

Dr. Muhammad bin Abubakar

The Politics of National Integration in Indonesia

An Analysis of the Role of Military
in the Province of Aceh



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THE POLITICS OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN INDONESIA: *An Analysis of The Role of Military in the Province of Aceh*

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**THE POLITICS OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION
IN INDONESIA:
*An Analysis of The Role of Military
in the Province of Aceh***

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PREFACE

the socio-political and cultural beliefs of the early Buddhist Kingdom of Shrivijaya and the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit completely failed to penetrate into Aceh. Therefore, Islam easily came to Aceh as early as the 7th century A.C, primarily because of the king himself who warmly welcomed Islam by embracing it, and declared it as the only religion of the Sultanate. It was from here that Islam expanded to all over the Southeast Asian region, along with the expansion of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam to become one of the five great powers of the Muslim Sultanates in the 15th century A.C. Along with the emergence of the Muslim Sultanate of Demak in Java, succeeding the decaying Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit.

Therefore, there is a clear line of difference between the two Sultanates, particularly on the socio-religious and political development of the community. In Aceh, there was a strong and obvious influence of Islam on the community's way of life, in which the people had been experiencing a system well governed by the Islamic *Shari'ah*, which was directly supervised by the council of '*Ulama*. Meanwhile, the emergence of the Muslim Sultanate of Demak, in Java, did not mark a complete penetration of Islam into the community. This was due to the solidness of the influence of Hinduism on the people's way of life. Accordingly, they were two different communities with different self-perceptions. One was the community that proudly represented the Islamic heritage, while the other one was the community that proudly represented the heritage of the Old Kingdom, the Hindu Majapahit. Such differences were reflected in the later political developments in the two communities, which were manifested in the thought of each of the political élite group, be it during the colonial period or after Indonesia gained its full sovereignty from the Dutch in December 1949.

The influence of Islam on the Acehnese community was reflected in their struggle against the colonial forces, the Dutch and the Japanese, under the direct command of '*Ulamas* such as Teungku Chi' diTiro and Teungku Abdul Djalil Cot Plieng. As a result of their willingness to sacrifice their lives in the holy war against the infidel colonial forces, their strong faith in Islam, and their great respect to the '*Ulamas*, Aceh was the only region which was not completely pacified by the colonial rules. It was for Islam that the Acehnese

were ready to support fledgling Republic of Indonesia during the national revolution since 1946 till 1949, resisting against Dutch military aggressions in 1947 and 1948 in the Medan-area that paved the way for the *Round Table Conference* in the Hague in December 1949.

In the early 1950s, Islam again became the motivation for the Acehnese to resist the secular central government that had deviated far from the stated primary objective. Instead of establishing an Islamic State of Indonesia that was imbued in the first principle of *Pancasila*, the belief in One Supreme God, Sukarno tried to revive the Hindu heritage with Indonesian nationalist clothing. Hence, being betrayed by the central government, the PUSA, under the leadership of Teungku Daud Beureueh, declared the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Aceh under the federation of the Islamic State of Indonesia (DI/TII) which was previously declared by Kartosuwiryo in late 1948 in West Java. Consequently, civil war was inevitable, with more than a thousand casualties from both sides. After seven years of war, peace was restored in Aceh following the restoration of Aceh as a province with a special status in religion (Islam), education, and customary law and the implementation of some elements of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

However, the period of peace in Aceh was so brief, primarily because of the political change that occurred in 1968. The New Order military regime did not promote the interest of Islam either and instead, it adopted *Pancasila* as the sole ideological foundation of the State. Its aim was not only to silence the debate about the state's ideology, but also to put any alternative sources of political power under full state control. Islam was no exception. Moreover, the vagueness of the *Pancasila* and the 1945 constitution gave room for different interpretations which were subjected to the belief system of the interpreter. This indirectly destroyed the cohesiveness of the 'Ulamas in Aceh. Therefore, the 'Ulamas of PUSA failed to initiate another revolution because they were not supported by other groups of 'Ulamas. These 'Ulamas included those who tried to Islamize the *Pancasila* by joining the MUI, and also those conservative 'Ulamas who emphasized the importance of educating the civilians and seek refuge in the *Dayah*.

In order to prevent the possible re-emergence of regional cohesiveness under the leadership of the 'Ulamas who felt discontented with the political change, Suharto created a strong patrimonial political system, of which the military was the backbone.

At the same time, he nurtured the factional political élite within Acehnese politics by recruiting the Acehnese secular educated élite to counter balance the *'Ulamas*. With the help of the local élite, the central government introduced a new economic policy that would transform Aceh from an agricultural to an industrial zone, as the way to enhance the prosperity of the people. Nevertheless, in spite of the creation of the ZILS in Aceh, the region remained underdeveloped and many of its people continued living below the poverty line. The ZILS did not provide the Acehnese with jobs and instead, it brought in much of their staff from Java. Certainly, it infused more frustration and discontent among the Acehnese due to the exploitative nature of the central government policy in Aceh.

Such an exploitative nature of the central economic policy led to the emergence of the third élite group, which was initiated by an Acehnese businessman, Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro. He suggested a different panacea for the problem of Aceh's underdevelopment. This group claimed that the backwardness and underdevelopment of Aceh was not because of its Islamic fanaticism, but because of the exploitative nature of the center-regional relationship, or an internal colonialism. Therefore, Aceh should free itself from the status quo by becoming an independent state of its own. Due to its nationalist base, the insurgency failed to win the support of the *'Ulamas*; and therefore, it was easily silenced and many of its prominent leaders were driven overseas to live in exile in Sweden. However, the idea of separatism has not been completely wiped out and in the middle of 1989, the Acehnese witnessed the resurrection of the GAM. As the gap between the have and the have-nots was escalating in the region, many Acehnese, including the trishaw drivers, intellectuals, businessmen, civil servants and the alienated political élite began to grasp the idea of separatism.

In response to the second phase of Acehnese insurgency, the government used carrot-sticks strategy that centers at shock therapy and development. Nevertheless, the shock therapy which aimed at creating fear and terrorizing the community, overshadowed the development policy primarily because it caused serious violations of human rights committed by the military in Aceh since 1989. Accordingly, the development scheme introduced by the regional government during the period of the "DOM" did not seem to heal the wound and reduce the people's hatred towards the government and armed forces in particular.

The implementation of the “DOM” not only had profound effects on the psychological aspect of the community, but also on their socio-cultural, political and economic life. The creation of militias and *cuak* groups among the Acehnese has destroyed the cohesiveness of the community and diminished a cooperative sense among the villagers. People began to evolve a sense of suspicion and prejudice towards each other, and no one felt safe to stay in the community. In the past, such conditions could be solved by the ‘*Ulamas*, but their association with the ruling Golkar Party during the “DOM” had damaged their reputation. People have lost their trust in the ‘*Ulamas* and this was signified by the vacuum of authority following the withdrawal of the military from Aceh. The GAM fighters who wanted to take revenge for their lost families soon filled this vacuum. Following the abduction of seven military officers and the killing of former *cuaks*, the military then launched a *wibawa* '99 operation to search for the missing officers. But during the operation, many civilians were arrested and even killed by the soldiers. This brutality of the soldiers motivated the Students and Youth to call for a referendum to be held in Aceh along with the demilitarization of the region.

In response to the intensified demand of the students and the youth, the government deployed more than 500 members of PPRM that initially was assigned to restore peace and security in Aceh. Yet, as the atrocities continued, PPRM began to launch operations into rural areas to search for the GAM fighters. This created fear and anxiety among the villagers who began to flee from their villages and seek refuge in the concentration camps in their respective regencies. Until the end of 1999, there were still 7000 refugees living in the Camp of Daud Beureueh Mosque, in Beureunun district, Pidie.

Following the incident of Beuntoung Ateueh, the *Taleban* and the ‘*Ulama of Dayah* in the two days congress declared their support for the Students’ call for a referendum. It was then followed by the greatest ever Acehnese Assembly on November 8, 1999, in front of Baiturrahman Mosque, Banda Aceh. About more than one million Acehnese pledged to each other a commitment to the call for a referendum. Was it the sign of the awakening of the Acehnese? Only time can answer. Thus, the military operation which sought to silence the idea of separatism in Aceh has indeed failed. In fact, it is backfiring for the government, with a more serious problem of disintegration of Aceh from Indonesia.

The study began with three basic questions on the case of Acehese separatism in the light of Indonesian politics of maintaining its territorial integration. The study finds that there is a perpetual tension between the separatists and the central government, as the former groups have gained more support from the Acehese. This reflects the crisis of central government legitimacy in Aceh. It shows that the maintenance of national integration strongly depends on the policy that the central government adopts to silence the insurgency. This is primarily because the policy might either induce a positive or negative boomerang effect. It might strengthen the sense of patriotism or it might cause a sort of identity crisis which simultaneously puts national integration in jeopardy. Furthermore, the nature of the policy that the government adopts will manifest itself in the feedback from the affected community. Does the community feel more integrated after the enforcement of the policy or is it the other way around? As mentioned above, there are at least four interlocking dimensions of national integration which require the state to create a dynamic equilibrium among these dimensions. Once a government fails to create such an equilibrium, a serious disintegrative force might emerge and threaten the state's territorial integrity. If such an affair is perpetuated, it requires the state to work hard to silence the insurgency. Accordingly, the state can either adopt a persuasive policy that may take a long time and have an uncertain final outcome, or a coercive policy that will completely destroy any suspected stronghold of the insurgency at a very short time. Therefore, the government needs to act wisely by having a clear picture and definition of what sort of crisis it is facing. This is due to fact that most of the insurgency or revolution emerges as the outcomes of the perpetual relative deprivation of rights that includes political, economic and socio- religious rights.

On the contrary, the success of the insurgency may also depend on the type of policy that the central government adopts. For instance, the government's excessive use of force, rather than economic and political measures to curb the minority insurgency, will create a state of alienation and deepen a sense of frustration. This sentiment paves the way for the minority élite to mobilize support from the community for the insurgency, and it is the base for maintaining group cohesiveness as can be seen in the case of Aceh's separatism in Indonesia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of national integration and nation building in the current literature on political development are used interchangeably. Rounaq Jahan in her study on *Pakistan: Failure in National Integration*, defines national integration as “the creation of a national political system which supersedes or incorporates all the regional subsystems”,¹ indicating that national integration is a multidimensional, complex and dynamic process. As suggested by Myron Weiner:

It [National integration] may involve five tasks: the creation of a sense of territorial nationality; the establishing of national central authority; the bridging of the elite-mass gap; the creation of a “minimum” value consensus; and the devising of integrative institutions and behavior.²

In line with this argument, Christian Drake suggests four different important interlocking elements of national integration which function separately, yet interact and generally mutually reinforce each other. The first are common historical and political experiences, which obviously act as a cohesive force. Second, sharing common socio-cultural attributes that provide citizens with a distinctive identity. Third, advanced infrastructure and telecommunication devices as the means to enhance the level of communication and interaction among diverse ethnic groups within the country. Finally, balanced economic development where the state should be able to evolve a perception that the standard of living is improving and there are some measures of equity in the allocation of economic resources and development schemes.³ Drake observes:

National integration depends on a fundamental balance among these four major historical-political, socio-cultural, interactions

¹Rounaq Jahan, *Pakistan: Failure in National Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 3.

²Myron Weiner, “Political Integration and Political Development,” cited in *Ibid.*, 3.

³Christine Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Pattern and Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 3.

and economic component -dynamic equilibrium. If one component is neglected or become out of balance, disintegrative force may emerge and that can threaten a state's stability or even its continued existence.⁴

The disintegrative force, as Drake argues, can be due to the perpetual crisis of distribution as a result of the mismanaging of resource allocation that deprives a segment of citizens of their due right, which gradually evolves to a stage of common grievance.⁵

This grievance depends on the people's perception of *relative deprivation*, that is the perception of discrepancy between the standard of value expectation and the standard of value capabilities of any individual or community, as Ted Gurr explains in his theory of *relative deprivation*.⁶ Ted Gurr's study suggests that value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe, they are rightly entitled, while value capabilities are the goods and condition that they are capable of getting and keeping. This argument parallels with Marx's hypothesis of *relative deprivation* which suggests that the worker will eventually evolve standards for their desired and expected need satisfaction. Insofar as there is a gap between "what the workers feel they should get and what they actually receive", they will eventually revolt until the gap is minimized or eliminated.⁷

James A. Geschwender asserts that all patterns of temporal changes, which produce revolutionary activities, may be explained with the *theory of dissonance*. Objectively, sociopolitical change produces a state of mind in which individuals perceive that they are unjustly deprived of their due rights. It goes through three different stages. First, they evolve an image of the state of affairs. Next, they develop a belief that they are rightly entitled to that state of affairs. Lastly, they are aware of being deprived from that state of affairs. The combination of these three attitudes induces a state of dissonance and the only way to reduce the state of dissonance is by changing the environment so as to attain the desired state of affairs. This action frequently takes the form of social revolutionary

⁴*Ibid.*, 4

⁵*Ibid.*,

⁶Ted. Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1970), 24.

⁷Cited in James A. Geschwender, "Explorations in the Theory of Social Movement and Revolutions" in Alexander J. Groth (eds.), *Revolution and Political Change* (England: Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, 1996), 12.

activities.⁸ According to Ted Gurr, on principle, there are three basic alternatives for the group to choose: exit, voice, or loyalty. The groups who have autonomy will either demand for an exit that is complete separation, or for a broader autonomous authority, while those who voice through protest and demonstration, will focus their demand on status betterment. Finally, those who accept their situation and try to seize any opportunity available are the loyalists.⁹ He concludes that:

The global evidence suggests that there are two different kinds of dynamic factors which drive the political grievances of contemporary minorities. Firstly, political and economic disadvantages will motivate communal groups to demand greater access to the political system and greater economic opportunity. Whereas, a history of political autonomy leads groups to attempt for secession, ecological and demographic stress contributes mainly to demand for redress of grievances within the system; only secondarily do they reinforce demands for autonomy.¹⁰

Whatever may be the causes and types of the separatist movements, usually the response of a state depends on the political and cultural contexts of that particular society. Firstly, the state may adopt an "Accommodative Policy" that is to compromise with the demands of the separatist group. Secondly, the state may adopt a "Confrontative Policy" by enforcing martial law or a military operation to destroy every suspected stronghold of groups i.e. politics of violence and to force them to accept a settlement on the government's terms. Thirdly, the state may attempt through psychological, symbolic, and actual economic, political, and social policies to create an environment that will detract support from the separatist's political appeal.¹¹ However, there is still a possibility that one of these policies may contribute to the success of the separatist movement too, as Serajul Islam observes:

⁸James A. Geschwender, "Explorations in the Theory of Social Movement and Revolutions", 13.

⁹Ted. Robert Gurr, *Minority at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington DC: U.S Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 86.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 87.

¹¹See, Roebert H. Taylor, "Government responses to armed communist and separatist movements: Burma," in Chandran Jeshurun, (eds.), *Governments and Rebellions in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 1985), 104.

If the state uses excessive force rather than economic and political measures to curb the minority group, it will cause the group to feel more alienated and frustrated. The minority élite will exploit this to perpetuate sentiment to mobilize the masses to support the separatist movement.¹²

In the light of the above, the maintenance of national integration is a matter of particular concern in Indonesia because of the great diversity of both its geographical environment and its people.¹³ In recent years, the most crucial challenge has come from Aceh, the staunchest Muslim region of the outer island groups counting for less than 2% of the total population of Indonesia.¹⁴

The Acehnese have a long and proud history of resistance. For almost sixty years they thwarted colonial military power to "pacify" the region and to fully incorporate into their colonial empire. Although, the Acehnese agreed to support Indonesia's struggle for independence against the Dutch between 1945-1949, the government's failure to enforce Islam as the religion of the state soon led to the formation of an armed revolution, the Darul Islam, under Teungku¹⁵ Muhammad Daud Beureueh. He did proclaim the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Aceh, but he did not demand secession.¹⁶ The revolution ended with a concession that Indonesia granted "Special Region" status to Aceh, giving the Acehnese control over education, religion (the implementation of some element of Islamic Shari'ah), and customary law.

The overthrow of Sukarno's regime by Suharto in 1965 was warmly welcome by the 'Ulamas of Aceh, primarily because of Suharto's anti-communist stance; that seemed to give a "new hope" for Islam in Indonesia. However, their optimism was brief as Suharto

¹²Syed Serajul Islam, "The Islamic Independence Movements in Patani of Thailand and Mindanao of the Philippines," *Asian Survey* 37:5 (May 1998), 441-455. See also Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 39-58; Ted. Robert Gurr, *Minority at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*, 123-138.

¹³ Christine Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Pattern and Politics*. 5.

¹⁴ Based on the 1997 census, the number of Indonesian population has reached two hundred millions people, ranking as the fourth largest nation in the world.

¹⁵ The term 'Ulama or Teungku denotes "religious scholar", in Acehnese usage. It can be either singular or plural which contradicts the Arabic usage. I attach suffix "s" to indicate its plural form.

¹⁶ There was an agreement between the late President Sukarno and the 'Ulamas of Aceh Ajip Rosidi, *Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Lebih Takut Kepada Allah* [Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Fears Allah Most] (Jakarta: Inti Idayu Press, 1986), 151.

gradually formed a strong centralized government that brought all other countervailing sources of political power into its tight control. This political change was perceived by most of Acehese political élite as a hindrance for their political, economic, and Islamic development.¹⁷ By the mid-1970s, blatantly unequal distribution of revenue drawn from the region's vast natural resources contributed to the formation of the armed separatist movement, the GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka/ Free Aceh Movement) in 1976.¹⁸

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although, the nascent Acehese separatist movement was easily crushed and most of its leading figures were driven to live overseas, the Acehese witnessed the resurrection of the movement with the return of AGAM late in 1989.¹⁹ In response to the second phase of the Acehese armed struggle, the government in Jakarta, upon the request of the then governor of Aceh Dr. Ibrahim Hasan, deployed more than 12000 combined troops from different units in the region. It turned Aceh into a military operation zone for a decade, in which there were reportedly high incidences of human rights violations conducted by the military against the civilians. This study, therefore, will attempt to answer the following three questions. Firstly, what are the reasons underlying the GAM? Secondly, what are the policies that the government of Indonesia adopts to crush this movement? Finally, what impact do these policies have on civilians' socio-religious, political and economic life?

PROBLEM JUSTIFICATION

The recently announced evidence of human rights violations in

¹⁷ Particularly after Suharto enforced *Pancasila* as the sole ideological foundation of political parties in August 1983 and of all non-governmental agencies a year later. *Pancasila* consists of five principles: (1) Belief in the One Supreme God, (2) A Just and Civilized Humanity, (3) Nationalism, (4) Consultation, and (5) Social-justice. According to Sjafruddin, all these can be interpreted and applied according to the wishes and thought of those who hold power. Implicitly, the policy has justified the success of Suharto to defeat his political opposition, the Islamic movement in particular. See Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, "Pancasila as the Sole Foundation" *Indonesia*, no. 38 (October 1987), 81.

¹⁸The GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*/Free Aceh Movement) is also known as ASNLF (Aceh-Sumatra National Liberation Front).

¹⁹ AGAM (Angkatan Gerakan Aceh Merdeka/ Forces of the Free Aceh Movement), and most of them received military training in Libya.

Aceh during the period 1989-1998, after the enforcement of martial law in that predominantly Muslim special territory, has drawn the attention of world community. Yet, the irony of this is that there are still very few countries that have come forward to express sympathy with the struggle of the Acehnese. What is wrong with the GAM? It is, therefore, essential to understand the primary objective of the movement and its failure to gain external support for their struggle. Apart from that, it is also necessary to investigate the impact of the government's aggressive policy against the lives of the Muslims in Aceh. Finally is to suggest some measures to prevent more killings and bloodshed in the region.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of this study are as follows. Firstly, to explain briefly the relationship of Aceh and Indonesia in both the historical and contemporary settings in the light of the politics of national integration perspective. Secondly, to investigate specifically the causes for growing dissatisfaction of the Acehnese and the emergence of GAM. Thirdly, to explore the response of the Indonesian government to this movement and to assess the impact of such measures on its followers, as well as on the civilians' socio-religious, political and economic life. And finally, to suggest measures that future Indonesian government can adopt to deal with the movement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the process of investigating the politics of national integration focusing on the case of Aceh in Indonesia, a number of studies have been done. However, the following analysis reveals that none of the related literature has evaluated satisfactorily the impact of the military regime's politics of violence on regional separatism. In addition, none of them have examined the side effects of the Indonesian military operation in Aceh during the period from 1989 to 1998, in the context of Indonesian politics of national integration.

W. F. Wertheim (1969) in his book *Indonesian Society in Transition*, which is considered to be among the first works on the subject, attempts to interpret the causes of the Acehnese rebellion as the expression of perpetual conflict between the 'Ulamas and the

*Ulèëbalangs*²⁰force within Acehnese community. This interpretation is basically based on the assumption that Aceh's political development during the post-independence period is initially an expression of Aceh's past politics, dominated by the conflict between the two groups stated above. Wertheim asserts that during the post-independence period, the tension between these two groups continues due to the political condition after the revolution which shows no reversal of the past trend. He writes, "what had been preserved of the old aristocratic order had been integrated into the new social order."²¹ Such unfavorable development again brought the '*Ulamas- Ulèëbalangs* conflict to the fore, as the latter saw the opportunity for revenge against the former who had outwitted them during the period of national revolution from 1946-1949. In this book, Wertheim overemphasizes the impact of the historical conflict between the '*Ulamas* and the '*Ulèëbalangs* within Acehnese politics, in which he considers it as the sole cause of the Acehnese rebellion. This indicates the narrow outlook of the author in analyzing the complex nature of the rebellion. Therefore, this work has failed to answer the question that if the rebellion is due to internal political conflict, why did the Acehnese wage rebellion against the central government? Thus, it shows that this work is irrelevant with respect to the current political development during the Suharto military regime.

This line of argument is in conformity with the Ali Sastromidjojo (1953) government's response in *Keterangan dan Djawaban Pemerintah tentang Peristiwa Daud Beureueh* [The Government Explanation and Answer towards Daud Beureueh's Event]. Prime Minister Ali rejects the opinion that the Aceh rebellion is associated with his government's failure to meet the Acehnese demands for autonomy. Rather, he believes that behind the Acehnese movement lies the conflict for political power between the '*Ulamas* and '*Ulèëbalangs*. When the conflict reappears, the former as the dominant political élite feel that the latter is threatening their political authority, and that compel them to resort to seeking the support of the central government. Yet, the central government

²⁰*Ulèëbalang* is denoted initially as head of *Ulèëbalanghip* or self-governing rule. It also refers to an aristocrat who holds the title of *Teuku*. Thus, here I attach suffix "s" in case the word is used as plural.

²¹W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition* (2nd revised ed.) (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1969), 165.

refuses to support them and instead let the conflict continue. As a result the 'Ulamas respond by demanding autonomy for Aceh²².

S.M Amin (1957), who was the former Governor of North Sumatra and a prominent writer on Acehnese politics, also holds this argument. In his book *Sekitar Peristiwa Berdarah di Atjeh*²³ [On the Bloody Affair in Aceh], he states that the real cause behind the Acehnese rebellion is not the demand for autonomy, but rather the perpetual conflict between the 'Ulamas and the *Ulèëbalangs*. In this regard, Amin doubts the fact that the religious factor contributes at all to the causes of the rebellion, and he believes that the Acehnese leaders are only manipulating religion to gain popular support.²⁴ These two books represent the stand of the central government that try to deny its political failure. They oversimplify a complex problem that trigger the Acehnese rebellion. They do not represent the stand of the masses who are directly affected by the rebellion. Therefore, these works are irrelevant to the current development of the Free Aceh Movement.

However, Ajip Rosidi (1986), in his book *Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Lebih Takut Kepada Allah* [Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Fears Allah Most] refutes this opinion. He devotes a full chapter of the book to explain the root causes behind the Acehnese rebellion. He argues that the reason of the Acehnese rebellion lies in the people being dissatisfied with and degraded by the central government, when the provincial status of Aceh was dissolved and integrated into the Province of North Sumatra in 1950. In addition to that, the religious factor also contributes to the causes of the rebellion when Sukarno fails to keep his promise which is to declare Islam as the State Religion.²⁵ In this book, Ajip Rosidi manages to show the roots of the conflict that trigger rebellion, but he does not deal specifically with the response of the central government towards the rebellion as well as the impact of the government response on the civilians.

Herbert Feith (1968) in his book *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, asserts that the Acehnese rebellion is the

²²Kementrian Penerangan R.I., *Keterangan dan Djawaban Pemerintah tentang Peristiwa Daud Beureueh* [The Government Explanation and Answer towards Daud Beureueh Event] (Jakarta: Kementrian Penerangan R.I., 1953).

²³The word Atjeh is written in the classical spelling of the Indonesian language and it is used interchangeably with the word Aceh, the spelling that was modified in 1972.

²⁴S. M. Amin, *Sekitar Peristiwa Berdarah di Atjeh* [On the Bloody Affair in Aceh] (Jakarta: Soeroengan N. V., 1956).

