



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file - Votre référence

Our file - Notre référence

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Canada

**THE DECLINE OF THE ISLAMIC EMPIRE OF ACEH
(1641 - 1699)**

Luthfi Auni

**A Thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts**

**Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University
Montreal**

April, 1993

© Luthfi Auni



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file - Votre référence

Our file - Notre référence

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-91664-8

Canada

ABSTRACT

Author: Luthfi Auni
Title: The Decline of the Islamic Empire of Aceh (1641-1699)
Department: Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University
Degree: Master of Arts

This thesis deals with the history of the Acehnese Islamic empire, focusing on the events leading up to its decline in both its internal stability and its hegemony in the surrounding regions in the second half of the seventeenth century. During the given period (1641-1699) the empire was ruled successively by four female rulers. The thesis deals with the political and economic developments in this period.

Aceh was an Islamic empire in the Indonesian archipelago which emerged as the greatest and most influential Islamic power in the region from the middle of the sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century. It reached its golden age during the reign of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) who succeeded in developing the empire into an unrivaled Muslim power whose control included the West Sumatran coast and the Malay peninsula. During his reign, Aceh became the holder of the political and economic hegemony in the region.

Towards the second half of the seventeenth century, the power of Aceh gradually declined from its peak both internally and externally. Internally, political disintegration paved the way for the process of power transition between political groups within the empire. Externally, both the political importance and the economic supremacy of the empire in the region was drastically reduced. Consequently, its power again shrank back into the north-Sumatran area from which the empire originally emerged.

RÉSUMÉ

Auteur: Luthfi Auni
Titre: Le déclin de l'empire islamique d'Aceh (1641-1699)
Département: Université McGill, Institut des études islamiques
Diplôme: Maîtrise ès Arts

Ce mémoire s'attaque à l'histoire de l'empire islamique Acehen, en concentrant sur son trajet historique, à la veille de son déclin dans la seconde moitié du dix-septième siècle. Durant cette période (1641-1699), l'empire fut gouverné successivement par quatre souverains. Ce mémoire mettra l'emphase sur les aspects politique et économique de cette période.

Aceh fut l'un des empires islamiques de l'archipel indonésien qui émergea comme le plus grand et le plus influent pouvoir islamique à partir du milieu du seizième siècle jusqu'au début du dix-septième siècle. L'apogée de cet empire survint sous le règne du Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) qui parvint à faire de l'empire une puissance musulmane régionale sans rival et dont le pouvoir s'étendait de la côte ouest de Sumatra à la péninsule malaysienne. Durant son règne, Aceh devint le détenteur hégémonique de la puissance politique et économique de la région.

À l'approche de la deuxième moitié du dix-septième siècle, le pouvoir d'Aceh entreprend graduellement son déclin, tant au niveau interne qu'au niveau externe. Au niveau interne, l'empire connaît une désintégration politique qui ouvre la voie à un processus de transfert de pouvoir parmi des groupes politiques au sein de l'empire. Au niveau externe, l'importance politique et la suprématie économique de l'empire sont toutes deux diminuées de façon importante. Par conséquent, le pouvoir d'Aceh fut de nouveau limité à la région nord de Sumatra, région qui avait été le berceau de cet empire.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to Professor Dr. A. Uner Turgay, Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University as well as my academic advisor and thesis supervisor. His assistance, advice and the personal interest given to me during the development of my thesis will be remembered with fondness. Special appreciation is extended to Professor Dr. Karel A. Steenbrink, for the invaluable counsel and brotherly advice which he unreservedly gave to me.

I am further indebted to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for a fellowship to study at McGill University. I also would like to express my thanks to Professor Dr. Issa J. Boullata, Director of the McGill-Indonesia IAIN Development Project, Dr. Rebecca B. Aiken, the Project Coordinator, and the Project staff, Ms. Joana Gacek and Ms. Lori Novak, for their help during my stay and study in Canada.

Thanks also go to Mr. Adam Gacek, the Head of the Institute's library and his staff, Ms. Salwa Ferahian, who helped me very much in finding materials for this thesis. My sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to Floyd MacKay and Maha al-Maraghy who spent their time and attention correcting and editing my English. Thanks also go to Ms. Roxanne Marcotte who translated the abstract of this thesis into French.

My due regards and appreciation are further extended to both my beloved parents for their prayers and their moral support towards me.

Lastly, and by no means the least, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my beautiful and lovely wife, Nurmawati MYc, for her love, patience, encouragement and willingness to stay alone to look after my three growing beloved daughters Evalida Ulfha Aunies, Herline Fitria Aunies and Marissa QurRatu 'Aina Aunies, during my years of study in Canada.

L.A.

Montreal, 1993

ABBREVIATIONS

Some publications used in this thesis have been abbreviated as follows.

BKI = *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche Indie*, published by Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land, en Volkenkunde

JIAEA = *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*

JMBRAS = *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society*

JSEAH = *Journal of Southeast Asian History*

JSEAS = *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*

MBRAS = *Monograph of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
RÉSUMÉ	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
ABBREVIATIONS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: SOME NOTES ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF ACEH	3
A. Aceh Before Islam	8
B. The Coming of Islam	10
C. The Rise of Aceh	14
CHAPTER TWO: THE GOLDEN AGE OF ACEH	29
A. Internal Developments	29
- Politics and State Structure	30
- Religion, Culture and Education	34
- The Military.....	37
B. External Affairs	40
- Expansion and Trade	41
- Aceh and the European Powers	46
a. Aceh and the British	48
b. Aceh and the Dutch.....	51
c. Aceh and the French	52
d. Aceh and the Portuguese	53

**CHAPTER THREE: THE CRISIS OF ROYAL POWER OF THE
ACEHNESE SULTANATE UNDER QUEENLY RULE
(INTERNAL DECLINE)..... 58**

A. The Rise of Female Rulers 58

B. The Emergency of the Orangkayas 61

C. The Division of Power 71

D. The Opposition Group 81

**CHAPTER FOUR: THE DECLINE OF ACEH'S REGIONAL
POWER 92**

**A. Political Wane and the Loss of the Outlying
Possessions 92**

B. The Decline of Economic Supremacy 111

CONCLUSION 122

APPENDIX ONE128

APPENDIX TWO129

BIBLIOGRAPHY130

INTRODUCTION

Aceh, which occupies the northern part of the island of Sumatra, and is now the name of the Indonesian republic's most western province, is considered to be the first area of Indonesia to have accepted Islam. Historically, Aceh consisted of various independent small segmentary states such as Perlak, Samudra Pasai, Pidie and Daya. When the first European power, the Portuguese, subdued Malacca in the Malay Peninsula in 1511, their intolerant attitude towards Islam resulted in strong reactions from the native people surrounding the area. The strongest reaction came from Aceh. By the early sixteenth century, Aceh emerged as the sole powerful empire after unifying all former kingdoms under one umbrella, the so-called empire of Aceh Darussalam.

The historical journey of the empire of Aceh, beginning in the early sixteenth century, went steadily upward both in terms of political and economic power. Aceh was able to rely on its anti-Portuguese attitude and to keep its strength equal to that of the Portuguese, the major enemy in the area. Consequently, from a less important small segmentary state in the fifteenth century, Aceh arose as the greatest and the most powerful Islamic empire on the western part of the Indonesian archipelago in the middle of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries.

By the early seventeenth century, Aceh reached its peak under Sultān Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). Under this sultān, Aceh emerged as an unrivalled empire in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. During this time Aceh was a cosmopolitan state marked by extraordinary developments in politics, economics,

society and religion. William Marsden points out that in the eyes of the western peoples, it was the only empire of Sumatra, in the Indonesian archipelago, that ever reached such a degree of political growth, as to occasion its transactions being mentioned as a significant part of world history.¹

However, after the death of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda and his immediate successor, Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni, in the second half of the seventeenth century, Aceh was governed by successively four female rulers from 1641 to 1699 and the condition of the Acehnese sultanate began to shift. Gradually, the power of Aceh began to wane both internally and externally. Internally, the political situation of the empire became destabilized, marked by a transition of power from one group to another. This power struggle took place between the central and the more remote areas which resulted in the reduction of royal power. Externally, most of the Acehnese vassals freed themselves from their overlordship as a result of the weakness of the Acehnese empire after the death of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda. Economically, the empire also faced waning economic supremacy in the region owing to the inability of the empire to compete with the growing commercial power of the Dutch after the capture of Malacca in 1641. Consequently, the power of Aceh was reduced to its core in the very tip of North Sumatra.

It is this relationship between political and economic decline that I would like to explore in the particular case of the Acehnese empire in this thesis. More specifically, this work will deal mainly with the history of the Acehnese empire during the period between 1641 and 1699. Within the given period Aceh was

¹ William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*, a Reprint of the third ed. Introd. by John Bastin (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966), 396.

under the rule of four successive queens. This thesis will explore the internal and external factors that brought the Acehese empire to this process of gradual decline. To this end, four questions have been set. What were the main factors that caused the Acehese empire to decline gradually ? How could the female rulers take over the position of male sultāns ? Were these queens real rulers or only intermediaries for a group of influential persons who made use of them as symbols of authority ? Finally, how did the people react to the leadership of the female rulers since it was a new phenomenon in the Acehese community?

This study of the history of the Acehese empire will be terminated in the year 1699 which ends the scope of this study.

This thesis consists of four chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. Chapter one summaries the early history of Aceh. Here are drawn at a glance the previous pictures of Aceh both before and during its rise as a single powerful Muslim empire in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago. We will see how Aceh rose and developed as a prominent power in the region which finally brought it to its greatness both politically and economically.

Chapter two will deal specifically with the early seventeenth century Aceh, its golden age under the renowned ruler, Sultān Iskandar Muda as well as his successor Sultān Iskandar Thani. The causes of this prosperity and the subsequent regional role of the Acehese empire will be examined. The achievements during its zenith are also a part of this section. This is essential in order to better understand the history of Aceh, in particular its golden age. The reader will be able to see a clear comparison of Aceh between its period of grandeur in the early seventeenth century and its process of decline beginning in

the second half of the seventeenth century.

Chapters three and four, which are the main parts of this work, will examine the internal and external position of the Acehese empire. They will depict the internal and external power shifts that took place in the empire when Aceh was under the control of the four successive female rulers from 1641 to 1699. This study concentrates on the internal problems of royal power, power transition and the reaction of the opposition movements. The external problems of the wane in power of the Acehese empire both in terms of political importance and economic supremacy in the region will complete this section. Politically, the discussion will concentrate on the loss of control over their outlying possessions both in the Malay Peninsula and the western coast of Sumatra. Economically, this study attempts to show the steady decline of the empire's economic supremacy in the region since the rise of the Dutch after taking over Malacca from the Portuguese in 1641.

To find authentic as well as reliable data to support this study, a tight selection of sources of different geographical origins has been done. Those chosen from the contemporary Malay and European authors are referred to as 'primary sources'. The second category will include studies on the history of Aceh by modern scholars and historians and these are designated as 'secondary sources'.

Even though the Malay sources are full of myths and legends, these sources are useful. They provide rich factual information about the peoples of the region and their traditions. These local histories give us the chance to see a clearer picture of such matters in order to better understand the natural state of the peoples in the region. These indigenous Malay sources cannot be ignored in this study. Significantly, as L. F. Brakel has pointed out, "these sources have been

published and their reliability and accuracy have been established beyond reasonable doubt."² In this study, three significant indigenous Malay historiographies are taken into account, *Hikayat Aceh*, *Bustanu's- Salatin* and *Adat Aceh*.

Hikayat Aceh. This seventeenth century Acehnese chronicle has been published and discussed by Teuku Iskandar in his Ph.D. thesis under the title "*De Hikajat Atjeh*."³ This chronicle was composed during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). Although the first part of this chronicle includes a number of early rulers of Aceh and the dates of their death, the main focus of this work is on the greatest Acehnese ruler, Sultān Iskandar Muda. More than half of its contents portray the glorification of Sultān Iskandar Muda himself. This chronicle is also of great importance for the earlier Acehnese rulers since it presents the lineage of Sultān Iskandar Muda and his character.

Bustanu's- Salatin. This chronicle was written by one of the greatest Acehnese '*ulamā*', originally from Gujarat, Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī. He composed it during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Thāni, Iskandar Muda's immediate successor and the first sultāna, Safiat al-Dīn. This work is divided into seven chapters which deal mainly with both religious and historical aspects. In this study, only its second chapter will be consulted because in this part such historical matters of Aceh are well portrayed. It gives a chronological history of Aceh as well

² L. F. Brakel, "State and Statecraft in 17th Century Aceh," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. (MBRAS, 1979), 56.

³ Teuku Iskandar, *Hikayat Aceh*, trans. by Aboe Bakar (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan, Museum Negeri Aceh, 1986).

as a description of the person of Sultān Iskandar Thāni and the condition of the sultanate. Significantly, female rulers, especially Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn are also depicted in the last part of this chapter. Even though the content of this chronicle cannot be entirely taken for granted, Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat has claimed that the information about events between the years 1600 and 1680 given by this chronicle is reliable and acceptable.⁴

Adat Aceh. This work consists of four texts, written in Malay. It contains the ancient history of the sultanate of Aceh. It includes also the regulations of government of the sultān and the palace, the court's traditions, the regulations of customs and duties and regulations of the government officials of the sultanate. A complete facsimile of this work can be found in *Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land, en Volkenkunde*, No. 24 (1958).⁵ The translation of the genealogy by Thomas Braddel is found in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. IV (1850), 598-603, and Vol. V (1851), 26-32.

We find a wealth of data about Aceh composed and written by westerners. "There are numerous descriptions, often quite elaborate and detailed, by Western visitors, diplomats, merchants and the like, many of which have been published and readily accessible."⁶ For this study, some important European sources on the

⁴ Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. by Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Proyek Permuseuman Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982/1983), 3.

⁵ *Adat Atjeh*. Reproduced in facsimile from a manuscript in the India Office Library, Intro. and Notes by G. W. J. Drewes and P. Voorhoeve (s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958), 3-176.

⁶ Brakel, "State and Statecraft," 56.

sixteenth and seventeenth century Malay world, especially Aceh, are also consulted. Such important works include the narratives and travel accounts of John Davis, Sir James Lancaster, Thomas Best, Peter Mundy, Augustin de Beaulieu, and Thomas Bowrey and William Dampier. Some of these original works were consulted, while others are only quoted from secondary sources. On later seventeenth century Aceh, the last two mentioned sources are very important to this study. Significantly, these two works contain information with regard to the sultanate of Aceh during the reigns of female rulers.

Futhermore, in addition to the main sources mentioned above, other sources referred as to secondary ones are also used. Books as well as articles by both Indonesian and Western historians and scholars have been utilized. Some secondary sources which do not directly talk about the history of Aceh, but include some information about Aceh, were also consulted. Their contribution to this thesis is essential in order to better understand the history of the Acehnese empire.

CHAPTER ONE

SOME NOTES ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF ACEH

A. Aceh Before Islam

The early history of Aceh, particularly before Islam, is uncertain. This is due to the lack of historical sources which may support our study. Experts themselves are still at varied opinions about the origin of the Acehnese people and their beliefs. As in most parts of the Indonesian Archipelago, however, it is believed that before Islam, Hinduism had taken root in this region, especially in its maritime areas. This can be related to the fact that there had been some Hindu kingdoms such as in Indrapuri, Indrapatra, and Krueng Raya.¹ Evidences of these kingdoms exist as physical remains in some places such as Ladong, Neuhen, Krueng Boei, Krueng Raya, Lambeusoe (Calang), Tanoh Abeue, Rueng-Rueng and Koeta Bateue, where inscription on stone have been found.² It is even believed that in the beginning the kingdom of Pasai itself was a Hindu kingdom, which later became the first Muslim kingdom in Sumatra.³

Furthermore, even though Dutch scholars such as Snouck Hurgronje, Julius

¹ Surahman and Sutrisno Kutoyo, eds., *Sejarah Daerah Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Pusat Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya, Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah, 1977/78), 52.

² Ismail Yacob, *Atjeh dalam Sedjarah* (Koeta Radja: Joesoef Mahmoed, 1946), 8; T. Muhammad Hasan, "Perkembangan Swapraja di Aceh sampai Perang Dunia," in Ismail Suny, ed., *Bunga Rampai tentang Aceh* (Jakarta: Bharatara Karya Aksara, 1980), 138.

³ Yacob, *Atjeh Dalam*, 10.

Jacobs and Van Langen, who studied the influence of Hinduism on the culture and language of Aceh, have concluded that the Hindu culture had a significant role in Acehnese life, Mohammad Said seems not to be in agreement with those stated scholars. He argues that those considerations cannot be proved, and states that the existence of Hindu kingdoms in Aceh still needs reliable authentication.⁴ Unfortunately, Said does not explain his argument about this matter, and as such, it seems that Said himself does not have enough evidence to support his conclusion. Unlike Said, another Acehnese historian, H. M. Zainuddin, firmly recognizes that before Islam Aceh had been controlled by Hinduism. Further, he asserts that "it is no doubt that there were some regions which had been influenced by Hindu kingdoms and its culture. Many of their remains can still be seen in Aceh in terms of inscriptions on stones and graves."⁵

It is not, however, the main purpose of this study to add to this debate about the early history of Aceh by historians. These arguments are beyond the scope of this study. But at least these illustrations can give us some understanding about the uncertainty and unreliability of information on Aceh before Islam. Further study about such matters is still greatly needed.

⁴ Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan: Pt. Percetakan dan Penerbitan Waspada, 1981), 24.

⁵ H. M. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh dan Nusantara* (Medan: Pustaka Iskandar Muda, 1961), 18-19.

B. The Coming of Islam

As in the case of the early history of Aceh, it is needless to say that among historians there has not yet been any agreement on a dating of the introduction of Islam into the Indonesian Archipelago, mainly in Aceh. The most commonly accepted argument has been that Arab traders played a role in spreading Islam in this region.

The presence of Arab traders in the Indonesian archipelago has been recognized as occurring long before the coming of Islam to this region. Historical accounts agree that trade from Ceylon was in the hands of the Arab traders. Very early seventh century trade from China to Ceylon was already in existence and developed further. Consequently, in the following century Arab traders were settled in Canton and they successfully controlled the trading activity in the East.⁶ Owing to this, "it is likely therefore that Islam was known in the Indies as soon as there were Muslim merchants on the seas."⁷ It was estimated that Arab traders established their trading posts permanently in the Indonesian Archipelago as they did elsewhere.⁸ Therefore, it is not impossible that Islam was brought by them in the beginning of Hijrah. Among the Muslim traders "were pilgrims bound for Mecca and religious teachers, chiefly from India, but settled there".⁹ In the Chinese annals, for instance, under the date 674 A.D. an account is given of an Arab chief,

⁶ T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1913), 363.

⁷ G. E. Marrison, "The Coming of Islam to East Indies," *JMBRAS*, 24 (1951), 28.

⁸ Arnold, *The Preaching*, 365.

⁹ J. A. E. Morley, "The Arab and the Eastern Trade," *JMBRAS*, 22 (1949), 154.

who from later notices is reckoned to have been the chief of an Arab settlement on the West coast of Sumatra.¹⁰

Meanwhile some scholars like Harry W. Hazard and Raymond LeRoy Archer assume that Islam had come to this region in the first century of Hijrah. Hazard, in *Atlas of Islamic History*, for instance, writes:

The first Moslems to visit Indonesia were presumably seventh-century Arab traders who stopped at Sumatra en route to China. Their successors were merchants from Gujerat who dealt in pepper, and who had by 1100 established the unique combination of commerce and proselytizing which characterized the spread of Islam in Indonesia.¹¹

In connection to this, Archer seems also in agreement that "the introduction of Islam into Sumatra was not carried on by Arab preachers, but rather by Arab traders in the early centuries of the Hidjra."¹²

Furthermore, Tjandra Sasmita does not ignore the possibility that Muslim traders stopped at ports on the north coast of Sumatra in the seventh century because during that time trade routes between the East up to China were heavily frequented by various merchants. Sasmita, however, does not accept the existence of Muslim kingdoms in the area in the seventh century.¹³

¹⁰ Arnold, *The Preaching*, 364.

¹¹ Harry W. Hazard, *Atlas of Islamic History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), 45.

¹² Raymond LeRoy Archer, "Muhammadan Mysticism in Sumatra," *JMBRAS*, 15 (1937), 90.

¹³ Uka Tjandrasasmita, "Samudra-Pasai Kerajaan Pengemban Islam Pertama di Indonesia," *Djaya*, 158 (January 30, 1965), 30; See also Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Sepintas Mengenai Peninggalan Kepurbakalaan Islam di Pesisir Utara Jawa* (Jakarta: Proyek Pelita Pembinaan Kepurbakalaan Islam dan Peninggalan Nasional, Departemen P & K, 1976), 1-2.

As far as this trade route is concerned, Anthony Reid also claims that the important development of organized trading networks took place between 1400 and the mid-seventeenth century in southern Asia, from the Red Sea in the West to Canton in the East, covering much of the coastal Malay world, in which this dynamic force led to the existence of some coastal kingdoms in the region.¹⁴

From the facts above we can conclude that the most important factor which brought Islam to the Indonesian region was the route by which Arab traders, while pursuing their trade, spread Islam into this region. Therefore it is not unreasonable to assert that in the beginning Arab traders played an important role.

Apart from that, however, it is believed that by the thirteenth century, a great number of conversions among the people of Aceh began to take place when Muslim traders acquired a permanent settlement there. Besides, it is believed that Aceh was known as the first place for Muslim traders from Arabia, Persia, and India to seek commercial goods from the East. Indeed, they became commercial partners and political allies of local rulers in ports all along the trading routes, furthering the spread of Islam in the region. Consequently, this dynamic connection provided for the emergence of some Muslim kingdoms in the region.

The most positive information concerning this is based on Marco Polo's report that in 1292 A.D. when he was on his way to Venice from China he was detained

¹⁴ Anthony Reid, "Trade and the Problem of Royal Power in Aceh. Three Stages: c. 1550 - 1700," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. MBRAS, (1979), 45.

at Perlak awaiting the change of the monsoon and observed that the people of that kingdom were already Muslims, owing to being frequently visited by Saracen traders, who converted them to the law of Islam.¹⁵

Other reliable information which supports this argument comes from the famous Moroccan traveler, Ibn Battuta who visited Samudra, another Muslim kingdom in the area, twice, in 1345 A.D. and in 1346 A.D. He wrote that Islam had been rooted there for about a century and that the ruler of the kingdom, al-Mālik al-Zāhir, was a sophisticated Muslim Sultān, who carried out his religious duties passionately and had links with China and India.¹⁶ The ruler, as well as the people, based on Ibn Battūta's account, followed the Shafi'ite school.¹⁷

The most authentic evidence to support that there had emerged an Islamic kingdom in this region is based on the discovery of the grave of the first Sultān of Samudra Pasai in Blang Me, near the village of Samudra. According to Said, the inscription tells us that King Merah Selu, who assumed the title of Sultān Mālik al-Sālih, died in 697 Hijrah (A.D. 1297).¹⁸ According to Vlekke, "this tombstone furnishes us with an unexpected amount of information about the earliest Islamic period of Indonesia."¹⁹ From this inscription we receive the oldest reliable

¹⁵ Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. by W. Marsden and intr. by John Masefield (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1926), 338.

¹⁶ Robert Arnt, ed., "The Far East", *Aramco World* 42, No. 6, (1991), 52.

¹⁷ P. A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, "Islam in Indonesia," in K. W. Morgan, ed., *Islam the Straight Path* (New York: The Roland Press Company, 1959), 375.

¹⁸ Said, *Aceh*, 82.

¹⁹ E. H. M. Vlekke, *Nusantara A History of Indonesia* (The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd., 1959), 67.

information about Islam and an Islamic kingdom in the region. Furthermore, two Malay annals, *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*²⁰ and *Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals*, also state that the first king of Samudra was converted to a Muslim by Fakir Muhammad and Syeh Ismail and assumed the title Sultān Mālik al-Şālih.²¹

C. The Rise of Aceh²²

Before the rise of the Acehnese Muslim Empire (Aceh Darussalam) as a single powerful Islamic empire, there had been some early Muslim kingdoms such as Perlak, Samudra Pasai. Pidie and Daya in Aceh. Samudra Pasai, long before the rise of Aceh, had reached a point of substantial development in both economic and religious life. It was in this region, as Anthony Reid depicts, that one of the greatest international seaports existed. This port was greatly developed in the fourteenth century²³ as a trading entrepot in which merchants from China, India and Arabia pursued their trading activities.

Since Samudra Pasai was a meeting place, its role was not only a center of international trade but also a center of Islamic learning in Southeast Asia.²⁴ *Malay*

²⁰ See A. Teeuw, "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai and Sejarah Melayu," in John Bastin and R. Roolvink, eds., *Malayan and Indonesian Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 222-224.

²¹ *Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals*, Annot. and trans. by C. C. Brown (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1970), 30-33.

²² An Islamic empire called Aceh Darussalam located in the very tip of north Sumatra.

²³ Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 4.

²⁴ Ailsa Zainu'ddin, *A Short History of Indonesia* (New York: Praeger Publishers,

Annals mention, for instance, that Pasai had good Islamic religious scholars in its courts. Many religious matters were brought there, including the translation of Islamic books, such as *Durr al-Manzūm*.²⁵ It is assumed that the greatness and influence of this kingdom was so great as to transfer its name to the entire island of Sumatra.²⁶

Yet, in the fifteenth century the power of Samudra Pasai was eschewed by Malacca on the Malay Peninsula. This was due to its strategic position as a place of commercial traffic on the tip of the Malacca Straits.²⁷ Consequently, Malacca took over as the center for international trade in the Archipelago. In addition, when this kingdom accepted Islam in 1414 A.D., many Muslim traders moved their trading activities to this region. Subsequently,

for somewhat over a century, from its rise from obscurity in about 1400 to the mid-16th century, Melaka was unsurpassed as a center of transshipment in Southeast Asia. Located in a zone of calms, it enjoyed distinct advantages over rival ports such as Pasai and Pidir, which were buffeted by the monsoon; under the sultan, Melaka thus experienced a more or less untrammelled prosperity.²⁸

Not long after that, Malacca not only became prosperous but became a powerful Muslim kingdom as well. "Malacca quickly developed and dominated the shipping route that lay between Indonesia and India and it also became, as a matter of

1970), 82; D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East-Asia* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1962), 206.

