Rethinking the Imbrication of Orality and Literacy: Historical Discourse in Early Modern Makassar

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In the sixteenth century, Makassarese in the South Sulawesi courts of Gowa and Talloq began to write.[1] What they chose to write were historical texts that chronicled their origins and preserved the words of their ancestors. Scholars once knew how to make sense of such an event: it could not be but a watershed, a fundamental change or turning point of the first magnitude. Such is the nature of what we liked to call the "transition from orality to literacy," yet more careful examinations have suggested that this confidence in the very idea of a shift from orality to literacy was misplaced. Literacy and orality are not states of being that are simply manifested in places like Makassar. This article extends the efforts of scholars to grapple with the considerable overlap, symbiosis, and exchange that seem to characterize a boundary once believed to demarcate firmly orality and literacy. Considerable work has gone into documenting the inadequacy of trying to delineate what formal characteristics mark oral and literate productions. For example, Wendy Doniger notes that it is only when we distinguish among texts that were *composed* orally, *preserved* orally, or *performed* orally "that we begin to glimpse the complexity of the problem" (1991, 31). Similarly, what should we do about traditions such as Javanese *wayang* in which oral performances are based on stories in texts, even though few puppeteers own, consult, or have even seen the written texts (Sears 1996)? The possible permutations in how oral and literate traditions interplay are many, and dissatisfaction with the very notion of a boundary between orality and literacy widespread (see Flueckiger and Sears 1991).

My goals in this article are threefold: first, to review briefly the ongoing reassessment of the relationships between literacy and orality; second, to bolster the growing scholarly consensus that to speak of a "shift" from orality to literacy is at

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[1]The island of Sulawesi lies in the center of the Indonesian archipelago, and Makassar is a region in the province of South Sulawesi.

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least misleading and often simply mistaken; third, to consider carefully how oral and written histories of key episodes in Makassarese history relate to one another within a social context governed by questions of hierarchy and status rivalry, which leads me to contend that this growing consensus on imbrication and symbiosis of oral and written histories is nevertheless problematic. This consensus tends to focus on interplay and connection at the expense of situations marked by counterpoint and separation. Certainly the time has come to dispense with the idea of a "transition" between orality and literacy and perhaps even with the categories of "oral" and "literate" altogether, but the presumption that has taken its place about their inevitable entanglement deserves equally critical review.

Debating the Relationship between Orality and Literacy

At the turn of this century, amidst heightened consciousness of the global transformations taking place in information technology, scholars have naturally been drawn to topics involving the complex links among forms of literacy, cultural production, and social change. A seminal article examining the effects of the transformation from orality to literacy is Jack Goody and Ian Watts's (1968) "The Consequences of Literacy." Viewed three decades later, the article has deep faults overemphasizing the ramifications that stemmed purely from adopting one form of writing or another. For example, there is the dubious assertion that pictographic and logographic writing systems are conservative and tend to reify the existing social order, while an alphabetic writing system with its more flexible possibilities for representation has "intrinsic" advantages that lead to more critical and democratic societies. Arguing that an alphabetic writing system, being an abstract system of representation, enables abstract, critical, skeptical, logical, or generally historical, as opposed to mythical, thinking is to ignore a wealth of ethnographic evidence.

Despite its shortfalls, Goody and Watts's article focused on problems that set the agenda for much subsequent scholarship. The main contention in this agenda has been that literacy causes fundamental cognitive changes, making literate thought processes distinctly different from oral thought processes, a world to which literates cannot return. This agenda has come to be known as the "Great Divide" thesis and owes most to the work of classicist Walter Ong, anthropologist Jack Goody, and psychologist David Olson. The most cited work in this body of scholarship is Ong's 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. At the heart of Ong's argument is the position that spatializing language in writing makes possible the sense of cognitive distance from language that abstraction and reflection require: "Because [writing] moves speech from the oral-aural to a new sensory world, that of vision, it transforms speech and thought as well" (1988, 85). Exploring this further and, at the same time, making new claims for literacy, Ong writes, "[b]y separating the knower from the known (Havelock 1963), writing makes possible increasingly articulate introspectivity, opening the psyche as never before not only to the external objective world quite distinct from itself but also to the interior self against whom the objective world is set" (105). Similarly, Olson, the most dogmatic of the three, writes, "the media of communication, including writing, do not simply extend the existing structures of knowledge; they alter it" (1988, 28). In Olson's work, we find the clearest expression of the claim that literacy produces cognitive change: "[W]hen writing began to serve

the memory function, the mind could be redeployed to carry out more analytic activities such as examining contradictions and deriving logical implication. It is the availability of an explicit written record and its use for representing thought that impart to literacy its distinctive properties" (28). Increasingly, however, research is demonstrating that this is not so.

Certainly to argue that in early modern Makassar the advent of writing led to perceptible cognitive change is hazardous. The best case for such a change would seem to involve the Gowa court records known as *lontaraq bilang*. Kept at royal courts beginning in the 1630s, these manuscripts recorded important events and were organized chronologically. Instead of referring all events to the actions and presence of a ruling lord (known in Makassar as a *karaeng*), as was the case in Makassarese chronicles of the time, in their narrative form lontaraq bilang presented the past within the framework of what seems to be the homogenous and linear time of the calendar. The question, then, is whether this change from karaeng-centered chronicles to event-centered calendars radically affected meaning and cognition. Did inscribing events according to their location along a timeline encourage Makassarese to reconceive of the past as a container that events filled? Did it inspire or embody a new conception of historical causality?

Here is a segment of the Gowa court's lontaraq bilang recording the events of 1648:

2 February (Sunday)	Karaeng Paqbundukang died
20 March (Wednesday)	female Karaeng of Popoq died
5 April (Saturday)	Karaengta of Tamasongoq gave birth to a son by Tumamenang of Jungtana named Manginara Majduddin, Daengta Daeng Mattiro
12 May (Monday)	the mother of the ruler named Karaengta of Bontoa died
14 June (Saturday)	Daengta Daeng Naratang had a daughter named Habibah
3 August (Monday)	Karaeng Jipang died when still young
11 October (Wednesday)	I Maqminasa Daengta Daeng Sannging died
30 September (Friday)	Friday prayer services were begun in Bontoalaq
30 November (Monday)	the son of Karaeng Salaparang (on Lombok) named Ammasa Pamayan became ruler of Sumbawa
8 December (Wednesday)	a house was built for a large bell
9 December (Thursday)	I Assing died

(Kamaruddin et al. 1969, 27–28)

All of these events are referenced to a linear calender not indigenous to Makassar but most likely modeled after the diaries of Portuguese merchants visiting Sulawesi in the early sixteenth century. Emplotted in a new calendrical frame of reference, each event gains meaning from its position within a series whose measure is no longer the ruler of Gowa. All took place within the larger abstract frame of "1648." Indeed, it is not uncommon to encounter lontaraq bilang books in which future days, months, and years have been neatly graphed in preparation for entering later events deemed worth recording. Can we from this infer that at the Gowa and Talloq courts at least some Makassarese conceived of the past, present, and future as a vast container stretching backward and forward infinitely? Was there a sense that all days and years occupy the same period of this new time, whether or not they witnessed significant events? The implications are profound, suggesting fundamental shifts in Makassarese perceptions of their place in the cosmos and its workings. The possibility is tempting

and exciting, positing as it does the kind of transformation so appealing to historians. The only drawback to this thesis is that there is no other evidence for it whatsoever. No other historical sources or ethnographic materials exist to support the intriguing speculation that writing in this particular form initiated or even contributed to the evolution of such perspectives.

