others	1687/88	268	1688	16,308 <sup>l</sup>	15–30	1,000–1,800
Total	1687/88	4,127	1688	c. 66,348	c. 200–400	3,730–6,430

<sup>a</sup> With the exception of the Cape of Good Hope, all figures on company slaves are derived from Gastra, *De geschiedenis van de VOC*, pp. 84–85, 94.

<sup>b</sup> According to Knaap, 8–9% of the total number of slaves in Ambon were imported each year. See Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en christenen*, pp. 107, 132.

<sup>c</sup> In 1680, the company estimated that annually 150–200 slaves had to be imported in Banda. See *Generale Missive IV*, p. 431. According to Jacobs, in the eighteenth century more than 100 slaves had to be imported each year in Banda in order to compensate for the losses due to deaths and desertions. See Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, p. 26.

<sup>d</sup> Prior to 1733, mortality rates in Batavia and Ceylon ranged between 5 and 10%. See Van der Brug, *Malaria en Malaise*, p. 59. According to Reid, about 1,000 slaves per year may have been imported on average into Batavia in the seventeenth century, though this figure seems to be on the low side for 1689. See Anthony Reid, “Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in Southeast Asian History,” p. 29. In 1671, in the aftermath of the campaigns waged by the company and its allies against Makassar, 1,584 slaves were imported in Batavia by Asian ships. In 1720, 2,149 slaves were imported legally into Batavia. Raben, “Batavia and Colombo,” p. 122; *Generale Missiven VII*, pp. 579, 581.

<sup>e</sup> According to Armstrong and Worden, for most of the eighteenth century 100–200 slaves were imported into the Cape by the burghers and company officials (excluding those imported by the company for its own use). See Armstrong and Worden, “The Slaves, 1652–1834,” p. 120. According to Shell, 63,000 slaves were imported into the Cape between 1652 and 1808, 5,400 of those by the company between 1652 and 1795. By 1717 2,579 slaves (40 per year) had been imported by the company and 3,997 slaves (60 per year) by free burghers and local officials (total of 6,576 or 100 per year). See Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 4, 40–41, 68.

<sup>f</sup> With the exclusion of Matura.

<sup>g</sup> In 1694, the city of Colombo alone had a slave population of 1,761. See Knaap, “Europeans, Mestizos and Slaves,” p. 88. In 1661, 10,000 slaves had been put to work by the company and by private individuals on the lands in southwestern Ceylon, including 2,000 company slaves. Due to poor conditions, manumission, and budgetary measures of the late 1670s the number of slaves decreased rapidly thereafter. VOC 1234, fls. 125r-v, Miss. Gouver. Van Goens aan H. XVII, 5.4.1661.

(Table 4 notes are continued at the top of page 167)

*Table 4 notes (continued)*

<sup>h</sup> In 1676, the city of Vlaardingen alone had a slave population of 921 out of 1,384 inhabitants. Vlaardingen had 1,125 and 2,929 inhabitants in 1679 and 1694, respectively, with 58% of the population (c. 2,500 based on interpolation) reportedly being slaves in 1688.

<sup>i</sup> In 1687, Cochin, the seat of the Dutch commander and council and main Dutch settlement on the Malabar coast, had (excluding the Asian population) 1,845 inhabitants, including 649 slaves (plus 142 free women and 24 free household servants). The other company settlements (Quilon, Cannanur, Cranganur, and Pallipuram) had 704 inhabitants, including 204 slaves. VOC 1434, OBP 1688, fls. 263v–265v, *Samentrekking huisgezinnen*, 17.12.1687; s'Jacob, "De VOC en de Malabarkust in de 17de Eeuw," p. 88.

<sup>j</sup> The mortality rates in Malabar in 1768–69 among VOC personnel was 5%. Van der Brug, *Malaria en Malaise*, Table B, p. 29.

<sup>k</sup> There were 330 male slaves in the Moluccas in 1686 along with 385 (free and enslaved) women and children. *Generale Missiven* V, p. 33.