²⁵ *Malay Annals*, 90-93.

²⁶ Djajadiningrat, "Islam in Indonesia," 375

²⁷ For an explanation, see M. A. P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 60-73.

²⁸ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Commerce and Conflict: Two views of Portuguese Melaka in 1620's," *JSEAS*, 19 (1988), 66.

course, the disseminating point of Islam for the rest of the Indonesian Archipelago."²⁹ On the same point, F. J. Moorhead writes, "Malacca was the headquarters of Islam in South-East Asia, and from here it spread throughout the whole area."³⁰ The Malacca kingdom enjoyed its prosperity for about a century until the coming of the first Western power to the region, the Portuguese.

Indeed, when Malacca was conquered by the Portuguese in 1511, and Islam was repressed, many Muslims and Muslim traders fled from the peninsula and moved to Aceh and other places. In dealing with the harshness of the Portuguese, Vlekke writes:

The fire of the Crusades was strong enough in Albuquerque to make him capture and loot all Moslem vessels he could find between Goa and Malacca. Thus he fought the Moors while he served the Portuguese commercial interest. But it is one of the first examples of those terrible blunders which the Europeans often made when dealing with nations of which they had insufficient knowledge.³¹

Consequently, there resulted a change in the pattern of trade by which Asian merchants preferred to follow the route along the west coast of Sumatra, through the Sunda Straits to the ports of Java.³²

²⁹ Mochtar Lubis, *Indonesia: Land under the Rainbow* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990), 57-58.

³⁰ F. J. Moorhead, *A History of Malaya and Her Neighbours* (Kuala Lumpur: Longmans of Malaysia Ltd., 1965), Vol.1, 146.

³¹ Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 88; see also B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, Bandung: W. Van Hoeve, 1955), part 1, 42.

³² R. C. De longh, "The Economic and Administrative History of Indonesia between 1500 and 1630," in F. H. Van Naerssen and R. C. De longh, *The Economic and Administrative History of Early Indonesia* (Leiden/Koln: E. J. Brill, 1977), 89; Michael Mitchiner, *The World of Islam* (London: Hawkins Publications, 1977), 455.

These circumstances greatly affected the position of Aceh and its development in the sixteenth century. Thanks to its strategic location, Aceh then took over the role of Malacca and became an international trade center in the region. In this regard, Moorhead further illustrates:

"her excellent geographical position at the northern end of the Straits and its nearness to the West commended it to the astute merchants from India and the Red Sea; and from an insignificant agricultural state, it soon became the chief Muslim stronghold in the west of the Archipelago and Malacca's most dangerous enemy."³³

Like Samudra Pasai and Malacca, Aceh then also became not only a center of Islamic learning but a pivot for trade as well. Regarding this, Reid writes:

Foreign traders were restricted to the capital near the mouth of the Atjeh River-Banda Atjeh Dar-es-Salaam. Its importance on the new Muslim trade route through the Sunda rather than the Malacca Straits drew population to it, until Atjeh Besar became one of the most thickly settled areas in Sumatra, with a nineteenth-century population of about 300,000.³⁴

As far as politics was concerned, there is no doubt that Aceh leapt into prominence under Sultān 'Alī Mughayat Shāh³⁵ (1516-1530), the founder of the Islamic Acehnese Empire, who succeeded in rallying anti-Portuguese elements in Aceh and expelled the Portuguese from Pidie in 1521 and Pasai in 1524. With reference to the attack at Pasai, Danver informs us that the Acehnese king with his 15, 000 troops entered the capital of Pasai and besieged the whole country with fire and swords.³⁶ Consequently, "the puppet sultan of Pasai ran away to Malacca

³³ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 1, 192.

³⁴ Reid, *The Contest*, 2.

³⁵ *Bustanu's-Salatin* mentions that he was the first sultān of Aceh Dār al-Salām. See Teuku Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Bab. 2, Fasal 13 (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementrian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 22-23.

³⁶ F. C. Danver, *The Portuguese in India* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966),

and the kingdom was subdivided."³⁷ His victory united the territories not only along the north coast with the Great Aceh (Aceh Besar) including all previous kingdoms such as Pidie, Pasai, and Daya but also the regions in the south under the single umbrella of Aceh. This unification came to be known as the empire of 'Aceh Darussalam'.³⁸

Having succeeded in taking over all former kingdoms, Sultān 'Alī Mughayat Shāh began to organize the government toward strengthening the power of Aceh. His programs, as Zakaria Ahmad illustrates, were formulated into three steps. First was the unification of all small kingdoms in Great Aceh into a strong independent core empire and the extension of its territory to include coastal parts along the Malacca Straits. Second was the struggle with the Portuguese to drive them out from Malacca and to take over in order to fully control Malacca's international trade route. Third was the effort to inspire a spirit of *jihād* among the Acehnese people and foster Islamic teaching among the population.³⁹

Sultān 'Alī Mughayat Shāh was only able to rule the Acehnese empire for about fourteen years and seven months,⁴⁰ and he passed away in August 1530. His death, according to De Barros, quoted by Marsden, was "in consequence of

356.

³⁷ Edwin M. Loeb, *Sumatra its History and People* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990), 218.

³⁸ Teuku Iskandar, *Hikayat Aceh*, trans. by Aboe Bakar (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan, Meuseum Negeri Aceh, 1986), 41.

³⁹ Zakaria Ahmad, *Sekitar Keradjaan Atjeh dalam Tahun 1520-1675*, (Medan: Monora, 1972), 37.

⁴⁰ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 22.

poison administered to him by one of his wives, to revenge the injuries her brother, the chief of Daya, had suffered at his hand".⁴¹ Nevertheless, the actual cause of the death of Sultān 'Alī Mughayat Shāh is still questioned. It is impossible, according to Said, that after having lived together for a such long time and having children from their marriage, a wife would still bear malice towards her husband.⁴²

Although his reign ended while his goals were not yet fully realized, it is believed that under his rule the foundation of the Acehnese empire had been established. As stated above, he was not only successful in ousting the Portuguese from Aceh but also uniting Aceh's core power.⁴³ This period witnessed the consolidation of the military power of Aceh which was already considerable in 1521. They had defeated the Portuguese at sea and removed them from north Sumatra.⁴⁴ Indeed, all this had opened the door for his successors to strengthen the power of Aceh and to continue his programs in the long run.

The continuation of the greatness of the Acehnese empire depended greatly on its greatest sixteenth century ruler, Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh, who later assumed the title of al-Qahhār, and ruled from 1537 to 1568. Under him, Aceh emerged as a strong Islamic empire. Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, for instance, says that after having succeeded in extending his power, Aceh then became well-

⁴¹ William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*, a reprint of the third ed. intro. by John Bastin (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966), 427.

⁴² Said, *Aceh*, 169.

⁴³ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 38.

⁴⁴ Ann Kumar, "Developments in four Societies over the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," in Harry Aveling, ed., *The Development of Indonesian Society* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1980), 11.

known, not only to the Portuguese state but also among the kingdoms throughout Indonesia. He was recognized not only as the organizer of the Acehese government but also the protector of Islam and Islamic teaching in the empire.⁴⁵

Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh continued the policies which had been established by his predecessor, 'Alī Mughayat Shāh. It seems that on coming to power, he began to organize his political, as well as economic, strategies in order to strengthen and consolidate the power of Aceh. In addition and most importantly, a set of programs were formulated in order to drive out the Portuguese from the territory of Aceh; also, wars which were at least partially inspired by religious fervor were conducted against non-Islamic regions and some puppet vassals of the Portuguese surrounding Aceh.

Having been able to organize the internal structure of the empire, Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār began to expand the Acehese political power, occupying a considerable part of West Sumatra. First, in 1539, with the help of the ruler of Barus, who later married 'Alā' al-Dīn's sister, he subjugated Aru, one of the puppet vassals of the Portuguese, and killed its king and expelled the queen of Aru from the throne. The latter then fled to Bintan to seek help from the king of Johor on the Malay Peninsula. The victory made the sultān of Aceh able to control the region. The subjugation of this area was obviously vital for Aceh both politically and economically. In terms of politics, Aru was very advantageous for the Acehese position because its territory was strategically located face to face with

⁴⁵ Raden Hoesein Djajaningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan Tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. by Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Proyek Pengembangan Permesiuman Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982), 21.

Malacca where the Portuguese stronghold was located. This also made it easier for Aceh to attack Batak and Siak.⁴⁶ In terms of the economy, as J. Kathirithamby-Wells points out, the subjugation of Aru was aimed at strengthening and strategically opening Aceh's opportunity to capture Malacca and commercially benefit from it.⁴⁷ Besides, Pinto goes on to add, the capture of Aru benefited Aceh because the sultān "could easily have access to all of the spice trade in that archipelago and thus comply with the terms of the new treaty he had signed with the Grand Turk, through the intermediary of the Pasha of Cairo."⁴⁸

It seems that the Acehenese could not maintain their occupation of Aru. One fact shows that in 1540 the defeated queen of Aru gained support from the king of Johor and finally threw out the Acehnese from the region. From then on, Aru again became the vassal of Johor. This experience was a big setback for the Acehnese at that time since its ambition to control the region had been taken over by the latter. It was this bitter hatred between Aceh and Johor that became more obvious. Not until 1564 did Aceh again attack and subdue Aru and proceed to capture the Johor kingdom, carrying Sultān 'Alā al-Dīn along with his relatives to Aceh where, according to Moorhead, the king finally died or was killed.⁴⁹ Since then, Aceh again ruled Aru and appointed as its ruler 'Abd Allāh, the eldest son of Sultān 'Alā al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 40.

⁴⁷ J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Acehnese Control over West Sumatra up to the Treaty of Painan, 1663," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 45.

⁴⁸ Fernao Mendez Pinto, *The Travel of Mandez Pinto*, ed. and trans. by Rebecca D. Catz (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 46.

⁴⁹ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 1, 198.

Following the second fall of Aru, Aceh began to include Barus and Pariaman as the territories of Aceh. The sultān of Aceh installed his brother-in-law and his son, Sultān Ghory and Sultān Mughal, as the rulers of the two regions. On this point, "the presence of royal representatives in the subordinate regions had, no doubt, helped Aceh in exerting hegemony over these regions".⁵¹ Based on the extent of his subjugation, he entitled himself Sultān of Aceh, Barus, Pedir, Pasai, Daya, and Batta, Prince of the Land of the Two Seas, and of the mines of Minangkabau.⁵² Still, as mentioned earlier, his strategy was not only to spread Islam but also to control the region's economy. The two points were inescapably linked. It is clear, as Kathirithamby claims, that "the basic economic interest which underlay its territorial expansion should not be seen as secondary to the jihad principle."⁵³ Obviously, the enmity between Aceh and the Portuguese was based on two aspects, namely politics and economics. The sultān, for instance, not only engaged in *jihād* wars in order to throw out the Portuguese from Malacca but also endeavored to take over complete control of the trade in that area.

As mentioned before, the conquest of Malacca by the Portuguese had disturbed the political and economic equilibrium in the area. The Portuguese had attempted not only to dominate but also to push out any other power from the region.⁵⁴ One by one the small kingdoms surrounding the area were captured by

⁵⁰ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 22.

⁵¹ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 47.

⁵² Marsden, *Sumatra*, 428.

⁵³ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 45.

⁵⁴ R. O. Winstedt, *A History of Malaya* (Singapore: Marican & Sons, 1962), 275.

force or alliance. In addition, it was obvious that since their complete defeat in the territory of Aceh and after the conquest of their puppet vassals in west Sumatra by Aceh, the Portuguese had begun to organize their power to destroy the position of the Acehnese empire which was "the most dangerous enemy that the Portuguese had in Asia."⁵⁵

Economically, since the fall of Malacca at the hands of the Portuguese, the position of Aceh as a center of trade became more beneficial and developed greatly because most merchants from India, China, Persia, Arabia, and other places moved their trade to Aceh. This made it wealthier and more dangerous than ever for the Portuguese economic interests.⁵⁶ Aceh was now the great barrier for the Portuguese to achieve their goal of dominating and controlling both the politics and the economy, especially in the western part of the archipelago. In the view of the Portuguese, Acehnese political and economic power had to be destroyed completely. This ambition is clearly stated by Jorge de Lamos, the Portuguese viceregal secretary at Goa: "The conquest of Atjeh would give the Spanish-Portuguese Crown the economic resources wherewith to destroy not only 'the Heresiarchs and their followers', but to recover all Christian's territory lost to the Muslims (including Jerusalem), and to overthrow the Ottoman Empire."⁵⁷ It was stated that to this end, the Portuguese had created a special map of the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh and developed a strategy for an invansion.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest and Commerce in Southern Asia, 1500-1750* (London: Variorum Reprint, 1985), 421.

⁵⁶ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 1, 198.

⁵⁷ Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest*, 424.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 422.

It seems that the Portuguese plan to invade Aceh was nothing concrete. We do not get any further information about the continuation of the plan. Instead, Aceh proceeded to attack the Portuguese strongholds in Malacca. It is not impossible that the sultān of Aceh had known the Portuguese's secret plan and, therefore, he did not allow the Portuguese to consolidate their power.

It was noticed that during the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār, Aceh had attacked the Portuguese stronghold in Malacca three times, in 1537, 1547, and in 1568. Of these, the last was the greatest one in which the Acehnese, under the command of the sultān himself, with a fleet of 20,000 men including 400 Ottoman elite troops attacked.⁵⁹ In this giant battle, Aceh was defeated, resulting in 4,000 Acehnese troops killed, including the eldest son of the Sultān, 'Abd Allah, the ruler of Aru.

As far as the economic interest was concerned, both the Portuguese and Acehnese had endeavored to compete mutually not only in this region but spread their rivalry into other areas as well. There is no doubt that during the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār, Acehnese trade had expanded to take part in the traffic in both the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. It has been stated that the involvement of Acehnese trade during the mid-sixteenth century in these two vital areas greatly developed. Boxer, for instance, has pointed out that "the export of Sumatra pepper to the west coast of India and thence to the Red Sea in Gujarati shipping was only temporarily interrupted by the Portuguese conquest and occupation of Malacca."⁶⁰ Besides, beginning from 1540 up to the end of the

⁵⁹ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 1, 98.

⁶⁰ Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest*, 416.

century, much more pepper was exported by the Acehnese to Jedda, instead of being exported by the Portuguese to Lisbon. This had reduced pepper's value everywhere because of the surplus of pepper and other spices in Jedda. Consequently, this greatly affected the Portuguese economic development whose intention was to "set the prices on the market themselves as Egypt and the Italians before them had done."⁶¹

Because of this, the Portuguese endeavored to destroy Acehnese international trade by intercepting Acehnese ships sailing to the Red Sea. However, their efforts did not affect Acehnese shipping substantially. This can be linked to the fact that between the years 1560 and 1567, ships from Aceh still carried large amounts of their pepper and other goods through the Red Sea. In 1566, for instance, it was reported that "five ships reached Jidda from Atjeh, together with three vessels from Batalalao, bringing a total of some 24,000 cantara of pepper."⁶²

Another development in the Acehnese empire during the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār was that, under him, Aceh began to build close ties with the Muslim kingdoms throughout Indonesia as well as some great Islamic states such as the Mughal, Persia and Ottoman empires. All these efforts were especially aimed at expelling the Portuguese from Malacca. It was witnessed that "in Acheh's 1568 attack on Malacca, a force of 400 Turks was involved, as well as help from Calicut and Jepara and in the years 1570-71 Bijapur (in Deccan), Calicut

⁶¹ Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part 1, 41.

⁶² Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest*, 419.

and Aceh launched a concerted offensive against the Portuguese."⁶³

In dealing with the particular case of the Acehnese connection with the Ottoman Empire, Reid informs us that the political link between these two countries began in the years 1537-1538,⁶⁴ in order to obtain weapons and skilled men.⁶⁵ With the benevolence of the Ottoman Empire, Aceh built up a strong navy and became the scourge of the Portuguese in Malacca. Symbols of this cooperation are preserved in Aceh in the form of the great cannon *Lada Secupak* used by the Sultān to fend off his palace, and by the red Acehnese flag, which was based on the Ottoman standard.⁶⁶ The help of the Ottoman Empire was not only military in nature but also political, in that Aceh was officially recognized as a part of the Islamic Caliphate. Therefore, the position of Aceh in the sixteenth century was internationally recognized in the Islamic world.⁶⁷ It is probably for this reason that some historians came to conclusion that Aceh was included as one of the leading Muslim states in the world. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, for instance, argues that "in any case, the fact is that in the sixteenth century the Muslim World was once again powerful, wealthy, and touched with splendor. Whatever view he might

⁶³ Kumar, "Developments," 12.

⁶⁴ Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 402-411.

⁶⁵ Barbara Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," in John Maxwell ed., *The Study of Politics in Southeast Asia* (Australia: Monash University Press, 1982), 4.

⁶⁶ Reid, *The Contests*, 3; Said, *Aceh*, 102; Anas Mahmud, "Turun Naiknya Peranan Kerajaan Aceh Darussalam di Pesisir Timur Pulau Sumatra" in A. Hasjmy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989), 293; See also De longh, "The Economic," 88; Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 199.

⁶⁷ Mahmud, "Turun Naiknya," 292-293.

take of it, the Muslim of this period -in Marocco, Istanbul, Isfahan, Agra, Acheli- was participant in a history expansive and successful."⁶⁸

Following the death of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhār, his son Sultān Husein who then assumed the title of Sultān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh came to the throne.⁶⁹ However, it was under his reign that there existed a certain hostility among the heirs in the Acehese sultanate. It is noticed that his brothers Sultān Ghory and Sultān Mughal who were the representative rulers at Aru and Pariaman came to the capital of Aceh demanding to share power in the sultanate. In this struggle for power, the two last sultāns, who were helped by Batak's people in the fight against Sultān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh, were defeated which resulted in Sultān Mughal's death, while Sultān Ghory withdrew to his station in Aru. Sultān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh's reign lasted until 1579.⁷⁰

On the death of Sultān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh the Acehese sultanate experienced political turmoils. Five rulers were successively overthrown in ten years. This instability ended when the throne was taken over by Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Mukammil in 1589. Reid notes that this sultān was from the line of Daral Kamal's dynasty which ruled the valley of Aceh before it was unified.⁷¹ It is under the reign of this sultān that a remarkable development again took place in political

⁶⁸ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 38.

⁶⁹ Iskandar, *Hikayat Aceh*, 46; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 24-25.

⁷⁰ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 46; Said, *Aceh*, 205.

⁷¹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 48.

as well as economic spheres in the Acehese sultanate.⁷²

⁷² For a complete discussion on this matter see Said, *Aceh*, 208-210; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 30-32; Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 48-49; Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme dan Imperialisme di Daerah Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1982/1983), 16.

CHAPTER TWO

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ACEH

A. Internal Developments

There is little disagreement on the part of both foreign and domestic observers of the time that the Acehese empire enjoyed its golden age under Sultān Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). Under this greatest and most outstanding of Acehese rulers, there was much development in social, economic, political, and religious spheres. During that time, as Leigh states, the city of Aceh even rivalled some cities in Europe in social and physical expansion and social institutions.¹ Sultān Iskandar Muda was successful in developing the capital of Aceh as a cosmopolitan city in the region. This was marked by frequent visits by various nationalities, such as Arabs, Indians, Turks, Chinese and Europeans, who came to Aceh during that time. In this regard, Francois Pyrard, a French traveler who came to Aceh during this time, wrote about his impressions. "All people in the Indies or on the other side of the Cape of Good Hope, when they would go to Sumatra, merely say they are going to Acheen; for the city and port has acquired all the name and reputation of the island."² It should also be noted that "the sultan was a disseminator as well as protector of Islam, and under him Aceh was the

¹ Barbara Leigh, "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences," in John Maxwell, ed., *The Study of Politics in Southeast Asia* (Australia: Monash University Press, 1982), 4.

² Gray Albert, trans. and ed., *The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Maluccas and Brazil* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1887), 159-160.

strongest Islamic power in the western part of the Indonesian Archipelago in the early seventeenth century."³ Reid states that there were three main factors that brought about this development, namely a particularly skilled ruler, commercial expansion, and mastery of artillery.⁴

1. Politics and State Structure

Soon after coming to power, Sultān Iskandar Muda re-organized the civil government, giving it its basic design. He divided the Acehnese territory into three levels. First level, the lowest level, was *gampong* (village), led by a gampong leader, *Keuchik* and *Teungku Meunasah* (Islamic leader). This administration was also helped by *tuha puet* (four qualified persons). The second level was the *Mukim* (district) which was a federation of several *gampongs* (of at least eight *gampongs*). This federation was led by *Imeum Mukim* and *Qadhi Mukim*. The third level was called *nanggroe* (states) which were led by an *uleebalang* and *nanggroe qadhi*.⁵ In this regard, Reid states that "the uleebalang (cf. Malay Hulubalang = war leader) were probably originally the foremost servants of the

³ A. K. Das Gupta, "Iskandar Muda and Europeans," in A. Hasjmy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pt. almaarif, 1989), 45.

⁴ Anthony Reid, "Trade and the Problem of Royal Power in Aceh. Three Stages: c. 1550-1700," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. MBRAS, (1979), 45.

⁵ A. Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975), 74-75; Rusdi Sufi, "Sultan Iskandar Muda," in *Dari Sini Ia Bersemi* (Banda Aceh: Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1981), 71; Zakaria Ahmad, *Sekitar Keradjaan Atjeh dalam Tahun 1520-1675* (Medan: Monora, 1972), 83-103; A. Mukti Ali, *An Introduction to the Government of Aceh's Sultanate* (Jogjakarta: Nida, 1970), 12.

sultan, rewarded by him with a number Mukims in federal tenure."⁶ This pattern, he goes on to add, is evident both in Atjeh Besar and in the important subordinate states.⁷

It seems that the main purpose of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda in creating these administrative divisions was not only to coordinate politics and economics but was also directed towards military motives.⁸ In terms of politics, by installing persons loyal to him in the top positions of the state government, the Sulṭān was able to control all Acehese political power. In this way, it was easier for him to watch the opposition movement which endangered his position or the internal security of the Acehese empire. During this time, as Reid illustrates, "such new Orang Kayas were kept under very tight control. According to Beaulieu each was obliged to keep watch, unarmed, in the palace every third night, so that if there was an anti-royal plot at any time at least one-third of the nobility would be in the king's hands."⁹

Furthermore, during the reign of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda, we do not find any information about opposition movements which challenged his authority. This is an indication that under this greatest of the Acehese Sulṭāns, the political atmosphere was stable and safe. Consequently, he was very successful in developing the Acehese empire politically, economically, socially, and religiously.

⁶ Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Sufi, "Sultan Iskandar Muda," 97.

⁹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 50.

The creation of the administrative divisions also had economic reasons. This type of administration enabled the Sultān to collect duties and tributes from his people through the *Uleebalangs* on a simpler and sounder basis.¹⁰ In addition, it has been noticed that "under this mightiest of Acehnese sultans, an absolutist strategy appears to have been conducted deliberately with astonishing success."¹¹ In this connection, Reid, quoting De Beaulieu, writes:

This king has had great good fortune and no setbacks; all his plans have succeeded; indeed he is so fortunate... that many take him for a great sorcerer. For my part I take him to be a man of great judgment, who undertakes nothing lightly or out of season... . All his designs begin with measures which appear incomprehensible until they have been carried to execution... he takes advice of no one... nor discusses with them.¹²

It should come as no surprise that another important function of the division of administration into *mukims* and *uleebalangships* was to provide troops at any time that the sultān called for them. This is clear from the travel account of Beaulieu, as quoted by Lombard in his book *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au Temps d'Iskandar Muda 1607-1636*. Beaulieu writes

"On fait estat que d'Achen et des lieux adjacents dans la vallée, peuvent sortir 40 mille hommes. Quand le Roy entreprend quelque guerre il ne luy couste rien, tous ses sujets, sans en exempter aucun, estans obligez de marcher à son premier mandement, à leurs dépens, et de porter de quoi vivre pour 3 mois."¹³

Furthermore, to run daily government affairs, in the Acehnese core part, Banda Aceh which was known as Great Aceh (*Aceh Besar*), and which was the

¹⁰ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 97.

¹¹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 49.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Denys Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au Temps d'Iskandar Muda 1607-1636* (Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extrême-Orient, 1967), 90.

political center of the empire, Sultān Iskandar Muda formed central and district governments. No doubt this was an effort of the sultān to consolidate the internal power of the empire. First, in the central government, Sultān Iskandar Muda sat as the highest leader under whom there were several state ministers. It was noticed that under him were a prime minister, state ministers, great judge, military leader, and treasurer.¹⁴ Second, as mentioned above, Sultān Iskandar Muda also divided districts into the so called *mukims* and *uleebalangships*.¹⁵ Each of these was led by an aristocratic person, *uleebalang*¹⁶ confirmed by the sultān. It is stated that to confirm these chieftains the sultān gave a *sarakata* (state's declaration) which was stamped with the state seal called *cap sikuereueng* ("the nine-fold seal of the sultan.")¹⁷ It seems that by giving this state seal the sultān was not only aiming at strengthening his position but also preventing the heads of districts from doing bad deeds. In this way too, the *uleebalangs* were subject to the central authority of the sultān as the head of the empire, because with the state seal, officially they were part of the structure of the empire. This was one of the most essential factors which resulted in maintaining the strong and effective central authority of the sultān because, at that time, most political powers supported the status quo offered by the sultān and the *uleebalangs* were the right hands of the sultān.

¹⁴ For a complete explanation on this, see Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 91-92.

¹⁵ Reid, *The Contest*, 3.

¹⁶ For a complete explanation on this matter, see Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 77.

¹⁷ Th. W. Juynboll and P. Voorhoeve, "Atjeh," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. by H. A. R. Gibb et al. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), Vol. 1, 741; see also Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 105.

