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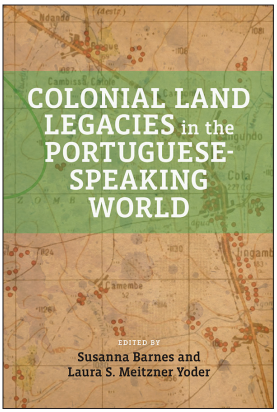

COLONIAL LAND LEGACIES IN THE PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING WORLD

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Dutch Colonialism and Portuguese Land Legacies in Flores

Hans Hägerdal

Introduction

In 1859, after ten years of diplomatic activity, two European colonial powers eventually agreed on the details of a territorial partition that largely took place over the heads of the populations involved. After 250 years of uneasy colonial rivalry, ownership of the sizable islands of Timor and Flores was settled. East Flores and parts of the Solor Islands formally left the Portuguese fold for the Dutch colonial state.[1] It was a drastic step that engendered some local resentment, but the consequences for the local populations were as yet somewhat limited.[2] Globally, the late nineteenth century was the high tide of European colonial expansion. However, the metropolitan Dutch government preferred a non-interventionist policy, an *onthoudingspolitiek*, up to the years around 1900, meaning that local self-ruling polities, *zelfbesturende landschappen*, were able to mind their own business as long as they followed the Dutch lead.[3] In eastern Flores the main polities were the Catholic Sikka and Larantuka realms, headed by rajas with roots back in proto-historical times, and also with an element of Portuguese political and religious culture.[4]

This raises intriguing questions about the consequences of colonial hybridity, in the sense of the creation of new transcultural forms in a contact zone. In this chapter I study colonialism as a historical process that involved not only European but also indigenous agencies. How was Portuguese cultural impact embedded in a regional Florenese governance that sought to manage land and labour? Can we even speak of self-colonization—an acceptance of the ways of the dominant foreigner that is set in motion through the pressure of European

expansion, but that allows a degree of political, economic, and cultural choice? And how was this hybridity assessed by the new colonial suzerains, the Dutch, who had a long history of rivalry with Iberian powers and harboured supposedly progressive (economically and administratively rational) ideas about land use? In fact, the East Flores case highlights the legacy of an inter-European colonial transfer that, unlike in most cases, was carried out under relatively peaceful if strained conditions.

The investigation is carried out, first, by surveying the construction of a Luso-hybrid society from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and second, by scrutinizing how Dutch colonial writers perceived the intersection between the Portuguese and indigenous past of East Flores, especially with an eye to governance over land. Here, I investigate how continuities and discontinuities—the persistence of a Luso-Florenese hybrid heritage—are reflected in the Dutch colonial records from the nineteenth century to the eve of World War II. In particular I scrutinize the *Memories van Overgave* (memorandums of succession) that officials with responsibility for a territory were asked to write for their successors.[5] As pointed out by Cees Fasseur in a massive study, colonial officials of the Netherlands underwent extensive training before being assigned to posts such as *controleur*, *asistent-resident*, or *resident*.[6] This is reflected in an intellectual curiosity in their reports, which often went far beyond immediate practical needs, frequently including historical and ethnographical details of great value for posterity. In fact, a personal intellectual interest does not conflict with colonial discourses: Even if certain data is of little use for colonial governance, ethnography could serve to reinforce a sense of epistemic superiority.[7]

How are we to assess these sources? As noted by Bernard Cohn, history and anthropology both have to do with the creation, formalization, and practise of knowledge that is deeply embedded in one's own historical experience. As Europe expanded, the history that it constructed for itself was also part of a quest for control over space. The non-European past had to be reconstructed by Western methods, which in turn constructed colonial sociologies.[8] To quote Ann Stoler, "If a notion of colonial ethnography starts from the premise that that archival production is itself both a process and a powerful technology of rule, then we need not only brush against the archive's received categories. We need to read for its regularities, for its logic to recall, for its densities and distributions, for its consistencies of misinformation, omission and mistake, along the archival grain."[9]

Flores Society in Portuguese Times

The evolution of the former Portuguese possessions in Flores has been studied by attentive scholars such as Robert Barnes, Stefan Dietrich, and Douglas Lewis.[10] The most detailed analysis of land and politics in Florenese history is by Dietrich, who warns against seeing the society documented in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as "traditional"; in fact, Florenese society has had a long history of external contact with Asian and European groups. Dietrich sees disposition of land through territorial *Rechtsgemeinschaften* (communities defined by customary right) as central. Here, ancestry and mytho-chronological sequence play a large role in defining the relations between social groups. Origin stories explain the emergence of polities and villages and give vital frames of reference on an island that is often mountainous and infertile and thus characterized by material scarcity. Custodians of a territorial unit, in Malay *Tuan Tanah* (lords of the land), are descendants of the original settlers who allocate the land resources and may combine this with priestly and even political functions.[11] In the Lamaholot-speaking area of East Flores and the Solor Islands (Solor, Adonara, and Lembata), these structural principles are seen in the ritual contradiction between the Paji and Demon groups, which largely overlaps with the Islam-Catholicism division, and also with the division in Dutch- and Portuguese-affiliated areas.[12]

The commercial interest in the Timorese sandalwood resulted in the construction of Portuguese settlements in Solor from 1562 and in Larantuka after 1613, since ships loading sandalwood could easily reach the ports of Timor from these places. Whiteness and racialism were issues in Iberian society, but this in no way prevented marriages with local women and adaptation to Asian customs and uses.[13] The sandalwood trade was mostly managed by the Portuguese residing in Larantuka, who co-opted traders from Macau who would sell the fragrant wood to buyers in southern China.[14] The governors of Timor, residing in Lifau, on Timor's northern coast, after 1702, and in Dili after 1769, seldom visited Flores. From early on, Larantuka was dominated by a hybrid population of Black Portuguese, or Larantuqueiros, who were often at odds with the white Timor-based governor in the period 1702–85. There are also, however, references to a series of rajas or *sengajis* (local leaders) of Larantuka and Sikka who usually bore Portuguese Catholic names. The titles of these figures were not originally used by the indigenous populations but were imported from the outside: *raja* is Malay and ultimately Sanskrit, while *sengaji* comes from North Maluku and ultimately Java. Portuguese and early Dutch sources also often used the term king (*rei*, *koning*), while late colonial Dutch texts spoke of *vorst* (ruling prince) and *radja*.