²⁵Ajip Rosidi, *Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Lebih Takut Kepada Allah*, 151.

expression of the clash of state ideological foundation between *Pancasila* and Islam, which is closely associated with the political conflict at the national level. Particularly, this occurred after Ali Sastromijoyo formed a new cabinet controlled by PNI (*Partai Nasional Indonesia*/Indonesian Nationalist Party) that excluded the Muslim Political Party "Masyumi" from the cabinet in 1953. Insofar as Aceh lose its only ally in the center, there is very little chance for the PUSA (*Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh*/All Aceh Ulama Association) to have bargaining power at the center. This unfavorable political development marks the victory of secular and nationalist parties, and strengthens the *Pancasila* as state ideology. In this regard, the Acehnese under PUSA leadership perceives that Indonesia has deviated from the primary goal of revolution for independence that is the establishment of an Islamic State of Indonesia, or at least to grant Aceh a special status as an Islamic province.²⁶ In this book, Feith overemphasizes the impact of political conflict at the central government on Aceh, but he does not deal with the impact of the central government response towards the rebellion and the civilians. Hence, the works of Ajip and Feith are unable to provide a framework for understanding the recent development of the regional separatist movement in Aceh.

Eric. E Morris (1983) in his Ph.D. thesis *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relation in Indonesia*, poses the question, why have the Acehnese so frequently assumed a position of defiance towards the central government? In an attempt to answer the question and to analyze the cause behind the Acehnese rebellion, Morris asserts:

People, not region, act politically. Thus we need to ask who formulates identity symbols, who provides the "definition of the situation," and who mobilizes a group on the basis of this identity...in examining the emergence, maintenance and transformation of ethnic and regional identity symbols, attention must be focused on leadership who define the symbol.²⁷

²⁶Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1968), 30-31. Masyumi (Majlis Syura Muslim Indonesia/ Indonesian Muslim Consultation Assembly) was the strong ally of the PUSA of Aceh at the central government.

²⁷Eric. E Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia* (Ph.D. Thesis, Macro Film: Cornell University, 1983), 11-12.

He argues that it is imperative to have a look at the initial consistent desire of the religious leaders, the '*Ulamas*', that is to reform the Acehnese community according to what Islam dictates as embodied in the *Shari'ah*,²⁸ which gave the Acehnese a religious oriented identity. However, during the colonial period, there was another élite group, the *Ulèëbalangs*, who advocated the continuity of *adat* or indigenous customary law. During the transition period 1946, the contending visions came into open and violent conflict. Meanwhile, in the early 1970s, the dominant new political elite, the secular educated group in Aceh tried to elaborate a new "definition of situation" which contradicted with the '*Ulamas*' version. They redefine Aceh as "a disadvantaged ethnic minority in need for capital and expertise"²⁹ which can only be obtained by cooperating with the central government. Morris further argues that though the appeal of religious reform is based on the idiom of Acehnese renovation, the revivalist '*Ulamas*' extend their vision at the national level. This implies that the Muslim leaders maintains that they have the right to say something about Indonesia as a state, particularly on the issue of the ideological foundations of Indonesia. Therefore, the central government encourages the emergence of other elite groups to formulate different identity symbols which undermined the '*Ulamas*' version. This "divide and rule" policy is similar to that of the Dutch, which created a new *Ulèëbalangs* or technocrats to counter the '*Ulamas*' aspiration. In this manner, Morris attempts to describe the relations between the contending Acehnese élite groups and the center. He further claims that by manipulating the diehard conflict between these élite groups, by supporting one of the contending élite groups to counter the other, the central government maintains its control over Aceh. Although Morris also discusses in short the emergence of the GAM, he is focusing on the early stage of the insurgency. Though it is irrelevant for this study, it provided a useful historical background for it.

²⁸The term *Shari'ah* refers not only to the Islamic Law (Hudud), but it also refers to the whole teaching of Islam ordained in the Qur'an and Sunnah. For they believed that when the faithful act in unity and harmony as true Muslim, any practice of particularism of self-interest, kinship, and locality, certainly could be overcome.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 15

David Brown (1994) in his book *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia* further explains the impact of neo-patrimonialism in Indonesia on Acehese communalism during the Old Order³⁰ and the impact of New Order³¹ on factionalism in Aceh. He shares a similar view with Morris when he analyzes the case of Acehese rebellion during the Old Order as well as the emergence of the Free Aceh Movement during the New Order. Brown focuses on analyzing the politics of the central government in maintaining her control over Aceh. The government took advantage of the perpetual conflict of force within the Acehese community between the new *Ulèëbalangs* (secular educated technocrats) and the '*Ulamas* by supporting one of the élite groups, so that a cohesive Acehese grouping can never be realized.³²

Brown and Morris draw similar conclusions on the central-periphery relations. However, Brown focuses more on the success of the central government in creating a strong patron-client relation with the secular-educated élite in Aceh, in which the central government uses the latter as its agent and creates rivalry with the '*Ulamas*. However, the secular élite failed to realize the goal of Acehese regional development such as minimizing the growing gap between Aceh's contribution to the Indonesian economy and Jakarta's contribution to Aceh's economy. Thus, the perpetuation of unbalanced economic development, which is reinforced by political discrimination, has led to the emergence of the third Acehese political élite group that initiated a separatist movement, the GAM.³³ In this book, Brown highlights the causes of the emergence of the Movement, but he does not deal with the question of what sort of response the central government takes against the movement. Although his work is irrelevant but it provides a brief political background for this study.

³⁰ The Old Order is the period of guided democracy under the presidency of Sukarno, 1959-1968

³¹ The New Order is referred to the period of *Pancasila* democracy under Suharto's regime, 1968-1998.

³² David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 1994), 135-157.

³³ The alienated professional holds the view that underdevelopment in Aceh is due to the unjust policy of the Indonesian government, and Aceh can only be developed by separating itself completely from Indonesia. See *Ibid.*,

M. A. Nawawi in his conception of “regional stagnancy” in his Ph.D. thesis (1968) entitled *Regionalism and Regional Conflict in Indonesia*. Nawawi goes a step further and posits “particularism” and “stagnation” as the causes of regional sentiment. Prior to the study of the Aceh case, Nawawi argues that the ‘*Ulamas*’ rebellion in 1953 was based on “moral disgust and economic stagnation”.³⁴ This particular case is apparent when the provincial status of Aceh is liquidated to integrate it with the North-Sumatra province. The ‘*Ulamas*’ of PUSA perceives negative influences as being brought by the influx of many Javanese Dutch-educated technocrats to Aceh, and by the adoption of Dutch’s Law which undermines the Islamic Court which has been present since the Japanese occupation. Under these circumstances, Teungku Daud Beureueh perceives that Indonesia is ruled by Hindu-Javanism wearing the clothes of nationalism. Hence, being threatened by the slow but sure inflow of alien influence, the ‘*Ulamas*’ of PUSA believe that it is necessary to resume the provincial status of Aceh for maintaining its distinct Islamic character. The integration of Aceh into the North-Sumatra province generates a strong negative impact on the Acehnese economy, as their full right of autonomy in terms of external trading³⁵ is consequently restricted and it leads to economic stagnation. The Acehnese feel that the central government has treated them in a step-motherly fashion and therefore, they wage a rebellion against the central government.³⁶ Nawawi’s thesis simply emphasizes the causes of the Acehnese rebellion, which are emanated from political and economic discrimination. However, he does not deal with the reaction of the central government towards the rebellion.

Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin (1985) in his book, *The Republican Revolt: A Study of the Acehnese Rebellion*,³⁷ analyzes central-regional relations in which he stresses the response of the central government towards the rebellion. He asserts that the central government has adopted an accommodative policy that is meant to meet the demand of the revolutionist. However, in another article, *Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the*

³⁴M.A. Nawawi, *Regionalism and Regional Conflict in Indonesia* (Unpublished, Ph.D. Thesis: Princeton University, 1968).

³⁵After the complete surrender of the Japanese, despite tight sea control imposed by the Dutch, the Acehnese continued to have trading relations with Penang in Malaya.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 347-378.

³⁷Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt: A Case Study of the Acehnese Rebellion* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 1985), 12.

Acehnese Experience (1984), Nazaruddin investigates the second regionalism in Aceh, under the influence of the GAM under the leadership of Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro. He argues that the root of the conflict stems from three factors. Firstly, the failures of the former New Order regime to realize the autonomous status of Aceh and to put into practice the *Shari'ah*. Secondly, the regime's close relationship with Christian groups, which gives the latter many opportunities to "proselytize" in the Aceh region. Finally, the region is treated like a "stepchild" by the central government. The government only develops good infrastructure that linked Arun - the newly found reserved natural gas area - and North Sumatra, which indicates that Suharto's regime only has an interest in LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) in Arun. This fact angers the Acehnese and turns their support to the cause for the establishment of the Independent State of Aceh that Hasan Muhammad diTiro propagates.³⁸ In the first book that is based on his thesis, Nazaruddin emphasizes the response of the central government towards the rebellion, in which he believes that the rebellion is ended due to the willingness of the central government to respond positively towards the demands of the revolutionists. However, he does not analyze the side effects of the government policy, which has actually initiated another series of Acehnese separatist movement. In his latter work, Nazaruddin focuses on the causes of the emergence of the Free Aceh Movement, which he considers as a movement based on regional sentiment. His works, therefore, have provided the historical background for the study of the current political developments in Aceh.

In his book *Political Dimension of Islam in Southeast Asia* (1996), Lukman Thaib, asserts that the struggle of GAM or in his terms ASNLF (Aceh-Sumatra National Liberation Front) is a continuation of the Acehnese struggle against colonial powers, which he defines as the Indonesian- Javanese dominated government. It is a continuous struggle for self-determination justified by the international declaration of human rights. Yet, the Indonesian government alleges ASNLF to be an Islamic fundamentalist revolution, so as to contain support from the international community for the latter. Lukman further asserts that it is not true

³⁸Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, "Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Acehnese Experience," in Lim Joo-Jock and Vanis (eds), *Arm Separatism in Southeast Asia*, 124.

by constitution that the ASNLF talks about the Islamic State of Aceh, but he believes that their struggle is for the Acehnese rights as free people. In short, GAM is a historical struggle of the Acehnese for their independence from outside powers.³⁹ Lukman presents a very radical view on this issue. He focuses on the historical fact that the Free Aceh Movement is an incremental struggle against colonial power. His work is descriptive in nature, and to some extent will largely be adopted for the discussion on historical background for this study.

Tim Kell (1995), in his book *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, investigates the root of the rebellion. Kell claims that the insurgence is due to the central government's failure to initiate a change in governmental system from the unitary to a federal system whereby distribution of political power is possible between the center and outer island ethnic groups. Hasan Muhammad diTiro claims federalism as the best system to govern Indonesia. The absence of the fundamental change in power distribution compels diTiro to initiate a movement of independence for the outer islands, signifying Indonesia as a camouflage nation-state of Javanese colonialism inherited from the Dutch. Perceiving that the Javanese was destroying the Acehnese political, social and cultural heritage, taking their land and plundering their economic resources, he set up a Free Aceh Movement (GAM) with the objective of assuring "the survival of the people of Aceh- Sumatra as a nation," by re-declaring Aceh as an independent state in 1976.⁴⁰ Kell also highlights the policy that the central government takes in response to the movement, in which the government adopts a policy of "Shock Therapy" through organizing military operations, as well as by incorporating the 'Ulamas and civil servants into a non-military operations. In this study, Kell highlights not only the roots of the rebellion, but also policies that the government has adopted. Due to the limitation of the period that the study covers, he fails to show the impact of these policies on the way the Acehnese perceive themselves *vis-à-vis* the military, as well as the 'Ulamas and the central government. Nevertheless, his work provides useful information for the discussion of the historical background of this

³⁹Lukman Thaib, *Political Dimension of Islam in Southeast Asia* (Bangi: Penerbit University Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1996), 27.

⁴⁰Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesian Project, 1995), 61-64.

study.

Finally, Al-Chaidar et al. (1998) in their most recent work on Military Operation in Aceh entitled *Aceh Bersimbah Darah* [Bloodbath in Aceh],⁴¹ try to dig up the bloodiest *genocide* as the result of the politics of violence adopted by the central government to silence GAM in Aceh, during the period 1989-1998. They consider it as a sort of genocide that has been perpetuated since the occupation of the Dutch, Japanese and Indonesia under Suharto regime. They also suggest what sort of future policies the central government should take to calm down the anger and psychological pain of the victim. This book is one of the latest works on Aceh, in which Al-Chaidar et al., make an attempt to uncover the records of human rights violations committed by the military during the Suharto regime when Aceh is declared as Military Operation Zone. However, they do not attempt to analyze the political impact of the Indonesian military regime's politics of violence on the Acehnese perception towards Indonesia *vis-à-vis* the GAM.

Evidently, none of the above mentioned works explain the issue of Aceh in the light of the theoretical framework of national integration. Some of them have overemphasized the historical aspect, which is descriptive in nature. Though there are also those who have emphasized the political base, yet they have focused on the causes of the rebellion, rather than on the impact of the government response on the masses and movement itself. Thus, they have skipped asking questions such as what sort of political response does the central government have to curb the movement and what sort of side-effects does it have on the civilian victims. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct an investigation on the recent developments of Acehnese aspiration for complete separation from Indonesia. It is hoped that this study could be the first contribution to the study of the issue of national integration, with the case of Aceh in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

In the process of completing this study, the researcher has used a historical-analytical method. The historical approach is necessary for examining the historical development of the inclusion of Aceh into Indonesia. It is also necessary to apply the analytical

⁴¹Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah* [Bloodbath in Aceh] (Jakarta Timur: Pustaka Kautsar, 1998).

method for analyzing the impact of the politics of violence that the central government has enforced in Aceh. Concerning the concrete research strategy, the study has examined the relationship between Aceh and Indonesia through the historical and political development before the enforcement of military operation in Aceh, and the political condition during the post-military operation.

Therefore, the data for this analysis are derived from major sources of non-survey data, namely press reports and standard biographical publication for the élite backgrounds and other government and non-government sources of aggregate data. Semi-structured interviews, analysis of student's congress and recommendations of various conferences and written works are also used.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the introduction and theoretical framework, as the navigator that should direct the study towards its stated objectives. Chapter 2 discusses the historical background of Aceh as our case of study, with the emphasis on the position of Aceh in the Indonesian perspective. Its purpose is to show the relationship that existed between Aceh and the Republic of Indonesia in the past. Chapter 3 discusses the genesis or the possible causes of the Acehnese rebellions, referring specifically to the *Darul Islam* rebellion that demanded autonomy from the Old Order regime. Chapter 4 traces the root of the conflict which initiates the birth of GAM during the New Order regime. Chapter 5 highlights the type of policy adopted by the regime to silence the insurgence and investigates the impact of the policy on the Acehnese attitude towards the GAM *vis-à-vis* the Indonesian government. Finally, Chapter 6 sums up the discussion and provides recommendations for solving the problem of national integration, keeping in view the case of Aceh in Indonesia.



CHAPTER 2

ACEH IN THE INDONESIAN PERSPECTIVE

Sukarno, in his efforts to strengthen the concept of Indonesian unity, expounded that "the national state is the only Indonesia in its entirety, which existed in the time of Shrivijaya and Majapahit, and which now too we must set up together."⁴² Likewise, Dr. Henry Kissinger, the former US secretary of State, correctly wrote: "Indonesia was nothing but a geographic expression until the Dutch found out it was more efficient to unite the islands of Indies under a single administration".⁴³ From these two quotations, one may ask: was Aceh under the influence of these two ancient kingdoms, the Shrivijaya and Majapahit? Was there any other civilizations that had touched Aceh and left a deep impact on the later generation of Acehnese? Then what were the factors that led Aceh to join Indonesia, were there any threats towards their state? These questions have been neglected and none of the Acehnese or Indonesian historians have ever critically analyzed the factors behind the inclusion of Aceh and the benefits that Aceh would gain by joining Indonesia. It is, therefore, necessary to provide in brief a historical and political background of Aceh, so as to have a clear picture of why, the once loyal, Acehnese revolted against the central government, from the 1950s until the present time.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ACEH

Aceh is a region located in the tip of the North Sea of Sumatra Island, which covers an area of 57,365,57 km², including more than a hundred small islands stretching along its Western Coast. At present, Aceh's population is 4 million⁴⁴ residing in twelve regencies:

⁴²See Grant Bruce, "Indonesia" quoted in Christian Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Pattern and Politics*, 19.

⁴³ Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (Washington D.C: n.n.p, 1967), 256

⁴⁴The Acehnese are also divided into three ethnic groups, those who live in the coastal area, and the other two groups who live in the mountainous central and southeastern region known as Gayo and Alas. They speak different languages from that of the people of the coastal area. According to the late A.Hasymy, an Acehnese historian, those highlanders are the original Acehnese.

Sabang, Proper Aceh, Pidie, Aceh Jeumpa Bireun, North Aceh, East Aceh, Central Aceh, West Aceh, South Aceh, Southeast Aceh, Aceh Singkel, and Simeulu. It was in this region that a great Muslim Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam flourished.⁴⁵ Aceh was the first region to receive Islam, and from here, it began to flourish all over the Southeast Asian region.

Aceh was unknown to the world until the coming of Islam in early seventh century AC, until then only one-third of its area was under the influence of the Buddhist kingdom Shrivijaya that was located in Palembang.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the Hindu kingdom of Java, Majapahit which was at its zenith in the late fourteen century,⁴⁷ was not able to influence Aceh which eventually was growing stronger and extended its control over the Malacca straits. The Acehnese Sultanate had not only become a strong rival of the Majapahit,⁴⁸ but it had also sent some Muslim missionaries to Java that marked the beginning of the Islamization of Java and as the turning point of the Muslim sultanate in Java to replace the decaying Hindu Majapahit kingdom.⁴⁹

The first kingdom that declared Islam as a state religion was located in East Aceh, the kingdom of Pereulak in 1258.⁵⁰ In Pasé, North Aceh, there was another kingdom under the King *Meurah Silu*⁵¹ who embraced Islam and assumed the title of Malik al- Salih. He then married the princess of the Pereulak kingdom and fathered two sons, Malik al-Zahir and Malik al-Mansur. According to Ibn Batuta, the crown was inherited by Malik al-Zahir (1298-1346) after the death of al-Salih. He loved to have discussions with the learned persons, such as theologians, jurists and his court was frequented by

⁴⁵ Lukman Thaib, *The Roots of the Acehnese Struggle* (Bangi: Dept of Political Science UKM, 1996), 154.

⁴⁶ Christine Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Pattern and Politics*, 20.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁸ Jon M. Reinhardt, *Foreign Policy and National Integration: The Case of Indonesia* (New Haven: Yale University South East Asia Studies, 1971), 14.

⁴⁹ However, the influence of Hindus and paganism cannot be illuminated completely from the way of life of the Javanese. For the civilization that Hindus once brought to the Javanese had become the pride of the past generation. It is obviously reflected in the later political developments in Indonesia.

⁵⁰ “*Meurah*” is an Acehnese word which means “Your Highness”, see M Arifin Amin, *Monisa Dalam Lintasan Sejarah Bangsa* [Monisa in the Line of National History] (Medan: U.D. Rahmad, 1984), 12-13.

⁵¹ S.Q Fatimi, *Islam Came to Malaysia* (Singapore: Islamic Institution, 1963), 9.

poets and men of learning.⁵² In addition to that, he was such a great general and made war against the infidels of the surrounding countries until they submitted and paid tribute.⁵³

The Sultan Malik al-Zahir established the first Islamic educational institution at the Mosque of Pasé (today Lhokseumawe). The institution was patronized by the Sultan himself who also participated in the studies. As mentioned above, Ibn Batuta witnessed the way how the Sultan loved knowledge and encouraged people to study. Consequently, Pasé evolved to be the center for Islamic studies and also the meeting place for Islamic scholars and theologians from the world of Islam, including for instance Qadi Amir Sayyid from Shiraz (Iran), Taj al-Din from Isfahan and Amir Daulasa from the Sultanate of Delhi, India. It was reported that even 'Abd Allah Ibn Muhammad al-Muntasir, a descendant of the last Caliph of Baghdad had also visited Pasé and passed away there in 1407.⁵⁴

There were many small kingdoms in Aceh such as the kingdom of Daya, Pedier, Beunua (Tamieng), Linge, Jaya and all these kingdoms were unified under the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam during the early sixteenth century A.C by Sultan Alaidin Ali Mughaiyat Syah.⁵⁵ And, under the leadership of Sultan Iskandar Muda, who reigned from 1607 to 1636 A.C, the Acehnese successfully destroyed the naval force of the Portuguese that had occupied Malacca in 1614 in Bintan.⁵⁶ It was the starting point of their expansionism.⁵⁷ During this period the Sultan claimed that along the West Coast their territory extended beyond Tapus, Barus, Sorkam, and even Tapanuli. In the East Coast, Batubara and Tamiang were said to be the limits marking the Acehnese Sultanate

⁵²H. A. R Gibb, Ibn Batuta: *Travels in Asia and Africa* (London n.n.p, 1929), 274, 302.

⁵³Ismail Hamid, "The Earliest Center of Islamic Studies in the Malay World," in *Islamic Herald*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Kuala Lumpur (Feb, 1986), 11-14.

⁵⁴Syed Muhammad Nuquib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of Malay-Indonesia Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa, 1969), 21.

⁵⁵Lukman Thaib, *The Politics and Government of Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Golden Books Center Sdn. Bhd, 1997), 46; Teungku Syik diPaloh, *Acheh Sumatra Kelahiran Baru untuk Merdeka* [New Birth of Acheh Sumatra for Independence] (Kuala Lumpur: Anis Sdn. Bhd, 1997)

⁵⁶"Iskandar Muda" in, *Encarta Encyclopedia*.

⁵⁷Lee Kam Hing, *The Sultanate of Aceh Relation with the British 1760-1824* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995), 2.

influence.⁵⁸ Almost half of the Sumatra Island was under its control until the coming of the Dutch in 1873.

The fact that Aceh is located in the northern part of Sumatra and sited in the eastern edge of the Bay of Bengal, gave it a commanding position over the Straits of Malacca. It produced chaphor, sappanwood, dammar, rattan, beeswax, pepper, betel nut, some rice, as well as horses which were exported through Pedier coast. On the other hand, Aceh also imported such goods as opium, cloth, iron, gunpowder, various Indian goods and an assortment of goods from China.⁵⁹ Trade was taking place on the West Bank, the *Kampung Jawa* that acted as the main commercial center. Meanwhile, on the east bank where Penajong was located, traders set up shops and residence. Five kilometers inland from the mouth of the river was the capital of Aceh Darussalam, which was referred to as Banda Aceh Darussalam or Kutaraja,⁶⁰ connoting abode of peace, where the Sultan's palace was located.

The Sultan was at the apex of the political system, as the source of all political, judicial and economic power. He appointed all the *orangkaya* (merchant-official)⁶¹ and the *Ulèëbalangs* (the aristocrat/territorial chief). Aceh was divided into many *mukims* (territories) that included a numbers of mosques. The *Ulèëbalang*, who was originally the chief military commander in their respective *mukim*, ruled each *mukim*. During the reign of Nur al-Alam Nagiyat ad-Din Syah, *mukim* was grouped into three federations. Each federation was controlled by a Panglima Sagi (Sago), and their title was followed by the number of *mukim* that had been placed under him, such as *Panglima Sagi* of the XXII, XXV and XXVI *mukim*. Moreover, the *Panglima Sagi* of the XXII was the most powerful and was referred to as *Panglima Polem*. There were other *mukims* which were directly under the control of the Sultan and other *Ulèëbalangs*, while in other newly opened territory by the immigration of the Acehnese, the Sultan appointed a family member to be the head of these principalities in order to have full control over them.⁶² The *Geuchik* (the Chief) was the leader of a village which comprised of many

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁰Kutaraja, at present refers to Banda Aceh.

⁶¹*Orangkaya* was the title owned by rich merchants, court officials and members of nobility.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 9.

*meunasah*⁶³ as the smallest community with a *Teungku Imum*⁶⁴ as its leader. Therefore, the cohesiveness of the Acehnese community, absolutely depended on the compromise and tolerance among those *Teungku Imums*.⁶⁵

Concerning the revenues, not all were sent to the Sultan, but they were also shared by the *orangkaya* and *Ulèëbalangs*, who were directly controlling the port. As the former were growing wealthy and powerful due to the economic prosperity, Sultan Iskandar Muda, began to check them. He seized their weapons, forbade them from building their house of bricks and stones, and went to the extreme of executing many of them. In order to strengthen his power, the Sultan codified the commercial regulation.⁶⁶ It was during his reign that the royal had full control over all important ports of the West and East Coast which by then marked the zenith of the Sultanate Aceh Darussalam.⁶⁷ After his death, Iskandar Muda, was succeeded by his son in-law Iskandar Thani (1636-1641) who later was succeeded subsequently by four other Queens,⁶⁸ during whose reign the struggle for power became profound, leading to several attempted coups. Consequently, the Sultanate began to decline and ended when the Dutch arrested the last Sultan Muhammad Daud Syah in 1903, after not less than 60 years of heavy wars.