Further close reading of *Orality and Literacy* and other important works in a similar vein would belabor the point that both orality and literacy are far more complex and varied phenomenon than once suspected. At a minimum, we face literacies, not Literacy. The Makassarese-language historical literacy of early modern South Sulawesi, for example, is but one literacy. Malay or Arabic literacy in the same place and time may have differed considerably in its character and dynamics. As Amin Sweeney cautioned, "'Orality' and 'literacy' are not independent entities subject to immutable laws; they can only be observed in the context of specific societies, and studied in relation to the social structure of the society in question" (1987, 66).

In the wake of loss of faith in the Great Divide thesis, we have been offered an assortment of replacements for oral and literate as classificatory tools. Among these newer dichotomies and continuums are *focused* and *nonfocused* interaction (Scollon and Scollon 1984), *fluid* and *fixed* texts (Doniger 1991), *recorded* and *received* texts (V. Narayana Rao, quoted in Flueckiger and Sears 1991, 4), and *stylized* and *nonstylized* composition (Sweeney 1980, 1987). All attempt to chart the interplay between orality and literacy by examining what happens to written texts when they are performed orally and what happens to oral traditions in an increasingly literate social world. That these various dichotomies and continuums ultimately are not very helpful is less important than how the search for ways of describing the relationships between orality and literacy has as its central tenet the mutual, entangled imbrication between oral performance and textual tradition.

In the case of Indonesia, authors such as Kenneth George (1990, 1996) and Laurie Sears (1996) describe how oral performances and written texts are constantly circulating in shared traditions whose forms are far more influenced by power relations, social structures, and cultural contexts than by any set of characteristics supposedly inherent in the categories of "oral" and "literate." George can speak for many when he writes that, in upland South Sulawesi, "oral and textual practices exist as mutually shaping contemporaries embedded in social, ideological, and historical contexts" (1990, 19). Nowhere, it appears, is this untrue, and examining the nature of these contexts and their influence on speech and text has gradually supplanted attempts to pin down the exact nature of orality and literacy or even the effort to qualify broad assertions by cataloging local variations.

Central to this scholarly agenda has been the effort to recognize the artificiality of Western genres and boundaries and the concomitant distortions they introduce into our perceptions. Sweeney has vigorously critiqued the application of terms such as "epic" to Malay literature: "If, accepting for the sake of argument that the Ramayana and Mahabharata are epic poems," Sweeney writes, "it be proposed that the *Hikayat Seri Rama* and *Hikayat Pandawa* deserve the appelation 'epic' because they are translations of the Hindu epics, one must respond that they are neither translations, Hindu, nor poems" (1991, 26). These alien concepts of genre and form simply do not fit. In a similar vein, Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger (1996) concludes in her study of Chhattisgarhi folklore that indigenous principles of genre identification and organization derived not from formal principles or thematic content, but from the social identity of the group to which the genre "belongs." Paramount among the

artificial boundaries Western scholarship has imposed is the one separating orality from literacy.

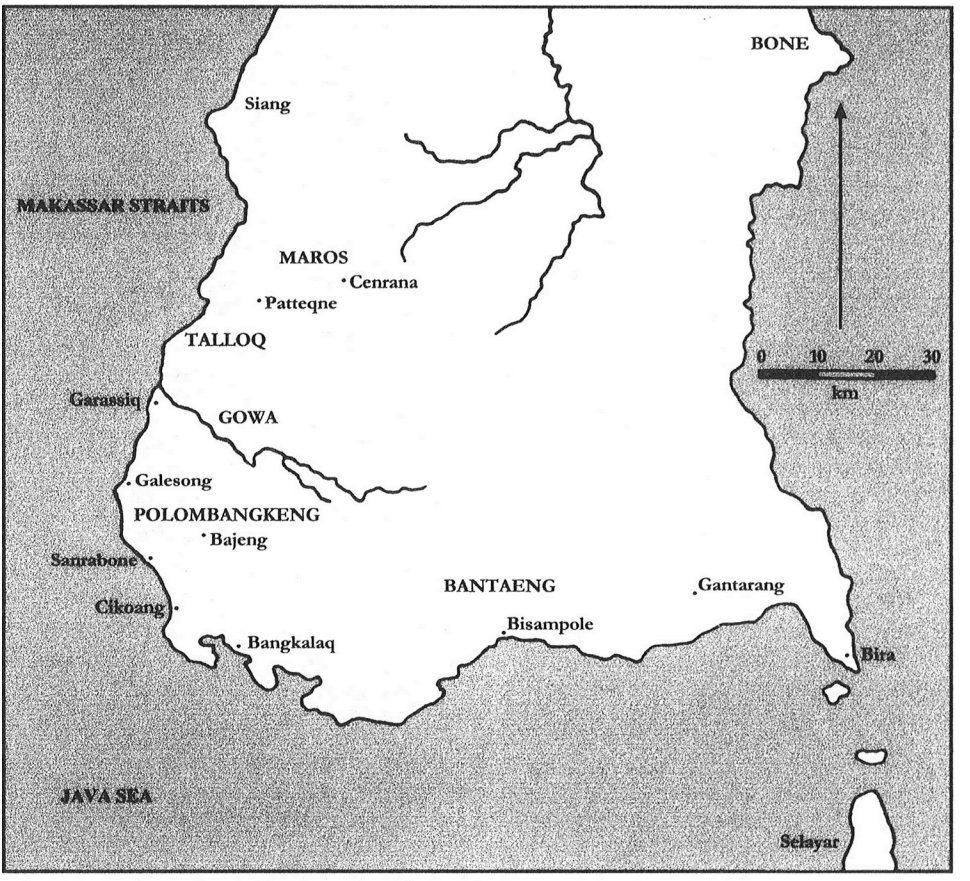
The work of Philip Lutgendorf on the Ramcaritmanas, a sixteenth-century retelling of the legend of Ram by the poet Tulsidas, is exemplary in this respect. He examines the wide range of performance genres that use the text, ultimately arguing that it cannot be divorced from its performance: "the two are essentially inseparable" (1991, 2). Once we appreciate that the text is experienced orally/aurally during performances and not through the Western style of reading a text as literature, "then it becomes possible to understand the intimate and seamless interplay of text and oral commentary—a relationship that we might profitably suggest by such paired terms as 'seed' and 'manifestation,' 'theme' and 'improvisation,' or even 'blueprint' and 'realization'" (Lutgendorf, 1991, 245).

