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ACHEH IN INDONESIAN TRADE AND POLITICS: 1600 – 1641

Arun K. Dasgupta, 1962

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# ACHEH IN INDONESIAN TRADE AND POLITICS: 1600-1641

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Arun Kumar DasGupta

February, 1962

KONINKLIJK INSTITUUT VOOR TAAL-, LAND- EN VOLKENKUNDE

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# ACHEH IN INDONESIAN TRADE AND POLITICS: 1600-1641

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by

Anwar Kumar Bhattacharya

February, 1962

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## Biographical Sketch

Arun Kumar DasGupta was born on 4 January, 1925 in Kalia, East Bengal (now East Pakistan). He was married in 1949 and has an eight-year old boy.

After having received his B.A. in 1944 with Honours in History from Presidency College, Calcutta, he worked for his M.A. in History at the Calcutta University. He had his M.A. in 1947 and joined the West Bengal Government Educational Service in December, 1948 as a Lecturer in History. In 1956 he was appointed a part-time Lecturer in History in the Post-Graduate Department of the Calcutta University.

In July, 1957 he left India for the United States as a Fullbright-Smith Mundt grantee for advanced studies. He began his graduate work in the Department of History at Cornell University in September, 1957. In June, 1959 he was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship which enabled him to take a trip to Europe in 1960 to do research in the India Office Library in London and the Algemeen Rijksarchief in The Hague. In 1960 he was elected to the Cornell chapter of the Phi Kappa Phi.

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To my wife, who beside taking care of a household, a child, and a thesis of her own found time to type and check her husband's thesis, I offer my loving thanks.

To all other friends who have helped during the last critical days I offer my sincere thanks.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS


| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Introduction | 1 |
| | i. Early Acheh in Legend and History | 1 |
| | ii. The Foundation of the Sultanate | 20 |
| | iii. The Coming of the Portuguese and the Rise of Acheh in the Sixteenth Century | 29 |
| II. | The Coming of the English and the Dutch | 51 |
| | i. The Coming of the English | 51 |
| | ii. The Coming of the Dutch | 62 |
| III. | Iskandar Muda--His Resources and Objectives | 73 |
| | i. Accession to the Throne | 73 |
| | ii. The City of Acheh | 80 |
| | iii. The Kingdom of Acheh | 90 |
| IV. | The English, the Dutch and Iskandar Muda in Achenese Trade | 98 |
| | i. Acheh in Asian Trade | 98 |
| | ii. The English Trade in Acheh | 120 |
| | iii. The Dutch Trade in Acheh | 155 |
| V. | Acheh under Iskandar Thani--the Beginning of the Decline | 179 |
| VI. | Summary and Conclusions | 188 |
| | Appendix | 203 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS


| Chapter | Page |
|---|---|
| I. Introduction | 1 |
| i. Early Aceh in Legend and History | 1 |
| ii. The Foundation of the Sultanate | 20 |
| iii. The Coming of the Portuguese and the Rise of Aceh in the Sixteenth Century | 29 |
| II. The Coming of the English and the Dutch | 51 |
| i. The Coming of the English | 51 |
| ii. The Coming of the Dutch | 62 |
| III. Iskandar Muda--His Resources and Objectives | 73 |
| i. Accession to the Throne | 73 |
| ii. The City of Aceh | 80 |
| iii. The Kingdom of Aceh | 90 |
| IV. The English, the Dutch and Iskandar Muda in Achenese Trade | 98 |
| i. Aceh in Asian Trade | 98 |
| ii. The English Trade in Aceh | 120 |
| iii. The Dutch Trade in Aceh | 135 |
| V. Aceh under Iskandar Thani--the Beginning of the Decline | 179 |
| VI. Summary and Conclusions | 188 |
| Appendix | 203 |

Page

List of Abbreviations..... 207

Bibliographical Notes..... 209

Works Quoted..... 213

Maps..... 220

Page

List of Abbreviations..... 207

Bibliographical Notes..... 209

Works Quoted..... 213

Maps..... 229

## Preface

In the present study an attempt has been made to analyse the political behaviour of Acheh and the commercial policy of its kings during the period 1600-1641. The coming of the English and the Dutch to Indonesia at the beginning of the seventeenth century altered the balance of power in western Indonesia. There began a period of rivalry among European powers in Indonesia which lasted until the seizure of Portuguese Malacca by the Dutch in 1641. As Acheh happened to be a traditional enemy of the Portuguese, both the English and the Dutch sought good relations with it. During the first half of the seventeenth century pepper brought a high price in the European market. The English and the Dutch were very much interested in collecting pepper at its source. Of the two sources of pepper, Malabar and western Indonesia, the former was within the Portuguese sphere. So the English and the Dutch came to western Indonesia and set up factories or trading houses in Acheh and Bantam--the two major pepper ports of the area. Neither the English nor the Dutch could get on well with Bantam at first. Consequently they had to turn to Sumatra, to the kingdom of Acheh and Jambi for pepper.

Acheh was thus placed in a strategically advantageous position in trade as well as in politics. It is a striking

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coincidence that at this point of history, when the coming of the English and the Dutch brought new opportunities to Acheh, Iskandar Muda, the greatest of Acheh's sultans, came to power. The purpose of the present study is to examine the response of Acheh under Iskandar Muda to the situation created by the coming of new Europeans in western Indonesia.

The study is based primarily on materials furnished by European informants. The journals and letters of the servants of the English and the Dutch East India Companies tell us a great deal about the trade of Acheh and the activities of its king. An attempt has been made in the following pages to utilise this material in building up the story of Acheh in this period. The focus is entirely on the kingdom of Acheh and what happened to it rather than on the Europeans in Acheh.

Such an attempt, however, has its limitations. In the first place, the Europeans' knowledge of Acheh's trade was limited by the circumstances in which they found themselves. They had fair knowledge of the conditions obtaining in the port-towns of the kingdom of Acheh but they had hardly any opportunity to get behind the port-town into the hinterland or to observe the processes of production or the inland trade in operation. Even in the port-town their interest was confined to the products which they bought and sold, i.e., the major articles of export and import. But side by side with the European traders there were numerous other

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small and big merchants of Acheh who carried on business with traders from the Malay Peninsula and from the rest of Indonesia as well as from different countries of Asia. From the European sources we become aware of the existence of these non-European traders but we cannot form a complete picture of Acheh's trade as a whole.

Secondly, the Europeans were not impartial observers in Acheh. Their interests often clashed with those of the king. We cannot expect to get an objective assessment of the king's activities.

The limitations of the European sources cannot be made up by referring to the indigenous sources for we have very little native tradition or history to fall back upon. The two important chronicles, the Hikajat Atjeh and the Bustan us-Salatin, do not give us a complete and consistent account of the reigns of the kings of our period.

Within the limitations mentioned above it is worth while to make an attempt to write the story of Acheh in the given period. The justification is to be found in the point of view adopted. No attempt has been made here to cover the history of Acheh in the period 1600-1641 in all its aspects. The major external forces entering the area were the English and the Dutch. They provide the context of the story. As we have stated earlier, the central theme of this work is Acheh's response to the coming of the English and the Dutch in the first forty years of the seventeenth century.

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The interaction between Acheh on the one hand and the Dutch on the other hand deserves a close examination because of the uniqueness of the Achenese case. Acheh successfully maintained its political independence through the entire early period of European penetration of Indonesia. Particularly in our period Acheh held a very strong position and was a formidable force to reckon with. In many of the transactions between Acheh and the Europeans the former dictated the terms and the latter had to conform.

The European sources, in spite of the limitations mentioned above, enable us to form an idea of the general pattern of Acheh's foreign trade at least in its outlines. The coming of the English and the Dutch to Acheh as traders brought about significant changes which are worth analysing. A case study like the present one, it is hoped, will help us to understand better the phenomenon of the confrontation of Asia and Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century.

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## Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1. Early Acheh in Legend and History

The kingdom of Acheh with its capital of the same name lay in the north-western extremity of the island of Sumatra. The interior of the island is occupied by ranges of mountains roughly parallel to its long axis. The coasts are generally low flat lands. In some areas of the north, especially on the west coast, mountain cliffs rise precipitously from the sea. Elsewhere the flat coast is well cultivated and supports large populations. The rivers are short and run down sharply to the coast. They are not navigable except for small country boats.

The city of Acheh (the present-day Kotaradja or Kutaradja) lay, as it still lies today, near the north-western tip of Sumatra known in the mariner's chart as Achin Head. The city stands in a valley formed by the Acheh river and is shut in on the three landward sides by hills. In the north the valley opens out to the sea.

The history of Acheh proper does not go far back into antiquity. It begins in the early decades of the sixteenth century. But the triangular territory at the north-western

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The history of Aceh proper does not go far back into antiquity. It begins in the early decades of the sixteenth century. But the triangular territory at the north-western

end of Sumatra of which Acheh was a part has a longer history. The Achenese population is not homogeneous; it is made up of different races and groups. The story of the formation of the Achenese people and the beginning of their history are not known. K.F.H. Van Langen, the first Dutch scholar todelve deeply into Achenese legends, set forth the landmarks of early Achenese history in the following manner. The original inhabitants of the area known to popular tradition were the Mantirs. They were pushed back from the coastal strip to the interior by the Bataks. The Bataks dominated the area for a long time until "the Mantir-Batak state" was overthrown by the Hindus. Native tradition speaks of the Hindu king Ravana who lived in Indrapuri and whose kingdom stretched as far as the sea. Traces of Hindu influence, maintains Van Langen, can be found in a few inscriptions and several Sanskrit place-names such as Indrapatra (XXV Mukims), Indrapurva (XXVI Mukims) and Indrapuri (XXII Mukims). The Acheh river was formerly known as Chera, which means lovely.[1]

Van Langen's reconstruction of the early history of Acheh is interesting but it has not found acceptance among

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[1]K.F.H. Van Langen, "De Inrichting van het Atjehsche Staatsbestuur onder het Sultanaat," BKI, 37, 1888, 384-386; C. Snouck Hurgronje, The Achehnese, I, 1906, 82. The greater Acheh area consisted of three political divisions known as the XXV Mukims, the XXVI Mukims and the XXII Mukims. The "Mukim" was a collection of Kampongs or villages comparable to the English Hundreds.

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scholars.[2] It shows, however, that popular tradition has preserved the memory of at least two major landmarks of Achenese history viz., the coming of the Bataks and the contact with the Indian civilisation. The Indian cultural influence is most noticeable in the sphere of language. Both the Batak and the Achenese languages have borrowed liberally from Sanskrit vocabulary.[3] It is, however, difficult to ascertain whether this influence came in at a very early stage of the history of this area or in a later period.

To pass on from legend to history we come to the early foreign notices of Acheh. The Achin Head was a natural resting place for sailors and merchants passing by and the Arab and Persian travellers seem to have known the spot very well. They were not familiar with the name Acheh. They called it variously Rami, Ramni, Lamuri, and Lawri.[4]

The identification of Lamuri or Lamri with Acheh is now generally accepted. Teuku Iskandar admirably sums up the long controversy over this question. According to him, the name Acheh has been used to signify both the larger area known as Greater Acheh and the city proper: Bandar Acheh. Historians were not far wrong when they took Lamri for Acheh

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[2]Snouck Hurgronje, Achehnese, I, 16.

[3]J. Gonda, Sanskrit in Indonesia, 1952, 57-67, 80-87, 90.

[4]G. Ferrand, Relations de Voyages et Textes Géographiques, 1913, 25, 36, 91, 163, 343, 361, 380, 383, 392, 396, 661n; H.K.J. Cowan, "Lamuri-Lambri-Lawri-Ram(n)i-Lan-li-Lan-wu-li-Nan-po-li," BKI, 90, 1933, 421.

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for together they formed one territórial complex in which Lamri, being a seaport, was easily noticed (while Acheh, lying a little to the interior, was less so). Tomé Pires speaks of the "kingdom of Acheh and Lambry" showing that the two places were included in the same state. Iskandar locates Lamri in the neighbourhood of Kréung Raja. According to him, Lamri lost importance in the fifteenth century when, possibly due to pressure from the expanding state of Pedir, its rulers moved inland to Makota Alam in the Acheh valley.[5]

The Arab writers identified Ramni as a source of camphor, gold, and brazil wood all of which were well-known Sumatran products. They also mention that the country had rhinoceros and many elephants. But by far the most valuable piece of historical information recorded by them about Ramni was that it was under the authority of the Maharaja of Srivijaya.[6] It is not known when exactly Ramni became a dependency of Srivijaya, but it was an established fact when Masudi wrote about it in the middle of the tenth century. This is the first tangible evidence that the area had been brought into direct contact with an Indianised state in Sumatra; Srivijaya in the tenth century was an avowedly Buddhist state with strong Mahayanist leanings.[7] It seems,

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[5]Teuku Iskandar, De Hikajat Atjéh, VKI, XXVI, 1958, 27-31.

[6]Ferrand, Relations, 100.

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[7] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, History of Srivijaya, 1949, 70-71.

however, that despite the contact with the empire of the Srivijaya north Sumatra continued to be relatively free from Indian religious influence in the Hindu-Buddhist period of Indonesian history. This is partly explained by the fact of its geographical remoteness from the major centres of diffusion of Indian culture in the archipelago. It is significant that when Islam came to Indonesia in the thirteenth century it found a foothold on the periphery of an Indianised empire in a region where the Hindu-Buddhist influence was the weakest.

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Lamli has been identified by Bretschneider with Lamri.[12] This identification seems to be an obvious one, but it is difficult to see how exactly the date 960 A.D. has been arrived at as the year in which the Persian ambassadors stopped over at Lamri. All that Gerini has to say about the embassy in question is that it "seems to belong to the Sung period (960-1278)."[13] Bretschneider points out that the history of the Sung dynasty makes mention of twenty embassies from Ta Shi (Persia) having gone to China but he does not specify which one of these touched at Lamri on its return voyage in 960 A.D.[14]

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[12]Gerini, Researches, 684.

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The Indian raid on Sumatra did not lead to the breakup of the empire of Srivijaya. The evidence of Chao Ju-Kua (1225) shows that Lan-wu-li (Lamri) was still a dependency of Srivijaya in the first quarter of the thirteenth century.[15] It used to send yearly tribute to San-fo-ch'i (Palembang).[16] Coedès, however, draws attention to the fact that Lan-wu-li was among the states about which Chao Ju-Kua wrote separate notices; it would imply that it was already on the way to independence.[17]

A very significant change occurred towards the end of the thirteenth century when direct relations were established between Lamri and China. China had always been aware of the great strategic importance of the Straits of Malacca as an avenue of commerce between the East and the West. Particularly with the rise of the T'ang dynasty there came a great expansion of China's overseas trade. The Nanhai trade, that is, China's trade with the South China Sea area, now extended into the Indian ocean area and even Persian traders began to visit China.[18] One can notice China's growing interest in

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[15] G. Ferrand, L'Empire Sumatranais de Çrīvijaya, 1922, 14.

[16] F. Hirth, "Chao Ju-Kua's Ethnography," JRAS, 1896, 482.

[17] G. Coedès, Histoire Ancienne Des États Hindouisés D'Extrême-Orient, 1944, 231.

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The thirteenth century thus forms an important watershed in Achenese history. It saw the end of Srivijayan dominance over north Sumatra. The little states of this area forged closer political links with China. The extension of Chinese political influence to the far western end of Sumatra coincided with the most momentous event of the thirteenth century viz., the coming of Islam to Sumatra.

The Sumatran port-towns had, of course, been quite accustomed to receiving Moslem traders and travellers for a long time before Islam came to be accepted as a creed. Occasional references in Chinese annals of a 'Haji' or a 'Mohammed' among Srivijaya's emissaries show the increasing ascendancy of individual Moslems in Sumatran politics.[25] As has been noted before, the state of Sumutula sent Hassan and Suleiman as envoys to China around 1282.[26] A little earlier, in 1281, Malayu had sent to China Mohammedan envoys named Sulayman and Samsuddin.[27]

Islamic infiltration reached a significant stage when individual Sumatran rulers began to accept the new religion. In 1292 Marco Polo, during his visit to Sumatra, noticed that the kingdom of Ferlec had gone over to Islam.[28] Ferlec

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A number of Achenese and Malay legends put forward the claim of Acheh to be one of the earliest recipients of Islam in Sumatra.

Thus according to one tradition the first preacher of Islam in Acheh was one Shaikh Abdullah Arif who arrived there in the middle of the twelfth century.[34]

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[29] Ibid., 287.

[30] Ibid., 284-300.

[31] J. P. Moquette, "De eerste vorsten van Samoedra-Pase" in Rapporten van den Oudheidkundigen Dienst in Nederlandsch Indie, 1913, 10.

[32] G. P. Rouffaer, "Sumatra," in Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch Indie, IV, 1905, 204.

[33] B.J.O. Schrieke, Het Boek van Bonang, 1916, 3.

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At the time of the outbreak of the Acheh War in 1873, a Constantinople paper, Djawaib, published a chronicle about the beginnings of the Sultanate of Acheh. According to this account Acheh was conquered and converted to Islam by Gazi Djehan Sjah on January 19, 1215.[36]

Still another tradition says that the Achenese Sultan Muhammad Shah, who was ruling in 1836, was the tenth descendant of one Arab Shaikh Jamal-ul-Alam (Djamal al-alam), who was sent by the Grand Turk with some cannons to impose Islam by force upon a Brahmanical Acheh.[37]

The Sejarah Melayu says that one Shaikh Ismail was sent by the ruler of Mecca with a ship to Semudra (Samudra) with instructions to call at Ma'abri on the way. At Ma'abri the ship picked up a fakir and proceeded towards Semudra (Samudra). They first came to Fansuri, and converted the people to Islam. Next they came to Lamiri (Lamri) where all the people embraced Islam. Then they went to Haru (Aru). On being told

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Interesting as they are, the legends do not agree with one another and none of them agrees with Marco Polo's evidence that in 1292 Lamri was a heathen country.

The Sejarah Melayu does not give a date for the coming of Shaikh Ismail and the fakir of Ma'abri to Sumatra. Although its account that Lamiri (Lamri) was converted before Pasai contradicts Marco Polo's evidence, the Sejarah Melayu in a way broadly agrees with it. In the first place, the order in which the Sumatran states appear geographically fits in with Marco Polo's description.[39] Secondly, it confirms Polo by stating that Perlak was converted before Samudra.

We do not know how and when exactly Islam was introduced to Greater Acheh. The earliest Chinese notice of a Moslem ruler in Lamri dates around 1412.[40] In the absence of supporting evidence we cannot attach much historical value to

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[39] J. T. Thomson, "Marco Polo's Six kingdoms or Cities in Java Minor, identified in translation from the ancient Malay Annals," PRGS, XX, 1876, 221-223; Yule, Marco Polo, II, 302-303, 305-306.

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Teuku Iskandar thinks that Islam came to Acheh around the middle of the fourteenth century.[41] It would perhaps be safer to place the Islamisation of Greater Acheh somewhere in the second half of the fourteenth century. The earliest attempt to win the people of Lamri to Islam by Shaikh Ismail and the fakir of Ma'abri (even if we grant its historicity) did not lead to permanent results. When they found that the people could not read the Koran the preachers were evidently disappointed and left the place.[42] It was clearly a half-hearted attempt and it is no wonder that its gains were soon lost. The fourteenth century Chinese work, Tao i chih lüeh (1349), in describing the customs of the people of Nan-wu-li does not mention Islam. While Ma Huan's Ying yai sheng lan (1425-1432) says that in Nan-po-li there are about one thousand families and "all are Mussulmans."[43] We have already seen that Lamri had a Moslem ruler in 1412. We may thus place the coming of Islam to Acheh somewhere between 1349 and 1412.

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Ibn Batuta did not visit Lamri during his short stay in Sumatra in the middle of the fourteenth century. Coming about fifty years after the death of Malik-ul-Saleh, he found Samudra to be a well-established Moslem kingdom.[44] Indeed in the history of north Sumatra the rise of Samudra-Pasai as an important state is one of the outstanding developments of the fourteenth century. After the break-up of the Srivijaya Empire Samudra-Pasai emerged as an important centre of trade in north Sumatra and pushed itself into the highways of international trade and shipping passing through the Straits. At the same time it became the first great centre of diffusion of Islam in Indonesia. If Java had been converted in Malacca, there cannot be any doubt that Malacca itself took its Islam from Samudra-Pasai. For when Malacca was founded around 1400, Islam was already one hundred years old in Samudra-Pasai. Throughout the fifteenth century controversial theological points continued to be referred back to this earliest centre of Islamic learning in the archipelago.[45] To Samudra-Pasai, therefore, more than any other state, must belong the credit of consolidating the Islamic influence in north Sumatra during the first century after its arrival.[46]

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[44] H.A.R. Gibb, Ibn Batuta, 1929, 273-276.

[45] A. H. Johns, "Malay Sufism," JMBRAS, XXX (2), 1957, 8-9.

[46] B. Schrieke, Indonesian Sociological Studies, II, 1957, 260-262.

Ibn Batuta did not visit Lamri during his short stay in Sumatra in the middle of the fourteenth century. Coming about fifty years after the death of Malik-ul-Salah, he found Samudra to be a well-established Moslem kingdom.[44] Indeed in the history of north Sumatra the rise of Samudra-Pasai as an important state is one of the outstanding developments of the fourteenth century. After the break-up of the Srivijaya Empire Samudra-Pasai emerged as an important centre of trade in north Sumatra and pushed itself into the highways of international trade and shipping passing through the Straits. At the same time it became the first great centre of diffusion of Islam in Indonesia. If Java had been converted in Malacca, there cannot be any doubt that Malacca itself took its Islam from Samudra-Pasai. For when Malacca was founded around 1400, Islam was already one hundred years old in Samudra-Pasai. Throughout the fifteenth century numerous theological points continued to be referred back to this earliest centre of Islamic learning in the archipelago.[45] To Samudra-Pasai, therefore, more than any other state, must belong the credit of consolidating the Islamic influence in north Sumatra during the first century after its arrival.[46]

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[44] H.A.R. Gibb, Ibn Batuta, 1929, 273-276.

[45] A. H. Johns, "Malay Sufism," JMBRAS, XXX (2), 1957, 8-9.

[46] B. Schrieke, Indonesian Sociological Studies, II, 1957, 260-262.

As has been mentioned before, the Achenese and the Malay chronicles claim that Acheh was converted before Samudra-Pasai. Whether this is true or not further research will show. Whatever be the date of Acheh's conversion, it could not possibly have escaped the religious influence of Samudra-Pasai as it lay within its immediate diffusion belt.

The international ascendancy of Islam, especially its expansion across the subcontinent of India probably favoured its spread in north Sumatra and subsequently to the coastal regions of the Indonesian archipelago. The new religion was carried to Indonesia primarily by merchant-preachers who adopted the strategy of converting the rulers and lords of the coastal states as the first essential step in their efforts to transplant Islam to a new country.[47]

The Nagarakertagama (1365) mentions Perlak, Samudra and Lamuri (Lamri) among the Sumatran states which recognised the supreme authority of the Majapahit emperor Hayam Wuruk.[48] Whether the Majapahit empire ever included the whole of Sumatra is a matter of dispute.[49] Chinese records show that about the year 1377 the Javanese conquered parts of the Srivijayan empire.[50] The Hikayat Raja Raja Pasai or

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[47]C. C. Berg, "The Islamisation of Java," Studia Islamica, 4, 1955, 115.

[48]Krom, HJG, 416; Ferrand, Relations, 652.

[49]D.G.E. Hall, A History of South-East Asia, 1955, 78.

[50]Groeneveldt, "Notes," 69, 76.

As has been mentioned before, the Achenese and the Malay chronicles claim that Aceh was converted before Samudra-Pasai. Whether this is true or not further research will show. Whatever be the date of Aceh's conversion, it could not possibly have escaped the religious influence of Samudra-Pasai as it lay within its immediate dilution belt.

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Chronicles of Pasai says that about 1350 Majapahit troops conquered Pasai but failed to conquer Minangkabau.[51] The Javanese action appears to have been more in the nature of a punitive expedition than an outright conquest of Pasai. For, shortly after, in 1383 one finds Su-wen-ta-na (Samudra?) sending an envoy named Ambar to the Chinese court.[52] When Cheng Ho visited Lam-bu-li (Lamri) in 1408 he evidently dealt with an independent kingdom and there was hardly any trace of Javanese authority to be found there.

Early in the fourteenth century the Persian traveller Rashiduddin (1310) noticed that merchants from many countries came to the island of Lamori (Lamri).[53] Friar Odoric of Pordenone (1323), too, found Lamri to be a centre of trade.[54]

In the fourteenth century the Chinese noticed considerable piratical activities at both ends of the Straits. Significantly enough, Nan-wu-li (Lamri) is mentioned as one of the principal pirate states. The Tao i chih lüeh (1349) calls it an important trade-centre and at the same time warns that the people 'are given to piracy like the people of Niu-tan-hsi.'

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[51] R. O. Winstedt, "The Chronicles of Pasai," JMBRAS, XVI (2), 1938, 24-30.

[52] Parker, "Sumatra," 135, 138; Rockhill, "Trade of China," 152.

[53] Ferrand, Relations, 361.

[54] Yule, Cathay and the Way thither, II, 1913, 146-149.

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[51] R. O. Winstedt, "The Chronicles of Pasai," JMBRAS, XVI (2), 1938, 24-30.

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A ship would have to be extremely lucky not to fall into 'the tiger's mouth,' which Lamri was at that time.[55]

That the narrow waters of the Straits would breed piracy is nothing unexpected. In fact a number of states continuously thrived on the plunder of the rich traffic passing through the Straits. Once in a while one of these grew powerful enough to dominate the entire region and keep the petty pirate chiefs in check. Such a state invariably gained recognition as a great maritime power and found honourable acceptance in the contemporary family of nations. Such was the case with Srivijaya and the same was to be true of Malacca in the fifteenth century and the Portuguese and Acheh in the sixteenth.

When Malacca was founded in the Malay Peninsula around 1400, Palembang was still a part of the Majapahit Empire of Java. Matching the island empire of Majapahit there appeared the powerful Siamese Empire on mainland Southeast Asia. Almost from the beginning Malacca's very existence was threatened by the Siamese Empire pressing down towards the Straits. That the Majapahit and the Siamese empires did not either collide or swallow up the little states on both sides of the Straits was very largely due to China's policy towards the Straits region. The dramatic excursions of Admiral Cheng Ho up and down the Straits and out into the Indian Ocean cut

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out a safety belt between the two big empires, to which the small Malay and Sumatran states could adhere. Siam was restrained and Malacca was taken under Chinese protection. As Malacca grew and prospered through the fifteenth century, the kingdom of Acheh slowly took shape in north Sumatra under the shadow of Pedir.

## ii. The Foundation of the Sultanate

Up to the fifteenth century the state occupying the northwestern tip of Sumatra was known to outsiders as the kingdom of Lamri. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, after the Portuguese conquest of Malacca (1511), the kingdom of Acheh leapt into prominence and the name Lamri dropped out of use. Tomé Pires (1512) is the first European to mention Acheh.[56] The name, however, had been in use among the people of Sumatra for a long time before the coming of the Portuguese, although its exact origin is not known.

There is a local legend that a Hindu princess once disappeared and was later found in Sumatra by her brother. The latter told the natives that she was his Achi or sister. The Hindu princess became the queen of that country which thereafter came to be known as Acheh.[57]

Another story has it that once a merchant ship from Gujarat sailed up the river Chera (the old name of the Acheh river) and got near Kampong Pandei when it was caught in heavy rains. It found shelter under the canopy of a tree whose enormous crown of leaves drew from the passengers the exclamation: "Achai Achai Achai" i.e., "Fine! Fine!

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[56] Cortesao (ed.), The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, I, 1944, 135, 138.

[57] G. P. Tolson, "Acheh, commonly called Acheen," JSBRAS, V, 1880, 38.

## 11. The Foundation of the Sultanate

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Another story has it that once a merchant ship from Gujarat sailed up the river Ubera (the old name of the Aceh river) and got near Kampong Pandei when it was caught in heavy rains. It found shelter under the canopy of a tree whose enormous crown of leaves drew from the passengers the exclamation: "Achet Achet Achet" i.e., "Final Final

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[56] Cortesao (ed.), *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, I, 1944, 135, 138.

[57] P. Tolson, "Aceh, commonly called Achean," *JSBRAS*, V, 1880, 78.

Finei" Soon after the place came to be referred to as Negri Achai.[58]

G. P. Tolson thinks that this visit must have taken place prior to the coming of Islam to this country, for the name occurs in the "Undang Undang" or laws and customs of Minangkabau promulgated by Perpati Sebatang. In them there is a mention of the marriage of a Minangkabau princess with a royal prince of Acheh.[59]

Others believe that the name originated from a species of wood-leech of that name which abounds in that area.[60]

The legends and chronicles cited in the previous section show that in local memory the emergence of Acheh as a distinct entity is connected with the coming of Islam and the foundation of the Sultanate.

When was the Sultanate founded and where? The Bustan-us-Salatin says that Ali Mughayat Shah (1517-1532) is the first Sultan of Acheh. Before him there were no sultans in Acheh, only chiefs. He was the first to embrace Islam and patronise it.[61]

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[58] K.F.H. Van Langen, "Atjehsche Staatsbestuur," 386; Tolson, "Acheh," 37.

[59] Tolson, "Acheh," 37.

[60] Tolson, "Acheh," 38; John Crawfurd, A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries, 1856, 2.

[61] Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 144-45.