ACEH DURING COLONIAL RULE: THE DUTCH AND JAPANESE OCCUPATION

The Acehnese owed a lot to Islam. It is their pride, due to their sincerity to propagate Islam, that Aceh become well known as the

⁶³It is a multi-purposes building used for daily congregational prayers, but not for Jum'at prayer because it is smaller than the Mosque. It also functions as the village gathering place. Basic Islamic education for children was also conducted there and boys over ten years would spend the night there, instead of spending the night at home. See Siegel T. James, *The Rope of God* (Los Angeles: University California Press, 1969), 50-80.

⁶⁴*Imum* is derived from an Arabic word "Imam" which connotes leader, who leads in offering five times prayers, as well as in social life. By the same token to the term *Imum* in Acehnese language, he holds both functions.

⁶⁵The role of those *Teungku Imums* was profound in motivating the community to fight in the path of Allah against colonial power, as to be explained in the later part of the paper.

⁶⁶Lee Kam Hing, *The Sultanate of Aceh Relation with the British 1760-1824*, 14.

⁶⁷Lukman Thaib, *The Politics and Government of Southeast Asia*, 46.

⁶⁸Ismail Sofyan, *Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History* (Jakarta: Jakarta Agung Offset, 1994)

“Front Porch of Makka”. Though of course there was still a slight influence of *Buddhism* that was flourishing during the pre-Islamic era, Islam has deeply penetrated the way of life of the people.⁶⁹ Such influence was so conspicuous, particularly during the three consecutive Acehnese wars against the colonial powers, the Portuguese in the straits of Malacca, the Dutch, and the Japanese.

Although the *Nusantara*⁷⁰ which is later referred to as Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch for more than 300 years, Aceh still remained an independent sovereign sultanate recognized internationally by big powers, particularly, Great Britain,⁷¹ the United States, and Italy.⁷² However, following the signing of the Sumatra Treaty between Great Britain and the Netherlands in 1871 which gave the Dutch freedom to expand their control over the whole island of Sumatra, the Sultan of Aceh sent a delegation to a friendly kingdom such as Turkey for help. In October 1872, the Dutch government dispatched a letter to the Sultan of Aceh, requesting him to send a mission to settle that matter in the interest of both parties. In reply, the Sultan sent a delegation to Riau in December of the same year requesting for some months of postponement of the Dutch mission’s visit, as the Sultan was waiting for the return of his envoy from Turkey. On the return from Riau, the Sultan’s delegation had a stopover in Singapore and called on the United States and Italian consulates.⁷³ On January 25, 1873, the United States consulate and the delegates drew up a draft agreement for bilateral co-operation in facing the Dutch menace.⁷⁴

Apprehensive of an unfavourable outcome of the Singapore negotiation between the United States and Aceh, and fearing the

⁶⁹Richard V. Weeks, (eds.), *Muslim Peoples: A World Ethnographic Survey* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984), 4.

⁷⁰The term *Nusantara* was firstly used by Mahapatih (Prime Minister) Gajah Mada of the Majapahit kingdom, who pledged himself to unite the whole Southeast Asia region under the banner of Majapahit. Yet, the term here is used within the scope of Indonesia’s territory. See Jon M. Reinhardt, *Foreign Policy and National Integration: The case of Indonesia*, 16.

⁷¹As it was stated in the London Treaty of 1824, Great Britain respected the independence and integrity of the Sultanate of Aceh. See Lee Kam Hing, *The Sultanate of Aceh Relation with the British 1760- 1824*, 319.

⁷²The Sultanate of Aceh also had managed to have a friendship accord with the United State and Italy in 1873. See Bernard H.M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia* (Jakarta: P.T. Soerongan, 1961), 320.

⁷³*The Dutch Colonial war in Aceh* (Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh/ Documentation and Information Center of Aceh, 1977), 20.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 21.

intervention of a third power, on March 26th, 1873, the Dutch government issued a formal declaration of war against the independent Sultanate of Aceh.⁷⁵ The war between the Acehnese and Dutch took place and it was known as the "Aceh War." For the Acehnese it was the Holy War (*jihad* in the path of Allah), fighting against the infidel Dutch who had threatened the existence of their religion Islam.⁷⁶ It was a long and fierce war whereby both sides had presented brave and gallant warriors who fought for their own beliefs.

A Dutch historian, Paul Van't Veer has divided the Aceh War into four phases.⁷⁷ The first phase of the war began in 1873. It was on April 6, 1873 that the first Dutch troops landed in Pante' Ceuremen under the command of General J.H.L. Kohler. The Dutch attempted to capture the Great Mosque, however, the Acehnese under the command of the Teungku Imum Lueng Bata repulsed the attack. During this battle, the Dutch met serious and fierce resistance from the Acehnese who forced them to retreat and had to suffer great losses following the death of Major General Kohler on April 14, 1873. In this war, 45 Dutch troops were killed including 8 officers, 405 wounded, and 23 of whom were officers. The first Dutch offensive was a total failure.⁷⁸

The second phase lasted from 1874 to 1880, in which Dutch troops landed for the second time under the command of General J. Van Swieten. He started a second offensive on December 9, 1873 and by January 24, 1874, the Palace of the Sultan fell to the Dutch. Van Swieten proclaimed that the whole kingdom had been placed under the jurisdiction of the Netherlands Indies' government. During this war, there were considerable casualties, 28 officers and 1024 subordinates were killed, 52 officers and 1082 subordinates were wounded or sick and the latter had been evacuated elsewhere. The Dutch speculated that by capturing the palace, the rest of the Aceh

⁷⁵It was the violation of the Siak Convention in which the British and the Dutch agreed to guarantee the independence of Aceh. See Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Aceh, Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898* (Kuala Lumpur: University Malaya Press, 1969), 57.

⁷⁶This historical fact indicates that the so-called nation-state of Indonesia was unknown to the Muslim Acehnese warriors, until the late 1930s, when the Indonesian nationalist movement began to emerge. See George M.T. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952), 18-100.

⁷⁷A. Hasymy, et al., *50 Tahun Aceh Membangun* [50 Years Aceh Development] (Medan: Percetakan Bali, 1995), 64.

⁷⁸*The Dutch Colonial War in Aceh*, 26.

territory would bow down before Dutch superiority. Nevertheless, the Acehnese resistance intensified under the command of 'Ulamas and other great commanders like Teuku Nya' Hasan, Teuku Umar, Panglima Nya' Bintang, Pang Saman, Pang Jareueng, Teuku Cut, Teuku Husen, Pang Pagar Aye and Said Ali. Therefore, their resistance caused great losses to the Dutch with very minimum gains. Within seven years, the war had cost the Dutch 115 million florins, while they were only capable of capturing an area of 10 square kilometers by early 1880.⁷⁹

The third phase known as Guerrilla War, from 1881-1896, was marked by a successful mass mobilization by 'Ulamas such as the Tiro in Pidie, Teungku Syekh Muhammad Saman (Teungku Chi' diTiro)⁸⁰ with other 'Ulamas from other parts of Aceh, who declared a Holy War against the infidel Dutch. His campaign was well received by all Acehnese and he succeeded in mobilizing an estimated 6000 men. This state of war continued until the death of Teungku Chi' diTiro and Panglima Polem Raja Kuala in 1891. Their sons inherited their warrior spirits, Raja Daud Syah and Teungku Muhammad Amin diTiro continued the Holy War against the Dutch. In West Aceh under the leadership of Teuku Umar, the Acehnese waged guerrilla war against the Dutch, while Panglima Nya' Makam, who was appointed as commander for East Aceh by the Sultan Muhammad Daud Syah, continued the guerrilla war there. This state of warfare was continued by many other warriors including the heroines such as Tjut Nya'dhien,⁸¹ the widow of Teuku Umar in West Aceh and Tjut Nya' Meutia, the widow of Teuku Chi' Muhammad (Teuku Chi' diTunong) in North Aceh.⁸² Thus, another Dutch historian, H.C. Zentgraaff, characterized the Acehnese as follows:

Yet, we heard from all our military commanders who had fought that there was no one single nation which was so brave

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 27-33.

⁸⁰His great success earned him a prominent position as the chief of religious authority in the whole region of Aceh. His appointment had undermined the *Ul  balang*, in order to protect him from the jealousy of the latter, the Sultan gave him the *chap sikureu  ng* (nine-fold seal), the Sultan's authorization that authorized him as the acting-Sultan of Aceh, until the young Sultan grows up. Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Aceh, Netherlands and Britain 1858-1898*, 251-252.

⁸¹M. H.Szekely-Lulofs, Tjoet Nja Din, (Trans) Abdoel Moeis (Djakarta: Penerbit Chailan Sjamsoe, n.nd).

⁸²Ismail Sofyan, *Prominent Women in the Glimpse of History*, 79-107; the term Tjut Nya' is the title given to the women belong to the aristocrat family

and fanatic in battle other than the Acehnese. Even their women had more courage and willingness to sacrifice in war than women of other nations.⁸³

Although the last Sultan of Aceh, Muhammad Daud Syah (1878-1903) and the *Uléëbalangs* surrendered to the Dutch after the latter captured two of his wives and son,⁸⁴ the war continued. It was the fourth phase of the Aceh-Dutch war which took place from 1903 till 1942. Therefore, Paul Van't Veer asserted that the Aceh war did not end in 1913 or 1914, for there was a red line from 1914 until 1942 leaving a trace of murder and killing of the underground or the open resistance movement which spread from 1925 to 1927.⁸⁵ This period was known as Aceh Murder (Aceh Moord)⁸⁶ which took place during the period between 1910 to 1942. This affair was well known all over the Netherlands Indies, as the Acehnese individually carried out such Holy War against the infidel Dutch that led to a series of murders of the Dutch officers.⁸⁷ There were an estimated 120 cases of murder during the period 1910 to 1937, 43 cases from 1913 to 1918, and there were 19 cases from 1933 to 1938. It was declining as the influence of PUSA touched the heart of the community.⁸⁸

As the red line stretched from 1914 to 1942, the whole period from 1873 until 1942 must be regarded as one great Dutch war in Aceh.⁸⁹ During this war from 1873 to 1914, the casualties resulted as follows, (a) on the Dutch side, about 37500 men were killed, and (b) on the Acehnese side about 70000 men martyred. The total casualties of both sides was no less than 100,000 men dead and 500,000 wounded.⁹⁰ In memory of this long war, G. B. Hooyer stated that:

...[T]herefore, the Dutch war in Aceh will always remain a source of study for our army and for this very reason, I

⁸³H.C. Zengraaff, *Atjeh*, quoted in *The Dutch Colonial War in Aceh*, 255.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 49

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 253

⁸⁶Some Acehnese writers define this term connoting "Acehnese madness" which is out of context, such as in Al-Chaidar, et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 21.

⁸⁷*The Dutch Colonial War in Aceh*, 248-250.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 251.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 255; However, the Acehnese resistance was regarded as a foolish move by the Muslim in other islands which had been colonized, for they believed that it was the will of Allah that the Dutch had colonized Indonesia. See, Bernard H.M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia*, 326.

⁹⁰*The Dutch Colonial War in Aceh*, 251.

consider it quite appropriate to devote this entire third and last volume concerning the war history (in the Netherlands Indies) to the description of the Aceh war.⁹¹

Another issue that is worth mentioning is the Islamic religious revivalism which took place within the Acehnese community propagated by young Muslim reformists such as Teungku Daud Beureueh. It was an extraordinary policy of the Dutch that they allowed many religious schools to grow under the 'Ulamas of PUSA in particular, and in which they failed to perceive that a dangerous Acehnese force was in the making. The Dutch seemed so much worried with the everlasting hostility propagated by the traditionalist 'Ulamas, that this forced the Dutch to establish a *Volkschool*, challenging the traditional Islamic school. They sent *Ulèëbalangs'* sons who were considered as future leaders of Aceh,⁹² to secondary education in Bukit Tinggi or to Java so that they may be co-opted with the system of the ruling power, the Dutch system. This education policy, had actually initiated an unexpected response from the reformist 'Ulamas, as well as the *Ulèëbalang*. From the late 1920s, such Islamic schools which adopted western methodology began to flourish all over Aceh and marked the year of religious revivalism in the history of Aceh.⁹³

In May 1939, the *Kaum Muda* or the young 'Ulamas formed PUSA (*Persatuan 'Ulama Seluruh Aceh*/ All Aceh 'Ulama Association) on the initiative of Teungku Abdul Rahman and Teungku Muhammad Daud Beureueh was appointed as its chairman.⁹⁴ He established a school called "Jami'atul Diniyah" in Garot, Sigli, where he began a reform movement by propagating the idea that all human hearts consist of *Akai*⁹⁵ (Mind) and *Nafsu* (Lust). These two dimensions of the human heart are in conflict, and they tried to overcome one another. Once the Lust overwhelms the Mind, it would lead to chaos

⁹¹G. B. Hooyer, *De Krijgsgeschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indie*, quoted in *Ibid.*, 255.

⁹²As Governor Goedhart was quoted saying that: "it is essential that we keep firmly in mind that our authority in Aceh rests primarily on the *Ulèëbalangs*, apart from the force of arms... Without them, we will achieve nothing in Aceh in the long run." Cited in Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional rules in Northern Sumatra* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 7.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 21-24.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 25.

⁹⁵Akai or Akal is derived from the Arabic word "Aqal" which connotes Mind or Reason, and it is in Acehnese usage. While the term, Akal is in Indonesian usage.

and backwardness. Therefore, the Mind with the help of religion should always overcome the Lust. Only then, the self-awareness of the duty that Allah had ordered could be realized.⁹⁶ This revival movement was positively accepted by the Dutch and had normalized the relation between the Acehnese with the Dutch, which had also ended the period of Aceh Murder (Atjeh Moord).⁹⁷ Due to its distinct Acehnese character of revivalism which differed from other nationalistic revivalisms in Indonesia, such as Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah, the Dutch were not aware that they had allowed a dangerous weapon to spread all over Aceh. Anthony Reid states: "...[I]t may seem extraordinary that such a powerful weapon for resistance was allowed to arise under 'Ulamas leadership. This was precisely what the earliest Dutch "pacifiers" most feared."⁹⁸

The PUSA took this opportunity to send some delegations from PUSA Youth, such as Said Abubakar, to contact the Japanese who had occupied Penang. With the support of the Japanese (Nippon) who formed the *Fujiwara-Kikan* (Fujiwara organization), they began to revolt against the Dutch, and on March 12, 1942, they drove out the Dutch from Aceh for good. Thus, the Japanese were greeted by enthusiastic Acehnese crowds, whereby other Indonesians were shocked and awestruck at the might of the new colonial master.⁹⁹ The Japanese entered Aceh and after two weeks, they pacified the whole of Indonesia. The first policy that they adopted was to separate Sumatra and Java. While, in Aceh, those Regents of the Dutch period were replaced by prominent *Ulèëbalangs*, holding the Japanese title *guncho*, civil administrative or *the head of the gun*.¹⁰⁰

However, during the first six months of their landing in November 1942, the Japanese were shocked to find themselves in a bloody confrontation with the Acehnese Islamic leadership. This hostility became apparent as the 'Ulamas began to realize that the *Fujiwara*-organization had driven out "the dog but had brought in the pig". Teungku Abdul Djalil Cot Plieng in Bayu (North Aceh) even equated the Japanese with *Yajuj* and *Majuj* (Gog and Magog), the

⁹⁶Since then, Teungku Daud Beureueh was known as the father of the self-awareness of the Acehnese people. See James T. Siegel, *The Rope of God*, 99-105.

⁹⁷The normalization period had not only created a peaceful condition but had also elevated the economic performance of the Acehnese, as crops-growers, and by 1941, they experienced a surplus of rice stock in Aceh. Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People*, 125.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 26.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*,

brutish destroyers of Islam.¹⁰¹ He then propagated among his disciples the concept of martyrdom embodied in *Hikayat Perang Sabil* (The Epic of the Holy War in the Path of Allah).¹⁰² In November 10, 1942, the Japanese massacred him together with 100 of his disciples, and burned down his school and the mosque.¹⁰³ Fearing another Islamic revolution, the Japanese set up *MAIBKATRA*, an Islamic Religious Institution in March 1943.¹⁰⁴ The establishment of this institution was one way to normalize the relationship between the Acehnese and the Japanese. The function of this institution was to explain the sacred nature of the war against the West and to be cheerful in facing hardship. It also advised the people not to interfere in government matters and encouraged them to adopt the attitude of a pure and upright heart that Islam had prescribed. This institution was a vehicle for propaganda in which the Japanese had recruited many prominent '*Ulamas*, and the Japanese agreed to establish an Islamic court in Kutaraja beside the secular court. Anthony Reid observes that:

The establishment of the religious court was a great symbolic victory for Acehnese Islam as a whole, unique in Indonesia, and was naturally saluted by propagandists as something which proved that the sacrifices of the 'holy war' in the Pacific were worthwhile.¹⁰⁵

Japanese Islamic policy made normalization possible and paved the way for Japanese military mobilization. Since the Japanese perceived the gallantry and fearlessness of the Acehnese, they were convinced of the need to establish a strong military force. The Japanese were optimistic that if these people were directed to the right way, that would be of a great benefit to them in the future.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 112-113.

¹⁰² Teungku Haji Pante Kulu was one of the writers of the *Hikayat Perang Sabil* [the epic of the Holy War]. This epic is about the journey of man from the world to the hereafter. It begins with the convention, "In the name of Allah the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate". Then announces that this is the story of the command to fight in the Holy War and followed by the verses of the Qur'an: "Allah has bought from the believers their selves and their possessions with Paradise; They fight in the way of Allah; they kill, and are killed; that is a promise binding upon Allah in the Torah and the Gospel, and the Qur'an..." See James T. Siegel, *The Rope of God*, 75-77; James T. Siegel, *Shadow and Sound: the Historical Thought of a Sumatra People* (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1979), 229-265.

¹⁰³ Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People*, 113.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

Many Acehnese youths, therefore, were recruited into a special police force. When the *Giyugun* (volunteer soldier) was established, Aceh *Giyugun* was the strongest in Sumatra and many of them reached higher ranks than those from other parts of Sumatra. The force of *Giyugun* in Aceh was estimated to be more than 5000 personnel.¹⁰⁶

Despite their willingness to concede with the Islamic nature of the Acehnese, the Japanese remained a colonial force that exploited the human and natural resources of the defeated people without any hesitation. The tension between the ruled and the colonizer was inevitable. Originally, the Japanese intended to make Sumatra as a source of raw material and market for Japanese industry, but due to the lack of shipping facilities, the intention broke down completely in 1943. All Japanese shipping available was requisitioned for purely military purposes. As a result, the Japanese economic policy had to undergo a complete change in the direction of self-sufficiency. Aceh which had been a major rice-surplus area before the war, supplying 36,000 tons of rice outside the region in 1941, had become the victim of requisition. From 1943 to 1944, 17,000 tons of rice and 3,000 tons of other foodstuffs were requisitioned to feed officials and the growing military force concentrated in Aceh. As the target grew progressively higher (22,000 tons of rice for 1944 to 1945 and 33,000 tons for 1945 to 1946), elaborate networks of organizations were established right down to the village level to collect quotas which represented between 10 and 15 per cent of the harvest. Yet, the targets were never reached and during the first six months of 1944 to 1945, less than 7,000 tons had been collected. Besides, 65 per cent of the Aceh population were now having shortage of rice, representing not only the urban people and fishermen, but also farmers who had already sold their rice and surrendered 50 per cent of the production to their landlords. Though the Acehnese had experienced similar rice crisis in 1918 to 1919 (under the Dutch), the needy were able to obtain credit and to buy a bamboo from the government at f,0.40.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, the prices of the rice in towns had soared from the normal f,0.15 to f.0.400 a bamboo, which was out of reach of any but the affluent.¹⁰⁸

Besides the evasion and passive resistance of rice growers

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 113-120.

¹⁰⁷ The letter "f" stands for Florin, the Dutch currency.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 124-125.

against requisition at nominal price, the burden of the Japanese demand for land and labors had reduced the rice crop substantially. Every *guncho* was given quotas of new crops such as silk and cotton which had to be grown to meet the new demand for self-sufficiency. In addition, the Japanese imposed a scale of forced labor policy on the Acehnese, in which rural labor had been diverted into feverish Japanese preparation to meet the expected Allied attack on the northern Aceh coast. Many airfields were constructed, strategic roads built and fortifications prepared at a very high cost in terms of human life, where many died during the process.¹⁰⁹

Although, the Japanese occupation was only for three and a half years, it had caused the people to suffer much more than the period of the Dutch colonialization. This bitterness, as the result of ruthless exploitation, aggravated deep animosity among Indonesians, and specifically among the Acehnese towards the Japanese, for the hopes of 1942 had been betrayed by the reality of wartime exploitation. Meanwhile, the *Ulèëbalangs* who held the position as *guncho* were also in an inconvenience position, particularly after the establishment of the Islamic Court, which marked the shift of judicial authority from the *Ulèëbalangs* to the 'Ulamas of PUSA. As the latter dominated the Court, what remained for the former was administration whose duty was to separate the farmer from his rice crop to supply the occupation army, and recruiting manpower for forced labor to construct defense installations. Their task certainly aroused popular resentment, implying that though both of the groups were cooperating with the Japanese, the *Ulèëbalangs* apparently were to pay a much higher price.¹¹⁰ As Anthony Reid writes: "they were between the frying pan and the fire. If they took pity on the people, in one hand they were hit by the Japanese; while on the other if they took the Japanese orders the people were oppressed."¹¹¹

In May 1945, a revolution began to break out such as the one at Pandraih in Jeunieb district, North Aceh. Although the revolution was not carried out systematically, it produced a very great impression. The Japanese were so surprised and demoralized as

¹⁰⁹Women were also used in the agricultural forced labor. *Ibid.*, 125-126.

¹¹⁰Audrey R. Kahin (ed.), *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 89.

¹¹¹Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People*, 126.

many of them fell victim to the Acehnese *rencong*.^{*} Thereby, the Japanese no longer dared to move about freely. Following the revolution, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 forced the Japanese to surrender to the Allied force and after several fierce wars, they left Aceh, as well as Indonesia for good. Aceh was once again standing as an autonomous region and continued its trading with Penang under the Regent, Teuku Nya' Arif.

ACEH DURING INDONESIAN REVOLUTION PERIOD: THE INCLUSION

After the Japanese left and the Dutch were on the way back to Indonesia, there was a great social revolution which is worth mentioning. It was a revolution where hundreds of the *Ulèëbalang* lost their lives. The event took place first in Cumbok village, Pidie, where the masses attacked the *Ulèëbalangs* whom they considered as traitors and the slaves of the Dutch colonial master. It was the conflict between the masses who were identified as the followers of PUSA and *Ulèëbalangs*, in which both had accused each other to have collaboration with the Dutch. Actually, it was more due to misunderstanding and prejudice that the civil war was inevitable, and Teuku Nya' Arif, the Resident of Aceh, was arrested, and he passed away in his exile in Tankengon (Central Aceh).¹¹² Such a social revolution that occurred in 1946 ended the traditional authority of the *Ulèëbalang*, and the 'Ulamas of PUSA assumed the leadership, and mobilized the people in defending the fledgling Republic against the Dutch Military aggressions in 1947 and 1948.

Although the Indonesians had declared their independence on August 17, 1945,¹¹³ the Dutch, with the support of Allied force came back to occupy Indonesia. Between the first Dutch military aggression in 1947 and the second in 1948, all regions in Indonesia, even its capital, had been reoccupied. However, Aceh was the only

^{*}*Rencong*, it is like a knife and identically used by the Acehnese during the war as a weapon.

¹¹²A.K.Jakobi, *ACEH: Dalam Perang Mempertahankan Proklamasi Kemerdekaan 1945-1949 dan Peranan Teuku Hamid Azwar Sebagai Pejuang* [Aceh: In defending Independence 1945-1949 and the Role of Teuku Hamid Azwar] (Jakarta: PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1998), 303-338.

¹¹³The declaration of Indonesian independence was not internationally recognized, particularly by those great powers such as Britain and the United States. Only a few third world countries such as Egypt recognized it.

region left untouched. In fact, it was an excellent opportunity for the Acehnese to declare their independent state, but they remained loyal to the fledgling Republic as reflected in the declaration of loyalty made separately by the late Teungku Haji Hasan Kruengkale, Teungku Daud Beureueh, Teungku Haji Ja'far Lamjabat, and Teungku Haji Hasballah Indrapuri. On behalf of all 'Ulamas of Aceh, on October 15, 1945, with the support of the Regent of Aceh Teuku Nya' Arif and the Chairman of the National Committee Tuanku Mahmud,¹¹⁴ they made an official statement of determination to stand up for Sukarno whom they regarded as a great leader who had declared the Independence of Indonesia to the world. They also proclaimed that defending the Republic of Indonesia was a holy cause. The statement was concluded with a remark that the Acehnese gave a pledge of obedience to the national leader for the sake of the country, religion and the new nation (see Appendix A).¹¹⁵

On December 19, 1948, the Dutch reoccupied the capital of the Republic and all prominent leaders were arrested. The weak Republic continued her struggle under the late Amir Sjarifuddin who formed an emergency state of Indonesia in West Sumatra. However, this opportunity was used by Teuku Dr. Mansur, the resident of East Sumatra region, and he organized a conference on March 28, 1949 in Medan. He invited Teungku Daud Beureueh, (Military Governor of Aceh, Land of Karo and Langkat) and other leaders to discuss the fate of Sumatra, whether to remain as part of the Republic or to declare an Independent State of Sumatra. He gave three options for Aceh. Firstly, it could split itself from the Republic of Indonesia and join the State of Sumatra. Secondly, it could declare itself as an independent state of Aceh, and finally, it could decide to remain as part of the Republic of Indonesia. Nevertheless, Teungku Daud Beureueh released a statement in a newspaper, *Semangat Merdeka* in Kuta Raja, dated March 23, 1949, stating that:

...[T]here is no provincialism in Aceh, therefore we have no intention of forming a Greater Aceh or such thing because we are all Government in spirit. For this reason we shall ignore the invitation of the Head of the State of the East Sumatra, and

¹¹⁴According to Muhammad Daud Paneuk, former Command in Chief of GAM's Armed Forces, the declaration of loyalty to Sukarno was made separately by those 'Ulamas. Daud Paneuk, MP-GAM, Kuala Lumpur, interview, August 14, 1999.