The remainder of this article examines Makassarese historical traditions, written and oral, with an eye toward a more critical analysis of the varied relationships that obtained between these oral and literate histories. Certainly the stories that Makassarese told and wrote about their pasts do not cleave neatly into two halves (see Pelras 1979). Makassarese written historical discourse is not unambiguously distinct from oral historical discourse, nor with the advent of written forms of history did oral history making disappear—to speak of a "shift" from orality to literacy is problematic indeed. The persistence and vitality of oral history making in early modern Makassar after the advent of literacy is striking. However, written histories *did* embody a potency that oral histories could not, because Makassarese regarded written texts, particularly written historical texts, as *kalompoang*. Meaning "greatness," kalompoang refers to a class of sacred objects or regalia possessed by many Makassarese communities and nobles. As objects inherited from illustrious ancestors, kalompoang incarnated the past in the present and their possession conferred social status and political legitimacy. In this sense, Makassarese perceived oral histories as subordinate to written histories because of the written texts' privileged social position as kalompoang (Cummings 2002). This subordination, however, was complex rather than simple. Oral histories communicated all that most Makassarese knew of the past; for most, written histories were beyond their status and grasp. Oral history making continued to flourish alongside written history making. What is most critical to understand, therefore, is what might be meant by "alongside."

In different contexts, the relationship between oral and written histories could be complementary, antagonistic, or subordinate. In the sections that follow, we explore specific topics around which history making clustered to illustrate the variety of relationships that linked oral and written histories in Makassar. First, there are the most apparently overt cases of opposition and resistance between oral memories and written histories. Second, two episodes—the origins of the kingdom of Gowa and the coming of Islam—show how both oral and written history making focused on these episodes and, perhaps, contested each other. These provide a clarifying perspective from which to assess the shift from orality to literacy in early modern Makassar, as well as recent reevaluations of the bound-togetherness of oral performances and literate productions.

History, Palimpsest, Memory

In his work *The Collective Memory*, the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs argued that there is a fundamental opposition between memory and history. Memories



Map. Makassar.

are vibrant and unpredictable, while history is uniform and sanitized, a rewriting of dynamic memories within historical narrative's sclerotic confines (Halbwachs [1950] 1980, 78–80).[2] In this conception, history in its written form makes a museum of the past, putting events on display with an artificial neatness that elides the contradictions, confusions, and uncertainties that infused the past and our memories of it. Yet, we know this opposition between oral memories of the past and written histories of the past is too neat; it falsely promises that oral memories are unmediated glimpses of the past, "authentic" and unshaped by the frameworks and assumptions that guide history making in any form.[3] At the same time, this opposition does capture how written histories, being tangible and authoritative, have more easily lent themselves to social manipulation and political exercise. Particularly before the availability of media such as television, those hoping to put the past to constructive use have been better served by written histories.

In early modern Makassar, histories related in the manuscripts possessed by the rulers of Gowa were the focus of political legitimation. In these ambitious histories,

[2]By "sclerotic confines," I mean Halwach's sense that historical narratives have a confining, almost oppressive quality about them, in contrast to disorganized memories not yet organized along those lines.

[3]This is a major theme in Sweeney 1980.

the past of a small community in a mosaic of similar communities and federations was transformed into the splendid, unique, and sacred foundation for a new social and political order. Other pasts were swept away, sublated in favor of this new history. The *Gowa Chronicle* asserted that it was elevated above and superior to oral histories, cautioning that such oral histories are dangerous because they mistakenly lead people either to believe they are equal in status to the rulers of Gowa or to forget that Gowa's rulers are illustrious because of their unique past:

> Because if they are not known,
> there are two dangers;
> either we will feel ourselves to be such Karaengs
> or outsiders will say you here are just common people.
> (British Library Oriental Manuscripts, ms. 12351, p. 33r)

In the minds of Gowa's kings and chroniclers, then, "alongside" meant "subordinate" or "suppressed." Over these oral histories was written a new one. Gowa's chroniclers made their history a palimpsest of the past, a history that (re)wrote and thereby erased oral memories of the past. Writing enabled Gowa to elide the oral histories of older prestigious centers in Makassar whose glories were preserved only in oral traditions. This social struggle to shape and define the past and its history is what concerns us here.

Gowa asserted its centrality within Makassar by seizing the sacred kalompoang—including written texts—of other Makassarese communities and, by possessing these manuscripts and regalia, dominating their past and present. Controlling the past and gathering its significance to itself through such acts was straightforward, violent, and often effective. A Makassarese manuscript from Baku—described here using the term *lontaraq*—recounting Baku's history ends with the following explanation:

> It is greatly to be regretted that the lontaraq telling about this was borrowed by Sombaya [the ruler of Makassar] at the time of the installation of Arung Pao [the ruler of Baku].[4] He asked to just borrow it but has not returned it until this time. It was borrowed by an old woman named I Maniya. She asked to borrow it in order to copy it. There were [other lontaraq] taken by the Dutch; there were others that were lost, there were others that were burned by Sombaya of Gowa.[5]
> (manuscript N16, p. 15)

[4]Newcomers to South Sulawesi histories face a veritable barrage of terms and titles that Makassarese used to denote social ranks. *Karaeng* literally means "ruler" or "lord" and indicates a noble of high rank. According to many origin stories in South Sulawesi, the first karaeng of a community was a being known as a *tumanurung* who descended from the heavens, with white blood flowing in his or her veins and often bearing sacred objects. The highest Makassarese title, *Somba* or *Sombaya*, was reserved for the ruler of Gowa. *Gallarrang*, *Opu*, *Dampang*, and *Datuq* were among the many titles used by local chiefs who typically came under the authority of a karaeng. In Gowa a council of nine chiefs who advised the karaeng was known as originally as the *Kasiang Salapang* and later as the *Bate Salapang* (Nine Banners). The head of this council bore the title *Pacalla*.

[5]The exchange of kalompoang was not unknown in Makassar and was one mechanism used to strengthen social ties among communities and to enhance the kalompoang's reputation and, hence, the status of the community in which it was kept beyond the local community. In this context a noble woman from the Gowa court borrowed the lontaraq from Baku described here. Unfortunately, to date precisely the events described is not possible, although they likely took place in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. This manuscript, and others in the author's possession, were collected in 1996 and 1997 in Makassar. Most are copies of privately owned originals borrowed by my Makassarese language tutor, Djohan Selengke. His family connections and social ties were critical in gaining access to these texts (see Cummings 2002, 52–53).