According to the Jesuit and Dominican sources, a ruler of Lewonama (Larantuka) was baptized with many grandees and subjects around 1559, and during the seventeenth century several rulers with Catholic names are mentioned, starting with a certain Dom Constantino around 1625.[15] Indigenous lords may have upgraded their prerogatives, simply because the Portuguese chose to approach them as "kings" (*reis*) in the European understanding.[16] A Franciscan account from 1670 stresses the acculturation that was taking place in easternmost Flores: "In this port of Larantuka live some Portuguese and besides that a lot of indigenous Christians, to whom the clerics of the Order of our Father Saint Dominic give their service. . . . And in this Lent we preached the gospel, not only to the Portuguese but also to the natives of the land, who understood us since they know Portuguese. Because of that we had quite some work to do at this port."[17] Another text from the era also alleged that the East Florenese were "very domesticated and agreeable," in stark contrast to the "lazy" and often rebellious Timorese.[18] A lay account from 1695–6 gives an idea of the colonial geography and the possibilities, including the supposedly primitive agrarian economy in a European mercantile system:

> [After 1613], other [Portuguese] moved to the lands of Ende,[19] to the village of Larantuka on the east end of the island, near [Solor], where they already had some churches and Christianity. They crossed the river and placed a village above the place they call Praia Grande [Pantai Besar], at the foot of an eminent and famous summit, one of the largest I have seen, that the natives call Gunung Serbite.[20] It is next to the village Lewonama where the king of those lands stays, who is presently Dom Domingos Vieira. [He is] a Christian who pays obedience to the Most Serene Ruler of Portugal our Lord, together with all his vassals and landlords whom they call *atalaques* and colloquially *atacabeis* or *atacabelos*, being the name and coat of arms of their nobility, just as the *fidalgos* among us. . . .
>
> If there is more Portuguese attendance, a great conquest and expansion of grand interests can be achieved for the Portuguese Monarchy, due to the extended lands that lack culture. They are very fertile, with healthy freshness, abundant of everything necessary for a human treat, and with a grandeur that surpasses some in Europe; for agriculture requires low costs, as has been experienced, since it is just enough to plant the seedlings at the discretion of time, and [fields are] often dug with a stick that serves as a hoe.[21]

Here, one may note the perceived entwinement of Portuguese and local categories, as local lords of the land are equated with *fidalgos*. The Catholicized leaders lived a short distance from the foreign settlement and seem to have co-operated closely with the ethnically mixed Portuguese, who often had Melaka and Makassar origins. In 1679 the Dutch noted that the renowned Larantuqueiro leader António Hornay wielded power in the Timor-Flores quarters with the help of a very multi-ethnic force consisting of men armed with muskets, which were awe-inspiring since non-Christians seldom possessed them.[22] António Hornay, co-operating with the *sengaji* of Larantuka, tried to bind some far-off Lamaholot settlements to their political network by bestowing flags to the leaders.[23] Portuguese flags were very important and spiritually potent prestige objects, as shown by parallel practices in Timor, but their acceptance probably did not entail any more interference in land use than the deliverance of the kind of customary services and "gifts" sent by settlements to the rulers in the area. Rather than landowning, Larantuqueiro power was based on control over trade in Timorese sandalwood until this source of wealth was exhausted by overcutting in the eighteenth century.[24] Also, seafarers from Sikka were active in the sandalwood trade in Sumba, showing that the Catholicized elite outside of Larantuka town partook in the economic opportunities.[25]

As far as can be seen, the local rajas continued to support the Black Portuguese while keeping control over parts of Solor, Adonara, and Lembata. Missionary activities decreased greatly compared to the seventeenth century, but Catholicism persisted, at least in the core areas.[26] Nevertheless the Catholicized rajas replaced the Black Portuguese as the politically dominant force in Larantuka under very obscure circumstances. There is no evidence of any violent competition, but the leading Black Portuguese clans Hornay and da Costa seem to disappear from Larantuka in the 1760s.[27] It is only after the cession of East Flores to the Dutch colonial state in 1859 that the political system of the Larantuka polity is amply documented by missionaries and government officials.

In their pre-1859 accounts, the Dutch officials stationed on Timor held the East Florenese in somewhat higher regard than the ostensibly "barbaric" Timorese. One of the more attentive writers, Emanuel Francis (1832), identified the population with Roman Catholic so-called Black Portuguese, although this can only have applied to part of them. The literate ruler of Larantuka, Dom Lorenzo, was a bright contrast to the miserable and uncivilized rajas on Timor, and Francis noted that he had the dignities of both king and priest.[28] But he also believed that the Portuguese government should state its rights on Larantuka on Flores, and Oecussi and Noimuti on Timor, in a more clear-cut fashion. These regions kept the Portuguese flag without actually acknowledging the power of the

government. Such authority should be implemented for the benefit of the "general right of the peoples."[29] We discern a political system that was more "Southeast Asian" than colonial European, where the Larantuka king was a satellite of a central Portuguese hierarchy (Dili, Lisbon) that was laden with symbolical capital but had limited administrative abilities.