¹¹⁵Ibrahim Alfian, "The Aceh Question," International Conference on, *The Future Integration of Indonesia: Focus on Aceh*, New York, April 3rd, 1999

no reply will be sent.¹¹⁶

It was the starting point for the Acehnese under the leadership of PUSA to join Indonesia and remain loyal to the Republic of Indonesia. Nevertheless, many questions arose, such as why the Acehnese under Teungku Daud Beureueh initiates a revolution against the central government in the later phase of the political development of Indonesia? To answer this question, it is imperative to look at the factors that forced Aceh to join Indonesia, instead of standing alone as an Independent State of Aceh.

There were several important factors which initiated Aceh to join Indonesia. One of the most prominent factors that initiated the inclusion of Aceh in Indonesia was that on his visit to Teungku Daud Beureueh in Kutaraja (Banda Aceh) in 1948, Sukarno was asked by the Reformist '*Ulamas* (PUSA) and Orthodox '*Ulamas* of PUT (*Persatuan 'Ulama Tuha* / Orthodox '*Ulama* Association) about what would be the basis of future Indonesia. In response to this, Sukarno said it would be based on the Jakarta Charter.¹¹⁷ The answer still did not satisfy the '*Ulamas*, and thereafter Sukarno reiterated that Indonesia would be based on Islamic principles and if he failed to realize it, he promised Aceh should be an Islamic region. Only after these reassurance, the '*Ulamas* gave their commitment to support the Republic.¹¹⁸

Another interpretation of the possible factor that brought Aceh into Indonesia is the crucial condition during the revolution period between 1947 to 1948 when the Dutch captured Yogyakarta, the capital of Indonesia, and continued their expansion reaching almost Medan, very close to Aceh border. This state of affairs posed a very serious threat to the existence of Aceh, because in this situation it could not be taken for granted that the Dutch would not subjugate Aceh once again. However, the Dutch, did not even try to re-

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*,

¹¹⁷Jakarta Charter was the origin of *Pancasila*, it was more Islamic because it ensured the application of Islamic law on all Indonesian Muslim. This statement was deleted due to the rejection from East Indonesia (Christian dominant region). See, E. Darmaputera, *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1988), 152-153.

¹¹⁸Osman Raliby, *Documenta Historica* [Historical Document] (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1953), 223.

subjugate Aceh,¹¹⁹ and thus it remained as an autonomous territory. As they felt secure in their autonomy, the Acehnese had no difficulty to remain loyal to the central government,¹²⁰ as elaborated above in the response of Teungku Daud Beureueh to the invitation sent by Teuku Dr. Mansur.

Why did the Acehnese join the fledgling Republic? Was it due to a very delicate spirit of republicanism, nationalism or Islam among the Acehnese élite? In addition, was it a wise political decision taken by the late Teungku Daud Beureueh? None of the Indonesian historian or politicians had provided an accurate answer to these questions. Some argued that the Acehnese had been imbued by the idea of an Indonesian nation-state.¹²¹ Based on historical fact, soon after the colonial powers left Aceh, there were three élite groups: the PUSA, PUT, and *Ulèëbalangs*.¹²² There was perpetual political conflict between PUSA and *Ulèëbalangs*, while PUT was more concerned with education. Nevertheless, none of them had the idea of establishing Aceh as an independent state, rather they had been imbued by Islamic fanaticism that wanted to make Indonesia into an Islamic state.¹²³ As Brenda described, "Aceh, under the banner of a distinctively Islamic local and ethnic patriotism, entered independent Indonesia as a virtually autonomous *imperium in imperio*." ¹²⁴ Moreover, two prominent '*Ulamas*, Abdul Halim Hasan and Zainal Arifin Abbas from Eastern Sumatra sent a delegation to invite PUSA as the dominant political group in Aceh to fight against the Dutch (infidel). The delegation came with three messages:

1. The presence of the Dutch threatened the existence of religion (Islam) and Indonesia as a state;
2. Muslims in Aceh had to help their brothers to fight in the path of Allah to drive out the Dutch;
3. Eastern Sumatra needed heavy weaponry systems to block the Dutch forces with modern weapons.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹Eric. E. Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia*, 54-114.

¹²⁰Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt: A Case Study of the Acehnese Rebellion*, 2.

¹²¹Lim Joo-Jock and Vanis (eds.), *Armed Separatism in Southeast Asia*, 8.

¹²²Daud Paneuk, MP-GAM, Kuala Lumpur, interview, August 14, 1999

¹²³*Ibid.*,

¹²⁴Harry J. Brenda, "Southeast Asian Islam in the Twentieth Century," in P.M. Holt, et al., (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol.2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 204.

¹²⁵A. Hasymy, et al., *50 Tahun Aceh Membangun*, 193.

The Acehnese, therefore, believed that it was because of the idea of the Islamic State of Indonesia that Teungku Daud Beureueh and other prominent '*Ulamas* remained loyal to the Republic. This line of thought has proven to be reasonable when the Republican revolution took place in the 1950s under the banner of DI/TII (*Darul Islam/ Tentara Islam Indonesia* [Islamic State/ Islamic Soldiers of Indonesia]).¹²⁶

THE ACEHNESE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FLEDGLING REPUBLIC

During the national revolution, Aceh had played a very important role in defending the independence of the Republic. It provided not only men but also financial support that made the Indonesian international diplomatic missions possible. Their fierce struggle against the Dutch military aggression and loyalty had made Indonesia as it is today. In 1946, the Acehnese made their first contribution by purchasing the national security bonds issued by the emergency government of Indonesia in Sumatra at different prices (a hundred, five hundred, and a thousand Rupiah) of the Indonesian currency per bond which none of the other regions did.¹²⁷

Their second contribution was their willingness to defend the Medan Area on July 21, 1947 and December 19, 1948 against the first and second Dutch military aggression.¹²⁸ When the Dutch almost reoccupied all of Indonesia and established puppet states in Java and Sumatra, Sukarno proposed that the commander of the National Military of Indonesia should move from Yogyakarta to Kutaraja (Banda Aceh). Following the call for the Holy War by the '*Ulamas*, many Acehnese youth who were formerly members of *Giyugun*, *Heiho*, and Muslim Student Forces (*Mujahidin*) went to Medan Area and fought fiercely driving away the Dutch from Aceh.¹²⁹ Thus, the Dutch failed to pacify Aceh, and therefore, it had the opportunity to continue its trade with Penang through which weapons and medicine were smuggled into Aceh, despite strict

¹²⁶Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt: A Case Study of the Acehnese Rebellion*, 30.

¹²⁷Ibrahim Alfian, "The Aceh Question,"

¹²⁸*Serambi Indonesia*, September 25, 1998; *Warta Pemda Daerah*, October, 1998

¹²⁹Tgk. A.K. Jakobi, *Aceh Daerah Modal: Long March ke Medan Area* [Aceh the Capital Region: Long March to Medan Area] (Jakarta: Yayasan "Seulawah RI-001"/ Pt. Pelita Persatuan, 1992), 8-9.

Dutch sea patrols.¹³⁰ These weapons and medicines were sent to the Indonesian guerrillas in other regions including to Java where the late General Sudirman, in his very ill condition, continued the guerrilla war against the Dutch.¹³¹

In addition to military war, there was also psychological war, which was aired through Dutch Radio in Medan and Sabang. To counter severe Dutch propaganda, the *Rimba Raya* Broadcasting in Central Aceh began to operate and sometimes it was known as *Suara Indonesia Merdeka* (The Voice of Independent Indonesia). It replaced RRI (Radio of Republic of Indonesia) in Java, which functioned as a device to maintain communication among the guerrillas in different parts of Indonesia, as well as broadcasting Indonesian national aspirations to all over the world during this particularly critical situation.¹³²

In August 1948, on his political visit to Aceh after having an agreement with the *Ulamas*, Sukarno asserted that Indonesia was in need of two airplanes, to enable the smooth running of her diplomatic mission. The price of the two airplanes was 20 Kg. (Kilogram) pure gold. In order to have that much of gold, Teungku Daud Beureueh who was the Military Governor of Aceh, Land of Karo and Langkat, instructed Abu Daoed, the Vice Chairman of Financial Division of Military Governor, Mansoer Ismail and Teuku Haji Husen Samalanga, the Staff of Military Governor Office, to go and ask the Acehnese businessmen in Pasar Aceh¹³³ for gold. On June 16, 1948 Acehnese Businessman Association held a meeting in Atjeh Hotel in Kutaraja,¹³⁴ and after the meeting, 20 Kg gold and RM 120,000 were collected.¹³⁵ On August 4, two airplanes Dakota with number *RI 001* and *RI 002 Seulawah*¹³⁶ were bought complete with spare-parts and motor substitutions. These were the first two Indonesian airplanes that enabled the international diplomatic missions of Indonesia to be

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 274-275.

¹³¹ A.Hasmy, *50 Tahun Aceh Membangun*, 238.

¹³² A.K.Jakobi, *ACEH: Dalam Perang Mempertahankan Proklamasi Kemerdekaan*, 281-84; Abdullah Ali et al., *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Aceh dalam Perang Kemerdekaan 1945-1949* [The Acehnese Struggle during Independent War 1945-1949] (Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1985), 296.

¹³³ Pasar Aceh is an open trading center in Kutaraja (Banda Aceh).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹³⁵ This is referred to the value of the exchange rate in August 1948.

¹³⁶ *Seulawah* is an Acehnese word which means mountain of gold.

smoothly carried out. It also paved the way for the genesis of the national airline (Garuda Indonesia Airways).¹³⁷

Through *Rimba Raya* Broadcasting, the Acehnese came to know that the president and the vice-president together with other terrace leaders were arrested and sent to exile in Bangka. As the Mohd. Yamin team reached an agreement during *Roem-van Royen* negotiations, the way to peace negotiations became clearer. In August 1949, the Dutch agreed to hold peace negotiations with Indonesia in the Hague, Netherlands and as a precautionary measure, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara was appointed as deputy Prime Minister residing in Banda Aceh, the second Emergency Capital of the Republic of Indonesia. He and the Minister of Religious Affairs, Kyai Masykur arrived at Aceh by the Dutch Naval Vessel from Sabang. He operated an emergency government in Kuta Raja, preparing for the possibility of the failure of the *Round Table Conference* that was officiated on August 23, 1949.¹³⁸ On December 14, 1949, the conference was wrapped up by an agreement signed by the two parties enforcing the surrender of full sovereignty to Indonesia. And Aceh continued providing funds for the fledgling central government in Yogyakarta, and its representatives abroad, namely Dr. Sudarsono in India, L. N. Palar in the United Nations, its representative in Penang, Malaysia and H. Agus Salim, the Indonesian ambassador to all over the world.¹³⁹ It also provided financial support for the Armed Forces, and for the cost of the return of the Republic government to Yogyakarta.¹⁴⁰ Thus, in his speech on September 4, 1959 in Meulaboh, West Aceh, President Sukarno declared that Aceh as the *Region of Capital* for Indonesia independence.¹⁴¹

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, Aceh was once an independent Muslim Sultanate even before Indonesia was established. Its achievement which

¹³⁷“Penuturan Orang Dekat Daud Beureueh [The Comment of Daud Beureueh Close Man]” *KARISMA*. No.6. Week V. May & 1 June 1999.

¹³⁸A.K.Jakobi, *Aceh: Dalam Perang Mempertahankan Proklamasi Kemerdekaan*, 285-286.

¹³⁹Nur El Ibrahimy, *Teugku Muhammad Daud Beureueh* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1986), 44.

¹⁴⁰Ibrahim Alfian, “The Aceh Question”

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*,

evolved along with the expansion of Islam strongly affected the Acehese perception toward themselves *vis-à-vis* others. Islam has become the generator for their force and motivation to fight the colonial powers. Therefore, the concept of Holy War had become an integral part of every Acehese resistance against the colonial power. This force existed within the community, as those colonial powers had experienced when they tried to pacify Aceh and this is what makes the Acehese different from other ethnic groups in Indonesia. Islam had also become the sole factor behind the loyalty of the Acehese towards the Republic during the revolution period.

They were ready to sacrifice not only their lives but also properties for defending the Independent State of Indonesia believing that Islam would be the State religion. Sukarno, therefore, politically had to admit and consider Aceh as the Region of Capital for independent and development of Indonesia, as Taufiq Abdullah concludes that:

...[T]he period of revolution for independence is seen as evidence of the involvement of Aceh in communities of the Indonesian nation, which was indicative of its ability to rise above Aceh-ism (ke-Aceh-an), and more importantly, with its Aceh-ism the national ideals and aspirations could be maintained. It was a great pride in fact that Aceh was the only region of the Republic that was free from the Dutch soldiers' atrocities and that Aceh with its concern for national interest and an awareness of God's cause gave everything for national struggle for independence.¹⁴²

Indonesia, therefore, with the inclusion of Aceh as the only territory which could escape from Dutch reoccupation in the two military aggression of 1947 and 1948, was able to show the world that it still had a territory which was fully under the control of the government. It made Indonesian international diplomatic mission possible and a *Round Table Conference* was held in The Hague, in which full sovereignty of Indonesia was achieved on December 14, 1949.



¹⁴²*Ibid.*,

CHAPTER 3

FIRST ACEHNESE REVOLUTION, 1950S: DEMAND FOR AUTONOMY

It is indisputable that the Acehnese contributed a lot to the making of Indonesia today. Their prominent role during the national revolution period placed Aceh in an undisputed special status *vis-à-vis* other regions of Indonesia. Moreover, their loyalty was proved during the period when Indonesia was crumbling and the Dutch began re-colonizing in the late 1940s. This was obvious when Dr. Mansur, the governor of East-Sumatra, called for the establishment of the Sumatra Federation, and Aceh rejected the call and proclaimed their loyalty to the fledgling Republic. Since Aceh once acted as the capital of the emergency government of Indonesia during the revolution period, by request, the Emergency government granted Aceh a provincial status. However, this lasted for only a short period, because the United States of Indonesia was abrogated, and the Republic of Indonesia came into effect. This led to a bloodiest civil war in the 1950s, which was ended by the central government's agreement to grant a special status of Aceh province.

Why did the Acehnese wage a rebellion against the central government in the 1950s? This question has compelled many intellectuals to write and interpret the factors inspiring this republican revolution and they can be classified into two groups of thought, the externalist and internalist. The former claimed that the revolution was the result of political conflict between the regional and central elite. The latter would prefer to see it as a political conflict long existing within the regional élite that evolved because of one of the élite groups attempting to seek support at the center. Besides, there was also an interpretation that looked at the revolution as the reflection of persistence political conflict at the center, which had evolved and affected the political development at the regional level. However, there is no such certain answer to the question, "why did the Acehnese revolt against the Regime of the Old Order?"¹⁴³ In order to answer this, it is imperative to discuss, firstly,

the process of the formation of the Aceh province by the Emergency government. Secondly, the cause of the discontent and finally, why, in this revolution, they did not ask for an independent state, but instead a federal form of the Islamic State of Indonesia.

THE FORMATION OF ACEH PROVINCE: THE PRELUDE

During the colonial rule, Sumatra as a whole was one province and Aceh was virtually an autonomous regency that continued to be until Indonesia gained full independence. As the demand for Aceh to become a province was not unanimous, the government's policy of dividing Sumatra into three provinces during the early days of the Republic gained more momentum. These three provinces were North Sumatra included Aceh, Tapanuli and East Sumatra. This policy seriously affected the Acehnese élite, particularly the PUSA, as they perceived that it would minimize and limit the autonomous right of Aceh territory. Worse, still it involved the issue of religious and cultural differences.¹⁴⁴ They requested the then Emergency Government of the Indonesian Republic which was located in Banda Aceh to give Aceh provincial status.

This demand was well grounded on a historical basis. For instance in August 1947, when facing the first Dutch military aggression, the central government had appointed Teungku Daud Beureueh as a Military Governor with the honorary rank of Major General. His authority covered Aceh - as the capital - Langkat and Tanah Karo, and was confined not only within military affairs, but civil affairs connected with defenses as well.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, following the Dutch second military aggression in December 1948, they captured not only Yogyakarta, but also other regions of the Republic, with the exception of Aceh. Therefore, Aceh was chosen to be the

¹⁴³The Old Order is referred to as the era of guided democracy system, after the failure of the parliamentary system. Sukarno was the president and remained the highest political authority until 1968, which was then replaced by the New Order, under the leadership of Military General, Suharto, after the Communist abortive coup on September 30, 1965. See Robert Cribb and Colin Brown, *Modern Indonesia A History since 1945* (London: Longman, 19950), 68-86.

¹⁴⁴The Acehnese who are the champions of Islam perceived the inclusion of Aceh into North Sumatra as jeopardizing their distinct Islamic characteristic, as North Sumatra was dominated by Batak who are majority Christian.

¹⁴⁵C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: the Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 288.

capital of the Emergency Government and Sjafruddin Prawirangara was appointed as the deputy Prime Minister for Sumatra.¹⁴⁶ He and his family, therefore, came to Aceh to make preparation for any possible outcomes of the *Round Table Conference* in The Hague. In case the negotiation met a deadlock, Sjafruddin should be able to take any precautionary action for defending independence that would begin in Aceh. This implied enough reason for Aceh to become a province with special status *vis-à-vis* other regions. However, the formation of the Aceh province had to face pro and contra opinions due to protracted conflict of interests not only among the Acehese élite but also among those nationalist and secular political élites at the center.

Sjafruddin realized that there were different opinions on the formation of Aceh province that might hinder the idea. The foremost problem was long political conflict between the *Ulèëbalangs* and the PUSA 'Ulamas. He noticed this problem soon after he arrived, for there was a failed attempt by the group led by Ali Al-Saqaf to topple the PUSA government, which had resulted in the imprisonment of their leader. Sjafruddin understood that the *Ulèëbalangs* would not be happy with the idea, for the establishment of Aceh province would give more authority to the 'Ulamas of PUSA who had successfully mobilized the people to fight against the colonial rule. While the *Ulèëbalangs* had been one factor underlying the success of colonial rulers maintaining their indirect rule, that certainly had created fierce animosity within the community. Feeling insecure, the *Ulèëbalangs* rejected the idea of the formation of Aceh province and instead preferred the idea that integrated Aceh with North Sumatra.

Sjafruddin finally took a decision without waiting for the possible outcome of the *Round Table Conference* to form an Aceh province. He based his decision on three reasons. Firstly, the backbone of the Acehese struggle against the colonial rulers were the 'Ulamas, while *Ulèëbalangs* were the élite group manipulated by colonial rulers and people hated them. Therefore, the *Ulèëbalangs'* antagonistic opinion was considered as the vested self-interest of a minority group within the community of Aceh. Secondly, during the

¹⁴⁶ He initially had been given the authority as special deputy of the premiership for Sumatra in which his decision would be followed by the force of the law, prior to the consultation with the Advisory Council whose members would be appointed by the President. Besides, he also had the power to issue "ordinary" government regulation without consultation with the Council. *Ibid.*,

struggle for defending independence, particularly during and after the Dutch Military Aggression, the Acehese under the command of the *'Ulamas* had contributed a lot to the fledgling Republic, be it moral or material support. Their contribution was unique and it enabled the continuation of the Republic. Finally, he was told personally by the late Teungku Daud Beureueh that Sukarno himself had promised in the name of Allah to give freedom to Aceh to implement Islamic *Shari'ah*, with the condition that the Acehese would fight till the last drop of blood defending Indonesia.¹⁴⁷

On December 17, 1949, Sjafruddin issued a regulation¹⁴⁸ that had the force of a government regulation, which divided North Sumatra into two new provinces: Aceh Province that included Langkat, and Tapanuli/ East Sumatra provinces. The creation of the province of Aceh was an extraordinary decision that did not follow normal procedure whereby the creation of a new province should be based on an act of Parliament. However, no such Council had been formed, and dividing North Sumatra was considered as an urgent necessity to improve the administrative structure.¹⁴⁹ He offered the governorship to Teungku Daud Beureueh but he refused, and instead suggested as the first governor of Aceh, Teuku Daud Syah, an *Ulèëbalang* who had been side by side with PUSA during the struggle against colonial rulers.

Eight months after its formation, the newly formed province of Aceh met its sudden death, as the antagonistic views continued provocation. Besides, it confirmed with the interest of the central government to consolidate power through a centralization policy. The opposing view towards the formation of Aceh province was particularly stimulated by those nationalists and secular educated élite who dominated politics at the center. They were paranoid of and suffering from an Islamophobia syndrome, who could not accept Islam to be adopted as the state religion, as well as to the formation of such an Islamic province of Aceh. It is ironic to note that even Masyumi, the Muslim political party of North Sumatra branch, shared a similar view. They were against the formation of a province of Aceh because of their fear of losing during the general elections to

¹⁴⁷ Ajip Rosidi, *Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Lebih Takut Kepada Allah*, 150.

¹⁴⁸ Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang no. 8/Des/WKPM, 1949 [Government Regulation Substitution of Law no. 8/Dec/DPM, 1949]

¹⁴⁹ C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 289.

be held in 1951. Aceh was the stronghold of this Muslim party and it has formed an alliance with PUSA. Therefore, the exclusion of Aceh from North Sumatra would certainly affect the final result of the elections, even to the extent that they could not form the majority in the Parliament.¹⁵⁰

As the result of these antagonistic views, the central government set up a special Commission of Inquiry which announced its stand that Aceh should remain part of the newly formed North Sumatra province. In spite of endorsing the regulation issued by Sjafruddin that granted Aceh provincial status; the central government dissolved the province of Aceh. This policy changed the Acehese attitude towards the central government. Their dream to have an autonomous region with its distinctive Islamic nature was now shattered. It created serious discontent within the Acehese community. It was hard for Acehese to reason how the central government could so easily forget their merit and treat them step-motherly *vis-à-vis* other regions. The PUSA responded by threatening the central government with a revolution as a means to put pressure on the central government, so that the latter would grant their demand for a separate province of Aceh.

Notwithstanding Acehese opposition, on August 1, 1950, the central government set up a new preparatory committee for the creation of North Sumatra, with S. Parman Reksodiharjo as the chairman and Teuku Daud Syah as the member. On August 15, 1950, the United States of Indonesia which was created by the Dutch was officially abrogated and replaced by the Unitary Republic. The new government system issued a number of regulations governing the provincial administration division substituting regulations issued by previous government. For instance, government regulation no 21, stated that the territory of Indonesia comprised of ten provinces and North Sumatra was one of them. It had also annulled the regulation that Sjafruddin issued on the proposed creation of the province of Aceh. Yet, the formation of the North Sumatra province was very precarious, because it was also formed on Government Regulation rather than the Law that parliament passed. It was derived from the agreement between the United States of Indonesia¹⁵¹ and the

¹⁵⁰ Ajip Rosidi, *Sjafruddin Prawiranegara Lebih Takut Kepada Allah*, .150

Indonesian Republic in 1950, which immediately abrogated the former one.¹⁵²

The division of Indonesia into ten provinces under Mohamad Hatta's cabinet aimed at reducing ethnic and religious differences. As the new Government Regulation went into effect, the *Shari'ah* Court which had been in practice in Aceh since the occupation of the Japanese, was all of a sudden proclaimed as ineffective or void for it had no sufficient legal basis.¹⁵³ The incidence raised a disturbing question among the Acehnese (PUSA), "why could we not implement Islamic Laws?"¹⁵⁴ Accordingly, the abolishment of Aceh province initiated a prompt Acehnese reaction. The PUSA provided a long list of arguments as to why Aceh should be given an independent provincial status and be treated differently in many respects, for instance in education, the economic, legal and religious fields. Since Aceh had been in a state of continuous warfare during the colonial rule and consequently, politically unstable, Aceh had to cope with an enormous educational slowdown, agricultural insufficiency, extremely bad infrastructure, and inefficient fishing industries.