Similarly, another oral tradition later recorded on paper contains a reference to Gowa ruthlessly suppressing histories that undermined its authority:

> These, then, are stories about the first karaeng of Makassar. These stories were intentionally hidden by the ancestors because the karaeng would be angry if someone told them. Thus, not many people know them. If they know them, it is only in fragments. Declared the karaeng of Gowa, "it is forbidden to tell them."[6]
>
> (manuscript N12, p. 45)

Other tales, too, circulate in Makassar about how rulers of Gowa tried to control discourse about the past, either burning the historical manuscripts of other rival communities or by punishing those who told stories that challenged the position of the rulers of Gowa.[7]

This effort to possess exclusively written histories was not confined to Gowa. The owner of a manuscript from Siang that contained oral histories from that area explained why no written histories were available.[8] A brother-in-law of the ruler of Siang betrayed the latter to the Dutch. He told the ruler of Siang to flee and hide in the mountains because the Dutch intended to kill him. After the ruler fled, his brother-in-law cooperated with the Dutch and with their aid was installed as, so the story tells, the first Karaeng Pangkajeqne, thereby ending the reign of the existing line of rulers from Siang. Because of this ignominious episode about the origins of their rule in treachery, the karaengs of Pangkajeqne since that time either hid and guarded from outside eyes historical manuscripts about Siang or suppressed efforts to write a history of their own assumption of power. Both in and outside Gowa, then, Makassarese fought to control the past as the potent political weapon that it was. I should note briefly, however, that the "oral" histories made use of here are themselves mostly gleaned from the pages of written texts produced by literate Indonesians, a fact which requires comment.

Encountered in manuscripts penned by Makassarese, or translated and included in Indonesian government-sponsored collections of regional "popular stories" (*cerita rakyat*) that began to be published in earnest in the 1970s, these histories cannot but differ from their oral performance in fundamental ways. Typically, the written text has been cleansed of intrusive oral elements (diversions, pauses, repetitions, and variations) and in so doing has been transformed into a literate product. Gone are the emotions, surrounding geographical reference points, and social context of their telling. In the case of government-sponsored projects, any information gathered from informants describing the history of the oral tradition and their understanding of its place in society is elided, nor can we know what kind of prompting or editing took place during their recording. Certainly the context of the investigation must have been a peculiar one, a transaction between local informants and deputized representatives of the Indonesian national government in which each, presumably, gained something of value. For the Indonesian government, collecting and publishing local traditions is part of an ongoing project devoted to "carrying out the excavation, investigation and recording of cultural inheritance for the creation, development, and

[6]Like the previous story, the text provides no indication of when it was written, although it, too, probably dates from the early twentieth century.

[7]A. C. Milner notes several similar incidents in which Malay rulers jealously guarded or, in one case, destroyed historical manuscripts containing a past regarded as dangerous to their authority (1982, 65).

[8]The manuscript's owner made this explanation orally to my language tutor, Djohan Selengke, in early May 1997, and he related this comment and account to me shortly thereafter.

endurance of national culture" (Suwondo, Yunus, and Sagimun 1977, n.p.), tangible proof of the national motto "Unity in Diversity." In each of Indonesia's provinces, local cultural expressions—myths, dances, art, architecture, and popular stories—are being positioned as facets of a larger entity (Indonesian National Culture) manufactured at the behest of the New Order and its successor. Whether local informants were paid (quite likely) or they received some less tangible benefit, such as prestige, is unknown. Certainly some informants were aware of the larger discursive context in which this nationally sponsored project was initiated. Did they, then, alter the stories in form or content to appeal to this new and politically important audience?

Certainly a scholar trying to read in these pages reliable evidence about the narrative form of oral histories would be poorly served. Written texts can be pondered, perused, reread, and skimmed. Most possess a structure and coherence that invite detailed narrative analysis. To perform such an analysis of a transcribed oral tradition, however, endows the text with a unity, permanence, and consistency that correspond poorly to the context of its telling. Loosed from its social moorings, it can be collected and possessed in ways that no longer "speak volumes" about the place where and the people through which they were voiced. So, too, it would be hazardous to read complex mental perceptions in the play of language used in these texts, to alight on the significance of specific phrases as a key to oral cognition, or to claim a reliable historical framework in the structure of the narrated text itself. For all that, however, I believe that the past is tenacious and that recurring themes and motifs; references to people, places, and objects; and tales embodying what Makassarese considered significant about the past are not so easily eroded. Caution is appropriate, but I remain convinced that the social relationships embedded in the histories described here and their larger meaning can weather entextualization, particularly because of the context of status rivalry that infused Makassarese discourse about the past. These sources contain, then, valuable insights into the tenor of the rivalrous relationships among Makassarese communities and the historical dynamics that have marked these relationships.

Try as it might, history—either in early modern Makassar or in written accounts of ancient oral traditions—never firmly suppresses memory. Whispered stories, secretive assertions, and the other "hidden transcripts" always escape and, in so doing, cast doubt on the truths of privileged histories (Scott 1990). Oral histories in Baku telling of the loss of their kalompoang to Gowa were retold and transmitted from generation to generation despite the threat of punishment from Gowa. The past was too significant to forget: in it lay the core of Makassarese identity and the explanation for their social world. An important part of this social world that needed explanation was Gowa's preeminence and their own social inferiority. In a world rife with status rivalry, secret histories proclaiming prestigious origins and a subsequent fall in status within the landscape of Makassarese communities were probably common. Along with Siang and Baku, communities such as Bontonompo remembered how they had been conquered and their kalompoang—the focal point of their identity and their history—seized (manuscript N8, pp. 2–3).

Status Rivalry, History Making, and the *Tumanurung*

As Makassarese society became more socially stratified and politically centralized in the early modern period, social and political jockeying for position increased.

Although the presence of status rivalry among individuals in Makassar has long been noted, the same competition for status and advancement thrived among communities as well. As with the status rivalries among individuals striving for higher social position, Makassarese based rivalries among polities on historical claims, particularly claims centering on origins and matters of precedence. More than any others, two specific historical events became pillars on which Gowa's supremacy and vision of a highly stratified social order rested. The first was the coming of a *tumanurung* and Karaeng Bayo,[9] from whom came the kalompoang and from whom the rulers of Gowa claimed descent. Literally "the person who descended," *tumanurung* refers to a heavenly ancestor of pure white blood—a mark of distinction from earthly and red-blooded commoners—who was recognized and installed as the first ruler of a new community by the people of the land. The second was the coming of Islam, an event which Gowa used to further enhance its position as the center of Makassar.

According to the *Gowa Chronicle*, the origins of the tumanurung and Karaeng Bayo were unknown: "She was called by the people of old tumanurung because unknown were her origins and her manner of death. It only was said she disappeared. She was married to Karaeng Bayo; as for Karaeng Bayo, unknown, too, was his community. It was only said that purportedly he was brothers with Lakipadada" (Wolhoff and Abdurrahim 1959, 9–10). From these two mysterious figures—both bringing powerful kalompoang, one of which came from the Upperworld (homeland of Makassarese gods and cultural heroes), one of which was a lord more powerful than any in Gowa—the line of rulers of Gowa claimed descent. The power and prestige of the tumanurung and Karaeng Bayo, which would be inherited by their offspring, derives precisely from this mystery. The intent of the history is to establish decisively that Gowa owed its origins to no other Makassarese community and that no other Makassarese community could match in standing and sacredness Gowa's illustrious origins. In the history made here, Gowa was elevated above all others.