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William Marsden, following De Barros, accepts a certain Raja Ibrahim as the founder of the Achenese Sultanate. According to the Portuguese writer Acheh was a vassal state under Pedir. It was governed by a freed slave of the Sultan of Pedir. Raja Ibrahim, the eldest son of this former slave, succeeded his father to the governorship of Acheh. In 1521 he freed Acheh from the authority of Pedir and set up the independent kingdom of Acheh.[62]

Hoesein Djajadiningrat considers Bustan us-Salatin to be a very reliable chronicle and accepts Ali Mughayat Shah as the founder of the Sultanate. He points out that Raja Ibrahim of the Portuguese is the same person as Ali Mughayat Shah.[63] According to P. Voorhoeve and Th. W. Juynboll, Ali Mughayat Shah is 'the real founder of the empire of Acheh.' They have, however, drawn our attention to the discovery of tomb-stones of some of the predecessors of Ali Mughayat Shah after Djajadiningrat had drawn up his list of Achenese kings.[64] These tomb-stones are valuable as they point to a possible earlier date for the beginning of the sultanate. Ali Mughayat Shah might well have been the "real founder of the empire of Acheh,' but the assertion that he was the founder of the first Moslem ruling house in Acheh is open to question.

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[62]William Marsden, The History of Sumatra, 1811, 418-423.

[63]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 151.

[64]P. Voorhoeve and Th.W. Juynboll, in the article "Atjèh" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1960, 742-743.

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A local chronicle, entitled 'Adat Acheh' i.e., Usages of the kingdom of Acheh, gives a genealogy of the sultans of Acheh. According to this chronicle the sultanate was founded in A. H. 601 (1205) by a certain Johan Shah, who introduced Islam and settled at Kandang Acheh, a village near Kotaradja.[65] The third king of this line, Sultan Mahmud Shah (A. H. 665-708 or 1266-1308 A.D.),[66] moved from Kandang to the present site of the city of Kotaradja and built there a fort called Dar al Dunya. This happened in the 43rd year of his reign i.e., A. H. 708 or 1308 A.D.[67] The ninth king of the line, Sultan Salauddin (A. H. 917-946 or 1511-1540 A.D.) has been identified by Djajadiningrat with Ali Mughayat Shah of Bustan us-Salatin.[68] The genealogical list has nine kings between Salauddin (or, Ali Mughayat Shah) and Iskandar Muda, the greatest of Achenese kings.[69] The authoritative list drawn up by Djajadiningrat and modified by Juynboll and

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[65]T. J. Newbold, "Genealogy of the kings of the Mahomedan dynasty in Achin, from the 601st year of the Hejira to the present time," Madras Journal of Literature and Science, III, 55; G.W.J. Drewes and P. Voorhoeve, Adat Atjeh, VKI, XXIV, s-Gravenhage, 1958, 16.

[66]According to the Comparative Tables of A.H. and A.D. dates in the Handbook of Oriental History (ed. C. H. Philips, 1951, 36). These tables have been used throughout except where Djajadiningrat gives a different date.

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Voorhoeve has ten.[70] Except for this difference the names of the kings given in the chronicle agree with those of the authoritative list. Djajadiningrat, however, doubts the authenticity of the earlier part of this chronicle on the ground that only seven kings have been made to cover a period of 300 years.[71] The list actually gives eight between 1205 and 1511 A.D.[72] Drewes and Voorhoeve suggest in their editorial notes on Adat Atjeh that there are grounds for believing that the chronicle goes back to a "rather remote past." In their opinion the historical part, at least, does not show any signs of being forged or altered to serve the interests of any later ruler.[73]

Another chronicle, the Hikajat Atjeh, gives the names of the ancestors of Sultan Iskandar Muda both on the father's side and on the mother's side. After correction by Djajadiningrat and Moquette they read as follows:[74]

| Father's side | Mother's side |
|---|---|
| Munawar Shah | Inayat Shah |
| Shamsu Shah | Muzaffar Shah |
| Ali Mughayat Shah | Firman Shah |
| Alauddin Riayat Shah | Alauddin Riayat Shah |
| Abangta Abdul Jalil | puteri Raja Indera Bangsa |
| Sultan Mansur (father of Iskandar Muda) | (mother of Iskandar Muda) |

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[70]Juynboll and Voorhoeve, "Atjeh" 742-743; see Appendix II and III.

[71]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 148, note 3.

[72]See Appendix I.

[73]Drewes and Voorhoeve, Adat Atjeh, 16.

[74]Iskandar, HA, 30.

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[70] Juynboll and Voorhoeve, "Atjeh" 142-143; see Appendix II and III.

[71] Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 149, note 3.

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[74] Iskandar, HA, 30.

The chronicle reveals that Iskandar Muda's ancestors on the father's side at one time ruled in Lamri while those on the mother's side ruled in Dar al-Kamal, on the southern bank of the Acheh river.[75]

According to the records of the Ming dynasty, Mahama Shah, the king of Lambri, sent an envoy to China in 1412. His son Sha Che-han also sent an envoy to the Chinese court.[76] Ma Huan's Ying-yai Sheng-lan (1416) or "General Account of the Shores of the Ocean," says that the king of Lambri is a Mahomedan.[77]

The relationship between the kings mentioned above in the two chronicles has not yet been fully worked out. Nor have the two kings mentioned in the Chinese records been identified. However, on the basis of the materials offered by the Hikajat Atjeh and the tomb-inscriptions Teuku Iskandar has made an attempt at the reconstruction of the early dynastic history of Acheh.[78]

It appears that in the fifteenth century there were two centres of power in Greater Acheh, one at Lamri on the

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[75]Ibid., 31-32.

[76]Schlegel, "Geographical Notes," 357-358.

[77]Groeneveldt, "Notes," 98.

[78]Iskandar, HA, 30-38.

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Munawar Shah, Iskandar Muda's ancestor on the father's side, was originally a ruler of Lamri. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the capital was transferred to Makota Alam which is the same as present Kuta Alam, on the northern bank of the Acheh river.[82] When the two kingdoms thus stood face to face across the river, all the noble Ulebalangs and all the people of Acheh Dar as-Salam (i.e., Greater Acheh) were split into two camps. The ruler of Makota Alam made war on Dar al-Kamal, but failed to win. He then proposed to marry his son to the daughter of the ruler of Dar al-Kamal, Setia Indera. This was accepted. On the pretext of transporting the dowry, weapons were shipped across and Dar al-Kamal was taken by a surprise attack. The ruler of Makota Alam now

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[79]Iskandar, HA, 32.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Ibid., 32-33.

[82]Ibid., 31.

sea coast and the other at Der al-Kamal on the southern bank of the Aobah river. Raja Inayat Shah, the ancestor of Iskandar Muda on the mother's side, ruled in Der al-Kamal,[79] which was possibly the contemporary name of Aobah proper i.e., Bandar Aobah.[80] A little distance from Der al-Kamal, at Bilay, a grave has been found of Sultan Muzaffar Shah, son of Inayat Shah, son of Abdullah al-Malik al-Mubin. One wonders whether the last mentioned person was the first ruler of Aobah.[81]

Nunawar Shah, Iskandar Muda's ancestor on the father's side, was originally a ruler of Lamri. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the capital was transferred to Makota Alam which is the same as present Kuta Alam, on the northern bank of the Aobah river.[82] When the two kingdoms thus stood face to face across the river, all the noble Uleebalangs and all the people of Aobah Der as-Salam (i.e., Greater Aobah) were split into two camps. The ruler of Makota Alam made war on Der al-Kamal, but failed to win. He then proposed to marry his son to the daughter of the ruler of Der al-Kamal, Sultia Indera. This was accepted. On the pretext of transporting the dowry, weapons were shipped across and Der al-Kamal was taken by a surprise attack. The ruler of Makota Alam now

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[79] Iskandar, HA, 32.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid., 32-33.

[82] Ibid., 31.

ruled over the whole of Acheh Dar as-Salam and thus was the Acheh valley unified under one ruling house.[83]

Now the question arises whether we can identify the conqueror of Dar Al-Kamal. A Portuguese account of 1599 says that the founder of the kingdom of Acheh was a certain "Sidimorogom." In Kuta Alam there is a grave traditionally known as that of "Poteu Meureuhom" i.e., "Grave of our late Lord." The inscription on the grave shows that it was the grave of Sultan Shamsu Shah, who according to Hikajat Atjeh was the father of Ali Mughayat Shah. Rouffaer reads "Sidimorogom" of the Portuguese account as Said al-Marhum i.e., the Late Lord." This seems to be the same person as "Poteu Meureuhom" of the tomb-inscription. The statement in the Hikajat Atjeh that Sajjid al-Marhum is the son of Shamsu Shah is thus incorrect. Possibly one should read the two together as one name: Shamsu Shah Sajjid al-Marhum. If Sidimorogom of the Portuguese account was the founder of the kingdom of Acheh Dar as-Salam then the honour should belong to Shamsu Shah.[84]

Shamsu Shah abdicated in favour of his son Ali Mughayat Shah. The grave of Ali Mughayat Shah at Kandang XII in Kotaradja shows that he died in 1530 A.D. The most dependable chronicle, Bustan us-Salatin, says that Ali Mughayat Shah

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ruled for 14 years. Thus the date of Ali Mughayat Shah's accession would be 1516 A.D. There is a separate grave of Raja Ibrahim, son of Shamsu Shah, at Kuta Alam, which shows that he was not the same person as Ali Mughayat Shah. Raja Ibrahim was a brother of Ali Mughayat Shah and he died in 1523.[85]

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[85] Ibid., 34-35.

## iii. The Coming of the Portuguese and the Rise of Acheh in the Sixteenth Century

The story of the coming of the Portuguese to Asia has been told many times over. For our present purpose only the major landmarks may be noted.

Portugal's expansion overseas began with "the impetus of a belated crusade" in 1415 when Ceuta, on the north coast of Africa, was captured from the Moors. Ceuta was an important trading centre of the Moslems connecting Alexandria and Damascus with Europe.[86] The first explorers of the African coast were sent out by Prince Henry the Navigator in 1421. From the very beginning these expeditions were carried out under the military Order of Christ of which the Prince was the Governor.[87] It took them the rest of the century to circumnavigate Africa and reach Calicut in India (1498).

While they were slowly moving down the west coast of Africa an impressive Chinese fleet was operating in the Indian Ocean area. Several voyages were made by the Imperial fleet of China commanded by Admiral Cheng Ho, between 1405

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[86] B. Schrieke, ISS, I, 37; G. Birdwood, Report on the old Records of the India office, 1891, 157.

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and 1433, to the different countries of Southeast Asia, and those bordering on the Indian Ocean. These missions visited Champa, Java, Sumatra, Bengal, Ceylon and Malabar and went as far west as the Persian Gulf and the Somaliland. The Cheng Ho missions ended abruptly in 1433 and in the second half of the fifteenth century China definitely turned away from an active overseas policy. By an imperial decree (1481) the Chinese were forbidden on pain of death to trade with Japan and other countries beyond the seas.[88] There followed a general shrinking of Chinese shipping and when the Portuguese reached Calicut at the end of the fifteenth century, the Chinese ships were no longer visiting the countries west of Malacca.

The rise of Portuguese power along the shores of the Indian Ocean was rapid and spectacular. The Portuguese maritime empire was based on the control of strategic points of the main sea route to India and the Far East. Within a very short time (1498-1510) there emerged a chain of Portuguese fortified posts stretching from Sofala, in southeastern Africa, to Goa on the west coast of India. Having acquired a few bases on the Indian subcontinent the Portuguese made their dramatic entry into Southeast Asia in 1511, by the outright conquest of Malacca, the foremost entrepot

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Chinese dominance over Eastern waters was a spectacular but temporary affair. A phenomenon of much greater significance was the Mohammedan control of the long range sea-borne trade between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in the west and the Moluccas in the east. On the eastern side of Africa the Portuguese ran into a predominantly Moslem trading world. The Portuguese chain of forts was flung across long-established trading networks operated by Moslem merchants of Arabia and Persia, Gujarat and Bengal, Sumatra and Java. This was a deliberate policy, for they not only wanted to seize the fruits of Asia's trade with Europe but also to attack the Moslems from the rear. In 1500 the Portuguese had royal instructions to seize Moslem vessels on the high seas. In

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1505, following the orders of King Manuel I, the Portuguese began a concentrated attack on Moslem shipping in the mouths of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and along the west coast of India.[90] The continental powers of Asia could afford to ignore the Portuguese thrust but it caused serious alarm among the coastal states and merchant groups connected with the commerce between Asia and Europe. Besides it directly threatened vital commercial interests of Egypt, whose Mameluk rulers derived a large income from this trade. The immediate result was the formation of an alliance between Egypt and the Sultanate of Gujarat to meet the Portuguese challenge. In 1508 the combined Egyptian and Gujarati fleet defeated a Portuguese fleet off Chaul on the west coast of India. The Moslem counter-attack had begun. In the end superior armament, better leadership, and good luck brought victory to the Portuguese. It should be noted, however, that the struggle was a long-drawn-out one and as its focus shifted from the west to the east the cause of Islam won new adherents in Sumatra, Java and the Moluccas, who made it impossible for the Portuguese to establish a monolithic control over the entire theatre of Asian commerce.

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with all the naval backing they needed. Consequently in those areas where the Portuguese blow fell hard the Moslem traders had no other alternative but to disperse and avoid the usual trading routes. The next step for them was to congregate at a new point and weave a new trading complex around it. This capacity to disperse and reappear at alternative trading centres seems to have been the secret of survival of the unweaponed Asian merchants in periods of political disturbance.

Malacca fell to the Portuguese in 1511. Schrieke sees a correlation between the capture of Malacca by the Portuguese and the rise of Acheh as an important trading centre. He points out that the anti-Moslem policy of the Portuguese in Malacca caused an exodus of Moslem traders from that city. Many of them came to Acheh. The establishment of Portuguese control over the Straits of Malacca also resulted in a shifting of trade routes. The Moslem merchants coming from the west now avoided the traditional route through the Straits and preferred instead to go round Sumatra via the west coast to enter the Java sea by the back door of the Sunda Strait. Placed strategically at the northwestern tip of Sumatra, Acheh got full benefits of these developments as did Bantam (West Java), partly for the same reasons, being placed on the Sunda Strait at the other end of the same route.[91]

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Broadly speaking there is a connection between the establishment of Portuguese authority in Malacca and the rise of Acheh as a major trading centre in western Indonesia. The connection between the two events is, however, not a direct one; the one did not immediately lead to the other. The first north Sumatran port-town to be benefitted by the fall of Malacca was Pasai, not Acheh. Tomé Pires (1512-1515) did not think much of Acheh, but he was struck by the growing opulence of Pasai. In trying to explain the sudden expansion of Pasai's trade he writes,..."since Malacca has been punished and Pedir is at war, the Kingdom of Pase is becoming prosperous..." He then goes on to predict that "this improvement which Pase received through what happened in Malacca" will be cancelled when Malacca is reformed and that "...Pase will return to its former state, and (so will) Pedir."[92]

The revival of trade in Pasai in the second decade of the sixteenth century may, therefore, be directly ascribed to the capture of Malacca by the Portuguese. North Sumatra was a natural alternative for the merchants who came to Indonesia from the west but were unwilling to move on to Malacca. Sumatra had products of great export value such as pepper, silk, camphor, benzoin, and gold. These had always enabled north Sumatra to set up one or more centres

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of international trade as minor competitors to the great emporium of Malacca.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the two big centres of trade in this area were Pedir and Pasai. Pedir was the more important of the two for it was not only a flourishing port but also a notable political power exercising dominion over a number of states of north Sumatra. One would naturally expect Pedir and Pasai to take full advantage of the dislocation of Moslem trade in the Straits region caused by the Portuguese seizure of Malacca. The new traders who resorted to north Sumatra preferred to go to Pasai instead of Pedir because the latter was at war with its neighbours. They could not have possibly come to Acheh for Acheh was as yet unprepared to receive them. It was only when the Portuguese interference with the trade of Pasai caused a second exodus around 1520 that Acheh could make good use of it.

There cannot be any doubt that the Portuguese conquest of Malacca gave rise to a new situation which mightily aided Acheh's rise to power. But the important role of the external stimulus should not be overstressed to obscure the fact that, at the initial stage, Acheh was much more the handiwork of its Sultans than the product of external circumstances. The Portuguese presence in the Straits of Malacca was a constant challenge to all the Mohammedan states of Western Indonesia. The typical response of Acheh to that situation can only be

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understood in terms of the internal components that went into the making of the state.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the Acheh valley had been unified by Sultan Shamsu Shah. At that time Pedir was the strongest power in north Sumatra. The expansion of Pedir towards the northwest had forced the rulers of Lamri to transfer their capital to Makota Alam in the Acheh valley.[93] Possibly it was during the reign of Shamsu Shah that Pedir made an attack on Acheh. According to the Portuguese writers this incident took place in 1497 when the extreme north-west of Sumatra submitted to the authority of Pedir. Sultan Marif Shah of Pedir then made two of his former slaves the Governors of Daya (west coast of Sumatra) and Acheh. According to the same source Raja Ibrahim, the son of the Governor of Acheh rose in rebellion against Pedir's authority and made Acheh independent in 1521.[94]

There is substantial agreement between this account and what we know from indigenous sources although it is difficult to identify the former slave of the Sultan of Pedir who governed Acheh. Shamsu Shah had two sons, Raja Lella and Raja Ibrahim. We have seen that Shamsu Shah abdicated power in favor of Raja Lella, who ascended the throne around 1516 and

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Ali Mughayat Shah was able to harness the native fearless spirit of the seafaring and piratical Achenese to an effective military machine. The coming of the Portuguese helped him in two ways. First, the Portuguese brought with them superior artillery which he never missed any chance to seize. Secondly, the Portuguese antagonised Moslem merchants trading at Pedir and Pasai by indiscriminate seizure of Asian ships.[96]

The Portuguese first came into contact with Acheh in 1519 when one of their ships, under the command of Gasper d'Acosta, was wrecked on the island of Gomes, off the northwestern tip of Sumatra. The survivors were overpowered by the Achenese and taken prisoners. The Governor of Malacca, Garcia de Sa, was finally able to secure their release

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through the intervention of the Shahbandar (superintendent of the port) of Pasai.[97]

Another Portuguese ship commanded by Diogo Pacheco arrived in Daya, a town on the west coast of Sumatra, in quest of the "Gold Island." He was caught in a storm and lost his brigantine near Barus, a port on the west coast, famous for its gold trade with Indian merchants.[98]

About the same time, the Portuguese began to make their influence felt in Pasai. After the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese, many Malay and Sumatran states made peace with the new masters of that city and offered to acknowledge the overlordship of the king of Portugal. Pasai was one of them.[99] In 1520 in a letter to the king of Portugal, the king of Pasai complained against Portuguese interference with ships trading with Pasai.[100] In 1521 the Portuguese set up their own nominee on the throne of Pasai and built a fort at the mouth of the river on which the city stood.[101]

In the same year Jorge de Brito arrived near Acheh with seven ships on his way to the Moluccas. According to most

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of the Portuguese writers de Brito went straight to Acheh to demand satisfaction for the goods taken by the Achenese from the Portuguese ships. Gaspar Correa, however, makes an interesting deviation. He made de Brito arrive first at Pasai where messengers from Pedir met him and invited him to help Pedir against Acheh. De Brito agreed. Supported by the Pedirese army on land the Portuguese ships sailed up the Acheh river and destroyed a "great city" and carried away a large booty. Then they returned to attack the Kraton but failed. In the end the invaders had to beat a retreat in the face of a fierce counter-attack. Tiele admits that Correa's account gives a better insight into the purpose of de Brito's visit to Acheh, although the account may not be entirely dependable.[102]

Whatever be the real story, the important thing to note is that the Portuguese were gradually extending their power over north Sumatra. They had already built a fort at Pasai and they had made a direct assault on Acheh. The establishment of a Portuguese fort at Pasai meant that Pedir, the traditional enemy of Acheh, could now easily draw upon Portuguese help against Acheh. So even if Correa's story is doubtful, the alliance between Pedir and the Portuguese against Acheh was a possibility which Acheh could not afford to ignore.

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[102] *Ibid.*, 368.

of the Portuguese writers de Brito went straight to Achen to demand satisfaction for the goods taken by the Achenese from the Portuguese ships. Gaspar Correa, however, makes an interesting deviation. He made de Brito arrive first at Pasai where messengers from Pedir met him and invited him to help Pedir against Achen. De Brito agreed. Supported by the Pedirese army on land the Portuguese ships sailed up the Achen river and destroyed a "great city" and carried away a large booty. Then they returned to attack the Kraton but failed. In the end the invaders had to beat a retreat in the face of a fierce counter-attack. Tiele admits that Correa's account gives a better insight into the purpose of de Brito's visit to Achen, although the account may not be entirely dependable.[102]

Whatever be the real story, the important thing to note is that the Portuguese were gradually extending their power over north Sumatra. They had already built a fort at Pasai and they had made a direct assault on Achen. The establishment of a Portuguese fort at Pasai meant that Pedir, the traditional enemy of Achen, could now easily draw upon Portuguese help against Achen. So even if Correa's story is doubtful, the alliance between Pedir and the Portuguese against Achen was a possibility which Achen could not afford to ignore.

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[102] Ibid., 168.

In 1520 the expansion of Acheh began. Raja Ibrahim, brother of Ali Mughayat Shah, conquered Daya in that year. In 1521 Acheh threw off its allegiance to Pedir and the next year attacked the city itself. The city was easily taken by bribing the principal officers. In 1524 Pasai fell to the Achenese. The Shahbandar of Pasai was already in Achenese pay. Acheh had by that time enough artillery to take care of Pasai's Portuguese allies. The Portuguese garrison under Andre Henriquez put up a poor show and abandoned the fort along with a considerable amount of artillery. The Achenese seized the fort immediately and turned their own artillery against the Portuguese. The taking of Pasai marked the end of the first phase of Acheh's expansion.[103]

Tiele points out that the Portuguese interference with Asian shipping off Pasai impressed upon the Asian merchants, particularly the Mohammedans, the need for protection against their European competitors. The only possible place in north Sumatra where they could have found such protection was the rising state of Acheh. The rapid expansion of Acheh can, therefore, be partly ascribed to the support of the Mohammedan traders.[104] Apart from that, the very conquest of north Sumatra brought Acheh the rich commercial heritage of Pedir and Pasai.

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[103] Ibid., 385-386; Marsden, Sumatra, 419-422.

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Before 1510 Pedir was a great port. Ludovico di Varthema, the Bolognese traveller, who visited Sumatra around 1508, thought Pedir to be the best port of the whole island. It had enough pepper to load annually 18 to 20 ships "all of which go to Cathai."[105] It had raw silk in great quantity, the annual value of the produce being worth 100,000 ducats. Most of it was bought up by Gujarati merchants.[106] It also had benzoin, three kinds of aloeswood, lac and abundant timber good for making ships. From the interior came gold.[107] Many merchants came to this port from Cambay, the Coromandel coast, Bengal, Pegu, Tenasserim, and Kedah. Varthema saw 500 money-changers in one street, a fact indicating the large volume of trade transacted there.[108]

Pasai too, as we have seen, was experiencing a revival of trade after 1511. It became the main outlet for all products of Sumatra. Among the foreign merchants who came to trade with Pasai were Turks, Arabs, Persians, Gujaratis, Klings (from Coromandel), and Bengalees. Traders also came from Pegu, Siam, Kedah, and Bruas.[109]

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[105]G. P. Badger (ed.), The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema, 1503-1508, 1863, 228; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 140.

[106]Tiele, "Europeërs," 1877, 333, note 2.

[107]Badger, Varthema, 235, 238; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 140.

[108]Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 134; Badger, Varthema, 239.

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The prosperity of Acheh in the 16th century should, therefore, be very largely ascribed to its capacity to draw away the former trade of Pedir and Pasai. The exodus of Moslems from Malacca was no doubt an important factor in the making of Acheh but its impact was much greater in the sphere of religion than in trade. It would be a mistake to think that Portuguese Malacca had nothing to do with Moslem traders. In fact within a short time Malacca regained its contact with Mohammedan merchants. The exodus of Moslem scholars and religious teachers, however, appears to have been a permanent one. The capture of Malacca by a Christian power inevitably made Acheh the headquarters of Indonesian Islam.

The incorporation of north Sumatra into Acheh's dominions meant a virtual defeat of Portuguese arms and diplomacy. It meant the elimination of what may be called a Portuguese outpost in north Sumatra. Never again could the Portuguese find a foothold on the Sumatran side of the Straits of Malacca.

Having beaten the Portuguese in Sumatra, Ali Mughayat Shah did not have to wait long before he could launch an attack on Malacca itself. In 1528 he got a fresh opportunity of capturing some Portuguese arms. In that year the Portuguese commander Simão de Souza Galvão was forced by a storm to seek shelter in the port of Acheh. The king of Acheh invited Galvão to land but the Portuguese refused, suspecting treachery. The Achenese then attacked the ship and killed almost all its men including Galvaõ. The few survivors were

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taken prisoner but the king treated them with extreme kindness and expressed regret at the death of the brave commander. He sent one of them, Antonio Caldeira, to Malacca with a proposal of peace and friendship. He offered to release the prisoners and return the ship and its artillery and even those seized at Pasai. At this time Acheh was having a war with the kingdom of Aru, the country lying to the east of Pasai. Aru had been trying to get help from the Portuguese, something which the king of Acheh was very eager to prevent. Luckily for Acheh, Caldeira was able to persuade the Governor of Malacca to accept Acheh's offer and not to help Aru. Caledeira was killed on his way back to Acheh so that no news reached the Sultan of Acheh. The king of Aru was naturally very much disappointed with the Portuguese and after fighting a minor battle made peace with Acheh.

Ali Mughayat Shah came to know through secret messengers that the newGovernor of Malacca, Garcia de Sa, was favorably disposed towards him. This prompted him to send ambassadors to Malacca who brought back with them representatives of the Governor, empowered to negotiate a treaty of commerce. These envoys were lavishly entertained and were allowed to leave the port after having settled all business to their complete satisfaction. When this news reached Malacca it dispelled much of the former suspicion towards Acheh. Meanwhile the Portuguese mission had been overtaken on its way to Malacca and the envoys were all slaughtered. Malacca did not suspect

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any foul play as the Governor thought that his men had been lost in an accident.

The king of Acheh then requested that a person of rank be sent to Acheh to take up his residence there. The Portuguese Governor agreed and sent Manuel Pacheo with a large ship fully laden with merchandise. Senaia Raja, the Shahbandar of Malacca, who was secretly in league with the king of Acheh, informed him that the ship had more artillery than the city of Malacca itself possessed at the time. Ali Mughayat Shah lost no time in seizing the ship with its artillery and merchandise. This made him so confident of victory over his enemy that he sent a message to the Governor of Malacca thanking him for his generosity and to tell him that he would soon trouble him for the remainder of the Portuguese navy. In 1529 he planned an attack on Malacca on a Sunday when most of the people of the town would be in church. The Shahbandar promised to help him from within the walls. This was not an open attack. Several ships secretly landed Achenese soldiers on the outskirts of Malacca. The plot, however, leaked out, the Portuguese were alerted and the Shahbandar was immediately punished with death.

The Achenese plan did not work. The whole series of incidents[110] from the handling of the survivors of Galvao's ship to the secret expedition show that in crafty unscrupulous

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diplomacy the Achenese were more than a match for the Portuguese.

In 1530 Ali Mughayat Shah died, poisoned by his wife. By the time of his death Acheh had grown into a prosperous and mighty kingdom. It had all the characteristics of an Indonesian pirate state, periodically bred and fostered by the conditions prevailing in the Straits of Malacca. At the beginning of the sixteenth century two new elements helped to make it even more formidable. These were the introduction of European firearms and the quickening of zeal for Islam--for both of which the Portuguese were to be thanked.

The next great ruler of Acheh, probably the greatest in the seventeenth century, was Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah al-Kahar (1537-1571). One of his major achievements was the extension of the armed forces of Acheh. The king of the neighbouring state of Aru told the Portuguese adventurer Mendez Pinto that the basis of Acheh's military strength was the rich store of gold in its possession which enabled the sultans to hire trained mercenaries from abroad almost continuously. Evidently the flourishing trade of Acheh was bringing a substantial income to the royal treasury on which the sultans could depend in planning their military expeditions. Pinto, who claims to have seen the Achenese army in action, reports that it contained large contingents of Turkish, Cambayan, Malabari, and Abyssinian soldiers.

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Occasionally it also had soldiers from Luzon and Borneo.[111]

Another factor which strengthened Acheh's position in the middle of the sixteenth century was its international connections.[112] Alauddin built up close relations with notable Islamic powers of the Middle East. Through the mediation of the Pasha of Cairo an arrangement was made with Turkey by which Acheh received Turkish and Abyssinian troops. In return Alauddin granted the subjects of Turkey a factory (commercial establishment) in Pasai.[113] From documents in the Turkish archives we know that in 1563 the king of Acheh sent an embassy to Constantinople to ask for assistance against the Portuguese. The envoys said that many of the Southeast Asian rulers were willing to embrace Islam if Turkey would help them. After waiting for two years the embassy achieved its objective and two ships with supplies and military technicians were sent to Acheh.[114] It was around this time that the rulers of western India formed an anti-Portuguese league which Acheh was invited to join.[115]

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[111] A. Vambery (ed.), The Voyages and Adventure of Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, the Portuguese, 1891, 38, 39, 42; Tiele, "Europeers," 1877, 64-65.

[112] Schrieke, ISS, I, 44.

[113] Tiele, "Europeërs," 1877, 64-65.

[114] Juynboll and Voorhoeve, "Atjeh," 743.

[115] Marsden, Sumatra, 429.

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Strengthened by his international connections Alauddin bore down on his neighbouring states with his powerful army and navy. He made extensive conquests and styled himself the king of Acheh, Barus, Pedir, Pasai, Daya, and Batta, prince of the two seas, and of the mines of Minangkabau.[116] In 1539 he made war against the Bataks in the heart of Sumatra in the cause of Islam, and he conquered Aru. The king of Johore (Malay peninsula), however, managed to drive away the Achenese from Aru in 1540. But in 1564 Acheh conquered it again and in the same year Achenese forces sacked Johore itself and carried away its king as a prisoner to Acheh. Malacca was attacked thrice, in 1537, 1547 and 1568, with large forces. In the last attack 15,000 Achenese and 400 Turkish soldiers took part and the Achenese had 200 pieces of artillery big and small.[117] The Javanese and the Tamils were on the Portuguese side, as were Johore and Kedah.