Overall, little ink was spent on Flores in the Dutch surveys of the region. As a geographical report of the Timor Islands from 1850 curtly notes, "as far as [is] known, the land yields rice, jagung [maize], wild cinnamon, sandalwood, pumice stone, amber, some gold sand, buffalos, cows, pigs, goats, fowl, birds' nests and turtles."[30] Some of these products were potentially profitable, but the hearsay character of the information evoked little colonial enthusiasm, and most of Flores, apart from a toehold in Ende at the southern coast, was anyway outside their reach.[31]

Can the nineteenth-century texts, in conjunction with older sources, help us understand the legacy of three centuries of Portuguese dominance in eastern Flores and adjacent islands? There seem to have been few ambitions to impose an administrative structure on the villages, let alone to introduce a regular system of taxation. As established by Alice Kortlang, local accounts of the coming of the Portuguese are abundant but stress the consensus aspect: newcomers approached the local genealogical headmen who supervised allocation of lands, and received land on the outskirts or at the seashore of various settlements.[32] Thus, the old system of land management via membership of houses (clan segments) and marriage alliances coexisted with the trade-oriented Eurasian immigrants. At most, modern anthropology has found traces of clerical efforts to alter certain social customs, such as abolishing traditional bridewealth in favour of bride service, with partial success.[33]

However, two factors come to the fore: the presence of a Catholic community, and the emergence of a Catholicized kingdom with a partly new, sea-oriented settlement pattern.[34] While these factors tended to be downplayed in Dutch writings, this misses an important point: the system worked. While most inhabitants of the old Portuguese territories remained non-Christian until relatively modern times, the centrality of Catholicism in the power structure never seems to have been questioned, and the raja of Larantuka had, as Emanuel Francis noted, also a vital clerical position in the religious fraternity (*confraria*) of the place. The rajas were tied to the Black Portuguese elite by matrimonial alliances, socially vital in a Lamaholot (and Sikka) context,[35] and are not known to have rebelled against them.[36] Though the Sikka and Lamaholot worlds were turbulent, the predominant political position of Larantuka in East Flores, West Solor, and parts of Adonara and Lembata apparently persisted through the seventeenth century and

for several hundred years thereafter. As will be discussed later, this is partly a result of their ability to co-opt local institutions and traditions, including decidedly non-Christian ones.

"Savagery" and Catholic culture in the *Memories van Overgave*

As the entirety of Flores was incorporated into the Dutch colonial state after 1859, information about the Lamaholot area (to a lesser extent Sikka) was included in the *Memories van Overgave*. The early texts were focused on political conditions in the Flores area, with limited regard for the economic resources. A *Memorie* from 1876 evokes the image of a virtual *terra incognita*, aggravated by the economical indolence of the local populations: "The highlands of Flores are still obscure, one knows almost nothing about them. In the areas of Soa, Rokka, Foa, and Potta, tin is found, possibly in large amounts, but they do not want to point it out."[37] Moreover, the local raja of Larantuka, Don Gaspar, "is in general not to be trusted." The *Memorie* relates in brief how the Raja, as the principal interlocutor for the colonial state in the area, tries to expand his influence over land beyond the Lamaholot ethnic borders by vassalization of Sikka further to the west.[38]

Beyond the self-righteous account of unco-operative and dishonest natives one may, obviously, trace tacit local resistance: Colonial tin prospecting on their land may not be in the interest of the highlanders, while the raja tries to create his own political network beyond European control. For much of the archipelago the Dutch used the policy of non-intervention (*onthoudingspolitiek*) from the 1830s to the 1890s, preferring indirect rule. This has some parallels with contemporary British colonialism.

The most obvious heritage of the Portuguese suzerainty was Catholicism, which had been suppressed in the Netherlands itself until not such a long time ago. Catholic missionary organizations were eventually able to work in the colonies.[39] Missionaries had high hopes for the raja family of Larantuka, who might co-operate with them in order to create a Catholic kingdom in East Flores. The colonial residents and *controleurs*, on the other hand, were less enchanted by the local aristocracy. In a *Memorie van Overgave* from 1878, Resident Ecoma Verstege noted a less than happy religious land legacy. The Catholic clergy, he asserted, kept coffee plantations, which were the reason for the great drought that plagued the Larantukan territory. This pitted the exasperated mountain people against the Europeans and native Christians, and violence was only averted by the arrival of the rains.[40] In the following *Memorie van Overgave* from 1880, Resident J. G. F. Riedel—otherwise known as an ethnographer of note—lists a

long litany of disputes in the Timor Residency. These again include the perceived juxtaposition between unruly settlers in uphill lands and the Catholicized centre, in his reference to "the resistance of the mountain people beyond the [mountain] Ilimandiri against the Raja of Larantuka, East Flores, and their attempts to attack the central place, or rather coastal kampong, by means of headhunting, since the Raja of Larantuka, as a Christian, is no longer willing to head their pagan religious service."[41] Reflecting on all the problems in the residency, Riedel posited the development of the "neglected, still in a very primitive way handled agriculture" as a necessary remedy.

"Savagery" and heathen rites are here attributed to non-Christians, in stark contrast to the Catholic ruler, who seems to have little control over land beyond Ilimandiri, the lofty volcano behind Larantuka whose non-regal dimensions—a seaside village rather than a local capital—are accentuated. As also suggested by other texts, colonial discourse posited a doubleness in the position of the raja between a "civilized" Luso-Catholic heritage and an impotency to implement ordered governance vis-à-vis local "non-civilized" agriculturists. In fact, the preconditions of Larantuka kingship were partly misunderstood by the Dutch: The Catholic names and titles and the inclusion of the raja in a local clerical organization did not imply any European-style governance, but rather a highly segmentary power structure with parallels in many parts of eastern Indonesia and Timor-Leste.[42]