<sup>l</sup> In 1687/88, the other company settlements (Amoy, Bantam, Bengal, Coromandel, Jambi, Japan, Japara, Palembang, Persia, Siam, Sumatra, Surat, Timor, and Tonkin) had 2,839 European VOC servants, 24.58% of the total of 11,551.

presented here are, to borrow a phrase from Ralph Austen, in the form of a "tentative census."<sup>87</sup> Future archival research will refine the estimates for various VOC settlements. In 1688, there were about 4,000 company slaves and perhaps 66,000 total Dutch slaves in the various settlements spread out across the Indian Ocean basin (see Table 4). Not surprisingly, the two most important VOC settlements, Ceylon (1,500) and Batavia (1,400), accounted for the bulk of the 4,000 company slaves, with the Cape of Good Hope (382), Banda (166), Malacca (161), and Makassar (112) as important secondary centers of forced labor. Batavia (26,000) and Ambon (10,500) made up over half of the total of 66,000 Dutch slaves, with Ceylon (4,000), Banda (3,700), Malacca (1,800), and Makassar (1,500) as significant second-rank slaveholding societies. The number of slaves in South Asia was much smaller than in Southeast Asia and greater South Africa due to the ability to compel "free" populations to perform labor services as part of their caste obligations or to demand extraordinary services from resident foreign communities.

To replenish or increase these numbers, 200–400 company slaves and 3,730–6,430 total Dutch slaves had to be imported each year.

<sup>87</sup> R. Austen, "The Trans-Saharan Trade: A Tentative Census," in H. A. Gemery and J. S. Hogendorn, eds., *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York, 1979), pp. 23–76; R. Austen, "From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean: European Abolition, the African Slave Trade, and Asian Economic Structures," in D. Eltis and J. Walvin, eds., *The Abolition of the Slave Trade: Origins and Effects in Europe, Africa, and the Americas* (Madison, 1981), pp. 117–39.

Assuming average mortality rates en route of circa 20% on slaving voyages, 240–480 company and 4,476–7,716 total Dutch slaves were exported annually from their respective catchment area.<sup>88</sup> To place these numbers in a comparative global perspective, 9,500 slaves were exported each year in the trans-Saharan slave trade in the seventeenth century; 3,000 slaves were shipped annually from the Swahili and Red Sea coasts during the same time period. In addition, 29,124 slaves were exported each year in the Atlantic slave trade during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, 2,888 of which transported by the Dutch West India Company. The exact volume of the Crimean Tatar trade in Polish and Russian slaves is impossible to gauge, though one (inflated) estimate suggests that in the seventeenth century Poland lost an average of 20,000 captives yearly. In the period 1607–17 the Tatars may have seized 100,000 Russians and in the next 30 years another 100,000.<sup>89</sup> The volume of the total Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade was therefore 15–30% of the Atlantic slave trade, slightly smaller than the trans-Saharan slave trade, and one-and-a-half to three times the size of the Swahili and Red Sea coast and the Dutch West India Company slave trades.

## SLAVE RESISTANCE AND SLAVE REVOLT

With some notable exceptions, relationships of power in Dutch territories were tilted too heavily in favor of the owners for a large or even a medium-scale slave revolt to break out. The virtual absence of con-

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<sup>88</sup> Of 2,467 slaves traded on 12 slave voyages from Batavia, India, and Madagascar between 1677 and 1701 to the Cape, 1,617 were landed—a loss of 850 slaves, or 34.45%. On 19 voyages between 1677 and 1732, the mortality rate was somewhat lower (22.7%). See Shell, “Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope, 1680–1731,” p. 332. Filliot estimated the average mortality rate among slaves shipped from India and West Africa to the Mascarene Islands at 20–25% and 25–30%, respectively. Average mortality rates among slaves arriving from closer catchment areas were lower: 12% from Madagascar and 21% from East Africa. See Filliot, *La Traite des Esclaves*, p. 228; A. Toussaint, *La Route des Îles: Contribution à l’Histoire Maritime des Mascareignes* (Paris, 1967), pp. 451, 454; Allen, “The Madagascar Slave Trade and Labor Migration.”