2. Religion, Culture and Education

Islam, which was the official religion in the Acehese empire, was also greatly developed and flourishing as the empire grew steadily in power and wealth during its golden age. *Bustanu's-Salatin* provides us with information that Sultān Iskandar Muda was a devoted Muslim who was very active in developing Islam in the empire. He built many mosques and the biggest of these was the so-called *Bait al-Rahmān*.¹⁸ At this time Aceh was not only a center of Islamic learning which was so famous both in the Indonesian Archipelago in particular, and Southeast Asia in general,¹⁹ but also a gateway to Mecca for Southeast Asia,²⁰ where the Muslims were bound before departing to the holy land. It was probably due to this role that Aceh then assumed the title of *Serambi Mekkah*, the Verandah of Mecca.

It is noticed that two great Acehese '*ulamā*' lived during this period, namely, Shaikh Hamzah Fanshurī and Shaikh Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatranī.²¹ Both successively played important roles in the empire as writers and religious teachers. In addition, both are credited with the introduction of the doctrine of Wujūdiyya there. In dealing with Shaikh Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatranī, Iskandar

¹⁸ Teuku Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Bab. 2, Fasal 13 (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 184; Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 79.

¹⁹ J. A. Zainu'ddin, *A Short History of Indonesia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 82.

²⁰ Leigh, "Design Motifs," 3.

²¹ For more discussion on these '*ulamā*' see A. H. Johns, "Muslim Mystics and Historical Writing," in D. G. E. Hall, ed., *Historians of South East Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 37-49; See also Richard Winstedt, *The Malay A Cultural History* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1953), 38-39.

states that "Shams al-Dīn was a great theologian greatly respected in Sufism and it is believed that the Sultān (Iskandar Muda) himself was his disciple."²² Finally, it is important to notice that the fame of both '*ulamā*' can be proven by their monumental works on Sufism, theology and poems which are still studied by scholars today.²³

At this center of Islamic learning, educational institutions existed at all levels: *meunasah* (lowest level), *rangrang*²⁴ and *balee* (middle level), and *dayah* (advanced level).²⁵ Most of the teachers in charge of these were not merely from the local '*ulamā*' but from various Muslim countries as well. Many '*ulamā*' came from Arabia, Persia, Anatolia and India, such as Sheikh Idrus Bayan of Baghdad, Abu al-Khayar ibn Hajar and Muhammad Yamani of Mecca, and Muhammad Jailani ibn Husainy of Gujarat.²⁶

²² Teuku Iskandar, *Hikayat Aceh*, trans. by Aboe Bakar (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan, Meuseum Negeri Aceh, 1986), 50.

²³ See Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, "*Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyyah of 17th Century Aceh*," *MBRAS* 3 (1966); G. W. J. Drewes and L. F. Brakel, eds. *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri* (Dordrecht-Holland/Cinnaminson-U.S.A: Foris Publication, 1986); see also Al Yasa Abubakar, "Abdurra'uf Syiah Kuala: Riwayat Hidup dan Warisan Ilmiah," in Ibrahim Husein, ed., *Kajian Islam, Jurnal Pusat Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam* (February, 1991), Vol. 1, 12-24.

²⁴ See James T. Siegel, "Acehnese Religion," in *The Eyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade, ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), Vol. 1, 24.

²⁵ For further discussion on this see Baihaqi A. K. "Ulama dan Madrasah Aceh," in Taufik Abdullah, ed., *Agama dan Perubahan Sosial* (Jakarta: C.V. Rajawali, 1983), 113, 130-133, 158-160.

²⁶ Haji Abdullah Ishak, *Islam di Nusantara (Khususnya di Tanah Melayu)* (Malaysia: al-Rahmaniah, 1990), 117.

Sultān Iskandar Muda also promulgated 'Adat Makuta Alam',²⁷ the famous governmental legislated laws which became the basic laws in the Acehese empire. In this regards, K. F. H. Van Langen explains that:

Aan Sultan Iskander Moeda, bij Atjehers meer bekend onder den naam van *Makota Alam*, wordt ook de samenstelling van een soort van wetboek of liever nog *grondwet* toegeschreven bekend onder den naam van *Adat Makota Alam*, voorschriften bevattende omtrent de bestuursregeling in het Atjehsche rijk.²⁸

Clearly, it contains a number of important state stipulations such as the principle of the state, sources of law and governmental organizations, the authority of the sultān and state ministers, the basic regulation for external affairs, and the rights of the citizen.²⁹

The period of this golden era is also marked by the evidence of famous buildings like '*Pinto Khop*' and '*Kota Gunongan*'. These two buildings, which were so unique and astonishing, were artistic achievements of the Acehese empire. They remain as historical sites to this day. These very impressive buildings have drawn the attention of some well known writers such as L. F. Brakel³⁰ and Denys

²⁷ Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan: Pt. Percetakan dan Penerbitan Waspada, 1981), 303; see also Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda*, 70-76; Eric Eugene Morrice, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia," Ph.D. Thesis (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1983), 23.

²⁸ K. F. H. Van Langen, *De Inrichting van Het Atjehsche Staatsbestuur order Het Sultanaat* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1888), 13.

²⁹ For a complete explanation of this matter see A. Hasjmy, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1990), 326-328.

³⁰ See L. F. Brakel, "State and Statecraft in 17th Century Aceh," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. MBRAS, (1979), 61-62.

Lombard.³¹ However, it is important to note that historians and experts still dispute the date of their foundation as well as the meaning of these structures, especially the *gunongan*.³²

3. The Military

The Acehese empire under Sulṭān Iskandar Muda was a strong military power which was unrivalled at that time in the western part of the Indonesian Archipelago. This factor guaranteed the sovereignty of Aceh from all threats, both internal and external. Iskandar Muda realized that a large state like Aceh could not be maintained without proper military equipment and qualified soldiers. Moreover, the political atmosphere in the Indonesian Archipelago in general and Malacca Straits in particular was very uncertain, mainly due to the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, both attempting to control the political as well as the economic activities in the region.³³

As has been stated before, in order to build its armed forces, Aceh had made close relations with some Islamic states, particularly the Ottoman Empire. It was this close link which resulted in a great advantage for Aceh, particularly in the military development in which the Acehese troops were successful in gaining technological help for making war equipment from the Ottoman experts who came

³¹ See Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 39, 127-140.

³² For an explanation of this matter see Robert Wessing, "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise," *Archipel*, 35 (1988), 156-194.

³³ S. Arasaratman, "Monopoly and Free Trade in Dutch-Asian Commercial Policy: Debate and Controversy within V.O.C.," *JEAS*, 4 (1973), 1-2.

to Aceh at that time.

It was probably due to the above fact that Aceh successfully acquired Turkish technology with the result that they were able to develop their own war equipment such as artillery. "In short, the army appears to have been well equipped and to have had a good command of tactics."³⁴ This is also related in a Portuguese source that says that "the enemy were so industrious in building their bulwarks that it was said that not even the Romans could have made such works stronger or more quickly."³⁵ Consequently, it is believed that under Sultān Iskandar Muda, Aceh became one of the most powerful military forces in the Indonesian archipelago. Accordingly, De longh recognizes that "in military technology Atjeh was much more advanced than the Javanese kingdoms and military tactics and strategy were clearly of Turkish origin."³⁶

As far as the military power was concerned, the most reliable information comes from Augustin De Beaulieu, who anchored in Aceh on January 30, 1621 when Aceh was ruled by Sultān Iskandar Muda.³⁷ From De Beaulieu we know that

³⁴ Ann Kumar, "Developments in Four Societies over the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," in Harry Aveling, ed., *The Development of Indonesian Society* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1980), 15.

³⁵ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest and Commerce in Southern Asia 1500-1750* (London: Variorum Reprint, 1985), 111-112.

³⁶ R. C. De longh, "The Economic and Administrative History of Indonesia between 1500 and 1630," in F. H. Naerssen and R. C. De longh, *The Economic and Administrative History of Early Indonesia* (Leiden/Koln: E.J. Brill, 1977), 88.

³⁷ Said, *Aceh*, 307; Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan Tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. by Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Proyek Pengembangan Permeuseum Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982), 31.

Aceh was the most powerful kingdom in comparison with all her neighbors in naval power: "C'est le royaume le plus fort de ses voisins par mer."³⁸ In addition, according to De Beaulieu as quoted by Lombard, in the three main fortresses of Aceh, Daya and Pidie, there lay three hundred large galleys which were ready to sail. De Beaulieu was very impressed because one third of the galleys were tremendously large and unrivalled by those built in the Christian world. "Y en a le tiers qui sont sans comparaison plus grande que pas une de celles que l'on bastit en chrestiente."³⁹

Information about the same thing is also derived from Peter Mundy supporting our understanding of the naval power of Aceh. "Galleys and frigates which belonged to the sultan was numbered 200. If not in use, those galleys and frigates were taken out of water and covered with leaves in order to protect them from the sun and rain."⁴⁰

Another reliable datum which supports our study of Acehnese military power, particularly its naval force, can be seen in the fact that in 1629, when Aceh attacked the Portuguese in Malacca, Aceh sent a strong combat fleet consisting of 236 warships, including 38 galleys, much larger than those of the Portuguese, together with 19,300 troops.⁴¹ In this giant and bloody battle, the Acehnese were equipped with "the finest fleet that had ever been seen in Asia, full of great and

³⁸ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 85.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 82.

⁴¹ Boxer, *Portuguese Conquest*, 110; Said, *Aceh*, 293.

small cannons, as well as much booty",⁴² and led by a famous flagship, the so-called 'Terror of the World'. In dealing with the last ship, Lombard, quoting Faria Y, gives us more information by stating:

Dans sa longueur--qui avait bien 400 palmes (env. 100 mètres) --se dressaient à distances appropriées trois mâts (se levantavan aproporcionadas distancias tres arboles): elle contenait plus de 100 pièces d'artillerie, la plupart pesant de nombreuses livres et une même, plus de deux arrobes (mas de dos arrobas). Celle-ci était de tambac, métal merveilleux, et pouvait valoir environ 7000 ducats; cette autre était inestimable par l'extrême perfection de son travail. Non, ce n'est pas en vain qu'on donna à ce vaisseau ce nom de "Terreur du monde." Quelle grandeur et quelle force! Quelle beauté et quelle richesse! Nos yeux, bien qu'usés à force de s'étonner de choses belles, s'étonnèrent tous de celle-là.⁴³

From this explanation it is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that during its golden age, particularly during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Muda, Aceh had appeared as one of the most powerful forces in the Indonesian Archipelago in the seventeenth century. This has perhaps led De Beaulieu to come to the conclusion that the Acehnese were the best soldiers in the Indonesian archipelago.⁴⁴

B. External Affairs

No doubt Aceh was very strategically located in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago. As a maritime state, however, it much depended on its trade. Thus Sultān Iskandar Muda firmly believed that Aceh's economy had to expand internationally and that it had to be an essential trading center in the region. Consequently he made every attempt to control the trade and shipping in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula.

⁴² Boxer, *Portuguese Conquest*, 113.

⁴³ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 87.

⁴⁴ A. Hasjmy, *Iskandar Muda*, 94.

1. Expansions and Trade

Having succeeded in strengthening his power internally, Iskandar Muda, with his strong navy took action to establish Aceh's territorial claims and to expand his control to include many of the coastal kingdoms of Sumatra and Malaya. As in the case of his predecessors, he was motivated not by religious fervor alone but also by economic considerations.⁴⁵ In fact it appears that, unlike his predecessors, his territorial expansion at this time depended more on economic motives than religious ones. In other words, during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Muda, the economic interests seem to have prevailed over the principle of *jihād*. Several factors point to this conclusion. First, all kingdoms, both in Sumatra and the Aceh-conquered Malay peninsula, were by that time already Muslim.⁴⁶ Thus, for Iskandar Muda, *jihād* could not have been a consideration. The most important thing as far as he was concerned, was that the newly conquered states could bring many commercial advantages to the Acehnese empire.⁴⁷ Second, in most cases, the defeated sultāns of the conquered regions were carried off to Aceh and relatives, representing the Acehnese sultān were stationed as vassals of Aceh.⁴⁸ The strategy behind this move, according to Tarling, was to control and draw revenue from local trade.⁴⁹ Third, each conquered region was forced to accept the

⁴⁵ R. C. De longh, "The Economic," 89.

⁴⁶ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 100.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁴⁸ D. K. Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern of the Malay Politics, 1629-c. 1665," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 429.

⁴⁹ Nicholas Tarling, "Sumatra and the Archipelago 1824-1857," *JMBRAS*, 179

economic system offered by the sultān.⁵⁰ On the basis of the existing evidence, therefore, it can be argued that Aceh's expansion under the reign of Sultān Iskandar Muda was based more on economic than on religious motives.

Five years after coming to power, Sultān Iskandar began to expand the territory of Aceh. *Bustanu's-Salatin* informs us that Sultān Iskandar Muda conquered Deli in 1612, Johor in 1613, Bintan in 1614, Pahang in 1618, Kedah in 1619, Perak in 1620, and Nias in 1624.⁵¹ Meanwhile, Sufi, as he quoted from Beaulieu, goes on to state that Aceh's territory was also extended to include parts of the west coast of Sumatra such as Pariaman, Tiku, Salida, Barus, Labo, Batanghari, passaman and Padang.⁵² Accordingly, this expansion transformed Aceh into a great empire.⁵³

As far as the economic system was concerned, Sultān Iskandar Muda practiced a monopoly in the trade of valuable commodities within Acehnese-controlled regions. All production of important items such as pepper, gold and tin, was under the control of the sultān himself through his administrators. After conquering the kingdoms of Perak, Pahang and Kedah, for instance, Iskandar Muda took control of the main centers of production on the Malay peninsula.⁵⁴

(1957), 22.

⁵⁰ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 92.

⁵¹ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 23; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 47-49; J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Achehnese Control over West Sumatra up to the Treaty of Painan, 1663," *JSEAH* 10 (1969), 458.

⁵² Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 87; see also Marsden, *Sumatra*, 439.

⁵³ Gupta, "Iskandar Muda," 45.

⁵⁴ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 459.

Meanwhile, in order to gain the monopoly over the pepper trade, with high demand by foreign merchants, Iskandar Muda subdued the rich pepper producing regions in west Sumatra such as Tiku, Indrapura, Natal and Pariaman.⁵⁵ As a result, on the whole, pepper production came to be dominated by Aceh. This enabled the sultān to control production and to keep the price at high levels.

As he carried out his monopolistic strategy, Iskandar Muda followed two different methods, centralization and destruction. First, Iskandar Muda took steps to centralize the trade in the major products, especially of pepper, in the main port of Aceh's capital, Banda Aceh Darussaia. This strategy represented an attempt by the sultān to force the foreign traders to come to terms with him in his capital. It has been estimated that the amount of pepper produced each year was around 50,000 sacks.⁵⁶

In the capital of Aceh the sultān sold pepper to foreign merchants. Generally, as Lombard states, the sultān himself controlled the pepper for sale within his territory and insisted on different prices for Muslims and Christians.⁵⁷ In addition, Muslim and Indian traders were given the first opportunity to buy before the Europeans.⁵⁸ Consequently, European merchants became extremely frustrated with the policies of the sultān⁵⁹ but as Gupta explains, "they were forced to accept

⁵⁵ Anas Mahmud, "Turun Naiknya Peranan Kerajaan Aceh Darussalam di Pesisir Timur Pulau Sumatra," in A. Hasjmy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989), 296.

⁵⁶ J. C. Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society* (Bandung: Sumur Bandung, 1957), 171.

⁵⁷ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 103.

⁵⁸ Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 110.

the terms the sultan offered."⁶⁰

The second strategy pursued by Sultān Iskandar Muda was to subjugate the rich pepper-producing kingdoms and to destroy their pepper plantations. This was aimed at consolidating the Acehese pepper monopoly and eliminating the competition of rivals. This can be seen by the fact that after the subjugation of Johor in 1613 and the raid on the Kedah kingdom in the Malay peninsula in 1619, he destroyed their pepper plantations entirely.⁶¹ While earlier the latter kingdom had been the main rival of the Acehese pepper monopoly, now the trade of this important item was in his hands, centered in the capital of Aceh.⁶²

Although Iskandar Muda endeavored to control all pepper in the remoter Acehese possessions, especially on the west coast of Sumatra, he was not entirely successful.⁶³ It was due to the swerves practiced by his representatives and the local merchants, who conducted clandestine trade with foreigners. In addition, "to evade the monopoly and trade regulations at Kota Raja the European traders resorted to clandestine trade direct with the west coast."⁶⁴ Their secret trading cost Iskandar Muda's monopoly "large quantities of pepper every year."⁶⁵ According to Sufi, one factor that appears to have given rise to this clandestine

⁵⁹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 49.

⁶⁰ Gupta, "Iskandar Muda," 47.

⁶¹ R.O. Winstedt, *A History of Malaya* (Singapore: Marican & Sons, 1962), 275.

⁶² Said, *Aceh*, 288.

⁶³ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 95.

⁶⁴ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 461.

⁶⁵ Gupta, "Iskandar Muda," 47.

trade was the sultān's monopolistic policy itself. "This policy gave too many advantages to Aceh and inflicted losses upon the local communities."⁶⁶

To cope with such economic problems, which worked against his economic policies, Iskandar Muda soon took several steps. First, he prohibited the foreign traders from conducting direct trade on the west coast of Sumatra⁶⁷ and, as Kathirithamby relates, imposed strict limitations on their trade⁶⁸ in which all traders should get permission and license from the sultān.⁶⁹ Secondly, Iskandar Muda erected fortresses to control trade by merchants in surrounding areas, particularly in Tiku which was the main center of production.⁷⁰ Third, he installed new trade-oriented *panglimas* of Acehnese origin to replace the former ones, especially in the vital ports of production and export such as Tiku, Pariaman, Salida and Indrapura.⁷¹ Consequently, this institution of *panglimas*, as De longh illustrates, successfully prevented foreign merchants from dealing with the local producers, with the result that clandestine commercial activity in the region could be overcome.⁷² From a different perspective, furthermore, this strategy had at least two positive effects, in addition to those stated above, for the Acehnese economy.

⁶⁶ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 95.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 463.

⁶⁹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 49.

⁷⁰ B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, Bandung: W. Van Hoeve 1955), part 1, 52.

⁷¹ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 96; Said, *Aceh*, 167; Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 460.

⁷² De longh, "The Economic," 89.

Firstly, this meant that Acehese traders resumed their role in the transportation and trading of pepper, bringing them income and employment that had been lost to foreign competitors. Secondly, all pepper transactions could be carried out directly through the Acehese *panglimas*, which were more centrally controlled.

2. Aceh and the European Powers

When Iskandar Muda came to power, there were three European powers competing in Southeast Asia: the Portuguese, the British and the Dutch. The French were to arrive later. During his reign, Aceh was powerful enough to deal with these powers. This can be seen from the fact that for more than two decades Sulṭān Iskandar Muda withstood the pressure from European powers to obtain for political and economic concessions and thus preserved the Acehese empire from colonial exploitation.⁷³ From this point of view, "Aceh was one of the regions in the Indonesian archipelago which remained independent even towards the end of the century."⁷⁴

Iskandar Muda's commercial policy and his overall attitude towards the European powers, in this case the European trading companies, provides material for an interesting study. He was able to take advantage of the commercial rivalry between the British and the Dutch.

Unlike his predecessors, on coming to power, Iskandar Muda drove out both

⁷³ Kathirithamby, "Acehese Control," 464.

⁷⁴ Zainu'ddin, *A Short History*, 85.

the British and Dutch altogether.⁷⁵ He turned down proposals to prolong the customs exemptions for the British consented to in 1602 by his predecessor Sultān 'Alā al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh. He also broke the agreement of exclusive trade made with the Dutch in 1607 by his predecessor, Sultān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh. He then announced that both the British and Dutch had to secure licenses to trade in Aceh.⁷⁶ In this case, Gupta writes, "the sultan practiced a policy of minor concessions and stern control."⁷⁷ At any rate, it was difficult to gain profitable transactions from Sultān Iskandar Muda who vigilantly monitored the commercial market.⁷⁸

However, the refusal to renew the commercial agreements with both the Dutch and British should not imply that Iskandar Muda was blind to the many advantages inherent in the presence of European traders in Aceh. Among others, he might have seen them as the key to his strategy of maintaining high prices, which could be achieved by playing off one power against another. This can be seen in his decision half way through his reign to re-establish his relations with the British and to cut off his cooperation with the Dutch. This will be analyzed in more detail in the next section.

Apart from that, however, the Europeans were allowed to trade at Aceh and its outlying possessions after obtaining the sultān's permission and after submitting to other conditions determined by the sultān. Consequently, before they could

⁷⁵ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 49.

⁷⁶ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 461.

⁷⁷ Gupta, "Iskandar Muda," 47.

⁷⁸ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 461.

pursue their trade in any other port in the Acehnese outlying possessions the European traders had to come to terms with the sultān in his capital.⁷⁹

Iskandar Muda's firm attitude towards the European powers seems to have been based on his observation of the experiences of various Indonesian kingdoms in the archipelago. The coming of the European powers into the arena and their interests tended to disturb the equilibrium of politics and economics in Indonesia. After the conquest of Malacca, for instance, the Portuguese had attempted to dominate trade and to direct it through Malacca,⁸⁰ pushing away all other powers both politically and economically.⁸¹ Similarly, when the Dutch came into contact with the rulers of Mataram, Central Java, they were able to put pressure on the indigenous rulers of that region and exploit their products for the Dutch's own sake.⁸² It was probably due to this, then, that Sultān Iskandar Muda took the decision not to give special concessions to the foreign powers at that time.

a. Aceh and the British

The second British expedition to come to Aceh arrived in June, 1613. This was led by Captain Thomas Best with his two ships *Dragon* and *Hosiander*.⁸³ This second expedition was a follow-up to the first British expedition in June, 1602,

⁷⁹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 49.

⁸⁰ S. Arasaratman, "Some Notes on the Dutch in Malacca and the Indo-Malayan Trade 1641-1670," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 480.

⁸¹ Winstedt, *A History*, 118; Said, *Aceh*, 284.

⁸² Zainu'ddin, *A Short History*, 138.

⁸³ C. A. Gibson Hill, "On the Alleged Death of Sultan Ala'u'd-din of Johor at Aceh in 1613," *JMBRAS*, 29 (1956), 27; Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 120; See also Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 89.

which had been led by Sir James Lancaster, who carried with him a letter from Queen Elizabeth.⁸⁴ Aceh was then under the reign of Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh, who subsequently granted permission for the British company to trade in Aceh and its outlying possessions. However, as has been depicted in the previous paragraphs, when Iskandar Muda became the sultān, he revoked this agreement which resulted in cutting off this commercial relation. In 1613 the British company sought to re-open their official commercial relations, and to this end King James I sent Captain Thomas Best accompanied with an official letter requesting permission to trade in the Acehnese ports.⁸⁵ According to Said, the arrival of this second expedition was officially welcomed by Sultān Iskandar Muda, who presented a glorious reception to Thomas Best and his crew.⁸⁶ As a result of this re-opening of relations, the sultān gave special permission to the British company to trade in prominent Acehnese ports in West Sumatra such as Pariaman, Tiku and Barus.⁸⁷

In addition, the sultān also bestowed upon Captain Thomas Best the status of an Acehnese nobleman with the title of Orang Kaya Puteh.⁸⁸ "This honor was bestowed upon Thomas Best because of his having handed over to the Sultān a

⁸⁴ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 121; Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1966), 98; See also C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Raffles, Aceh and the Order of the Golden Sword," *JMBRAS*, 29 (1956), 6; Marsden, *Sumatra*, 432, 436.

⁸⁵ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 439; See also Harrison, *South-East Asia*, 89.

⁸⁶ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 89; Said, *Aceh*, 276.

⁸⁷ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 462; Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 89.

⁸⁸ Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 121; Marsden, *Sumatra*, 439.

Portuguese ship and her crew which he had captured in the Acehnese sea."⁸⁹

Thomas Best remained in Aceh for several months and in 1614 left for Britain, taking with him Iskandar Muda's reply and a token for King James I.⁹⁰ According to Sufi, as quoted from Schrieke, it was estimated that as a result of their transactions on this visit, the British company "was able to carry away 1,500 bahars of pepper or 255, 000 kg."⁹¹ The success of this re-opening of relations resulted in the continuation of commercial relations between Aceh and Britain in the following years. This was marked by the arrival of other British expeditions such as that of 1615 led by Captain Downton and another in 1637 led by Peter Mundy.⁹²

From the above, we can draw the conclusion that there was a change in Sultān Iskandar Muda's attitude toward the British resulting in his agreement to re-establish relations between their two countries. This marked a new era in Acehnese overseas politics during Sultān Iskandar Muda's reign. It is not easy to determine all the factors behind the sultān's decision to pursue this policy. However, it is not unlikely that it represented a tactic on the part of the sultān to secure international support and help in achieving his foreign policy goals. These consisted mainly of his intention to destroy his sworn enemy, the Portuguese of Malacca. Hence, the sultān agreed to re-establish his relations with the British in

⁸⁹ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 90; see also Said, *Aceh*, 277; See also Gibson-Hill, "Raffles, Acheh," 6.

⁹⁰ Said, *Aceh*, 277.

⁹¹ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 90. Bahar is a measure of weight equivalent to about 180 kilograms.

⁹² Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 122.

the hope that they would side with Aceh when he attacked the Portuguese.

The re-entry of the British into the Acehnese trading networks apparently led to the rapid development of the Acehnese economy through their regular and organized trade, which in turn, indirectly affected the trading activities of Portuguese Malacca.

b. Aceh and the Dutch

The commercial relationship between Aceh and the Dutch no longer ran as smoothly as it had when Aceh was under Sulṭān 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh. As in the case of the British, Iskandar Muda also cancelled Acehnese-Dutch commercial agreements. This was related to the basic economic policy of the sulṭān at very early in his reign. However, it seems that the sulṭān's policy towards the Dutch was stricter than that towards the British, leading him to refuse any concessions to the Dutch. Consequently, the Dutch were inactive in Aceh⁹³ and finally decided to close their factory there in 1615 and 1623.⁹⁴ Yet, it is important to note that a decade later in 1632 Aceh again reestablished relations with the Dutch.⁹⁵

This obviously implies that the sulṭān differentiated between the British and the Dutch. It is probable that the sulṭān considered the presence of the Dutch in Acehnese commercial networks to be less profitable. In addition, it is likely that

⁹³ Ibid., 168.