As in the rest of Indonesia, the final abandonment of the Dutch non-intervention policy, inspired by events in Aceh, led to a rapid increase of colonial control on Flores by the early twentieth century. Indigenous regimes were swiftly suppressed in Bali, South Sulawesi, Timor, and elsewhere, and Resident J. F. A. de Rooy reports in a *Memorie* from 1908 how Flores was subjected to similar subordination. By the early twentieth century, he notes, Dutch power on the island, formally divided in three *onderafdeelingen*, was in a sorry (*treurig*) state. Apart from four Catholic missionary stations and a few tiny coastal strips, there was no executive power, and the interior was entirely unknown. In 1906, however, a *controleur* was employed with the mission to enforce a more direct colonial influence, "to prepare for measures to make Flores productive for the treasury chest." It is then described how large tracts of the island were mapped, roads were projected, local populations enjoined to accept Dutch adjudication, and unwilling *kampongs* forced to yield at gunpoint. Captain Christoffel with a company of *marechausses* (military police) made a clean sweep throughout Flores, whose "savage" (*woest*) population suffered many hundreds of casualties. But new risings soon broke out, and De Rooy reflected that a more sedate colonial approach might prove more successful.[43]

However, the image of non-Christian "savagery" and recalcitrance in the face of civilized governance is not matched by any appreciation of the Luso-Catholic heritage of Larantuka. On the contrary, Resident de Rooy denounces the recently deposed and exiled Raja Don Lorenzo, who "had a usurped power, on Flores as well as the Solor Islands, and abused that; his dignity is entirely superfluous and should remain abolished."[44] This is underlined by the assertion that the Lamaholot region had been in a tranquil state since Don Lorenzo disappeared (1904). According to De Rooy, "much better results" flowed from the direct communication between the colonial authorities and the *kakang* (district heads), implying increasing colonial control over local societies and land. But not only that; the Catholic establishment that was a heritage from the Portuguese period disturbed colonial ambitions: "With one word I must point out as a warning, that the Catholic mission in Larantuka has, or at least had, an inclination to support the affairs of the exiled Catholic raja. That is the only attempt of meddling in affairs of governance which is found in the six Catholic missions in the area."[45] The resident nevertheless praised the general work of the Catholic missionaries in the area, who took care to learn local languages, did not use intermediaries, and sought no worldly advantages, "all entirely to the opposite of the Protestant direction."[46] A *Memorie* from 1913 deplored the slow advances of Christianity in relation to Islam on Flores, since "a Christianized population creates closer support for our power."[47]

In the eyes of these observers, the Portuguese heritage appears to work in two ways. It forms the basis for further Christianization, which is considered advantageous for colonial penetration and thus land use. Also, the chiefs in East Flores are deemed to be more "developed and civilized" than their peers in other parts of the Timor Residency.[48] However, the power structure with a Catholic raja at the apex is deemed to have little legitimacy and is an obstacle to reaching out to the local districts and villages. With a notion common in Orientalist tradition, traditional rulership is depicted as oppressive and detached from functional governance. As pointed out by Robert Barnes, this is nevertheless a misleading view; the rulers were always believed to possess spiritual strength and authority vested by their ancestors. They received products from the land as tribute from the *kakang*-ships with irregular intervals but had no taxation rights. The Dutch policy that people and lands be surveyed and taxed regularly therefore engendered dissatisfaction and altered the balance from Portuguese times.[49]

Dutch Missionary Investigations

This condescending idea of local authority is also partly gainsaid by a category of writers who had the opportunity to work in Flores, and who were sometimes

opposed to the official colonial policy. These were the Catholic missionaries who were active after about 1860. Not much had been published about the former Portuguese possessions by the early twentieth century. There were, however, two short works by the missionary F. C. Heynen (1876), in addition to a number of articles.

Heynen's accounts are especially valuable since they were rather early and conveyed another perspective than those of colonial officials. He notes the importance of ancestral myths in the perception of the settlement structure. In the beginning a brother-sister pair, Liahura and Watewele, arrive from Selayar Island and settle by the volcanic Mount Ilimandiri. They subsequently go separate ways: Liahura goes to the western side of Ilimandiri, marries an autochthonous woman, and sires ten children, of whom one becomes the raja over eight settlements. Meanwhile, Watewele stays close to the seashore, where she meets Pategolo, a fugitive prince from Wewiku, on Timor (which allies with Wehali, the centre of the Timorese political-ritual order[50]). The pair begets five sons, including the ancestor of the rajas of Larantuka. The formation of the settlement pattern is then outlined, with a core of territories under *hoofd-kapalas* (principal headmen) and a number of remote vassals who contribute with certain tributes and auxiliaries.[51] All this is understood to be pre-Christian history.

The account underscores the close relation between authority and land: The order of land division is laid down by the ancestors, who play a fundamental role in East Florenese religion and the local world view. However, Heynen also presents us with myths of the coming of the Portuguese, both for Larantuka and the Sikka kingdom further to the west. In both cases the stories involve culture heroes, local aristocrats who are educated and baptized by the Portuguese, return to their native lands, and bring about the Catholicization of the East Florenese aristocracy.[52] In these oral stories, the Portuguese are basically portrayed in a positive light, as an ordering force. Moreover, among all the Orientalist stereotypes, Heynen does not see the Catholic kingship as actually despotic:

> From olden times the Larantuka kingdom, if one considers the low level of development and the strangeness of its components, seems to have been rather well ordered. Supreme power rests with the raja, who formerly had the rights over life and death; his powers were however tempered by that of the principal kapalas who, being hereditary like him, held far from small power and influence in their negorijen [settlements] and were councillors of the crown by birth.[53]