<sup>89</sup> Austen, “The Trans-Saharan Trade: A Tentative Census,” pp. 66, 68; Austen, “From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean,” p. 136; Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, p. 47; Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 294–95, 303. For information regarding the numbers of slaves brought through the Crimea, see H. Inalcik, *Sources and Studies on the Ottoman Black Sea. Vol. I: The Customs Registers of Caffa, 1487–1490* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996); A. Fisher, “Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 6, no. 4 (1972):575–94, reprinted in A. Fisher, *A Precarious Balance: Conflict, Trade, and Diplomacy on the Russian-Ottoman Frontier* (Istanbul, 1999).

certed mass slave rebellions in the face of slave-owner hegemony does not mean, of course, that the slaves meekly acquiesced in their subordination. Resorting to what James C. Scott has called the “weapons of the weak,” they expressed their discontent in a variety of everyday forms of resistance, but above all by marooning or deserting.<sup>90</sup>

Using Eugene Genovese’s list of preconditions favoring “massive revolts and guerilla warfare,” numerous factors worked against any large-scale slave rebellion in Dutch-controlled territories throughout the Indian Ocean basin.<sup>91</sup> First, the nature of the master-slave relationship was by and large immediate and personalized. Though the incidence of absenteeism was probably higher than most historians have assumed, there appears to have been no serious cultural estrangement between “white” and “black.” In fact, “Low Portuguese” and Malay were the means of communication between master and slave in Batavia, Ceylon, the Cape, and elsewhere.<sup>92</sup> Second, despite several booms and busts in the economies of Dutch colonial settlements, there were only occasional signs of serious distress and famine due to inadequate local food production and/or external sources of supply. In fact, the high government was very conscious in assuring plentiful rice supplies and low prices at Batavia and the “outer factories” in order to forestall bread riots and other forms of social unrest.<sup>93</sup> Third, the small size of slaveholding units in Dutch conquests worked against any massive slave insurrection. Unlike the sugar colonies in the New World with an average size of 100 to 200 slaves per owner,<sup>94</sup> few slave owners in the Indian Ocean had more than 100 slaves. In 1688, for instance, the 88 *perkeniers* of the nutmeg gardens on Banda owned 2,149 slaves, an average of less than 25. Some 25 small *perkeniers* only had 6, 8, or 10 slaves. In the same year, the average married household in Stellenbosch district at the Cape consisted of 6.3 individuals, including free burghers, VOC-knechts, and slaves. Most of the wine farms owned between 5 and 20 slaves, some farms having only 1 or 2 slaves.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>90</sup> J. C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Resistance* (New Haven, 1985).

<sup>91</sup> E. D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge, 1979), pp. 11–12. See also M. Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca and London, 1982).

<sup>92</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia* I, p. 452; *Generale Missiven* IV, pp. 676–77; Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us*, p. 60. On the other hand, the absence of social and physical distancing between master and slave could also provoke conflict.

<sup>93</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia* I, pp. 129, 363–64.

<sup>94</sup> The typical Caribbean sugar plantation had a force of at least 50 slaves—more often, more than 200 or even 300. See Curtin, *The Tropical Atlantic*, pp. 3, 7.

<sup>95</sup> Van Dam, *Beschryvinge* I, p. 199; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III, pp. 5–12, 22–23; Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us*, p. 48; Armstrong and Worden, “The Slaves,”

Fourth, despite politico-economic tensions between private settlers or burghers and VOC leadership, the basic fabric of colonial society was never seriously threatened. The exceptions to the rule at the Cape are the affair that led to the sacking of Governor Willem Adriaen van der Stel in 1707, the Barbier rebellion of 1739, and the Patriot movement of the 1780s.<sup>96</sup> Though the Patriot movement had little impact on the citizenry of Batavia, during the early history of the Dutch Asian headquarters a burgher movement lobbied for a city government, a Council of Aldermen (*Schepenbank*) of their own, which could not be manipulated by presiding company officials. The letter, which they sent in 1649 directly to the States General of the Dutch Republic (effectively bypassing the high government in Batavia and the VOC directors in Amsterdam), in fact represented the culmination of a long-standing feud between the burghers and company authorities, which had been fermenting since the founding of Batavia in 1619. All requests from the Batavian citizenry, however, were brushed aside. They had to live under institutions, which were similar in name only to those back in Holland, presided over by company officials, mostly members from the Council of the Indies. Henceforth, the free burghers lived subject to the whims of the successive governors general.<sup>97</sup>