⁹⁴ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 463-464; A complete explanation on this see also Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 90-93.

⁹⁵ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 464.

the sultān saw them as a second rival to Aceh's power in the area after Portuguese Malacca. This can be linked to the fact that when Iskandar Muda attacked the Johor kingdom in the Malay peninsula, the Dutch entered into an alliance with the kingdom.⁹⁶ Secondly, the hostility of the sultān towards the Dutch was also a result of their unfulfilled promises to the sultān. In 1615 Iskandar Muda proposed that the Dutch lend him a ship to attack Portuguese Malacca. In the beginning, they promised to fulfil the sultān's request but later, when Aceh had made preparations for the expedition, the Dutch broke their promise.⁹⁷ Consequently, "the sultān was very angry and forbade the Dutch ships to anchor at Aceh, even to get some water and foodstuff."⁹⁸

c. Aceh and the French

The official French expedition to Aceh was led by Admiral Augustin De Beaulieu, who arrived in Aceh in January 1621.⁹⁹ He commanded three warships, the *de Montmorency*, *de Esperance* and *Hermitage*.¹⁰⁰ The arrival of this French expedition was also welcomed by Sultān Iskandar Muda. In addition, the admiral also brought presents and an official letter of the king of France, Louis XIII, containing a request for the right to trade in Aceh.¹⁰¹ According to some sources, the letter that De Beaulieu handed to the sultān was not in fact from the king of

⁹⁶ Ibid., 462.

⁹⁷ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 91; Said, *Aceh*, 284.

⁹⁸ Said, *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 442.

¹⁰⁰ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 92; Said, *Aceh*, 307; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 73.

¹⁰¹ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 91.

France, but one he had written himself. If this was so, it is fair to conclude that before coming to Aceh, De Beaulieu had kept in touch with other traders who had already been to Aceh. Therefore, he knew about the Sultān's attitude and policy. Whether the letter was original or not, his strategy seems to have been successful in securing a trade agreement with Aceh, as is proven by the large cargo of pepper that he brought home, reaching Le Havre on December 1, 1622.¹⁰²

In his account of his voyage which is still valuable today for providing the most reliable data about the Acehnese empire, Augustin De Beaulieu writes that, in the seventeenth century, the sultān of Aceh was the universal king of Sumatra, who controlled all commercial activity there.¹⁰³

d. Aceh and the Portuguese

It is obvious that Portuguese Malacca on the Malay peninsula was the primary enemy of the Acehnese. Since their subjugation of Malacca in 1511, as indicated earlier, the Portuguese had been particularly hard on the Muslim population. Winstedt refers to the Portuguese legislation which was passed for the conversion of Hindus and Muslims in the area. Quoting a Portuguese official in Malacca, Justus Schouten, says:

Everybody and anybody was allowed to enter the city as free vassals of Portugal irrespective of nationality or their being criminals, provided they were converted to the Christian faith; otherwise they would be deported to Goa, Macau and Manila, where they would be sold as slaves without any consideration or mercy, unless ransomed.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 120.

¹⁰³ "Au XVII s., le sultan d'Atjeh est le souverain incontesté de l'île de Soumatra; il n'en tient que les côtes mais il en controle presque tout le commerce." Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh*, 98.

It was owing to this that the Acehese ruler, Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Shāh al-Qahhār, Iskandar Muda's predecessor, declared *jihād* in order to drive them out of the Peninsula. Following this declaration, the Acehese undertook a number of attacks against the Portuguese in Malacca during the sixteenth century. The Acehese spent most of their strength pursuing wars against the Portuguese. During the period of the predecessors of Iskandar Muda, for instance, their strongholds were attacked many times, in 1537, 1547, 1568, 1573 and in 1577.¹⁰⁵

However, during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Muda it seems that the hostility between Aceh and Portuguese Malacca became more aggravated. Concerns about religion as well as the economy made this conflict inevitable. De longh goes even further and concludes that it was particularly during this time that economic interests began to take priority over the principle of holy war.¹⁰⁶

To a great extent, this may be true. First, Sultān Iskandar Muda, as illustrated above, had undertaken several endeavors to control all trade and trade routes both in Sumatra and in the Malay peninsula. Second, the only region located in the Malay peninsula which had not yet been subdued by Aceh was Malacca, where the Portuguese strongholds were located. Third, from an economic point of view, Portuguese Malacca represented the main challenge to Aceh, controlling as it did the Malacca straits and channelling trade exclusively

¹⁰⁴ Winstedt, *A History*, 97.

¹⁰⁵ Amirul Hadi, "Aceh and the Portuguese: A Study of the Struggle of Islam in Southeast Asia, 1500-1579," unpublished M. A. Thesis (Montreal: McGill University, 1992), 90.

¹⁰⁶ De longh, "The Economic," 89.

through the port of Malacca.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that the conflict between Aceh and the Portuguese was based on economic interests rather than religious motives.

Aiming at controlling the economic base and destroying competitors, Sultān Iskandar Muda launched two waves of attack against Portuguese Malacca in 1615 and in 1629. However, both these attacks failed. These will be further examined in the last chapter of this thesis.

On December 27, 1636 Sultān Iskandar Muda died. It is stated that his death was due to poison given by certain Buginese women on the orders of the Portuguese.¹⁰⁸ His death brought deep sorrow among the Acehnese people. He had been the charismatic sultān who successfully brought his kingdom to its golden age, politically, economically, and socially. He did not leave a crown prince who could replace him. His only son, according to some sources, had been killed by him. Some historians state that before his death, Sultān Iskandar Muda had ordered his subordinates to eliminate his only son because of his bad behavior.¹⁰⁹ In addition, according to Said, quoting from Zainuddin's work, *Singa Aceh*, the reason why Sultān Iskandar Muda ordered his own son to be killed was that the prince had been caught having sexual intercourse with someone's wife.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Arasaratman, "Some Notes," 480.

¹⁰⁸ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 111.

¹⁰⁹ Sufi, "Iskandar Muda," 111; Said, *Aceh*, 331; Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 52.

¹¹⁰ Said, *Aceh*, 332.

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that historians generally depict the sultān killing his own son because of the prince's bad attitude and sinful deeds. However, it is not impossible that the sultān killed the prince under the influence of his consort. The Sultān treated his son and his step-son quite unequally. The latter was the son of his consort from Pahang whom he married after Aceh subjugated the Pahang kingdom in 1618. Iskandar Muda really loved his consort of Pahang who later assumed the title of 'Putroe Pahang'.¹¹¹ The evidence shows that to please his consort, the sultān built an imitation mountain which is known as *gunongan*,¹¹² with beautiful surroundings as the place where the consort could enjoy herself. Moreover, the consort was afraid of being losing her position after the death of her husband. For this reason, she may have persuaded Sultān Iskandar Muda to eliminate his own son so that her son could take over the position of sultān. In other words, it was the design of the Pahangnese consort to take revenge of her defeat when Aceh had subjugated her kingdom. It later became clear that to fulfill his consort's purpose Sultān Iskandar Muda married his nine-year-old daughter to his step-son, and then decreed his step-son as well as his son-in-law, Iskandar Thānī, to be his heir when he died.

Following the death of Iskandar Muda, Sultān Iskandar Thānī took over the position as the ruler of Aceh. Under his rule, the internal condition of the Acehnese empire remained wealthy and stable even though he was only able to govern the empire for about five years. *Bustanu's-Salatin*, the famous Acehnese chronicle which was composed under this sultān, portrays Sultān Iskandar Thānī

¹¹¹ Ibid., 337.

¹¹² C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehnese*, trans. by A. W. S. O'Sullivan, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1906), Vol. 1, 109.

as a devoted Muslim who governed the empire wisely. It is stated that he sat on the throne for about four years, three months and six days, and died in 1641. After his death he was well-known as Marhum Darussalam.¹¹³

Externally, however, it seems that the Acehese empire under Sultān Iskandar Thānī began to shake. The empire faced challenges not only from the Malay states but also from the Dutch. Further study about this will be examined in the last chapter of this thesis.

¹¹³ For a complete picture of attitude of this sultān see Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*; Said, *Aceh*, 331-378; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 52-56.

CHAPTER THREE
THE CRISIS OF ROYAL POWER OF THE ACEHNESE
SULTANATE UNDER QUEENLY RULE
(INTERNAL DECLINE)

The second half of the seventeenth century is an unusual period in the history of the Acehnese sultanate. This is an era during which the sultanate was held by female rulers. The rise of these female rulers was a new phenomenon because, prior to this, we do not hear any information that the sultanate was ever ruled by a woman. Aceh, to my knowledge, was only one of very few Islamic sultanates in the Indonesian archipelago that granted women such high positions on the political scene. This may demonstrate a degree of equal status for men and women, at least during that era.

A. The Rise of Female Rulers

The rise of the female rulers in the Islamic sultanate of Aceh must be seen against the background of the circumstances which led to the accession of its first queen, Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn. We only find limited information concerning this in the regional chronicles or in the European sources. Nevertheless, some clues to this issue can be gleaned from these sources which may be used to reconstruct an approximate history of that time.

Following the premature death of Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni, there was a vacuum in the Acehnese throne. The sulṭān, like his predecessor Sulṭān Iskandar Muda, had no male heir to succeed him. This vacuum seems to have caused political

unrest which led to riots in the capital. This precarious situation was exploited by the influential *orangkayas* (noble men) who competed among themselves for the vacant throne. Information concerning this comes from Nicholas de Graaf, a Dutchman who witnessed the situation. He writes that "while I was at Achin (in 1641), the king died which caused great commotion among the great men, and cost the lives of a great many people for each one wished to be king."¹

After days of confusion and indecision, the crisis was resolved after the *orangkayas* came to an agreement by choosing Sri 'Alam, Iskandar Thāni's consort and Iskandar Muda's daughter. As the first queen of Aceh, she assumed the title of Sri Sultan Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn Shah.²

Bustanu's-Salatin, the famous regional chronicle written during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Thāni, does not give us a clear cut explanation for this choice. It simply states that, following the death of Iskandar Thāni, Safiat al-Dīn was placed on the throne on the same day.³ In another version of this event, A. Hasjmy writes

¹ Quoted in Thomas Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal 1669 to 1679*, Sir Richard Carnac Temple, ed. (Cambridge: The Haklyut Society, 1903), 298; see also Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat Dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. By Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Proyek Permesiuman Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982/1983), 59; Anthony Reid, "Trade and the Problem of Royal Power in Aceh. Three Stages: c. 1550-1700," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. MBRAS (1979), 52.

² Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan: Pt. Percetakan dan Penerbitan Waspada, 1981), 377; Ismail Yacob, *Atjeh dalam Sedjarah* (Koeta Radja: Joesoef Mahmoed, 1946), 56; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 56.

³ Teuku Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Bab. 2, Fasal 13 (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 58.

"after a long exchange of opinions among the leading figures, they decided that Safiat al-Dīn was qualified to be appointed as the ruler of Aceh."⁴ Even though he does not mention explicitly that confusion had taken place among the influential figures in the sultanate, he alludes to it.

From the above description it can be reasonably concluded that the choice of Queen Safiat al-Dīn as the successor to Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni was mainly based on the fact that there was no male heir to the sultanate. She was appointed in order to rescue the sultanate from the threat of chaos precipitated by the struggle for power among the ambitious leaders.

It seems, however, that despite this move, the political situation of Aceh remained unstable and unsafe due to the intrigues of leading chiefs seeking to destroy Safiat al-Dīn's power.⁵ Indeed, this internal crisis was one of many factors that led to the decline of the sultanate of Aceh during the reign of the Acehnese queens. This was also not very advantageous for the sultanate of Aceh because consciously or not this had a great effect on the position of Aceh and its development. In conjunction with the previous picture of Aceh, there is no doubt that during the reign of the Acehnese queens, Aceh began to decline although it seems that there was no single factor that caused this process of decline. However, several apparent interrelated factors converged to bring about this decline. Externally, after being the greatest and most powerful Islamic sultanate in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago, dominating the west and east

⁴ A. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka di Bawah Pemerintahan Ratu* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977), 49.

⁵ Said, *Aceh*, 377-379.

coastal part of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula in the first half of the seventeenth century, Aceh's territory was reduced to a small part of North Sumatra. It was no longer recognized as a major power, neither by its allies nor by its rivals. Meanwhile, the power struggle in Aceh led to internal political instability, the control of power frequently shifting from one group to another.

B. The Emergence of the Orangkayas

Under the reign of the first queen of Aceh, Safiat al-Dīn, who sat on the throne for about 35 years, no major institutional change took place in the Acehnese sultanate.⁶ She still maintained the mode of government which had been formulated by her father, Sulṭān Iskandar Muda. As was indicated earlier in chapter two, when Iskandar Muda ruled the sultanate, he had reorganized the system of government dividing it into the central and district governments. In the structure of the central government, located in the capital of the sultanate, Darussalam Banda Aceh, the sulṭān acted as the highest ruler under whom there were several state ministers to run the government. While in the core segment of the sultanate, Aceh Besar (Great Aceh), Iskandar Muda divided the Acehnese territory into several *mukims* (parishes) and *uleebalangship*. Each of these was led by a territory chieftain who assumed the title of *uleebalang*, and who was confirmed by the sulṭān and acted on his behalf. This system was maintained by Queen Safiat al-Dīn during her reign.

⁶ Zakaria Ahmad, *Sekitar Keradjaan Atjeh dalam Tahun 1520-1675* (Medan: Monora, 1972), 37; Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 52.

However, the evidence shows that the style of royal authority of Queen Safiat al-Dīn differed greatly from that of Sultān Iskandar Muda, who had been able to centralize all power and authority. Of the sultān it was said that his will was a regulation.⁷ While Sultān Iskandar Muda was well known for his tight control of his subjects, Queen Safiat al-Dīn was known to be a gentle woman⁸ who allowed her subjects to play a larger role in state affairs. The high officials of the states acquired more power to control important aspects of the central power structure. A power transition took place in the sultanate. Formerly, it was the sultān who was the only figure having a right to determine government policies. During the time of Safiat al-Dīn, her subordinate state ministers took this power into their hands. This was reflected in the fact that during her reign, there were 12 *orangkayas* who ran state affairs. Raden Husein Djajadiningrat points out that these *orangkayas* had more power and influence in the government than before and for fear of losing their positions they made a great effort to take care of her.⁹ Consequently, "the power which formerly was in the hands of a despotic prince, was seized by a council of Nobles, who allowed a Queen to be on the throne as a nominal ruler, the sole management of the country being in their hands."¹⁰ William Marsden further asserts that "the business of the state was managed by twelve *orangkayas*, four of whom were superior to the rest, and among these maharaja, or governor of the

⁷ Teuku Iskandar, *Hikayat Aceh*, trans. by Aboe Bakar (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan Meusium Negeri Aceh, 1986), 40.

⁸ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 62-63.

⁹ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 57.

¹⁰ Thomas Braddel, "Translation of the Annals of Acheen," *JIAEA*, 4 (1850), 19; see also Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 52.

kingdom, was considered as the chief."¹¹

The transition of power that took place with the rise of the 12 *orangkayas* has been variously interpreted by different historians. Thomas Braddel, for instance, estimated that this transformation of power had left Queen Safiat al-Dīn no power at all to be able to interfere with government affairs during this time.¹² However, I do not agree with Braddel. The position of Queen Safiat al-Dīn in the government was still strong as well as respected by the 12 *orangkayas*, especially in taking decisions about state affairs. This opinion is based on an empirical account from Thomas Bowrey who came to Aceh and witnessed the role of this queen. He writes:

The Men in Office that (Under their Queene) governe this Kingdome are Entitled as followeth. The Meer Raja vizt. the Lord Treasurer, the Leximana the Lord Generall, and the great Oronkay is Lord Chiefe Justice. There are other Oronkays and under this, as alsoe Shahbandars under them and the Queen's greatest Eunuchs, but are all very Submissive and respective to the Queen, not dareinge to act or doe any businesse of importance before they have throughly acquainted the Queen thereof.¹³

In accordance with the active role of Queen Safiat al-Dīn in state affairs we still find some valuable notes from Bowrey's account in which it is stated that before a transaction of state business could be authorized, the *orangkayas* had to visit the queen in her palace to gain her agreement and the state's seal which was put on the declaration of a state affair. "If the choop cometh not downe to them, they must desist from the business in hand and mind Something else."¹⁴

¹¹ William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*, a reprint of the third ed. Introd. by John Bastin (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966), 449.

¹² Braddel, "On the History," 19.

¹³ Bowrey, *A Geographical Account*, 299.

Another piece of information which supports my assumption that Safiat al-Dīn still played a role in state affairs of the Acehneese sultanate is based on a report coming from Arnold de Vlamingh Van Outshoorn, who visited Aceh in 1644, four years after the queen came to power. The aim of this visit was to conduct negotiations with Queen Safiat al-Dīn regarding the Dutch monopoly on tin trade in Perak on the Malay peninsula. On this negotiation, it is stated that Vlamingh met the queen in her palace and failed to get an agreement from the queen.¹⁵

From the above historical facts, it is reasonable to infer that although during the reign of Safiat al-Dīn there arose a council of 12 *orangkayas* who gained more power and influence in the sultanate's central government of Aceh, we cannot ignore the evidence that Queen Safiat al-Dīn still played an important role in the structure of the government, if only in certain cases. This implies that the first queen of Aceh, Safiat al-Dīn, was not a puppet sitting on the throne as a symbol, as some Western historians, such as Braddel, have concluded.

As far as the political situation under the reign of Safiat al-Dīn is concerned, we do not have any clear information. Neither the regional chronicles nor the other sources have much to say about this aspect. The Acehneese chronicle *Bustanu's-Salatin* offers no information. It only portrays Queen Safiat al-Dīn as a merciful and beneficent woman, like a mother loving her children.¹⁶ We can extract from the chronicle some evidence that under the reign of this queen, the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh, was prosperous and most people had enough food and a sufficient

¹⁴ Ibid., 300. "Choop" is "cap" meaning "seal."

¹⁵ Said, *Aceh*, 377; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 81.

¹⁶ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 59.

supply of goods. This implies that economically, Aceh was still in good condition. However, it is not unlikely to interpret that the silence of the author of this chronicle about the political situation during this time might be aimed at hiding the real situation on such matters because the author, Shaikh Nur al-Dīn al-Ranirī, was one of the religious Islamic teachers under the royal patronage of the sultanate. This assumption can be made due to the fact that during the appointment of the first queen to the throne, opposition groups arose which greatly opposed a female ruler to rule the country. According to Ainal Mardhiah, the election of Safiat al-Dīn as the ruler was strongly challenged by the Wujūdiyya group who had the support of some '*ulamā*'.¹⁷ A. Hasjmy notes, although without mentioning his source, that there were at least 300 '*ulamā*' who rejected Queen Safiat al-Dīn as ruler of the country and launched for a resistance against her rule.¹⁸ The political fortunes of this opposition group will be examined in the last part of this discussion.

In addition, there are also indications of the instability of politics during the reign of Queen Safiat al-Dīn. During her reign there was a struggle for power among groups or individuals who considered themselves to be entitled to sit on the throne.¹⁹ One source states that the struggle for power was carried out by a group of influential politicians who felt they were the rightful heirs to the throne. An important note on this matter comes from Bowrey who writes:

The Inhabitants up in the countrey not above 20 or 30 miles off Achin are for the most part disaffected to this Sort of Government, and Scruple not to

¹⁷ Teuku Ainal Mardhiah, "Pergerakan Wanita di Aceh Masa Lampau Sampai Kini," in Ismail Suny, ed., *Bunga Rampai tentang Aceh* (Jakarta: Bharatara Karya Aksara, 1980), 292; see also Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 79.

¹⁸ A. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 98.

¹⁹ Said, *Aceh*, 379; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 79.

Say they will have a Kinge to rule and beare dominion over them, and that the true heire to the Crowne is yet alive and hath Severall Sons, and him they will obey. He is one that liveth amongst them, a great promoter of a Rebellion, and often-times doth much prejudice both in Citty and Country.²⁰

In addition, during her reign, most of the conquered regions began to break away from Acehese influence seeking their full independence.²¹ Consequently, by the end of her reign in 1675, the power of Aceh was reduced only to its main core region in the northern part of Sumatra. From this point of view, it seems that there was no effort by the sultanate to rebuild its military power after its failure in attacking the Portuguese at Malacca in 1629. It is difficult to determine why Aceh stopped rebuilding its armed forces at a time when the Acehese sultanate was especially in need of strong combat capabilities to face regional and foreign intrigues which were shaking Acehese sovereignty. On this point we see one area of real decline in the Acehese sultanate which shows that the sultanate was clearly not what it had been.

It is safe to infer in the light of the above mentioned evidence that the weakness of the royal power began after the death of Sultān Iskandar Muda and his immediate successor, Sultān Iskandar Thāni. Queen Safiat al-Dīn's inability to follow her predecessors' style of heading the government reduced the power of the throne. This brought about the "decline which really set the political pattern of Atjeh."²² During her reign a shift of power took place. Her mildness and

²⁰ Bowrey, *A Geographical Account*, 313.

²¹ Ailsa Zainu'ddin, *A Short History of Indonesia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 104.

²² Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 4.

inexperience resulted in the decline of royal power. The *orangkayas* became more powerful in determining the direction of the sultanate. Consequently, as Marsden points out:

the nobles finding their power less restrained, and their individual consequence more felt under an administration of this kind, than when ruled by kings (as sometimes they were with a rod of iron) supported these pageants, whom they governed as they thought fit, and thereby virtually changed the constitution into an aristocracy or oligarchy.²³

Following the death of Queen Safiat al-Dīn, the *orangkayas*, who preferred to have a "gentle" female ruler, continued the same mode of government. She was therefore succeeded by three other female rulers, Queen Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn (reigned 1675-1678), Queen 'Ināyat Shāh Zakī al-Dīn (reigned 1678-1688), and finally Queen Kemal Shah (reigned 1688-1699). According to Reid, "these later queens, however, had none of the status the first had enjoyed as daughter of one mighty king and widow of another. With each new queen, the power wielded by the leading *orangkayas* became more apparent."²⁴

Both *Bustanu's-Salatin* and Bowrey's record give the same year on the death of the first queen. *Bustanu's-Salatin*, clearly states that Queen Safiat al-Dīn passed away on Wednesday, Sya'ban 3rd, 1086 (October 23, 1675), after sitting on the throne for thirty five years, eight months and twenty-six days.²⁵ On the same day she was succeeded by the second queen, Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn.²⁶

²³ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 447.

²⁴ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 52-53.

²⁵ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 73-74.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Even though this chronicle does not inform us how the second queen was appointed, there was an indication that the election of this queen was aimed at avoiding the struggle for power among the competing political groups. Bowrey, who witnessed this event, records that instability was already precipitating before the death of Safiat al-Dīn, and that a riot took place after the succession of the second queen. Bowrey says that:

This Old Queen was Sore Visited with Sicknesse five weeks before She died, duringe which time there was great Suspicion and feare of a Rebellion with Some of the inhabitants of Achin, Assisted by many of the inland people, but as great care as possible could be and means to prevent it were Used by the Grandees, who caused the City to be more then doubly guarded, more Especially the pallace that was guarded with Some thousands of armed men, and 600 warre Elephants diligently attended, and Opium 3 times a day given them to animate them in the highest degree, and Severall resolute and well Effected people to this Government put into Office both in the City and in the Fortifications of this Country some miles Eastward of Achin.

Yett I have been in Achin when about 700 of these insolent highlanders have come downe to the city, and on a Sudden rushed into the Pallace Royall, and plundered it, to the great Astonishment of all the Citizens, Especially the Lords, who were so affrighted with soe Sudden and desperate attempt, that there onely care for the present was to Secure there Owne Persons.²⁷

The unrest was finally resolved by the capital guards. Most rioters were arrested. After being interrogated and examined by a "*mulla or Mahometen Priest*,"²⁸ probably the great judge of the sultanate, some were sentenced to death and others were jailed. According to Reid, these people were led by the heir of the Polem family, a powerful *uleebalang* of the upland *mukim*. He was the son of Teuku Itam, Sulṭān Iskandar Muda's son who was born from his non-royal wife.²⁹

²⁷ Bowrey, *A Geographical Account*, 312-313.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 314.

²⁹ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 53.

In dealing with the line of descent of the second queen of Aceh, historians still have varied opinions. It is believed, however, that she was a daughter of one of the most powerful *orangkayas* of Aceh.³⁰ If this is true, it is safe to conclude that the dynastic line of the sultān of Aceh ended with the death of Safiat al-Dīn. In other words, a new dynasty emerged in which the royal power belonged to the nobles.

During the short reign of this second queen, Aceh became more politically unstable. In the central government, the powers of the queen were fully transferred to the council of the 12 *orangkayas*. Unlike the first queen, Safiat al-Dīn, who still had some right to interfere in the state's affairs, Queen Nur 'Alam was only a symbol of this small number of 12 elite *orangkayas*. In addition, it must be added here that it was during her reign, as depicted in the Annals of Aceh,³¹ that the district reaction took place which resulted in the creation of three federations of *mukims* in the core part of the sultanate, Great Aceh (Aceh Besar). This reaction was due to the conflict between the center or the capital and the agrarian powers. Consequently, from this time, the nature of the government structure was changed by this development. Details about the rise of this agrarian power will be examined later. It is also important to note what *Bustanu's-Salatin* confirms: under this second queen, the sultanate's palace with its valuable contents, including the Bait al-Rahmān mosque was destroyed by fire.³² After having sat on the throne for more than two years, Queen Nur 'Alam died on

³⁰ Said, *Aceh*, 402.

³¹ See Braddel, "Translation of the Annals," 602.

³² Iskandar, *Bustanu's- Salatin*, 74.

January 23, 1678. She was then succeeded by another female ruler, her daughter, named 'Ināyat Shāh Zaqī al-Dīn.