Essentially the same story is told in another common Makassarese written historical text. Recounting the original agreement between the Bate Salapang (headed by the Pacalla) and the tumanurung in which she became the first Karaeng Gowa, this text describes how this agreement came about:

> This Kasiang Salapang and the Pacalla were worried because they had no ruler, and they did not want to make one of the Kasiang [i.e. the Bate Salapang] ruler. Not long after they discussed this, the united three purportedly attacked Gowa: the people of Garassi, Unti, and Lambengi. Then the Bate Salapang and the Pacalla met. Then they agreed to take a ruler. This ruler, may I not be cursed, may I not be destroyed, was a tumanurung. It was agreed to install the tumanurung as karaeng of Gowa. They said it was fitting we take this person as ruler, because this person is a tumanurung, even though the tumanurung is female, because she purportedly is the person who descended with a necklace, with a "Javanese" platter, with a palace near a mango tree. The palace was sacred and spanned six rows of house-poles. After going there, then the tumanurung was taken as Karaeng Gowa by the Kasiang Salapang and the Pacalla.

[9]The name Bayo refers to the "sea people" known as the Bajo. They lived along the littorals of Sulawesi and other islands in the archipelago, and by the seventeenth century at the latest many swore oaths of loyalty to Gowa's rulers. For Makassarese to have called someone who appeared from overseas "Karaeng Bayo" is not uncommon, as happens in the oral history from Baku discussed below when a stranger is found sleeping in a beached ship. The apparent link between the Bajo and Gowa's history of its founding have led many to suspect that forging an alliance with the Bajo was a critical step in Gowa's early rise to prominence.

> After a while she became famous in other communities. It was said there was a divine person who descended in Gowa who was made karaeng by the people of Gowa. Many came to pay respects to the Karaeng Tumanurung from all the communities that had heard of her, including those communities not conquered by Gowa. After a while there were again worries among the Bate Salapang because the Karaeng Manurunga had not yet married. They said, "it is a problem our ruler has no children; our ruler may be without descendants [to rule after her]." A while later a person came from the uplands; his community was unknown, his position and where he came from were unknown. His mother and father were unknown also. It was only said that from the uplands into the center of Gowa came a person named Karaeng Bayo and a person named Lakipadada. The one named Lakipadada was the owner of the sword Sudanga.
>
> (manuscript N10, pp. 2–3, 5–7)

This text, too, emphasizes the mysterious heavenly origins of the tumanurung and her kalompoang, particularly the golden chain or "necklace" Tanisamaang. Even her palace, later to become the Gowa royal palace, is described as descending from above. In this account, the unprecedented uniqueness of this event and the unrivaled power of the tumanurung and first ruler of Gowa are emphasized by noting that Makassarese from communities beyond Gowa came to pay obeisance to her. Inscribing or mentioning the tumanurung is itself dangerous because of her suprahuman origins, for which reason the writer includes the supplication "may I not be cursed, may I not be destroyed" to avoid invoking her wrath and causing his own destruction. Finally, the equally obscure but obviously prestigious origins of Karaeng Bayo and the regalia sword Sudanga are described. Here again is a history of Gowa's origins that no other Makassarese community could equal.

Other traditions, however, claim to know the origins of the tumanurung and Karaeng Bayo. Several Makassarese oral histories claim the tumanurung as their own before it descended in Gowa. A history from Baku told how the ruler who founded their community also bore the august title "Somba," which the rulers of Gowa claimed exclusively for themselves. Indeed, the ruler of Baku was called Somba long before the ruler of Gowa. This ruler, too, had appeared mysteriously (with his wife) and was installed as the lord of Baku, had children, then disappeared in a clap of thunder, apparently returning to the Upperworld whence he came. However, this tumanurung later descended again:

> After the people had mourned for some time, news came to Mamampang, to Salassaq, to Sapolambere, to Sapotanga, to Pao that purportedly a person was found sleeping in a boat on the edge of the sea at Barombong. He was called Karaeng Bayo. Then Karaeng Mamampang, Karaeng Sapotanga, Karaeng Sapolambere, Karaeng Pao each ordered people to go see Karaeng Bayo. "Who knows, perhaps he is really Sombaya of Baku?" A portion of the people of Mamampang arrived at Barombong. They saw that it was indeed their karaeng who had disappeared. They asked him if he would return back to Baku. But, he did not want to return. Then he was brought by the people of Barombong to Lakiung because the *Bate Salapang* [of Gowa] wanted to join him with the tumanurung. After being joined together, they wanted to install and make him karaeng of the people of Gowa. [Karaeng Bayo] said to the people of Gowa, "wait first, because there is something I want to order taken away from these people who have come." Then the people of Baku were commanded to return and bring their crown, trident, the two cinde,[10] the sword. Then the people of Baku went back

[10]The term *cinde* refers to a colorful piece of silk or cotton cloth, usually south Asian, woven in a distinctive pattern different from local styles. As in much of eastern Indonesia, Makassarese saw such cloths as valuable, even sacred, heirlooms.

> to bring all that they were ordered to bring. In seven days' time the people of Baku arrived bringing their kalompoang. Said [Karaeng Bayo] to the people of Baku, "dwell here, you." But already sad-hearted, they asked leave to go back to Baku. Then he was installed by the people of Gowa to become Somba. This Somba was the first in Gowa. The kalompoang stayed in Gowa.
>
> (manuscript N16, pp. 10–13)

What should we make of this effort to appropriate Gowa's Karaeng Bayo and locate his origins, as well as the origins of Gowa's most sacred kalompoang, in Baku? In Makassar, both oral and written history making worked to explain social position in the present. The past is where both people and communities inherited their ranks and knew their proper places. Read in this light, the tale of Baku's origins and subsequent fall is a history that asserts a measure of importance for an otherwise peripheral Makassarese community at the expense of Gowa's own privileged history. Someone from Baku who told this story in Gowa would certainly have incurred the wrath of its rulers. Here, then, is an oral history that cast itself as both subordinate and subversive; that is, Baku's history was both respectful and fearful of Gowa's historiographical dominance, and Baku challenged this dominance by asserting its own importance simultaneously. In this, Baku was far from unique.