Fifth, although slaves generally outnumbered the whites, the slave/master ratio was never sufficiently tilted especially when including local Asian populations under Dutch jurisdiction. Unfortunately, exact numbers on the subject populations in Dutch conquests are lacking, but they acted as a significant corrective to the owner/slave ratio among the other groups. Sixth, despite "moments of creolization," foreign-born slaves decisively outnumbered the creole slaves born locally into servitude. These foreign-born slaves came from a variety of cultural backgrounds and hence were internally divided along ethnic, linguistic, and religious lines. The chance of a general slave revolt was

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pp. 135–36; Biewinga, *De Kaap de Goede Hoop*, pp. 91–92; Shell, "Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope," pp. 486, 491; Kieskamp, "De wereld in één land," pp. 81–82. There were some nutmeg gardens and wine farms with more than 100 slaves, though they were clearly the exception. In 1805, the largest single number of slaves in an European household in Batavia was 165. Sirks, "Het Recht om Huysselek te Castyden," p. 88.

<sup>96</sup> G. Schutte, "Company and Colonists at the Cape, 1652–1795," in Elphick and Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Society*, pp. 303–15; Katzen, "White Settlers and the Origins of a New Society," pp. 187–232; F. C. Dominicus, *Het Ontslag van Willem Adriaen van der Stel* (Rotterdam 1928); C. Beyers, *Die Kaapse Patriotte Gedurende die Laatste Kwart van die Agtiende eeu en die Voortlewing van Hul Denkbeelde* (Pretoria, 1967).

<sup>97</sup> N.P. van den Berg, *Uit de Dagen der Compagnie: Geschiedkundige Schetsen* (Amsterdam, 1904), pp. 30–63; Blusse, *Strange Company*, pp. 24–25; De Haan, *Oud-Batavia* I, pp. 112–14, 376–77; II, pp. 8–9.

minimal in the absence of a unified slave cultural identity.<sup>98</sup> Seventh, the social structure of the slaveholding regime did not permit the emergence of an autonomous black leadership. Eighth, though the geographical, social, and political environment provided terrain and opportunity for the formation of colonies of runaway slaves, they never grew to the size necessary to threaten the colonial regime. The largest maroon communities consisted of at most 60 men and women. Moreover, the possibility of flight encouraged escape and flight rather than revolt.

In Batavia, the one example of revolt involved a Muslim aristocrat from Manipa (near Ambon) called Captain Jonker, who commanded the VOC's Ambonese soldiers. In 1689, it was discovered that Jonker had joined with other opponents (Makasarese, Bugis, and Banteneese) of the company in plotting a massacre of the Europeans in the Dutch Asian headquarters. Upon discovering the plot the VOC attempted to arrest Jonker, but he broke into open plunder and murder and was caught and killed only after a pursuit. His followers then fled inland to Kartasura, where they at first found refuge with the local Javanese ruler, Amangkurat II. A few months later, however, some fifty of the conspirators were handed over to the VOC, which summarily executed them. Apart from political, religious, and ethnic overtones, the Jonker revolt clearly had some elements of a social protest movement since thirty-one of the conspirators' slaves were subsequently banished to Ceylon.<sup>99</sup> A deep and lasting slump in the sugar industry, failing administrative institutions, high-handed measures, and corruption instigated the insurgency of Chinese laborers on the sugar plantations around Batavia in 1740 and the subsequent massacre of the 10,000 Chinese townsmen in the Dutch Asian headquarters.<sup>100</sup> In 1710, a slave conspiracy was discovered "through God's special mercy" on

<sup>98</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia I*, p. 452.