The Colonial Official as Anthropologist: Looking for Luso-Legacies

While precious little was published about Flores societies, a body of information about the recent acquisitions was piling up in the colonial archives in the form of reports, letters, and statistics, enabling serious historical analysis.[54] There were particular *Memories* about Flores and its various *onderafdelingen*. Unlike our Kupang residents, the writers based in Flores often displayed great interest in the *adat* and traditional past. The dearth of preserved indigenous writings makes their contributions important in spite of their inevitable bias as colonial officials. In part, this is inherent in the genre: Questions of agricultural practice, division of land, statistics for the districts and villages, and religious customs of importance are often found in excessive detail in the particular *Memories* of the Dutch East Indies, since these matters were important for taxation and projects of development. In the Netherlands at the time, there was a lively scholarly discussion on whether the colonial state should appropriate "wastelands" belonging to native communities for ostensibly useful purposes.[55] While the lands in East Flores were largely preserved for indigenous use, the new colonial taxation system was deeply resented and led to serious uprisings in 1913–14, highlighting the necessity of knowledge production.[56] As Assistant Resident G. A. Bosselaar wrote in 1932, "For a correct governance, a solid knowledge of the structure of the indigenous society is the first requirement; this is true in general, but particularly for a land that is still young from a governing point of view, where indigenous governance must still be organized and systematized."[57]

The official A. J. L. Couvreur provided a long report on the Larantuka kingdom in 1907 that remains valuable to this day in spite of its condescending ideas about local authority.[58] Couvreur devoted much space to the mytho-historical and genealogical aspects of the polity. Similarly, C. J. Seegeler's *Nota van Toelichting* (1931) includes a detailed mytho-historical account that is partly different from Heynen's older account and emphasizes other names. Special attention is paid to the first raja of Larantuka, Sirah Demon, who is a true culture hero: Supported by supernatural occurrences, he bonds a number of places in East Flores and the Solor Islands, introduces pre-Christian religious practices, gathers the hitherto scattered populations in real villages, divides them in four *suku* (clans), decrees a fourfold division of village chiefs, and places *kakang* over the various dependencies.[59] Compared to the missionaries, these officials strangely tone down the stories of the Portuguese and the integration of Luso-culture in local governance, and Couvreur repeats the idea that the raja in Larantuka was superfluous and

that the kingdom did not even exist "in our sense," but was merely a collection of isles and villages.[60]

The most remarkable contribution is, perhaps, the *Memorie van Overgave* by J. J. M. F. Symons. Apart from the usual details of local economics and population data, he includes a series of appendices on customary rules and the history of the Sikka kingdom, all written in Malay by local informers. The history is anonymous but was clearly authored by Dominicus Pareira Kondi, a raja official who also co-wrote an extended history that has been published and translated in recent times.[61]

It provides a detailed account of the double indigenous-Portuguese origins of the Sikka political order where ten pages out of thirty-six are devoted to the coming of the Portuguese and Catholicism, how the first Christian ruler, Dom Alesu, visited and thus bonded a large number of places in Flores, and how relations were cemented by the bestowal of ivory tusks.[62] As such, it is an interesting case of colonial officialdom co-opting an indigenous counterpart. While this undoubtedly conveys the voices of the colonized, it must be stressed that the choice of the Malay texts is still within the colonial archive's logic of inclusion and omission.[63]

C. J. Seegeler provides a relatively informed idea of ethnographic particularities in the Larantuka territory.[64] It is interesting to note that the author has almost nothing to say about the Portuguese past when surveying ethnohistory, religious ideas, and settlement structure. Indirectly, however, he provides important clues:

> Possession of the land lies in the hands of the *suku* [clans]. Thus the *kottang*, *keleng*, *hurit* and *maring* [chiefly titles] are also, apart from *suku* headmen, *Tuan Tanah* [lord of the land] over the lands of their own *suku*. This applies to the entire territory of Larantuka. The *Tuan Tanah*s are the persons who direct the placement of new gardens and know how the *suku* land is divided up. Where the gardening forms *Etang* and *Netak* occur, the *Tuan Tanah* still has a very large significance. Where the land is practically speaking divided up everywhere, and one works the lands every year, which the forefathers have already worked (*Horowura*, *Tanah Boleng*), the significance and also prestige of the *Tuan Tanah* has declined.[65]

We see here a strongly clan-based society where land is a collective property, similar to many places in Southeast Asia. The ordering notion of quadripartition is, moreover, common in eastern Indonesian societies,[66] and implies a system of

authority that is both heavily decentralized and built on strong structural principles. The author concludes that there were originally not even true hamlets. Only later on some were moved to the seashore, and "good and regular" *kampongs* emerged due to Dutch influence. The author furthermore expands on the religious customs. Most people still practise ancestral beliefs at the time of writing, and society is knit together by the *korke* or *rumah pemali*, ritual houses that are present in the various settlements. A *korke* has four wooden pillars who are named after the four clan leaders *kottang*, *keleng*, *hurit*, and *maring*. The stronger this structure stood, according to the author, the less successful were the Catholic missionaries in their efforts.

Now, however, there has also been a central *korke* in Larantuka town that reproduces the fourfold symbolism of the pillars. Here, *kottang* is the raja himself, *keleng* is the second raja, while *hurit* and *maring* are prominent lineages in the *kampong* Balela. The setting is entirely non-Christian: Inside the *korke* is a large drum and seven gongs used for war dances, while outside are numbers of sacred stones, *nubanara*. At the time of writing (1931) this central *korke* is in decay, but previously it had been used with the participation by the Larantukan political elite.[67]

Such are the main points of Seegeler's *Nota van Toelichting*. Historical sources clearly point out a long line of Catholicized leaders since the sixteenth century. In other words, local institutions of land use were reproduced on a central level that involved participation by Christian leaders without any known commotion, apparently for hundreds of years. As F. C. Heynen wrote in 1876, "From old, religion in the small Larantuka kingdom was woven together with the character of the state. They both pervaded each other; and in such degree that some peculiar conditions and especially a dignity that should have disappeared with the introduction of Christianity, can only find its explanation in the mutual relation between the state and the original religion. We allude to the dignity of the *Tuan Tanah*."[68] While Heynen seems to regard this as an aberration, it may equally well be seen as functional; Christian and pre-Christian power structures coexisted pragmatically, as the *Tuan Tanah* allocated agricultural land. This is similar to the well-known features of syncretism that may be found in many parts of Southeast Asia, testifying to vibrant local traditions that provided meaning to people and were often, as in Larantuka, tied to land use. Territory was divided into garden land and forest land and understood as sacred space.[69] Perhaps the guardianship of this land, which, apart from a host of spirits and ancestors, also included a supreme being called Lera Wulan, facilitated accommodation with Catholicism.[70]