During the rule of the successors of Sultan Alauddin al-Kahar an attempt was made to extend the Islamic alliance eastward to include the Javanese kingdom of Japara. Malacca was attacked twice, in 1573 and 1575. The conquest of Perak (in the Malay peninsula) in 1575 marked the end of Acheh's expansion in the sixteenth century.

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Schrieke ascribes the Achenese expansion very largely to the desire on the part of the rulers of Acheh to control the pepper ports of the east and west coasts of Sumatra.[118] This was probably an important factor. One should not, however, underestimate the role of religion in Acheh's expansion. During the military campaigns the sultans of Acheh whipped up a fanatical zeal for Islam which was the primary driving force behind the army.[119] The Portuguese in Malacca were regarded as the chief enemy of Islam and the wars against the fellow-Mohammedans of the neighbouring states were justified on the ground that these at one time or another had sided with the Portuguese against Acheh.

It should be appreciated that the Sultans of Acheh were genuine patrons of Islamic learning. As the hostility with the Portuguese continued through the sixteenth century, scholars and theologians began to congregate in the city of Acheh. During the reign of Sultan Husain (1571-1579) there arrived from Mecca a scholar named Muhammad Azari or Shaikh Nuruddin, who taught metaphysics.[120]

The next sultan of Acheh, Sultan Aluddin of Perak (Mansur Shah) was especially known for his patronage of Islamic scholarship. It was during his reign (1579-1586)

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Sultan Alauddin of Perak died in 1586. His daughter was married to the king of Johore. Their son now became the heir to the throne. In 1588 this boy king (Raja Buyong) was done away with and the chief nobles of the state chose Alauddin Riayat Shah (1588-1604), son of Firman Shah, as the king of Acheh. With his accession the dynasty of Dar al-Kamal was re-established on the throne of Acheh.

Johore was a traditional enemy of Acheh. Several times in the sixteenth century there had been clash between the two states (1539, 1564, and 1582). In 1587, when the Portuguese defeated Johore in an engagement, Acheh sent congratulations to the former. In 1588 the murder of the boy king (Raja Buyong) opened a new phase of Acheh-Johore hostility. Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah put an end to his country's war against the Portuguese. He was more interested in getting the Portuguese on his side as allies against Johore.

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According to the Hikajat Atjeh, two Portuguese envoys named Dong Dawis and Dong Tunis came to the court of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah. They requested the king to let them have the Achenese fort Biram. The king said in reply that the Portuguese might have some other fort but not the one they had asked for because it guarded the mouth of the river.[122] Djajadiningrat points out that Frederick de Houtman has a similar story to tell. According to him a Portuguese "Pope" from Malacca came to Acheh on November 15, 1600 and asked for the fort Lubock, the strongest fort of Acheh, in return for which the Portuguese would help Acheh against Johore. Sultan Alauddin said that if the Portuguese would first hand over Johore to him he would not refuse them any fort.[123] It was at this point when the king of Acheh was still looking for an ally against Johore that the Dutch and the English arrived.

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## Chapter II

## The Coming of the English and the Dutch

### 1. The Coming of the English

On 1 June 1592 the English ship Edward Bonaventure, commanded by James Lancaster, appeared on the island of Gomes, at the north-western tip of Sumatra. Lancaster and his men rested for a few days at the island, hoping to find a Sumatran pilot. They were within a few miles of the city of Acheh, yet they did not visit that place. Instead they moved over to the island of Penang off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula where they sheltered during the three months of South-west monsoon.[1]

This was the first entry of the English into Achenese waters. The London merchants who had sponsored the voyage were seriously concerned to open up commerce with Asian countries "to assist the export of English manufactures, which were suffering from lack of markets."[2] The need for new markets was more acutely felt because the opening of hostilities with Spain had closed down England's profitable

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[1]William Foster (ed.), The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster, 1940, 10.

[2]Ibid., xii.

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## The Coming of the English and the Dutch

### 1. The Coming of the English

On 1 June 1592 the English ship Edward Bonaventure, commanded by James Lancaster, appeared on the island of Gomes, at the north-western tip of Sumatra. Lancaster and his men rested for a few days at the island, hoping to find a Sumatran pilot. They were within a few miles of the city of Achen, yet they did not visit that place. Instead they moved over to the island of Penang off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula where they sheltered during the three months of South-west monsoon.[1]

This was the first entry of the English into Achenese waters. The London merchants who had sponsored the voyage were zealously concerned to open up commerce with Asian countries "to sealet the exports of English manufactures, which were suffering from lack of markets."[2] The need for new markets was more acutely felt because the opening of hostilities with Spain had closed down England's profitable

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[1]William Foster (ed.), The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster, 1940, 10.

[2]Ibid., xii.

trade with Spain and Portugal, the Spanish Netherlands and Spanish-occupied France, and parts of the Mediterranean area.[3]

Lancaster, however, showed no inclination to trade. Early in September he moved out of his shelter in Penang and began to cruise up and down the Straits of Malacca interfering with Portuguese shipping in that area. Before he finally sailed out of Indonesian waters, in November, he had seized and emptied three Portuguese ships. One of them, of about 60/70 tons, was from Martaban carrying pepper belonging to "certain Jesuites and a biscuit-baker, a Portugal."[4] Another was a big 700 ton ship from Goa belonging to the Captain of Malacca. In this ship the English found "... sixteene pieces of brasse and three hundred bats of Canarie wine and niper wine,...hats, red caps knit of Spanish wooll, worsted stockings knit, shooes, velvets, taffataes, chamlets, and silkes,...rice, Venice glasses, certaine papers full of false and counterfeit stones (which an Italian brought from Venice to deceive the rude Indians withall), abundance of playing cardes,...French paper."[5]

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[3] S. T. Bindoff, Tudor England, 1961, 286; W. Foster, England's Quest of Eastern Trade, 1933, 127-128; see also D. K. Bassett, The Factory of the English East India Company at Bantam, 1602-1682, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1955, 3.

[4] Foster, Lancaster, 11.

[5] Ibid., 13.

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The main purpose of Lancaster's trip was reconnaissance. But he came fully prepared for prize-taking and he successfully made a break through into the rich preserve of Portuguese-Asian trade around Malacca. He did not, however, seize ships and goods belonging to Asian merchants.[6]

A Dutch historian suggests that Lancaster's acts of piracy "lowered the British reputation" and gave the Portuguese a chance "to discredit all foreign Europeans with the Indonesians."[7] It is difficult to see how this could have happened. Many Malays and Sumatrans in the Straits region were far too involved in piracy themselves to consider it as absolutely sinful. Besides, the Portuguese were not particularly known for their innocence of this form of maritime activity. Since Lancaster was cautious enough not to hurt Asian shipping, there is scarcely any reason to think that his actions should have appeared very disreputable to the Indonesians. On the contrary, considering that the Portuguese were not very popular with the natives of western Indonesia, the news of the coming of armoured European ships which made prizes of Portuguese carracks must have been extremely heartening to the people of that area. Coming four years after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, Lancaster's exploits were likely to have made an impression on the maritime states of Sumatra and Malaya.

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That the Achenese, at least, knew about the Armada is testified to by John Davis, the first English visitor to Acheh. In 1599 he came to Acheh as a pilot of the Dutch fleet commanded by Cornelis de Houtman. Houtman was not a little annoyed when Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah kept asking him whether he was really from England. The king had heard of England but not of Flanders. When the king finally found out from Houtman that there was an Englishman in the ships, he immediately invited him to the court and gave him a flattering reception. The old Sultan wanted to know all about Queen Elizabeth and wondered how England could beat Spain. To him, as John Davis found out, "Europe is all Spanish."[8]

The report of John Davis that England enjoyed great prestige at the court of Acheh and that the English would be especially welcome there was very encouraging. The English East India Company received its charter on the last day of the year 1600. In February 1601 Lancaster sailed again with four ships and a letter for the king of Acheh from Queen Elizabeth.

On 5 June 1602 the fleet arrived in the road of Acheh. The country people flocked to the English ships with their canoes, as was usual for them to do on the arrival of new

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ships. Some went aboard. Next day two Dutch merchants, who were at that time in charge of their country's trade in Acheh, came and greeted the English.[9]

Captain John Middleton first went to see the king to communicate the message that Lancaster had a letter from Queen Elizabeth for him. The king, the same person who had received John Davis in 1599, treated him well and expressed the desire that the General should have a day's rest after such a long voyage. On 7 June, Lancaster landed with 30 men. The Dutch received him and took him to their factory. Here the king sent six big elephants to carry the General to the court. The Achenese loved processions. A royal letter from England could not conceivably have been carried to the Kraton except in a procession. So the procession started out from the Dutch factory. The biggest elephant, about thirteen or fourteen feet high, had upon its back "a small castle" (like a coach) covered with a canopy of red velvet. Under this canopy in a gold basin was placed Queen Elizabeth's letter covered by a piece of silk. General Lancaster followed riding another elephant. The attendants rode the other elephants; some went on foot. Trumpets and other music played all along. "And there was twentie other that carried streamers of silke of divers coulours, according to that countrie manner."[10]

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When he was admitted to the king's presence Lancaster made obeisance "after the manner of the country"[11] and declared his desire to conclude a treaty of peace and amity. He went on to explain more and the king then interrupted him and asked him to have a seat and relax. The Queen of England's letter was then presented and received. After the exchange of presents the General was treated to a great banquet and then entertained with music and dancing.[12]

In Queen Elizabeth's letter the king of Acheh was addressed as "our loving brother." It said that trade was beneficial to both England and Acheh and that the two countries could profitably unite against the common enemies viz., Spain and Portugal.[13] Would the king of Acheh conclude a treaty with England and would he accept under his royal protection the merchants of England so that they might trade freely?[14]

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[11]John Davis says, "before any man can come to the king's presence, he must put of his hose and shooes, and come before him bare-legged, and bare-footed, holding the palmes of the hands together and heaving them up above his head, bowing with the bodie, must say, Doulat." (Markham, John Davis, 1880, 149.)

[12]The arrack served was too strong for Lancaster, who asked leave to mix water with it, which was granted. The dinner was served with "two or three hundredth generall dishes of meate, baked, roasted and boyled. The dishes and cuppes wherein they were served were most of goulde...every dishe covered, some with purslain of China." (Foster, Lancaster, 93, 131.)

[13]In 1580 Portugal and Spain were united under one crown.

[14]Foster, Lancaster, 94-95.

The king of Acheh was greatly pleased and agreed to conclude a treaty. He asked the "chiefe bishope"[15] and another noble to confer with Lancaster on this matter. When, at the conference, Lancaster asked for "freedomes for the merchants," the "bishop" asked whether he had any special reasons for demanding such privileges. A written agreement whereby a group of foreign traders would be allowed to trade without paying the customary charges was evidently a novel idea and might have appeared somewhat odd to the Achenese noblemen since Acheh's principal source of revenue was trade and the collections at port. In reply Lancaster talked at length expounding the virtues of free trade and added that the English were also allies of Turkey and would readily hinder the Portuguese. Lancaster was making Elizabeth's England appear more pro-Moslem and anti-Spanish than it actually was. England's main need was trade and what Acheh needed was a strong ally matching the Portuguese in naval power. So the agreement was drawn up and signed.

The agreement of 1602 granted to the English free entry and trade; exemption from customs; assistance with ships to rescue English ships, goods and men in case of danger and shipwreck; liberty of testament to bequeath their property to whomever they pleased; stability of bargains and orders for payment by the subjects of Acheh; authority to execute

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justice on their own men; justice against injuries from the natives; freedom from arrest, staying of goods or pricing them by Achenese authorities; and freedom of conscience.[16]

These were no minor concessions considering the Achenese background. The Portuguese and Dutch traders, who had arrived in Acheh before the English, did not enjoy exemption from customs. On the side of the English East Indian Company this was the first set of concessions ever granted to them by an Asian monarch. For some time this agreement was looked upon as a model for similar agreements to be made with other Asian rulers.[17]

That the alliance between England and Acheh was meant to be directed against the Portuguese was demonstrated by Lancaster's acts soon after the agreement was signed. Lancaster was getting extremely worried to find that he could not load his four ships with the little pepper that was available there and with the small amount of money at his disposal. Due to a bad harvest only a small amount of pepper appeared in the market and the price was high.[18] About this time an Indian egg-vendor brought news that the Portuguese had employed a Chinese to collect information

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[16]F. C. Danvers (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, I, 1896, 1-4.

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about the English ships and all that they contained. He further reported that two messengers would be sent to Malacca with the information to get reinforcements. Lancaster brought it to the notice of the king who had the messengers intercepted when they actually tried to leave for Malacca. Lancaster now hatched a plan for seizing Portuguese ships in the Straits and getting his supplies by piracy. The king had recently turned down a Portuguese request to settle a factory and build a fort in Acheh. He was considering a proposal from the king of Siam to make a joint attack on Malacca. Lancaster's project won his full approval and co-operation. He played his part exceedingly well by delaying the departure of the Portuguese ambassador to Malacca. Lancaster was joined by the Dutch captain Spilbergen on the promise of an eighth of the booty. Early in October they seized the 1200 ton Portuguese ship Santo Antonio coming from St. Thome with a rich cargo. More than 950 bales of Indian cloth were collected from the ship besides other valuable merchandise.[19] Lancaster's problems were solved. The king of Acheh was mightily pleased. The Dutch had not been able to give him effective naval aid when he had asked for it. At last he had an ally who surpassed the Portuguese in naval power.

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possibility of opening up new areas to English trade. In this he was less successful. The English bought a stone house, safe from fire. While Lancaster was busy visiting the king and harassing the Portuguese, his men were trying to do some trade. Pepper was selling at 64 Rials a bahar (387 1/2 lbs.). Sometimes it went up even higher.[20] This unusually high price was partly due to the bad harvest of the previous year. Partly it was caused by the influx of new European buyers--the English, the Dutch and the French. At Acheh the English were able to collect about 210,000 lbs. of pepper which along with some cloves and cinnamon were sent home in the Ascension.[21]

Lancaster had already sent the Susan to Priaman, a port on the west coast of Sumatra, where pepper was cheaper. Now he too sailed in that direction with the Dragon and the Hector.

Acheh did not appeal to Lancaster as a suitable port for English trade in the East Indies. The high price of pepper made an unfavourable impression on him. So he left Acheh with all his men and things, giving away the stone house to the king.[22]

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[20] Ibid., 132, 134.

[21] H. Stevens, The Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies, 1886, 247.

[22] Foster, Lancaster, 133.

possibility of opening up new areas to English trade. In this he was less successful. The English bought a stone house, safe from fire. While Lancaster was busy visiting the king and harassing the Portuguese, his men were trying to do some trade. Pepper was selling at 6½ Rials a bahar (387 1/2 lbs.). Sometimes it went up even higher.[20] This unusually high price was partly due to the bad harvest of the previous year. Partly it was caused by the influx of new European buyers--the English, the Dutch and the French. At Aceh the English were able to collect about 210,000 lbs. of pepper which along with some cloves and cinnamon were sent home in the Ascension.[21]

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It took Lancaster 17 days to reach Priaman, where the Susan was found to have collected 600 bahars of pepper at a much cheaper rate.[23] Having ordered the Susan to sail for England Lancaster moved on to Bantam. Here pepper was still cheaper. The terms of trade so impressed Lancaster that he set up the first English factory there and left for England in February.

Despite a good agreement with the king of Acheh, the English did not come back in the lifetime of Alauddin Riayat Shah, who died in 1604. One reason why the English did not follow up their early gains in Acheh was that Bantam, with cheaper rates and a plentiful supply of pepper, appeared more attractive. Another reason was that this was the exploratory phase of the East India Company's penetration of Asian trade. The Directors of the Company were still interested in finding a place where English goods would find a market.

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## ii. The Coming of the Dutch

The coming of the Dutch to Asia was prompted by economic as well as political motives. The theory that the closing down of Lisbon compelled the Dutch to seek a direct passage to the East has been discarded in favor of a pluralistic explanation. In the first place the Dutch attempts to seek a passage to the East predate the closing of the pepper market of Lisbon. Secondly, the Dutch expansion to the Far East can also be seen as a continuation of their struggle against Spain. The Dutch were as much interested in trade as in attacking the overseas possessions of Spain and Portugal, which became one empire after 1580.

The Dutch started out to the East with greater resources than the English and their enterprise in Asia was on a much larger scale. In the period preceding the formation of the Dutch East India Company, i.e., between 1595 and 1602, an impressive number of ships were sent out to the East in quick succession. They went to almost all ports of South-East Asia some of which they visited many times over. Naturally the Dutch influence was stronger in the Indonesian archipelago than that of the English. In the initial period the Dutch thus acquired a lead over their English competitors. Acheh was no exception in this respect. Although the English navigator James Lancaster preceded the Dutch in Achenese

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waters, the latter were the first to arrive at the city of Acheh.

On 30 June 1599, two Dutch ships, the Lion and the Lioness, commanded by Cornelis de Houtman, anchored in the Bay of Acheh.[24] The king of Acheh, Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah, immediately sent his officers to measure the length of the ships, and to take stock of their armaments and men. Houtman sent two of his men with those officers with a looking-glass, a drinking glass, and a bracelet of coral for the king. They returned the same day bringing news of "peace, welcome and plenty of spicery."[25] Two days later the king invited Houtman to visit him and sent a nobleman as hostage. Houtman was given a friendly reception and honoured after the country's manner, i.e., was offered a suit of Achenese dress of good calico and a kris. Within a few days the Dutch were permitted to buy pepper. They collected 25 bahars at the rate of 8 tael per bahar, which was a good amount at a reasonable price.[26] The king gave them a house

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[24]"Cort Verhael van Frederick de Houtman" in: De Oudste Reizen van de Zeeuwen Naar Oost-Indie 1598-1604. (Edited by W. S. Unger), 1948, 69. According to John Davis this was on 21 June 1599. The discrepancy in date is due to John Davis's using the old reckoning which gives a difference of ten days from the new. (P. A. Tiele, "Frederick de Houtman te Atjeh," IG, 1881, I, 147, note 1.)

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in the city where Jacques Boudons and four other men took up residence. Houtman's brother, Frederick de Houtman, was next invited to join the king's bathing party, which was a great honour.

While the Dutch were being thus entertained things began to take a bad turn. The Shahbandar interfered with the buying of pepper by the Dutch by forbidding any sale below 15 tael per bahar. An appeal to the king did not help. The king said he had nothing to do with merchandise which was entirely the Shahbandar's affair.

Within a few days, however, the king changed his mind and invited Houtman for a discussion. To allay all suspicion he sent three hostages: Poosi Poule, Posi Laba and Katzong, the latter a son of one of the Shahbandars.[27] The king now proposed a firm alliance between his kingdom and the Dutch. The Dutch were to help him with two ships against Johore in return for 2,000 bahars of pepper. A document was written up and sealed.[28]

The growth of friendly relations between the court of Acheh and the newly arrived Dutch traders was something which the Portuguese did not like. As we have seen before, Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah was at that moment favourably disposed towards the Portuguese. The previous year (1598)

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[27] Ibid., 72.

[28] Ibid., 72-73.

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Within a few days, however, the king changed his mind and invited Houtman for a discussion. To allay all suspicion he sent three hostages: Pooat Pouls, Poal Labs and Ratong, the latter a son of one of the Shahbandars.[27] The king now proposed a firm alliance between his kingdom and the Dutch. The Dutch were to help him with two ships against Johore in return for 2,000 bahars of pepper. A document was written up and sealed.[28]

The growth of friendly relations between the court of Achen and the newly arrived Dutch traders was something which the Portuguese did not like. As we have seen before, Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah was at that moment favourably disposed towards the Portuguese. The previous year (1598)

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[27] Ibid., 12.

[28] Ibid., 12-13.

his envoys to Portuguese Goa had been given a very honourable reception and they brought back with them Affonso Vincente, a resident of Malacca, as ambassador to Acheh. Affonso Vincente was present in Acheh when the Dutch ships arrived. From the very beginning he tried to poison the king's mind against the Dutch, whom he described as nothing but sea-robbers, and urged the king to seize the Dutch ships. The king was finally persuaded and on the pretext of supplying arms and provisions to the Dutch ships for the expedition against Johore the Achenese made a surprise attack and killed Cornelis de Houtman. Frederick de Houtman, who was in town at that time, was taken prisoner along with several other Dutchmen. The two ships, however, managed to sail away to Pedir where they were attacked again by Achenese galleys, which had Portuguese on board. The king of Acheh then sent back Lafort, one of the prisoners, with the message that he was prepared to make peace if the Dutch would surrender their biggest ship. The Dutch not only rejected the offer but kept Lafort and sailed away.[30]

That was not a good beginning. The first encounter created in the Achenese mind an unfavorable impression of the Dutch. This was followed by a succession of events which only helped to confirm the original view.

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[29]Tiele, IG, 1881, 147-148.

[30]Markham, John Davis, 144-145; De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 215.

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In July 1600, Jacob Wilkens, the next Dutch visitor, appeared before Acheh. Possibly he had a letter from Prince Maurice, for Frederick de Houtman came to learn at Pedir that such a letter had been delivered to the king of Acheh. The king had sent him provisions and was preparing to receive him. Just at that moment Wilkens was secretly informed by one of the Dutch prisoners of the fate of the Dutch ships which had come before. This unnerved him so much that even though he had promised to come and visit the king he now sought excuses and the next day, after firing a few shots, sailed away. The king took it as a great affront and suspected that the main purpose of Wilkens' visit had been to pick up the prisoners.[31]

In November 1600, Vice-Admiral Paulus Van Caerden representing the New Brabant Company arrived in the road of Acheh without any knowledge of the previous Dutch visits. The king was polite but reserved. A letter from Prince Maurice which van Caerden tried to deliver remained untouched, because the Portuguese had warned the king that the parchment was made out of pig leather. The king, however, let him hire a house in the city and carry on trade.[32] The Shahbandar took up with him matters of trade and on 28 December 1600 an agreement was drawn up according to which 1800 bahars of

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[31]Tiele, 10, 1887, 1:9; De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 236.

[32]De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 231-232.

pepper were to be delivered within four months at the rate of 8 tael per bahar. The Dutch were to pay 5% export duty. Payment was to be made on delivery.[33] Within a few days, however, the king asked for advance money and van Caerden had to pay 1,000 Rials and more. Suspecting an Achenese plot, van Caerden seized a number of foreign ships at the harbour. Three of them were from Constantinople, three from Gujerat, two from Bengal and one was Portuguese.[34] Van Caerden's acts confirmed the Portuguese allegation that the Dutch were nothing but pirates.

In June 1601, the Portuguese Captain of Malacca, Andrea Furtado de Mendoza arrived in Acheh and asked for permission to build a fort. This was refused.[35] The attempt on the part of the Portuguese to acquire a fortified post in Acheh brought about a change in the king's attitude towards the Dutch. Consequently, when on 23 August 1601 four Dutch ships sent out by the Middleburgh Company arrived in Acheh they received a very friendly welcome.[36] Laurence Bicker and Gerard Le Roy, the chief merchants of the fleet, carried on negotiations with the king. They too had a letter from Prince

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[33]Heeres, Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum, 1907, 19-20.

[34]De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 234.

[35]Stapel, Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indie, II, 440.

[36]De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 254-255. The Middleburgh Company was at this time united with the Zeeland Company in the United Zeeland Company.

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Maurice which was now received and read. Maurice had requested permission for the Dutch to trade in Acheh and pleaded for the release of Frederick de Houtman and other Dutch prisoners. The prisoners were immediately set free. This ended the detention of Frederick de Houtman who had used his 26 months' stay in Acheh to write a valuable dictionary of the Malay and Madagascar languages.

Trading was still somewhat difficult. The price of pepper was high and the Portuguese had spread the rumour that the Dutch used counterfeit coins. The king no longer trusted the Portuguese as much as he had done before. He had about 300 coins cut open one by one and found them genuine.[37]

In order to strengthen the alliance the king resolved to send two envoys to Holland with a letter and presents for Prince Maurice. On 29 November 1601 Abdul Samad and Sri Muhammad left for Holland reaching their destination on 6 July 1602.[38]

The Dutch were allowed to set up a factory, which they named Zeeland. The king even helped them to establish trading contacts with Gujarat. In 1602 two Dutch merchants sailed to Cambay in native ships with a letter of introduction from the Sultan of Acheh.[39]

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[37]Unger, De Oudste Reizen, p. 140.

[38]Ibid., 141, 144; P. J. Veth, Atchin en zijne betrekkingen tot Nederland, 1873, 71.

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Meanwhile, on 15 December 1601, Jan Grenier, Vice-Admiral in Jacob van Heemskreck's fleet, had arrived. Before his very eyes the factory Zeeland was destroyed in a fire. Dutch trading, however, continued and Grenier bought about 100 bahars of pepper. He then left for Tiku, a pepper-port on the west coast of Sumatra (19 February 1602).[40]

On 16 September 1602, Admiral Spilbergen, representing the Zeeland Company of Moucheron, appeared before Acheh. This was a few months after the English fleet commanded by James Lancaster and the French fleet under De la Bardeliere had arrived. On 17 September, Spilbergen went to see the king and deliver a letter from Prince Maurice. The king gave him a warm reception. Friendship between the Dutch and the king of Acheh was reinforced. As has been mentioned before, Spilbergen joined Lancaster in an attack on Portuguese shipping in October 1602. He moved in and out of Acheh several times, staying there for the whole period from 25 December 1602 to 3 April 1603. During this time he had excellent relations with the king. The price of pepper, however, continued to be high, each bahar selling at 24 tael (i.e 96 Rials).[41] He left behind Cornelis Specx with two other men to look after the pepper trade.

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[40] De Jonge, Opkomst, II, 266-267.

[41] De Reis Van Joris van Spilbergen naar Ceylon, Atjeh en Bantam, De Linschoten-Vereeniging, XXXVIII, 1933, 65-79.

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With the departure of Spilbergen on 3 April 1603 the period of trading by individual Dutch companies ended. On 20 March 1602 the Dutch East India Company had been formed. At the beginning of the seventeenth century it was the biggest of its kind, starting out with ten times as much capital as that of its rival, the English East India Company. Already on 17 January 1603 the Vlissingen and Der Goes, belonging to the first fleet sent out by the United East India Company (V.O.C.) had arrived. In March 1603 four more ships of the same fleet had arrived. When Vice-Admiral Sebald de Weert arrived in Acheh on 10 February 1603 he found there seven Dutch ships including two under Spilbergen. He found the factory established by the Zeelanders in good condition. It had established trading connections not only with Gujarat but also with Calicut in Malabar.[42] In 1603 the Portuguese no longer enjoyed the confidence of the king of Acheh, but the Gujarati merchants, well established in Acheh, disliked the presence of so many European armed ships. Raja Muda, the heir apparent, shared their feeling.[43] De Weert, however, succeeded in acquiring a house with a compound near the river, where he established a factory. This was the first factory set up by the Dutch East India Company in the Far East. The attempt to put a fence around the house aroused

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[42] De Jonge, Opkomst, III, 9.

[43] Ibid., 9-10.

so much opposition that it had to be given up. Jan de Decker was left in charge of the factory when De Weert left for Ceylon on 3 April 1603.[44]

In December 1604 the Delft brought back the Achenese envoy Sri Muhammad from Holland. Abdul Samad had died in Holland.[45] In the estimation of the Dutch, Acheh was quite an important centre of Asian trade. They would have made it one of their major ports of call if the Achenese king had shown greater trust. Had Sultan Alauddin Raiyat Shah lived longer he might have tried to accommodate the Dutch. As it happened, he died in 1604 and the political confusion that usually went with a new succession in Acheh did not encourage the Dutch to settle there.

In February 1605 the Delft sailed from Acheh to the Coromandel coast. There with the help of a Jewish resident of Golconda named Assalan the Dutch secured the right to trade at Masulipatam.[46] Already in August 1603 a factory had been established at Bantam. The Dutch now developed a trade between Bantam and Masulipatam in which Acheh became an intermediary port of call. On 18 March 1606 the Delft stopped over at Acheh for about a fortnight on its way to the Coromandel coast.[47]

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Veth, 71.

[46] T. Ray Choudhuri, "The Dutch in Coromandel, 1605-1690," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Oxford University, 1957, 26-27.

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In the same year Admiral Cornelis Matelieff directed the first major European assault on Portuguese Malacca. The failure of the expedition led the Dutch to seek new allies. Vice-Admiral Olivier de Vivere was sent by Matelieff to Acheh to form a new alliance with the new king, Sultan Ali Riayat Shah. On 17 January 1607 an agreement was signed. By the major provisions of the agreement the Dutch were to receive from the king of Acheh a secured and permanent place to build a factory. They were also granted exemption from customs and freedom of trade to the exclusion of all other European nations, except those who had passes from Holland. Even the vassals of the Dutch were to enjoy freedom of purchase and disposal of goods without any payment of customs. Furthermore, the two parties were to be united in alliance against the common enemies, viz., Spain and Portugal. The Dutch agreed to supply the king of Acheh whatever arms he needed at their purchase price in Holland.

Thus in 1607 the Dutch acquired rights similar to, but somewhat more favourable than, those granted to the English in 1602. But while they received important concessions they became treaty-bound to give arms aid and naval assistance to Acheh against the Portuguese.