Therefore, Aceh was in dire need of a very effective and efficient administration that required an independent provincial status in order to deal effectively with these problems. As the PUSA leaders were aware of their weakness in the bargaining position *vis-à-vis* the center, they adopted a pressuring tactic, by threatening the central government that "if these arguments are not well received, we, the Sons of Aceh and whoever shared the same ideal and presently holding the position in Administration would resign."¹⁵⁵ In response to this threat, the central government sent a delegation led by Asaat, the Minister of Internal Affairs to negotiate with Teungku Daud Beureueh, as the leading figure of PUSA. The delegation, however, failed to reach an agreement and neither did the Vice-

¹⁵¹RIS [Republik Indonesia Serikat/ the United States of Indonesia] was the creation of the Dutch government after it successfully pacified Yogyakarta, the Capital of the Indonesia in 1949.

¹⁵²C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 291.

¹⁵³David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 140.

¹⁵⁴Eric E. Morris, "Aceh: Social Revolution and the Islamic Vision" in Audrey R. Kahin (eds.), *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution*, 101.

¹⁵⁵C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 291.

President succeed in this when he came to Banda Aceh in November.¹⁵⁶

In January 1951, when the provincial reorganization was due to take effect, Prime Minister Mohamed Natsir went to Aceh and during his speech on Radio in Banda Aceh on January 23, 1951 announced the agreement reached between him and the élite of Aceh. He stated that the creation of the North Sumatra province would not lock any other future possibilities for Aceh to be a province. For the central government was not opposing the call for autonomy for Aceh, and the matter now became a national issue that would be settled down in a nation-wide context. Then, Teungku Daud Beureueh also released a statement indicating his agreement with Natsir,¹⁵⁷ and so the dispute ended. On January 25, the provincial governor office, which was formerly in Banda Aceh, was shifted to Medan and Abdul Hakim was appointed the governor. As in Aceh, the regency was set up to administer and supervise the residential administration instead.

The political change in August 1951 that brought the Masyumi cabinet into power under Prime Minister Natsir; brought a “new hope” for the Acehese. Nevertheless, the Masyumi leaders were not able to do much as they were paralyzed by administrative considerations such as factional rivalries between the Islamist and the secular nationalist and the communists, thus they failed to respond satisfactorily to the Acehese call for their provincial status.¹⁵⁸ Consequently, the Acehese under the PUSA leadership revolted against the central government, following the exclusion of Masyumi from the newly formed cabinet by secular nationalist Prime Minister, Ali Sastromidjojo.

THE CAUSES OF THE ACEHNESE REVOLUTION

By the end of July 1953, Ali Sastromidjojo of PNI had already formed a new cabinet and it was for the first time that the Masyumi was excluded from the cabinet. The exclusion indicated that there was no more hope for PUSA to continue cooperating with Masyumi for establishing an Islamic State of Indonesia, nor was there any hope for Aceh to attain the provincial status. The PUSA leaders

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 292.

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*,

¹⁵⁸David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 140

turned to use radical means of putting pressure on the center. They began by mobilizing communal grievances against the center on a wide range of issues related to the loss of the provincial status of Aceh.

The issues were exemplified by, firstly, the imposition of the prohibition on Aceh's direct trading with Malaya and Singapore. Secondly, the replacement of Acehnese military units by other races (non-Acehnese officers) in Aceh had led to the increase of un-Islamic activities such as gambling and liquor drinking. Thirdly, Aceh had been treated in a step-motherly manner by the central government in terms of educational development, infrastructure improvement, and in the development of sophisticated irrigation. Finally, Teungku Daud Beureueh inferred that Sukarno and the proponents of *Pancasila* have betrayed the trust for establishing an Islamic Aceh in particular, and Islamic Indonesia in general.¹⁵⁹ Hence, when Sukarno visited Aceh in March 1953, he was greeted by a banner with the slogan "Aceh must not be treated as a stepchild" and "We love the President but we love religion more."¹⁶⁰ As their demand was not well entertained by the central government, while at the same time losing their alliance at the center, they initiated a rebellion. After the meeting in Batee Krueng, they declared an Islamic Republic of Aceh under the confederation of the Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo's Islamic Federation State of Indonesia which was declared in late 1948.¹⁶¹

THE "DARUL ISLAM" (DI/TII) 162 REVOLUTION: 1953-1962

There were several possible considerations underlying the launching of revolution by Teungku Daud Beureueh. Firstly, the Wilopo cabinet in 1952 had conceded to regionalist pressure and granted enhanced autonomy to areas of Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi and Moluccas.¹⁶³ Secondly, Teungku Daud Beureueh felt confident that PUSA had enough resources and support to maintain

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁶⁰ Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, 346.

¹⁶¹ C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 311.

¹⁶² DI/TII [Daru Islam/ Tentara Islam Indonesia or Islamic State/ Indonesian Islamic Military]

¹⁶³ Herbert Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet, 1956-1953: a Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1958), 20.

such a revolution, in terms of military and well-trained youth of PUSA who had successfully carried out a previous social revolution. Thirdly, since there was a widespread Darul Islam movement in other regions, Teungku Daud Beureueh felt assured that the Acehese demand would be acceded too.¹⁶⁴ Finally, all the Acehese were backing up the revolution, be it openly by joining the force or by providing food, finance, and shelter.¹⁶⁵

On September 19, 1953, Teungku Daud Beureueh declared that the revolution was part of the Kartoswiryo's Darul Islam movement in West Java, and that of Kahar Muzakkar of Sulawesi. The rationale of the revolution was clearly drawn on the pamphlet, as a manifestation of mass support for the revolution. It stated that:

If in reality the Republic's laws guaranteed religious freedom for Muslims, then religious law would already have been implemented in Aceh [but]...not a single Acehese request has been granted by the government. Aceh has been prevented from standing on its own, from having its own province, even though it has been stated in the context of a unitary state...We do not want to separate ourselves from our brothers and sisters in other regions...But we cannot accept if we have to live like a slave and be treated as stepchild.¹⁶⁶

Being part of the *Darul Islam* movement, it reflected the intense commitment of the Acehese and of their leaders to the goals of an Islamic Aceh. Hence, this revolution was not a separatist one, but rather a motion to put pressure on the government so that their demands could be heard. Civil war was inevitable and Aceh again had to field another bloody massacre. If in the past, they were fighting to defend their land and religion [Islam] against invaders, at this time, they were fighting for their due rights which they had been deprived of. They claimed that the central government¹⁶⁷ was corrupt and un-Islamic. Van Dijk best described this allegation:

¹⁶⁴David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 142.

¹⁶⁵C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 299.

¹⁶⁶Eric E. Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia*, cited in David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 143.

¹⁶⁷The central government was dominated by Ali Sastromidjojo's party, the PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia/ Indonesian Nationalist Party). This party in cultural and religious outlook represented Javanism (*kejawen*), and most of its leaders were Javanese

Teungku Daud Beureueh claimed that the Republic had deviated from the right course. It had not developed into a state based upon Islam...as the implication of the principle of Believing in the One and Only God, the first principle of *Pancasila*...

[And, the central government] had never acceded to any of Aceh's requests. Nor had it made concessions to Aceh's pleas for autonomy...the people of Aceh did not want to become separated from their brothers, Daud Beureueh stressed, but neither did they want to be treated like a stepchild. He pointed to the lack of educational facilities and job opportunities for the children of Aceh, while the absence of a satisfactory transport system was hampering people's economic activities...

In response to the claim that the proclamation of an Islamic State would give rise to chaos and was in conflict with the law, he asserted that on the contrary, the prevailing legal chaos had provoked rebellion. He advised the government leaders not to use violence, but tackle the crux of the matter and correct the foundation of their state as well as rectify their policies.

In other statements, the rebellion was characterized as a movement to free Aceh from Javanese colonialism. Herein, the leaders in Jakarta were depicted as infidels out after the destruction of Islam, e.g. through reforms of the educational system. They were branded as corrupt administrators, appointing their own friends to position of importance, and allegedly firing or retiring at will anyone who did not belong to their circle...for a thousand and one reasons.

[The central government]...was accused of trying to

and members of the social group of the *priyayi*, the Javanese aristocracy, which had in the large part remained little affected by Islam. Combining with a nominal adherence to Islam with contempt for Islamic orthodoxy. These Javanese aristocrats held syncretistic mystical beliefs, which owe more to Hinduism than any branch of Islam. Proud of traditional Javanese culture, they saw this as a basis for a new Indonesian civilization and looked at it to provide an alternative to cosmopolitan culture. See Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, 140.

promote the interests of Java and the Javanese...Teungku Daud Beureueh described the Republic Government, as a Hinduistic one that was clothed in a nationalistic jacket which closely resembled Communism. Its chief desire, in the eye of the Acehese, was to bring back the time of the Javanese Empire of Majapahit in its heyday...¹⁶⁸

Meanwhile, during the hearing in Parliament on October 28, 1953, Prime Minister Ali Sastromijoyo presented the Government Explanation on the event of Teungku Daud Beureueh. The government assumed that the rebellion in Aceh on 21 September, 1953, was merely the rebellion of a small faction of the Acehese community, which was affiliated with PUSA, led by Teungku Daud Beureueh, and not the rebellion of all the Acehese community. The government claimed that the PUSA had abused their authority, as mentioned in the first part of the Government Explanation, which was prepared by BKR (*Badan Keinsafan Rakyat/* People Awareness Body).¹⁶⁹ It consisted of 33 points that briefly alleged PUSA to have received funds from *Borsumij*, the Dutch owned company. They reportedly received \$ 15 million from the United States to finance the fight against Communism and they were also allegedly in possession of a large amount of shares in *NV Permai* and *ATC* (Aceh Trading Company) state-owned companies.¹⁷⁰ While in the last part of the Explanation that consisted of 22 points, some of these allegations have been removed for there was no sound evidence for it.¹⁷¹ However, on November 2, 1953 which was supposed to be the date for the hearing of the PUSA view, it was not given a fair chance to be presented as the accused party by the government.¹⁷²

The Civil War began. On the first attack, the DI/TII guerillas were able to occupy several cities and towns but they were not able

¹⁶⁸C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 311-314.

¹⁶⁹BKR was an anti-PUSA group established on April 15, 1951, dominated by mostly *Ulèëbalangs* which aimed at revealing and fabricating the “mischief” or “corrupted administration” of PUSA and took it to the central government. See, C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 293.

¹⁷⁰Rancangan Keterangan Pemerintah mengenai Peristiwa Daud Beureueh (kode S111-0/53) [The Plan of Government Explanation on the Event of Daud Beureueh (code S111-0/53)].

¹⁷¹Rancangan Keterangan Pemerintah mengenai Peristiwa Daud Beureueh (kode S117-1/53) [The Plan of Government Explanation on the Event of Daud Beureueh (code S117-1/53)].

¹⁷²Al-Chaidar, et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 31.

to hold them for very long. One by one, the government forces recaptured those cities and launched severe attacks to curb the DI/TII guerillas. By 1954, all towns and cities were again under the control of government forces, but much of the countryside was still under the control of the DI/TII forces.¹⁷³ Thereafter, the government force began to launch sweeping operation in the countryside to chase the rebels. A local newspaper *Peristiwa* disclosed one case of massacre done by the government forces.¹⁷⁴ The incident took place in two villages, Pulot Leupung and Cot Jeumpa, later on known as the Incident of Pulot-Cot Jeumpa. The incident not only shook the Acehnese in the region but also the Acehnese community in Jakarta. Yet, Prime Minister Ali Sastromijdojo rejected all allegations that government forces massacred innocent civilians brutally. Al-Chaidar et al. have precisely recorded what really happened:

In March 1954, a sweeping operation was conducted and a convoy of military trucks was passing by a small village. When they reached a bridge at Pulot village, they were attacked by rebel guerillas. Shooting took place and the rebels escaped through the two villages, Pulot Leupung and Cot Jeumpa. They called for help from Kutaraja and that very day the Indonesian Military launched the greatest operation chasing the rebels by sweeping the whole villages. The military which outnumbered the villagers began to interrogate the villagers who started panicking. None of them was able to speak and give satisfactory answers on the rebels' whereabouts. Eventually, as villagers failed to give positive cooperation, a group of soldiers from Battalion 142, out of disappointment and anger, showered innocent villagers with bullets. The amok took 99 civilian lives.¹⁷⁵

The exposure of the event by *Peristiwa* initiated Acehnese action promptly. The Acehnese community in Jakarta organized an assembly of Acehnese in *Yayasan Iskandar* (Iskandar foundation) in which the discussion to find the best solution to the recent conflict in Aceh. As the issue was growing serious, the third parliament hearing was held on April 13, 1954 on the event of Pulot Leupung and Cot Jeumpa. The hearing confirmed that the event did occur and many innocent civilians were killed. During the hearing, the government

¹⁷³David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 143.

¹⁷⁴*Harian Peristiwa*, March 11, 1954

¹⁷⁵Al-Chaidar, et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 27-31.

had to face strong criticism from the opposition party regarding the policy that the government adopted to curb rebellion guerillas. One of them was Nur El Ibrahimy. In response to the opposition, Ali Sastromidjojo in his apologetic statement to Parliament in mid-April, accused the DI/TII's rebels of the abduction and assassination of 28 members of the PUT, 123 of the PNI and 120 of the PKI.¹⁷⁶

In the meantime, the newly appointed North Sumatra Governor, S. M. Amin began a conciliatory approach by sending a letter to Teungku Daud Beureueh, requesting him and his followers to end their resistance and prepare for negotiations. He also promised the latter to grant them an amnesty. In reply, Teungku Daud Beureueh made a draft of a government regulation in which the central government would hold negotiations with the founders of the Islamic State of Indonesia in Java, Aceh, Kalimantan (Borneo) and Sulawesi. The latter should grant protection and assistance for the members of the delegation of the Islamic State during the negotiations. They also pointed clearly that what they wanted was negotiations and not a pardon. Amin, then sent the letter to Jakarta for approval by Prime Minister Ali Sastromidjojo, but the government did not react.¹⁷⁷

As the deadlock remained, Sjammaun Gaharu¹⁷⁸ suggested to General Abdul Haris Nasution, the then Chief of Staff of the Government Army, that the Acehese situation was very complicated and it could be best solved by the Acehese themselves in an Acehese way. Firstly, he proposed that Aceh must be given provincial status and Acehese military officers be returned to Aceh and placed under his command. Secondly, he suggested that some of the respected '*Ulamas* of PUSA who had been imprisoned, must be returned to previous positions as Aceh's religious, judicial and educational officials.¹⁷⁹

At the end of 1956, a Government regulation, which granted Aceh a provincial status was passed, and A.Hasymy, the pre-war leader of the PUSA Youth of Aceh Proper, was appointed as the

¹⁷⁶C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 327.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 329-330.

¹⁷⁸He was the commander of the TKR [Tentara Keamanan Rakyat/ People Security Forces] in Aceh during the Indonesian revolution in October 1945- 1946, before he was taken over by Amir Husin al Mujahid, following a social revolution in Aceh in 1946. He then left Aceh to Jakarta.

¹⁷⁹David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 144.

Governor. Gaharu, together with Hasymy, began a conciliation policy to end the rebellion.¹⁸⁰ In April 1957, in the middle of Ramadan, the Muslim fasting month, negotiations were held with a number of prominent DI/TII leaders at Lamteh. The negotiations were later known as the Lamteh Charter where “Both sides pledged themselves to promote Islam, to stimulate the development of Aceh in the broadest sense of the word, and to try to bring prosperity and peace to the people and society of Aceh.”¹⁸¹

In response to the Lamteh Charter, Prime Minister Djuanda (Juanda) who formed a new cabinet in September 1957, issued a resolution (*Keputusan Perdana Menteri Republik Indonesia no. 1/ Missi/ 1959* [Decision of Prime Minister of Republic of Indonesia no.1/Missi/ 1959]) to the effect that, as of May 26th, 1959 the Province of Aceh could style itself *Daerah Istimewa Aceh* [Special Region of Aceh]. The government also promised to give Aceh the widest possible autonomy, in particular in the field of religion, education and customary law, but with the provision that this should not be in contravention with existing legislation.¹⁸²

The change of the central government policy towards Aceh that seemed to be in favor of Acehnese interest, actually was a successful trick of the central government to distract Acehnese communalism. For instance, Hasan Saleh, DI/TII military commander in Aceh, together with other rebellion leaders betrayed Teungku Daud Beureueh by forming an Aceh Revolutionary Council that would negotiate with the central government. In May 1959, after the negotiations the central government granted amnesty to the followers of Hasan Saleh. Meanwhile, Teungku Daud Beureueh and a few of his die-hard followers remained in the mountains and sought to join PRRI¹⁸³ (*Pemerintah Revolusi Republik Indonesia/ Revolutionary Government of Republic of Indonesia*) in 1960, where Aceh was self-proclaimed as the RIA (*Republik Islam Aceh/ Islamic*

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 145.

¹⁸¹C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 333.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, 335.

¹⁸³PRRI consisted of RIA (Republik Islam Aceh/ Islamic Republic of Aceh), PRI and NII (Negara Islam Indonesia/ Islamic State of Indonesia). See, SS. Juangga Batu Bara, *Teungku. Tjhik. Muhammad Daud Beureueh: Mujahid Terangung di Nusantara* [Teungku. Tjhik. Muhammad Daud Beureueh: the Great Reformist in the Region] (Medan: Gerakan Perjuangan dan Pembebasan Republik Islam Federasi Sumatra, 1987).

Republic of Aceh). But, the PRRI rebellion was short-lived, due to the lack of leadership consensus. Consequently, when the central government agreed to issue a decree in April 1962 that authorized the implementation of some elements of Islamic Law in Aceh, Teungku Daud Beureueh agreed to go down from the mountains. Aceh again stood as a provincial government with special status in the field of religion, education and customary law.

CONCLUSION

The above exposition shows that Sukarno did not keep his promise to make Indonesia an Islamic state, or to grant Aceh a special status as an Islamic province of Indonesia. Obviously, the adoption of Dutch laws and *Pancasila* as the State ideology instead of Islam, has caused great disappointment among the Acehese leaders, in particular the *'Ulamas* of PUSA. Moreover, the inclusion of Aceh into North Sumatra province automatically revoked the Islamic Religious Court in Aceh and imposed prohibition on trading between Aceh and Malaya. This change had a great impact on the perception of the Acehese vis-à-vis other regions. They felt betrayed and treated as a stepchild instead of their great contribution during and after the period of the revolution.

Although, delegations after delegations were sent to the center, the government did not show any positive response to the Acehese demand for an Islamic province of Aceh. Nor did after the formation of the Natsir cabinet of Masyumi in 1951, which the PUSA of Aceh saw it as a good sign; and therefore took the party as their allies at the center. Yet it again, ended with disappointment because of the exclusion of Masyumi by Ali Sastromidjojo's cabinet of PNI in 1953. As the PUSA lost their only allies at the center, they initiated to join the DI/TII in 1953 and PRRI in 1962. They waged a rebellion against the secular central government, which subsequently, ended by the agreement in which the central government recognized Aceh as a province with the title of Special Region of Aceh that imbued the implementation of some elements of Islamic laws. Did it signify the onset of effective central-regional integration?



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CHAPTER 4

FREE ACEH MOVEMENT REVOLUTION, 1976: DEMAND FOR INDEPENDENCE

Fourteen years after the peace agreement reached between Teungku Daud Beureueh and Sukarno in May 1962, another separatist movement emerged in Aceh under the leadership of Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro.¹⁸⁴ On December 4, 1976, diTiro declared an independent state of Aceh and claimed that his movement was a continuation of the Acehnese struggle against the colonial master. He referred to Indonesia-Java¹⁸⁵ as a new colonizer that tried to colonize other nations in the outer islands and he referred to Aceh specifically. Did the Acehnese support the movement? In order to answer this question, it is imperative to look at the condition of the Acehnese during Suharto's regime as background information that may highlight the alleged reasons underlying the emergence of GAM. Apart from that, the government's responses and actions to curb the GAM insurgency in Aceh will also be discussed.

¹⁸⁴He holds the title 'Al Mudzabbir Al Maulana Al Malik Al Mubin Prof. Dr. Sultan Muhammad Hasan Ibnal Sultan Maat diTiro. He was born in Tanjong Bungong, Lamlo, Pidie in 1923. After completing Volk School, he joined Madrasah Al Dinniyat that was established by Teungku Daud Beureueh in 1938. The latter sent him to Normal School in Bireun, North Aceh that was chaired by Muhammad El- Ibrahimy. In 1945, he chaired the Indonesian Youth Front in Lamlo, Pidie and claimed his family as diehard supporters of Indonesia. Upon the request of his brother, Zainal Abidin, Teungku Daud Beureueh sent him to Yogyakarta to study at University Islam Indonesia. He got to know Sjafruddin Prawiranegara and worked as a government servant. In 1951, upon the recommendation of Sjafruddin, diTiro served as a member of staff at the Indonesian Representative Office to the United Nations in New York until 1953. When he came to know that Teungku Daud Beureueh had joined the DI/TII movement; he appointed himself as the DI/TII's 'ambassador' to the United Nations. The then Prime Minister Ali Sastromidjojo, canceled his diplomatic passport, but he succeeded in obtaining a status of permanent resident of the United States. Though he lost contact with the Acehnese, he was a typical Acehnese with a strong sense of ethnic sentiments. In 1976 he returned home and set up a Free Aceh Movement. See, "Tanjong Bungong Sok Feodal [Feudalism of Tanjong Bungong]" *GAMA*, August 22, 1999, 29; Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Experience of Aceh*, 112; C. Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam*, 319.

¹⁸⁵Herein the term Indonesia-Java is referred to the term used by diTiro, describing that the Javanese dominates Indonesia.

ACEH DURING THE NEW ORDER

The agreement reached between the DI/TII and the central government, in which the latter acceded to the Acehnese demand for provincial status and implementation of some elements of Islamic *Shari'ah*, had finally ended the rebellion. During the last phase of the Old Order, however, Sukarno's close relations with the Indonesian Communist Party created another threat to Indonesia as a whole and Aceh in particular. Sukarno's illness led to the decay of his power and it was a great opportunity for the Communists to take over the government on September 30, 1965. The failure of the Communist coup marked the end of the Old Order and the beginning of the New Order.¹⁸⁶ The Acehnese gave warm welcome to the newly formed regime, dominated by the armed forces under the leadership of Suharto, primarily because of its strong anti-Communist stance.

Soon many realized that their optimism was misplaced as the government moved not only to limit the scope of Islam as a social and political force, but also to bring all other countervailing sources of power into its tight control. The government gradually evolved to become a strong centralized political system, leaving little more room for the regional autonomy which was given to Aceh by the previous regime.¹⁸⁷ In 1968, the former had prevented the latter from putting into practice the Islamic *Shari'ah* in Aceh, which was agreed upon by the previous regime. At the same time, a rapid proselytization by Christian preachers was progressing in the Southern and Southeastern parts of Aceh between 1967-1978.¹⁸⁸ This led to Acehnese prompt action by burning down many churches. In retaliation to the Acehnese, Christians, in North Sumatra alleged that the Acehnese secretly planned to begin another

¹⁸⁶The New Order is referred to as Suharto's regime in which *Pancasila Democracy* was used as the governance system. This system is imbued with the Javanese conception of power, which considered power as something concrete residing in individual ruler. Suharto developed a strong patrimonial political system, in which the relationship between the top and subordinates is characterized by the term *Bapakism* [Fatherism]. The subordinates are expected to give great respect to the top, to be faithful and loyal; it is very much like patron-client politics. See, B. R. O'G. Anderson "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture" in Claire Holt (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 13; K. D. Jackson and L. W. Pye (ed.), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 34; Jon M. Reinhardt, *Foreign Policy and National Integration: The Case of Indonesia*, 36.

¹⁸⁷Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion, 1989-1992*, 28.

¹⁸⁸Lukman Hakim, *Fakta dan Usaha-Usaha Kristianisasi di Indonesia* [Fact and the Proselytization Efforts in Indonesia] (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1991), 73

revolution against the central government. Without further investigation, the central government and local security forces in Aceh took the allegations seriously, though afterwards it was proven untrue.¹⁸⁹ The allegations had indeed exacerbated the disappointment of the Acehnese.

As the regime implemented a total restructuring policy that emphasized security and economic development, Suharto made use of the *dual-function* of ABRI (Armed Forces of Republic of Indonesia) as a strong backbone of his regime. The dual function of ABRI stipulated military involvement in politics. The doctrine legally empowered the military to assume security and civil administrative responsibility. Such a patrimonial system of politics created a state of political stability which was conducive for economic development. Besides, Suharto's open of economic and pro-West policies attracted foreign direct investments that enhanced capital inflows as well as financial support from developed countries for the country's development. However, it was only at the upper layer that impressive economic development was seen, and only a few who belonged to the patron-client circle enjoyed the prosperity. Crouch states:

After 1966, General Suharto gradually tightened his hold on the armed forces...to use coercion against resisting groups;...the distribution of patronage...to reward loyal supporters and win over dissidents...with appointments to civil posts that offer prospects of material gains. [While] other officers were encouraged to go into business, with the promise of help from the administration...licenses, credits, or contract...control over machinery of patronage...Suharto maintained the support of the armed forces for his leadership.¹⁹⁰

Such social, political and economic transformations had profound effects on all regions of Indonesia, and Aceh in particular, although it was granted a special status which carried a limited sense of autonomous rights.

¹⁸⁹Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Issue and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Experience of Aceh*, 126.