Concluding Remarks

Of what actually happened when Portuguese seafarers began to settle in the Lamaholot and Sikka worlds and intermarry with the locals, we know strangely little, for the early modern Portuguese and Dutch sources did not tell us much about day-to-day practices. While later traditions depict the introduction of Luso-culture as a set of particular incidents and personal initiatives taking place several generations previously, it was obviously a long and less-than-linear process that began very early. What does appear in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources is a pattern of insecurity and low-level warfare. Raiding between villages were common in the Lamaholot area, often but not always following the ritual Paji-Demon division, and the overlapping division in Dutch and Portuguese spheres of influence. Wouter Schouten, who followed a Dutch expedition in 1660, noted that the small settlements by the Larantuka Strait had pretty fields and gardens but were surrounded by rough palisades for security.[71] In such a volatile world, protection by a well-organized and well-armed force was badly needed, and the Europeans or Eurasians could provide this. Indeed, Lamaholot tradition associates the coming of the Catholic immigrants with the defeat of the Paji adversaries and compensation for military feats via land—again underlining that a colonial situation may not merely be due to European agency.[72] The readiness by some groups to convert should be seen against this background. Black Portuguese groups settled strategically in the coastal places Larantuka-Lewonama, Pantai Besar, Lawerang, Konga, and Wureh (on Adonara),[73] respected for their proficiency in firearms and knit together by their religion. For the Florenese they stood out through cultural specifics such as language (Malay and Portuguese), fishing techniques (nets), and craftsmanship (iron smithery), and were known as *kebelen* (people of importance).[74] Similar to Timor, the leading families probably maintained themselves through contributions from the surrounding *kampongs* without interfering in the role of the *Tuan Tanah* in the management of arable land among their *suku*.[75] While they might have been hard masters, we do not find the intense anti-Portuguese resentment present in nearby Timor.[76] Rather, the locals incorporated the Portuguese into their own origin stories, where indigenous interlocutors became culture heroes (João Resi Ona in Larantuka, Dom Alesu in Sikka)—somewhat unusual in Southeast Asian traditions, where Europeans are seldom seen in positive terms.[77] It is possible to see this as a case of "self-colonization" where powerful symbols from outside were accepted as superior and integrated in the Sikka and Lamaholot flow of life. Similar to more well-known cases of self-colonization, such as in Siam and Japan, this seems to have preserved pre-European socio-political relations to a

Image 5.1. Lusophone land legacies epitomized: The last raja of Sikka, Thomas da Silva, in a golden Portuguese morion helmet, with his consort Dua Eba Sadipung and an elephant tusk, the ritual item used to bind the centre to the villages and custodians of the land.

Source: Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam.

large degree. The Catholicized society leaders successfully integrated Christian kingship with a pre-Christian ritual quadripartition, which in turn replicated the local quadripartition with *suku* leaders who allocated agricultural land. Land was taxed through irregular contributions during the Portuguese period, and the

Dutch effort to impose regular taxes immediately met with bitter resistance. On the other hand, lands rights as such remained largely in place, and commercial crops had limited impact during the Dutch era.[78]

This hybrid system evoked mixed feelings among the Dutch colonialists and clerics who began to interfere in East Florenese life after 1859. While perceiving the Larantukan Catholics as distinct from the supposed "savagery" of the pagan Flores populations, the early colonial reporters were skeptical of the position of the raja and distrusted the Catholic missionaries. The latter, conversely, held prejudiced but partly appreciative opinions about the Luso-legacy and pioneered the exploration of the ethnohistory of the region. Educated Dutch twentieth-century officials with personal ethnographic interests paid limited attention to continuities with the Portuguese era—a sort of colonial hybridity that might have complicated rather than facilitated their efforts to manage and transform East Florenese society. However, they probed deeply into questions of governance and land rights, and indirectly highlighted a resilient external-indigenous duality that had evolved during several hundred years.

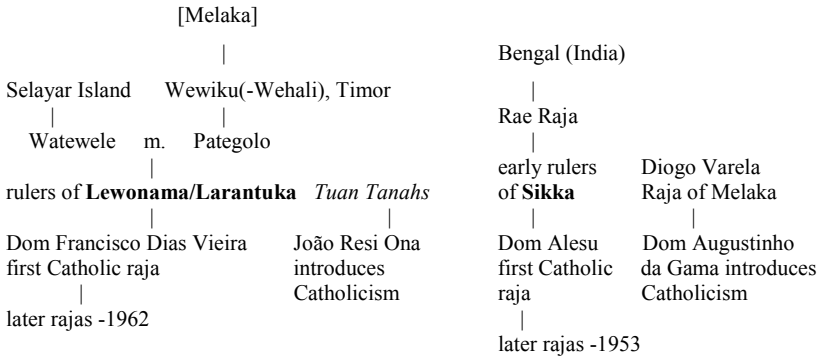

Figure 5.1. Main mytho-historical elements of the emergence of Larantuka and Sikka

Map 5.1.
Flores in the late colonial period.
Source: Ivan Taniputera, Kerajaan-kerajaan Nusantara pascakeruntuhan Majapahit. Hikayat dan sejarahnya (C.V. Gloria Group, 2013). Cartography: Rui Pinto.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1 Robert H. Barnes, *Excursions into Eastern Indonesia: Essays on History and Social Life* (Yale University, 2013), 98.