The most extensive set of histories contesting Gowa's claim to such unique and mysterious origins comes from Bantaeng. Bantaeng was an important Makassarese center centuries before Gowa's rise to prominence, and its reluctance to acknowledge Gowa's overlordship has persisted to the present. Archaeological finds attesting to ancient trade links have unearthed bronze Buddhist statues, potsherds, bronze artifacts, polished stone axes, Chinese ceramics, and gold images, which are now part of Bantaeng's royal regalia.[11] Bantaeng is even mentioned in the Javanese *Nagarakertagama* as Bantayan, the principal kingdom in the region (Pelras 1996, 25–26, 66). This ancient past may lend credence to Bantaeng's most notable historical claim that it was the homeland of Karaeng Bayo. One manuscript from Bantaeng explained that Karaeng Bayo was the son of the female ruler of Bantaeng: "May I not be cursed, making clear the origins of the karaengship of Gowa before the tumanurung in Gowa. The child of Karaeng Baine, he was the first Karaeng of Gowa, Karaeng Baya of Bantaeng. He married the tumanurunga of Gowa. They had a child Tumassalang Barayanga" (ANRI, ms. 8/20, p. 2).

Other oral and written histories from Bantaeng make similiar claims. A late-eighteenth-century manuscript written by an elderly man living in Maros told how Karaeng Bayo (here called Karaeng Baju) left Bantaeng with his followers seeking wood to build a ship. They began cutting wood on top of a hill, but the gods (or Allah) intervened and changed his fate. Becoming very thirsty, Karaeng Bayo and his followers drank the water they had brought and could find no more. Seeing a dog that was wet and muddy, they tracked it to the source of the water. There Karaeng Bayo discovered an earthly paradise or garden of delights. In the center was a magnificent house that looked like a palace. Karaeng Bayo saw the tumanurung inside, sitting on a white throne of ivory beneath a multicolored roof sewn with gems that sparkled like the stars above. While he was struck silent with wonder and fear, the tumanurung spoke, saying that among mortals only he was fit to be her mate and live in contentment. With reverence he took her by the hand and they were joined

[11]Numerous Makassarese polities, including Bantaeng, had ruling dynasties that possessed a wide variety of objects that were considered royal regalia.

("Makassaarsche Historiën" 1855, 112–14). The history this manuscript related, and possibly other oral histories they collected, led Dutch colonial authors to the conclusion that Karaeng Bayo, before his arrival in Gowa, had been a "prince" or "king" of Bantaeng (see "Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van Celebes" 1854, 149; Blok 1948, 7; Friedericy 1929, 365–66).

An oral history collected by the Dutch missionary B. F. Matthes in the nineteenth century related how a stranger appeared from over the sea at a small settlement called Bisampole. Because of his mighty bearing and lofty appearance, the Dampang of Bisampole was brought to see him. Struck with fear and almost blinded by the golden image on the stranger's chest, he fell to his knees and asked the stranger to come to his dwelling. The stranger refused to go unless he was carried on a golden palanquin. This was done. In Bisampole the stranger explained he was the oldest of three brothers descended from heaven, the second brother being in Gowa and the youngest in Bone. While in Bisampole, the stranger ate only cooked rice and drank only coconut milk, "white foods" that emphasized his heavenly origins. He disappeared one night but left behind the gold image and other kalompoang, including banners, swords, lances, and other regalia. The gold image, he said, was to take his place. The Dampang summoned all the people to deliberate, and finally the Dampang agreed to become the caretaker of the kalompoang. With it in his possession he became the ruler of the land, the first ruler of Bantaeng (Matthes 1943, 424–25; Lathief 1984, 41–42).

In other histories, too, Bantaeng challenged Gowa's assertion that it was the most prestigious and ancient of Makassarese communities. In South Sulawesi, such assertions often focused on the deeds of a group of siblings, usually three or seven. A story from Bantaeng tells of seven sisters, the youngest of whom was responsible for collecting wood for the kitchen after their parents died. Burying the bones of a fish she had fed, but which her sisters ate, the youngest sang, "grow up into a tree, may your leaves fall on Java and be picked up by the king of Java" (Matthes 1943, 405–6). This indeed happened, and the king of Java came and married the youngest sister. All seven, however, sought their own places to dwell and thereby established seven communities near Bantaeng. The sisters became the founders of seven other communities that all looked to Bantaeng for their origins. Much as other communities looked to Gowa, these seven looked to Bantaeng as their ancestor. At the same time, this oral tradition linked Bantaeng to another prestigious polity: the island of Java southwest of Sulawesi. It was the king of Java who married the youngest of the seven sisters, a history that gave Bantaeng a prestigious origin approaching Gowa's own. Similarly, another history told of two children of the highest rank of a Javanese ruler named Karaeng Mandarawaya Ratu ri Salamanaya. One, a daughter, went west and married the ruler of Banten, while the other, a son, went east and married the daughter of the ruler of Bantaeng. From this marriage linking Java and Bantaeng, Karaeng Bayo was born (ANRI, ms. 80/10, p. 1). This link gave Bantaeng a renowned lineage and impressive status *independent* of Gowa. In these histories, Bantaeng did not recognize the supremacy of Gowa's origins—and thus its later right to be Bantaeng's overlord—but asserted a heritage and position equal or superior to Gowa's own.

A quiet but significant historical discourse that challenged Gowa's telling of the past flourished in Bantaeng. These histories explained what the *Gowa Chronicle* said was unknown: the origins of Karaeng Bayo. It was important that Gowa's founding rulers were of exalted origin, but more important still that their origins not be traced to any other human community. Gowa's historical supremacy stemmed from the fact that its origins were unique and unequalled, rather than common and derivative. Other communities' histories looked to Gowa, but Gowa's own history had an

immaculate genesis unsullied by the prospect of rivals or equals. Histories from Bantaeng that claimed (perhaps accurately) that Karaeng Bayo came from their land or that Karaeng Bayo was the younger (and thus subordinate and inferior) brother of the founder of Bantaeng were anathema to Gowa but of enormous importance in Bantaeng as proof of its own worth and status.

Status Rivalry, History Making, and the Coming of Islam

Like the founding of Gowa, the coming of Islam was an event around which history making and its attendant social implications clustered. Gowa and Talloq derived enormous prestige for being recognized as the first Makassarese communities to convert to Islam. This prestige, however, was hard won. Historians accept that, by the initiatives of Gowa and Talloq, Islam was spread throughout Makassar and beyond; communities first were implored and, if they resisted, then compelled to accept the new faith (see Andaya 1981; Mattulada 1991; Pelras 1996; Reid 1981). Gowa and Talloq's rulers built mosques, collected Islamic texts, encouraged the haj, demanded attendance of other rulers at Gowa's annual celebrations of Idul Fitri and Idul Adha, and created officials known as *mokkeng* to ensure that Makassarese attended Friday prayer services. Their persistent missionary efforts carried Islam to the Bugis and to islands overseas that submitted to Gowa in battle. This twin legacy of being both the first Makassarese to convert and the source of Islam disseminated throughout Makassar provided Gowa tremendous political, social, and cultural capital to help establish itself as the premier polity and center of Makassar.