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## Chapter III

## Iskandar Muda--His Resources and Objectives

### 1. Accession to the Throne

Iskandar Muda was the grandson of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah (1588-1604) by his daughter Putri Raja Indra Bangsa. The Malay chronicle, the Hikajat Atjeh, which is full of miraculous tales about the extraordinary powers of this king, refers to him as "Perkasa Alam." "Iskandar Muda" seems to be a posthumous title used for the first time in the Bustan us-salatin, another important Malay chronicle written after his death.[1] According to the Hikajat Atjeh Perkasa Alam (Iskandar Muda) was ten years old when the two Portuguese envoys, "Dong Dawis" and "Dong Tunis" came to the court of Acheh.[2] Since Frederick de Houtman reports a similar event taking place in the year 1600, Djajadiningrat suggests that 1590 could be taken as the date of birth of Iskandar Muda.[3] Marsden says that Iskandar Muda was twenty-three years of age when Alauddin Riayat Shah died (1604).[4]

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If this is true then the date of his birth has to be pushed back to 1581. This agrees exactly with the statement of Patrick Copland, who accompanied Thomas Best in 1613, that the king was thirty-two years old at that time.[5] It should be noted that the report about the coming of the Portuguese envoys is not accurate. As Djajadiningrat points out, "Dong Dawis" reminds one of John Davis, the English pilot of Cornelis de Houtman's fleet, who could not have been one of the Portuguese envoys.[6]

The reign of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah came to an end in the year 1604. In that year or the previous one he was removed from the throne by his son Sultan Muda, who assumed the title of Sultan Ali Riayat Shah. He was not a strong ruler and there was great confusion and disorder in the kingdom during his reign.[7] To this were added the ravages of a famine caused by a drought.[8]

Ali Riayat Shah had a serious difference of opinion with his brother, the ruler of Pedir, over their nephew, Iskandar Muda. To escape punishment from the king of Acheh, Iskandar Muda went to Pedir to seek the protection of his

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Iskandar Muda inherited a prosperous city and an extensive kingdom. When he ascended the throne the Portuguese were still the dominant power in the Straits region. For about a century Malacca had held its own against repeated attacks by the Achenese, the Malays and the Javanese. Their influence over Asian commerce was far out of proportion to their military strength. At Malacca there never

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For about three decades after the capture of Malacca (1511) the trade of Malacca suffered because of a faulty commercial policy. A reform in the customs policy around 1544 brought change.[11] By 1587 the political situation had considerably improved; Malacca's trade revived and its rivals suffered.[12] Alauddin Riayat Shah (1588-1604) had made peace with the Portuguese and Ali Riayat Shah (1604-1607) was a weak ruler. It remained for Iskandar Muda to renew the traditional struggle against the Portuguese in Malacca with fresh zeal. He had all the qualities of a great war-leader and he had immense resources at his command. Copland describes him as "a proper gallant man of warre,

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[10] I. A. Macgregor. "Notes on the Portuguese in Malaya," JMBRAS, XIV (2), 1936, 6.

[11] R. O. Winstedt, A History of Malaya, 1935, 91.

[12] Schrieke, ISS, I, 45.

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[10] I. A. Macgregor. "Notes on the Portuguese in Malaya," JMBRAS, XIV (2), 1936, 6.

[11] R. O. Winstedt, A History of Malaya, 1935, 91.

[12] Sohrlake, 1938, I, 45.

of thirty-two yeares, of middle size, full of spirit, strong by sea and land."[13]

It is difficult to know what specific objectives Iskandar Muda set before himself. From what he did during his reign one can see that he was a man devoured by ambition. A man of stern character and ruthless disposition, he was, like the great sixteenth century monarchs of Acheh, full of hatred for the Portuguese. To make Acheh great by land and sea, to wipe out Portuguese Malacca and to stand like a colossus astride the Straits of Malacca were the grand objectives of his policy. Much has been said on the commercial motivation in Acheh's expansion. Without underrating the role of this element it may be said that in trying to understand the history of Acheh in the first half of the seventeenth century one cannot afford to miss the fundamentally warlike nature of Iskandar Muda's policy. The resources of his extensive kingdom were used primarily for military purposes. There cannot be any doubt that Iskandar Muda loved to possess wealth and hardly missed any chance of drawing more money to his personal treasury. He was reported to have piled up an immense amount of gold and treasure within the royal castle. Beaulieu saw some of it and heard a lot more about it. Sealed chests of gold had been handed down from the predecessors of the king. These were not opened customarily.

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[13]Foster, Thomas Best, 213.

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The king had a good income from the ports of his kingdom and also from his own trading.

Iskandar Muda had enough resources to fight the Portuguese alone, but the presence of the English and the Dutch as anti-Portuguese forces strengthened his hand. At the turn of the century the Dutch-English assault had begun. The Dutch Admiral Matelief made a big attack on Malacca in 1606. Had Malacca fallen to the Dutch the situation would have been very different for Acheh. But the Portuguese still held their own and there followed a struggle for about half a century between the European powers: the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. Had the Dutch and the English united their strength against the Portuguese the latter would have found it difficult to survive. Fortunately for them and fortunately for Acheh they remained serious competitors in Asian trade and power-politics, giving Acheh a great strategic advantage.

Iskandar Muda expected to get substantial military aid from the enemies of the Portuguese. In this he was not very successful. He fought almost all his wars alone. The new Europeans, however, brought him some good cannons once in a while and they regularly brought gun-powder. But their participation in Acheh's trade proved to be a source of even greater profit.

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In the following sections we shall make an assessment of Iskandar Muda's resources and then go on to see what use he made of the opportunities offered to him by the coming of the English and the Dutch.

## ii. The City of Acheh

The city of Acheh, as the European travellers found it, was situated in a wide valley, some fifteen or sixteen miles in circuit, "formed like an amphitheatre by lofty ranges of hills." The city stood on a river of the same name, two miles from the sea and about three miles from the foot of the hills. The river ran through the city cutting it in two, the important part lying on the north-west side. The houses were mostly of reed and bamboo and some were made of stone.[14] They were usually built on bamboo posts, six to eight feet high, with free passage under them.[15] This was because every year rain and tide flooded the town and people had to move from house to house in boats.[16] The houses were not joined together; most of them had a fence around them.[17] John Davis described the city as one built in a wood; the houses

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[14]"The Expedition of Commodore Beaulieu to the East Indies" in A Complete Collection of Voyages and Travels by John Harris, I, 1744, 741-742; R. C. Temple (ed.), A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679, by Thomas Bowrey, 1905, 286; Marsden, Sumatra, 397; J.C.U. Warnsinck, Reisen van Nicolaus de Graaff, 1930, 12.

[15]Warnsinck, de Graaff, 12; Markham, John Davis, 14.

[16]Warnsinck, de Graaff, 13; C. Wilkinson (ed.), Voyages and Discoveries by William Dampier, 1931, 103.

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could not be seen from a distance because of the thick foliage. Beaulieu thought it was more like a village than a city, being an open place without walls, nor even a ditch around it.[18]

Acheh was one of the most populous cities of Indonesia. It had about seven or eight thousand houses in the closing decades of the seventeenth century.[19] In Iskandar Muda's time the city and its adjoining areas were populous enough to enable the king to raise an army of 40,000 men.[20]

There were a number of mosques in the city. They were of moderate size, "generally square built and covered with Pantile," but with no turrets or steeples. The Great Mosque, believed to have been built by Sultan Iskandar Muda, was a centre of attraction.[21] There were many schools where the pupils were taught the Arabic way of writing and arithmetic.[22] There were two main markets, one in the heart of the city and the other at its northern end. The market area consisted

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[18]Markham, John Davis, 147; Harris, I, 744; Wilkinson, Dampier, 90.

[19]Temple, Thomas Bowrey, 293; Wilkinson, Dampier, 90.

[20]Harris, I, 745.

[21]R. C. Temple (ed.), The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667, III (i), 1919, 121, 124, 134; Wilkinson, Dampier, 90; Temple, Thomas Bowrey, 322; P. J. Veth, 1873, 13.

[22]KITLV Neg. 219/1 H 164 Artikel van Leupe over Atjeh, F.1A; Markham, John Davis, 151; Harris, I, 143.

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[22]Kitty Ng, 219/1 H 164 Arthur van Dapper over Atjeh, p.14; Markham, John Davis, 151; Harris, I, 743.

of a few streets with a row of houses closely joined together.[23] The markets were well supplied with rice, fruits, vegetables, fowl and fish from the adjoining areas.[24]

Fishing was a flourishing industry and a large number of men were engaged in it. There were also carpenters, shipwrights, weavers, tailors, hatters, potmakers, cutlers, blacksmiths, gunfounders and goldsmiths. Many of the goldsmiths were foreigners.[25] Money-changers were mostly women. They sat in the markets, at street-corners, with their piles of cash, a coin made of lead.[26]

The nobles and big merchants usually sent their slaves to the market to buy rice. Even the less wealthy people, who did not own slaves themselves, hired a slave to carry rice for them. Slaves were also hired to check the money from the money-changers.[27]

In Acheh there was a large concourse of foreign merchants. Traders came from Constantinople, Venice, Aleppo, the Red Sea area and Arabia. They came from Gujarat, Dabul, Malabar, Coromandel, Bengal, Arakan and Pegu. Others came from the Malay Peninsula, Siam, China, Borneo, Macassar,

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[23]Warnsinck, de Graaff, 13; C. Lockyer, An Account of the Trade in India, 1711, 37.

[24]Wilkinson, Dampier, 90.

[25]Ibid., 91; Markham, John Davis, 151.

[26]Wilkinson, Dampier, 91-92.

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[23] Varthema, de Orsaff, 13; C. Lockyer, An Account of the Trade in India, 1711, 37.

[24] Wilkinson, Pamphlet, 90.

[25] Ibid., 91; Markham, John Davis, 151.

[26] Wilkinson, Pamphlet, 91-92.

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Java and the other parts of Sumatra.[28] In the sixteenth century came the Portuguese; in the seventeenth the English and the Dutch and following them the French and Danes.[29]

The Asian merchants lived in little colonies of their own which stretched along the river leading to the town.[30] These were more crowded in the trading seasons. Captain Forrest's (1752) description of the settlements of the Chulia traders from the Coromandel coast gives us some idea of the traditional manner of living in these kampongs:

> On their arrival they immediately build, by contract with the natives, houses of bamboo...very regular, on a convenient spot close to the river, to which their large boats of 8/10 tons have easy access. This spot is railed in and shut at night for fear of thieves.[31]

The Chinese formed one of the major trading groups. John Davis collected his information about Acheh from a Chinese who could speak Spanish.[32] The Chinese section of Acheh stood at the northern end of the city, nearest the sea. Some of the Chinese lived there all the year round. Others made annual trips from China. They arrived in June

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[28] Leupe, 219/1, f.2; Markham, John Davis, 143, 151-152; Wilkinson, Dampier, 95; Temple, Thomas Bowrey, 287-288; Foster, Lancaster, 90.

[29] Markham, John Davis, 143; Wilkinson, Dampier, 94.

[30] Ibid., 103.

[31] Thomas Forrest, A Voyage from Calcutta to the Mergui Archipelago, 1792, 41.

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and stayed till the end of September. They brought with them several mechanics, carpenters, joiners and painters, who set themselves to work the moment they arrived. They made chests, drawers, cabinets and a variety of Chinese toys, which they offered for sale in their shops and doorsteps so that:

> ...for two months or ten weeks this place is like a fair, full of shops stuft with all sorts of vendible commodities and people resorting hither to buy...and as their goods sell off, so they contract themselves into less compass, and make use of fewer houses. But as their business decreases, their gaming among themselves increases....[33]

When the Chinese set up their market the business of all other nations slackened, "all the discourse then being of going down to the China Camp." The Europeans too went there for diversion, especially "to drink their Hoc-ciu, at some China merchants House who sells it."[34]

The Gujaratis, took, kept shops, acted as brokers and had a large business in Acheh. Gujarati cloth had a big market in the whole of Sumatra and the Gujarati traders who came every year with several shiploads of merchandise from Cambay, Surat and Broach enjoyed a position of great importance in Acheh's trade.[35]

The Europeans, when they arrived, were allocated one long street near the river. Their factories were close to

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[34]Ibid. cit.

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John Davis remarks that one had to pass through three guards before one could reach the king's apartments and that there was a "great greene between each guard."[38] The gates were 10 or 12 feet high and were made of strong wood, being

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[36]Ibid., 103; Lockyer, Trade in India, 37; H. T. Colenbrander (ed.), Jan Pietersz. Coen Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indië, I, 1919, 130.

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[37]Forrest, Voyage from Calcutta, 151; Veth, Atchin, 12, Warnelink, de Graaff, 13; Barrie, I, 1144.

[38]Markham, John Davis, 146.

shut on the inside with two cross-bars fixed in the wall. On either side of each gate there was a stone wall, as high as the gate, with a terrace on which were mounted a couple of brass guns. One of these yards had the King's arsenal. The yard was large enough to hold 300 elephants at a time.[39]

The river Kreung Daru ran through the castle. A large stone fort commanded the point where the river entered the castle area. Nearby stood the king's pleasure-house, where there were "fish and pleasant walks," the whole area being enclosed by a strong entrenchment made of turf.[40]

Each gate was guarded by about 150 slaves. These slaves were generally foreigners taken young and trained up in the use of arms. They were strictly confined to the castle and were not allowed to talk to anyone. All the punishments inflicted within the palace were executed by them.[41]

The king's household was large. The great yard which had the royal apartments was guarded by eunuchs, of whom the king had about five hundred. The interior contained about 3,000 women, many of whom were guards. They were grouped under several captains and had their civil judges and night-officers. They, too, did not stir out of the castle and had a market place of their own within the walls. A large number

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[40]*Ibid.*, 744.

[41]*Loc. cit.*

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The Orangkayas or the nobles who lived in the town were entirely under the control of the king. They were formed into three companies, each one of which, in turn, had to keep guard at the castle, unarmed and surrounded by slaves.[44]

The Orangkayas were also entrusted with the administration of the city. The Laxamana was the chief municipal governor. Several law-courts sat daily in the city. Civil matters were dealt with in a court which sat under a great Bali,[45] near the great Mosque. One of the richest Orangkayas presided over it. The court dealing with criminal matters sat near the castle gate, also presided over by the chief Orangkayas, in turn. A third court took care of the violations of religious practices. Here the Cady presided. Finally, there was a court for the settling of differences among merchants, both native and foreign; this was held in the Alfandica, or the Customs house, and was presided over by the Laxamana himself. There were four officers under the Laxamana, known as Pengulu Cawalos who took care of things done in the night time. Each of them had a quarter of the

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[42]Ibid., 743-744; Warnsinck, de Graaff, 213.

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city under him. At night a watch of 200 horsemen patrolled the city and the surrounding country as far as the sea-shore.[46]

Sultan Iskandar Muda was immensely rich. He had large incomes but very small expenses. The royal household was furnished, free of charge, with rice, meat, fish, oil, and sugar by the king's subjects. These were the king's collections in kind. The surplus was sold in the market. His servants were given only rice and if they wanted anything more to eat they had to buy it themselves.[47] Similarly, his clothes were supplied by gifts of his officers: on a certain day of the year all the king's officers, or whoever held a position in the city, presented the king with one or more garments or materials for women's clothes.[48]

His own rice fields were tilled by his subjects, who were obliged to supply him every year a certain quantity of rice whether the harvest was good or bad. This rice was kept up in huge storehouses and hoarded until the price rose high, when it was sold. He had many slaves who took care of his herds of cattle and elephants, cut wood, built houses and worked in quarries. Skilled slaves were allowed to commute their labour at the rate of 5 pence a day which income supported three or four overseers of the slaves.[49]

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[46]Harris, I, 743-744.

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[47]Ibid., 145.

[48]Ibid., 146.

[49]Loc. cit.

The king was heir to all his subjects who died without a male child. Unmarried daughters of the deceased were put in his kraton. The king also took over the property of foreigners dying within his country, excepting that of the Europeans. The possessions of noblemen whom he had punished with death were confiscated.[50]

Another source of income for the king was the rich presents made to him by all foreign visitors. No licence or permission of any kind could be secured without a present; foreign traders could hardly do any business without making presents at every step. The rich trade of Acheh yielded a good income from anchorage and customs duties. And above all the king was the principal merchant of the kingdom and his own business brought him large profits.

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[50] Loc. cit.

The king was heir to all his subjects who died without a male child. Unmarried daughters of the deceased were put in his kraton. The king also took over the property of foreigners dying within his country, excepting that of the Europeans. The possessions of noblemen whom he had punished with death were confiscated.[50]

Another source of income for the king was the rich presents made to him by all foreign visitors. No license or permission of any kind could be secured without a present; foreign traders could hardly do any business without making presents at every step. The rich trade of Aceh yielded a good income from anchorage and customs duties. And above all the king was the principal merchant of the kingdom and his own business brought him large profits.

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[50] Loc. cit.

### iii. The Kingdom of Acheh

Iskandar Muda inherited a large kingdom. The great sixteenth century monarch Alauddin al-Kahar (1537-1571) had styled himself "King of Achin, Barus, Pidir, Pase, Daya and Batta, prince of the land of the two seas, and of the mines of Menangkabau."[51] Beaulieu includes among the "late conquests" of Iskandar Muda, Labo, Singkel, Barus, Batahan, Passaman, Tiku, Priaman and Padang--all on the west coast of Sumatra.[52] This possibly means that Iskandar Muda had to reconquer much of the west coast which had at one time belonged to the empire of Alauddin al-Kahar. In his letter to the king of France, handed over to Beaulieu, Iskandar Muda called himself the "subduer and conqueror" of Deli, Johore, Pahang, Kedah and Perak to the east, and Priaman, Tiku and Passaruma (Passaman?) to the west.[53] Snouck Hurgronje's remark that the conquerors were generally content with the recognition of their supremacy and the payment of dues helps to explain this phenomenon of "reconquest." From time to time the kings of Acheh had to reestablish their authority over an area once conquered but

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[51]Marsden, Sumatra, 428.

[52]Harris, I, 742.

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[51]Marsden, Sumatra, 428.

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which had made itself independent since then. The earliest conquest mentioned by the Bustan us-Salatin is that of Deli (Aru) in 1612.[54] The subduing of the west coast ports of Tiku and Priaman must have taken place some time between 1607 and 1612. Keeling (1608), Bradshaw (1609) and John Jourdain (1612), however, do not talk of any expedition. They seem to have got the impression that those ports were under the sphere of influence of the king of Acheh for otherwise he could not have possibly barred the Gujaratis from trading there. Possibly this is a case of establishing direct governmental control over this area rather than of regular conquest. Beaulieu's observations confirm this view. He says that the king of Tiku is subject to the king of Acheh, who sends there a new Governor every three years without whom the king of Tiku cannot do anything of importance.[55]

The long series of conquests began with the taking of Deli (Aru) on the east coast of Sumatra in 1612. This place once belonged to the Kingdom of Acheh but had freed itself during the reign of Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah (1588-1604).[56] In 1613 the capital of Johore, Batu Sawar, was attacked and its king Sultan Alauddin and his brother Raja Sabrang were taken as prisoners to Acheh. In 1614 Iskandar Muda sent

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[54]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 178-179.

[55]Harris, I, 729.

[56]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 171.

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[54] Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 178-179.

[55] Serrla, I, 129.

[56] Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 171.

back the king of Johore with a fleet carrying many Achenese workmen to rebuild the city of Batu Sawar, but shortly afterward, in 1615, Iskandar Muda appeared before the city of Batu Sawar with a fleet of 300 ships carrying 40,000 men and destroyed the city. Perhaps the reason was that the king of Johore was unwilling to help Acheh in its war against the Portuguese.[57] In the same year, and again in 1616, Acheh attacked Malacca but without success.[58]

In 1618 Pahang (Malay Peninsula) was conquered. Kedah and Perak (also in the Malay Peninsula) were taken in 1619 and 1620 respectively.[59] In 1621 a naval expedition was sent to Tiku to suppress a rebellious chief.[60] A fort was set up there to guard against future outbreaks of rebellion.[61] The king's dominions now extended to Aru in the east and all the way down the west coast of Sumatra to Padang--a stretch of about 1100 miles.[62] In 1623 Johore was broken.[63] In 1624 or 1625 the island of Nias off the west coast of Sumatra was conquered.[64]

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[57]E. Netscher, De Nederlanders in Djohor en Siak, 1870, 28-30.

[58]Foster (ed.), L.R., III, 212-213, 228, 236.

[59]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 180.

[60]Harris, I, 729.

[61]Schrieke, ISS, I, 52.

[62]Marsden, Sumatra, 442; Henry Yule, "On Northern Sumatra and especially Achin," Ocean Highways: the Geographical Review, I (5), August 1873, 179.

[63]Netscher, Djohor en Siak, 31.

[64]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 179-180.

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The biggest attack on Malacca by Iskandar Muda came in 1629. The Portuguese managed to get reinforcements from Goa and won a complete victory, virtually destroying the Achenese fleet.[65] Meanwhile Pahang had made itself independent and had to be reconquered in 1635.[66]

Iskandar Muda had a powerful army. Its core, under his direct command, consisted of his palace guards and a cavalry force of 200 horsemen to patrol the city.

The rest of the army was probably raised whenever occasion demanded. Wars were not very expensive for Iskandar Muda, for his subjects were obliged to serve and carry three months' provisions with them. Only after they had served for more than three months did the king have to support them. The soldiers did not own fire-arms or powder; the king stored these in the palace. He had about 2,000 brass guns in his galleys and forts and in two houses, "where they are heaped one above another." The soldiers were given fire-arms by the king but a register was kept and the men were obliged to return the guns at the end of the campaign. Extreme methods of terror were employed to make good soldiers out of the Achenese. Their wives, children and parents were answerable for their behaviour on the battlefield.[67]

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[65]Danvers, The Portuguese in India, II, 228-232.

[66]Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 181.

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The king's galleys were fitted out by his orangkayas (nobles). After their return from a particular campaign the orangkayas took good care of them. The king had at least one hundred good galleys. Beaulieu remarks that, of these, one-third were built much larger than any ship in Europe.[68] Galleys were broad and high, the largest of them carrying from 600 to 800 men. Beaulieu specifically states that the crew consisted of poor people but not slaves.[69] When the king felt the need to repeople his country he brought them by force from the neighbouring countries. Thus after conquering Deli, Pahang, Kedah and Perak he transported about 20,000 people to Acheh.[70] It should be noted that deportation was a common practice on mainland Southeast Asia, e.g., in Cambodia, Siam and Burma.

The kingdom of Acheh thus consisted of a number of petty kingdoms brought together by force. Snouck Hurgronje thinks that at no time in Acheh's history had a programme of thorough centralisation been carried out. He admits, however, that only in brief periods such as the reigns of Alauddin al-Kahar (1537-1571) and Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) had these attempts been temporarily successful.[71] Even these

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[68] Loc. cit.

[69] Loc. cit.

[70] Ibid., 748.

[71] Snouck Hurgronje, Achehnese, 4.

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[68] Loc. cit.

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[70] Ibid., 118.

[71] Snouck Hurgronje, Achehnese, 1.

attempts did not achieve much. The traditional chiefs, although they paid tribute to the king, remained virtually independent in their own territories. They were the military commanders and judges in their own areas and they continued to perform their traditional role. These chiefs were known as Ulebalangs, which means "military commander." Regarding the origin of this name Snouck Hurgronje writes, "it is not inconceivable that this name was given them under one of the most powerful of the port-kings, who endeavoured to render them subordinate and allowed them the command over the fighting men in their districts, while he tried gradually to monopolize the supreme power for himself."[72]

The Ulebalangs and their subordinate officials ruled a territory (Ulebalangship) the basic unit of which was the kampong, the village with its elders. Between the kampong and the Ulebalangship there was another association at the middle level--the Mukim. When the number of free male adults in a community reached the figure of forty they formed what Snouck Hurgronje calls a "Friday Association." This group could now offer the Friday prayer at a common place. For this purpose a big mosque was built called the Friday mosque (masjid jami). When the kampongs which together formed a Friday Association were few in number (not exceeding four) and were near one another they formed a township or Mukim.[73]

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The Mukim was headed by the Imam, who was always in close touch with the mosque. He was entrusted with the task of enforcing the law of God and taking care that the prescribed rites were not neglected. According to the chronicles, the division into Mukims was the creation of Iskandar Muda.[74] He built a number of large mosques which served as the head mosques for a number of Mukims.[75] In this one may see the efforts of Iskandar Muda to unify the people through greater zeal for Islam.

A more direct way of extending the authority of the king over the Ulebalangships was the creation of Waqf lands. These were territories placed in a peculiar legal position by the sultan by being withdrawn from the territories of the Ulebalangs. Every Ulebalangship thus contained little pockets directly controlled by the king--a feature comparable to the royal manors of English feudalism. The inhabitants of these areas were not supposed to take part in local disputes between Ulebalangs, but to remain neutral.[76]

The king maintained a grand court at Acheh to create an impression upon the Ulebalangs. Rituals and ceremonies were evolved which required the attendance of the Ulebalangs

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[74]K.F.H. Van Langen, "Atjesche Staatsbestuur," 390.

[75]Ibid., 390-391.

[76]Hurgronje, Achehnese, 121-123.

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[74]K.F.H. Van Langen, "Atjehsche Steatsbestuur," 290.

[75]Ibid., 290-291.

[76]Burgronje, Achehnese, 121-123.

at the court. Edicts were issued by the king dealing with the observance of these ceremonies on solemn occasions.[77]

Several royal edicts dealt with the laws of the port. They fixed the shares of certain officials in the income from the port of Acheh. It appears that almost all the port officials derived an income from the charges collected at the port. These regulations concerned only the city of Acheh, to which place the foreign trade was confined for a long time, and were naturally strictly enforced. The very fact that foreign trade could be diverted from the smaller ports of the kingdom to the metropolis is evidence of effective centralization, at least in commerce.[78]

It should be remembered that the kingdom of Acheh stretched along the coasts and that because of the terrain the king's authority could not be extended towards the interior. A coastal kingdom is much better policed by a navy than anything else. Iskandar Muda was stronger by sea than by land and as long as he was in power all the smaller ports of the kingdom were directly under his control.

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[77] Ibid., 125-126.

[78] Ibid., 5; G.W.J. Drewes and P. Voorhoeve, AA, VKI, XXIV, 23-26.

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## Chapter IV

## The English, the Dutch and Iskandar Muda in Achenese Trade

### 1. Acheh in Asian Trade

The kingdom of Acheh had plenty of rice, meat, fish and wine. It had a wide variety of fruits including durians and mangoes and the country was well supplied with livestock.[1] These, however, did not attract the foreign traders. The commodities in which they were chiefly interested were: pepper, silk, benzoin, pitch, lignaloes, camphor, sulphur, saltpetre, petroleum, gold, tin, lead and elephant's teeth. The elephant too was an article of export.[2] These were native to the country. Cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, mace, sandalwood, Indian cloth, and Chinese porcelain were also collected by foreign traders at Acheh.[3] These, however, came from outside. Cinnamon grew primarily in Ceylon, and also in Java, the spices in the Moluccas and the Banda Islands, and sandalwood in Timor.

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[1]Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 139; Markham, John Davis, 146; Harris, I, 729.

[2]L.R., I, 74; Harris, I, 729, 730, 742; Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 485; W.Ph. Coolhaas (ed.), Jan Pietersz Coen, VII (2), 1953, 1451.

[3]Foster, Lancaster, 134; L.R., I, 76; Schrieke, ISS, I, 43; Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 337.

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1 Corresão, Tomé Pires, I, 139; Markham, John Davis, 116; Harris, I, 129.

2 L.R., I, 74; Harris, I, 129, 130, 142; Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 1695; W.Pb. Coolhaas (ed.), Jan Pieterszoon, VII (2), 1953, 1951.

3 Foster, Lancaster, 134; L.R., I, 76; Schrieke, 159, I, 43; Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 337.

Of all the native products by far the most important article of export was pepper. Lodewijcksz (1596) described papper in South Sumatra as growing upon little boughs or sprigs, "als de Geneverbesien doen" (as Juniper-berries do).[4] John Davis (1599) found around Acheh pepper gardens of one square mile area where "it groweth like Hops from a planted root, and windeth about a stake set by it untill it grow to a great bushie Tree."[5]

The best contemporary description has been left by the French traveller Beaulieu (1621), which deserves quotation:

> The pepper plants grow in a flat free soil. They are planted at the root of every tree, round which they creep and twist like hops. The way is to take a shoot or sprig of an old pepper-plant, and plant it under some shrub,...it will bear no fruit till the third year, after which it bears every year six or seven pounds weight of pepper.

After the first three years, writes Beaulieu, the yield begins to decline and after the twelfth year it does not produce any more. The garden needed a great deal of attending:

> ...for the first three years the ground about them must be kept very clean or they will not bear, and even that requires a great deal of pains, for the climate is moist,...when the plant begins to bear, the branches of the tree, through which it creeps, must be lopped off, lest they intercept the rays of the sun, which, above all things that plant stands most in the need of. When the clusters of this fruit are formed, care must be taken to support them with poles, lest the weight should draw down the

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> plant,...care must likewise be taken that no buffaloes or oxen or large animals get in amongst them....
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> They must be planted at a convenient distance one from another, that one may get round them with a ladder to prune them after their fruit is gathered, for otherwise, they would grow too high, and so bear less fruit...when the fruit is ripe, they cut off the clusters and dry them in the sun, till the grain falls from its stalk, which it does not in less than fifteen days,...and during that time they must be turned from side to side, and covered up in the night-time.[6]

Beaulieu goes on to remark that pepper did not grow so easily as many are apt to think and that it needed many hands to take care of a plantation.[7]

Beaulieu's description of pepper plantations in Pulo Lada, near Kedah, agrees in detail with the accounts of William Marsden and William Hunter, who made an intensive study of the pepper cultivation in the west coast of Sumatra in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This shows that methods of growing pepper have remained substantially the same through the centuries.

There are two kinds of pepper--black and white. They both came from the same plant. About the white pepper, which was in great demand, Beaulieu writes:

> Of late years the inhabitants observing that foreigners wanted them for the same use, have found out a way of whitening the black ones, by taking them when they are yet red, and washing off the red skin with water and sand, so that nothing remains but the heart of the pepper which is white.[8]

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[6]Harris, I, 738.