2 Up to around 1930 the area was divided into two Catholic *landschappen* (territories, petty kingdoms) called Sikka and Larantuka, and six Muslim ones: Lohayong, Lamakera, Lamahala, Adonara, Trong, and Labala. The Muslim *landschappen* belonged to the Dutch sphere of interest after 1613, while the Catholic Sikka and Larantuka came under Dutch suzerainty in 1859. The population of the subdivision (*onderafdeeling*) Oost Flores en Solor Eilanden in the late colonial period (1930) was 131,301 souls. See National Archives, The Hague, Collection Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (hereafter NA, KIT) 1296, C. J. Seegeler, Memorie van Overgave van den aftredend Controleur van Oost-Flores en Soloreilanden, 1932, 4.

3 Karel E. M. Bongenaar, *De ontwikkeling van het zelfbesturend landschap in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Walburg Pers, 2006), 108; I. Ketut Ardhana, *Nusa Tenggara nach Einrichtung der Kolonialherrschaft 1915 bis 1950* (Universität Passau, 2000), 103.

4 For the history of Larantuka, see the articles in Barnes, *Excursions*; for Sikka, E. Douglas Lewis, *The Stranger-Kings of Sikka* (KITLV Press, 2010). The two polities were governed by rajas until 1953 (Sikka) and 1962 (Larantuka). Ivan Taniputera, *Kerajaan-kerajaan*, *Nusantara pascakeruntuhan Majapahit: Hikayat dan sejarahnya* (C. V. Gloria Group, 2013), 1292, 1311.

5 There are fifty-three *Memories* about the Timor Islands in the National Archives, The Hague, of which eleven are about Flores, four specifically about East Flores.

6 Cees Fasseur, *De indologen: Ambtenaren voor de Oost 1825–1950* (Bert Bakker, 1993).

7 Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Polity Press, 1994), 7.

8 Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 50–2.

9 Ann Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form," in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. Carlyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michèle Pickover, Graeme Reid, Jane Taylor, and Razia Saleh (Kluwer Academic Publishers), 92.

10 See Barnes, *Excursions* (a collection of Robert Barnes's articles about Flores and the Solor Islands); Lewis, *The Stranger-Kings*; Stefan Dietrich, *Kolonialismus und Mission auf Flores (ca. 1900–1942)* (Klaus Renner Verlag, 1989). See also Stefan Dietrich, *Kota Rényа, "Die Stadt der Königin"; Religion, Identität, und Wandel in einer ostindonesischen Kleinstadt* (Habitilationsschrift, Universität München, 1997).

11 Dietrich, *Kolonialismus*, 12–14.

12 Arend de Roever, *De jacht op sandelhout: De VOC en de tweedeling van Timor in de zeventiende eeuw* (Walburg Pers, 2002), 63.

13 Malyn Newitt, *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400–1668* (Routledge, 2005), 254–7.

14 W. P. Coolhaas, ed., *Generale missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, vol. 2 (M. Nijhoff, 1964), 374.

15 Frederik Constanijn Heynen, "Het Christendom op het eiland Flores in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Studiën op Godsdienstig, Wetenschappelijk en Letterkundig Gebied* 8, no. 8 (1876): 17; Benno Biermann, "Die alte Dominikanermission auf den Solorinseln," *Zeitschrift für Missionaswissenschaft* 14 (1924): 15, 34. Lewonama was adjacent to the later Portuguese settlement Larantuka. The list of royal names does not accord with later genealogical tradition. See, briefly, Hans Hägerdal, *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea; Conflict and Adaptation in Early Colonial Timor, 1600–1800* (KITLV Press, 2012), 174–5, 422; Dietrich, *Kota Rényа, "Die Stadt."* The same goes for the rulers of Sikka, where the traditional pedigrees differ from rajas found in European pre-1800 sources. Lewis, *The Stranger-Kings*, 72; E. F. Kleian "Eene voetreis over het oostelijk deel van het eiland Flores," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 34 (1891): 514–22.

16 A point also made in a sixteenth-century Maluku context by Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*, vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 853.

17 Manuel Teixeira, *Macau e sua diocese: A diocese de Malaca*, vol. 4 (Tip. do Orfanato Salesiano, 1957), 447. Translations from Dutch and Portuguese texts in this chapter are my own.

18 Artur Teodoro de Matos, *Timor Português 1515–1769: Contribução para a sua história* (Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1974), 216–18.

19 Ende was used as a name for the entirety of Flores in some texts.

20 Should be Ilimandiri at the rear of Larantuka. The name Serbite is otherwise associated with Adonara. Barnes, *Excursions*, 79.

21 Artur Teodoro de Matos, *Timor no passado: Fontes para a sua história (Séculos xvii e xviii)* (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2015), 35–6.

22 W. P. Coolhaas, *Generale missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, vol. 4 (M. Nijhoff, 1970), 273–4.

23 National Archives, The Hague, Collection Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (hereafter NA, VOC) 1531, Dagregister, sub 28 October 1692.

24 Hägerdal, *Lords*, 311.

25 NA, VOC 1556, Willem Moerman, Dagregister, 5 October 1693.

26 Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink, *A History of Christianity in Indonesia* (Brill, 2008), 92–3.

27 NA, VOC 3215, Letter, Francisco Hornay to Alexander Cornabé, 24 May 1767; Affonso de Castro, *As possessões Portuguezas na Oceania* (Imprensa Nacional, 1867), 111, 258.

28 Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Collection K.43 Timor (hereafter ANRI Timor) 140, Report, Emanuel Francis, 1832, f. 110.

29 ANRI Timor 140, Report, Emanuel Francis, 1832, f. 170.

30 ANRI Timor 45, J. C. R Steinmetz, Inlichtende Nota, 1849, in Besluit, 15 April 1850, No. 13.

31 Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Ikhtisar keadaan politik Hindia-Belanda tahun 1839–1848* (ANRI, 1973), 422–4.