<sup>99</sup> *Generale Missieven V*, pp. 371, 423, 426, 490; H. J. de Graaf, *De Geschiedenis van Ambon en de Zuid-Molukken* (Franeker, 1977), pp. 157–63; F. de Haan, *Priangan: De Preanger-Regentschappen onder het Nederlandsch Bestuur tot 1811* (Batavia, 1910), I, pp. 228–31; J.K.J. de Jonge and M. L. van Deventer, eds., *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag in Oost-Indiën*, 16 vols. (The Hague, 1862–1909), VIII, pp. 58–59, 62–63, 65–67; Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy in Java*, pp. 105–106.

<sup>100</sup> Blussé, *Strange Company*, pp. 88–96; A.R.T. Kemasang, "How Dutch Colonialism Foreclosed a Domestic Bourgeoisie in Java: The 1740 Chinese Massacres Reappraised," *Review* 9, no. 1 (1985):57–80; J. Th. Vermeulen, *De Chineezzen te Batavia en de Troebeelen van 1740* (Leiden, 1938); De Haan, *Oud Batavia I*, pp. 381–82; De Jonge et al., *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag IX*, pp. xlvii–lxxvi; W. R. van Hoëvell, "Batavia in 1740," *Tijdschrift voor Neêrland's Indië* 3 (1840):447–557; J. Crawford, *History of the Indian Archipelago* (London, 1820), II, pp. 427–30; T. S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London, 1817), II, pp. 210–14.

Banda Neira. The slaves' intention was to burn and kill everything and everyone, seize several vessels, and escape in the ensuing confusion. Thirteen of the leaders were apprehended and sent in chains to the small penal colony on Rozengain Island.<sup>101</sup>

There is no evidence of slave revolts in the Cape Colony in the seventeenth century. The only two revolts occurred in the western Cape after the British takeover in 1806, motivated by the frustrations slaves felt at the slow pace of amelioration and emancipation. The 1808 Malmesbury revolt was partially a response to rumors that the recent abolition of the international slave trade (1806) would lead to general emancipation, whereas the 1825 Bokkeveld uprising was similarly the outcome of rumors of emancipation and the general uncertainty of government policy toward slaves. Both revolts united the white Anglo-Boer élites and were quickly suppressed.<sup>102</sup>

In the absence of large-scale revolts, slave responses assumed a variety of everyday forms of resistance: slowness at work; breaking farm equipment and household possessions; refusal to obey orders; stealing food, clothing, or other commodities; arson of crops or property; poisoning owners, open particularly to those who prepared the master's food; running amok, assault or physical attacks on masters or innocent bystanders; "escapism" in alcohol, drugs, and gambling manifested in drinking arak, smoking opium, holding cockfights, and throwing dice; and suicide, the most tragic form of slave response and the ultimate "theft" of the master's property.<sup>103</sup>

The most common form of resistance, however, was marooning or

<sup>101</sup> *Generale Missiven* VI, pp. 668, 732, 846.

<sup>102</sup> Ross, *Cape of Torments*, pp. 96–118; K. Harris, "The Slave 'Rebellion' of 1808," *Kleio (Pretoria)* 20 (1988):54–65; Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa*, pp. 120, 134; Armstrong and Worden, "The Slaves, 1652–1834," p. 161. See also the historical novel on the Bokkeveld uprising: A. Brink, *Chain of Voices* (London, 1982).