[7]Loc. cit.

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In Beaulieu's time this variety sold for double the price of the black sort.[9]

A piece of land newly cleared for rice cultivation would often be chosen for cultivation of pepper. Sometimes fresh grounds were acquired by felling and burning of wood. The most coveted sites for pepper gardens were of course the flat lands along the banks of a river, for the convenience of transportation of the produce by water.[10]

There were two harvests, one in December and the other in April-May. The two gathering seasons were so close that the collection continued at a stretch from December till August.[11]

After being harvested pepper had to be winnowed and dried. Through this process it lost most of its weight. Hunter found that 100 catties of green pepper, with the stalks, yielded 35 catties of clean and dry pepper.[12]

Transportation of pepper from the gardens to the port-town at the mouth of the river was done mostly by water. Small boats or praus were used for this purpose.[13] Marsden

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[9] Loc. cit.

[10] William Marsden, Sumatra.

[11] William Hunter, "Remarks on the species of pepper, which are found on Prince of Wales's Island," Asiatic Researches, IX, 1809, 388.

[12] Loc. cit.

[13] P.A. Tiele (ed.), Bouwstoffen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanders in den Maleischen Archipel, I, 1890, 167-168.

In Beaulieu's time this variety sold for double the price of the black sort.[9]

A piece of land newly cleared for rice cultivation would often be chosen for cultivation of pepper. Sometimes fresh grounds were acquired by felling and burning of wood. The most coveted sites for pepper gardens were of course the flat lands along the banks of a river, for the convenience of transportation of the produce by water.[10]

There were two harvests, one in December and the other in April-May. The two gathering seasons were so close that the collection continued at a stretch from December till August.[11]

After being harvested pepper had to be winnowed and dried. Through this process it lost most of its weight. Hunter found that 100 catties of green pepper, with the stalks, yielded 35 catties of clean and dry pepper.[12]

Transportation of pepper from the gardens to the port-town at the mouth of the river was done mostly by water. Small boats or prahus were used for this purpose.[13] Maraden

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[9]Loc. cit.

[10]William Maraden, Sumatra.

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describes the use of a raft made of rough timbers or large bamboos, having a platform of split bamboo, to keep the cargo dry.[14]

In the second half of the eighteenth century the average garden managed by a single person had 500 trees, while those taken care of by a family averaged 1,000 trees.[15] We have no information about the size of an average garden in the seventeenth century and we know almost nothing about the ownership of pepper plantations in the back country. In Indrapura Raja Hitam had 30,000 men under him working on pepper and rice plantations.[16] It is possible that the lords of the central tablelands of Sumatra sent their own men with boats to the river mouth, if not the port-town, to sell the pepper.[17] It is also possible that the men who actually transported the pepper down the river were petty country traders who had bought the pepper from the owners of the produce. The precise relationship in which these men stood to the owners of the pepper gardens is not clear. In some areas, it seems that the merchants met the inland carriers half-way and intercepted the merchandise before it could

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[14]Marsden, Sumatra, 145.

[15]Ibid., 132.

[16]Tiele, Bouwstoffen, I, 167-168; Schrieke, I, 51-52.

[17]N. Macleod, De Oost-Indische Compagnie als Zeemogendheid in Azie, I, 1927, 186; Tiele, Bouwstoffen, I, 169.

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enter the port-town. In Jambi the Chinese were employed by the Dutch and the English to buy up pepper from the interior.[18] In 1617 Abraham de Rasiere was instructed to row up the river to Indrapura to see whether the king was willing to deliver pepper according to the contract he had made with the Dutch in the previous year.[19]

At the port-town, pepper was sold by the Sultan of Acheh, his officers--the Shahbandar and the Laxamana--the orang-kayas, foreign traders such as Gujaratis and a multitude of lesser folk who also took part in the trade under the restraining hands of the more powerful figures.[20]

Van Leur estimated the total amount of pepper produced annually on the west coast of Sumatra at 40,000 bags or 2,400,000 lbs. (at the rate of 60 lbs. per bag). The king of Acheh, according to his calculations, handled about 16,000 bags or 960,000 lbs. The total for the kingdom of Acheh thus comes to 56,000 bags or 3,360,000 lbs.[21]

The Dutch merchant Cornelis Comans estimated in 1616 the annual yield of Tiku and Priaman at 4,000 bahars[22] or

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[18]Schrieke, ISS, I, 56.

[19]Macleod, Zeemogendheid, 186; Coolhaas, Coen, VII (1), 248-249.

[20]Original Correspondence, No. 753; No. 799; L.R., III, 237; IV, 92, 165; V, 171; Harris, I, 735.

[21]J. C. Van Leur, Indonesian Trade and Society, 1955, 370, n. 30. Van Leur actually estimates eight to sixteen thousand bags for the king of Atjeh; the higher estimate is used here.

[22]Koloniale Archiven, No. 980.

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1,500,000 lbs. (at the rate of 375 lbs. per bahar).[23] The estimate of the English merchant Nicolls agrees with it.[24] Indrapura, another pepper port on the West Coast of Sumatra, had at least 2,000 bahars (750,000 lbs.).[25] The total annual yield of the West Coast thus comes to 6,000 bahars (2,250,000 lbs.). Acheh itself had little pepper--not more than 500 bahars.[26] Assuming that some 500 more came from Pedir, Pasai and Kedah, we get a total figure of 1,000 bahar (375,000 lbs.) for Acheh. Before 1620 the annual volume of pepper controlled by the kingdom of Acheh may, therefore, be put at around 7,000 bahars or 2,625,000 lbs. This is much less than Van Leur's higher estimate. We do not know, however, what period he had in mind when he made the estimate. A higher figure for the next decade would be quite in order.

The small amount of pepper produced in the Acheh valley in the early seventeenth century is perplexing. North Sumatra had incredibly large amounts of pepper in the sixteenth century. Tomé Pires (1512-15) found that the two ports of Pedir and Pasai together produced from 14 to 16,000 bahars and that formerly Pedir alone had 15,000 bahars.[27]

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[24]L.R., VI, 72.

[25]J. W. Ijzerman (ed.), Cornelis Buijsero te Bantam 1616-1618, 1923, 25.

[26]Harris, I, 742.

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A century later, in 1618, the English merchant William Nicolls reported from Acheh: "...heretofore for certayne 10 thousand bahars of pepper hath yearly been laden sence by Gugerattes, Dabulls, Pegooes and Klynge shippinge, besides what hath beene brought from Tecco and Pryaman..."[28] Beaulieu (1621) too heard about the fabulous production of the port but he also heard a story which explained how it began to decline: "...one of the kings observing that they minded nothing else, and neglected the manuring the ground, cut down all the pepper-plants..."[29]

This measure is incomprehensible unless the trees belonged to someone else. Was it a punishment inflicted upon local chiefs whose main source of wealth was pepper? From the sixteenth to the seventeenth century there is a noticeable shift in the movement of pepper within Sumatra. Pepper did not move towards the north Sumatran ports any more. It reached out to the West Coast and to the South-east. One wonders whether this had any connection with the turning of the Indian trade around to the West Coast of Sumatra after the fall of Malacca.

Of the other products of the kingdom of Acheh silk was produced in Pedir and Pasai.[30] Barus on the west coast was

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One of Sumatra's chief attractions was gold. Tome Pires (1512-1515) reports that gold was mainly obtained from two mines in the Minangkabau area of central Sumatra. Of the three Minangkabau kings who could collect gold from these mines two were heathens, and one had turned a Mohammedan about fifteen years back (i.e., about 1500). According to the law of the land, however, Mohammedans were not allowed to go to the mines. Tome Pires writes:

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[31] Ibid., 743; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 144-161.

[32] Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 136, 146.

[33] Harris, I, 730, 742-743; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 146.

[34] Harris, I, 742.

[35] L.R., I, 79; Marsden, Sumatra, 173.

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[33]Marsla, I, 130, 142-143; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 146.

[34]Marsla, I, 142.

[35]L.H., I, 19; Marsden, Sumatra, 173.

[36]Marsla, I, 142.

> Only the heathen lords have the gold and from there it is distributed to the kings of Minangkabau and from the three kings it is distributed to others, and (as for) the amount of gold which is obtained from the said mines every year, they say that they get two bahars of gold, and more according to the Moors.[37]

From the Minangkabau highlands gold was taken mainly to Tiku, Priaman, Cotatinga, Padang and Selebar, on the west coast and to Indragiri on the east coast.[38] Much of it was drawn to the city of Acheh. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the gold of Acheh attracted many ships and traders. By that time, however, the control of the mines had passed to the Mohammedans. Dampier was told that

> ...none but Mohammedans were permitted to go to the Mines. That it was both troublesome and dangerous to pass the Mountains,...that in some places they were forced to make use of Ropes, to climb up and down the Hills. That at the Foot of these Precipices there was a Guard of Soldiers to see that no uncircumcised Person should pursue the Design, and also to receive Custom of those that past either forward and backward.[39]

The mines were very unhealthy and many of those who went there never returned. Yet some made a regular profession out of making trips to the mines once a year. As one could make about a 2,000% profit out of this trade, no thought of danger could hold them back. Rich men, of course, never went themselves but always sent their slaves with cloth and wine to the gold county. If three out of six

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[37]Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 164-165.

[38]Loc. cit., Harris, I, 742-743.

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returned they thought they had made a profitable journey for their masters.[40]

The city of Acheh, known to the Achenese as Bandar Acheh Dar-es-Salam, was the principal port of the kingdom. Several islands off the mouth of the Acheh river formed the Road of Acheh. Between Pulo Gomes in the west and Pulo Way in the east a number of small islands bent in a semicircle to shelter a spacious bay which had room for several hundreds of ships at a time.[41] Ships of 60, 70 or 80 tons could sail up the river about two miles to the point where the Custom House stood.[42]

To the east of Acheh were the ports of Pedir, Pasai, and Deli (Aru). To the west of Acheh and along the west coast of Sumatra there were the ports of Daya, Singkel, Barus, Passaman, Tiku, Priaman, Padang, and Selebar.

The ports of the kingdom of Acheh were visited every year by merchants from many countries of Asia. They brought with them a variety of merchandise and took back Sumatran products and also such commodities as were available in the markets of Sumatra but which had come from elsewhere.

The Gujaratis brought different types of calicoes, cotton and cotton yarn, coarse painted cloths, quilts, and

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[41] Ibid., 85-86.

[42] Temple, Bowrey, 286.

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carpets.[43] They took back pepper, gold, silk, benzoin, lignaloes, camphor of two kinds, wax, honey, petroleum, spices, tin, sandalwood, Chinese porcelain, other China wares and Rials.[44]

The merchants from Malabar and the Coromandel Coast brought rice, butter, and oil in jars, white and blue salampoorees,[45] fine Chint[46] of Masulipatam, striped stuff,[47] cushion carpets, pintadoes (painted cloth), steel, and slaves.[48] They took back pepper, brimstone (sulphur), camphor, dammar, benzoin, lignaloes, raw silk, sandalwood, Chinese porcelain and other China wares, tin, Rials and some Gujarati cloth.[49]

From Bengal came rice, wheat, oil, butter, sugar, stick lac, cambayas (a kind of calico), elaches (silk cloth), oromals (handkerchiefs), mulmuls (muslin), slave boys and

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[43]Temple, Bowrey, 288.

[44]Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 161; Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 337, 485; Schrieke, ISS, I, 43; Pieter Van Dam, Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie, 1931, 261; Harris, I, 733.

[45]A kind of calico.

[46]A sort of painted calico.

[47]Cotton cloth interwoven with gold and silver.

[48]Temple, Bowrey, 289; L.R., IV, 5-7.

[49]Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 485; L.R., IV, 5, 7; L.R., II, 278; Harris, I, 733.

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girls.[50] The Bengali merchants took back pepper and silk.[51] From Arakan came rice, cotton wool and cotton cloth.[52] Traders from Pegu brought rice, Martaban jars, stick lac and gansa (bell-metal).[53]

The main commodity that came from Tenasserim, Junk Ceylon, Perak and Kedah to Acheh was tin.[54] From Siam were imported tin, copper, China wares, rice, plain and lacquered writing-cases.[55] Among the Chinese products that were brought to Acheh were roots, porcelain, striped and flowered silk, gongs, gold and silver coins and steel pots and pans.[56] The Chinese were big buyers of pepper.[57] They also carried back elephant's teeth and Indian cloth.[58] Rice, sugar and cassia fistula (a kind of cinnamon) came from Java. From Borneo and Macassar, slaves were imported--men, women and children.[59]

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[50]Temple, Bowrey, 290.

[51]Tomé Pires, I, 131; L.R., I, 76.

[52]L.R., III, 103.

[53]Temple, Bowrey, 290.

[54]Loc. cit.

[55]Loc. cit.

[56]Loc. cit.

[57]Schrieke, ISS, I, 29-30, 43.

[58]Temple, Peter Mundy, III (2), 337, 485; Temple, Bowrey, 290-291; Schrieke, ISS, I, 43; Coen, I, 63.

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Trading with groups of foreign merchants took place in definite seasons fixed by the monsoon winds. The northerly winds brought the Indian and Chinese ships to Sumatra. The Gujaratis came in March and April, just before the onset of the southwest monsoon in June. The Bengalis came around the same time. The Chinese arrived a little later in June. The trading season for these groups lasted until September when the Chinese and Bengalis left. The heaviest trade was in July. The ships from the Coromandel coast came down in August and September and returned in February. Usually the voyaging took place during the narrow period of the turning of the winds, when the monsoon had lost its force and the opposite winds had not set in.[60]

About the Indian ships that visited Acheh Peter Mundy writes: "Except a man knew what they were, he would hardly judge them to be other than some Europe fleete by their forme, beake heads, toppes, rigging effects."[61]

The Gujaratis touched at the Maldives and Cannanore on their way to Sumatra. It took them five days to cross over from Cannanore to Pulo Gomes (off Achin head). From Pulo Gomes they went to Barus, Tiku, Priaman, and down the west coast of Sumatra. Sumatra was not the terminal point of

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[60]Van Leur, Indonesian Trade, 121; W. H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, 1920, 228-229; Cortesão, Tomé Pires, II, 269, 272 and I, 93; Wilkinson, Dampier, 95; L.R., VI, 27.

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Trading with groups of foreign merchants took place in definite seasons fixed by the monsoon winds. The northerly winds brought the Indian and Chinese ships to Sumatra. The Gujaratis came in March and April, just before the onset of the southwest monsoon in June. The Bengalis came around the same time. The Chinese arrived a little later in June. The trading season for these groups lasted until September when the Chinese and Bengalis left. The heaviest trade was in July. The ships from the Coromandel coast came down in August and September and returned in February. Usually the voyaging took place during the narrow period of the turning of the winds, when the monsoon had lost its force and the opposite winds had not set in.[60]

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The Gujaratis touched at the Maldives and Cannanore on their way to Sumatra. It took them five days to cross over from Cannanore to Pulo Gomes (off Aceh head). From Pulo Gomes they went to Baru, Tiku, Priaman, and down the west coast of Sumatra. Sumatra was not the terminal point of

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[60] Van Leur, Indonesian Trade, 121; W. H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, 1920, 228-229; Correasão, Tomé Pires, II, 269, 272 and 1, 93; Wilkinson, Dampier, 95; E.R., VI, 27.

[61] Temple, Peter Mundy, III (1), 138.

Gujarati overseas trade in the east. They passed through the Sunda Strait to emerge on the north coast of Java and went as far as Japara.[62] There was a colony of Gujarati traders on the Banda islands.[63] The Gujaratis did much more than simply making a round trip voyage to Sumatra. They picked up such commodities as were consumed in Indonesia and could dispose of much of it as they moved from port to port.[64]

The traders of the Coromandel coast sailed to Bengal, Arakan, Pegu, Tenasserim, Kedah, Perak, Acheh and Ceylon. Traders from Bengal regularly went to Coromandel coast, Ceylon and Acheh. Arakanese and Peguans made direct voyages to Acheh. Acheh was thus linked with the trading complex connecting the countries around the Bay of Bengal just as, through the Gujarati trade, it was tied up with western India. On the other side, the Chinese, the Siamese and the Indonesians from Borneo, Java and Macassar connected Acheh with the trade of the Far East.

No foreigner could trade at any port of Acheh without the permission of the king. Sometimes the rule was not strictly observed but even then one needed permission from the local governor to land. When a ship arrived in the Road of Acheh, its merchants had to wait until the Chap came. The

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[62]Cortesão, Tomé Pires, I, 159-162.

[63]Van Leur, Indonesian Trade, 195.

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Chap was a dagger with a gold handle and scabbard belonging to the king; it signified that the person bearing it was commissioned by the king.[65] A small boat carrying the port officials with the Chap was rowed to the ship and the officials came on board. The persons carrying the Chap had to be given presents.

On landing the first thing to do was to go to the Customs House (Alfandica), visit the chief officers there and pay fees for the Chap. Usually the payment was made in kind with pieces of calico.[66] The most important officers to be met were the Shahbandar, the Superintendent of the port, and the Orangkaya Laxamana, the Governor of the city.[67]

In the Alfandica (Customs House) an exact account was kept of the customs dues, gifts, fines and commodities belonging to the king. The officers of the Customs House also drew up a master list of all the persons who traded with the king or paid duties or offered presents to him.[68]

King's officers were present at the landing of all goods. Bales were opened and whatever was due the king was

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taken out. The remainder was stamped and freed for sale in any part of the king's dominions.[69]

The foreign merchants who came to Acheh proper had to be prepared to pay a large number of dues. There were in the first place the charges for securing a stamped permit to stay at the port. Besides the cash payment, taxes in Indian cloth (the adat kain) had to be paid on arrival. Thus a ship from Gujarat had to pay seven pieces of silk (kain tjindai) or 5 cubits length. These were for the court, the Panglima Bandar (the head officer) and the Penghulu Kawal (the head of the garrison). It was customary on the part of the captain of a Moslem vessel to deposit a cargo-list and the key to the ship's hold at the citadel (the fortification known as Kuta dar ad-dunia). When the captain wanted to discharge the goods he could get back the key by giving a present to the head of the garrison in the citadel. Then there were anchorage charges, fees for the guardsmen, and finally clearance duties.[70] The European ships were obliged to present the Sultan with a roll of cloth and a keg of gunpowder. The Shahbandar in return gave them meat, oil and rice.[71] Besides the harbour and clearance duties there were charges for weighing and setting up stalls.[72]

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[69]Forrest, Voyage from Calcutta, 41.

[70]Drewes and Voorhoeve, AA, 24.

[71]Ibid., 23.

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[69]Forrest, Voyage from Calcutta, 141.

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Duties had to be paid on both imports and exports. The Mohammedan traders did not pay anything for exporting goods from Acheh but the import duty was heavy, about 10% in gold. The officers of the Customs House generally over-rated the value of the goods about 50 per cent.[73] On the west coast the king received 15% of all that was sold. In addition the traders paid 25 Rials to the king of Tiku for every hundred bahars of pepper and a quarter part to the weigher and they had to give little amounts of pepper to about ten or twelve persons more.[74]

Having paid the initial duties the merchants took up houses in the town. Each national group had its own particular kampong to go to. Many of them built temporary huts for the few months of the trading season.

In the smaller ports, especially on the west coast of Sumatra, the foreign merchants were received under the Balai (a shed for public gatherings) by the local governor. There in the presence of the principal merchants of the town the licence from the king of Acheh was read out and prices were settled for the incoming and outgoing commodities.[75]

Small amounts were bought and sold at a time. The English merchant William Nicolls called it trading "from hand

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[73]Harris, I, 746.

[74]Ibid., 730.

[75]Ibid., 729.

Duties had to be paid on both imports and exports. The Mohammedan traders did not pay anything for exporting goods from Aceh but the import duty was heavy, about 10% in gold. The officers of the Customs House generally over-rated the value of the goods about 50 per cent.[73] On the west coast the King received 15% of all that was sold. In addition the traders paid 25 Rials to the King of Tiku for every hundred bahars of pepper and a quarter part to the weigher and they had to give little amounts of pepper to about ten or twelve persons more.[74]

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[73]Harris, I, 146.

[74]Ibid., 130.

[75]Ibid., 129.

to mouth."[76] The city of Acheh was better off than the ports of the west coast. John Millward, the English factor at Tiku, wrote that at Acheh "what is to be had is suddenly gotten, whereas at the other places the merchants are but peddlars."[77]

Goods were exchanged directly by barter although the use of money was also quite common. Pepper was much cheaper when bought in exchange for Indian cloth, dearer when bought for Rials. The Rials were valued as much as a commodity of trade as as a medium of exchange. The traders from Surat and Masulipatam bought large quantities of Rials every year.[78] Although money was widely used as a medium of exchange the foreign merchants preferred to be paid in unwrought gold and "quantity for quantity." Whenever they received large sums of money they always took it by weight.[79]

The participants in Acheh's trade came from different layers of society. In the first place there were the poor vendors who sold fish, fowls, vegetables and fruits in the open market. Then there were the slaves. A striking feature of Acheh's economy was the varied occupations in which the slaves were engaged. They bought things for their masters

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[76] O.C., No. 753.

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Besides the poor vendors and the slaves, most of whom were peddlars, there were the shop keepers, accountants and brokers who filled an important sector of Acheh's commerce. Many of these shop keepers and accountants were Gujaratis. The Europeans always preferred to employ Gujarati brokers because the latter were experienced and well informed about Acheh's trade.[81]

At the head of the mercantile community stood the big merchants. The nobles and king's officers took part in trade, especially in the cloth and pepper trade that went on between the capital and the west coast of Sumatra.[82] On the west coast most of the officials of the king and the big merchants together carried on a profitable trade with the Europeans. Often they prevented the poorer traders from

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[80] Ibid., 91, 93, 94, 98, 99.

[81] Ibid., 94.

[82] L.R., IV, 72.

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"But the greatest dump upon the trade," writes Beaulieu, "is that the king engrosses it all into his own Hands; for what Commodities he buys, he must have them under a market price, and what he sells rises to 50 per cent above it..."[85] The king thus not only derived an income from the ports as the ruler of the kingdom but he earned a large profit by direct trading. When the king's agents bought in the markets no one dared to buy or sell until the king's buying was over.[86] Royal trading was, however, not a peculiar feature of Acheh's economy; it was characteristic of the whole of Southeast Asia.

From the picture of Acheh's trade as sketched above it appears very clearly that the port-towns were the centres of economic activity of the coastal region. The kingdom of Acheh stretched along the coastal strip and never included much of the inland territories. All our informants speak of the coast only and it is difficult to guess what was going

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[83] L.R., IV, 165.

[84] Ibid., 165, 168.

[85] Harris, I, 746.

[86] Ibid., 735.

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on in the back country. The staple food of the people was rice. Unfortunately the European travellers do not give us any information as to the rice estates of the interior. We have seen in the section on the city of Acheh how the king's own estates were managed very largely by slaves. But it would be a mistake to describe Acheh's economy as based entirely on slave labour. There is hardly any evidence of chattel slavery in Acheh. The slaves of Acheh are comparable to the serfs of medieval Europe.

If we may use the term "feudal" in a very general way, we may say that Acheh's economic life showed a closer resemblance to a feudal type of economy than to anything else. The population broadly fell into two divisions: the nobles and the poor villagers and townsmen. The latter group included a large number of slaves. Only in the cities of the coast could one find a significant middle stratum composed of shop-keepers, scribes, accountants, captains of the ships and lower officials. The coastal towns were entirely dependent on trade. In Acheh proper there was not enough food for the whole population and rice had to be imported from abroad.[87] The supreme importance of the port of Acheh lay in the fact that, on the one hand, it controlled the pepper trade of all the ports of the kingdom through a system of licences and that, on the other hand, the Indian cloth needed for common use by the people of the kingdom passed through it.

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## ii. The English Trade in Acheh

After Lancaster had departed in 1602 the English had no contact with Acheh for several years. The directors of the East India Company were, at this stage, interested in exploring the different sectors of the Asian market to find out whether there was much demand anywhere for English manufactures.[88] As Acheh offered no such prospects it had little attraction for the English. The needs of the pepper trade were met by the factory at Bantam. Yet the expectation of getting a good lading of Priaman pepper occasionally drew English ships to the west coast of Sumatra.

In August 1605, Sir Edward Michelbourne, the "first of the interlopers," appeared before Priaman with his ship, the Tiger. He could not do any trading because the town was in the grip of great political confusion caused by the seizure of power by Sultan Ali Riayat Shah (1604-1607). The Governor of the town dared not even talk to the messenger of Michelbourne in private for fear of being suspected by others. Michelbourne therefore sailed on towards Bantam. On his way he seized a Gujarati ship of about 80 tons which he took into the Road of Selebar, evidently without encountering any opposition there.[89]

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The next English visitor to the west coast of Sumatra was Captain William Keeling, the commander of the third voyage (1606-1609) of the Company. He had instructions to set up a factory at Priaman. On 26 July 1608 the Dragon appeared before the port. The previous year Sultan Iskandar Muda had seized power and William Keeling happened to be the first English visitor to his kingdom. Keeling, of course, had no chance to visit Acheh to see the king and get his permission to trade at Priaman. Instead he secured the permission of the Governor Nacado Pastombo by offering presents. Keeling gave him three yards of stamel, one blue calico, a musket and stock, one barrel and two sword blades. This was not bribing for it was customary, on the arrival of new ships, to present something to the Governor, who in return sent meat, oil and other provisions to the ship. Even if he had had a licence from the king of Acheh he would have been obliged to do the same. The Governor sent him a goat. He had no authority to grant trade to Keeling. The fact that he did grant it, however, shows that at least there was no express command from the king to exclude the English from the ports of the west coast as there was with regard to the Gujaratis.

Getting permission to trade was the first step. The next and more important thing to do was to fix the price of pepper with the Governor and the principal merchants. On 29 July, Keeling went ashore, firing six shots in honour of

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the Governor. Sixty chief men of the town had gathered at the Governor's house to confer on the price of pepper. At first they demanded 50 Rials per bahar (about 387 lbs.), which was an unusually high price for the west coast. Naturally Keeling did not like it. He had been privately advised by an Achenese merchant not to offer more than 16 Rials. The Achenese, however, was trying to keep Keeling out of the trade so that he himself could collect as much pepper as he wanted and later sell it at whatever price he chose. Finally, after much debate, the merchants agreed to sell at 22 1/2 Rials per bahar and Keeling agreed to pay 6% customs. The agreement was drawn up in writing.

Keeling spent about two months in Priaman and sailed for Bantam on 15 September 1608. During his stay he had been able to collect 1385 bahars of pepper and some gold and benzoin. He could not leave a factory there but strongly recommended the setting up of one. He found that Priaman itself did not have more than 500 bahars of pepper, but all the pepper ports of the west coast together would yield yearly about 2,500 bahars. This could be bought reasonably in exchange for Surat cloth which was in great demand in the area. Keeling had picked up some calicoes at Socotra (off the coast of Africa) which he sold at Priaman for three or four times the price he had paid. Merchants from Acheh and Java were the main buyers of pepper on the west coast of Sumatra, the Gujaratis having been excluded from the trade.

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Keeling suggested that the English should try to collect Surat cloth and bring it every year to Priaman. For safe trading in the west coast a letter from the king of Acheh was necessary and the English should try to procure it.[90]

The coming of the English merchant, Samuel Bradshaw, to Acheh in the Union on 17 June 1609 marked the revival of official relations between the English and the king of Acheh. The renewal of the contact was, however, accidental. The Union, belonging to the fleet of the fourth voyage (1608) of the Company, had no instructions to call at Acheh. Having rounded the Cape of Good Hope the ship tried to reach the island of Socotra, but failed due to strong winds. It dared not move in the direction of the west coast of India because of the onset of the South-West Monsoon. So it made for Acheh with the expectation of finding Gujarati merchants there.[91]

On arrival Bradshaw found that the Dutch were still doing business at Acheh. They were not at all happy at the return of the English. Albrecht Willemsz, the representative of the Dutch Company, tried his best to obstruct the trade of the English.[92] This attempt to keep the English out of Acheh's trade, however, did not succeed. The English were

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[90] Purchas His Pilgrimes, II, 1905, 518-519; L.R., I, 17-18; Sainsbury, Calendar, 1513-1616, 200.

[91] L.R., I, 254; W. Foster, The Journal of John Jourdain, 1608-1617, 1905, xx, note 1.

[92] L.R., I, 254; KA, 967.

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The coming of the English merchant, Samuel Bradshaw, to Aceh in the Union on 17 June 1609 marked the revival of official relations between the English and the king of Aceh. The renewal of the contact was, however, accidental. The Union, belonging to the fleet of the fourth voyage (1608) of the Company, had no instructions to call at Aceh. Having rounded the Cape of Good Hope the ship tried to reach the island of Socotra, but failed due to strong winds. It dared not move in the direction of the west coast of India because of the onset of the South-West Monsoon. So it made for Aceh with the expectation of finding Gujarati merchants there.[91]

On arrival Bradshaw found that the Dutch were still doing business at Aceh. They were not at all happy at the return of the English. Albrecht Willemsz, the representative of the Dutch Company, tried his best to obstruct the trade of the English.[92] This attempt to keep the English out of Aceh's trade, however, did not succeed. The English were

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[90] Purchas His Pilgrimes, II, 1905, 518-519; L.R., I, 17-18; Salmbury, Calendar, 1513-1616, 200.

[91] L.R., I, 234; W. Foster, The Journal of John Jourdain, 1608-1617, 1905, xx, note 1.