As far as the central government was concerned, William Dampier's report gives the impression that like Nur 'Alam, Queen 'Ināyat Shāh was not active in the government nor had she any right to interfere in the state's affairs. Dampier says that "she has little more than the title of a Sovereign, all the Government being wholly in the hands of the Oronkey."³³ The same impression can also be gained from the report of an English mission (consisting of Ralph Ord and William Cawley) which was sent to Aceh to request a permission to build a British factory.³⁴ When these officials conducted the formal meeting in the queen's palace, they found that their interlocutor, was not the queen herself but someone else wearing the queen's ornaments. The person was described as being large and as having a strong voice.³⁵ Marsden, who compiled these reports, comments, "I venture, with submission, to observe, that this anecdote seems to put the question of the sex beyond controversy."³⁶

Still in the state of the central government of the sultanate, the picture of the power was unchanged. A council of the 12 *orangkayas* continued to maintain the mode of government they had formulated since the first queen came to power.

³³ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (London: J. Knapton, 1697), 139.

³⁴ For a complete discussion on this affair see John Bastin, *The British in West Sumatra (1685-1825)*, records preserved in the Relations Office, London with an intro. and notes by John Bastin (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965), xii.

³⁵ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 449; see also Said, *Aceh*, 408-409.

³⁶ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 449.

Dampier's reports further enhance this observation:

This country is governed by a Queen, under whom there are 12 Oronkeys, or great Lords. These act in their several precincts with great power and authority. Under these there are other interior Officers, to keep the Peace in the several parts of the Queens dominions. The Present Shahbander of Achin is one of the Oronkeyes. He is a man of greater knowledge than any of the rest, and supposed to be rich.³⁷

Queen 'Ināyat Shāh presided on the Acehnese throne for about ten years. She died in 1688. She was then replaced by another queen, Kemal Shah. It was under this last queen that the opposition group achieved its goal. After ten years on the throne, the queen was deposed in 1699.

C. The Division of Power

Thus far I have discussed the transformations that were taking place in the central government of the Acehnese sultanate under the first queen, Safiat al-Dīn, and the three other queens. Here, now we should examine the district governments and *uleebalangships*.

As pointed out in chapter two, at the time Sultān Iskandar Muda reigned over the Acehnese sultanate, he administratively divided the sultanate into many *mukims*. Several *mukims* formed an *uleebalangship*. To lead an *uleebalangship*, the sultān of Aceh appointed his representative there with the title of *uleebalang*. These district heads used to be recognized by the sultān through a "*cap sikuereng*" (state's seal) on the appointment declaration (*sarakata*).³⁸ With this

³⁷ Dampier, *New Voyage*, 141.

³⁸ Denys Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au Temps d'Iskandar Muda 1607-1636* (Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extrême-Orient, 1967), 104.

status, the position of *uleebalangs* was largely dependent on the sultān and basically they would support the sultān. In this way the *uleebalangs* were the right hand of the sultān because officially they were part of the structure of the sultān's power.

After Safiat al-Dīn came to power there was an indication that the old status of these *mukims* and *uleebalangship* began to change. The *uleebalangs* sought to break away from the central authority of the sultanate and arranged their own territory. Consequently, these territories became autonomous districts under their chieftains. The queen at the center now had virtually no power.³⁹

As far as the shift in the position of the *mukims* was concerned, we do not find an obvious answer as to why they became more independent from the central authority of the Acehnese sultanate. We might make two observations which can be surmised as follows: The first is political: this tendency was due to the weakening of the central power's control on these districts following the instability that accompanied Safiat al-Dīn's reign. In this context, the chieftains of the districts saw a good opportunity for them to seize the right to determine their own fate without intervention from the central government. The second observation is economic: these districts, located at the boundaries of the sultanate's capital, were the areas where agricultural goods, such as rice were produced and animal husbandry practiced.⁴⁰ By breaking loose from central control, the local resources of the districts could be fully used for the benefit of the districts themselves. This

³⁹ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 90.

⁴⁰ H. M. Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh dan Nusantara* (Medan: Pustaka Iskandar Muda, 1961), 315.

was also related to the fact that during the reign of the first queen, the Acehese sultanate experienced an economic decline as a consequence of its diminishing trade. Consequently, the population began to abandon their activities in the trade centers of the capital of Aceh in order to secure their livelihood in the agricultural areas. This shift of a trading community to an agricultural one strengthened, to some extent, the position of the districts surrounding the capital of Aceh. They no longer depended upon a trade center, supported by an international trade network. The change in the status of the districts surrounding the capital of the Acehese sultanate created a situation in which these districts' power gradually came to balance that of the center. This culminated in the emergence of three federations of *mukims* in the sultanate.

In the course of time, under the reign of the second queen of Aceh, Nur 'Alam, a competition for power took place in the sultanate of Aceh resulting in the breakdown of power between the center and the hinterland. A clear indication of this was the creation of three divisions of power in the core part of the Acehese sultanate, Great Aceh (Aceh Besar). These three powers were formed through alliance of *mukims* which formerly used to stand alone, but then organized themselves into three federations. These federations are known in the history of Aceh as Aceh Lhee Sagoe (three corners of Aceh). Each created federation was named by the number of *mukims* which composed it, namely the federation of the twenty-two *mukims*, of the twenty-five *mukims*, and of the twenty-six *mukims*. The *uleebalangs* (district chiefs) of each federation appointed one of the most powerful and influential among themselves to lead their respective federation. This leader then assumed the title of *panglima sagi*.

Although the *panglima sagi* was the highest leader of the *uleebalangs* in each federation, the latter still held their former status and role as the heads of their particular *mukims*. This is clear from what Snouck Hurgronje points out, that "the authority of such a Panglima sagi extended however only to matters of general interest. For the rest the remaining *uleebalangs* governed their own territories just as though there were no sagi in existence."⁴¹ The *panglimas* of the three federations were authorized to take over all civil and military powers from all *uleebalangs* only if the state was in danger. Then they would act on behalf of the sultān.⁴²

One important thing to note in this case, before discussing the division of power in the Acehese sultanate, is that historians have varying points of view about the time of the formation of the three federations. Snouck Hurgronje concludes that these federations were already formed long before the female rulers came to the throne of Aceh. "Sagis, that is to say confederations of *uleebalangship*, had however undoubtedly been long in existence before they succeeded in bringing the sultanate like an infant under their joint guardianship."⁴³ Snouck Hurgronje's opinion implies that the three federations had been formed during the reign of male rulers, even that these federations were as old as the kingdom itself. The opinion of Snouck Hurgronje was countered by another Dutch scholar, Veltman. According to him, as quoted by Said, the formation of these three federations took place during Queen Safiat al-Dīn's reign, the first queen of

⁴¹ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehese*, trans. by A. W. S. O'Sullivan, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1906), Vol. 1, 91.

⁴² Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 90.

⁴³ Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehese*, 90.

Aceh. "This is based on the assumption that it is impossible that under Sultān Iskandar Muda the "state within a state" could have taken place."⁴⁴ Besides the two different opinions above, Djajadiningrat and others think that these three federations came into being under the second queen's reign, Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn.⁴⁵

Even though historians are not in agreement on this point, I am inclined to accept the last viewpoint. The formation of the three federations took place during the reign of Queen Nur 'Alam. This conclusion is based on the fact that before Queen Nur 'Alam came to the throne, there is not a single source which mentions them. The three federations began to be repeatedly mentioned both in the Acehese chronicles and in the Western sources during the reign of the second queen, Nur 'Alam.

Furthermore, it seems that the formation of the three federations did not take place at the same time. The federations of the twenty-five *mukims* and twenty-six *mukims* on the west and the east parts of the capital of Aceh respectively, were formed as a reaction to the formation of the federation of the twenty-two *mukims* in the upland segment of the sultanate.⁴⁶ This reaction seems to be closely related to the fact that the sultanate had already recognized the latter because the sultanate and the *panglima* of the twenty-two *mukims* were blood relatives. It was probably this recognition that tempted the other two federations to organize.

⁴⁴ Said, *Aceh*, 406.

⁴⁵ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 58; Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh*, 316; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 90; Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 189.

⁴⁶ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 53.

The federation of the twenty-two *mukims* which was led by Panglima Polem gained the recognition of the Acehnese sultanate because its founder was the son of Sultān Iskandar Muda by his non-royal wife.⁴⁷ From this line there were born two sons, named Teuku Muda Suara and Teuku Muda Sa'ti. The latter was well-known as a warrior and very influential. After his brother's death, he succeeded as the *mukim* chief in his territory. When his neighboring *mukims* formed an alliance which resulted in the creation of the federation of the twenty-two *mukims*, he was elected by the *uleebalangs* within the federation as their military commander-in-chief.⁴⁸ The use of the title of *polem* (elder brother) was derived from the fact that his father, Iskandar Muda's son, was Queen Safiat al-Dīn's older half-brother.⁴⁹

Historians offer two interpretations for the historical context within which the three federations emerged. According to Teuku Daud Silang's version, as quoted by Zainuddin, the rise of the three federations was mainly due to the people's opposition against the new poll tax regulation, '*hase rinjeun*', issued by the government of the second queen, Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn. The people who were unable to pay these taxes rallied behind their *uleebalangs* to form alliances.⁵⁰ One very influential *mukim* figure named Tgk. Lam Panaih campaigned and recruited the 26 *uleebalangs* from the twenty-six *mukims*, the 22 *uleebalangs* of the twenty-two *mukims* and the 25 *uleebalangs* of the twenty-five *mukims* to act as the people's representatives in opposing the center's decision. It is believed that this

⁴⁷ Said, *Aceh*, 406.

⁴⁸ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 53.

⁴⁹ Said, *Aceh*, 407; Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 53.

⁵⁰ Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh*, 408.

respective representation later gave rise to the names to the three federations.⁵¹

Yet, Snouck Hurgronje sees it from a different perspective and gives another explanation. He suggests:

the origin of such confederacies is to be ascribed to the force of circumstances. From ancient times, and still more in former years than at the present day, internal conflicts and wars of every description have been the order of the day in Aceh. Just as the *gampongs* which standing alone would have lain at the mercy of the first freebooter, protected themselves by uniting under a single *uleebalang*, so must the *uleebalangs* in their mutual strife have perceived the usefulness of offensive and defensive alliances with their neighbours.⁵²

Furthermore he adds, "still the great mass of chiefs and dependants of any one *Sagi* are understood to form a single united body. This may be regarded as due to propinquity, similarity of manners, and dialects and above all community of interest."⁵³

The first version, therefore, argues that the three federations emerged as a result of the people's disagreement with the central government's new decision, while the second postulates that it was simply due to rivalries between *mukims* and *gampongs*. However, from these two opinions, an interesting impression can be drawn. The rise of these federations was grounded in a feeling of togetherness motivated by the need of each group to protect its interests. It was this tendency which finally united formerly separated *mukims* into cooperatives in the form of three federations. This, of course, strengthened the respective position of each group which, to a great extent, directly brought about a big effect upon the political

⁵¹ Ibid., 409.

⁵² Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, 91.

⁵³ Ibid.

life in the Acehese sultanate.

The rise of the three federations marked a new era in the history of the structure of the Acehese government. This probably led Braddel to conclude that this division was "a proof of internal improvement which points out the attention that was paid to agriculture."⁵⁴ Reid sees it from the different perspective of "the balance of power" between the sovereign and major chiefs. The change was due to the fact that "while the merchant officials were establishing a congenial regime in the capital, a powerful new force was arising in the agricultural hinterlands."⁵⁵

These two opinions interpret the rise of the three federations in the Acehese sultanate differently. Nevertheless, I am much more inclined to argue for the latter interpretation. The rise of these three federations had far-reaching consequences on the sovereignty of the central power of the Acehese sultanate as well as on the political equilibrium of the country.

As for the political atmosphere, since the rise of the three federations, a great rivalry took place between the central government led by the queen's great ministers on the one hand and the district governments led by *panglimas* of the three federations on the other. It is evident that this competition aimed at a stronger influence on the sultanate of Aceh. According to Veltman, as quoted by Said, these three federations sought to weaken the power of the queen and her twelve influential *orangkayas* and, in turn, to strengthen the position of the *Panglimas* of the three federations.⁵⁶ In this struggle for power, there is no

⁵⁴ Braddel, "On the History," 20.

⁵⁵ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 53.

evidence as to whether the competing central and district groups ever resorted to violence to support their ambitious ends. The struggle for power between the center and the districts had a big influence on the politics of the Acehnese sultanate. A radical change was now effected in the government of the Acehnese sultanate, which brought about a power transition in the sultanate. This transition can clearly be seen from the fact that, during this time, the *panglimas* of the three federations acquired more power than the queen and her twelve noblemen. In this power struggle, victory was on the side of the *panglimas* of the three federations. Consequently, the power of the queen's noblemen, who had monopolized power in the Acehnese sultanate, was reduced, if not eliminated, under this transition. These noblemen began to conform to the status quo imposed by the three *panglimas* of the federations. Indeed, during the reign of the Acehnese queens, the *panglimas* of the three federations played a very important role in the sultanate. Their power was no longer limited to their own territories, but rather they gained great influence to determine the direction of the sultanate. Therefore, the power of the queen and her ministers was only effective in the sultanate's capital and port.⁵⁷ This shift of power had caused the queen at the center to become merely the symbol in the Acehnese sultanate on one hand, and on the other, it rendered her to be a puppet in the hands of the *panglimas* of the three federations whose power base was largely in the agricultural hinterlands.

As the *panglimas* grew in power, it is stated that their influence then became eventually unrivalled. While formerly, the district chiefs had been appointed and

⁵⁶ Said, *Aceh*, 405.

⁵⁷ Reid, *The Contest*, 4.

confirmed by the sultān, now the three *panglimas* appointed the sultān (queen). Snouck Hurgronje points out that the *panglimas* of the three federations had become the determining figures in appointing and firing successive sultāns. Furthermore he writes that "under the weak female rule which was highly favoured by the *uleebalangs* for reasons easy to conceive, the latter were able to bring it to pass that every succession to the throne should take place in conformity with the decision of the representatives of the three *sagis*,"⁵⁸ who later "succeeded in threatening the sultanate like an infant under their joint guardianship."⁵⁹ The strong position of these three *panglimas* can also be attested to in *Kanun Meukuta Alam* (The Law of the Crown of the World), the Acehese formal legislated law which was changed with the formation of the three federations in the Acehese sultanate. Those who have right to choose and overthrow the sultān are: "1. Seri Imeum Muda Panglima Cut'oh, Panglima of the 26 *mukims* 2. Seri Setia 'ulamā', Panglima of the 25 *mukims*. 3. Seri Muda Perkasa Panglima Polem, Panglima of the 22 *mukims*, and; 4. Kadhī Malikul Adil, great Muftī."⁶⁰ Moreover, besides, because of the strong position of the three *panglimas*, the system of choosing and dethroning *uleebalangs* was changed. The right of a queen to appoint *uleebalangs* was taken over by the three *panglimas* of the three federations. They had now the full right to appoint *uleebalangs* by granting '*cap halilintar*' (seal of thunder) as a sign of authorization to each *uleebalang*.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehese*, 90; *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, S.v. "Achin," (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1898), Vol. 1, 96.

⁵⁹ Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehese*, 90.

⁶⁰ Di Mulek, *Kanun Meukuta Alam*, quoted in Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 189.

⁶¹ Zainuddin, *Tarich Atjeh*, 320; Anas Mahmud, "Turun Naiknya Peranan

It can be seen, therefore, that the *orangkayas* who formerly monopolized power in Aceh were unable to compete with the *panglimas* of the three federations. This transition, to a great degree, had directly shaken the position of the ministers in the capital of the Acehnese sultanate. The loss of power of this group of ministers had far-reaching consequences on the political equilibrium of the sultanate in the long run. This will be discussed later.

Although the power of the *panglimas* of the three federations increased and prevailed over the queen's men, the *panglimas* had no interest in destroying the position of the queen or subjugating the Acehnese throne to their control. They continued to support and maintain the position of the queen until the last queen's reign in the year 1699, even though, during the same period, opposition groups had become more vocal in opposing female rule in Aceh. The *panglimas* on the whole "showed respect for the dynasty, and even the most powerful never tried to seize the throne for himself."⁶²

C. The Opposition Group

Still, in the course of time, if we follow thoroughly the history of the Acehnese sultanate during the reign of the Acehnese queens which spanned about sixty years, we will find another tragedy in its history. During this period civil strife was precipitated by the conflict over the legitimacy of having a female ruler in the Islamic state of Aceh. The rise of female rulers was still a strange phenomenon in

Kerajaan Aceh Darussalam di Pesisir Timur Pulau Sumatra," in A. Hasjmy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989), 303.

⁶² Reid, *The Contest*, 5.

the Acehese community since all former rulers of Aceh had been men (sultāns). Therefore the rise of a female ruler was a new development which contradicted to Acehese tradition as well as religious teaching, at least according to the Acehese community during this time. In this controversy it seems that some great '*ulamā*' who were influential during that time gave a green light that there was no barrier for a woman to act as the holder of the Acehese sultanate. Two great '*ulamā*' who lived under the reign of four Acehese queens were Shaikh Nur al-Dīn al-Rānirī and Shaikh 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī. Even though they clearly never issued a *fatwā* about the legitimacy of a female ruler as a sultāna, it is believed that these two great '*ulamā*' were supporters of the appointment of queens in the Acehese sultanate.⁶³ When Aceh was under the rule of queens each of these '*ulamā*' held an important position in the Acehese sultanate namely that of *qāḍī malik al-ādil* or great judge.⁶⁴ When Shaikh Nur al-Dīn al-Rānirī left Aceh in 1643/1644 A.D.,⁶⁵ his position was taken over by a Minangkabau religious leader named Saifurrijal. Later on, when al-Singkilī, an Acehese '*ālim*', who spent about nineteen years in Arabia to deepen his religious knowledge, returned to Aceh, he took over Saifurrijal's position as *qāḍī malik al-ādil* in the sultanate. The latter continued in this position even during the reign of the last queen, Kemal Shah (1688-1699), and he died around 1693.⁶⁶

⁶³ Said, *Aceh*, 379.

⁶⁴ Al Yasa Abubakar, "Abdurra'uf Syiah Kuala: Riwayat Hidup dan Warisan Ilmu," in Ibrahim Husein, ed., *Kajian Islam, Journal Pusat Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam* (Banda Aceh: PSK3I, 1991), Vol. 1, 15-16.

⁶⁵ For a discussion on this, see Takeshi Ito, "Why did Nuruddin Ar-Raniry leave Aceh in 1054 A.H?" *B K I*, 134 (1978), 487-491.

⁶⁶ Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian 'Ulamā in the Seventeenth

However, the standing of great '*ulamā*' behind the queens did not resolve the controversy. The opposition groups continued their attempts to overthrow the queens either through peaceful means by influencing the general opinion of the Acehnese or through open violent confrontations and rebellion.

The configuration of the groups which strongly questioned and opposed the position of a queen as ruler of the Acehnese sultanate is not clear. We have no definite information about the origin of these oppositional groups, whether they were the '*ulamā*' or the elite groups. It is likely that among them were the followers of the Wujūdiyya group which was supported by certain politicians who wished to depose the queen from the throne.⁶⁷ If this contention is correct, it is safe to conclude that this opposition group was a cooperation between some members of the wujūdiyya which was against female leadership and a group of politicians who were thirsty for power.

It is believed that this opposition group came into being with the reign of the first queen, Safiat al-Dīn. However, its activities were first recorded during the reign of the second queen, Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn and her two successors. It seems that, during the reign of the first queen, the activity of this opposition could be contained and delimited. It is stated that Queen Safiat al-Dīn took a hard line towards this Wujūdiyya opposition group. In this respect A. Hasjmy writes:

The queen forbade the spread of the 'wujūdiyya' point of view in the Acehnese sultanate. Books on 'wujūdiyya' written by Shaikh Hamzah al-

and Eighteenth Centuries," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (New York: Columbia University, 1992), 415.

⁶⁷ M. Junus Djamil, *Silsilah Tawarich Radja2 Keradjaan Atjeh* (Banda Atjeh: Kodam I Iskandar Muda, 1968), 47; Ainal Mardhiah, "Pergerakan Wanita," 295.

Fansurī and Shaikh Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatranī were banned in the sultanate. This prohibition resulted in the destruction and burning of the books written by these two 'ulamā'.⁶⁸

If this statement of Hasjmy is correct, this would not be without precedent in Acehnese history. We know, for example, that during the reign of Sultān Iskandar Thāni, the writings of 'ulamā, which were considered a threat to political stability, were burnt. Hamzah al-Fansurī and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatranī were among these 'ulamā'. The Acehnese were prohibited from following these two great 'ulamā' who were condemned as heretics.⁶⁹

After the death of the first queen, Safiat al-Dīn, this opposition group escalated its resistance towards rebellion. It is stated that, during the reign of the second queen, Nur 'Alam Naqiyat al-Dīn, their failure to fulfill their ambition led them to practice an underground, hard-core resistance in the Acehnese sultanate. Their greatest act of rebellion, which was probably never forgotten by the Acehnese, was the burning of the capital of the Acehnese sultanate. Hasjmy says: "after one year in the reign of Queen Nur 'Alam, the Wujūdiyya group managed to burn the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh. The queen's palace, Dār al-Dunyā, including 'Bait al-Rahmān' mosque was totally ruined."⁷⁰ All the valuable properties of the sultanate were destroyed and reduced to dust.⁷¹ This event had a fatal impact on the sultanate and virtually paralyzed the government of the queen.⁷²

⁶⁸ Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 176.

⁶⁹ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 115; B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd., 1957), part two, 243.

⁷⁰ Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 191.

⁷¹ Iskandar, *Bustanu's- Salatin*, 74; Said, *Aceh*, 403.

So far, we have assumed that opposition to female rule was the driving force behind the rise of this opposition group. Earlier historians give no other motivations. However, it seems to me that the doors are still open for us to look for other possible motivations. As indicated earlier, since the appointment of Acehnese queens to the throne, power shifted to the hands of the *orangkayas* and the *panglimas*. During this time, these elite groups probably seized the opportunity to enlarge their own interests at the expense of others. This inevitably meant that some groups were discriminated against these groups and then sought to challenge the ruling class of the sultanate by means of rebellion. This conclusion is validated by the subsequent historical developments. When this opposition group realized its goal by deposing the last queen in 1699, the political situation in Aceh became even more uncertain. Reid states that "the reinstatement of male rule under an Arab dynasty in 1699 and a Bugis one in 1727 did nothing to restore the fortunes of the Sultanate."⁷³ If this is so, then the opposition to female rule was not the only motivation for the opposition groups, as early historians claim. The struggle for power resulting from discrimination against certain groups was the major cause for the rise of opposition movements.

Furthermore, the political journey of the opposition groups under the reign of Nur 'Alam is not known. However, there are indications that their struggle against a female ruler continued. During the reign of the third queen, 'Inayat Shāh Zakī al-Dīn, they escalated their resistance. Besides open confrontation, they also made contacts with Mecca to gain support from that center of the Islamic world. Djamil

⁷² Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 192.

⁷³ Reid, *The Contest*, 6.

points out that the "political opposition group which got rid of the Wujūdiyya members asked for the support of the *Sharīf* and *Muftī* of Mecca in their struggle against the female ruler."⁷⁴

Local historians such as Djamil, Hasjmy, and Zainuddin have linked this appeal to the arrival of a Meccan delegation sent by Mecca's *Sharīf* to Aceh during the reign of Queen 'Ināyat Shāh. This delegation was originally sent to the sultān of India. When the ruler of Mogul India, Aurangzeb, refused to meet this delegation, they decided to go to Aceh on their own initiative.⁷⁵ Historians have proposed different reasons for the visit by this Arab delegation. From various writings of the local historians we gain an impression that among them there is no agreement on this matter. Said, who mostly quotes Snouck Hurgronje on this issue, does not examine any further the reasons for the arrival of this delegation of the *Sharīf* of Mecca during this time. According to Hurgronje, as quoted by Said, "this delegation was the one which was sent by *Sharīf* Barakat, the ruler of Mecca."⁷⁶ The silence of Said in this respect seems to imply that the visit was a natural or bilateral link between the two countries. On the other hands Djamil, supported by Hasjmy and Ainal Mardhiah, supposes that the visit was in response to the request of the opposition groups that sought support from Mecca in their struggle to overthrow the female ruler in the sultanate. Even, Djamil as quoted by Hasjmy, further maintains that "because of the repeated appeals to Mecca, the *Sharīf* and *Muftī* of Mecca sent their delegation to Aceh to investigate the reports

⁷⁴ Djamil, *Silsilah Tawarich*, 47.

⁷⁵ Said, *Aceh*, 408-442; see also Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part 2, 249-250.

⁷⁶ Said, *Aceh*, 410.

of the opposition groups which were supported by the 'Wujūdiyya' members."⁷⁷ However, it is important to note that this contention of Djamil is still questionable for there is not a single reliable datum to support this opinion.

Given the absence of documentation on this issue in the original sources, it is difficult to reach any definite conclusion. I am inclined to believe in the first interpretation that the coming of the delegation of the Mecca's *Sharīf* to Aceh under the reign of Queen 'Inayat Shāh was an indication that there were bilateral relations between Mecca and Aceh. This means that they were not directly invited by the opposition groups as proposed by Djamil. According to the chronicles of Mecca, translated by Snouck Hurgronje, the delegation received a hearty welcome by the court and left Aceh only after receiving very generous gift from the queen.⁷⁸ However, it is not impossible that the opposition groups sought to use the delegation as part of their strategy to overthrow the queen. This strategy seems to have succeeded. When this Meccan delegation returned to Mecca, two of their members stayed in Aceh, namely Sharīf Hāshim Jamāl al-Lail and Sharīf Ibrāhīm. Hasjmy asserts that the opposition groups asked the leader of the delegation of Mecca to leave their two delegation members to teach Islam in Aceh.⁷⁹ However, it was only a ruse of this opposition group. The real aim behind this, as Ainal Mardhiah suggests, was to gain their support to overthrow the queen. They promised the two members of delegation that if they succeeded in dethroning the

⁷⁷ Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 204-208.

⁷⁸ C. Snouck Hurgronje, "Een Mekkaansch Gezantschap Naar Atjeh in 1683," *B.K.13*, (1888).