¹⁹⁰Harold Crouch, "Patrimonialism and Military Rule in Indonesia," in Atul Kohli (eds.), *The State and Development in the Third World* (US: Princeton University Press, 1986), 247-248.

ACEH'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

During the New Order, when the first five-year plan was introduced in 1969, Aceh, due to its fertile soil and historic crops barn, was to be developed as an agricultural region that would become "the rice barn of Indonesia".¹⁹¹ However, this changed by the discovery of huge reserves of natural gas in Arun, Lhokseumawe, North Aceh, by Mobil of Indonesia in 1971. By 1977, the Arun refinery of liquefied natural gas (LNG) had started production and Lhokseumawe was developed as one of the chemical industrial zones "ZILS" (*Zona Industri Lhokseumawe/ Lhokseumawe Industrial Zone*). The discovery had later put the region as one of the major contributors to national economic development besides Riau and Kalimantan (West Borneo). As it has been operating effectively since 1977, Arun has been producing four types of high value export products, namely: Condensate, LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas), LPG Propane (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) and LPG Butane (Liquefied Petroleum Gas). All of these four products in their total worth of US\$2.6 billion equal to 316 trillion Indonesian Rupiahs per year.¹⁹² Accordingly, since the 1980s the province has been contributing 30 percent of the country's oil and gas exports,¹⁹³ (excluding the revenue that other industries have contributed), such as: Iskandar Muda Fertilizer Industry, ASEAN fertilizer industry, Andalas Cement Industry, and Aceh Craft Paper Industry. Almost 99,3 % of all commodities produced by Aceh are of exportable value¹⁹⁴ such as timber, since approximately 74.56% of Aceh's land is rainforest which produces different species of timber.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹"Zone Pertanian, Konsep Baru Pembangunan Daerah Istimewa Aceh [Agricultural Zone, New Concept of Development of Special Region of Aceh]," *Prisma* 16, 7 July 1987, 96.

¹⁹²"Dengan Autonomy yang Lebih Luas Aceh akan Sama dengan Singapura [With a Broad Autonomy Aceh can be Similar to Singapore]," *Waspada*, September 11, 1998.

¹⁹³"Waging a Dirty War in Aceh," *Asiaweek*, April 12, 1991, 33; Adam Schwaz, "Liquefied Assets," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 14, 1989, 102; Donal K. Emmerson, "Understanding the New Order: Bureaucratic Pluralism in Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 23, 11 (November 1983), 1232.

¹⁹⁴Yayasan Bhakti, "D.I Aceh" in *Wawasan Nusantara* [Nusantara Vision] (Jakarta: PT. InterNusa, 1992), 7.

¹⁹⁵However, Suharto's cronies-owned industries, whose headquarters are in Jakarta monopolized the forest production. These industries are classified into three different categories which are based on the nature of their production- HPH (Hak Pengelolaan Hutan/ The Right to Forest Administration), IPK (Izin Penebangan Kayu/ License for

This optimal exploitation of Aceh's reserve of natural resources implied that Aceh seemed to have been more integrated economically.¹⁹⁶ But do the Acehnese feel accordingly? Based on the APBD (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Perbelanjaan Daerah*/ Estimated Regional Revenue and Expenditure) of the Province of Aceh Special Region 1997/1998, the province was granted only 0.05 percentage¹⁹⁷ of the whole revenue that Aceh contributed to the center. The figure indicated that the central government exploited Aceh.¹⁹⁸

THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH IN ACEH

Before the discovery of natural gas, agriculture, fishing and shrimp farming were the primary sources of income for the people in Aceh, and North Aceh in particular. As much as the creation of the ZILS has shocked the surrounding population. Many of the resettlement locations were soon deserted, either because people failed to initiate transitions to new livelihood or because the promise of the new land has never been fulfilled. Thus, the appropriation of land for industrial use and resettlement of the villagers has destroyed the traditional livelihood. Worse still, the development of the Zone did not offer a long-term alternative to many local people.¹⁹⁹ Although the big industries did employ the local people during the construction of the plant, it was only temporary. Once the industries were operated, only a few of the locals were employed,

Timber Cut) and HTI (Hutan Tebang Indonesia/ Forest for Logging). There are about 19 HPH industries operating in Aceh whose income annually reaches up to 900 billion Indonesian Rupiahs, such as that owned by Bob Hasan one of Suharto's cronies. With only a concession paper of HPH, he monopolized almost 25% of the Shares of the Aceh Kraft Industry with the value reaching up to 85 billion Indonesian Rupiah in 1985. Meanwhile, Aceh's PAD (Pendapatan Asli Daerah/ Original Provincial Revenue) can only have 45 billion Indonesian Rupiah, which is only 0.5% of its forest richness. See Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 13.

¹⁹⁶Christian Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Patterns and Politics*, 107.

¹⁹⁷This figure is considerably higher than the revenue that Aceh received before the insurgency.

¹⁹⁸Since Aceh entered Indonesia, the figures of revenue that were returned to Aceh have never been greater than 0.05 % of the whole regional revenue contributed to the center. See *Waspada*, September 11, 1998.

¹⁹⁹"Zona Industri Lhokseumawe [Lhokseumawe Industrial Zone]," *Prisma* 16 (July 1987), 88-99.

while many others were brought in from outside of Aceh.²⁰⁰ Just for the reasons that most of the workforces in Aceh were neither skillful, nor they had any qualification required by the job. As the consequence of the belated response by the government to the poor educational system and unqualified educators in Aceh.²⁰¹ Despite that, cronyism and nepotism also affected the recruitment in which other ethnic groups have held many important positions, especially from Java.²⁰² As such, the Acehnese were marginalized and were deprived of their rights to enjoy development within their own land.

The growth of “rich ghettos of migrants,” employees of the big industries, and the glaring socio-cultural and economic disparities with the surrounding population have become obvious. For example, the facilities enjoyed by the employees of the industries were sharply in contrast with the poor state of infrastructure in adjoining villages.²⁰³ By 1992, inasmuch as the industries utilized the abundance of electricity²⁰⁴ and clean water supplies, only 20 percent of the residents of the industrial zone had supplies of water that met official standards of cleanliness, while the majority made use of well water which was vulnerable to pollution by the waste discharged from the factories.²⁰⁵

The impact of industrial growth on Aceh, such as environmental devastation, was so profound on the people’s social and economic situations, particularly on the local population in the area of the Zone. Research done in 1990 reported that there was a common complaint that the Arun LNG refinery had produced a large scale of pollution for the locals, while earning US \$ 7 million per day

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

²⁰¹ “Sebuah Pesisir yang Gemerlapan [The Shining Coast],” *Tempo*, November 17, 1990, 35.

²⁰² The recruitment policy has been made at the central government. See Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 27; Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 14.

²⁰³ Budhy Tjahjati S. Soegijoko, “Dampak Pembangunan Proyek Besar: Kasus Zona Industri Lhokseumawe [The Impact of Giant Industry: The Case of Industry Zone Lhokseumawe],” *Prisma* 14, 12 (1985) 69-70.

²⁰⁴ According to Dawood and Syafrizal, in spite of being an energy-rich province, less than 10 percent of the villages in Aceh have a steady supply of electricity. See Dayan Dawood and Syafrizal, “Aceh: The LNG Boom,” in Hal Hill (eds.), *Unity and Diversity: Regional Economic Development in Indonesia Since 1970* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 122.

²⁰⁵ “Sebuah Pesisir yang Gemerlapan,”; as the impact of the pollution, it is reported that around 68 percent of the children were suffering from breathing problems. See *Kompas*, November 23, 1992, 11.

in foreign exchange for the treasury of Indonesia.²⁰⁶ In the middle of 1991, it was reported that 60 percent of fishermen in traditional fishing villages in the Lhokseumawe area were living below the poverty line, and were even close to starvation, as a result of critical low catches over the previous three years. The fishermen blamed the decline on the discharge of pollutants from the ZILS. Such discharge of chemical waste from the Mobil Oil Indonesia (MOI) refinery at Arun is responsible for the devastation of dozens of hectares of shrimp and fishponds owned by 240 farmers in 1991.²⁰⁷

Despite environmental pollution, the safety of the inhabitants of the ZILS is vulnerable to physical destruction. It was reported that in December 1991, there were about eighty-eight people badly affected by the leak of ammonia gas from the Iskandar Muda Fertilizer company. In November 1992, another incident occurred where five people were severely burnt, three houses burnt, and livestock and crops were killed and destroyed.²⁰⁸ In response to the disaster caused by the ZILS, the government set up several official agencies to study and control the pollution of ZILS on the environment. Such agencies included the Environmental Impact Control Agency (Bapedal/ *Badan Pencegah Dampak Lingkungan*) and the Industrial Zone Development and Control Team (TP2WI/ *Tim Pencegah dan Pembangunan Wilayah Industri*). However, none of these agencies were able to provide a better solution to the problem and this gave the impression to the people that their presence was that of a superfluous institution.²⁰⁹

Initially, the development of ZILS was to stimulate not only a large-scale of chemical industries, but also many medium and small rural industries where the former acts as a foster parent of the latter in the region²¹⁰. However, it turned to be more center-oriented, as Kell states:

²⁰⁶Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (YLBH), "Laporan Observasi Lapangan di Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh [Field Observation Report in the Special Province of Aceh]," (December 1990), 16-17.

²⁰⁷"Ditangani Serious, Kasus Pencemaran Tambak Rakyat di Aceh Utara [the Case of Polluted Fishpond in North Aceh Need Serious Attention]," *Kompas*, October 7 1991, 13.

²⁰⁸"Pipa Kondensat Arun Bocor dan Terbakar [Arun's Condensate Pipe Leak and Caught Fire]," *Kompas*, November 29, 1992, 11.

²⁰⁹A more detailed description of the TP2WI's activities can be found in "Zona Industri Lhokseumawe" *Prisma* 16, 7 (July 1987), 100-103.

²¹⁰Soegijoko, "Dampak Pembangunan Proyek Industri Besar", 70.

The economy of North Aceh “is more oriented towards the capital of Banda Aceh and, through it to Medan, Jakarta, and the International economy, than the rest of Aceh.” And the LNG and oil sector “is far better integrated with the East Asian economy” than it is with its immediate hinterland. The ZILS has had “very limited spread effect” in Aceh, not only geographically but also in terms of the impact it has had on the growth of other sectors of the economy. Such manufacturing...there was “no functional link” between industrial activity in the North Aceh enclave and other economic activities, including agriculture and existing manufacturing industries...all is reflected in the lack of development of infrastructure in the areas close to it, outside, but within the industrial enclave.²¹¹

The pattern of development did not stimulate a rapid structural change of the Acehnese economy. In terms of the manufacturing sector, it remained very small and its contribution to employment was very low. Farming was still the dominant economic activity throughout the province and at least 78.4 percent of the Acehnese still depended to live off the land.²¹² Therefore, the provincial government introduced a new scheme “Green Revolution” that intensified the agriculture sectors to enhance the prosperity of the people and made Aceh to become the principal rice barn in Sumatra.²¹³ In 1993 the province showed encouraging results when Aceh produced 11,450 tons of rice which were exported to Africa.²¹⁴ However, the price of the rice was relatively the lowest in Indonesia compared to other commodities, the people continued living far from prosperity. Many of them sold their land to the landlords and migrated to the urban area to find jobs for better income.

Kell claims that the province’s lack of autonomy in economic matters by virtue of the highly centralized state power under the New Order, has become the bottleneck for Aceh economic development.²¹⁵

²¹¹Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 22.

²¹²Soegijoko, “Dampak Pembangunan Proyek Industri Besar”, 63.

²¹³Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, “Kemiskinan dan Pemiskinan di Pedesaan [Poverty and the Pauperization in the Rural],” *Kompas*, September 9, 1993, 4.

²¹⁴“Aceh Expor Beras ke Afrika [Aceh Exports Rice to Africa],” *Kompas*, December 23, 1993, 13.

²¹⁵The New Order, in enhancing economic development, has created a division of economic development order. Out of twenty-seven provinces, there are four major growth centers of the first order; in Sumatra, Medan is the major growth center, and Riau

Not only does the central government control the revenue that accrues from Aceh's export industries, but the concentration in Jakarta, both authority over industrial policy and of the bureaucratic agencies which grants licenses for new industrial project, also has "Javanese centric effect." The pattern is accentuated by an additional "web of informal connection," which ensures for example, that military and government officials and professional people in Jakarta are the ones who reap the greatest reward from the negotiation of local equity in foreign owned venture...

[Furthermore] Aceh no longer has the freedom, let alone the infrastructure ability, to conduct trade in the fashion that accorded in its greatness as an independent state in the past century. Aceh's economy was now not only closely integrated with the rest of Indonesia, but today it and other outlying provinces are being taxed by the high protection conferred on (predominantly) Java-based manufacturers, and by the high cost domestic shipping system. Thus, Aceh would have more to gain by having complete freedom on trade directly with Malaysia, Singapore and other countries in the region. However, the capacity of Aceh's port to handle international trade is limited, and the economy of the province is heavily dependent on Medan, and its port Belawan as an entrepôt.²¹⁶

With the creation of the ZILS, Aceh emerged as a major exporter of oil and natural gas and became one of the richest regions of Indonesia with the fastest growth rate. However, Aceh and its inhabitants remained backward and poor, as its revenues were exploited by the central government. All of the shortcomings of economic development and the gap between the development of Aceh's resource revenue and the standard of living of the ordinary Acehnese people mentioned above, served as stumbling blocks to its integration with the rest of Indonesia. Although, the creation of the ZILS did silence the élite who were concerned with the economic development of Aceh, the government failed to silence the perpetual call for prosperity by the majority of Acehnese who continued living under poverty. This failure, is an advantage for the 'Ulamas who continued their resistance against the secular central government to

is growth center of the second, and Aceh is a sub-growth center. According to this order, it is no wonder that Aceh depended strongly on the Belawan port of Medan for export. See Christian Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Patterns and Politics*, 227-229.

²¹⁶ Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 27.

win support from the Acehese community. Accordingly, it is importance to discuss the impact of the patrimonial system of the New Order on Acehese politics, as a system used by the government to maintain its control over Aceh.

THE IMPACT OF THE PATRIMONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM ON ACEH POLITICS

As the New Order government was concerned with the twin goals of economic development and political stability, the regime set about to bring all independent institutions and alternative sources of power under its control, and when necessary, creating new institutions.²¹⁷ This move was possible through enhancing the power of the central government. Within the context of Acehese politics, the regime's policy to contain Islam from state political power had a profound impact on the Acehese '*Ulamas*, as their hope that the change of regime would herald a revival of Islamic power in Indonesia were quickly dashed.

Consequently, they found themselves unable to make any significant progress towards their goal of an Islamic Aceh because of the absence of cooperation from the center. On the one hand, it led to a relative decline of the Islamic schools, while on the other hand it led to the expansion of secular education with the establishment of a secular university (UNSYIAH/ University of Syiah Kuala) in the 1960s. This contributed to the emergence of a new generation of secular educated Acehese whose interests were more in the socio-economic development of the region, rather than in the Islamic development. In order to silence the reformist '*Ulamas*, the IAIN (Jami'ah Ar-raniry State Islamic Institution), Islamic School System and MUI (Indonesian Council of '*Ulama*) were established. Apart from that, the conservative '*Ulamas* who had less influence in the

²¹⁷As mentioned above, in order to enhance its control, the regime imposed *Pancasila* as the sole foundation of every institution, thereby curtailing all sort of divisive ideological issues. In creating new institution, the regime had allowed only three political parties to get involved in the election. The PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/ United Development Party) which was identified as Muslim party, Golkar (Golongan Karya /Functional Group) which identified with the nationalist and were close allies of Suharto, and PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia/ Indonesian Democratic Party) which identified as a nationalist and non-Muslim party. Theoretically, the PPP and PDI were the opposition parties, yet in practice Suharto controlled both of these parties, by having the right to veto the appointment of their chairmen.

government, but were close to the people, found refuge in the Traditional Islamic Boarding School, the *Dayah*.²¹⁸

The emergence of secular educated people marked the internal disunity and élite rivalries within Acehnese politics, following the rapid change in social and economic sectors in the region since the early 1970s. Such a condition in turn, raised the dilemma of whether regional economic development could be best promoted through a strategy of alliance with the center, or through opposition to the center. Since at the outset, political stability and economic development were the major concerns of the New Order, such political phenomena provided a conducive condition for the center to engineer alliances with one of the rivals that would enhance its control over the region.

If in the past the *Ulèëbalangs* were co-opted by the colonial power, under the New Order regime, the emerging secular educated élite were considered as “new *Ulèëbalanghip*”, since both shared similarities in terms of their role as agents of the central government to counterbalance their rival influence, the ‘*Ulamas*. Thus, instead of manning Aceh’s administration with Javanese, as was the case in other regions, the central government deliberately established a “technocratic linkage” with the new technocrats in Aceh. At this point, Golkar, the ruling party played a very significant role in forging an alliance with the secular educated élite and employed them against the ‘*Ulamas*.²¹⁹ The central government purposefully nurtured the new pattern of leadership in Aceh, as they would develop a different definition of the condition in Aceh. Brown states:

They could attempt to persuade the Acehnese people of the validity of their regionalist development goal by arguing that the apparent paucity of central expenditure in Aceh had arisen, not from any internal-colonial exploitation by the center arising from its Javanese bias. It is rather from Aceh’s social-backwardness and its lack of influence at the center and its parochial insularity, engendered by adherence to fanatical Islam.²²⁰

²¹⁸This move of the government has had a profound impact on the Acehnese. They consider the ‘*Ulamas* as those who found refuge in the *Dayah*, and denounce those ‘*Ulamas* who associate with the government under the MUI.

²¹⁹Eric Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Case Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia*, 255.

²²⁰David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 150.

Such a definition contradicted with that of the '*Ulamas* who expressed the goal of an Islamic Aceh, defending itself against the un-Islamic center. As each leadership articulated a version of Acehnese communalism that had widespread potential support in Acehnese Society, there emerged a third élite group who offered a different diagnosis and panacea for Aceh problem. They sought the support not only from among the regionalists but also from amongst the religiously committed people of the community.

These young Acehnese secular educated élite began to doubt the wisdom of the strategy of allying with Golkar, primarily because of the perpetuation of the gap between the contribution of Aceh to Indonesia's economy and the contribution of Jakarta to Aceh's economy. The argument that an alliance with the center was the way to increase the bargaining power of the Aceh, seemed less convincing. As Brown states further:

The alternative possibility was to argue that the center's Javanese bias in resource distribution signified an 'internal colonial relationship to Aceh that can only be corrected by Aceh moving towards a political autonomy in which it could retain control over its own resource revenues.²²¹

Since this diagnosis of Aceh's problem put the blame on the central government rather than on the Acehnese community, it had accommodated the '*Ulamas*' version of the definition of Aceh's problem. This erosion of the distinction between regionalist concerns with development, and religious concerns with Islam led to another insurrection movement in Aceh, the GAM (Free Aceh Movement) that began in 1976.

THE BIRTH OF GAM [GERAKAN ACEH MERDEKA/ FREE ACEH MOVEMENT]

On December 4, 1976, Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro, appointed himself as the *Wali Nangrou Aceh* (the President of Aceh),

²²¹*Ibid.*, 151.

the succession state of the once great Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam.²²² He declared:

We people of Aceh- Sumatra exercising our right of self-determination, and protecting our historic right of eminent domain to our fatherland, do hereby declare our selves free and independent from all political control of the foreign regime of Jakarta and the alien people of the island of Java. Our fatherland, Aceh-Sumatra, had always been a free and independent sovereign state since the world began.

... [T]he surrender of sovereignty which is illegal by the former colonial master, the Dutch East Indies, to the new colonial master, the Javanese is a deception and serious political crime of this century... the so called Indonesian nation is a camouflage and propaganda to cover Javanese's colonialism since the world began... if Dutch colonialism is illegal, thus Javanese colonialism which is derived from the former one, certainly is illegal- as stated in International Law "Ex injuria jus non oritur"- right cannot be derived from what is not right, legal cannot be derived from what is illegal...²²³

Following the declaration, he set up a movement GAM or ASNLF, as an organized force to continue the struggle of the Acehnese against the neo-colonizer, Indonesian-Java. The first appearance of Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro was after the incident of Pulot Leupung and Cot Jeumpa during the DI/TII rebellion in 1953.²²⁴ He was then living in New York, serving as a

²²²He claimed that he was a descendent of the great 'Ulama and hero of the Acehnese struggle against the Dutch, Teungku Syeikh Muhammad Saman (Chik di Tiro) who was given the *nine fold seal* of Sultan authorization. That signified his position as acting Sultan of Aceh after the pacification of the Palace by Dutch during the second military attempt in 1874 (Anthony Reid, *The Contest of North Sumatra: Aceh, Netherlands and Britain*, 251). On this basis, he claims himself as the true heir to the Sultanate.

²²³Teungku Muhammad Hasan DiTiro, *the Price of Freedom: the Unfinished Diary* (Sweden: n.np, 1981), 24-27. Indonesia was nothing but geographical expression until the Dutch found out it was more efficient to unite the islands of Indies under a single administration. See Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (Washington D. C: n.np, 1967), 256.

²²⁴Following the incident, he wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister, Ali Sastromidjojo, in which he wrote that Ali's cabinet had failed to bring prosperity to the whole nation, and instead had dragged the nation into the cliff of destruction, disintegration and civil war. He also alleged Ali's cabinet as being a fascist-communism regime that had committed *genocide* in Aceh, West Java, Central Java, South Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, and part of Kalimantan (Borneo). He also suggested that the central

member of the staff at the Indonesian Representative Office to the United Nations in New York. Defecting to the rebel side, he left his post and, with the support of the movement leader, Teungku Daud Beureueh, he appointed himself as the “Ambassador” of DI/TII to the United Nations. Thus, his involvement in a rebellion was not a new experience. Nor was his support for the earlier DI/TII rebellion in Aceh without a cause. As Nazaruddin states:

Long before the establishment of GAM, he had clearly advanced his view of the nature of the center-region relation in Indonesia. He believed that the root of the political conflict in Indonesia lay in the fact that the Indonesian state was dominated by one ethnic group: the Javanese. This domination was further strengthened by the political system adopted, that is, the unitary system, which protected this ethnic group’s interests at the expense of other ethnic interests. To overcome this problem of center-region domination, he proposed that Indonesia should adopt a federal system of government.²²⁵

Actually in the 1950s, diTiro advocated that Indonesia would be best governed under a federal system, in which Java would distribute political power among other ethnic groups in the country, and in return, would receive a share of the economic resources in the regions. However, in the absence of any fundamental change in the distribution of power in Indonesia, he arrived at the conclusion that the only option for the outer island was independence.²²⁶ DiTiro claimed that Indonesia “is not a natural geopolitical entity,” for there are no such historical links between Java and the outer islands, and the different parts of Indonesia lack a sense of “common destiny,”

government should hold negotiation with the DI/TII leaders, Teungku Daud Beureueh, S.M. Kartosuwirjo, Abdul Kahar Muzakkar, and Ibnu Hajar in order to solve the dispute. If not, he and many other Indonesian youth who love Indonesia would take the case before the General Assembly of the United Nations. However, his effort ended in vain, as DI/TII failed to gained support from the world, just because of their Islamic identity. Consequently, the government canceled his passport. With the help of some American senators, he obtained a permanent residency of the United States. See Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 41.

²²⁵Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Experience of Aceh*, 115; Hasan Muhammad diTiro, *Demokrasi Untuk Indonesia* [Democracy for Indonesia] (Aceh: Penerbit Seulawah, 1958).

²²⁶Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 61.

despite having been ruled over as a single colony by the Dutch.²²⁷ Hence, he implied that colonialism did not end with the departure of the Dutch who had handed their empire over to the Javanese completely after the end of the Second World War. This condition has had disastrous effects on the outer islands, as diTiro states further:

“Under the guise of “development,” their resources have been exploited for the benefit of Java, which uses military force to maintain control of the outer islands and seeks to ensure future control by means of transmigration of Javanese settlers. Not only are the economic interests of the regions subordinated to those of Java and its military regime, but the government in Jakarta is also in thrall to the Western capitalist powers, who consider Indonesia “their best neo-colony.” The few non-Javanese who have been brought into the government are there merely as “propaganda tools” to give the impression that the outer islands too are represented in the administration and are not completely disenfranchised, as is in fact the case.”²²⁸

DiTiro believed that the only way out for this predicament was for Indonesia to be divided into a number of independent states. That actually should have happened when the Dutch left at the end of the Second World War. As it is stipulated in International Law that each colonial territory has “a separate legal status” and “the right to independence,” he claimed that Aceh-Sumatra was a separate colonial territory from Java, and hence had a right to self determination when Dutch rule ended. DiTiro further maintained that,

Upon the withdrawal of the Dutch, there should have been a return to the precolonial “status quo ante bellum.” Consequently, because “when the Dutch declared war on Aceh in 1873, the sovereignty over the whole of Sumatra was

²²⁷Teungku Hasan M. diTiro, “ Indonesian Nationalism: A Western Invention to Contain Islam in the Dutch East Indies,” in M. Ghayasuddin (ed.), *The Impact of Nationalism on the Muslim World* (London: Al- Hoda Publisher, 1986), 61. This claim is reasonable, provided that it refers to Aceh which was an Islamic Sultanate. But the term Indonesia was invented during the colonial rule that implied similar experience of being ruled by the Dutch. Besides, this nation was built on the anti-colonial base, the Dutch in particular.