<sup>103</sup> For Ambon, see *Generale Missiven* V, pp. 26, 200, 298, 441, 512, 671, 822; VI, 18, 161, 601, 665, 844; G. E. Rumphius, *De Ambonse Historie* (The Hague, 1910), pp. 50, 71; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* II, pp. 62–63, 229, 231, 308, 313, 341–42, 368–69, 466, 474–76, 562, 565, 592, 610, 616, 622, 633, 636, 642–43, 647, 652, 656–61, 663, 666, 672; Knaap, *Kruïdnagelen en Christenen*, p. 134. For Banda, see *Generale Missiven*, IV, pp. 713–15; VI, pp. 190, 238, 479, 668, 732, 754, 846; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* III, pp. 15, 88; Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*, p. 26. For Batavia, see *Generale Missiven* IV, pp. 749, 777, 834; V, pp. 426, 490, 647; VI, pp. 102, 801–802, 827, 829, 841; Niemeijer, *Calvinisme en Koloniale Stadscultuur*, pp. 46, 266, 268, 269; De Haan, *Oud Batavia* I, pp. 461–66; Abeyasekere, *Jakarta*, pp. 22–23; Sirks, "Het Recht om Huysselyk te Casyden," pp. 88–90. For the Cape, see N. Worden, "Revolt in Cape Colony Slave Society," unpublished paper presented at the International Conference on Slavery, Unfree Labour and Revolt in Asia and the Indian Ocean Region, University of Avignon, 4–6 October 2001; Ross, *Cape of Torments*, passim; Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa*, pp. 119–37; Armstrong and Wor-

escape. Where there was slavery, there was desertion.<sup>104</sup> Similar to many parts of the Atlantic plantation complex, slave escapes started virtually simultaneously with the introduction of captive labor in all the Dutch settlements throughout the Indian Ocean basin. A substantial majority of these desertions were acts of *petit* maroonage, lasting less than one month. Though some escapes were planned, the majority of these attempts were not premeditated but were immediate responses to some point of crisis: either punishment or fear of punishment often induced slaves to run away. The great majority of fugitives were adult males, who also tended to be the relatively recent arrivals in the colony. Small communities of runaway slaves (*samenrottende slaven*) sprung up throughout the Indian Ocean basin mostly in inaccessible mountainous, wooded areas in the interstitial no-man's-land separating Dutch conquests from regions held by independent rulers and headmen. Maroon communities lived in parasitic coexistence on the margins of nearby slave societies, raiding and trading for food, clothing, and weapons.

In greater South Africa, slaves first reached Mauritius shortly after its initial occupation by the VOC in 1638. Maroonage became part of the colony's social and economic landscape no later than 1642, when 52 of 105 forced laborers brought to the island that year fled into the island's heavily wooded interior shortly after arrival. The first recorded slave escape at the Cape itself was in 1655, three years after the founding of the colony. Table Mountain, Hangklip promontory, and other mountains on the Cape Peninsula in the vicinity of Cape Town became regular hideaways for runaway slaves. The longest surviving and largest maroon community (about 50 runaway slaves) in the Cape Colony, established by a runaway Buginese slave named Leander, was near Hangklip or Cape False, which existed from the 1720s to the Emancipation Act of 1833.<sup>105</sup>

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den, "The Slaves, 1652–1834," pp. 157–62; Worden, *The Chains that Bind Us*, pp. 64–67; Biewinga, *De Kaap de Goede Hoop*, pp. 110–15. For Ceylon, see *Generale Missiven VI*, p. 623; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge*, p. 331; Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek I*, pp. 20, 62–63, 97–98, 109, 169–70, 191, 201, 234, 290, 293, 309–10.

<sup>104</sup> For the prevalence of escape in slave societies throughout the Indian Ocean region, see N. Alpers, "Flight to Freedom: Escape from Slavery among Bonded Africans in the Indian Ocean World, c. 1750–1962," unpublished paper presented at the Workshop on Slave Systems in Asian and the Indian Ocean, University of Avignon, May 2000.

<sup>105</sup> Moree, *A Concise History of Dutch Mauritius*, p. 31; Ross, *Cape of Torments*, pp. 54–72; Armstrong and Worden, "The Slaves, 1652–1834," pp. 157–60; Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa*, pp. 123–28; *Kaapsch Plakkaatboek II*, pp. 159–60; Kieskamp, "De Wereld in één Land," pp. 79–80, 82. For a later period, see N. Penn, *Rogues, Rebels and Runaways: Eighteenth-Century Cape Characters* (Cape Town, 1999).