⁷⁹ Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 207; Djamil, *Silsilah*, 47; Ainal Mardhiah, "Pergerakan Wanita," 293;

queen, one of them would become the sultān of Aceh.⁸⁰ This opinion seems to be correct. Later on, when the opposition groups achieved their aim by deposing the last female ruler, Queen Kemal Shah, one of these Meccan members, Sharīf Hāshim Jamal al-Lail, was elected as the Sultān of Aceh in 1699.

Prior to 1699, the tactics of the opposition groups failed to depose the queen. Records show that the third queen remained in her position until her death in 1688. This implies that the supporters of the queen remained strong and won the conflict against the anti-female rule forces. It is, however, needless to say that the opposition never ceased to fight against the female ruler, both peacefully and violently. Dampier, who stopped in Aceh in 1688, at the end of the reign of the third queen, notes that there were riots caused by this opposition group in the capital of the Acehnese sultanate which resulted in wars between the opposition side and the queens' supporters. Furthermore Dampier notices:

While I was on my Voyage to Tonquin, the old Queen died, and there was another Queen chosen in her room, but all oronkeys were not for that Election; many of them were for choosing a King. Four of the Oronkeys who lived more remote from the Court, took up Arms to oppose the new Queen and the rest of the Oronkeys, and brought 5 or 6000 men against the City. This Army was on the East side of the River, and had all the Country on that side, and so much of the City also, as is on that side the River, under their power: But the Queen's palace and the main port of the city, which stands on the west side, held out stoutly. The Queen's party, to oppose them, kept a small Guard of Souldiers just at the Landing-place. The Shahbandar of Achin had a Tent set up there, he being the chief manager of her Affairs: and for the more security, he had 2 or 3 small brass Guns of a Minion bore planted by his Tent all the day with their Muzzle against the River.⁸¹

In this battle we know from Dampier's account that the party of the queen again

⁸⁰ Ainal Mardhiah, "Pergerakan Wanita," 295.

⁸¹ Dampier, *A New Voyage*, 143-144.

prevailed over the opposition group, for even after the death of this third Queen, another queen was posted on the Acehese throne.

In the course of time, the conflict between the supporters of the queen and the opposition groups which had been acute in the Acehese sultanate had also brought a fatal consequence towards the supporters of the queen, resulting in the split of *orangkayas* into two groups. During the reign of Queen Kemaiaat Shah the split took place among the government figures. According to Said, at this culmination point there had been formed two groups who were now in conflict, namely a group of ministers of the sultanate and the *panglimas* of the three federations. "The government group (ministers) wished no longer to accept the female ruler. The group of the three Panglimas of the federations maintained that the woman should continue to sit on the throne."⁸² Why did the ministers of the state suddenly cease to support female rule ? Unfortunately, Said does not answer this question. Yet, I see two possible reasons. First, this may be related to the fact that since the rise of the *panglimas* of the three federations, the power of the state ministers in the kingdom had become limited and most power had been taken over by the three *panglimas*. It is not impossible that the state ministers began to be dictated to by the *panglimas*. Owing to this, and hoping to regain the power that was lost to the *panglimas*, the ministers finally decided to stand on the side of the group which opposed the position of the female ruler. Second, it is not unlikely that the state ministers saw that the political situation of the sultanate was at a critical point because the opposition groups were rallying the Acehese people behind them. This developments were observed by de Roy,

⁸² Said, *Aceh*, 412.

a Dutch visitor who was in Aceh in 1696. According to him, as quoted by Djajadiningrat, "sometimes the mass of people in a great number came to the palace to protest against the government, asking that the queen be replaced by a male sultān."⁸³

The climax of the struggle of the opposition groups finally took place during the reign of the fourth female ruler, Queen Kemal Shah. The supporters of the queen, both among the *'ulamā'* and the elite group, could not face the challenge launched by the opposition groups. The opposition was greatly successful in convincing the Acehnese that female rule was contrary to the Islamic point of view. This invocation of religious arguments weakened the position of the Acehnese *'ulamā'*, particularly after the death around 1693 of the most influential Islamic figure in the sultanate, Shaikh 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī. As stated earlier, he seems to have been the greatest supporter of the four female rulers under whom he acted as *qāḍī malik al-ādil* (great Muftī) of Aceh. After his death he was replaced by another *qāḍī malik al-ādil* who was unable to face the opposition attacks. There are indications that this successor of 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī, supported the opposition group's struggle, against female rule.⁸⁴

The confusion created by this controversy weakened the credibility of the *'ulamā'*. In order to get a *fatwā* on female rule, the Acehnese sultanate dispatched a delegation headed by the sultanate's *malik al-ādil* to Mecca, to ask the great *Muftī* of Mecca for a clear Islamic ruling.⁸⁵ It was not long after their arrival in

⁸³ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 59-60.

⁸⁴ Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 215.

⁸⁵ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 60; Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part

Mecca that there came an announcement saying that a female ruler was contrary to Islamic teaching.⁸⁶

This last tactic used by the opposition group was successful. In 1699, Queen Kemal Shah, the last of the four female rulers, was deposed after occupying the throne for about eleven years. It is reported that one year after she was overthrown, the queen passed away in 1700.⁸⁷

From the day Queen Kemal Shah was deposed, which resulted in the end of the female dynasty, the Acehese sultanate was again governed by a male ruler. However, interestingly, as I mentioned earlier, this did not resolve the political unrest in the Acehese sultanate. The newly appointed male ruler was again opposed by the Acehese and soon abdicated. The greater part of this discussion, however, belongs to the eighteenth century and I will not elaborate on this. As a last remark of this section, it can be pointed out that the continuous political instability following the period of the female dynasty, resulted in the Acehese sultanate being plunged into open civil wars, marked by "a series of succession disputes, coups, and counter-coups during the eighteenth century (which) brought the political fortunes of Atjeh to their lowest ebb."⁸⁸

two, 244.

⁸⁶ Said, *Aceh*, 412-413; Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 60; See also Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part 2, 244; Fatima Mernissi, *Sultanes Oubliees Femmes Chefs d'Etat en Islam* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1990), 152.

⁸⁷ Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies* (London: The Argonaut Press, 1930), 55.

⁸⁸ Reid, *The Contest*, 6.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DECLINE OF ACEH'S REGIONAL POWER

In this last chapter the discussion is mainly focused on two aspects- external politics and economic supremacy. First, the study will show the gradual decline of the regional power of the Acehese empire. An attempt is made to explain the chronological history of its decline as a result of its failure in the war against the Portuguese of Malacca as well as a consequence of the shift in political power in the western part of the Indonesian Archipelago after the Dutch took over the Portuguese position in Malacca in 1641. Second, an effort is also made to illustrate the economic wane of the empire in the region after the rise of the Dutch. Still, it is quite important to notice that unlike the discussion in chapter three which runs until 1699, this following discussion, however, will end with the period between 1670 and 1680. The reason for this is that beyond that period, Aceh had lost most of its political importance as well as its economic supremacy in the region, consequences of losing both its vassals and its trade monopoly in the Malay peninsula and Sumatra.

A. Political Wane and the Loss of the Outlying Possessions

In Chapter Two, the situation of the Acehese empire under its greatest ruler, Sulṭān Iskandar Muda, was discussed. Under his reign the empire reached the zenith of its power in the realms of politics, religion, military might and economy. Iskandar Muda's empire was the strongest power in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago. It covered the west coast of Sumatra and almost the

entire Malay Peninsula, except Malacca where the Portuguese had strongholds.

However, despite these successes the Acehnese empire failed to deal with major challenges. It failed to destroy its sworn enemy, the Portuguese in Malacca. Like his predecessors, Iskandar Muda endeavored to oust the Portuguese from this area. As Ahmad Zakaria pointed out, the existence of the Portuguese in Malacca was a great barrier to Iskandar Muda's ambition to establish himself as the sole ruler of the region.¹ This explains why many attacks on Portuguese Malacca were launched by the Acehnese empire throughout the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century. Under Sultān Iskandar Muda, Aceh attacked the Portuguese twice. In 1615 eight years after Iskandar Muda came to power, Aceh sent a large naval expedition to attack the Portuguese base in Malacca.² In this battle the Acehnese fleet "consisted of 500 sail, of which 250 were galleys, and among these a hundred were greater than any then used in Europe."³ It was, reported, however, that again Aceh failed. According to Mohammad Said this defeat was due to the fact that in this war the Portuguese received help from 10 warships from the Philippines under the command of Dom Jaoa Da Silva, a Portuguese Governor in Manila.⁴

¹ Zakaria Ahmad, *Sekitar Keradjaan Atjeh dalam Tahun 1520-1675* (Medan: Monora, 1972), 75.

² William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*, a reprint of the third ed. introd. by John Bastin (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966), 441.

³ *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1898), Vol. 1, s.v. "Achin," 96-97.

⁴ Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan: Pt. Percetakan dan Penerbitan Waspada, 1981), 284.

It seems that this defeat did not make Iskandar Muda abandon his ambition to expel the Portuguese from Malacca. Fourteen years later, in 1629, Iskandar Muda again engaged in war against the Portuguese.⁵ This attack seems to have been the last attempt by Aceh to destroy the Portuguese. The sultān of Aceh made full use of all his forces of military capabilities and strength. In this expedition Aceh sent the largest and strongest naval force in its history. Again, two of the greatest Acehnese admirals who led this mission were Orangkaya Maharaja Sri Maharaja and Orangkaya Laksamana. From the Portuguese sources, as related by Boxer, we learn that Aceh's expedition included 236 warships, including 38 galleys, and had 19,300 troops.⁶ However, Aceh was once again defeated. *Bustanu's-Salatin* mentions that this failure was due to the hostility of two Acehnese admirals who led the expedition, Orangkaya Maharaja Sri Maharaja and Orangkaya Laksamana.⁷ In this large and bloody war, the Acehnese experienced great losses. According to some sources, in facing Aceh's attack, the Portuguese received assistance from Goa and some native kingdoms surrounding Malacca

⁵ For a complete history of this matter, see C. R. Boxer, "The Achinese Attack on Malacca in 1629, as Described in Contemporary Portuguese Source," in John Bastian and R. Roolvink, eds., *Malayan and Indonesian Studies, Essays presented to Sir Richard Winstedt on His Eighty-fifth Birthday* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 105-120.

⁶ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Conquest and Commerce in Southern Asia, 1500-1750* (London: Variorum Reprint, 1985), 110.

⁷ Teuku Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, Bab. 2, Fasal 13 (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966), 24; See also Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*, trans. by Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Proyek Permeuseum Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982/1983), 49-50.

such as Johor, Patani⁸ and Pahang.⁹ These united forces finally crushed the Acehese forces. Most of the Acehese troops were killed. Their renowned Commander, Orangkaya Sri Maharaja Lela was killed and its famous admiral, Orangkaya Laksamana was taken captive. As a token of their crushing victory, the Portuguese confiscated the greatest Acehese flagship 'the Cakra Donya' (Terror of the World).¹⁰ This famous ship was then sent to Lisbon together with the captive admiral as trophies.

The defeat of 1629 had far reaching consequences on the external political power of Aceh. Vlekke argues that "this defeat constituted a turning point in Atjeh's history."¹¹ Anthony Reid points out that the disaster in Malacca was the starting point of the decline of the Acehese power.¹² Hall states that "thereafter the power of Acheh began to decline as rapidly as it had arisen."¹³ The political and economic power of Aceh did wane as it began to lose its hold over most of its vassal states in the Malay Peninsula: such as Pahang, Kedah and Johor. This

⁸ F. J. Moorhead, *A History of Malaya and Her Neighbours* (Kuala Lumpur: Longmans of Malaysia Ltd., 1965), vol. 1, 231; D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East-Asia*, 3rd ed. (New York: St Martin's Press, 1962), 46; B. H. M. Vlekke, *Nusantara A History of Indonesia* (The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd., 1959), 122.

⁹ Said, *Aceh*, 297-298.

¹⁰ Denys Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au Temps d'Iskandar Muda 1607-1636* (Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient, 1967), 87.

¹¹ Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 122; See also, James T. Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley: University of California, 1969), 4.

¹² Anthony Reid, "Trade and the Problem of Royal Power in Aceh. Three Stages: c. 1550-1700," in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles, eds., *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. MBRAS, (1979), 52.

¹³ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 346.

triggered the political and economic decline of the Acehnese empire. It became increasingly difficult for it to rebuild its power. This opportunity was used by the Malay states to reconsolidate their power. In the case of Johor, for instance, it is believed that the decline of the power of Aceh during this period resulted in the rapid increase of the power of that Malay kingdom.¹⁴ Johor was one of the leading kingdoms in the Malay peninsula as successor to the Malacca sultanate considered and main native rival of Aceh. As mentioned earlier, this kingdom had been repeatedly attacked by Aceh since the middle of the sixteenth century owing to its frequent alliance with the Portuguese Malacca. It is mentioned that in the year 1613, this kingdom was subdued by Aceh and from then on it became one of the main vassals of Aceh. But, needless to say, the sultān of Johor never stopped attempting at every turn to break free from Acehnese control. It seems that the resistance of this kingdom to the overlordship of Aceh brought it closer to the Portuguese. This explains why Johor always allied itself with the latter in its opposition to Aceh. Bassett says that "protection against Aceh was the fundamental need of Johor"¹⁵ because for Johor, Aceh was a more dangerous enemy than the Portuguese. "The feud between the two Malay empires was in the last resort of greater moment to them than their desire to drive out the Portuguese."¹⁶

¹⁴ J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Forces of Regional and State Integration in the Western Archipelago, c.1500-1700," *JSEAH*, 18 (1987), 36; See also D. K. Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern of Malay Politics, 1629-c. 1655," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 430.

¹⁵ Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 433.

¹⁶ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 345.

Although it is believed that, after the defeat of the 1629, the Acehese empire made no further progress on the political scene of the region,¹⁷ it seems to me that the empire still tried to rebuild its power and regain its former position. Three years after the defeat, Iskandar Muda attempted to avenge the losses inflicted upon him by the Portuguese. To this end, he began to approach the Dutch for help. He probably resorted to the Dutch because he lacked the military means to attack the Portuguese. Kathirithamby, quoting from Dutch sources, says that:

In 1632, in return for an alliance against the Portuguese, he (Iskandar Muda) signed away to the Dutch some of the very concessions which he had for so long prudently withheld from them. By this agreement the Dutch were allowed 4 years toll-free trade in the whole kingdom, including freedom to participate in Perak tin trade.¹⁸

In addition, Pahang, a former vassal of Aceh, which had made an alliance with the Portuguese during the 1629 war, was again attacked and subjugated by Aceh in 1635.¹⁹ Apart from that, however, even though the plan of Sultān Iskandar Muda was to revive Acehese power, he was never able to realize his vision for he died suddenly in 1636.

Following the death of sultān Iskandar Muda, Sultān Iskandar Thāni took over the Acehese throne. Under his leadership, the external power of Aceh further declined, particularly vis a' vis the Acehese outlying possessions in the Malay Peninsula which were still under the influence of Aceh. Generally, scholars are in

¹⁷ Rusdi Sufi, "Sultan Iskandar Muda," in *Dari Sini la Bersemi* (Banda Aceh: Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1981), 110; Said, *Aceh*, 302.

¹⁸ J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Acehese Control over West Sumatra up to the Treaty of Painan, 1663," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 464.

¹⁹ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 50; R. O. Winstedt and R. J. Wilkinson "A History of Perak," *MBRAS* 3 (1974), 20; W. Linehan, "A History of Pahang," *JMBRAS*, 14 part 2 (1936), 37.

agreement that this was due to the fact that his policy was weaker than that of his predecessor, Sulṭān Iskandar Muda. In this respect, Fadhullah bin Jamil adds that under the rule of Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni the Acehese sultanate began to inadvertently abandon its external political ambitions. Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni paid more attention to the internal development of the sultanate than to political competition with the outside world.²⁰ This shift in political orientation is attributed to the fact that he was originally a descendant of the line of the Sulṭān of Pahang on the Malay Peninsula. As stated in the previous chapter, when Iskandar Muda subjugated the Pahang kingdom in 1617, Iskandar Thāni together with his mother were held as captives and brought to Aceh. Later on he married Sri 'Alam Safiat al-Dīn, the daughter of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda and was appointed as the prince of Aceh. He was, then, declared as the heir to Sulṭān Iskandar Muda.²¹ Therefore, as a prince of Pahang blood, his political attitude towards the Malay states was more flexible. In fact, this was not to the advantage of the Acehese sultanate because the Malay states seized the opportunity to regain their strong position in the region. As a result, Acehese political power in the Malay Peninsula declined further and further.

Furthermore, in contrast to his predecessors who were uncompromising in dealing with the foreign powers, Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni shifted towards the Portuguese, who used to be the sworn enemy of Aceh, as well as to the Dutch. Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni made friendly gestures towards the Portuguese. During the

²⁰ Fadhullah Bin Jamil, "Kerajaan Aceh dan Hubungannya dengan Semenanjung Tanah Melayu," in A. Hasjmy, ed., *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Pt. Almarif, 1989), 74.

²¹ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 37-39.

first year of his reign, the Portuguese sent their representative to the sultanate to request the release of their men, who were jailed by Iskandar Muda. The sultān granted this request and freed the Portuguese prisoners.²² Furthermore, in dealing with the Dutch, again the sultān followed a weak policy. Edwin M. Loeb tells us that "Sultan Iskandar Muda was not friendly to the newcomers, the Dutch. However, the following ruler, Sultan Iskandar Tsani, allied himself to the Hollanders."²³ Kathirithamby goes on to argue that "the new ruler's concession to the Dutch went much further than those made by his predecessor."²⁴ In terms of economic concessions, for instance, the sultān gave the Dutch, a special permission not only to purchase tin in Perak which was the only vassal of Aceh in the Malay Peninsula but also gave a wide opportunity for the latter to pursue free trade activities in all ports of the Acehnese empire including in the west coast of Sumatra.²⁵ It is difficult to understand why the sultān went so far in offering concessions to the Dutch. It seems that this was part of his strategy to regain Acehnese control over the kingdom of Pahang in the Malay Peninsula. This attempt by the sultān seems to have been challenged by the ruler of Johor, Sultān Abdul Jalil. On this Bassett writes that: "after becoming Sultan Abdu'l-Jalil III of Johor, Raja Bujang seems to have re-established his authority in Pahang and it was Iskandar Thani's intention to displace him or at least to allow him to rule

²² Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 432-433.

²³ Edwin M. Loeb, *Sumatra Its History and People* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990), 219.

²⁴ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 465.

²⁵ Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme dan Imperialisme di Daerah Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1982/1983), 40-41.

Pahang only as a vassal of Aceh."²⁶ It was this event that most probably finally led Sultān Iskandar Thāni to establish good relations with the Dutch. It is not impossible that the sultān was hoping to get help from the Dutch to free Pahang, his native home, from Johor's influence. This is attested to by the report that Sultān Iskandar Thāni sent a message to the Dutch in Batavia warning that Aceh would break its good alliance with them if the Dutch also established close relations with Johor. It is reported that, in response to the sultān's demand, the Dutch agreed to help Aceh retake Pahang from Johor's control.²⁷ However, the Dutch could not fulfill the Acehnese hope. Later on, the sultān annulled the treaty which he had signed with the Dutch as an ally in the attack against the Portuguese of Malacca.²⁸

As the Acehnese sultanate continued to decline, a great shift took place in the political equilibrium in the Malay world, particularly in Malacca at the end of the first half of the seventeenth century. Two European powers, the Portuguese of Malacca and the Dutch of Batavia engaged in war. The Portuguese, who had been controlling Malacca for more than a century since they captured it in 1511, endeavored to defend this strategic area. This was especially important for the Portuguese since Malacca was "the last Portuguese stronghold in Southeast Asia."²⁹ In other words, if Malacca were lost, the Portuguese would lose their power in the area. The Dutch on the other hand considered the presence and position of the Portuguese in Malacca as an obstacle to their aspiration to

²⁶ Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 434; Linehan, "History of Pahang," 39.

²⁷ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 54.

²⁸ Linehan, "History of Pahang," 39.

²⁹ Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 158.

becoming a "commercial empire" in Asia, particularly in the Indonesian archipelago. For the Dutch, the Portuguese were the "only other serious European rival in Southeast Asia."³⁰ The Dutch sought to take over the Malacca Straits, the most strategic international trade artery in the western part of the archipelago. This necessarily entailed driving out the Portuguese from that area. In fact, the Dutch had been planning this for decades. According to Van Leur, the need to oust the Portuguese from Malacca was first recognized in 1606 when the Dutch made a treaty with the Johor kingdom.³¹ However, the Dutch realized that, at that time, their forces were not strong enough to deal with those of the Portuguese. Realizing this, the Dutch shifted their priority to Jakarta, whose ruler was considerably weaker.³² If Van Leur's statement is true, the Dutch dream of capturing Malacca was realized more than 35 years after their plan was conceived, because it was not until the year 1641 that the Dutch managed to expel the Portuguese from Malacca.

It is not necessary to discuss at length the history of the enmity between the Dutch and the Portuguese or the siege and capture of Malacca by the Dutch.³³ Yet, it is important to notice that in their effort to drive out the Portuguese from Malacca, the Dutch sought support from some Malay native kingdoms such as

³⁰ F. J. Moorhead, *A History of Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur; Longmans of Malaya, 1969), Vol. 2, 15.

³¹ J. C. Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society* (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve Publisher Ltd., 1967), 181; See also E. S. De Klerck, *History of The Netherlands East Indies* (Amsterdam: Israel NV, 1975), 248.

³² Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 181.

³³ For a clear study of this see P. A. Leupe, "The Siege and Capture of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1640-1641," trans. by Mac Hacobian, *JMBRAS*, 14 (1936), part I: 1-176.

Aceh and Johor. However, it seems that the most important state which was first approached by the Dutch was Aceh. The Dutch probably resorted to Aceh because the latter had been long considered a great anti-Portuguese power in the region. The Dutch Governor General in Batavia, Antonio Van Diemen, dispatched his ambassador, Van Deutecom, to meet Sultān Iskandar Thāni in Aceh.³⁴ The Dutch asked the sultān to help them attack the Portuguese at Malacca. This request seems to have been positively received by Sultān Iskandar Thāni. Van Deutecom returned to Batavia on December 7, 1638, after securing the agreement of Aceh to help the Dutch in their coming attack against Portuguese Malacca.³⁵ However, this agreement seems to have been short-lived. The Acehnese sultanate broke this treaty later on. Thus far, there has been no clear suggestion as to why the sultān did not fulfill this promise. Sultān Iskandar Thāni probably realized that the condition of Aceh was no longer strong enough to get involved in such large scale wars, as the naval forces of Aceh considerably weakened after the 1629 defeat. Linehan points out that this refusal may have been due to the actions of the Dutch, who had established a good relationship with the Johor kingdom.³⁶

Following the refusal of Aceh to make an alliance with the Dutch, the latter turned their eyes to the Johor kingdom in the Malay Peninsula. It seems that the sultān of Johor happily agreed to conclude an alliance with the Dutch. Hall points out that, realizing the Dutch were a potential ally against his old enemy, the sultān of Johor agreed to the joint attack on Portuguese Malacca proposed by the

³⁴ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 54; Proyek Inventarisasi, *Sejarah Perlawanan*, 41.

³⁵ Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 433.

³⁶ Linehan, "History of Pahang," 39.

Dutch.³⁷ Bassett adds that "the key figure in committing Johore to an anti-Portuguese alliance with the Dutch seems to have been the *laksamana*, whom Van der Veer described as having always been an instrument against the Portuguese and a true friend of Holland."³⁸

The joint forces of the Dutch and the Johor kingdom besieged Portuguese Malacca in 1640. Eventually, the alliance succeeded in defeating the Portuguese forces and driving them out from Malacca in 1641.³⁹ This war left Malacca in total ruin. Everything in the city was destroyed, including what the Portuguese had established there. Moorhead, quoting the Dutch sources, comments:

From 'a position of prominence and a pleasure resort... this renowned, strongly fortified, wealthy and prosperous city surprisingly and totally changed. It has come down to a commonplace existence, and its wealth and commerce are only a memory.' Famine and pestilence had wrought pitiful destruction. The wealthy, well-build city, with its cultivated lands and 20,000 inhabitants left. Not a single house or shop was left undamaged in this city which presented an appearance of unrelieved ruin.⁴⁰

The Dutch victory in Malacca enhanced their position in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago in general and in the Straits of Malacca in particular. This paved the way for them to achieve political and economic hegemony in the region in the long run. Moorhead argues that this victory of the Dutch gave them at least two great advantages:

In the first place it finally removed her only other serious European rival from South-East Asian waters. It therefore freed the Dutch from the need to

³⁷ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 346.

³⁸ Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 434.

³⁹ Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia: A Short History* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1966), 109.

⁴⁰ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 50.

provide blockading fleets to prevent supplies from reaching the enemy. At the same time Malacca became a Dutch emporium, and this consequently strengthened Dutch control over the Straits.⁴¹

Vlekke further states that the fall of Malacca led the Dutch to become "the masters of the Indonesian seas."⁴²

The fall of Malacca to the Dutch further weakened the position of Aceh in the region during the second half of the seventeenth century. In the case of Mataram in Java, "the fall of Malacca was the harbinger of the approaching end of Mataram's independence; its economic self-sufficiency was broken,"⁴³ Aceh, however, remained independent.⁴⁴ Aceh still made an effort to deal with the growing power of the Dutch in the region. Yet, the great blow to Aceh's regional power following the Dutch's capture of Malacca is undeniable. This was the end of "the era of Acehnese commercial supremacy and political importance."⁴⁵

While the Acehnese sultanate was losing its regional power, a crisis was precipitating internally. It was marked with the sudden death of Sulṭān Iskandar Thāni only one month after the Dutch took over Malacca⁴⁶ without a male heir to

⁴¹ Ibid., 15-16; See also R. C. De longh, "The Economic and Administrative History of Indonesia between 1500 and 1630," in F. H. Van Naerssen and R. C. De longh, *The Economic and Administrative History of Early Indonesia* (Leiden/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1977), 104.

⁴² Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 158.

⁴³ B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1955), part I, 61; see also De Klerck, *History of The Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 253.

⁴⁴ Said, *Aceh*, 400.

⁴⁵ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 465.