32 Alice Viola Kortlang, "Presença histórica 'portuguesa' em Larantuka (séculos XVI e XVII) e suas implicações na contemporaneidade" (PhD diss., Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2013), 229–31.

33 Sandra Modh, "The Lamaholot of East Flores" (PhD diss., Oxford University, 2012), 117.

34 Kortlang, "Presença histórica," 290.

35 NA, VOC 3215, Letter, Dom Gaspar Dias Vieira to Francisco Hornay, 15 April 1767.

36 Omitting certain disputes: Matos, *Timor portugues*, 229, 434; NA, VOC 3215, Letter, Dom Gaspar Dias Vieira to Francisco Hornay, 15 April 1767.

37 National Archives, The Hague, Ministerie van Kolonien, *Memories van Overgave* (hereafter NA, MMK) 336. Memorie van Overgave van den afgetreden Resident van Timor en Onderhoorigheden H. C. Humme, 1876, n.p.

38 NA, MMK 336. Memorie van Overgave van den afgetreden Resident van Timor en Onderhoorigheden H. C. Humme, 1876, n.p.

39 Aritonang and Steenbrink, *A History*, 230.

40 NA, MMK 337, Memorie van Overgave van den aftredenden Resident van Timor en Onderhoorigheden Ch.M.G.M.M. Ecoma Verstege, 1878, n.p.

41 NA, MMK 338, Nota bij de aftreding van den Resident van Timor J. G. F. Riedel, 1880, n.p.

42 Barnes, *Excursions*, 126–43.

43 NA, MMK 339, J. F. A. de Rooy, Memorie omtrent het toestand van het Gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1908, p. 13–15.

44 NA, MMK 339, J. F. A. de Rooy, Memorie omtrent het toestand van het Gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1908, p. 15.

45 NA, MMK 339, J. F. A. de Rooy, Memorie omtrent het toestand van het Gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1908, p. 16.

46 NA, MMK 339, J. F. A. de Rooy, Memorie omtrent het toestand van het Gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1908, p. 20.

47 NA, MMK 340, C. H. van Rietschoten, Memorie omtrent den toestand van het gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1913, p. 36.

48 NA, MMK 340, C. H. van Rietschoten, Memorie omtrent den toestand van het gewest Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1913, p. 38.

49 Barnes, *Excursions*, 186–7.

50 For this centrality, see H. G. Schulte Nordholt, *The Political System of the Atoni of Timor* (M. Nijhoff, 1971), and Tom Therik, *Wehali—The Female Land: Traditions of a Timorese Ritual Centre* (Pandanus Books, 2004).

51 Frederik Constantijn Heynen, "Het rijk Larantoeka op het eiland Flores in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Studiën op Godsdienstig, Wetenschappelijk en Letterkundig Gebied* 8, no. 6 (1876): 70–2, 79.

52 Heynen, "Het Christendom," 3–9, 74–85.

53 Heynen, "Het rijk Larantoeka," 75.

54 Barnes, *Excursions*; Lewis, *The Stranger-Kings*.

55 George François Elbert Gonggrijp, *Geïllustreerde encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie* (Leidsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1934), 133–4.

56 Ardhana, *Nusa Tenggara*, 171–2.

57 NA, KIT 1295, G. A. Bosselaar, Memorie van Overgave van den aftredend Assistent Resident van Flores, 1932, p. 65.

58 NA, A. J. L. Couvreur, Beschrijving van het rijk Larantoeka, 1907. Coll. C. C. F. LeRoux, No. 7.

59 NA, KIT 1296, C. J. Seegeler, Nota van Toelichting betreffende het zelfbesturende landschap Larantoeka, 1931, p. 74–8.

60 Cf. Barnes, *Excursions*, 183.

61 Lewis, *The Stranger-Kings*, 10; E. Douglas Lewis and Oscar Pareira Mandalangi, *Hikayat Kerajaan Sikka* (Penerbit Ledalero, 2008). Unfortunately, there is nothing comparable for Larantuka, though many notes were gathered in the 1950s, in Coll. M. J. H. Wertenbroek, H 1343, Koninjlijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV) Archive/UB Leiden.

62 NA, KIT 1301, J. J. M. F. Symons. Memorie van Overgave van de onderafdeeling Oost Flores en Soloreilanden en Maoemere, 1935; Leonard Yuzon Andaya, "The Social Value of Elephant Tusks and Bronze Drums Among Certain Societies in Eastern Indonesia," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 172 (2016): 66–89.

63 Stoler, "Colonial Archives."

64 NA, KIT 1296, C. J. Seegeler, Nota van Toelichting betreffende het zelfbesturende landschap Larantoeka, 1931.

65 NA, KIT 1296, C. J. Seegeler, Nota van Toelichting betreffende het zelfbesturende landschap Larantoeka, 1931, p. 65.

66 Schulte Nordholt, *The Political System*.

67 Seegeler, Nota.

68 Heynen, "Het rijk Larantoeka," 80.

69 Modh, Lamaholot, 18.

70 Cf. Hubert Jacobs, *The Jesuit Makasar Documents (1615–1682)* (Jesuit Historical Institute, 1988), 248.

71 KITLV Archive, H 1341: 2, M. Wertenbroek, De geschiedenis van Flores, p. 67.

72 Kortlang, "Presença histórica," 232.

73 NA, KIT 1298, C. J. Seegeler, Nota van Toelichting betreffende het zelfbesturend landschap Larantoeka, 1931, p. 28.

74 Kortlang, "Presença histórica," 232.

75 Cf. Matos, *Timor Portugues*, 216–17.

76 For some cases of local resistance against Catholic rulers in Dutch times, see, however, Ardhana, *Nusa Tenggara*, 103–5.

77 Anthony Reid, "Early Southeast Asian Categorizations of Europeans," in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 268–94.

78 Dietrich, *Kolonialismus*, 152.