²²⁸Cited in Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 2; “Kedudukan “Politisi Seberang” di Jawa [the Position of “the Politicians of the Outer Islands” in Java],”*Suara Aceh Merdeka*, Edisi VII, July, 1996, 15.

universally and formally recognized to belong to Aceh...the whole [of] Sumatra should have been returned to Acehnese sovereignty and become automatically independent again after World War II. The transfer of sovereignty instead to "Javanese Indonesia" was even more of an injustice given that "Aceh Sumatra" "remained free and independent while Java and the Javanese were, for four hundred years, being exchanged – like chattels – under the hands of one colonialist to another." Under International Law, "the People of Aceh-Sumatra" now had "an inherent right to expel Javanese Indonesia invaders from their country."²²⁹

Nevertheless, based on the historical facts, the argument forwarded by diTiro for Aceh Sumatra's historical development is inherently flawed. Firstly, he deliberately denied the fact that before the Dutch declared war against Aceh in 1873, part of Sumatra which was formerly within Aceh Sultanate territory, had been completely captured as early as 1824. And Sabang (Weh islands) which was on the tip of Aceh itself was completely pacified in 1878.²³⁰ Only the mainland was what the Dutch failed to pacify. Secondly, in 1942, though they had driven out the Dutch, the Acehnese had to face another colonial master, the Japanese. DiTiro did not mention that in his analysis of Aceh history. Finally, after the defeat of the Japanese by the Allied forces following the declaration of an independent Indonesia, the 'Ulamas of Aceh issued a declaration of full support to the fledgling Republic of Indonesia. DiTiro also denied this declaration by claiming that it was the "period of defeat" and the Acehnese had no "leaders" that had the notion of Aceh as an independent state.²³¹ According to diTiro, the history of Aceh should be traced to the period of the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, denying the colonial periods, to the return of diTiro who led the struggle for independent Aceh in 1976. He claimed that Aceh Sumatra's right to self-determination was inherent and deep rooted in history, and the struggle of his movement (GAM) is considered as a historic struggle of the Acehnese against colonialism.²³² DiTiro's

²²⁹Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro, "The Legal Status of Aceh-Sumatra Under International Law" (The National Liberation Front Aceh-Sumatra, November 2, 1980), 13.

²³⁰Jon.M. Reinhardt, *Foreign Policy and National Integration: The Case of Indonesia*, 22.

²³¹Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 63.

²³²Lukman Thaib, *The Politics and Governments Of Southeast Asia*, 49-51.

interpretation of Aceh history is characterized both by a static view of history and, as one writer has aptly put it, by “a romantic but somewhat distorted vision of Acehnese history.”²³³

The GAM was set up to ensure the survival of the Aceh Sumatra nation from the destruction of their socio-political and cultural heritage, as well as exploitation of their economic assets by the Javanese. Therefore, it made a straightforward ethnic appeal to provoke against Javanese colonialism. This appeal is particularly concerned with the natural wealth of Aceh, rather than the religious appeal. This gives the impression that the GAM is a secular movement.²³⁴ Nazaruddin states:

...Teungku Daud Beureueh was amenable to the separation of Aceh from Indonesia, as recommended by DiTiro, but he insisted that the struggle be based on the Islamic faith. DiTiro refused, for he believed that the religious bias would fail to attract support from overseas.²³⁵

In addition, Kell states further:

GAM ideology goes little beyond such straightforward appeals to ethnic sentiment and to past and potential glories of an independent Acehnese state. [DiTiro] far-fetched plan for ‘Aceh Sumatra’ is to establish a Swiss-style “Confederation of Free States,” in which each ethnic group would have its own state (equal in status to that of Aceh) and would choose its own form of government.²³⁶

Judged from its secular platform, it is hard for the GAM to win the support of Acehnese who are known for their strong Islamic sentiment. At the early stage of its insurgence that took effect in 1976, the movement was able to win the support among a small

²³³Finngair Hiorth, “Free Aceh: An Impossible Dream?” *Kabar Seberang: Sulating Paphilindo*, no. 17 (June 1986), 183; Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 63.

²³⁴*Ibid.*, 65; Lukman Thaib, *The Politics and Governments of Southeast Asia*, 49-51.

²³⁵Teungku Daud Beureueh refused to call upon his fanatical followers to support the movement, for he could not bear responsibility in the hereafter for the victims in a rebellion which was not based on the Islamic faith. See Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Acehnese Experience*, 125-128.

²³⁶Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 65; Daud Paneuk, MP-GAM, Kuala Lumpur, interview, August 14, 1999; Daud believed that the GAM would establish an Islamic state of Aceh. This is similar to Kell’s view, although he claimed that Islam was accidentally manifested in the movement’s goals, that is to establish a successor state to the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam.

group of alienated young élite²³⁷ and no more than 200 people who were formerly followers of DI/TII²³⁸. However, it failed to win widespread support among the Acehnese 'Ulamas who would have helped them to build mass support.²³⁹ Consequently, the government easily silenced its first incarnation by killing and putting in prison some of its prominent leaders and driving others into exile in Sweden.

THE REVIVAL OF GAM IN 1989

Since, there was a profound administrative contact failure between the rural dweller and government officials at the district level, it created a "vacuum" of authority in some rural areas. Such failure was perpetuated by the lack of infrastructure connecting rural and urban area and it was "the biggest mistake" that government officials and Golkar made in Aceh.²⁴⁰ People made the criticism that development had been concentrated at the center, the government had forgotten the need for development in the rural areas.²⁴¹ As such conditions remained, Acehnese resentment escalated following President Suharto's resettlement (*transmigratie*) policy in the early 1980s. This policy gave the people an impression that the government was trying to Javanize the region through

²³⁷These élites perceived that their prospect for promotion were blocked both by the Javanese bias of the regime and by those Acehnese technocrats who had become a closed Acehnese oligarchy enjoying exceptional privileges that exclude other educated and qualified élite after being co-opted by the center. See David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia*, 51.

²³⁸The reason why the former DI/TII followers supported the movement was due to the fact that diTiro was trying to establish a successor state to the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, in which Islam had become the integral part of the state. This is in contrast to the Republic of Indonesia which is neither secular nor an Islamic state as it is based on *Pancasila*. Teungku Idris Mahmud, MP-GAM, Kuala Lumpur, Interview, August 15, 1998.

²³⁹Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 65.; Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Issues and Politics of Regionalism in Indonesia: Evaluating the Acehnese Experience*, 125.

²⁴⁰"Gubernur Aceh Ibrahim Hasan [Aceh Gubernur, Ibrahim Hasan]," *Kompas*, March 29, 1992, 2.

²⁴¹People claimed that the government's top official paid more attention to the project through which they might earn a higher percentage of profits and such projects could only be found at the urban area. The rural area where there were no such big projects were neglected. It seemed that such conditions were deliberately neglected, for it could be used for political campaigns, promising people that their village would be developed if they voted for the Golkar.

resettlement of Javanese from the overcrowded Java Island into the rural area of Aceh.

Such a condition gave the GAM a room to secretly propagate and spread its ideology and concept to the community in different regencies, such as Proper Aceh, Pidie, North, East, South, and Central Aceh. Many of the Libya-trained Acehnese²⁴² returned home in 1989 to fill this “vacuum”.²⁴³ By joining a number of fighters who remained in the forests of Aceh, they began to create disturbances in Aceh, namely in Pidie, North and East Aceh regencies. In the middle of 1989, they attacked the government forces, civil servants, and suspected government informers. Most of the incidents occurred in areas around ZILS.

In the late 1980s, as Major General H. R. Pramono²⁴⁴ said, the movement was well established in the villages of these three regencies. The GPKs²⁴⁵ (*Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan*/ Gang of Security Disrupters) were “everywhere” among the people, and “had a concept, had guns, and on the ground had the masses”. Uncertain with the numerical strength of the movement, Pramono only assumed that they were approximately hundred of thousands, including their followers who were from a lower level of education, such as trishaw drivers, fishermen and farmers.²⁴⁶

However, the strength of the movement became more apparent in these three regencies in particular, only after the

²⁴²The GAM’s bilateral link with Libya was manifested by the establishment of the *Mathaba* organization, in which diTiro was holding a position as Chairman of the Political Committee in the late 1980s. This organization was against the ideologies of Imperialism, Racism, Zionism and Fascism, and was headed by Colonel Gaddafi. It supplied moral and financial support to liberation movements around the world. Since Aceh is a rich country it did not receive any financial and arms support from the organization; what they received was only the military training. See Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 73.

²⁴³“Aceh Menarik Rambut [Aceh Pulls the Hair]” *Tempo*, July 21, 1990, 35.

²⁴⁴Major Genereal Pramono was the first commander of Military Region Command “Bukit Barisan” (KODAM I/ B.B) from the middle 1990 to 1993. He was replaced by Albertus Pranowo. The “Bukit Barisan” command is based in Medan, and incorporates Aceh, North Sumatra, West Sumatra and Riau. In Aceh, there are two sub-regional commands. The first is “Liliwangsa” Military Resort Command (Korem 011/Liliwangsa), based in Lhokseumawe, and covering North, East, Central Aceh, and Pidie. The second is the “Teuku Umar” Military Resort Command (Korem 012/ Teuku Umar), based in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital, covering Proper Aceh, the municipalities Banda Aceh and Sabang, West, South, and Southeast Aceh.

²⁴⁵The GPK is another term given by the central government to GAM’s fighters.

²⁴⁶Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 67.

military began a counterinsurgency operation in August 1990. Here, about 1500 people came to pledge their loyalty to the Republic and confessed that they were forced to support the GAM.²⁴⁷ In addition, the GAM had also gained secret support from among government civil servants, politicians, businessmen, students and the local military, and police officers. Kell states:

In a report of an interview with Pramono, he said, “there were ABRI who, because members of their family were with GPK, carried out their duties halfheartedly if they were on patrol. [For instance] a senior official in the East Aceh police head quarters and the chief of police in a sub-district of Pidie, was imprisoned for assisting GAM fighters during 1990.”²⁴⁸

Kell further asserted that the majority of Acehnese support the separatist movement that extended into the upper echelons of the provincial authorities, albeit only passively. He refers to General Pramono’s statement that he did not deny that the idea of separatism had penetrated government officials and leading public figures who were trying to influence the people.²⁴⁹ This signifies that the GAM succeeded in tapping deep feelings of resentment towards the Indonesian government.²⁵⁰

As the insurgency reached its peak in the middle of 1990, the Javanese settlers in North and East Aceh became the target of GAM threats. Many people fled their houses in the villages, sought protection in the big towns, and even left to Medan in North

²⁴⁷*Ibid.*,; See Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (YLBHI), “ Laporan Hasil Observasi

Lanjutan Kasus ‘Aceh Merdeka’ di Daerah Istimewa Aceh [A Final Report of Observation on the Case of ‘Free Aceh’ in Special Province of Aceh]” Medan, November 12, 1990), 1-2.

²⁴⁸Tim Kell, *The Root of Acehnese Rebellion*, 67; “Perwira Polisi Didakwa Terlibat GPK Aceh [Senior Police Officer was Trained of his Involvement in GPK Aceh]” Kompas, November 1, 1991, 6; “Kapten (Pol) H. Ahmad Adami Dituntut Hukuman Enam Tahun Penjara [Police Captain H. Ahmad Adami Charged Six Years Imprisonment]” *Ibid.*, November 5, 1991, 6; Adami passed away in 1996, one year before his term finished. He was reported very sick due to being tortured while serving six years imprisonment.

²⁴⁹“Operasi Territorial untuk Mengikis Habis Ide Separatis [Territorial Operation to Eradicate Separatist Ideas],” *Kompas*, September 16, 1992, 13.

²⁵⁰Asia Watch, “Indonesia: Human Right Abuses in Aceh,” *News From Asia Watch*, December 27, 1990, 4.

Sumatra.²⁵¹ These incidents led to the disruption of the transmigration program and caused great embarrassment to the provincial government. Ibrahim Hasan was quoted saying that, "I apologize to the central government, because that incident was beyond our reach."²⁵² Following the tension created by the insurgency, Ibrahim met the president in Jakarta regarding the current peace disturbance in Aceh by GPK. The then president Suharto responded, that since Aceh has a very solid customary law under the supervision of the '*Ulamas*, the conflict in Aceh should be solved through a cultural and societal approach. The role of the '*Ulamas* is of the paramount importance to raise awareness among the people of the calamity imbued in the idea of separatism. He further asserted that the success of this propagation depended strongly on the support given by the Acehnese community, because only the Acehnese knew better who were directly involved in the insurgency. If this approach failed, only then would ABRI be involved.²⁵³

Upon the advice of the president, Ibrahim called a meeting with all influential Acehnese from various walks of life and provincial bureaucrats, discussing the way out to the conflict. They agreed to render this responsibility to the '*Ulamas* and community with support from the ABRI. The late A. Hasmy, who was then the chairman of MUI, went down to earth in the region, but his effort ended with no success. The people, particularly the youth, who were uneducated and unemployed by big industries in the ZILS were strongly influenced by the idea of separatism and independence which promised them a better future. Ibrahim also called the students of various organizations to take part in the mission, but none of them dared to take responsibility except with ABRI companionship.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹"Rebels Harass Java Migrants," *International Herald Tribune*, July 26, 1990; "Transmigran Stress Dipukuli GPK Aceh [Migrant Stress being Beaten by GPK Aceh]," *Terbit*, March 30, 1991.

²⁵²"Bagi Aceh, Transmigrasi adalah Investasi [For Aceh Transmigration is an Investment]," *Kompas*, March 1, 1993.

²⁵³Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 200-201.

²⁵⁴*Ibid.*,

The failure of the cultural and societal approach led Ibrahim, after consulting 'Ulamas and provincial bureaucrats,²⁵⁵ to meet Suharto and request for the deployment in Aceh of intelligence and additional military forces. At first, he suggested to Suharto that the military should remain in Aceh for six months only, for if they stayed longer, they might behave out of control, unless the conditions demanded.²⁵⁶ In 1990, in Aceh there were already 6000 troops under the *Kodam I/ B.B.* following the request, Suharto deployed another 6000 troops from other headquarters. This included the Red Beret special force, *Kopassus* (*Komando Pasukan Khusus/* Special Force Command) from Java, that was made up of a total number of 12,000 soldiers located in the province.²⁵⁷ Such conditions explicitly transformed Aceh from an industrial zone to (by using the term given by human right activist and politicians in Aceh) the "DOM" (*Daerah Operasi Militer/* Military Operation Zone).

CONCLUSION

Above all, the second phase of Acehnese rebellion has its roots in the social, political and economic changes that have occurred in this distinctive Muslim region of Indonesia under the New Order regime. In this second phase, the demand for independence was made under the banner of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), as the consequence of, firstly, the failure of the Indonesian government to make a profound change in term of the political system. The government had moved towards a strong centralized government instead of transforming the state into a federal system of government, which would grant a balanced distribution of political power to the outer island. Secondly, the exploitative nature of economic development as the result of strong centralized government portrays the colonial type of relationship between the outer island and the central government. In such relationship, the former gives larger contributions to the latter and receives lesser than its contribution in term of natural resources. Finally, the creation of patron-clientalism through the adoption of a patrimonial political system, which benefited a small élite class in the community at the expense of the majority. As such socio-political and economic condition persists, certainly the GAM will win the support of the people by promises them a better future, if Aceh gets its independence.



²⁵⁵ Among them were the late Ali Hasymy, Hasan Ali and Hasan Saleh, former DI/TII members, but none of them able to come up with solutions except the military approach. *Ibid.*, 202.

²⁵⁶ "Ibrahim Hasan: Live interview" *RCTI [Rajawali Citra Television Indonesia]*, July 20, 1998, 8:00.a.m.

²⁵⁷ Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehness Rebellion*, 74.

CHAPTER 5

“DOM” [DAERAH OPERASI MILITER/ THE MILITARY OPERATION ZONE] 1989-1998: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE 1989 INSURGENCY IN ACEH

On September 26th, 1989, Private–One Ismail Ali and Zakaria of Batallion III, Division B were ambushed. The former was killed on the spot, while the latter was badly injured in Krueng Tuan, Nisam, North Aceh. This incident was the starting point of the disturbance of peace in Aceh, and marked the point of resurrection of the GAM in Aceh. After six months, on March 9th, 1990, retired military officer Sergeant Major Ali was killed in Alue Leuhob, Lhoksukon, North Aceh. Then, several cases of murder, abduction, robbery, and the extrication of Javanese immigrants from the resettlement area occurred. All these incidences were happening within the period from March until August 1990, in which many properties had been requisitioned and many people were killed, including military officers, members of the separatist group as well as the civilians (see the Appendix B).

Correspondingly, H. R. Pramono was reported to have said that the GPKs were everywhere among the people, and had a concept, had guns, and on the ground, they had the masses. On this assumption, the then governor of Aceh requested Suharto to deploy additional troops to Aceh to maintain peace and security. “DOM” therefore, took effect in Aceh. This chapter deals with the way the military carried out their operations, such as the creation of village militias, and “*cuak*” as the operational assistance forces to control the separatist movement in the rural area. And also it deals with the effects of such created systems to the community socio-religious, political and economic structure in the rural Aceh.

“OPERASI JARING MERAH” [MILITARY RED OPERATION]

In response to the GAM insurgency, the central government adopted a carrot-stick strategy. On the one hand, it deployed some extra combination troops of the regular army, the mobile brigade of the police, the Special Forces, and Air Force units to combat the insurgency forces. On the other hand, it increased the regional revenue for development. Accordingly, two crucial questions are raised. Firstly, did the Armed Forces succeed in suppressing the insurgency of the GAM in Aceh? Secondly, did the government development scheme succeed in paying off all the losses suffered by the Acehnese following the enforcement of “DOM” in Aceh?

The deployment of 12,000 troops and government intelligence personnel to the rural areas, especially of the three regencies, Pidie, North and East Aceh was enough to create a state of great confusion in the village. People lived in fear and suspicion, and no one seemed to trust anybody and everybody was frightened of everyone else in the neighborhood, though they knew each other very well.²⁵⁸ What is more, as people at least maintained the secrecy of the Separatist members, between 1989-1998, the military carried out *Operasi Jaring Merah* (Red Operation) that initially aimed to restore public peace and security. However, during the operation the military behaved brutally with the people. Al-Chaidar et al. state that “*Operasi Jaring Merah*...had brutally dragged into not only an obvious violation of the human rights, but also a total destruction of religious (Islam) order that had long been preserved by the people in Aceh”.²⁵⁹ As Zainul Abidin describes “Most of the soldiers were ethnically identified as Batak. They were not Muslim and they did not respect Islam”.²⁶⁰

Furthermore, Kell states that “ABRI’s strategy in Aceh centered on the use of “shock therapy,” a campaign of terror designed to strike

²⁵⁸Rumors spread that government intelligence personnel were everywhere, they were among the trishaw drivers, vendors, coffee and *jamu* (Javanese tradition medicine) traders. See “Zainul Abidin’s Story” *Inside Indonesia*, June 1995, 19.

²⁵⁹Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 107.

²⁶⁰“Zainul Abidin’s story”, 19.

fear in the population and make them withdraw their support for the GAM".²⁶¹ Al-Chaidar et al. observe that:

For the Acehnese, *Operasi Jaring Merah* had become a very frightening nightmare and a traumatic experience. For the military had behaved inhumanly against people who were suspected of having connection with the GPK or GAM; they even fabricated the story that signified people's involvement in the insurgency.²⁶²

It was reported that although the separatists themselves did commit atrocities, there was "a vast difference in scale" between the two sides in this respect.²⁶³ During the operation, the Military carried out arbitrary arrests and the detention of hundreds of people, systematic burning of houses, rape, "abduction", and the dumping of unidentified dead bodies at the road side.²⁶⁴

Sometime in the morning we would go to the dawn prayer and there would be bodies lying in the street which were not there the night before when we came home after the 'Isha prayer. Usually the bodies were of people from outside the *kampung* (village) whom nobody knew. Sometimes, their hands were tied behind their backs and they had been shot in the heart. But if someone in the village recognized the dead persons, he would not show it out of fear of the soldiers.²⁶⁵

Was there no law to protect the rights of the civilians in Aceh? With the enforcement of the Anti-Subversion Law, the military indeed behaved above the law.²⁶⁶ Many civilians fell victim and charged under a wide range of subversive laws. Extra-judicial killings and arbitrary arrests could be carried out with impunity,

²⁶¹Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 74.

²⁶²Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 107.

²⁶³Asia Watch "Indonesia: Human Right Abuse in Aceh," (New York, December 27, 1990), 27.

²⁶⁴Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 74; "Indonesia" *Human Rights Watch: World Report*, January 1990, 301-306.

²⁶⁵"Zainul Abidin's Story", 19.

²⁶⁶The violation of the law was reflected with extra-judicial killings, unlawful detention, forced confession, and tortures. This happened although the Indonesian code provides protection from all these abuses. Statements from suspects or witnesses are supposed to be extracted without pressure, prisoners are allowed to notify their family of their arrest and they or their family have the right to challenge the legality of their detention. Arrest should followed by warrants except in special circumstances...See Adam Schawarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s* (Australia: Allen & Unwin Pty.Ltd, 1994), 247.

since once a victim was labeled as GPK, no question was asked, no warrant was needed, the victim could be detained, tortured for confession, and could even be killed. Many of the victims did not get a fair trial. They were either punished on the spot or taken into *Rumoh Geudong*.²⁶⁷ As the regional military commander of *Kodam I/BB*, Maj. Gen. Pramono asserted that “many Acehnese should be detained without trial because if they all went to the court, the court would be too full.”²⁶⁸

Such “deadly suspicion” had resulted into a growing number of unidentified corpses found and dumped at night on the side of the road, in the river, in the plantation areas and in the market of Pidie, North and East Aceh regencies. One report said that there had been a “trickle of death” since 1989 and becoming “a torrent” in September 1990. Between mid-1989 and mid-1991, a military doctor has estimated the total numbers of deaths at 2000. Most of the casualties were unarmed civilians killed by Indonesian military forces.²⁶⁹ This led to the speculation that military was executing the prisoners and dumping the bodies into the public places. Although the military denied responsibility, most Acehnese thought it as a warning to withdraw their support for the GPK or GAM.²⁷⁰ In response to the ruthless Indonesian military operations, Hasan Muhammad diTiro was reported to have said that: “If possible, I wish to achieve my aim peacefully”.²⁷¹

Besides *shock therapy*, since 1992, the military also initiated an integrated territorial activities program (*Bhakti Manunggal Aksara*),²⁷² as the way to win the hearts of the civilians particularly in

²⁶⁷This is another names for *Pos Sattis* (Military Strategic and Tactic Post), that was located in various areas of the three regencies. Here many detainees during investigation were tortured, raped, and even killed. See Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 115, 183, 186.

²⁶⁸Adam Schawaz, “Deadly Suspicion,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 25, 1991, 18-20.

²⁶⁹Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 74; “Indonesia” *Human Rights Watch: World Report*, January 1990, 301-306; “Korban Jaring Merah di Bukit Tengkorak [The Victim of Red Net in Bukit Tengkorak],” *Gatra*, no. 38, year 4, August 8, 1998, 24-29; *Serambi Indonesia*, July and August editions, 1998; *Waspada*, July and August edition 1998; “The Winds of Rage,” *Newsweek*, August 30, 1998, 24-25

²⁷⁰*Ibid.*; Amnesty International, “Indonesia: “Shock Therapy” Restoring Order in Aceh: 1989-1993” (London, July 28, 1993)

²⁷¹“Bayang- bayang Hasan Tiro [Shadows of Hasan Tiro],” *Editor*, July 13, 1991, 29. Cited in Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 77.

²⁷²Through this program, ABRI had constructed 375 units of houses, 4500 people received free health treatment and education for the villagers, but such contributions were

the GAM's strongholds. These activities included constructing village facilities and infrastructure, in which rural development funds were no longer put out to tender, but instead were directly handled by military and local government authorities who were in charge of the program. The program also consisted of "mental upgrading" that aimed at creating a sense of national awareness and patriotism through the socialization of the Indonesian national anthem and flag.²⁷³ The local military commander in mid-1992 summed up his satisfaction in the following terms: "in the past, most people did not know the Indonesian national anthem. Now "every one" could sing it, and they also now knew that the *merah putih* (red and white) was the Indonesian flag, whereas previously they [had] displayed the GPK flag."²⁷⁴

Yet, the satisfaction shown by the local military commanders of the program achievement was inherently full of flaws. As reported by Indonesian lawyers in November 1990, the whole community deplored the armed forces' actions and "their hatred and fear of ABRI" had reached a peak.²⁷⁵ Moreover, soldiers drafted in from outside Aceh were ignorant and neglectful of local customs and traditions. Thus, this heightened the level of popular antipathy.²⁷⁶ This means that the military failed to gain the popular support of the civilians. As such, the deteriorating condition was perpetuated where the misery is faced not only by those involved in the insurgency, but also impinged on innocent civilians. No wonder if most Acehnese would prefer to keep it secret about the movement of the GAM. In response to such an unfriendly environment, the Army created a system of village militias and informants.

not able to heal the wound caused by the Jaring Merah Operation. "Mereka Tak Bisa Tersenyum [They Could not Smile]," *Gatra*, no. 38, year 4, August 8, 1998, 34-35.