⁴⁶ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 13.

succeeded him. His widow, Queen Taj al-'Alam became the ruler of Aceh in the midst of a chaotic political situation. Since I have elaborated on the circumstances that led to her accession in the previous chapter, I will focus here on the regional policies of Aceh under this queen.

As mentioned earlier, Aceh's regional power was already declining by the time Queen Taj al-'Alam came to the throne. The sultanate, which in the early seventeenth century was considered to be the strongest Islamic polity in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago, was no longer seeking to revive its glory. Kathirithamby asserts that, under Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn the sultanate experienced a steady decline in its overseas power and in its territorial control over the vassals which remained under its power.⁴⁷ During this period Aceh made peace with the Johor kingdom in the Malaya Peninsula,⁴⁸ its latter day native arch-enemy. Aceh could no longer be counted on by any power in the region. The political, economic and military decline had set in.

Most historians link this decline to the rise of the Dutch after they captured Malacca. A. Hasjmy, however, seems to be inclined to interpret it in terms of a religious war between Islam and Christianity. According to him, the loss of the Acehnese outlying possessions during the reign of Queen Safiat al-Dīn was part of the conspiracy of the Dutch, the Western imperialists, to destroy Islam.⁴⁹ It is, however, hard to agree with Hasjmy's point of view. As a matter of fact, Hasjmy

⁴⁷ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 465-466.

⁴⁸ De Klerck, *The History of Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 271; Linehan, "History of Pahang," 39.

⁴⁹ A. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka Dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977), 144.

offers no reliable information to support his argument. Another local historian, Said, gives a more realistic explanation. According to him, the inability of the Acehese sultanate under Queen Safiat al-Dīn to maintain its external political power was due to the lack of unity among the native kingdoms of the area in facing the Dutch.⁵⁰ Yet, even though both these local historians, Hasjmy and Said have different perspectives, one religious and the other political, it seems to me that both agree that the most important factor which led to the decline of Aceh's regional power was the rise and pressure of the Dutch. In other words, both imply that the external factor played a more important role than the internal one.

Kathirithamby, on the other hand, believes that the internal factor also played a crucial role. According to her, the internal and external factors are interrelated.

Her long reign saw the steady decline of Achenese power overseas and increasing powers of the Orang Kayas at home. The sultanate's extensive territorial control either diminished or else became less effective as a result of internal weakness and external commercial pressure from the Dutch. The capture of Malacca by the Company, in fact, boosted Dutch prestige and damaged Aceh's bargaining powers to such an extent that the Queen was obliged to adopt a conciliatory policy.⁵¹

It seems to me that the internal factor played a more decisive role in the decline of Aceh. I therefore tend to agree with Kathirithamby's interpretation rather than with that of the local historians. The internal disintegration that prevailed during the reign of Queen Taj al-'Alam⁵² strongly affected Aceh's external power. Meanwhile, the Dutch's power was growing steadily after they captured Malacca in 1641. The latter naturally made use of the weak Acehese condition to reduce

⁵⁰ Said, *Aceh*, 394.

⁵¹ Kathirithamby, "Achehese Control," 466.

⁵² See chapter three for an elaborate discussion of this point.

their rivalries. In fact, the only strong native enemy of the Dutch in this region was Aceh. So, in this context, the rise of the Dutch made the political situation of Aceh more critical. As Anthony Reid puts it, "the reduced skill and authority of rulers who followed Iskandar Muda, and the rapidly growing commercial power of the Dutch after their capture of Malacca, speeded this process."⁵³

It seems that Queen Safiat al-Dīn followed the example of Sultān Iskandar Thāni in ruling the sultanate. She was even much more flexible and generous in making concessions to the foreigners. This allowed the Dutch to consolidate their power in the region at Aceh's expense. They kept up the pressure on Aceh in order to achieve total control over the western part of the Indonesian Archipelago in the long run. The inability of Aceh to deal with the Dutch is reflected in the fact that, under Queen Safiat al-Dīn, Aceh concluded many treaties and agreements with the Dutch, granting them major concessions, especially economic ones. This will be examined in the next section.

During the reign of Queen Safiat al-Dīn the Acehnese vassals resorted either to force or to alliance with the Dutch in order to achieve their independence.⁵⁴ Gradually, Aceh lost its control over one region after another until its territory narrowed down to its main part in the northern tip of Sumatra.⁵⁵ Ahmad claims that at the end of the reign of Queen Safiat al-Dīn all Acehnese vassals had already gained their independence.⁵⁶ From Ahmad's point of view, it can definitely be

⁵³ Reid, "Trade and the Problem," 52.

⁵⁴ Ailsa Zainu'ddin, *A Short History of Indonesia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 104.

⁵⁵ Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh*, 57.

concluded that the external political power of Aceh was reduced to nothing in the span of thirty-five years.

The subsequent history of the loss of political power of Aceh, beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century, may now be told. As indicated earlier, since the destruction of the Acehese naval forces in 1629, Acehese bargaining power on the political scene of the western part of the Archipelago was drastically reduced. The regions conquered by Aceh in the Malay Peninsula such as Johor, Pahang and Kedah made use of the weakness of Aceh to free themselves from Acehese control. As a matter of fact, from then on the only effective vassal which remained under the control of Aceh was Perak,⁵⁷ together with some areas in the west coast of Sumatra. It is reported that Perak was subdued by Aceh twice in 1575 and 1620. Economically, Perak remained important for Aceh since it produced a huge amount of tin. The monopoly on Perak's tin trade helped greatly in supporting the economy of the Acehese sultanate. However, after almost a century of subjugation to Aceh, Perak finally managed to break away in 1660. This was due to the inability of Aceh to protect the interests of Perak's people when the Dutch sought to secure a monopoly on tin production in that region. Aceh gave in to the pressure of the Dutch and was forced to grant them a special concession. This was a great disappointment to the Peraknese people. Realizing that Aceh was no longer able to protect Perak's interests, the Peraknese people decided to cease paying their allegiances to Aceh. Hall points out that "Perak, annoyed by Aceh's action in concluding the treaty, threatened to transfer her

⁵⁶ Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 57.

⁵⁷ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 346; K. G. Treggonying *A History of Modern Malaya* (New York: David McKay, Inc., 1964), 56.

allegiances to Johor."⁵⁸ The secession of Perak sealed the demise of Aceh's power in the Malay peninsula. Aceh was never again to regain its regional power. The loss of Perak dealt a devastating blow to the Acehnese economy which depended heavily on the monopoly of the region's tin trade. This will be examined next.

Acehnese control did not only decline in the Malay Peninsula but also in the west coast of Sumatra. The time had come for some local chiefs in the region to consolidate their power and shake off Aceh's domination over their territories. The dynamics of the decline of the Acehnese power in west Sumatra were different from those of the Malay Peninsula. This decline was not triggered by the dissatisfaction of the people with Acehnese sovereignty. Rather, it was precipitated by the ambitions of a small number of local political adventurers who sought to break away from Aceh's dwindling control.⁵⁹ The plan of a number of local chiefs in west Sumatra to break loose from Acehnese influence was first foreseen in 1657 when Anthony Van Voorst, the Dutch representative of Batavia, made a visit to these regions. The purpose of his visit was to negotiate the release of Dutch prisoners jailed by the Acehnese in Pariaman. The coming of this Dutch representative was used by a number of influential local chiefs to send a Minangkabau leader, Raja Lela, to Van Voorst to present their plan to drive out the Acehnese from the area.⁶⁰ Then in 1661 they sent another delegation to Dutch Batavia for the same purpose. This mission was led by Raja Panjang and its

⁵⁸ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 348.

⁵⁹ Said, *Aceh*, 399.

⁶⁰ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 469.

purpose was to secure Dutch support for the local chiefs' plan of secession.⁶¹ The Dutch, who had longstanding interest in the economic resources of these regions, responded positively. In 1662, one year after the mission of the local chiefs to Batavia, the Dutch replied and sent representatives. In this meeting a treaty was signed by both sides. A year later, the famous "treaty of Painan", was concluded and with it the dream of the people in these regions came true.⁶² Vlekke observes,

Steady work among the local chiefs on the west coast, who already resented the overlordship of Atjeh, finally led to the conclusion of the treaty of Painan (July 6, 1663), in which the districts of Indrapura, Tiku, and Padang put themselves under the protection of the Company, which, in turn, in exchange for an absolute monopoly of trade, promised to guarantee these districts complete independence from Atjeh.⁶³

By this treaty, Acehese control over the west coast of Sumatra was terminated. However, it seems that the Dutch found it difficult to take over the former Acehese position. In this regard, Schrieke mentions that "the Company, which took the place of Achin as suzerain, was not able to enjoy its possession in quiet, however. The after-effects of Acehese influence continued to work for a long time."⁶⁴

The secession of Aceh's vassals on the west coast of Sumatra was followed by that of its vassals on the east coast. Both Marsden and Said point out that Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn failed to maintain the Acehese overlordship over the region of Deli. By 1669, this region broke away from the Acehese empire, and

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 473.

⁶² De Klerck, *History of the Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 273.

⁶³ Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 171; See also Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 23.

⁶⁴ Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part 1, 63; See also Said, *Aceh*, 400.

from then on, Aceh lost its entire power in the region.⁶⁵

B. The Decline of Economic Supremacy

Information on the decline of Aceh's economic supremacy is scanty. Whereas we have plenty of information on the economic supremacy of the Acehnese empire during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the period of decline which follows received little attention.

It is believed, however, that the decline of Aceh's regional supremacy was concomitant with a process of economic weakening. From the second half of the seventeenth century, Aceh began to wane in its important role as a trading entrepot in the area. It seems that unlike the preceding decades of the seventeenth century in which the Acehnese port had been the busiest port in the area, its activity was considerably reduced. Some historians have linked this to the Europeans' more advanced techniques of navigation.

The Art of Navigation among the earlier traders was so defective, that they found it an advantage to be supplied with the produce of the whole Archipelago at entrepots such as Acheen and Pedir, without the risk and loss of time necessary for them to go to the several ports, collecting produce themselves, but from the better navigation of Europeans and their energy of character, they now began to visit the whole of the ports where they could barter their goods for the produce of the country, consequently Acheen, which rose to importance from its position as a trading entrepot now began to decline rapidly.⁶⁶

The economic decline of the Acehnese empire was due to its trade losses

⁶⁵ Marsden, *Sumatra*, 448; Said, *Aceh*, 401-402.

⁶⁶ Thomas Braddel, "Translation of the Annals of Acheen," *JIAEA*, 4 (1850), 64 n8.

resulting from "the collapse of the patronage system, which was based on international control of trade"⁶⁷ in the region. In addition, as a result of the migration of traders from the Acehese port, Aceh lost the revenues from the foreign trading vessels which used to pay "the harbor-dues of the capital of Atjeh."⁶⁸ Moreover, Aceh was unable to deal with the growing commercial power of the Dutch after they captured Malacca in 1641. Kathirithamby states that "the Dutch capture of Malacca in 1641 affected the era of Achehnese commercial supremacy and political importance."⁶⁹ As mentioned earlier, the main goal of the Dutch in expelling the Portuguese from Malacca was to achieve economic hegemony over the western part of the Indonesian archipelago, especially the Straits of Malacca. Therefore, not long after they captured Malacca the Dutch took concrete steps to control the international trade route in the region. S. Arasaratman has pointed out that "the Dutch were trying out the idea of forcing all traders who came to Malayan ports to call only at Malacca to transact their business."⁷⁰ Through this move, according to Moorhead, the Dutch sought to "secure the fulfillment of their hoped-for monopoly,"⁷¹ over any valuable production both in the Malay Peninsula and in Sumatra.

⁶⁷ Eric Eugene Morrice, "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia," Ph.D Thesis (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1983), 25.

⁶⁸ H. A. R. Gibb, et al. eds., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), S.v. "Atjeh," by A. J. Piekaar.

⁶⁹ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 465.

⁷⁰ S. Arasaratman, "Some Notes on the Dutch in Malacca and the Indo-Malayan Trade 1641-1670," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 482.

⁷¹ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 55.

It seems that since the rise of the Dutch in Malacca, the superior economic position of Aceh became more and more vulnerable. During that time Aceh began to be pressured by the Dutch to reduce its trade involvement in the region. The Dutch, for example, sought the monopoly over the tin production in Perak, an outlying possession of Aceh in the Malay Peninsula. Said illustrates that in 1641 the Dutch in Batavia dispatched their commercial representative, Puijt to the sultān of Perak, demanding that the latter to stop selling tin to other foreign traders and requesting that all Perak's tin production should be sold to the V.O.C.⁷² However, the sultān of Perak "refused to make the usual treaty in 1641, on the grounds that only Aceh, their suzerain, could authorise them to do so."⁷³ After this failure to fulfill their ambition to monopolize the tin trade in Perak, the Dutch responded by blockading the entrance river of the kingdom. Most foreign trading vessels were prevented from entering the port of Perak. Under this pressure, Perak finally gave in to the Dutch. The ruler of Perak, Sultān Muzzafar Shāh, sent his men to the Governor of the Dutch in Malacca in order to negotiate the Dutch demand for tin trade monopoly. In these talks, the sultān of Perak finally conceded to a Dutch monopoly over tin trade in the region. This concession, however, was opposed by the Acehnese empire. Aceh issued a strong protest to the Dutch. This protest seems to have been heeded by the Dutch since they realized that Perak was still an outlying possession of Aceh. In 1644, the Dutch sent a delegation under their high Commissioner, Arnold de Vlaming Van Outhoorn, along with Jan Harmansz, a head of the Dutch trading board, to negotiate with the ruler of Aceh, Queen

⁷² Said, *Aceh*, 383; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 81; Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 347.

⁷³ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 57; See also Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 347.

Safiat al-Dīn.⁷⁴ It is reported that this delegation was well received by Queen Safiat al-Dīn through her state ministers, Orang Kaya Bintara Raja, Setia Wangsa and Saudagar Raja.⁷⁵ However, the Dutch failed to secure a treaty from the Acehnese empire. The queen of Aceh probably believed that if the treaty were signed, the Acehnese economy, which was largely supported by its trade in the region, would be entirely broken, and thus they refused the Dutch request.

Having failed to secure a treaty with Aceh for the tin monopoly in Perak and unable to cope with other foreign traders from Pegu, Coromandel, Bengal and Surat, the Dutch, in 1647, blockaded the sea route in the region, in particular the entrance to Aceh and Perak.⁷⁶ Moorhead states that "in 1647 the Dutch, realizing Aceh's growing weakness, forbade Indian ships to call there or at any Malay port."⁷⁷ Aceh's trade activities were paralyzed because most traders were unable to enter its ports. That the inability of the Acehnese sultanate to break this Dutch blockade, showed that at this time Acehnese naval forces were no longer powerful enough to deal with the Dutch. The only retaliatory move which the ruler of Aceh could afford was to ask the Dutch to close their factory in Aceh. But later on, Safiat al-Dīn realized that this tactic was not effective enough. Bassett, for instance, writes: "Taj al-'Alam prevented the withdrawal of the Dutch factory from Aceh because she saw it as her last guarantee against an actual Dutch invasion of Aceh."⁷⁸ Needless to say, the inability of the Queen to end the Dutch blockade

⁷⁴ Said, *Aceh*, 385; Ahmad, *Sekitar*, 81.

⁷⁵ Said, *Aceh*, 386.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 384.

⁷⁷ Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 57.

obviously made the condition of Aceh worse. The Acehnese empire realized this would destroy their economic base and Queen Safiat al-Dīn was forced to pursue a policy of accommodation towards the Dutch. Kathirithamby argues that "intimidated by the Dutch Company's aggressive tactics, in 1648 sultan Taj'ul-Alam sent two ambassadors to Batavia promising the tin trade of Perak."⁷⁹ Two years later, in 1650, a treaty was finally signed between Aceh and the Dutch, stipulating that both sides would share the trade of Perak "on a fifty-fifty basis."⁸⁰

This treaty, however, was never implemented because the Peraknese strongly opposed it. According to Said, from the Peraknese perspective, the treaty between Aceh and the Dutch would have incurred great losses on the Peraknese and reduced their freedom to sell their tin to other traders.⁸¹ Thus, in 1651, the Peraknese people attacked the Dutch factory and killed all the officials in charge there.⁸² After this event, the Dutch again failed to secure the tin monopoly in Perak. This failure led them to again impose a blockade on the sea routes of Aceh and Perak. It is reported that this blockade lasted three years.

It is not the aim of this study to recount the history of Aceh's struggle against the Dutch attempt to take control over tin production in Perak. To sum up, following

⁷⁸ Bassett, *Changes in the Pattern*," 447.

⁷⁹ Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 466.

⁸⁰ D. J. M. Tate, *The Making of Modern South-East Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1971), Vol. 1, 226; See also Bassett, "Changes in the Pattern," 447; Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 347.

⁸¹ Said, *Aceh*, 394.

⁸² Moorhead, *A History of Malaya*, Vol. 2, 57; Kathirithamby, "Acehnese Control," 468; Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 347.

the treaty of 1650 Aceh was forced to sign with the Dutch two other treaties conceding their tin trade monopoly in Perak in 1655 and 1659. It is reported that, before signing the treaty of 1659, a delegation of Aceh was sent by Queen Safiat al-Dīn to Batavia. They were directly received by Maetsuycker, the Dutch Governor General in Batavia and "a treaty was signed which provided for the payment of compensation through a reduction in the price of the tin bought by the Dutch in Perak and a division of trade whereby the Achinese were to take one-third and the V.O.C. two-thirds of Perak tin export."⁸³

It seems that this treaty was the last economic treaty between the Acehnese empire and the Dutch dealing with the tin trade in Perak. This treaty paved the way for the secession of Perak from Aceh. One year later, Aceh lost its share of tin trade monopoly in Perak as a result of losing its overlordship over that kingdom. This put an end to the role of Aceh in Perak.⁸⁴ Meanwhile, as Hall writes, "as things turned out, however, the Dutch tin trade with Perak improved considerably, for the reason that Aceh's decline became so marked that few of her vessels visited the port."⁸⁵

After losing its monopoly over tin trade in Perak, Aceh had to face serious competition from the Dutch in other areas, particularly in the west Sumatran coast. As mentioned before, during the reign of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda, Aceh was able to control these regions. Their two main products, gold and pepper, were monopolized by the Acehnese empire. To install an Acehnese monopoly over

⁸³ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 348.

⁸⁴ Treggoning, *A History of Modern*, 57.

⁸⁵ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 348.

these important resources, *panglimas*, of Acehese blood were stationed by Sultān Iskandar Muda in the major export and production harbours such as Indrapura, Tiku, Salida and Pariaman.⁸⁶ However, as Aceh's power declined, the Dutch sought to destroy the Acehese monopoly over gold and pepper in these regions. More clearly, Said points out that the competition was based basically on the ambition of the Dutch to monopolize pepper in west Sumatra and gold in Salida.⁸⁷ To realize their ambitions, the Dutch, taking advantage of Aceh's weakness, approached local chiefs in the regions "to make individual agreements by which they were to forsake their allegiance to Aceh and come under the company's protection."⁸⁸ Even to fulfill their end, the Dutch set a strategy to interrupt the Acehese economy by using a hard-line policy in order to destroy the trade activity of Aceh in these regions. In this regard Kathirithamby, quoting Dutch sources, states that the Dutch resorted to an aggressive strategy. "Some officials in the east suggested that the Company take advantage of Aceh's weakness to gain the west coast trade by aggressive methods, such as the interception of Muslim shipping."⁸⁹ This strategy was soon implemented. When Aceh refused to give full monopoly over valuable goods in these regions to the Dutch in 1656, the Dutch launched a blockade over the west Sumatran coast.⁹⁰ This move was successful in interrupting the Acehese trade activity in the region. It seems that

⁸⁶ Kathirithamby, "Acehese Control," 460.

⁸⁷ Said, *Aceh*, 394.

⁸⁸ Hall, *South-East-Asia*, 344.

⁸⁹ Kathirithamby, "Acehese Control," 466.

⁹⁰ De Klerck, *History of the Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 272; See also A. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 150.

Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn saw no other way to stop the Dutch blockade but to concede to the latter's demand. Aceh was forced to negotiate with the Dutch to save its paralyzed economy. Accordingly, "it was not before 1659 that the Sultana, compelled by the harm inflicted on trade, sent an embassy to Batavia to restore peace."⁹¹ Like the case of tin trade in Perak, Aceh again was forced to accept the demand of the Dutch by signing a treaty with them. According to Hasjmy, in this treaty, two things were concluded. First, only V.O.C was allowed to purchase pepper in Minangkabau. Second, other traders such as the English, the Portuguese, the Arabs, the Javanese, the Chinese, the Malays, the Gujarats and the Buginese were prohibited from trading on the west coast of Sumatra.⁹²

In addition, in order to manage the trade on the west coast of Sumatra, the Dutch of Batavia sent Balthasar Bort to the region in 1660. Later on three Dutch agents were placed in Indrapura, Tiku and Padang as Residents.⁹³ Gradually, "most of the pepper states of Western Sumatra fell under the Dutch monopoly system."⁹⁴ Five years later, Aceh was forced to cease its commercial activities in the region. The growing power of the Dutch on the west coast of Sumatra finally broke down the Acehnese trade monopoly there. Said points out that, beginning from 1665, the Dutch secured a complete trade monopoly in these regions, including gold. Five years later they took over gold production and exploitation in

⁹¹ De Klerck, *History of the Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 272.

⁹² A. Hasjmy, *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka*, 150.

⁹³ Kathirithamby, "Achehnese Control," 468; De Klerck, *History of the Netherlands*, Vol. 1, 273.

⁹⁴ Tate, *The Making of Modern*, Vol. 1, 226.

Salida.⁹⁵ By the year 1680, Aceh was no longer able to maintain its trade domination in these regions. Shortly afterwards, its control over the pepper trade was terminated.⁹⁶

From the previous discussion it can be concluded that the pressure of the Dutch after capturing Malacca ultimately ended Acehnese commercial privileges in two important producing areas, Perak and the west coast of Sumatra. The monopoly over the tin trade in Perak and gold and pepper in west Sumatra which sustained Aceh's wealth was taken over by the Dutch. Economically, "this was a big loss for Aceh."⁹⁷ "Deprived of her monopolies, Aceh's hope of revival as imperial power was destroyed."⁹⁸

Even though it is greatly believed that Aceh during the second half of the seventeenth century, began to lose its commercial supremacy in the region, there is no doubt that the main port of Aceh located in the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh, as a trading port still played a considerable role in the region, being still very much frequented by various Asian and European merchants who pursued their trade activities there. This assumption is based mainly on the fact that the former function of the port of Aceh, labelled "cosmopolitan",⁹⁹ could still be maintained during this time. Historical evidence clarifies this matter. Under the reign of the first female ruler of Aceh, Queen Safiat al-Dīn, international traders still visited the

⁹⁵ Said, *Aceh*, 401.

⁹⁶ Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 201.

⁹⁷ Said, *Aceh*, 401.

⁹⁸ Tate, *The Making of Modern*, 226.

⁹⁹ Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological*, part 1, 43.

port of Aceh. In this regard, *Bustanu's Salatin* mentions that the city of Aceh was never quiet at any season, being frequented by many ships. Its capital, Banda Aceh, was very prosperous where food supplies were cheap and people lived in tranquility.¹⁰⁰ In addition, two other witnesses who came to the city of Aceh in a different period, Thomas Bowrey and William Dampier, give evidence to support the above conclusion that the port of Aceh was still frequented and never quiet from foreign and Asian merchants. Bowrey, for instance, who was in Aceh during the last reign of Queen Safiat al-Dīn, reported that:

Many Ships and vessels doe att all Seasons of the Yeare arrive in this Port from Severall places, namely Suratt, Malabar Coast or Coast of India, Fort St. George's, Metchlipatam, Bengala, Pegu, Syam, China, Java Major and Borneo, with infinite Numbers of Prows from the Malay Shore and West Coast of this Island Sumatra.¹⁰¹

In addition, Bowrey also listed a number of imported commodities which were brought to Aceh by the above mentioned merchants. Such goods were baftos, cotton, paintings, carpets of Surat, rice, butter oil, longcloth, *salampores* of India and Coromandel, fine chintz of Mechlipatam, and a number of commodities of England and Golcondah and Pettipole like cushion carpet, stipped stuff, scarlet, broadcloth, scissors and knives.¹⁰²

Still, around eighteen years after Bowrey's stay in Aceh in 1670, in 1688 when William Dampier visited the city of Aceh, he recorded that in the port of Aceh

¹⁰⁰ Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin*, 59; See also Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 171.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal 1669 to 1679*, ed. by Sir Richard Carnac Temple (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1903), 287-288.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 288-289.

foreign vessels were going in and out.

All ships bound from Achin to the Westward, or coming from thence to Achin, go in and out thro one or other of these channels. For the road is seldom without 10 or 15 sail of ships of several Nations. These bring all sort of Vendible Commodities, as Silks, Chints, Muslins, Callicoes, Rice, &tc. and as to this last, a man would admire to see what great quantities of Rice are brought hither by the English, Dutch, Danes, and Chinese.¹⁰³

Based on the above information, it is, therefore, no exaggeration to conclude that although during the reign of the Acehnese queens, the empire's economic supremacy waned, Aceh as the city of trade still played a rather important role in the region. In this respect, Reid concludes that "the four queens of Aceh (1641-99) witnessed the military and political decline that followed the conquest of Iskandar Muda (1607-36), but they nevertheless maintained Aceh as the most important independent port in island Southeast Asia."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (London: J. Knapton, 1697), 122 and 130; See also Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1966), 117.

¹⁰⁴ Reid, *Southeast Asia*, 171.

CONCLUSIONS

The empire of Aceh Darussalam had an interesting historical development. From a less important segmentary state located in the north end of Sumatra in the fifteenth century, the empire suddenly rose as a prominent Islamic power in the early sixteenth century after its first ruler, Sulṭān 'Alī Mughayat Shāh had a great success in unifying all of the small kingdoms surrounding Aceh's territory such as Pidie, Daya, and Samudra Pasai under one political umbrella. There is no doubt that the rise of this new forceful power was a response to the Portuguese. It was a direct consequence of the Portuguese hostility towards Islam after capturing Malacca in the Malay peninsula in 1511 as well as their intrusion into other Muslim states in the region.