As early as 1622, three years after the founding of Batavia, complaints were voiced about the troubles caused by runaway slaves committing robbery in the forested lands nearby. One particular street in the city was even called “path of absconders” (*Drosserspad* or *Gang Patjenongan*) after the numerous slaves using it as their road to freedom. Like many other slaves, Surapati (d. 1706), a Balinese slave who had lived in Batavia, escaped to the highlands south of Batavia and became the leader of a band of brigands. In 1684, Surapati and his followers attacked a VOC force near Batavia and were joined by a party from the Javanese court of Kartasura in a massacre of a Dutch embassy to that court in 1686. Surapati proceeded to establish an independent domain in East Java, where he and his descendants ruled until the late 18th century when the polity was finally destroyed by company forces.<sup>106</sup>

Maroon communities mushroomed throughout the Dutch government of Ambon, in the mountainous and forested regions of Hitu, Leitimor, the Lease Islands, Seram, and elsewhere near Dutch settlements. Governor Robert Padbrugge (1683–87) even had sagu trees, which served as a safe haven for runaway slaves and criminals, under the walls of Castle Victoria cut down. Passage around the city of Kotah Ambon on Leitimor nevertheless remained unsafe. A mountain slope on the neighboring island of Hitu was the base of operation of a community of 30 runaway slaves in the 1690s; the runaways lived in three houses protected by caltrops, guns, bows, and arrows.<sup>107</sup>

Large groups of slaves ran away from the nutmeg gardens on Banda and harassed the local *perkeniers*. In 1694, no less than 64 slaves recently sent from Batavia ran away. In 1702, a maroon community in the interior of Banda Neira was finally destroyed, its members dispersed, killed, or captured. The following year, adverse winds and currents foiled the spectacular act of “maritime maroonage” in the form

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<sup>106</sup> L. Nagtegaal, *Riding the Dutch Tiger: The Dutch East Indies Company and the North-east Coast of Java, 1680–1743* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 72–77, 79; M. C. Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy in Java, 1677–1726: Asian and European Imperialism in the Early Kartasura Period* (Sydney, 1993), pp. 84 et seq.; A. Kumar, ed., *Surapati, Man and Legend: A Study of Three Babad Traditions* (Leiden, 1976); H. J. de Graaf, *De Moord op Kapitein François Tack, 8 Febr. 1686* (Amsterdam, 1935); De Haan, *Oud Batavia I*, pp. 442–43, 462.

<sup>107</sup> *Generale Missiven V*, pp. 200, 297, 512, 671, 822; idem, pp. 161, 601, 665, 844; G. J. Knaap, ed., *Memories van Overgave van Gouverneurs van Ambon in de Zeventiende en Achtiende Eeuw*, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Kleine serie 62 (The Hague, 1987), pp. 91, 93, 251, 282–83, 289–90, 303; Valentijn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indiën II*, pp. 62–63, 229, 231, 313, 341–42, 368–69, 636, 642–43, 652, 657, 660–61, 663, 666, 672.

of the escape of 23 slaves on board an indigenous vessel. Slave desertion, however, continued unabated to the exasperation of the Dutch.<sup>108</sup>

From the very beginnings of Dutch settlement on Ceylon, slaves fled, reportedly “for no reason” (*sonder eenige redenen*) from the Dutch-controlled coastal areas to the interior kingdom of Kandy. Dense forest cover and Dutch-Kandyan politico-economic rivalries provided a readily accessible safe haven to the fugitives, subsisting like other maroon communities elsewhere on “poaching, stealing, and vagabonding” (*zich emerende met stroopen, rooven en vagabonden*).<sup>109</sup>