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admitted to royal audience within seven days of their arrival. This was the first time that Sultan Iskandar Muda had received English merchants. We have no information as to how the meeting went. Evidently the English encountered serious competition from the Dutch in offering more valuable presents to the king. In the end the English were able to get what they wanted. Bradshaw happily reported "by gifts they sought to prevent us but by gifts we obtained." He had to spend a good deal of money but he was not prepared to be outdone by the Dutch.[93]

Having secured the king's permission to trade in the kingdom of Acheh, Bradshaw opened business with the Gujarati merchants. He bartered English cloth and lead for Gujarati cloth. He could sell a fine Scarlet, some of the best Stamels, a few Venice reds and Popinjays, green and hare-colour. The Gujaratis liked the hare-colour ones most. The cloth was sold at 6 1/2 Rials per yard and lead at 20 Rials per Bahar. In exchange, he collected 125 corges of black and white Baftas (calicoes), 300 corges of Sealas (a kind of calico) and Kanikeens (a kind of bafta) and 450 corges of Chirams (striped cloth) and Cocimbows (a kind of bafta)--in all 875 corges or 17,500 pieces.[94]

Bradshaw was not interested in sending the Gujarati cloth directly to England for sale in the European market.

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He wanted to use them to collect pepper. So he went to Tiku and Priaman, the pepper ports of the west coast of Sumatra. A year earlier, Keeling had found that the Gujaratis had been forbidden trade in this area but they must have managed to secure permission again, for Bradshaw met with Gujarati merchants there who were willing to buy his English cloth. Both at Tiku and at Priaman he could sell the remainder of his English cloth at a cheaper rate (4 Rials per yard) to Gujarati merchants and he collected in all 11,000 Rials worth of Gujarati cloth. This whole amount he now bartered for pepper. Pepper was selling at the rate of 13 1/2, 14 and 15 Rials per bahar when bought for Rials which was quite reasonable.[95] It was much cheaper when bartered against Gujarati cloth. To take one example, a variety of the white Baftas of Surat cost 60 Mamoodies per Corge (20 pieces) or 3 Mamoodies per piece. Bradshaw found that 6/7/8/9/ pieces of these would fetch one bahar of pepper at Tiku and Priaman.[96] In other words, the price of one bahar of pepper varied from 18 to 27 Mamoodies, or, 3 3/5 to 5 2/7 Rials (5 Mamoodies make 1 Rial).[97]

Bradshaw used his stay to make a deeper survey of Achenese trade and prepare a valuable report.[98] He listed

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[96] L.R., I, 74.

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commodities which were in demand in Acheh and on the west coast of Sumatra. It showed that for the kingdom of Acheh the medium of trade par excellence was Indian cloth from Gujarat, Coromandel and Bengal. According to his estimate, about 174,000 pieces of Indian cloth of various kinds were sold annually on the west coast of Sumatra. He also prepared a list of the commodities which one could pick up in Sumatra for sale in Gujarat, Coromandel, Bengal and Arakan, which included, besides pepper, brimstone (sulphur), nutmegs, cloves, mace and tin.[99] All this was well known to Asian merchants. In the seventeenth century the English had begun to discover the pattern of the Asian trade for themselves.

It was clear that establishment of direct trade between England and the pepper ports of Sumatra was not an easy matter. Acheh and the west coast of Sumatra formed integral parts of a well-established trading pattern to which the English now had to conform. Bradshaw stressed the point already raised by Keeling that, in order to be able to trade in Sumatran pepper the English must have access to the highly strategic Cambay-Broach-Surat region of India. He predicted that if the English succeeded in establishing themselves in the Gujarati trade, the Dutch competition in Sumatra would be a minor matter and that "they shall, to their grief, find that others will trade as well as they." In February 1609 Bradshaw left for England in the Union.[100]

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In the year 1612, between July and December, seven English ships visited the west coast of Sumatra. One of these, the Pearl, belonged to the interloper Samuel Castleton. The six others belonged to the fleets of the different voyages of the East India Company. The crowding of so many ships at one place was the result of a lack of co-ordination between the different voyages. Very often the ships found themselves competing with one another.

The ships of the sixth voyage (1610) and the eighth voyage (1611) commanded respectively by Henry Middleton and John Saris were busy, in the early months of 1612, in blockading Mokha (Mocha), a port at the mouth of the Red Sea. In May, 1612 Henry Middleton sent John Jourdain with the Darling to Sumatra to collect pepper and to forestall Saris who had been planning to go in that direction. Saris immediately sent the Thomas which arrived at Tiku earlier than the Darling but was refused trade. The two ships then tried to come to an understanding to avoid spoiling one another's market. The men of the Darling set up a tent in one of the islands of Tiku and the Thomas went to Priaman.

On 26 September the James of the ninth voyage (1612) arrived. It was soon followed by the Hector, another ship belonging to Saris' fleet. The Hector wanted to buy up the Darling's pepper but the latter did not want to sell. On 9 October the James and the Hector left.

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John Jourdain, who had been doing most of the trading since his arrival in July, was exasperated by the inconstant behaviour of the local merchants and officials. He complained:

> ...one daie they would trade with us, and put us to three or four daies longer; then wee should have them of annother minde, askinge an extreme price for their pepper, and nothing for our cloth; and some times they would have money for their pepper, and within two or three daies cloth was better than money.[102]

Merchants from Acheh had a large share of the pepper trade of Tiku.[103] By 1612 the frequent visits by the English ships made the local people keenly aware of the possibilities of gain from the pepper trade. The merchants from Acheh

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[102] Ibid., 232.

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naturally took advantage of the situation. They could use delaying tactics with great effectiveness against the English because they knew very well that the latter were eager to buy but could not afford to stay long. Jourdain could not get pepper at less than 20 Rials per bahar.[104]

The usual response of the European traders to local obstructionism was to look for a less important trading spot where the smaller trader would be relatively free from control of the big merchants and the officials. This was the main purpose of the trip to Passaman, a smaller pepper port lying to the west of Tiku. The place appeared to be extremely unhealthy. It had, of course, some pepper and the English could buy about 30 bahars.

Jourdain's stay in Tiku confirmed what Keeling and Bradshaw had already experienced viz., Gujarati cloth was necessary for buying pepper in Sumatra at a reasonable price. Jourdain had some Gujarati cloth seized from Indian ships near the mouth of the Red Sea. But more was needed. Furthermore the English also stood in need of a royal licence from Acheh for safe trading on the west coast of Sumatra. Much of the difficulty which the English ran into at Tiku could be ascribed to the fact that they did not have the necessary licence.

The coming of Thomas Best to Acheh (1613) marks a new phase in the English-Achenese relations. The previous year,

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in an engagement with the Portuguese off the west coast of India, Best had been able to strike a hard blow at the Portuguese naval power. The superiority of English artillery and their skill in naval warfare were well demonstrated before Asian spectators. The Portuguese were not absolutely beaten but their prestige was badly hurt. At the same time Best had succeeded in establishing an English factory at Surat, one of the main outlets for Gujarati cloth.

On 12 April 1613 Thomas Best arrived in the Road of Acheh with the Dragon and the Hosiander. He had with him a letter from king James I for Sultan Iskandar Muda. The king of Acheh gave him a grand reception in the traditional style, similar to the one given by his grandfather to Sir James Lancaster. Best could not persuade the king to ratify the articles of the agreement concluded (1602) between Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah and Lancaster. The king was, however, especially kind to Best. He put an elephant at his disposal and granted him free access through the gates of the palace any time he wanted to visit the king. Sri Muhammad, who had been to Holland as an envoy, was asked to attend the distinguished English visitor.[105]

On 24 April Best repeated his request for the ratification of the former treaty and this time the king promised to do so. For a long time, however, nothing was done. On

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15 May Best seized a Portuguese ship which had just arrived from Malacca. This incensed the king and he threatened to arrest all English merchants if the ship were not released. After much argument with the king Best yielded and gave up the ship, which pleased the king very much. He conferred upon Best the title of "Orangkaya Puti" or White Noble, and sold him his own benzoin at 25 tael per bahar although the market price was 35 tael. He also promised to give Best a "letter of favoure unto Pryaman."[106]

Best found many Gujaratis at the port and the market glutted with Gujarati cloth. This was because Sultan Iskandar Muda had excluded the Gujarati traders from all places of his kingdom except the port of Acheh.[107] When the Portuguese ship was threatened by the English, the Gujaratis warned them of the coming danger and offered to take their merchandise in safe custody for a small charge. On 27 May Malim Gani, captain of a Gujarati ship and a friend of the English in western India, brought news of the granting of a firman to the English by the Mogul Emperor Jahangir permitting them to set up a factory at Surat.

On 20 June the king of Acheh seized a Gujarati ship because it had been to Perak, the enemy of Acheh. The rich merchandise of the ship was confiscated and the men were

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Meanwhile the king continued to keep the promise of a favourable letter to Priaman hanging before Best and at the same time pressed him to buy some of the Gujarati cloth which he had recently confiscated. Best agreed to see the goods and took along with him Malim Gani for his advice. The English merchants and the king's officers could not agree on price and so the sale did not take place.[111]

On 7 July came the promised royal letter for Priaman. Best was extremely disappointed to find that the king had not granted the exemption from customs which he had promised.[112]

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Best left Acheh on 12 July 1613 with a reply to King James's letter and a few presents.[113] He gave up the house and like Lancaster left practically nothing behind.[114] On the eve of his departure the king wanted Best to urge the king of England to send two white women. He promised that if he had a son by one of them he would make him the king of Priaman, so that the English merchants could go to their "owne English king" for pepper.[115]

Best brought from India 3500 pounds sterling worth of goods for Acheh and Priaman.[116] These however did not sell at Acheh. The market, as we have seen, was glutted with Gujarati cloth. Only high quality fine white calicoes from Broach were in demand.[117] Best, therefore, bought up about 600 Tael (about 2400 Rials) worth of Gujarati cloth at Acheh to take to Tiku.[118] The king of Acheh bought from him 1300 small bars of iron.[119] Iron was greatly in demand at Acheh because the king needed it for his preparations for war against his neighbours.

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Trade was held up because the Governor demanded new customs and anchorage duties which Best refused to pay. On 30 October Best left the Hosiander to carry on trade at Tiku and left for Bantam.

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[121] Ibid., 66.

Best's voyage from Surat down the west coast of India to Acheh and again from Acheh via the west coast of Sumatra to Bantam established a line of English trade which followed the route traditionally taken by the Gujaratis. The foundation of the Surat factory gave the English direct access to Gujarati cloth and thereby enhanced their importance as traders in the market of Acheh. This coincided with a temporary rupture of relations between the Gujarati merchants and the king of Acheh. Already the king had forced the Gujaratis to confine their trade exclusively to Acheh. In 1613 his honouring of Best and confiscation of a Gujarati vessel emphasised the contrast between the English and Gujarati position in Acheh. Then there was another factor.

In the same year, during the Achenese attack on Johore, the Dutch had helped Johore. During Best's stay at Acheh the victorious fleet returned with Johorite and Dutch prisoners. The straining of relations with the Dutch, who had annoyed the Sultan by not helping him with ships against his enemies, made the alliance with the English all the more valuable. Yet the king of Acheh was not prepared to make any undue concessions to the English. He granted a licence to the English so that they might be induced to trade in Acheh but he saw no reason why he should ratify those provisions of the previous agreement which gave the English a special position in the trade of Acheh. The Sultan was courteous but inflexible in his determination to pursue an independent policy.

Best's voyage from Surat down the west coast of India to Achen and again from Achen via the west coast of Sumatra to Bantam established a line of English trade which followed the route traditionally taken by the Gujaratis. The foundation of the Surat factory gave the English direct access to Gujarati cloth and thereby enhanced their importance as traders in the market of Achen. This coincided with a temporary rupture of relations between the Gujarati merchants and the King of Achen. Already the King had forced the Gujaratis to confine their trade exclusively to Achen. In 1613 his honouring of Best and confiscation of a Gujarati vessel emphasised the contrast between the English and Gujarati position in Achen. Then there was another factor.

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It took the English Company another year before it could take any advantage of the favourable situation at Acheh. Early in 1615 the English had to fight the Portuguese again in the waters of western India before the factory at Surat could be put on a stable foundation. By that time it had been discovered that Surat was the only place which could take in substantial amounts of the goods brought by the English ships. English broadcloth was not much in demand but ivory, lead, tin, quicksilver, vermillion, and sword-blades were readily sold.[122] In that year the English began to buy in Broach (west coast of India) certain types of cloth which were especially in demand in the market of Priaman, Tiku and the Red Sea area.[123]

The Hector arrived in Acheh from Surat on 15 April 1615 with a large consignment of Gujarati cloth (6500 pieces).[124] John Oxwick, who carried on negotiations with the king, was not the right man for the job with which he was entrusted. His rough manners annoyed the king and the issue of a licence was delayed. The other English merchants then approached the Orangkaya Laxamana, who first wanted to buy on his own account 4 or 5 bahars of iron, which the English agreed to sell. The Laxamana warned the English that Oxwick should not go to

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[122] L.R., III, 40-41, 44; L.R., I, 235.

[123] Ibid.,54.

[124] Ibid., 127, 83.

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[122] E.R., III, 40-41, 44; I.R., I, 235.

[123] Ibid., 54.

[124] Ibid., 127, 83.

the court any more and that with good words they might obtain their desire but with bad words never.[125] Oxwick was removed from authority and Arthur Spaight took up the dealings with the king of Acheh. On 27 June the English finally got their licence but "it cost dear." A total sum of 150 pounds sterling was spent, besides an anchor, a gun, and some powder.[126] The English were granted permission to trade at Tiku and Priaman and were asked to leave a factory at Acheh.[127]

On 21 June the Thomas arrived from Bantam via the west coast of Sumatra. The merchants of the Hector tried to dissuade the men of the Thomas from landing as they had already secured a licence. A debate followed and finally the men of the Thomas decided to land and try to collect another licence for setting up a factory at Tiku. The rivalry between the factors of the English Company of course brought more presents to the king who finally granted a second licence to the merchants of the Thomas. At his insistence Samuel Juxon of the Hector and William Nicolls of the Thomas were left at Acheh with some stock at their disposal.[128]

The Hector arrived at Tiku early in October. The local traders, probably expecting the Thomas to show up, were not

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[125] Ibid., 115.

[126] L.R., III, XX-XXI, 95-101.

[127] Ibid., 129.

[128] Ibid., 125-127.

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[125]Ibid., 115.

[126]L.R., III, xx-xxi, 95-101.

[127]Ibid., 129.

[128]Ibid., 125-127.

eager to open business immediately. They asked 50 Rials as the price of pepper per bahar but agreed to bring it down to 15 Rials. At this point (27 October) the Thomas appeared and immediately the price of pepper shot up to 30 Rials.[129] Once more the factors of the Company engaged in a debate as to which ship should stay and which should go. The merchants of the Thomas claimed they had a better licence for they had permission to trade at Tiku for two years while the Hector could trade only for eight months. The Hector yielded and was about to leave when the local officials and the merchants informed them that the Hector's licence was as good as that of the Thomas and further that if the Hector did not want to take advantage of the king's licence then they would not trade with the English at all. This threat enabled the merchants of the Hector to compel the men of the Thomas to disclose the contents of their licence and compare the two. As John Millward of the Thomas did not have the original copy of the licence the English collected it from the Serivano (the writer). It was found that while the Thomas had licence to trade for two years, the trade was to be confined at Tiku only. The Hector, on the other hand, was granted trade at Tiku, Barus and Priaman and no time limit was set. The dispute was therefore finally settled in favour of the Hector and the Thomas decided to leave.[130]

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[129] Ibid., 220.

[130] Ibid., 222.

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[129] Ibid., 220.

[130] Ibid., 222.

The whole episode showed that the Achenese officials and traders were getting accustomed to competition among European ships for the trade of Acheh. What happened between the merchants of the same Company could as well happen between nations and this was something which they always welcomed.

The English merchants at Acheh were instructed to send their accounts to Bantam, which was the headquarters for the southern factories. They were asked not to detail the ships beyond 15 September when the eastern monsoon set in. The ships had to assemble at Bantam around that time to get ready for the homeward voyage to London, which took place between November and February.[131]

The petty rivalry between the factors of the English East India Company did not stand in the way of their establishing themselves in the trade of Acheh. The Anglo-Portuguese conflict in the west coast of India had temporarily dislocated the Gujarati trade with Acheh. In 1615 the English noticed in Acheh that "the Gogeratts bring no goods thither as they were wont to do, whereby the town is utterly unfurnished."[132] Between 1615 and 1618 the English drove a flourishing trade in Acheh. In July 1616 Keeling renewed the licence for two years.[133]

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[131] Ibid., 57, 59.

[132] Ibid., 123, 125-126.

[133] L.R., IV, 469.

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[131] Ibid., 57, 59.

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The growing importance of the English in Acheh's trade directly affected the interests of the Gujarati traders. Millward wrote in 1615 that the Gujaratis of Acheh "live very slavish to the king, and yet many of them of great wealth and credit." He found them to be the greatest enemy of the English and "especially for our settling at Achen, a place which heretofore hath been very profitable unto them, which now they are like utterly to be deprived of."[134] It seems that in 1616 they made an attempt to recover their lost position. In Acheh, the only way to do this was to win over the king by heavy presentation. We have no way of knowing what went on behind the scenes but from what the king said to William Nicolls it became clear that the Gujaratis were trying to stage a comeback. The king told William Nicolls that the reason why he did not want the English to establish themselves permanently at Tiku was that it would hurt the Gujaratis. Nicolls wrote in a letter to Bantam: "His drift is that if the Gogeratts' shipping come hither and we remain at Tecoo we shall disposses them of their wonted relading of pepper by our continual buying it up."[135]

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Meanwhile the Governor of Tiku and his subordinates were taking full advantage of the English trade on the west coast of Sumatra. The English factors found them to be of an "insatiable griping disposition" and feared that they will soon take the entire trade in their hands.[137] Since they had the scale in their hands it was not at all difficult for them to interfere with the normal processes of trade. They prevented the poor people of the area and the local Gujarati merchants from trading with the English and thereby put pressure on the English to trade on their terms.[138]

In September 1616 the king of Acheh sent a new officer Addick Raja to the west coast. With him came the richest Gujarati merchants of Acheh. Millward suspected that they were "Factors from the king to buy up all the pepper and so divert the trade from this place to Achem."[139] His suspicion was confirmed when Addick Raja advised the English to sell less cloth for money or pepper. The purpose of this move, as he guessed, was "to draw the price of English goods within

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[136] Loc. cit.

[137] Ibid., 165.

[138] Loc. cit.

[139] Ibid., 168.

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[136] Loc. cit.

[137] Ibid., 165.

[138] Loc. cit.

[139] Ibid., 168.

the compass of those rates prescribed unto him by the king for sale of his own goods."[140]

The sending of an officer endowed with great authority signified something new. So far the king was content with issuing licences from Acheh. All those who wanted to trade on the west coast had to go to Acheh and give heavy presents to get the licence. From now on, however, the king began to draw away much of the pepper from the west coast to the port of Acheh. Royal junks began to collect pepper directly from the west coast.[141] There is no evidence of the continuation of the partnership between the king and the Gujaratis which Millward suspected. The Gujaratis continued to trade at Acheh but they could not regain the dominant position they had once enjoyed in the trade of Sumatra. The king went on extending his grip over the trade between Acheh and the west coast of Sumatra.

As for the local officers and big merchants Millward wrote that their aim was "to serve the country with cloth and the English with pepper."[142] This was exactly what the king tried to do. He wanted to sell pepper to the English and supply the people of the west coast, his own subjects, with cloth. To get pepper was easy enough but to get cloth was

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[140] Loc. cit.

[141] L.R., V, 171.

[142] Ibid., 165.

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[40] Loc. cit.

[41] I.R., V, 171.

[42] Ibid., 165.

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Being the ruler of the country he had no difficulty in controlling the trade. His technique was "to prescribe a price both for goods and pepper and to give his officers power to constrain the people to buy and sell with him at that rate."[143]

Meanwhile the English were becoming more and more aware of the possibilities of the trade with the Coromandel Coast. The Dutch had been exploiting this sector for quite some time. Having established themselves firmly on the west coast of India the English now turned to the trade between the Coromandel Coast and Acheh. In January 1616 William Nicolls reported that he had bought 6,000 pieces of steel called Besse Mallella, which sold very well at Tiku.[144] Several types of Massulipatam cloth--the Tappie Chindas, the

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Sellimbot Irassir, and the Tappie Serrassirs could be bought at Acheh from the Massulipatam traders. Nicolls reported that these would bring "cento per cento profit" in Bamtam.[145] Thus Acheh became the point of contact of the English trade in Gujarati as well as Coromandel commodities.

Samuel Bradshaw (1610) estimated the total amount of Indian cloth that could be sold annually in Sumatra at 150,000 to 174,000 pieces.[146] Of the various types bought by the English, from 2,000 to 3,000 corges (40,000 - 60,000 pieces) of coarse white baftas could be sold. They cost in Surat about 3 mamoodie (or 3 mas) a piece.[147] At Acheh they sold for 9 mas a piece, so that the English made a profit of almost 3 to 1.[148] Fine white baftas cost from 12 mas to about 41 mas and the profit on these ranged from 2 1/4 to 1 to 3 1/2 to 1.[149] The type of cloth which was in greatest demand was Seala, a coarse cloth costing 1 mamoodie (1 mas) a piece. About 5,000 corges (100,000 pieces) of these sold annually. It is significant that, out of a total estimated amount of 174,000 pieces sold annually in Sumatra, 160,000 pieces were coarse stuff.[150] We cannot generalize on the

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[145] Loc. cit.

[146] L.R., I, 74-76.

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[148] Ibid., 187.

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In 1619 William Nicolls claimed that 58,100 pieces of Surat cloth would sell at Acheh.[152] Of these, 30,000 pieces should be Kandikears which cost less than 3 mamoodies (3 mas) a piece.[153] This figure of Nicolls does not indicate a contraction of Indian cloth trade in Sumatra since the days of Bradshaw (1610). We should remember that in 1619 the English trade was mostly confined to Acheh proper. Secondly, at Acheh the Gujaratis and Dabul merchants brought a considerable amount of Gujarati cloth. What Nicolls calculated was the amount that the English could possibly sell, while Bradshaw's report was in the nature of a general survey of the whole market.

Making profits on the Indian cloth trade at Acheh was not the main objective of the English trade in Sumatra. The English trade in Acheh should be looked upon as subsidiary to the trade between Bantam and England. As pepper

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[151] Van Leur, Indonesian Trade, 133.

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could not be bought directly with English commodities, it became necessary to take part in the Indian cloth trade. The profit could be reinvested in pepper which was carried to Bantam to supply the homeward bound ships.

Keeling's (1608) estimate of the total annual produce of the whole of the west coast of Sumatra was 2500 bahars. By 1617, pepper producers of Sumatra had begun to respond to the demand of the European buyers. William Nicolls wrote in 1617 that with a stock of saleable commodities one could buy yearly "two, three or four thousand bahars of pepper and the more two years hence, the king having set five hundred men to do nothing else but plant pepper here, which in that time will grow to perfection."[154]

The success of the English in the pepper trade can be measured by Jan Pieterszoon Coen's regret that the English had collected from Tiku about 25,000 sacks (1,500,000 lbs. or about 4,000 bahars) of pepper in two years (1616-1618).[155]

In 1618 the English began to lose their special position. The king's system of monopoly was pulling the trade to Acheh more and more effectively. The Bantam authorities thought William Nicolls, the English merchant, had a hand in it.[156] William Nicolls, however, claimed that

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[154] L.R., VI, 72.

[155] Coen, I, 330.

[156] O.C. No. 595.

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he had been trying his best to secure an extension of trade at Tiku. The king refused on the ground that his own merchants had become beggars because of the English trading on the west coast of Sumatra.[157] The English first tried to get a two years' extension but later asked for four months only to recover their debts. The king refused, expecting, as Nicolls guessed, the English to buy up his own pepper at Acheh at 12 Tael per bahar.[158] Since 1616 the Dutch had been trying their best to secure a licence for trade in the west coast. In 1618 they finally got it for two years to the exclusion of the English.[159] Meanwhile the Gujaratis and the Dabul merchants had grown into serious competitors to the English. The Dabul merchants were damaging English trade more than any other nation by buying up large amounts of pepper.[160] Nicolls suggested that the best way of bringing down the price of pepper was to interfere with Gujarati and especially Dabul shipping. The whole area from the Red Sea to Acheh must be policed to impress upon the king the strength of the English "and consequently through feare...of cloth" he will be compelled to compromise. In this project the English

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[158] O.C. No. 602. One Tael was a little less than 4 Rials.

[159] O.C. No. 654.

[160] O.C. No. 659.

he had been trying his best to secure an extension of trade at Tiku. The king refused on the ground that his own merchants had become beggars because of the English trading on the west coast of Sumatra.[157] The English first tried to get a two years' extension but later asked for four months only to recover their debts. The king refused, expecting, as Nicolls guessed, the English to buy up his own pepper at Achen at 12 Tael per bahar.[158] Since 1616 the Dutch had been trying their best to secure a licence for trade in the west coast. In 1618 they finally got it for two years to the exclusion of the English.[159] Meanwhile the Gujaratis and the Dabul merchants had grown into serious competitors to the English. The Dabul merchants were damaging English trade more than any other nation by buying up large amounts of pepper.[160] Nicolls suggested that the best way of bringing down the price of pepper was to interfere with Gujarati and especially Dabul shipping. The whole area from the Red Sea to Achen must be policed to impress upon the King the strength of the English "and consequently through fear...of cloth" he will be compelled to compromise. In this project the English

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[159] O.C. No. 651.

[160] O.C. No. 659.

should invite the cooperation of the Dutch.[161] Besides the Asian merchants, who had always been there, there appeared the French. In 1617 a French ship had brought some Gujarati and Coromandel cloth to Acheh.[162] Even the Dutch had success in Surat and brought some Surat commodities to Acheh.[163]

The king was now assured of a supply of Indian, especially Gujarati, cloth. With so many competitors at hand the king could safely set the price of pepper high. Nicolls offered to buy the king's own 500 bahars of pepper at 8 Tael in goods. The king told him that the Dutch had offered 9 Taels in Rials. Nicolls then offered 10 Taels in goods. The king refused to take anything but Rials. Nicolls bought 250 bahars at the king's rate. His only satisfaction was that he had deprived the Dutch of 250 bahars.[164] The price of pepper was thus rising and Nicolls predicted that each year would be worse "by the Hollanders stepping in."[165]

The licence secured by Keeling in 1616 expired in July 1618. For a long time after this the English continued to expect a renewal of the licence. Nicolls felt frustrated that he had no suitable presents to offer the king. The

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161O.C. No. 667.

162O.C. No. 595.

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164*Loc. cit.*

165O.C. No. 753.

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[162] O.C. No. 595.

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[164] Loc. cit.

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Dutch, on the other hand, were giving valuable presents to the king, hoping to get trade for two more years. They even guaranteed him help against the Portuguese in Malacca. Nicolls still hoped to get a renewal of the licence by being "open fisted."[166]

On 8 April 1619 Captain Robert Bonner arrived in Acheh. The presents which he brought with him--a big gun, spangles and dogs--did not satisfy the king. He still refused to grant any licence to the English for trading at Tiku. Finally he agreed to grant it for two months only. Nicolls sailed with Bonner's fleet to Tiku to help in the collection of pepper for the Dragon.

The renewal of the licence for two months did not help the English at all. When the Dragon was almost fully laden the Dutch took it by force. The year 1619 turned out to be a bad one for the English in Acheh. The English and the Dutch were competitors in Indonesian trade and right from the beginning of the seventeenth century there had been open conflicts on several occasions. The rivalry between them had so far been confined to the spice islands in the eastern part of the archipelago. In 1618, however, the appointment of Jan Pieterszoon Coen as the Governor General of the Netherlands Indies and the arrival of Sir Thomas Dale from England with a naval force helped to extend the Anglo-Dutch

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In April 1620 the Bull arrived from England bringing the good news of the signing of an agreement between the English and the Dutch in the previous year (23 February 1619). Both parties agreed to cooperate in bringing down the price of pepper and to share the product equally between them. The English, however, continued to complain that the Dutch were not faithful to the treaty and that consequently the price of pepper could not be lowered.[168]

The king of Acheh was greatly displeased by the reconciliation between the English and the Dutch. When the English and the Dutch together requested the king for the renewal of the permission to trade on the west coast of Sumatra the king angrily turned them down. He said his own people must also trade. He declared that he did not care

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for either the English or the Dutch and if necessary he would fight; if the Europeans had 60 ships he would make 600.[169]

The expansion of Acheh around this time cannot be directly ascribed to the Anglo-Dutch agreement of 1619. The expansion of the kingdom had been going on stage by stage since the conquest of Deli (Arn) in 1612.[170]

The conquests of Pahang (1618), Kedah (1619), and Perak (1620), however, gave the king direct access to the pepper gardens of the Malay Peninsula. Coen was right when he wrote that the Sultan was trying to draw the entire pepper trade of Sumatra into his hands.[171] In late 1620 an Achenese fleet was sent to the west coast of Sumatra and in 1621 a fortress was built in Tiku to keep the local people in check.[172]

In the face of the expansion of the Achenese empire and the establishment of royal control over a large part of the pepper-producing area the Dutch and the English could not do anything effective. They could not withdraw their factories from Acheh as in that case the whole advantage would be reaped by the French and the Danes, who had already

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[169] Coen, I, 595.

[170] Djajadiningrat, "Overzicht," 179-180.

[171] Coen, I, 595.

[172] H. Kroeskamp, De Westkust en Minangkabau (1665-1668), 1931, 24; Schrieke, ISS, I, 52.

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Through these troubled days the English lingered on at Acheh for another decade. Iskandar Muda's arbitrary policy drove the English, the Dutch and even the Portuguese and the Chinese to seek pepper elsewhere. The only area in Sumatra where they could go was Jambi.[175] In the twenties of the seventeenth century Jambi's pepper trade grew rapidly. When Acheh's expansion threatened Jambi the Dutch wanted the English to join them in stopping Acheh. The English, although they had a factory at Jambi, wanted to maintain good relations with Acheh and refused to side with Jambi.[176]

The king of Acheh had not given up his policy of giving the foreign merchants just enough inducement to keep them in his port without granting any major concession. In 1621 George Robinson, the chief English factor at Acheh, reported that the king might withdraw the prohibition of trade at Tiku for 1,000 Tael. He soon realized that this was a delusion.[177]

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[173]Kroeskamp, De Westkust, 25; Coen, I, 475.