As was true with the histories Gowa made of the tumanurung and Karaeng Bayo, this history that made Gowa the sole origin and source of Islam in Makassar was challenged. A bewildering variety of oral traditions in different parts of Makassar claimed either special relationships with Mecca or that various Makassarese groups converted to Islam independently and prior to Gowa. Most of these tales involve a mysterious man who later turned out to be an Islamic prophet journeying to local communities and planting the seeds of Islam. Thus, when people from Gowa arrived to demand conversion, Makassarese from outside Gowa were already Muslim. Other tales tell of Makassarese journeying, sometimes in dreams and sometimes in ships blown off course, to Mecca and converting to Islam there before returning in order to bring this new faith to their community.

In this context, a sacred Islamic text preserved in three small neighboring communities in Tomboloq is relevant. In the seventeenth century, a disciple of Syekh Yusuf named Loqmoq ri Antang bequeathed a book of Islamic texts to the inhabitants of the three settlements. They and their descendants preserved this text as their most sacred kalompoang, performed ritual readings from the book twice monthly, and saw themselves as distinct from neighboring communities because they possessed this heirloom. In a ritual demonstration of this distinctiveness, they would celebrate Idul Fitri one day before their neighbors, thereby claiming a precedence, uniqueness, and status that surrounding communities could not match. Most oral histories of Islam entering Makassar before 1605 are prompted by a similiar motive to appear exceptionally devout, pure, or superior to other nearby communities (Cummings 2002). As we have seen with tumanurung, Makassarese played out social rivalries by fashioning partial histories of the past.

Often, too, these histories of Islam arriving independently of Gowa's proselytizing efforts have become entangled with other motives in making histories. Consider the following history of the community of Salu on the island of Selayar.[12] It tells how Datuq ri Bandang, who first Islamized Gowa and Talloq, journeyed to Selayar and married the daughter of the ruler of Salu.[13] With their two children, a long genealogy began that connected the ruling line of Salu to Datuq ri Bandang. One of these children, I Yamina, had three children: Opu Mallala, Opunna Kahi, and Opu Bembeng. Opu Mallala and Opunna Kahi quarreled with Opu Bembeng. Opu Mallala and Opunna Kahi then left Salu after a ritual cockfight in which Opu Bembeng was victorious. Opu Mallala became ruler in the community of Bukit, while Opunna Kahi became ruler in Lempange. As for the victorious Opu Bembeng, he had four children: Bissu, Tonitambungiabatu, I Tubinya, and I Tojulu. Bissu had a daughter named Ri Tobuddina who was married to Bakka Battang. Their child, To Rijalina, had a child, Daeng Sitaba. Daeng Sitaba had nine children. One of the nine was a daughter, Gallarrang Balara, who married seven times, but all of her husbands died because there was purportedly a poisonous centipede in her vagina. Finally, the son of the ruler of Gowa I Patotu married her, and their child became the ruler of Salu.

Although the tale this text relates is not factually, referentially "true," it is a fascinating depiction of how Makassarese shaped the past for use in the present. Furthermore, its shows how complex social and status relationships could be. This history makes Islam in Salu autonomous from Islam in Gowa. It, in a sense, makes Salu and Gowa equal, since Datuq ri Bandang introduced Islam in both areas. Marrying into the Salu ruling family, Datuq ri Bandang fathered a line of local lords, becoming their foremost ancestor. This impressive and direct genealogical tie with such a prestigious figure in Makassarese history was combined, moreover, with other efforts to link Salu with the most powerful polities of the region. No ruler of Gowa was, in fact, named or titled I Patotu. In the Bugis epic I La Galigo, however, the principal god and the father of Batara Guru was none other than I Patotu (Andaya 1981, 10). Thus, it would be Batara Guru himself (now from Gowa rather than Luwuq) who married the daughter of the ruler of Salu. This impeccable cosmological, religious, and political genealogy linked Salu directly with the foremost sources of ancient cultural heritage (Luwuq through Batara Guru), Islam in South Sulawesi (Datuq ri Bandang), and the dominant political power of the period (Gowa).[14] These diverse sources of authority, the text claims, are united in this history and thus present in Salu's rulers.

The claim in this history to such a lofty status, far above what the rulers of Salu can expect to be granted by modern historians, reveals one of the contradictions that pervaded Makassarese status rivalry. To be closely linked to powers such as Gowa

[12]The history is recounted at length in at least two nineteenth-century manuscripts (ANRI, mss. 46/5 and 46/6).

[13]The most famous history involving this figure describes how three Minangkabau brothers known as Datoq ri Bandang, Datoq ri Pattimang, and Datoq ri Tiro brought Islam to South Sulawesi at the beginning of the seventeenth century, converting first the ruler of Luwuq, then those of Gowa and Talloq (see Mattulada 1991, 43–46; Pelras 1994, 134).

[14]This is not the only history from Selayar that stresses links to Luwuq. A history written on several loose pages of manuscript VT 128 at the Perpustakaan Nasional in Jakarta (PNRI) makes similiar claims. This history tells how the first ruler of Potobangung on Selayar was a tumanurung. He married a tumanurung from Luwuq, and among their children was a daughter who married Lalaki Bosang-Bosang, who became the karaeng of Bontobangung. This history thus explained how Potobangung was the foremost kingdom on Selayar, while Bontobangung should be seen as its (obedient) child.

brought its own prestige and advantages, but so did autonomy. Located on Selayar, far from the centers of Makassarese power, Salu's rulers and historians were relatively free to make such claims. In its own eyes, Salu could be equal to Gowa in its devotion to Islam while still capitalizing on the cultural force of links with Makassar's most powerful polity.

Histories of Islamization in Makassar that were not derivative, that elided Gowa's likely role in spreading Islam, are most common in coastal communities. Traditions of seafaring and contact with other peoples and cultures indeed make it possible that Islam's first inroads in Makassar were outside Gowa and Talloq. Malay and Arab Muslim traders visited these coasts beginning at least a century before the 1605 conversion of the rulers of Gowa and Talloq, sometimes marrying into the families of local lords. In Sanrabone, one such coastal community, several texts attest to the presence of Malays there by the late sixteenth century. One manuscript explains or claims that, as a result of Malay influence, people in Sanrabone accepted Islam before it was accepted anywhere else in Makassar. This text carefully provides a chronology which states that it "explains Islamization":

> In the year 1010 Hijra [of the Islamic calendar], a Nabi of Allah brought Islam into Sanrabone. He who first Islamized here was Datuq Mokotta, the Sultan of Pangkaruyung [Pagarruyung]. He was also called a Patani Javanese. In the year 1015 Hijra the Nabi of Allah then brought Islam into Talloq and Gowa. He who Islamized Gowa was Datuq ri Bandang. In the year 1016 Hijra a Nabi of Allah then brought Islam in to the people of Luwuq. He who Islamized there was Datuq Ciqtiru. In the year 1018 Hijra a Nabi of Allah then brought Islam in to the people of Soppeng. He who Islamized there was Datuq Leang. In the year 1020 Hijra the people of Bone entered Islam. He who Islamized there was Datuq Leang. In the year 1035 Hijra a Nabi of Allah then brought Islam in to the people of Dima [Bima] and Sambawa [Sumbawa]. He who Islamized there was Datuq Ciqtiru. In the year 1016 Hijra a Nabi of Allah established Friday prayer services.
>
> (manuscript N17, pp. 1–3)

The manuscript is written in Makassarese using the Arabic script, which Makassarese call *serang*. One suspects that this script has the advantage in Makassarese eyes of lending the religious authority associated with Arabic to the contents of the manuscript. Although we do not know whether a Malay from Pagarruyung did indeed make converts to Islam among the ruling family of Sanrabone five years before the rulers of Gowa and Talloq converted in 1605, it is certainly plausible. As a coastal community involved in trade, Sanrabone may well have had Malay settlers who began spreading their faith before the famous conversions of Sanrabone's more powerful neighbors.