VOC authorities resorted to a wide variety of countermeasures in a desperate attempt to stem the continuous flood of slave escapees. A preferential slave import system promoted the introduction of certain “ethnicities” (often from remote areas having little cultural affinity with local indigenous populations), while prohibiting the trade in certain groups deemed troublesome (e.g., adult male Makassarese, Balinese, and others). Increasingly stern legislation held out the chilling prospect of cruel punishment to runaway slaves and their accomplices, including severe whipping, prolonged chain labor, and even the death penalty.<sup>110</sup> Numerous treaties with indigenous rulers and headmen included clauses providing for the exchange of runaway slaves. Occasional general pardons were issued by various VOC authorities in order to incite fugitive slaves to return. Numerous armed expeditions, consisting of company soldiers, free burgher militia, and draftees from the local population (including Khoisan at the Cape and Alfures “headhunters” in eastern Indonesia), were sent out, animated by the hope of material gain in the form of bounty or prize money. Sustained police action could have a temporary effect on maroonage. Despite occasional, fleeting successes, however, the problem of runaway slaves proved intractable. The myth of a relatively “benign” form of Indian Ocean slavery should therefore be quickly put to rest in the face of the continuous urge of slaves to escape their chattel status.

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<sup>108</sup> *Generale Missiven* IV, pp. 713, 714–15; VI, pp. 190, 238; Valentijn, *Beschryvinge* III, p. 15; Knaap ed., *Memories van Overgave*, pp. 90–91.

<sup>109</sup> Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I, pp. 109, 169–70, 201, 290, 399; Van Dam, *Beschryvinge*, p. 331.

<sup>110</sup> Various theories have been postulated to explain why fugitive slaves were often subjected to these harsh punishments: fears that maroon activity could portend loss of control over large and potentially dangerous servile populations, reflection of colonial paranoia and racism, a major component of class exploitation, or evidence that coercion was the glue that held these fragmented societies together.

## CONCLUSION

Following the discovery of the seasonal monsoon regime sometime after 300 B.C.E., the societies and cultures of the Indian Ocean basin became integrated in a regional world-system. As the world's oldest trade, trafficking in captive labor involved, among other things, the migration of peoples, cultural diffusion, and economic exchange. Arriving in the Indian Ocean in the late sixteenth century, the Dutch took over and interacted with preexisting systems of slavery and dependency. Like its Indian Ocean predecessor, the Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade was urban-centered, drawing captive labor from three interlocking and overlapping circuits or subregions: "Greater South Africa," South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Dutch slavery discourse was rendered in religious humanitarian terms. Private and company slaves served as general laborers and were used in a wide variety of occupations in the Dutch settlements across the Indian Ocean basin. In certain of these slave societies, however, they also performed specific activities in accordance with the size of the individual slave household and the particular position the settlement occupied within the company's overall commercial network. The division of slave labor roughly followed ethnic, gender, and age lines based on colonial taxonomy and preexisting indigenous beliefs and practices that characterized local slave systems. The number of company and total Dutch slaves and the accompanying volume of the annual slave trades fluctuated greatly. In the late seventeenth century, there were about 4,000 company slaves and perhaps 60,000 total slaves. In order to replenish these numbers, 200–400 company slaves and 3,200–5,600 total slaves had to be imported each year. Assuming an average mortality rate en route of 20%, 240–480 company slaves and 4,476–7,716 total Dutch slaves had to be exported from their respective catchment areas. While slave revolt was rare, slave resistance assumed a variety of everyday forms of resistance, especially desertion or maroonage.

Recent Afrocentric archival research has cast new light on the world's oldest trade in the Indian Ocean basin, especially the east coast of Africa (after 1770) and the Dutch Cape Colony (1652–1796/1805). Effectively ending the protracted history of silence, the suffering of the Indian Ocean slaves is finally being noted by contemporary historians. Further Asian-centric research, however, is needed to map this previously uncharted territory in greater detail, in particular for the period before 1770 and for the areas east of the southwest Indian Ocean. A more comprehensive chronological and geographic cover-

age should pursue a post-civilizational narrative, an alternative historicized, holistic, analytical, dynamic, and multidimensional open model, sensitive to chronological and geographic variations, socioeconomic and political contexts, and cross-cultural interactions. This new paradigm will provide the analytical tools to properly study the “world of slaves” that integrated the entire Indian Ocean basin for several millennia.