In the course of the sixteenth century, Aceh rapidly grew as an important Muslim power in the region under its great ruler, Sulṭān 'Alā' al-Dīn Ri'yāt Shāh al-Qahhar. Al-Qahhar was not only successful in expanding the territory of Aceh to some parts of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula and controlling the economy of the region, but more importantly, consistently relied on its anti-Portuguese attitude as well as working hard to keep the Acehnese strength equal to that of the Portuguese, Aceh's political and economic rival in the area. During this time political links were also established with other great Muslim states such as that of India and the Ottoman Empire. This was aimed at gaining international backing and military support, especially in Aceh's effort to destroy the Portuguese in Malacca. Consequently, during the sixteenth century Aceh became a great barrier to the Portuguese advance in the region.

From its rise in the early sixteenth century, the power of the Acehnese empire steadily increased. In the early seventeenth century, under its greatest ruler, Sultān Iskandar Muda, Aceh emerged as the strongest and unrivalled power in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago. Sultān Iskandar Muda succeeded in ruling and developing the empire with astonishing success both internally and externally. Internally, it was marked by the development of the state in political, economic, social, and religious spheres. He was recognized as an absolute ruler who centered all power in his own hands and followed a strict policy towards his subjects and *orangkayas* (noble men). He was thus successful in centralizing all powers in his own hands. Externally, Iskandar Muda made every attempt to extend the power of Aceh in both Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. With his well equipped naval forces, he succeeded in gaining the political and economic hegemony in both regions. This led the empire to reach its true peak in which its power covered the west coast of Sumatra and almost all the states of the Malay peninsula. Economically, through the sultān's monopolistic strategies the Acehnese capital was transformed into a cosmopolitan trading center in the area. Foreign traders were forced to come to the main port of Aceh when pursuing trade activities because the sultān had channelled all main valuable production in the region into the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh. In addition, during this golden age, Aceh was powerful enough to face any foreign nation which appeared on the political scene of the region: the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. In terms of economics, these foreign powers were allowed to trade in Aceh and its outlying possessions after gaining official licenses from the sultān. No permission was given if these foreign powers did not follow the sultān's demands. That was why most traders had to come to terms with him and "were forced to bow to his

wishes."¹

However, in the second half of the seventeenth century, the Acehese empire entered a new era. This was marked by the rise of a series of female rulers to the top position of the empire. During this period, Aceh gradually lost its political and economic status as a great power.

From the description of Aceh during the second half of the seventeenth century, some conclusions can be drawn.

The choice of Queen Safiat al-Dīn as the ruler on the political stage of the Acehese sultanate did not go smoothly. This selection took place amid the confusion of the leading chiefs of Aceh because of the sudden death of Sultān Iskandar Thāni. In order to prevent a struggle for power, his widow, Queen Taj al-'Alam Safiat al-Dīn, was chosen.

With the rise of female rulers, a struggle for power took place, undertaken by the state ministers in the kingdom. To this end they established a council of 12 *orangkayas* to organize and run the central government of the sultanate. This transition of power was possible due to the mildness of the queen in governing the state. Furthermore, the people after Queen Safiat al-Dīn's death were accustomed to female ruler, who was much more "gentle" than a male ruler. Therefore, it is not surprising that the *orangkayas* decided to maintain the system by posting three other female rulers after Queen Safiat al-Dīn: Queen Nurul 'Alam (1675-1678), Queen Inayat Shah Zakiatuddin (1678-1688), and Queen Kemal

¹ Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 3.

Shah (1688-1699).

Furthermore, there also took place a great shift in the powers of the districts, especially in the core part of the sultanate, Great Aceh. Most *uleebalangs* who formerly functioned as district heads also made use of the weakness of the female rulers to break loose from central control. This situation again changed when the *mukims* formed alliances by organizing themselves into three federations (*sagis*). Each of these were in turn led by a *panglima sagi*. This formation of federations was clearly meant to compete with the central government for the purpose of sharing power in the sultanate. As a result, it was obvious that by that time the power of the queen and her ministers was reduced and only effective in the capital while the *panglimas* gained strong control over the largely agricultural population. In such a political system in which the sovereign's power was limited obviously the rulers had a weak position. It was thus up to the influential leading chiefs such as *panglimas* to replace the ruler's successors based on their choice.

There was a possibility that the Acehnese people split into groups on the issue of the leadership of the female rulers. This was marked by struggles within the Acehnese sultanate resulting in confusion and rebellion. The four queens of Aceh did not come to power then without opposition by the Acehnese. After a *fatwā* from Mecca, which stated that a female ruler was against the Islamic teaching, the female dynasties were finally ended. The last queen was then deposed and succeeded by a male sultān in 1699.

From the external point of view, Aceh which had gained a position of political importance and economic dominance in the region by the middle of the seventeenth century, began to decline gradually. The most important fact that

brought about this shift was the defeat of the Acehese naval force when attacking Portuguese Malacca in the last year of Sulṭān Iskandar Muda's reign in 1629. Following that tragic event, the external political power of the empire, which formerly covered the west and east coasts of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula, was drastically reduced. Most of the important Acehese outlying possessions in those two regions, such as Pahang, Kedah, Johor, Perak, Pariaman, Minangkabau, Salida, and Deli, broke away from the overlordship of Aceh. Consequently, it is noticed that the power of Aceh was then again limited to the core region from which it had arisen.

While this gradual weakening of the Acehese sultanate was taking place, during the second half of the seventeenth century, the Dutch rose as the prominent European power in the region after expelling the Portuguese from Malacca in 1641.

The rise of the Dutch since their capture of Malacca had a two-fold effect on the position of Aceh. It caused the destruction of Aceh's political importance as well as the decline of its economic supremacy. Most of the Acehese vassals, both in the Malay peninsula and on the west and east coasts of Sumatra, were able to free themselves both by way of force and by alliances with the Dutch. Within forty years, Acehese external power was reduced to virtually nothing but its original core in the northern end of Sumatra. Again, in the course of the second half of the seventeenth century, Aceh also experienced a steady drop in economic supremacy and dominance in the region. It was due to the growing commercial power of the Dutch, who made use of the increasing weakness of Aceh, and who made every effort to destroy the Acehese trade monopoly both in the Malay

peninsula and Sumatra. As J. Kathirithamby-Wells points out, "the decline of Aceh's authority over the area from the mid-century upwards was conditioned by external commercial forces connected with Dutch ascendance in the Straits, by the capture of Malacca, and its consequent effect on the sultanate's power and prestige."² As a result, the Acehnese sultanate were unable to cope with the commercial pressure of the Dutch, be it imposed treaties or hard line actions, such as blockades and interception of the Acehnese trade in the area. The Dutch were finally able to break down the Acehnese trade monopoly both in Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. It was not until the 1680s that Aceh had to withdraw most of its trade monopoly and activities from both regions and then turn the sultanate toward dependency on imported goods and internal resources.

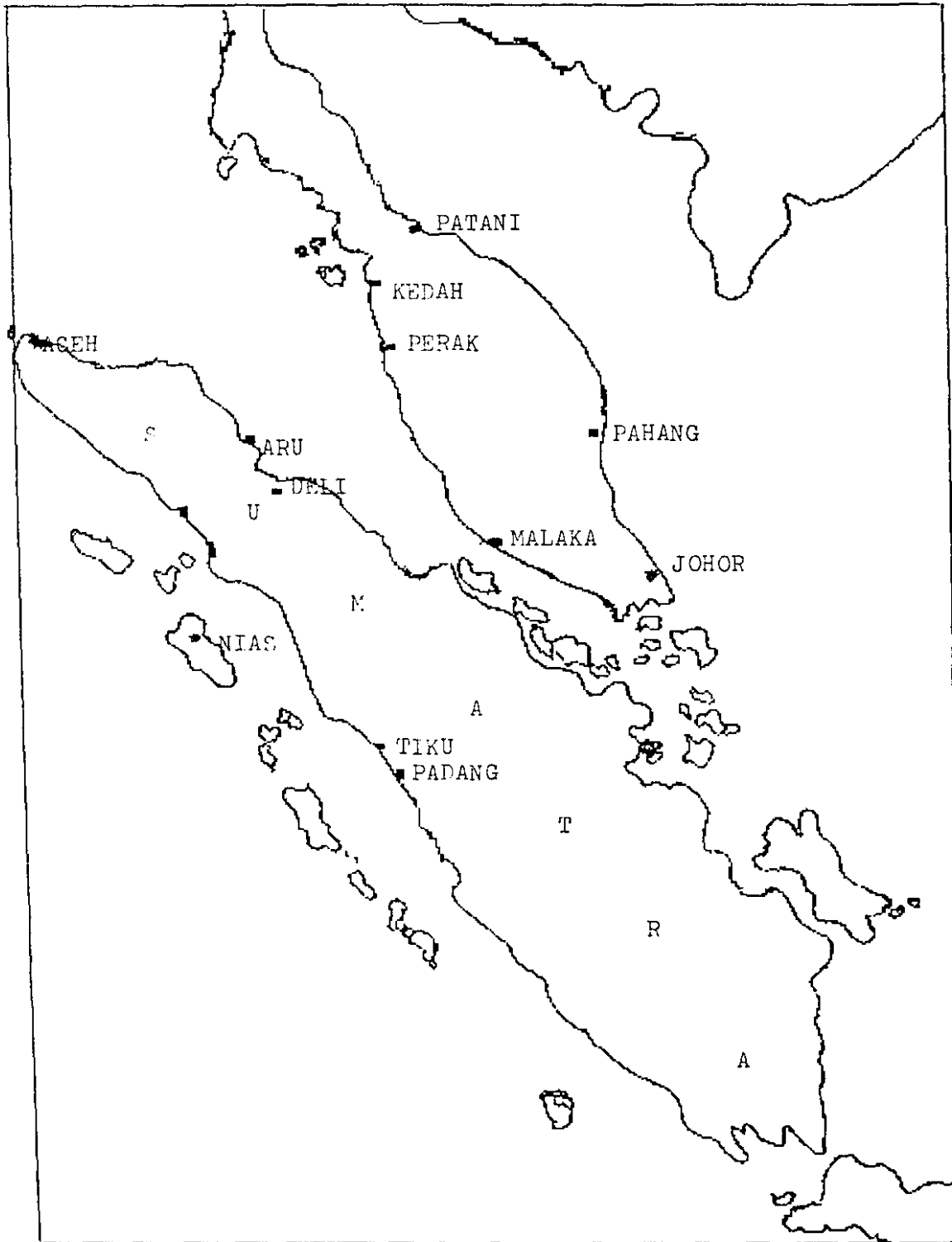
² J. Kathirithamby-Wells, "Acehnese Control over West Sumatra up to the Treaty of Painan, 1663," *JSEAH*, 10 (1969), 479.

Sulṭāns of Aceh Darussalam

- 'Alī Mughayyat Shāh (± 1514-1528)
 Salāḥ ad-Dīn (1528-1537)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh al-Qahhar (± 1537-1568)
 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh or Hoesein (1568-1575)
 Sulṭān Muda (Seven Months)
 Sri 'Alam (1576)
 Zayn al- 'Ābidīn (1577)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn or Maṅsur Shāh (1577-± 1586)
 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh or Raja Bujang (± 1586-±1588)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Ri'āyat Shāh (±1588-1604)
 'Alī Ri'āyat Shāh or Sulṭān Muda (1604-1607)
 Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)
 Iskandar Thānī (1636-1641)
 (Sulṭāna) Taj al-'Ālam Safiat ad-Dīn Shāh (1641-1675)
 (Sulṭāna) Nurul 'Ālam Naqiat ad-Dīn Shāh (1675-1678)
 (Sulṭāna) 'Ināyat Shāh Zaḳiyat ad-Dīn Shah (1678-1688)
 (Sulṭāna) Kemal Shāh (1688-1699)
 Badr al- 'Ālam Jamal ad-Dīn (1699-1702)
 Perkasa 'Ālam Sharif Lamtoei (1702-1703)
 Jamāl 'Ālam Badr al -Munīr (1703-1726)
 Jauhar al-'Ālam Ama ad-Dīn Shāh (20 days)
 Sham al -'Ālam or Wandī Tebing (few weeks)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Aḥmad Shāh or Maharaja Lela Melayu (1727-1735)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Johan Shāh or Pocut Auk (1735-1760)
 Maḥmūd Shāh or Tuanku Raja (1760-1781)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh or Tuanku Muḥammad (1781-1795)
 'Ala' ad-Dīn Jauhar al-'Ālam Shāh (1795-1824)
 Muḥammad Shāh or Tuanku Darid (1824-1836)

Source: Raden Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*. Trans. by Teuku Hamid (Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Pengembangan Permuseuman Dacrah Istimewa Aceh, 1982/1983.

ACEH AND ITS NEIGHBOURS



Source: Drawn by the Author

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abubakar, Al. Yasa. "Abdurra'uf Syiah Kuala: Riwayat Hidup dan Warisan Ilmiah." In *Kajian Islam*. Ed. Ibrahim Huesein. Banda Aceh: IAIN Ar-Raniry, 1990.
- Ahmad, Zakaria. *Sekitar Keradjaan Atjeh dalam Tahun 1520-1675*. Medan: Monora, 1972.
- Ainal Mardhiah, Teuku. "Pergerakan Wanita di Aceh Masa Lampau Sampai Kini." In *Bunga Rampai tentang Aceh*. Ed. Ismail Suny. Jakarta: Bharata Karya Aksara, 1980: 282-317.
- A. K., Baihaqi. "Ulama dan Madrasah." In *Agama dan Perubahan Sosial*. Ed. Taufik Abdullah. Jakarta: C. V. Rajawali, 1983.
- al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naguib. "Raniri and the Wujudiyah of 17th Century Aceh." *MBRAS* 3 (1966).
- Arasaratman, S. "Some Notes on the Dutch in Malacca and the Indo-Malayan Trade 1641-1670." *JSEAH* 10 (1969): 480-490.
- , "Monopoly and Free Trade in Dutch-Asian Commercial Policy: Debate and Controversy within V.O.C." *JSEAS* 4 (1973): 1-15.
- Archer, Raymond LeRoy. "Muhammad Mysticism in Sumatra." *JMBRAS* 15 (1937): 1-124.
- Arnt, Robert, ed. "The Far East." *Aramco World*. Vol. 42, No. 6 (1991): 50-62.
- Arnold, T. W. *The Preaching of Islam*. London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1913.
- Azra, Azyumardi. "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. New York: Columbia University, 1992.
- Bassett, D. K. "Changes in the Pattern of the Malay Politics, 1629-c. 1665." *JSEAH* 10 (1969): 429-452.
- Bastin, John. *The British in West Sumatra (1685-1825)*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965.
- Baynes, T.S. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 9th Eds. Vol. I. Edinburgh: Adam Charles Black, 1898): "Achin," 95-97.
- Boxer, C. R. *The Portuguese Conquest and Commerce in Southern Asia, 1500-1750*. London: Variorum Reprint, 1985.
- , "The Achinese Attack on Malacca in 1629, as Described in Contemporary

- Portuguese Sources." In *Malayan and Indonesian Studies*. Ed. John Bastin and R. Roolvink. London: Oxford University Press, 1964: 105-121.
- Bowrey, Thomas. *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal 1669 to 1679*. Ed. Sir Richard Carnac Temple. Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1903.
- Braddell, Thomas. "Translation of the Annals of Acheen." *JIAEA* 4 (1850): 598-606.
- "On the History of Acheen." *JIAEA* 5 (1851): 15-32.
- Brakel, L. F. "State and Statecraft in 17th Century Aceh." In *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South Celebes*. Ed. Anthony Reid and Lance Castles. *MBRAS* (1979): 56-66.
- Dampier, William. *A New Voyage Round the World*. London: J. Knapton, 1697.
- Danver, F. C. *The Portuguese in India*. New York: Octagon Books, 1966.
- Das Gupta, A. K. "Iskandar Muda and Europeans." In *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia*. Ed. A. Hasjmy. Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989: 42-47.
- De longh, R. C. "The Economic and Administrative History of Indonesia between 1500 and 1630." In *The Economic and Administrative History of Early Indonesia*. Ed. F. H. Van Naerssen and R. C. De longh. Leiden/Koln: E. J. Brill: 1977: 85-105.
- De Klerck, E. S. *History of the Netherlands East Indies*. Amsterdam : B. M. Israel N. V., 1975.
- Djajadiningrat, P. A. Hoesein. "Islam in Indonesia." In *Islam the Straight Path*. Ed. K. W. Morgan. New York: The Roland Press Company, 1959: 375-402.
- *Kesultanan Aceh: Suatu Pembahasan tentang Sejarah Kesultanan Aceh Berdasarkan Bahan-Bahan yang Terdapat dalam Karya Melayu*. Trans. by Teuku Hamid. Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Pengembangan Permeuseum Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1982.
- Djamil, M. Junus. *Silsilah Tawarich Radja2 Keradjaan Atjeh*. Banda Atjeh: Kodam I Iskandar Muda, 1968.
- Drewes, G. W. J. and L. F. Brakel. Eds. *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri*. Dordrecht-Holland/Cinnaminson-U.S.A: Foris Publications, 1986.
- and P. Voorhoeve, intro. and notes. *Adat Atjeh*. Reproduced in facsimile from a manuscript in the India Office Library. s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958: 3-176.

- Gibson Hill, C. A. "On the Alleged Death of Sultan Alau'u'd-din of Johore at Aceh in 1613." *JMBRAS* 29 (1956): 125-144.
- "Raffles, Aceh and the Order of the Golden Sword." *JMBRAS* 29 (1956): 1-19.
- Hadi, Amirul. "Aceh and the Portuguese: A Study of the Struggle of Islam in Southeast Asia, 1500-1579." unpublished M. A. Thesis. Montreal: McGill University, 1992.
- Hall, D. G. E. *A History of South-East-Asia. 3rd Ed.* New York: St Martin's Press, 1962.
- Hamilton, Alexander. *A New Account of the East Indies.* London: The Argonaut Press, 1930.
- Harrison, Brian. *South-East Asia, A Short History.* London: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1966.
- Hassan, T. Muhammad. "Perkembangan Swapraja di Aceh Sampai Perang Dunia." In *Bunga Rampai tentang Aceh.* Ed. Ismail Suny. Jakarta: Bharata Karya Aksara, 1980: 136-201.
- Hasjmy, A. *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam di Indonesia.* Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1990.
- *59 Tahun Aceh Merdeka dibawah Pemerintahan Ratu.* Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977.
- *Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam.* Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975.
- Hazard, Harry W. *Atlas of Islamic History.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952.
- Hurgronje, C. Snouck. "Een Mekkaansch Gezantschap Naar Atjeh in 1683." *B. K. I.* 3 (1888): 545-554.
- *The Achehnese.* Trans. by A. W. S. O' Sullivan, 2 Vols. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1906.
- Ishak, Haji Abdullah. *Islam di Nusantara (Khususnya di Tanah Melayu).* Malaysia: al-Rahmaniah, 1990.
- Iskandar, Teuku. Ed. *Bustanu's- Salatin, Bab. 2, Fasal 13.* Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1966.
- *Hikayat Aceh.* Trans. by Aboe Bakar. Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan, Meusium Negeri Aceh, 1986.

- Ito, Takeshi. "Why Did Nuruddin Ar-Raniri leave Aceh in 1054 A.H.?" *B. K. I.* 134 (1978): 487-491.
- Jamil, Fadhullah Bin. "Kerajaan Aceh Darussalam dan Hubungannya dengan Semenanjung Tanah Melayu." In *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia*. Ed. A. Hasjmy. Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989: 231-256
- Johns, A. H. "Muslim Mystics and Historical Writing." In D. G. E. Hall, ed. *Historians of South East Asia*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Juynboll, Th. W. and P. Voorhoeve. "Atjeh." *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Second ed. Ed. H. A. R. Gibb et al. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960, Vol. 1, 739-743.
- Kathirithamby-Wells, J. "Achehnese Control over West Sumatra up to the Treaty of Painan, 1663." *JSEAH* 10 (1969): 453-479.
- , "Forces of Regional and State Integration in the Western Archipelago, c. 1500-1700." *JSEAH* 18 (1987): 24-44
- Kumar, Ann. "Developments in Four Societies over the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries." In *The Development of Indonesian Society*. Ed. Harry Aveling. New York St Martin's Press, 1980.
- Leigh, Barbara. "Design Motifs in Aceh: Indian and Islamic Influences." In *The Study of Politics in Southeast Asia*. Ed. John Maxwell. Australia: Monash University Press, 1982: 3-32.
- Leupe, P. A. "The Siege and Capture of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1640-1641." Trans. by Mac Hacobian. *JMBRAS* 14 (1936), Part I: 1-176.
- Linehan, W. "A History of Pahang." *JMBRAS* 14 (1936), part I: 1-256.
- Loeb, Edwin, M. *Sumatra Its History and People*. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Lombard, Denys. *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au Temps d'Iskandar Muda 1607-1636*. Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient, 1967.
- Lubis, Mochtar. *Indonesia: Land under the Rainbow*. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Mahmud, Anas. "Turun Naiknya Peranan Kerajaan Aceh Darussalam di Pesisir Timur Pulau Sumatra." In *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia*. Ed. A. Hasjmy. Bandung: Pt. Almaarif, 1989: 281-325.
- Marrison, G. E. "The Coming of Islam to East Indies." *JMBRAS* 24 (1951): 28-37.
- Marsden, William. *The History of Sumatra*. A reprint of the third ed. and Introd. by John Bastin. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1966.

- Meilink-Roelofs, M. A. P. *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962.
- Mernissi, Fatima. *Sultanes Oubliees Femmes Chefs d'Etat en Islam*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1990.
- Mitchiner, Michael. *The World of Islam*. London: Hawkins Publications, 1977.
- Moorhead, F. J. *A History of Malaya and Her Neighbours*. Vol.1. Kuala Lumpur: Longmans of Malaysia Ltd., 1965.
- , *A History of Malaya*. Vol. 2. Kuala Lumpur: Longmans of Malaysia Ltd., 1963.
- Morley, J. A. E. "The Arab and The Eastern Trade." *JMBRAS* 22 (1949): 140-174.
- Marrice, Eric Eugene. "Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center Periphery Relation in Indonesia." Ph.D. Thesis. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1983.
- Mukti Ali, A. *An Introduction to the Government of Aceh's Sultanate*. Jogjakarta: Nida, 1970.
- Pieker, A.J. "Atjeh." *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. New ed. Ed. H. A. R. Gibb et al. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.
- Pinto, Fernao Mendez. *The Travels of Mandez Pinto*. Ed. and trans. by Rebecca D. Catz. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Polo, Marco. *The Travels of Marco Polo*. Trans. by W. Marsden and intr. by John Masefield. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1926.
- Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional. *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Kolonialisme dan Imperialisme di Daerah Aceh*. Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1982/1983.
- Pyrard, Francois. *The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*. Trans. and Ed. Grey Albert. London: The Hakluyt, Society, 1887.
- Reid, Anthony. *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford university Press, 1969.
- , "Trade and the Problem of Royal Power in Aceh. Three Stages: c. 1550-1700." In *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia: The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Bali-Lombok, South celebes*. *MBRAS* (1979): 45-55.
- , "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia." *JSEAH* 10 (1969): 235-250.

- , *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*. New Haven and London: Yale University, 1988.
- Said, Mohammad. *Aceh Sepanjang Abad*. Medan: Pt. Percetakan dan Penerbitan Waspada, 1981.
- Schrieke, B. *Indonesian Sociological Studies*. Pt. 1. The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1966.
- , *Indonesian Sociological Studies*. Pt. 2. The Hague: W. van Hoeve. 1966.
- Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals*. Annot. and trans. by C. C. Brown. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Siegel, James T. "Acehnese Religion." In *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Editor in Chief, Mircea Eliade. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987, Vol.1, 24-26.
- , *The Rope of God*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *Islam in Modern History*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. "Commerce and Conflict: Two Views of Portuguese Melaka in 1620's." *JSEAH* 19 (1988): 62-75.
- Sufi, Rusdi. "Sultan Iskandar Muda." *Dari Sini la Bersemi*. Banda Aceh: Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1981.
- Surahman and Kutoyo, Sutrisno. Eds. *Sejarah Daerah Propinsi Istimewa Aceh*. Banda Aceh: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Pusat Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya, Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah, 1977/78.
- Tarling, Nicholas. "Sumatra and the Archipelago 1824-1857." *JMBRAS* 179 (1957): 124-150.
- Tate, D. J. M. *The Making of Modern South-East Asian*. Vol. 1. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Teeuw, A. "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai and Sejarah Melayu." In *Malayan and Indonesian Studies*. Ed. John Bastin and R. Roolvink. London: Oxford University Press, 1964: 222-234.
- Tjandrasasmita, Uka. "Samudra-Pasai Keradjaan Pengemban Islam Pertama di Indonesia." *Djaja* (1965): 12-38.
- , *Sepintas Mengenai Peeninggalan Kepurbakalaan Islam di Pesisir Utara Jawa*. Jakarta: Proyek Pelita Pembinaan Kepurbakalaan dan Peninggalan

Nasional, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1976.

Treggoning, K. G. *A History of Modern Malaya*. New York: David McKay Inc., 1964.

van Leur, J. C. *Indonesian Trade and Society*. 2nd ed. The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1967.

Vlekke, H. M. Bernard. *Nusantara, A History of Indonesia*. The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd., 1959.

Wessing, Robert. "The Gunongan in Banda Aceh, Indonesia: Agni's Fire in Allah's Paradise." *Archipel*, 35 (1988): 156-194.

Winstedt, Richard O. *A History of Malaya*. Singapore: Marican & Sons, 1962.

----- and R. J. Wilkinson. "A History of Perak." *JMBRAS* 12, (1934): 1-180.

----- *The Malays A Cultural History*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1953.

Yacob, Ismail. *Atjeh dalam Sedjarah*. Koeta Radja: Joesoef Mahmoed, 1946.

Zainu'ddin, Ailsa. *A Short History of Indonesia*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.

Zainuddin, H. M. *Tarich Atjeh dan Nusantara*. Medan: Pustaka Iskandar Muda, 1961.