[174]Kroeskamp, De Westkust, 25.

[175]Schrieke, ISS, I, 49-50.

[176]N. Macleod, "De Oost-Indische Compagnie op Sumatra in de 17e eeuw," IG, II, 1903, 1246.

[177]Factory Records (Java), III (1), 1613-22, f. 273.

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In 1622 there took place a general contraction of English trade in Indonesia and the only factory which could be supplied with fresh stock was Jambi.[180] In the same year the English lost a year's trade at Acheh because their ships had been diverted to Persian waters to operate against the Portuguese.[181] The English factory at Indragiri was burned down causing a loss of about 1,000 Rials.[182]

In 1620 William Nicolls, the chief English factor, had been replaced by David Wight.[183] After the death of Wight,

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[178] Loc. cit.

[179] W. Foster, English Factories in India, 1622-23, 28.

[180] Bassett, "Bantam Factory," 67.

[181] Ibid., 67-68; Sainsbury, Calendar, 1622-1624, 1878, 61.

[182] Ibid., 111.

[183] O. C. No. 881.

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George Robinson became the chief factor. The king of Acheh did not like Robinson at all because, as the English thought, he was not as liberal as Nicolls had been in his presents to him. The king forced him to go and he was replaced by Henry Woolman.[184]

The Amboyna Massacre of 1623 did affect the relations between the English and the Dutch seriously but it had little immediate effect on the English buying of pepper from Sumatra, particularly from the kingdom of Acheh. The Elizabeth collected in that year 1955 bahars of pepper from Acheh. In 1624 the English managed to collect more than 3,000 bahars (1,080,000 lbs.) of pepper from Acheh and the west coast.[185]

Towards the end of the twenties the English concentrated more and more on Jambi and Bantam. In 1626 the English resolved to open negotiations with Bantam and in 1628 they returned to Bantam. By 1631 they had withdrawn from Acheh.

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[184]Sainsbury, Calendar, 1622-1624, 155, 207, 187.

[185]Sainsbury, Calendar, 1622-1624, 300; Factory Records (Java), III (2), 12, 14; J. E. Heeres, Dagh-Register, 1624-1629, 8, 91, 118.

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[184] Salmbury, Calendar, 1622-1624, 155, 207, 187.

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### iii. The Dutch Trade in Acheh

Unlike the English, the Dutch managed to maintain a fairly regular contact with Acheh in the first decade of the seventeenth century. The agreement of 1607 between Oliver de Vivere and Sultan Ali Riayat Shah gave them a distinct advantage over all other nations trading in Acheh. Before they could make much use of this agreement Iskandar Muda came to power and the Dutch were soon to learn that the new king had no intention of honouring the contract made by his predecessor.

In 1608 Jan Gerritz Ruyll was sent from the Masulipatam factory to "discover" Acheh.[186] Ruyll arrived on 8 May 1608 and found that Albrecht Willemsz was already there taking care of the Dutch Company's trade. There was at that time very little trade at Acheh partly because of a drought. The Gujarati and Coromandel ships, however, continued to arrive, for Acheh, as we have seen, was an important station on the international trade route.[187]

The Dutch had already established a factory at Masulipatam (1605) on the Coromandel coast of India. In the first

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[186]Macleod, IG, II, 1903, 1246.

[187]Jan Gerritz Ruyll to Jacques L'hermite, 20 July 1608, K.A., 967; Albrecht Willemsz to Admiral Verhoef, 2 November 1608, K.A., 967.

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It was during Albrecht Willemsz's stay (1608-1610) that the English ship the Union arrived at Acheh (June, 1609). As we have seen before, Willemsz's efforts to prevent the English from trading at Acheh were of no avail.[189] By Article 4 of the agreement made by Oliver de Vivere it had been provided that no other European nations than the Dutch would be allowed to trade at Acheh without a pass from Holland. But Iskandar Muda evidently did not consider himself bound by this contract and paid no attention to the appeal made to it by the Dutch.[190]

In 1609 Jacques L'hermite, the director of the Dutch factory at Bantam, sent Willem Jansz and Arent Maertensz to Acheh (9 December 1609) to consult with Willemsz about making a contract with Sultan Iskandar Muda. The Dutch were also interested in stimulating the enmity of the Achenese towards the Portuguese.[191] They failed to attain their first objective. The king refused to recognise the old

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[188] Opkomst, III, 339.

[189] See above, "The English Trade in Acheh," 123-4.

[190] Opkomst, III, 51.

[191] Leupe, 219/1.

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The Dutch were disappointed but did not abandon the factory of Acheh. In 1611 Albrecht Willemsz was replaced by Pieter Almeryn as the chief factor. He was asked to send a list of prices of the goods available in the market of Acheh and to attend especially the Gujarati cloth trade.[193] For the Dutch, just as for the English, Acheh was the principal source of Gujarati cloth.

For several reasons the Dutch could not make any headway in Acheh's trade. At this time they were heavily engaged in the struggle over the control of the spice trade in eastern Indonesia. They collected their pepper from Bantam and some from Patani.[194] Bantam and Patani were the two main terminal points of Chinese shipping and the two markets were very much oriented to the Chinese trade. The Dutch became more and more interested in the Chinese trade and in this matter they were immensely helped by their possession of a factory at

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[192]J. E. Banck, Atchin's verheffing en val, 1873, 75.

[193]Leupe, 219/1.

[194]Schrieke, ISS, I, 54.

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[193]Schrieke, 158, I, 94.

Masulipatam (Coromandel Coast).[195] Cloth from Coromandel was in greater demand at Bantam than were the Gujarati products.[196] On the other hand, Chinese wares sold very well on the Coromandel coast. The Dutch thus could take out cloth from Masulipatam and buy in exchange both pepper and Chinese products. Pepper could be shipped directly to Europe but the Chinese products could be sent to Acheh and the Coromandel coast.[197] At Acheh they could collect Gujarati cloth in exchange for Chinese wares and take it to the Banda islands and the Moluccas where Gujarati cloth was in very great demand. Acheh fitted into the pattern of Dutch trade in Indonesia as a source of Gujarati cloth.[198] But here the English competition was too great for the Dutch to cope with. As we have seen before the English pierced the line of Gujarati trade between western India and Acheh around 1613 and Thomas Best arrived in Acheh in the same year with the laurels of victory over the Portuguese. In the same year political developments made the situation worse for the Dutch.

In 1613 the Achenese made an attack on Johore. The Dutch merchants who were present there helped the Johorites

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[195] Coen, I, 28-30.

[196] L.R., II, 314.

[197] Coen, I, 30.

[198] Ibid., 60.

against the Achenese in accordance with a former treaty between them. The Achenese had tried to persuade the Dutch to remain neutral but the Dutch did not agree. The result was that when the Johorites were beaten the Achenese took a large number of prisoners including a number of Dutchmen and carried them all to Acheh.[199] When the victorious army returned to Acheh with the Johorite and Dutch prisoners Thomas Best was already there to watch it.[200]

The English ascendancy and the decline of the Dutch in Acheh in the second decade of the seventeenth century can very largely be ascribed to the fact that the English had a good quantity of Gujarati cloth to sell in Sumatra whereas the Dutch had little. The fact that the Dutch had arrived at Acheh before the English and had maintained a more regular contact with the place than the latter did not help them. Control over strategic areas and products was the key to the control over a certain sector of Asian trade.

In 1613 Symonsz Rijser was appointed the chief factor at Acheh.[201] The next year the Dutch Visitateur General Hans de Haze came out to visit the Dutch factories around the Bay of Bengal. On his way he stopped over at Acheh (August 1614). Rijser went on board the ship to welcome him.

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200 Foster, Thomas Best, 59.

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At the request of Rijser, Hans de Haze went ashore accompanied by the former even before the king's boat bringing the permission to land had arrived.

The Sultan immediately had Rijser arrested and in the palace yard had him thrown thrice before an elephant until the animal had broken his loins. The miserable Dutchman was then allowed to be removed to the Dutch factory.[202] The Rijser incident convinced Hans de Haze that it would be difficult for the Dutch to continue at Acheh. He went on to Masulipatam and returned again in 1615 (30 July) and found that the Sultan was holding the captain of the Dutch factory as a slave and was going to take him to Malacca. When Hans de Haze requested the king to release him the king asked for a few Dutch ships to help him against Malacca. The Dutch excused themselves, which made the king very angry. He said that the Dutch were an unjust nation who did not abide by their own treaty. Finally the Dutch handed over one of their ships to please him.[203]

Apart from what happened to Rijser the trading situation was very discouraging. The English had been allowed to set up factories in Acheh, Tiku and Priaman. The tyrannical behaviour of the king had discouraged the Gujaratis from coming to Acheh. The previous year (1616) a big flood had

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The Dutch soon realised that they had taken a rather hasty step. To give up a settled factory was easy enough but to return there proved extremely difficult.[205] It took them two years to reestablish a factory at Acheh.

As the situation became more and more difficult for the Dutch at Acheh they began to look for alternative sources of Sumatran pepper. The English when baffled at Tiku had gone to Passaman; the Dutch now discovered Indrapura. The frequent voyaging of the European ships around the island of Sumatra in search of less known pepper ports was having the effect of pulling pepper towards the sea. The rivers of Sumatra served as so many water-lanes down which the pepper moved towards the coast. Sometimes pepper was bought up by the big ships directly from the boats. This was the best way of avoiding the duties of the port and the arbitrary exactions of the local officials.

Almost immediately after the withdrawing of the factory from Acheh the Dutch began to send out ships from Bantam to the west coast of Sumatra. In June 1616 the Enckhuysen was

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In July 1617 Abraham de Rasiere arrived in the road of Selebar accompanied by a junk of the Chinese merchant Simsuan.[207] The trade of Tiku was open only to the English. But the Dutch now tried to get some pepper through the Chinese.[208] The Dutch-Chinese partnership in Indonesian trade is an interesting development of this period. Although the big Chinese merchants of Bantam formed a closed group which dominated the Bantam market there were always some Chinese who helped the Dutch. Simsuan was outside this group and was a friend of the Dutch.

But to go back to the west coast of Sumatra; de Rasiere came to know from local officers that two days after the

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[206] Coen, I, 240-241; MacLeod, Zeemogenheid, I, 186.

[207] Coen, I, 254.

[208] Ibid., II, 258-259.

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[207] Coen, I, 243.

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Enckhuysen had left fifteen large and small boats had come down from Indrapura and Lamenjuta and were disappointed at not having found the ship. They sold their pepper to the local buyers and only 30 bahars were left. But even that amount had just been bought by a certain Mandelika. De Rasiere appealed to the officer reminding him of the contract between the Dutch and Raja Hetam. The officer promptly cancelled the purchase by Mandelika and the pepper was delivered to de Rasiere at 15 Rials including the duties and presents.[209] De Rasiere tried to persuade the men who had brought the pepper from the interior to come again to Selebar with pepper. The country merchants promised that they would.

A junk belonging to Inche Muda, the Shahbandar of Japara, was lying in the road of Selebar. The above mentioned Mandalike had been to Acheh as an ambassador of Mataram. The ship was now on its way back to Java carrying an Achenese ambassador Majlis Khan and was at that time waiting for the western monsoon. De Rasiere did a little trade with the ship. He bought some Indian cloth, mostly Coromandel stuff, worth 762 1/2 Rials from Majlis Khan. Of this he paid only 100 Rials and expected the remainder to be paid at Bantam. From Mandelika and the captain of the junk he bought some more Indian cloth worth 827 1/2 Rials. He now felt quite confident about the prospects of trade at Indrapura for he

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Meanwhile the Dutch had been making serious efforts to get a licence from the king of Acheh for trading on the west coast. In October 1616 Cornelis Comans was sent to Acheh and was well received. Comans offered to pay annually 5,000 Rials to the king and 1,000 Rials to the Laxamana, as well as custom dues of seven per cent, for a licence to trade at Tiku.[211] The king refused to grant the licence but said that his kingdom was open to the Dutch and that they should return. As a sign of his friendliness he returned to the Dutch their old factory where the English had been staying.[212]

The second mission of Comans (August 1617) was more successful. The king was very angry when the Dutch asked for the exclusion of all other European nations and the Gujaratis.[213] He said openly that as the English had given him since their arrival 2,000 Taels (about 8,000 Rials) as tribute, he did not know why he should not grant licences to them. The Dutch were given to understand that no licence

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[210] Coen, VII (1), 249-250.

[211] L.R., VI, 72.

[212] Coen, I, 253.

[213] O.C. No. 623.

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The third mission of Comans (April 1618) secured the much needed licence. The Dutch were granted trade on the west coast of Sumatra for two years to the exclusion of the English. At Tiku the Dutch replaced the English and even occupied their former house.[216]

The Dutch possibly expected to make good profit out of the trade of Acheh and the west coast of Sumatra. In June 1618 the Valk was sent to Tiku and Priaman with 32,000 Rials and in the next month the Zeewolff was sent with 24,000 Rials to Acheh.[217] Their expectations, however, were not

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[216] Coen, I, 419.

[217] Ibid., 346-374.

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The political expansion of Acheh did not trouble the Dutch as did the interference with their trade in the west coast of Sumatra. Excessive tolls were demanded by the local officials. Comans complained in January 1619 that they had to pay 365 Rials as charges for every hundred bahar of pepper.[221] Besides at Tiku and Priaman the officials manipulated the weights to such an extent that only three-fourths bahar was given for one bahar.[222] The greatest hindrance was

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[218] Ibid., 419.

[219] Ibid., 477.

[220] Ibid., 436.

[221] Coen, VII (1), 396.

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In 1619, when the Dutch were exasperated by the conditions created by the king's men, they were approached by local chiefs for military help. Two principal men of Priaman, Maharaja Lella and Raja Setia Pahlawan, offered to help with men if the Dutch would fight the king of Acheh. Comans wrote on 28 January 1619 that Tiku and Priaman could be taken with four or five ships and that local people were willing to help.[225] Comans's proposals did not receive much official encouragement.

The king of Acheh was fully aware of what was going on between the local chiefs of the west coast and the Dutch. But he did not take any steps except to send for the Panglima (Governor) of Tiku.[226] At the same time he sent

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[223] Ibid., 399.

[224] Coen, VII (1), 611, 401.

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Comans's plans were not approved, but within a year Coen himself began to think in terms of taking strong military measures against Acheh. We have seen in the previous chapter how the strained relations between the Dutch and the English led to open conflict in Sumatran waters. In 1620 the news of the Anglo-Dutch agreement (1619) reached Indonesia and from then until 1623 the English and the Dutch worked together. It was not a happy partnership and each suspected the other. The alliance between the English and the Dutch was something that the king of Acheh did not like. When the English representative Fursland and the Dutch merchant Casembroot requested a renewal of the licence, the king burst into a fit of anger and said, "Aren't you ashamed to come to me again like a beggar?" He went on to say that a beggar ought to go and beg from house to house and not return to one house again and again.[228]

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227 Coen, VII (1), 401.

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As the higher authorities did not want to be involved in wars with Indonesian states, Coen could not take any effective measures against the king of Acheh. The English and the Dutch could not abandon their factories in Acheh as in that case the trade of Acheh would have fallen into the hands of the French and the Danes. In December 1620 the French Admiral Beaulieu had arrived on the west coast. The next year he went to Acheh to see the king and to secure, if possible, permission to trade at Tiku and Priaman. The king treated him with great kindness but did not grant the licence. The French did not appear as very serious competitors of the English and the Dutch but their very presence was advantageous to the king because it prevented the English and the Dutch from doing anything drastic and it gave him a chance to push the price of pepper still higher, to 64 Rials per bahar.[230]

The Dutch response to Acheh's policy was twofold. In the first place they tried to get as much pepper as possible from Jambi. Secondly they carried on a clandestine trade

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with local merchants and officials on the west coast of Sumatra.[231]

Acheh's expansion along the east coast of Sumatra threatened the very existence of Jambi as an independent pepper port. We have already noted how the Dutch sought the cooperation of the English in protecting Jambi's independence.[232] But they themselves were not absolutely sure of their position. In January 1624 when the Achenese actually appeared in the river of Jambi, neither the English nor the Dutch were prepared to use their ships against the invaders. But the English representative Robert Johnson played his role so well as to be able to maintain good relations with the ruler of Jambi.[233] Possibly the very presence of the English and the Dutch deterred the Achenese from making an all out attack. They left in the same month to the great relief of everybody.[234] The Dutch reconsidered their policy towards Jambi and thought that it was better to leave Jambi to its fate and maintain good relations with Acheh.[235] This was because they were vitally interested in the pepper trade and with the virtual closing of the Bantam

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[231]Kroeskamp, De Westkust, 25.

[232]MacLeod, Zeemogenheid, I, 340.

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[234]Ibid., 342.

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market Acheh appeared as an important alternative source of pepper.

In 1622 the Dutch factory in Acheh was virtually withdrawn[236] but the relations with the Sultan were not particularly strained. At the request of the king Thomas Deyns, an assistant, was left at Acheh. In March 1623 senior merchant Colyn was sent to Acheh. He was particularly asked to see whether it was possible to buy a good quantity of tin there and also slaves.[237] Colyn, however, met with an accident and returned to Batavia.

In 1624 the English reported to the king of Acheh about the Amboyna incident (February 1623). They complained that the Dutch were a proud and overbearing people and that they had been planning to move to Bantam and informed the king that the Sultan of Mataram was advancing with a large force against the Dutch and that he had the power to drive the Dutch from that country.[238] The news of an open breach between the English and the Dutch must have been extremely heartening to the king of Acheh. He immediately summoned the Dutch representatives Casembroot and Colyn and pretended to be greatly outraged by this incident. He angrily demanded to know why the Dutch General was behaving in such an

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[236] MacLeod, IG, II, 1903, 1254.

[237] Leupe, 219/3.

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From this time on the Dutch position in Acheh began to improve. At Acheh proper there was much competition so they concentrated more on shipping to the west coast. During this period the buying of pepper was mostly done by the incoming and outgoing ships. In 1624 they collected from the west coast about 4,065 bahars of pepper. From Acheh they got 400 bahars and they lost about 1,215 bahars through shipwreck. The total purchase, including the amount lost, came to 5,670 bahars (2,041,200 lbs.). In the same year the English had collected 2700 bahars. Thus between the Dutch and the English a total amount of 8,370 bahars (3,013,200 lbs.) were collected.[240] We must remember that the merchants

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In the second half of the twenties the English yielded place to the Dutch. Taking advantage of this situation the Dutch went ahead to draw as much pepper as possible from the west coast of Sumatra and Acheh. In 1625 they got 4,412 bahars (1,588,320 lbs.), in 1626 about 3,223 bahars (1,160,280 lbs.) and in 1627 about 4,158 bahars (1,496,880 lbs.).[241]

In the two years of 1623 and 1624 the Dutch Company made a net profit of 250,000 florins (one florin is equivalent to 2 shillings). But in 1625 alone they made 361,431. Out of this, Acheh and the west coast accounted for 97,165.[242]

One significant development in the trade of Acheh in this period was that owing to a heavy supply of Indian cloth by different groups of merchants the market was flooded and the value of cloth in terms of pepper fell. Formerly, as we have seen, Indian cloth bartered against pepper had always brought a greater amount of that product than was obtainable for Rials. In the latter half of the twenties the balance was turned in favour of Rials. In 1628 cloth could be exchanged for pepper at the rate of 25 Rials per bahar, while

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Iskandar Muda's system of monopoly was put to a hard test. The king complained to the Dutch merchant Casembroot that the English and the Dutch were buying up all the pepper of the west coast so that only small amounts reached Acheh.[244] As the Dutch drew away more and more pepper the Sultan's grip over the pepper trade of the west coast tightened. The customs charges were raised to about 18% while formerly they had been 14%. The king made Tiku his chief place of trade and of the total amount of pepper that was available there he took about half by coercion. He paid in cloth but about one-third less than the Dutch did. In addition he demanded from the local people certain old debts of about seven or eight years before; failure to pay meant arrest of persons and confiscation of goods. Indrapura, Ulakan (west coast of Sumatra) and their neighbourhood stood in constant fear of attack by the Acheneso.[245]

In 1629 Iskandar Muda attacked Malacca with a large fleet. The siege lasted from July to November. In the end the Achenese were badly beaten; most of their soldiers

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[243] Coen, V, 113.

[244] Leupe, 219/3.

[245] W. Ph. Coolhaas (ed.), Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs Generaal Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, 1960, I, 192-193.

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In August 1632 the ship Buijren under Dirck Stadtlander was sent to Acheh to urge the king to renew his attack upon Portuguese Malacca and to offer help for that purpose. Stadtlander arrived at Acheh on 6 October 1632. He was given a very friendly reception and the old English factory was assigned to the Dutch. The king sent two elephants and requested the Dutch representatives to come and visit him without the presents and the letter which they had brought for him. Stadtlander agreed and went to see the king, who was evidently very happy at the return of the Dutch. He said that he wanted to attack Malacca again and appreciated the offer of help from the Dutch Governor General. He further said that he would not have suffered the damage that he had if he had asked for help from the Governor General before as he was doing now.[247]

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[246] F. C. Danvers, The Portuguese in India, 1894, II, 228-232.

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The visit of Stadtlander marked a distinct change in Dutch-Achenese relations. Iskandar Muda had never spoken to the Dutch with so much modesty. His defeat at the hands of the Portuguese in 1629 had definite changed the balance of power in western Indonesia.

Four days after the first visit the king sent three big elephants to fetch the presents and the letter. A "convoy" of about 50 principal Orangkayas accompanied the elephants, followed by a thousand people. The Dutch envoys were ushered into a magnificent hall and were entertained with dances. The happy old days had returned. It had been a long time since the Dutch, or for that matter any European, had been received with so much display of royal grandeur.[248]

The king agreed to grant the Dutch freedom from customs for four years in his kingdom and exclusive enjoyment of the pepper trade if they would lay siege to one side of Malacca with ten ships.[249]

To what extent the king was sincere is difficult to guess. The trading situation did not immediately change for the Dutch. They had to pay 10% customs on outgoing pepper, besides a number of other duties.[250]

In 1633 Marten Valck was sent to Acheh to remind the king about his plans against Malacca. He reestablished the

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In 1634 Gerritt Corssen, a senior Dutch merchant, was sent to find out whether the king of Acheh had any intention of attacking Malacca. He was instructed to tell the king that the Dutch fleet had already appeared in the Straits of Malacca and was expecting the arrival of the Sultan's fleet. Corssen was received with friendliness but the Sultan was still not ready. The Dutch envoy brought some jewels as presents which made the Sultan very happy. He had a childish greed for all kinds of jewels and had been collecting them for a long time. To Gerritt Corssen he proudly said, "See, all the Jewels of the Company of Batavia are now in my possession."[253]

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Although the opening of Dutch trade in Acheh was a major gain the Dutch seem at this time to have been more interested in getting their Portuguese rivals out of the way. It was for that reason that they kept coming back to the king of Acheh with the same request. Iskandar Muda, however, did not live to see the fall of Malacca. He died on 27 December 1636 without accomplishing his grand design.

## Chapter V

### Acheh under Iskandar Thani: the Beginning of the Decline

Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) was succeeded by his son-in-law, Sultan Mogol, a prince of Pahang. He had been brought to Acheh as a young boy immediately after the conquest of Pahang (1618). On his accession to the throne of Acheh he assumed the title of Iskandar Thani. About the circumstances of his accession the English traveller Peter Mundy writes:

> The old tyrant perseivings the bad inclination of his owne only soune, then in Courte and waitinge his fathers death, caused this his successor and sonne in lawe to goe privily and well appointed in the nighte to his owne sonnes howse and to surprise and slay him suddenly, which he said was the only means of safety for himselfe. And this beinge done, the old man instantly declared him his heire and successor and soe Expired.[1]

This account is confirmed by the report (12 March 1637) of the Dutch merchants returned from Selebar (west coast of Sumatra), which said that about fourteen days before his death the old king of Acheh had his only son strangled to death and that he had chosen as his successor a prince of Pahang.[2]

Iskandar Thani was born around 1610 so that at the time of his accession to the throne he was about 25 or 26 years

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of age.[3] He was a person of mild temperament and liberal disposition, presenting a sharp contrast to his predecessor. He was very generous to the European traders but in this he was continuing the relaxed policy of the last years of Iskandar Muda.

About three months after his accession the English traders returned to Acheh. They did not represent the English East India Company but were agents of its rival, the "Courteen's Association." In December 1635 this association had received a commission from King Charles I of England for a voyage to Goa and thereafter to Macao and Japan "notwithstanding any grant or patent formerly given to the East India Company."[4] In April 1636 this association sent out six ships, of which the Dragon, the Sun, the Katherine, and the Anne arrived in Acheh on 22 April 1637.[5]

The king received them with great friendliness and granted them exemption from customs duties which were in force during the reign of Iskandar Muda. A factory was established under the charge of Edward Knipe. A house formerly belonging to the Danes was given to them temporarily.[6] The Courteen's Association merchants looked at the

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[4]W. Foster, The English Factories in India 1634-1636, 1911, xxxi.

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Achenese trade from a completely different angle than had been done previously by the English. One of the main objectives of the Courteen's Association was to trade with China. They now looked upon Acheh as a convenient place "for Correspondence with China." Acheh was connected with the Chinese trade just as it was with the Indian trade. In the earlier period the English had been more active on the Indian side of Acheh's trade and the Dutch operated more on the Chinese side, although the latter had close connections with the Coromandel coast. The Courteen's Association merchants first set up a centre of trade at Bhatkal on the west coast of India and at Acheh. Then they ventured to move over to the eastern wing of Acheh trade. They expected to carry pepper from Acheh to China and bring back sugar.[7]

The Dutch did not like the return of the English merchants to Acheh. The Dutch merchant Johan van der Meulen picked a quarrel with Edward Knipe by saying openly that the latter and his associates were not merchants but pirates.[8] The Dutch, however, failed to push the English out of Acheh's trade immediately. Knipe cultivated good relations with the king and managed to continue for at least two years. It seems that the English had to leave because they fell out

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The rivalry between the English and the Dutch at Acheh in the late thirties of the seventeenth century was of minor importance and Acheh could no longer make use of it. The balance of power in western Indonesia had changed so much in the thirties that Acheh no longer held the strategic position which it had once enjoyed. With the death of Iskandar Muda the crest of Achenese power had passed.

The English had never been an important political force in the Straits region, although to win the friendship of Acheh they always stressed the fact that they were against the Portuguese. In 1634, however, they signed a convention by which their long struggle with the Portuguese came to an end. When Iskandar Thani came to the throne of Acheh the English were no longer operating as an anti-Portuguese force.

In Indonesia and in South Asia the power of the Dutch had been growing almost unchallenged. The siege of Batavia by the Javanese king of Mataram in 1629 had failed. Bantam made peace with the Dutch around the same time. Governor General Van Diemen led an expedition to Ceram to put down rebellion. In 1638 war with Macassar came to an end and Macassar agreed to recognise special rights of the Dutch in the spice islands. It was in the thirties again that the

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In the struggle against the Portuguese Malacca the Dutch still sought Acheh's help. But Acheh was not an indispensable ally; Johore was there, prepared to join the Dutch against the Portuguese.

At a time when the Dutch were growing into a strong power in Indonesia, Acheh needed a strong king to handle her foreign affairs. The feudal-despotic state built up by Iskandar Muda could be run only by a masterful personality, one with a great capacity for offering leadership of the traditional type. Iskandar Thani was not fit to play this role. He had pleasing manners but much of his liberality sprang from weakness. Acheh was bending before powerful historical forces.

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of Batavia. Van Diemen appointed Jochum Roelofsen Van Deutecom as an envoy to Acheh.[11] The mission arrived in Acheh on 22 April 1638, beginning a series of missions that were to follow in the next few years. The mission acquired for the Dutch important commercial privileges. The king of Acheh granted them exemption from import and export customs and exclusive enjoyment of the pepper trade on the west coast of Sumatra. The king further agreed that the pepper which his men annually brought from the west coast to Acheh would, from then on, be carried by the Dutch to Acheh. Finally he made the Dutch ship the Grol free from all duties for as long as it sailed.[12] Iskandar Thani's reign thus saw the beginning of ever-deepening penetration of the Dutch into Acheh's trade, a process that was to continue under the queens who succeeded him. It was calculated that the customs-free ship the Grol alone would annually carry 2,000 bahars of pepper making a profit of 9,000 Rials.[13]

As for the siege of Malacca the king said he was anxious to attack Malacca with Dutch assistance. As evidence of his attachment to the Dutch he related how he had turned down a Portuguese offer of alliance. The Portuguese had come with costly presents but he had not made peace with his enemies.[14]

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[11]Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, 1610-1638, I, 606.

[12]Tiele, Bouwstoffen, II, 354.

[13]Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, 670.

[14]Tiele, Bouwstoffen, II, 355-356.

of Batavia. Van Diemen appointed Joohum Roelofsen Van Deutecom as an envoy to Achen.[11] The mission arrived in Achen on 22 April 1638, beginning a series of missions that were to follow in the next few years. The mission acquired for the Dutch important commercial privileges. The king of Achen granted them exemption from import and export customs and exclusive enjoyment of the pepper trade on the west coast of Sumatra. The king further agreed that the pepper which his men annually brought from the west coast to Achen would, from then on, be carried by the Dutch to Achen. Finally he made the Dutch ship the Graal free from all duties for as long as it sailed.[12] Iskandar Thani's reign thus saw the beginning of ever-deepening penetration of the Dutch into Achen's trade, a process that was to continue under the queens who succeeded him. It was calculated that the customs-free ship the Graal alone would annually carry 2,000 bahars of pepper making a profit of 9,000 Rials.[13]

As for the siege of Malacca the king said he was anxious to attack Malacca with Dutch assistance. As evidence of his attachment to the Dutch he related how he had turned down a Portuguese offer of alliance. The Portuguese had come with costly presents but he had not made peace with his enemies.[14]

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[11] Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, 1610-1639, I, 606.