The same manuscript continues with a remarkably detailed account of the building of the first mosque in Sanrabone, which it says was begun in 1012 and finished in 1015 under the direction of the same Datuq Mokotta mentioned above. The dimensions of the building, the size of the foundation posts, the number of doors, the hardwood walls, and other architectural details of the new mosque are all described in the manuscript. Moreover, here Datuq Mokotta is said to be the older sibling of Datuq ri Bandang, who Islamized Gowa and Talloq (manuscript N17, pp. 1–3). By making him the elder sibling, the manuscript not so subtly grants Sanrabone a measure of superiority or precedence over Gowa and Talloq. It also makes the history of Islam in Sanrabone independent of its history in Gowa, further granting Sanrabone a degree of autonomy from Gowa. Could rulers in Gowa have been aware of this

history of Islam that cast doubt on their telling of that past? Was the demand in Gowa and Sanrabone's treaty of alliance that the ruler of Sanrabone always attend Idul Fitri and Idul Adha celebrations at the Gowa royal palace an intentional effort to reject Sanrabone's claim and reassert Gowa's historical primacy (manuscript N7, p. 4)? Can ritual performance inscribe its own palimpsest over other histories of the past? We cannot know with certainty, but the existence of rival histories of Islam's first conversions in Makassar further evidences how Makassarese communities jockeyed for prestige and status in the present and future through the histories they made of the past.

The coming of the tumanurung and Karaeng Bayo and the coming of Islam represent prominent clusters of oral and written history making within the wider realm of Makassarese discourse about the past. A remarkable sense of how the past was used, how it was made present, emerges from the written and oral histories surrounding these two episodes. The dominance of the histories enshrined in Gowa's powerful written texts, so evident in much of what is written about Makassarese history, begins to recede. In fact, although its influence is felt everywhere, the "official" version of Makassarese history appears significantly weakened. Yet, this can be overstated. No Makassarese commoner would have ever been able to hear more than a few of these tales; for them the image of Gowa and its nobility as a dominant monolith was probably strongly felt. Only from our removed perspective does a larger pattern emerge of a social context alive with rivalries among communities. The central role of the past in these rivalries for status and prestige is compelling.

These two topics also shed light on one aspect of the complex relationship between oral and written history making in Makassar. There were certain areas of history making in which the (mostly written) histories of Gowa opposed the (mostly oral) histories of other Makassarese communities. Bound up in rivalries between communities, these historical discourses clashed because of the pivotal social role that the past played in Makassar.[15] This pivotal social role provided the most significant shaping context affecting the relationship between the oral and written histories that Makassarese made. The crucial function of the past in Makassarese social and political relations also outweighed the differences in form and meaning that histories derived from either being spoken or written. In another sphere of discourse, such as religious doctrines and practices, for example, relationships might have been considerably different. We should not expect dynamics of historical discourse to apply to all areas of Makassarese discourse. In the case of discourse about the past, at least, the relationship between oral and written histories cannot be characterized in terms of replacement, succession, or transition, but neither can it be captured adequately by notions of interplay, symbiosis, and seamlessness.

A Bound-Together Historical Discourse?

On the horizons of Makassarese history making about their past, certain people, events, and topics dominated the landscape. This article has aimed at an assessment of the relationship between written and oral history making in early modern Makassar at some of these promontories. These relationships were never of one kind; in different

[15]Cummings 1999 examines an episode in the history of Gowa and Talloq showing that the relationship between even these two kingdoms, typically seen as the closest of allies, contained rivalry and tension.

circumstances oral and written histories could be complementary, antagonistic, or subordinate. Each could infuse or confound, confront or complement the other depending on the social and historical contexts of the past events, the time of their making into histories, and the social life of these histories thereafter. This emphasis on the social world in which histories were made, from which they both derived and provided with meaning, is critical.

Recent scholarship has been enormously valuable in demonstrating the complex ways in which oral performances and textual traditions share a common world characterized by reciprocal influences and tangled connections.[16] The common conceptual thread that typifies explorations of the relationship between oral and literate productions centers on the idea of "interplay." Justifiably eager to counter the formal principles and assumptions that articulated orality and literacy as separate spheres, scholars now pay attention to symbiosis, connection, and entanglement within a constructed social context. Yet, this has come at the implicit expense of an appreciation of other possible relationships; instead of *interplay*, why not *counterplay*? This more distanced and hesitant relationship is nevertheless common in social contexts marked by dramatic inequalities of power separating those who control writing from those who do not. Even astute perceptions of the connections between oral and literate may slight the presence of contestation and opposition or fail to grant the possibility that oral and literate traditions can under certain conditions remain separate altogether.

The connections between oral and literate histories in early modern Makassar gained force and significance from a social and political context in which Gowa dominated its neighbors and a cultural context in which Makassarese viewed written manuscripts as sacred kalompoang. Discourse about the past was imbricated in all manner of contested social relationships, hierarchies, and rivalries. In terms of these contexts, histories about the past—oral, written, and in-between—gained meaning and ultimately exerted influence on the shape of events. An oral history, on the one hand, may appear to contest the written history of the *Gowa Chronicle* and, on the other hand, to parallel or mimic that most potent of historical accounts. Histories of the tumanurung and the arrival of Islam in Makassar emphasize how the past was reworked in response to social rivalries in the present.

Oral and written histories, however, did not always confront one another either explicitly or implicitly. More often they addressed each other from a careful distance, held in tension through an ongoing counterplay of assertion and denial as each sought the upper hand. Complex and not easily reduced to causal links, stable hierarchies, or single-faceted relationships, what emerges from the histories considered here is the impossibility of neatly pinning down how oral and literate historical traditions related. In early modern Makassar, oral and written histories were not so easily bound together. Oral and written histories collectively produced a world in which the past infused the present by providing the stories, claims, and explanations with which Makassarese created their communities, identities, and ultimately their social world, but they did not always do so together.

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[16]In addition to the works discussed in the beginning of this article, see also, for example, Blackburn 1996; Blackburn and Flueckiger 1989; Richman 1991.

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