[12] Tiele, Bouwstoffen, II, 354.

[13] Coolhaas, Generale Missiven, 670.

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The Dutch, however, suspected that the king was not as hostile to the Portuguese at heart as he pretended to be. They came to know that there had taken place a big transaction between the visiting Portuguese and the king. The Portuguese had brought in costly jewels and had taken back 10 bahar of rials i.e., 64,800 Rials.[15] Carel Reniers, Governor of the Coromandel coast, wrote (19 March, 1638) that he could not believe that the Sultan Mogol (Iskandar Thani) meant business when he said that he would fight the Portuguese, for he was actually a great friend of theirs.[16] The Dutch were suspicious because the king always tried to put off the proposed campaign. On 18 October 1638 he sent an envoy to Batavia suggesting that the proposed attack be postponed until his envoys had returned from Pahang and Johore.[17]

Commander Paulus Crooq led a second mission in May 1639. He had with him a costly kris (a sword) as a present for the king. Iskandar Thani received it with grace and honoured it by raising it to his head. As for the expedition he found an excuse as usual. He said he first wanted to settle matters with Johore with which he was at that time engaged in a bitter feud. Johore had occupied Pahang, his own homeland, and Iskandar Thani had failed to do anything effective about it.

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[15] Ibid., 356.

[16] Leupe, 219/8.

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In the dispute between Johore and Acheh the Dutch preferred to remain neutral. They tried their best to bring about a reconciliation between the two but failed.[18] Johore proved to be a better ally and helped the Dutch in 1639 in attacking and taking Portuguese ships.[19] In April 1640 the Dutch sent Jean de Meere to press the Achenese king to carry out his promises. This time the king flatly refused to help the Dutch unless they cut off all connections with Johore.[20] The Dutch did not want to antagonise Acheh because the latter had been treating the envoys of the Company very well and had already made substantial concessions in trade. They hoped to resolve the differences between the two states after they had taken Malacca.[21]

With the help of Johore and without the help of Acheh the Dutch took Malacca on 14 January 1641. A month later, in February 1641, Iskandar Thani passed away. With him ended the "glorious epoch" of Acheh's history.

The fall of Malacca coincided with the beginning of about sixty years of feminine rule in Acheh (1641-1699). This period saw the gradual decline of Acheh's power and the

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[18]P. A. Leupe, "The Siege and Capture of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1640-1641" (Tr. by Mac Hacobian), JMBRAS, 1936, XIV (1), 18.

[19]MacLeod, IG, II, 1903, 1921.

[20]Loc. cit.

[21]Leupe, JMBRAS, 1936, XIV (1), 17-18.

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shrinking of its dominions. With the last vestige of the Portuguese power swept out of their way, the Dutch emerged as the supreme military power in the Indonesian archipelago. Stage by stage they rolled back the frontiers of the empire of Acheh by compelling the tributary states to throw off their allegiance to Acheh. Within the kingdom the monolithic despotism of the sultans gave way to the virtual independence of the ulebalangs.

## Chapter VI

### Summary and Conclusions

Lamri and Acheh were two different places although inhabited by the same Achenese people. Lamri was a sea-port easily noticed by outsiders whereas Acheh lay about two miles inland on the banks of the Acheh river. The two places were united into the "kingdom of Acheh and Lambry" at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In trying to understand Acheh's role in Indonesian trade and politics in the first half of the seventeenth century it is necessary to bear in mind certain characteristics of the Achenese people as revealed in their early history.

The northwestern extremity of Sumatra was a frontier region, a wild country, notorious for its coastal pirates and the savage dwellers of its interior. This possibly explains why the area escaped Indianisation at a time when Hindu-Buddhist influence was dominant in Indonesian culture. Both pilitically and culturally it was remote from Palembang, the seat of the imperial authority of Srivijaya and the centre of Mahayanist Buddhism. Later on, when Acheh emerged, it was relatively unencumbered by Hindu-Buddhistic tradition.

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spirit. The Indian invaders who raided Sumatra in 1025 A.D. met with particularly strong resistance in Acheh.

The Achenese were a sea-faring people accustomed to living on fishing and the returns from piracy. The Chinese knew about the pirates' nest sheltered in the islands off the Achin Head and called it the 'tiger's mouth.'

The area possessed camphor and benzoin, both of which were important articles of Asian trade. Merchants from many lands visited the seaport of Lamri which was the first port of call for merchants coming from the west.

The earliest foreign notices of Lamri suggest that it was tributary to the empire of Srivijaya. In the eighties of the thirteenth century Kublai Khan's envoys visited north Sumatra and urged the little states of the area to send emissaries to China. The Achenese people had a remarkable talent for taking advantage of external opportunities and they immediately sent a diplomatic mission to China (1286) and thereby definitely established their independence of Srivijaya.

Almost simultaneously with this assertion of independence began the Islamisation of north Sumatra. In 1292 Marco Polo noted that Perlak, a north Sumatran state, had accepted Islam although the surrounding countryside was still inhabited by wild savages. Islamisation was a slow process. The merchant-preachers who were primarily responsible for the introduction of Islam to Sumatra aimed

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at the conversion of the rulers of the coastal states as the most effective way of converting the people. For a long time the Moslem kings of these small coastal states ruled over predominantly non-Moslem subjects and they carried on almost continuous warfare with the heathen hinterland in the cause of Islam. In the fourteenth century, Samudra-Pasai was the chief centre of diffusion of Islam and the new religion remained confined to north Sumatra for over a century before it spread to Malacca at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The Achenese people accepted Islam possibly in the second half of the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth century the pressure of the expanding power of Pedir forced the rulers of Lamri to move to Makota Alam on the northern bank of the Acheh river. A second Moslem ruling house had already been established at Dar al-Kamal on the southern bank of the same river. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the two houses concluded a matrimonial alliance uniting the Acheh valley and Lamri in one kingdom. Pedir was then the dominant power in north Sumatra and it claimed suzerainty over Acheh and Daya.

The coming of the Portuguese to western Indonesia at the beginning of the sixteenth century brought new opportunities. Under the able leadership of a line of kings Acheh took a great leap forward. The immediate gain for Acheh was, of course, the opportunity to capture superior artillery from the Portuguese. Ali Mughayat Shah seized a sufficient

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quantity of European arms to enable him to throw off the allegiance to Pedir and make Acheh an independent state.

When the Portuguese arrived, Malacca was the largest trading emporium in the Far East and the most important centre of diffusion of Islam. The capture of Malacca by the Portuguese in 1511, and their anti-Moslem policy afterwards, caused a dispersal of Moslem traders and scholars from that city. Many of them came to Pasai, which was the earliest centre of Islamic culture and at one time a flourishing port. The influx of new merchants led to a revival of Pasai's trade. This was, however, a shortlived affair, for the Portuguese began to extend their influence over north Sumatra and to interfere with Asian shipping near Pasai. By 1520 the Moslems began to feel insecure in Pasai. The only alternative left to them was the rising state of Acheh which under Ali Mughayat Shah had already begun to expand. In 1521 Pedir was taken and in 1524 Pasai was annexed by the kingdom of Acheh. With the annexation of Pasai the supremacy of Acheh over north Sumatra was fully established.

Three things are worth noting about sixteenth century Acheh. In the first place, the annexation of Pasai made Acheh the foremost centre of international trade in the Straits region. The Moslem traders were attached to Acheh because they received special privileges from its sultans. Secondly, Acheh, which was originally a pirate state, now appeared as a champion of the cause of Islam. The native

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war-like spirit of the people found its full expression in the jihāds (religious or holy wars) carried on against the heathen as well as against the Christian Portuguese. The neighbouring Islamic states of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, which had at one time or another sided with the Portuguese, were also attacked. The justification was that those who had helped the Portuguese, the arch-enemy of Islam, deserved to be punished. Under the patronage of its sultans Acheh became a great centre of Islamic theological studies and the Achenese military campaigns down the east and west coasts of Sumatra were responsible for the Islamisation of a large part of the island.

Finally, through these conquests, Acheh became a great territorial power. Under Sultan Alauddin al-Kahar the empire of Acheh extended to the eastern limits of Aru in the east and included a considerable part of the West Coast. Expansion of the empire generally meant the establishment of the supreme authority of the king of Acheh over a number of petty kingdoms and not the extension of direct rule by the government of Acheh to the newly conquered areas. Conquest of Portuguese Malacca was, of course, the main objective of Acheh's foreign policy. During the sixteenth century Malacca was besieged many times by the Achenese fleet. The Portuguese managed to hold their own but lived under constant fear of the Achenese.

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The spirit of jihād seems to have slackened towards the close of the sixteenth century. Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah made peace with the Portuguese being more concerned with his dynastic feud with Johore. An exchange took place between Acheh and the Portuguese governments of Goa and Malacca. Then, just when Acheh found itself at peace with the Portuguese and was expecting assistance from the latter against Johore, the English and the Dutch arrived.

The English and the Dutch were interested in trade. They wanted to collect pepper at its source and for that reason sought to conclude agreements with the rulers of the pepper-ports of Sumatra and west Java. They came to Acheh because it lay outside the Portuguese sphere of influence and they went to Bantam for the same reason. Neither the English nor the Dutch had anything of their own to offer in exchange for pepper. European commodities had practically no demand in Indonesia. So to begin with they let it be known that they were enemies of the Portuguese and would be prepared to fight them if necessary.

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The entry of the English and the Dutch into western Indonesia as anti-Portuguese forces was a matter of profound significance. But Alauddin Riayat Shah does not seem to have appreciated it at the beginning. He was still on friendly terms with the Portuguese and allowed himself to be guided by their advice in his dealings with the first Dutch visitors. The Portuguese gave the Dutch a bad name and succeeded in turning the Sultan against them. Such a thing could happen because Alauddin Riayat Shah was not primarily interested in fighting the Portuguese; he was still seeking an ally against Johore. The situation quickly changed when the Portuguese request for a fortified post in Acheh aroused old suspicions. The Sultan soon discovered that the English and the Dutch were at least as powerful as the Portuguese and decided that they were prospective allies against Johore. As a result he allowed the Dutch to set up a factory in Acheh (1601) and sent two envoys to Holland. He also concluded an agreement with James Lancaster, the representative of the English East India Company, whereby he made several important concessions to the English including exemption from customs charges.

The high price of pepper in Acheh discouraged the English so much that despite a good beginning they did not continue their connection with Acheh and preferred to set up a factory in Bantam where conditions were more favourable. The Dutch maintained more regular contact with Acheh. They wanted to use it as a port of call in their voyages between

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So far, Acheh's response to the coming of the English and the Dutch did not differ materially from that of the other Indonesian states. By making concessions through treaties they were in fact recognising the growing importance of the new Europeans in Indonesian trade and politics. With the accession of Iskandar Muda in 1607, however, Acheh began to react differently. This new king was aware of the advantages of the presence of the Dutch and the English as buyers of pepper and as possible allies against the Portuguese and he tried to make as much use of the situation as he could. He refused to recognise the validity of the

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The Gujaratis were the most important Asian trading group in Acheh, but it seems that they had fallen out of favour with the king during the early years of his reign. The fighting between the English and the Portuguese off the west coast of India may have dislocated the Gujarati trade between the Cambay-Broach-Surat region and Acheh and the west coast of Sumatra. Naval victories over the Portuguese in western Indian waters enabled the English to break into the Gujarati trade and from 1615 they began to supply Gujarati cloth to Acheh. In the same year they secured a two-year licence to trade in Tiku on the west coast of

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Sumatra. A factory was set up in Tiku which continued to exist until 1619. Between 1615 and 1618 the English carried on a profitable trade in Acheh and on the west coast of Sumatra. They regularly carried Gujarati cloth to Acheh and invested the profits in pepper which they carried to Bantam for transshipment to London. The English had not come to Indonesia originally with the purpose of taking part in the cloth trade between India and Indonesia, but they soon found out that there was little scope for direct trading between England and Sumatra. To collect pepper it was necessary to supply Indian cloth. First they built up a line of trade between Gujarat and Acheh. Subsequently they also took part in the trade between Acheh and the Coromandel coast.

English trading in Acheh temporarily dislodged the Gujarati merchants from the market, or, at least did considerable damage to their position there. In 1616 the Gujaratis made an attempt to regain their position by ousting the English but failed.

Compared to the English, the Dutch were in a disadvantageous position in Acheh. The king was disappointed with them because they did not help him with arms and ships against the Portuguese. Moreover they sided with Johore when the Achenese attacked Batu Sawar, the capital of Johore. The Dutch found it difficult to cope with the English competition in Acheh because they did not have the same access to Gujarati cloth as the latter. In 1616 they withdrew their

Sumatra. A factory was set up in Tiku which continued to exist until 1619. Between 1615 and 1618 the English carried on a profitable trade in Achen and on the west coast of Sumatra. They regularly carried Gujarati cloth to Achen and invested the profits in pepper which they carried to Bantam for transshipment to London. The English had not come to Indonesia originally with the purpose of taking part in the cloth trade between India and Indonesia, but they soon found out that there was little scope for direct trading between England and Sumatra. To collect pepper it was necessary to supply Indian cloth. First they built up a line of trade between Gujarat and Achen. Subsequently they also took part in the trade between Achen and the Coromandel coast.

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Compared to the English, the Dutch were in a disadvantageous position in Achen. The King was disappointed with them because they did not help him with arms and ships against the Portuguese. Moreover they aided with Johore when the Achenese attacked Batu Sawar, the capital of Johore. The Dutch found it difficult to cope with the English competition in Achen because they did not have the same access to Gujarati cloth as the latter. In 1616 they withdrew their

factory from Acheh. Almost simultaneously they began to send ships from Bantam (west Java) to the west coast of Sumatra to look for suitable ports for collecting pepper. In 1618 the king of Acheh did not renew the English licence but granted a licence for two years to the Dutch. The Dutch trade with Acheh was tied up with their trade between the Coromandel coast and Bantam.

The growing demand for pepper led to increasing participation by the king of Acheh in the pepper trade. He used his coercive powers to buy up large quantities of pepper from the west coast of Sumatra at a cheap rate to be sold at a high rate to the Europeans. His ultimate aim was to monopolise the pepper and cloth trade so that he could dictate the price of these two commodities. His attempt at complete monopoly failed but his interference in the trade succeeded in raising the price of pepper. Before 1615 the price of pepper varied from 13 Rials of eight to 20 Rials. In 1621 the king sold his pepper at 64 Rials per bahar (375 lbs.). On the west coast the price remained lower but the Europeans were excluded from trading in that area after 1620.

The rivalry between the English and the Dutch was advantageous to Acheh. In 1620 news reached Indonesia of the agreement signed between the two powers in 1619. The king of Acheh did not like the reconciliation between the English and the Dutch and tried to tighten his grip over the pepper trade. The English and the Dutch could not give up trading

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in Acheh because they feared that if they left the French, who had arrived at the end of 1620, would reap the benefit. Moreover, the Gujarati merchants and the traders from Dabul were beginning to give serious competition to the Europeans again in the twenties.

The difficulties of trading in Acheh led the English and the Dutch more and more to Jambi in southeastern Sumatra, which lay outside the Achenese empire. They could not, however, discontinue trading in the kingdom of Acheh which for them continued to be an indispensable source of pepper especially in view of their strained relations with Bantam.

Iskandar Muda revived the old expansionist foreign policy of Acheh and under him the empire stretched across the Straits and included a large part of the Malay Peninsula. The traditional struggle against the Portuguese in Malacca was renewed. The territorial expansion of Acheh under Iskandar Muda was not a mere continuation of a sixteenth century trend; it represented something more. The coming of the Dutch traders touched off a scramble for pepper in western Indonesia to which Acheh reacted by throwing up a new empire. It was partly an attempt to reach out to the pepper-gardens of the Malay peninsula and to control as many pepper-ports as possible.

Iskandar Muda was unable to make much use of the hostility of the English and the Dutch towards the Portuguese. The European traders brought him supplies of gunpowder and

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iron and occasionally presented him with guns. But beyond that they could not give him any substantial assistance in his wars. In 1629 Iskandar Muda made a grand attack on Malacca and failed. This proved a turning point in Acheh's relations with the Dutch. After the Amboyna massacre (1623) the English had ceased to be serious political rivals to the Dutch. They had virtually withdrawn from Acheh and had returned to Bantam. After the failure of Iskandar Muda to take Malacca the Dutch influence in Acheh began to rise. In 1632 the Dutch acquired substantial commercial concessions from the king of Acheh. The balance of power in western Indonesia was tilted in favour of the Dutch. Under Iskandar Thani, the successor of Iskandar Muda, Acheh no longer held the strategic position which it had once enjoyed. The fall of Malacca in 1641 marked the final eclipse of the Portuguese as a political force in western Indonesia and left the Dutch as the supreme military power in the area.

The coming of the English and the Dutch to western Indonesia at the beginning of the seventeenth century as buyers of pepper thus started a rivalry between the English, the Dutch and the Portuguese. This, combined with the fact that the Europeans did not get on well with Bantam, gave Acheh a great strategic advantage. To the scramble for pepper, touched off by European competition, Acheh responded by throwing up an empire and by setting up a system of royal monopoly of pepper trade. The empire was a loose one and

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the system of monopoly was not perfect. This was because the feudal-despotic state which was at the back of these activities was incapable of doing anything better. Yet as long as Acheh was militarily strong it could take advantage of the competition and rivalry among the Europeans. It was in a position to dictate terms to the Europeans rather than be dictated to by them. In most of the transactions between Iskandar Muda and the European traders it was the former who was the dominant partner and the latter had to submit. The destruction of Acheh's fleet in 1629, the death of Iskandar Muda in 1636, and the elimination of serious European competition by the Dutch by 1641 deprived Acheh of all its advantages. It is no wonder that the decline of Acheh was rapid after 1641.

In response to the new demand for Sumatran pepper, production of the commodity increased and prices went up. The royal monopoly of pepper trade, which was never fully effective, collapsed in the face of clandestine trade on the west coast of Sumatra and through the general weakening of the political position of Acheh.

Before the coming of the English and the Dutch the position of Acheh was well established in Asian trade. As a result of the English and Dutch participation in Acheh's trade there was little alteration either in the general pattern of trade or in the methods of commercial dealings. The English and the Dutch had to operate through brokers

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Before the coming of the English and the Dutch the position of Aceh was well established in Asian trade. As a result of the English and Dutch participation in Aceh's trade there was little alteration either in the general pattern of trade or in the methods of commercial dealings. The English and the Dutch had to operate through brokers

and middlemen due to their lack of experience in local trading methods. The dislocation of Gujarati trade by the English was a temporary affair. The Gujaratis continued to play an important role in Acheh's trade in the second half of the seventeenth century.

## Appendix I

Silsilah Raja Raja di Bander Achi--Genealogy of the kings of Achin, comprising a historical abstract of the reigns of the Mahomedan kings of Achin from the 601st year of the Hejira to the present time.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Sultan Johan Shah | A.H. 601-631 (1204-1233 A.D.) |
| 2. | Sultan Ahmed | 631-665 (1233-1266 A.D.) |
| 3. | Mahmud Shah | 665-708 (1266-1308 A.D.) |
| 4. | Firman Shah | 708-755 (1308-1354 A.D.) |
| 5. | Mansur Shah | 755-811 (1354-1408 A.D.) |
| 6. | Alauddin Johan Shah | 811-870 (1408-1465 A.D.) |
| 7. | Hussain Shah | 870-901 (1465-1495 A.D.) |
| 8. | Ali Riayat Shah | 901-917 (1495-1511 A.D.) |
| 9. | Salauddin | 917-946 (1511-1539 A.D.) |
| 10. | Alauddin | 946-975 (1539-1567 A.D.) |
| 11. | Hussain Shah | 975-983 (1567-1575 A.D.) |
| 12. | Sultan Muda | 983-984 (1575-1576 A.D.) |
| 13. | Priaman | 984 (1576 A.D.) |
| 14. | Raja Jeinal | 984-985 (1576-1577 A.D.) |
| 15. | Mansur Shah | 985-993 (1577-1585 A.D.) |
| 16. | Sultan Buyong | 993-996 (1585-1587 A.D.) |
| 17. | Alauddin Riayat Shah | 996-1011 (1588-1602 A.D.) |
| 18. | Ali Mughayat Shah | 1011-1015 (1602-1606 A.D.) |
| 19. | Direm Wangsa Tuan (Iskandar Muda) | 1015-1045 (1606-1635 A.D.) |

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| 12. | Sultan Muda | 983-984 (1575-1576 A.D.) |
| 13. | Priamban | 984 (1576 A.D.) |
| 14. | Raja Jalasi | 984-985 (1576-1577 A.D.) |
| 15. | Manour Shah | 985-993 (1577-1585 A.D.) |
| 16. | Sultan Buyong | 993-996 (1585-1587 A.D.) |
| 17. | Alauddin Riayat Shah | 996-1011 (1588-1602 A.D.) |
| 18. | Ali Mughayat Shah | 1011-1015 (1602-1606 A.D.) |
| 19. | Piram Wangsa Tuan (Iskandar Muda) | 1015-1045 (1606-1635 A.D.) |

## Appendix II

Djajadingrat's list:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Ali Mughayat Shah or Raja Ibrahim | 1514-1528 |
| 2. | Salah al-Din | 1528-1537 |
| 3. | Ala al-Din Riayat Shah al-Kahhar | 1537-1568 |
| 4. | Ali Riayat Shah or Husayn | 1568-1575 |
| 5. | Sultan Muda--a child, reigned only a few months | |
| 6. | Sri Alam (a king of Priaman) | 1576 |
| 7. | Zayn al-Abidin | 1577 |
| 8. | Ala al-Din of Perak or Mansur Shah | 1577-1586 |
| 9. | Ali Riayat Shah or Raja Buyong | 1586-1588 |
| 10. | Ala al-Din Riayat Shah | 1588-1604 |
| 11. | Ali Riayat Shah or Sultan Muda | 1604-1607 |
| 12. | Iskandar Muda | 1607-1636 |

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| 9. | Ali Riayat Shah or Ala Buyong | 1586-1588 |
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| 11. | Ali Riayat Shah or Sultan Muda | 1604-1607 |
| 12. | Iskandar Muda | 1607-1636 |

## Appendix III

Modified list by Juynboll and Voorhoeve:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Ali Mughayat Shah | ( ? -1530) |
| 2. | Salah al-Din | (1530-1537) |
| 3. | Ala al-Din Riayat Shah al-Kahhar | (1537-1571) |
| 4. | Ali Riayat Shah or Husayn | (1571-1579) |
| 5. | Sultan Muda | (a few months only in 1579) |
| 6. | Sultan Sri Alam | (1579) |
| 7. | Zayn al-Abidin | (1579) |
| 8. | Ala al-Din of Perak or Mansur Shah | (1579-1586) |
| 9. | Ali Riayat Shah or Raja Buyong | (1586-1588) |
| 10. | Ala al-Din Riayat Shah | (1588-1604) |
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| 12. | Iskandar Muda | (1607-1636) |

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5. Sultan Muda (a few months only in 1579)
6. Sultan Sri Alam (1579)
7. Zayn al-Abidin (1579)
8. Ala al-Din of Perak or Manawr Shah (1579-1586)
9. Ali Riayat Shah or Raja Buyong (1586-1588)
10. Ala al-Din Riayat Shah (1588-1604)
11. Ali Riayat Shah or Sultan Muda (1604-1607)
12. Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)

## Appendix IV

### Mahmudi (mamoodi)

(a small silver coin current in Gujarat)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 mahmudi | -- 11d. or 12d. English |
| 5 ma | -- 1 Rial of eight |
| 1 ma | -- 1 Mas (Achenese money) |

### Achenese money and weights

(Cash, of lead, and Mas, of gold)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1,000 to 1,500 Cash | -- 1 Mas |
| 16 Mas | -- 1 Tael |
| 1 Mas | -- 15d. English |
| 1 Tael | -- 20 shillings |
| 4/5 Mas | -- 1 Rial of eight |
| 1 Tael | -- 4 Rials of eight (approx.) |

Weights

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Bahar | -- 300 catty, or 3 picul |
| 1 Bahar | -- 360/375/380/385/400 pounds. Usually 360 pounds in our period |

### European money

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Rial of eight | -- 4s. 6d. or 5s. |
| 1 Florin | -- 2s. |
| 2 1/2 Florin | -- 1 Rix Dollar (Rial of the East Indies) |

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(a small silver coin current in Gujarat)

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1,000 to 1,500 Cash -- 1 Mas

16 Mas -- 1 Tael

1 Mas -- 15d. English

1 Tael -- 20 shillings

4\5 Mas -- 1 Rial of eight

1 Tael -- 4 Rials of eight (approx.)

Weights

1 Bahar -- 300 catty, or 1 picul

1 Bahar -- 360\375\380\385\400 pounds. Usually 360 pounds in our period

### European money

1 Rial of eight -- 4s. 6d. or 5s.

1 Florin -- 2s.

2 1\2 Florin -- 1 Rix Dollar (Rial of the East Indies)

## List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| Bantam Factory | The Factory of the English East India Company at Bantam, 1602-1682 (see Bibliographical Notes). |
| BKI | Bijdragen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde. |
| BSOAS | Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. |
| EF | The English Factories in India 1634-1636 (see Bibliographical Notes). |
| EI | Encyclopaedia of Islam. |
| Generale Missiven | Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs Generaal Raden aan Heren XVII der verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie (see Bibliographical Notes). |
| IG | De Indische Gids. |
| JMBRAS | Journal Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society. |
| JRAS | Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. |
| JSBRAS | Journal Straits Branch Royal Asiatic Society. |
| Leupe 219/1 | KITLV Neg. 219/1, H169 Artikel van Leupe over Atjeh (see Bibliographical Notes). |
| L.R. | Foster, W. (ed.), Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East (see Bibliographical Notes). |
| NCMH | New Cambridge Modern History. |
| O.C. | Original Correspondence Series, 1602-1644, I-XVIII (see Bibliographical Notes). |
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| | |
|---|---|
| VBG | Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen. |
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## Bibliographical Notes

English Sources:

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Factory Records (Java), 1613-1646, III (1 & 2).

As the English East India Company did not have a continuous factory either in Acheh or in Tiku during the first half of the seventeenth century, a separate series of letters from the factories has not grown up. Only a small number of letters from these two factories have come down to us. Most of them are to be found in the series known as Original Correspondence which contains letters from all the factories of the East. Some also appear in another series viz., the Factory Records (Java). The letters from Acheh and Tiku or from ships off the coast of Sumatra were generally written to Bantam, the headquarters of the Company's factories in the Far East. Some were also addressed to Surat, Masulipatam and London.

Besides these letters from the subordinate factories to Bantam there are general letters from Bantam or Batavia to London. These were in the nature of general reports containing information about all the subordinate factories including those in Sumatra. These letters also appear in

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Dutch Sources:

Records of the Koloniaal Archief, Algemeen Rijksarchief (The Hague)

Overgecomen Brieven en Papieren ter Kamer Amsterdam 1608-1643 (K.A. 967-1047)

The letters relating to Acheh contained in this series are of two types, viz., those written from Bantam or Batavia to Holland and those exchanged between the subordinate factories and the headquarters at Bantam or Batavia. Among the former were the letters written annually by the Governor General and his council to the Heeren XVII known as "Generale Missiven." These contained a valuable survey of the Company's trade in Asia. All the regions were covered, including the important factories. The Dutch too did not have a continuous factory in Acheh or Tiku and consequently the

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letters to and from those factories do not form a separate series. They lie scattered in the volumes of Overgecomen Brieven mentioned above.

A substantial part of these documents has been published. The general letters for the period 1610-1638 have been recently published in a work entitled Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs Generaal Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie, edited by W.Ph. Coolhaas.

The letters written by Jan Pietersz. Coen to the Company in Amsterdam have been published in the work entitled Jan Pietersz. Coen, Bescheiden Omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië (6 vols.) edited by H. T. Colenbrander. Coen's letters to the factories in Acheh and on the west coast of Sumatra are also included in these volumes. W.Ph. Coolhaas has edited the last volume (VII) of this series in two parts which contain the letters written to Coen from Acheh and the west coast of Sumatra. Several letters to and from these factories have been printed in the two collections of Dutch documents, viz., De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost-Indië (13 vols.), edited by K.K.J. De Jonge, and Bouwstoffen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanders in den Maleischen Archipel (3 vols.), edited by P. A. Tiele and J. E. Heeres.

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KITLV Neg. 219/1 H 164 Artikel Van Leupe over Atjeh

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The Whole Island OF SUMATRA.
Achin
Pedir
ACHIN
Pasai
Pesir
PACEM
Kueda
Pulani
Kalanten
Pinang
Wellesly
Tringano
Dilli
Perak
Batubara
Pahang
Báros
Malacca
Nias
Batu
Natal
Juhor
Singapur
Bintan
Rio
Passaman
Tiku
Priaman
Linça
Sibirú
Padang
Indragiri
Siberg
Sipora
Indrapura
Korinchi
Banka
Jambi
Palembang
Bangkahulu
(Benkolen)
Rejangs
Sabar
INDIA
GOVT.
Lampungs
Pulo Rondo
Engano Id.
Straits of Sunda
Bengal Passage
VICINITY OF A'CHIN.
Pulo Wai
Malacca Passage
Pulo Brás
Pulo Malora
Tanj Batu
Tanj Pedir
Middle Id.
Nias
The XXVI Mukims.
A'CHIN
Cedar Passage
Achin Head
Pulo Gomes
The XXVI Mukims
Surat Passage
Kings Passage
Lampo
The XXIII Mukims
Tanj Mamudra
Khang
Kluang

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