²⁷³Korano Nicolash, "Upaya ABRI Memerangi GPK Aceh Merdeka [ABRI Effort to Fight GPK Free Aceh]," *Kompas*, March 20, 1992.

²⁷⁴Albert Situmorang, "Bakti ABRI di Aceh Merebut Hati Rakyat untuk Melawan GPK [ABRI Service in Aceh to win the People Heart to Fight the GPK]," *Suara Pembaharuan*, May 12, 1992; Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 76.

²⁷⁵YLBHI, *Observasi Lanjutan Kasus 'Aceh Merdeka'* [Further Observation of 'Free Aceh' Case], cited in *Ibid.*,

²⁷⁶*Ibid.*,

THE CREATION OF VILLAGE MILITIAS AND “CUAK” SYSTEM ²⁷⁷

The military also maintained tight control of village life by constructing military checkpoints and setting up a group of informants and militias to restrict the movement of the GAM. Every man over 18 years had to take turns in doing night guard duty to report everything that went on at night and report on anyone who left their houses at night, or people from outside the village who visited houses. They also had to report themselves once within twenty-four hours, failing to do so might have resulted in their detainment or the payment of fines.²⁷⁸ During the night duty, no one should fall asleep or otherwise he and the group would be doused in mud after the dawn prayer as a disgrace. Such disgraceful incidents were common, because most of them were farmers who had been working all day in their fields.²⁷⁹

Since Aceh had a potential of geographic strategic depth in which the GAM fighters could retreat to the mountainous areas, the military also created a group of village militias in every village in Pidie, North, and East Aceh, consisting of twenty to thirty youths. Such a group was set up to help the army in its operations. They were provided with rudimentary training, but the military took the precaution of arming militiamen only with primitive weapons such as *bambu runcing* (bamboo spears), not with firearms.²⁸⁰ This group would accompany the army in *pagar betis* (fence of legs) operations such as the sweeping of guerillas' concentrated areas.²⁸¹ During the operation, the group was put in the front line, as one military

²⁷⁷ *Cuak* is an Acehnese term for the military informants which connotes “traitors” and their blood is “permissible” (Haleu Darah – Acehnese Terms). That implies death as their punishment. I add the suffix “s” to indicate its plural form.

²⁷⁸ In August 1994, a businessman and two of his nephews from North Aceh visited their village in Bambong, Pidie. Upon their arrival, after Maghrib prayer, he went to report to the military post of that village. Due to a belated report, the military fined them 20,000 Indonesian Rupiah. Sigli, interview, July 10, 1994. To maintain the safety of the interviewee, all information pertaining their identity are not mentioned here.

²⁷⁹ “Zainul Abidin’s Story”, 19.

²⁸⁰ “Sistem Hankamrata di Aceh Tarik 300 Lebih Anggota GPK [Hankamrata System in Aceh Pulled out more than 300 members of the GPK],” *Kompas*, July 11, 1991, p. 1. Hankamrata [Pertahanan Keamanan Rakyat Semesta/ People Security Defense].

²⁸¹ Tim Kell, *The Roots of Acehnese Rebellion*, 75.

commander said, “the youths are our front line, they know best who are the GPKs. Then we settle down.”²⁸²

The *Cuak* (Military Informant) system was also created as TPO (*Tenaga Pembantu Operasi/* Operational Assistance Forces). The *cuak* was recruited from different backgrounds: gangsters, the chief of the village, and government and non-government employees. The range of the age was between 26 and 60 years. In North Aceh, there were 119 *cuaks*. Among them, 32 were farmers and fishermen, 14 entrepreneurs, 8 government employees that include ABRI, 4 retired government employees, 3 chiefs of villages, 6 gangsters and jobless and other 52, who took *cuak* as the profession.²⁸³ They were classified into different ranks subjected to the area where they were operating. Some were with a qualification to operate within regency, and inter-regencies. Some were qualified to operate only at the district level, covering the rural areas. The military did not only recruit men but also women who were assigned to watch the movement of *Srikandi* of the GAM (The GAM heroines).

There were four obvious factors that drove some to become military informants. The first, was to have business privileges and facilities from the government. This was exemplified by a contractor in Lhokseumawe who by having good relations with the local military commander, won a tender from the government just by showing a “memo” from the latter. And it would guarantee that his work would not be checked.²⁸⁴ Second, to save himself and his family from the military threat. Third, to compensate for his punishment after being suspected as a supporter of the GAM; and finally, was merely to show off.

Despite being informants, they were forced to accompany the Army in its operation as *anak panah* (an Arrow). Thus, *Cuak* did not function only as informant but also as “torturing machines” such as the case of Raja @ Ismail, a resident of Bilie Aron, Gelumpang Lhéen, Pidie. According to his father, Raja was accused of supplying food for

²⁸²Infantry Colonel Syarwan Hamid, quoted in *Ibid.*,. However, this resulted in a traumatic condition among the Acehnese villagers, as they became the shields for the army against the GPK's attack. Moreover, during the operation, out of fear of the army, the villager besieged the GAM fighters without caring whether they were from the same village or were family members. See Asia Watch, “Indonesia: Commission of Inquiry Needed for Aceh” (New York, February 17, 1992 [Vol. 4, no. 5]),4 ; “ Aceh Kini Pulih dari Gangguan GPK [Aceh now safe from GPK Disturbance],” *Pelita*, June 12, 1991.

²⁸³*Ibid.*, 209.

²⁸⁴Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 208.

the GAM's fighters and forced to be a *cuak*. Being forced, he became brutal in carrying out his duties. In February 1998, he hanged a 7-month baby boy Ardiansyah, before his mother, Aisyah, just for the sake of information about her suspected husband. He was even very brutal towards his own father, Hamzah, when the latter was detained for being a suspected supporter of the GAM in 1994. His father was detained and investigated in *Pos Sattis*, Kota Bakti, Pidie. As his father said he did not know the man named Robert who was one of GAM's members, on military orders, Raja strangled his father's neck. Consequently, though his father understood and forgave him, he no longer could stay in the village and he vanished along with the pullout of the soldiers from Aceh.²⁸⁵

As the *Cuak* also behaved mercilessly, their presence in the community has created worries, confusion and suspicion among the people in the community. Since the military was backing them up, they behaved arrogantly and even brutally to the helpless civilians. They did not even differentiate between those who were involved and who were not. Nobody dared to make trouble with them, or dared to say no to whatever they wanted. Mrs. Hafsah (38) (pseudonym), a resident of Laweung, Pidie, was raped by the local chief of village in her house. However, nobody dared to be the witness after being threatened by the chief that their family would be accused of being GPK supporters.²⁸⁶

Accordingly, with the help of militias and informants, the military gradually succeeded in neutralizing the threat posed by the GAM, before the general election that would be held in July 1992. By October 1990, the GAM's fighters were forced to take refuge in the remote highland areas. Their connection with the people in the towns was also restricted, as many *Pos Sattis* were constructed at the edge of these remote areas. Many others, including civilians of affected areas, fled across the Straits of Malacca to Malaysia, despite tight military control over the coastal area in the North and East Aceh.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵“Cuak Tega Siksa Ayahnya [Informant Dares to Torture His own Father]”, *Serambi Indonesia*, October 14, 1998, 1.

²⁸⁶Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, “A Dialog on Women Rights before the Law and Reality”, *Flower Aceh*, Banda Aceh, July 24, 1998).

²⁸⁷“Anggota Pengganggu Keamanan Ada Yang Lolos ke Negara Tetangga [Members of GPK Fled to Neighboring Country],” *Waspada*, June 29, 1991; “40 Acehnese Seek Asylum at UNHCR Office in KL,” *The Straits Times*, June 23, 1992.

The status of Aceh was yet to change and the military remained in Aceh for years to come, as the GAM's leaders such as Pawang Rashid and other fighters were still hiding in the remote highland areas. The pursuit of the remaining GAM fighters continued. Many civilians, suspected supporters, or family members of the GAM were detained in the *Rumoh Geudong* for investigation, or held hostages to force the mountain people to get down. They were tortured and killed for not being co-operative, ironically, most of the civilians were arrested as victims of "guilty by suspicion". Al-Chaidar et.al states:

Almost 100% of the information given by *cuak* was positively responded by the military and they took it as the base for abduction, detainment, torture and requisition...while the victim of *cuak* was not only those suspected supporters of the GAM, but also those with whom the *cuak* had personal feuds.²⁸⁸

Consequently, many victims of torture who died in the investigation process were dumped in one hole or thrown in the river and at the roadside. Such tragic phenomena continued until August 1998, when the status of "DOM" in Aceh was officially withdrawn.

THE PULLING OUT OF "DOM" STATUS OF ACEH, 7 AUGUST 1998

Following the reformation wave that occurred in Indonesia, for the first time in the modern history of Indonesia, the press and the people gained back their right for freedom of expression, and the hidden agony in Aceh was disclosed at the national level. It gained momentum, when Abdul Gani Nurdin²⁸⁹ together with two widows, Ti Aminah (26) and Juariah (41), whose husbands were victimized by the military operation in Aceh, went to report to the National Commission of Human Rights in Jakarta regarding the violation of human rights in Aceh. Through this Commission, they demanded that the government stop military operations in Aceh.²⁹⁰ Although,

²⁸⁸ Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 204, 208.

²⁸⁹ Nurdin is the chairman of Presidium Forum *Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat* Aceh (People Empowerment Body) one of the NGOs in Aceh.

²⁹⁰ "Forum LSM Minta Operasi Militer Aceh Dihentikan [NGO Demanded Military Operation in Aceh Should be Stopped]," *Kompas*, June 4, 1998. Nurdin was aware that his action was very risky. Hence before leaving to Jakarta, he told his wife to be patient

his report was not well supported by even the Acehnese in Jakarta and by the members of the DPR-RI,²⁹¹ the people in Aceh in co-operation with NGOs, university students, and victims of the “DOM” began to put pressure on the DPR I at the provincial level. It was to force them to write a letter to the defense minister demanding that military operations in Aceh should be stopped.

This move compelled the MUI and the Governor of Aceh, Prof. Syamsuddin Mahmud to write a letter to President Habibie (a successor of Suharto), requesting him to withdraw the “DOM” status of Aceh.²⁹² In the meantime, being intensively pressured, DPR-RI formed an independent TPF (*Tim Pencari Fakta/* Team of Fact-Finding). Based on fact finding on August 7th, 1998, PANGAB (*Panglima Angkatan Bersenjata/* Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces) General Wiranto visited Aceh and apologized for the misbehavior of his soldiers. He then promised the people that he would withdraw all the *non-organic* (Soldiers of other Regional Military Command) troops from Aceh and entrust the responsibility of maintaining security and peace in Aceh to the people of Aceh and the ‘*Ulamas*.²⁹³ As the TPF went down to Aceh, numerous locations of mass graves were uncovered located in different districts and regencies. Some of the locations are as follows:

1. It was reported that over 70 to 120 corpses were dumped inside a deep jungle cliff of Tangse, Beureunun and Keumala way, 20 km from Sigli, Pidie.
2. It was estimated that about 20 to 30 human skeletons were discovered in one grave in Sigli, Pidie, behind the Sigli prison, near by the seashore.
3. 150 to 200 corpses were found in one hole on *Gunung Salak* (Mountain of Salak), bordering between Central Aceh and North Aceh.

and ensured her that his deed would be blessed and helped by Allah. *Waspada*, June 10, 1998.

²⁹¹DPR-RI (People Representative Council of Republic of Indonesia) is a legislative assembly at the national level. DPR-I is a Legislative assembly at the regional level, and DPRD is a legislative assembly at the regency and municipal levels.

²⁹²“Gubernur Aceh Minta Presiden Mencabut DOM [Aceh Governor Requests President to Revoke DOM]”, *Ibid*, August 1, 1998.

²⁹³“DOM Dicabut Pangab Minta Maaf [DOM is Withdrawn and Pangab Apologizes]”, *Waspada*, August 8, 1998.

4. Over 200 to 300 corpses were dumped inside a deep jungle cliff of *Cot Panglima* (Panglima hill), between Aceh Jeumpa (Bireun), and Central Aceh.
5. 50 to 100 corpses were discovered in one hole on *Bukit Salam* (Salam hill) in Lhokseukon, North Aceh.
6. On *Bukit Seuntang* (Seuntang hill), 8 km from Lhokseukon, North Aceh, about 100 to 200 human skeletons were discovered in one hole.
7. Over 250 to 300 human skeletons were uncovered in one hole on *Bukit Tengkorak* (Skeleton hill) in Jambo Aye, 60 km from Lhokseumawe, North Aceh.
8. More than 30 corpses were discovered buried inside the *Gudang Dinamit* (former Dynamite Store of MOI) in Arun village within the complex of MOI, North Aceh.
9. In the hilly plantation area of SPIV-V in Kuta Makmur, 47 km from Lhokseumawe, North Aceh, about 50 to 100 corpses were discovered in one hole.
10. 20 to 40 corpses were unearthed from one hole within the location of PT Satya Agung in Buloh Blang Ara, Kuta Makmur, North Aceh, at the Javanese resettlement area.
11. A grave consisting of 5 to 10 corpses was discovered in *Tanjung Awe* (Tanjung Awe village) in Samudera Geudong, North Aceh.
12. It was reported that 150 to 200 corpses were dumped and carried away by fast current under the *Jembatan Kuning* (Yellow bridge of Tamiang river) in Kejuruan, 24 km from Langsa, East Aceh.
13. Within the former housing area of Pertamina on *Bukit Sopoyono* (Sopoyono hill) Peurelak, East Aceh, 50 to 100 corpses were unearthed from one hole.
14. 20 to 50 corpses were unearthed from one hole, at a location within PTP I (plantation area) in Julok, 25 km from Kuta Binjai City, East Aceh.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴Forum LSM Aceh forum_aceh@aceh.wasantara.net.id; Elizabeth Pisani, "Curfews and Killings Many Perpetuate Indonesia Rebellion," *Reuter*, April 30, 1991; *Tempo* interactive, Edition 23/03- 8 Agustus 1998. <http://www.tempo.co.id>. This list of locations is based on temporary findings of TPF (Tim Pecari Fakta/ Team of Fact Searcher) which was found in August 1998, consisting of members of DPRRI (People Representative Council Republic of Indonesia).

The discovery of many mass graves in Aceh indicates that Aceh was turned into a killing field, and the impact of military operation was profound on many innocent civilians.²⁹⁵ According to a report by an NGO in Aceh, which was cited by The Straits Times, within the period of 1990-1997, 600 women were raped by the military, and there was a number of the so-called *kampung janda* (Village of Widows) in Pidie, North, and East Aceh. This claim parallels with the observation of the former Governor of Aceh, Ibrahim Hasan, who estimated that the number of widows in Aceh reached up to 6,000, although the National Commission of Human Rights (1998) reported that there were about 3,000 widows. What is obvious is that since the enforcement of "DOM" in Aceh, widows and orphans, the victims of military violence have become the common phenomenon in *Tanouh Rencong* (Aceh).²⁹⁶

SELECTED CASES OF VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ACEH DURING THE "DOM"

On July 27, 1998, TPF of DPR RI came to Aceh. During their visit, several cases of violence were reported. For instance, the case of Teungku Abdurrahman (70) who was arrested in February 1997 for being suspected of accumulating weapons. Abdurrahman was continuously tortured for three days and nights. He was beaten with rattan, wood, and rifle butts. His private part was given electrical shocks and he was also doused into a water of human waste. Finally, he was buried alive which almost took his life. Among the TPF members present were Lieutenant General (TNI) Hari Sabarno and Major General (TNI) Sedaryanto. Before the TPF, this old man denounced the action in the following way: "*Bukan main herannya kita, mereka itu macam orang biadab* [it is really unbelievable, they are very uncivilized]". He demanded that the violator should be punished.²⁹⁷

Another case of violence was reported by the family of Ibrahim Alibasyah who was abducted in March 1991 for being suspected of providing food for the GPK. During the detention, he was stripped and beaten with rattan and rifle butt. Then, his weak body was

²⁹⁵"Meninjau Arakundo yang Disebut "The Killing Field" [A visit to the Killing Field of Arakundo]," *Waspada*, August 20, 1998.

²⁹⁶*Ibid.*; "Aceh: Siapa Harus Minta Maaf pada Mu [Aceh: Whom Should Ask Forgiveness from You]," *Gatra*, no. 38, year 4, August 8, 1998, 30-32.

²⁹⁷*Tempo* interactive, edition 23/03 - 8 August 1998. www.tempo.co.id.

kicked and stepped on with military boots and he was also given electrical shock till he fainted. His body was then thrown into the cliff of Cot Panglima, Central Aceh. When he gained consciousness, he found out that his neck was severely slaughtered. Praise be to Allah SWT, he said Who had spared his life. He crawled up the cliff of about 25-meter height and walked through the wilderness towards the highway. He was living a traumatic life since, and his body was trembling anytime he passed by the army. His father, Alibasyah, who was abducted in the same month, was gunned down through his mouth, and his body was left before his burning house by the military.²⁹⁸

These are only two examples among many other sadistic cases of the violation of human rights in Aceh, in which many of the victims before being gunned down were brutally tortured during the detention. Some of the atrocities even happened in public, such as the execution of two residents of Krueng Sa and Dua village, Simpang Ulim district, East Aceh. In March 1991, at 10:30 a.m. during the month of Ramadan, Sarjani Ibrahim (35) and Teungku Imuem Budiman (50), were handcuffed by the soldiers, then killed before the bare eyes of the villagers, and their hands were cut to remove the handcuff. The villagers were then intending to bury the corpses as prescribed by Islamic teachings, but the soldiers snapped the villagers and ordered them to bury the corpses right away.²⁹⁹

Women's rights were not exempted from being violated, in the form of sexual harassment. In between the years 1991-1998, there were not less than 40 women who became the victims of violence, as it was investigated by LBH (*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum/ Legal Aid Foundation*) of Aceh. The detail reports said 11 women were raped, 26 women were released after being sexually harassed and tortured, and the rest were killed in a very strange manner.³⁰⁰ According to Khairani Arifin,³⁰¹ there were three reasons why women were raped by ABRI. Firstly, a victim could be raped because her husband was a suspected supporter of the GAM. Secondly, the victim was raped

²⁹⁸“Tujuh Janda yang Kehilangan Anak dan Suami Mengadu ke TPF [Seven Widows who lost their Son and Husband Make a Report to the TPF],” *Waspada*, July 28, 1998.

²⁹⁹Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 174.

³⁰⁰TPF, “Pemeriksaan di Serambi Makkah [Rape Case in the Mecca's Front Porch],” July, 1998, 3-35. There are still many other victims who decline to make a report and prefer to keep it secret, as it will carry family disgrace.

³⁰¹Khairani Arifin is a woman activist from Flower organization in Aceh.

because of being suspected as a supporter of the GAM. Thirdly, the victim was an outlet for the rapists to release their sexual desire, as many of the soldiers were unmarried, or if they were married, they were far from their wives as they were on duty in other areas. And finally, since their salary was relatively low, instead of visiting brothels, it was easier for them to rape and force the victim by using the gun.³⁰² The below are some of the reported cases:

1. The case of Ms. Sarah (pseudonym) and two of her friends (24), residents of Sawang, North Aceh. In 1991, they were raped and killed by unidentified soldiers of an unidentified unit.
2. In Sawang, North Aceh, a pregnant housewife, Mrs. Dina (37) (pseudonym). In 1991, she was raped and killed by an unidentified soldier of an unidentified unit.
3. In October 1994, a group of soldiers of an unidentified unit came to the house of Mrs. Nina (32) (pseudonym), whose husband was suspected to be a GAM supporter in Ganda Pura, North Aceh. Since her husband was not in (working as vendor), she was taken to the military post where she was tortured, though she was then in her six month of pregnancy. When her husband came home and went to the military post, he found his wife with her stomach open and the motionless fetus.
4. On August 17, 1996, Ms. Shara (32) (pseudonym), a waitress of a coffee shop in Bandar Dua, Pidie, was visited by a group of soldiers (unidentified) from 126 division, Ulee Glee district, Pidie. One of the soldiers, Private-one HMS (pseudonym) was drunk and began to disturb her. Out of fear, she run home wobbling as the victim was crippled. The soldier followed and kicked the door of the house, and threatened to kill her, if she refused to have sex with him. The victim was raped and impregnated. When a baby girl was born, the soldier left no trace. Then, his commander came with 500,000 Indonesian Rupiahs and asked the victim to sign a letter that the case should not be taken to the court.
5. In March 1998, a group of soldiers from the Special Forces unit took Mrs. Minah (45) (pseudonym), the wife of a village chief of Tiro, Pidie, to the military post in Arun. She was suspected of

³⁰²Ottis Simopiarief, "ABRI Memperkosa Wanita Aceh dan Papua [ABRI Raped Women of Aceh and Papua]," Netherlands, April 19, 1999. Visit www.aceh.org/ham/abri.wanita.html.

preparing a blessing ceremony for some weapons belonging to the GAM. She was stripped, tortured, kicked, and her private parts were given electrical shocks. She died after four days.

6. On January 4, 1998, in Rinti village, Mutiara district, Pidie, Mrs. Naima (35) (pseudonym), the wife of a village chief. At night, a group of soldiers came to her house to take her husband who was not in. She was then taken to a military post at Pintu I Tiro for investigation. In the process, she was tortured, her thigh was severely hurt and her head was hit with a solid material that damaged her hearing capability. The next day, she was released. However, in May 1998, two soldiers, Effendi and Salahi (pseudonym) took her again to the same post. This time, she took along her two-year-old son. During the investigation, the victim was tortured again, and stripped. At night, she was raped before her son's bare eyes and her private parts were also given electrical shocks. After her neck was tied with a rope, she was released with condition of supervision.³⁰³

The impact of such a tragic incident is so profound not only on the victim, but also on other women living in the surrounding areas. This nightmare certainly disturbs the psychological condition of the victim in particular, in the form of *mental disorder*.³⁰⁴ In addition to that, plundering and requisition of the properties of civilians by soldiers were also rampant in Aceh. The most common types of property that were plundered and requisitioned by force were jewelry, transportation or vehicles, livestock, and housing items.³⁰⁵

³⁰³Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, "A Dialog on Women Rights before the Law and Reality".

³⁰⁴Nur Jannah Bachtiar Nitura, "Trauma Psikis Akibat DOM [Psychological Trauma as the Impact of DOM]," quoted in Al-Chaidar et al., *Aceh Bersimbah Darah*, 99-100. According to Nur Jannah, the mental disorder that victims often suffered, namely: (1) Neurotic Hysteric, in which the victim might be paralyzed, become deaf and blind, and suffer from amnesia. (2) Neurotic Phobia, the victim suffers from extreme fear towards men, due to being raped. (3) Neurotic Depression, when the victim might be apathetic, feeling inferior, and in some cases might commit suicide. (4) Paranoid. (5) Several Sexual disturbances, such as *vaginismus* and frigid, because of being raped and electrical shock on the private parts, and (6) Other psychological disorders that might harm the victim and other people.

³⁰⁵"Selama DOM Terjadi Penculikan, Pembunuhan, Penganiayaan, Perkosaan dan Perampasan Harta [Abduction, Murder, Torture, Rape and Requisition of Possession During the DOM]," *Waspada*, July 30, 1998; and the loss had reached 7 billion Indonesian Rupiah. See *Kontras*, July 13, 1998.

It was really unfortunate that the implementation of the “DOM” was fouled up by serious violations of human rights. According to Teuku Syamsuddin, the Chairman of the Aceh Deliberative Committed in a press-release dated on February 24, 1999, during the “DOM” status from 1989 until 1998, a total of 8344 people were killed, 875 disappeared, 1465 widowed, 4670 orphaned, 34 raped, and 298 permanently disabled. In addition to that, the civilians suffered enormous losses, such as out of 809 houses, 667 were burned down, and 142 were damaged.³⁰⁶ The question that arises at this stage is that, by the enforcement of “DOM” status on Aceh, did the central government succeed in uprooting the idea of separatism from Aceh?

THE IMPACT OF “DOM” ON THE ACEHNESE PERCEPTION TOWARD THE GAM VIS-À-VIS THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

As discussed above, the policies that the central government adopted to silence the insurgency had a profound impact on the socio-political, religious, and economic life of the people in Aceh that certainly would influence their perception towards the GAM *vis-à-vis* the central government. The enforcement of the night-time in the village, that forced the villagers who were mostly farmers to carry out night guard duty in the village, had directly affected their economic activity. Coffee shops which used to closed at 10:00 p.m. must be closed before 9:00 p.m. immediately after “DOM” took effect. In certain conditions, the villagers sometimes had to carry out day and night guard duty. Such policy had really created inconvenience among the villagers. Many of them left the village and stayed with their family in other safer places of the urban areas, although they had to leave behind all their properties and agricultural harvest. Certainly, such conditions had not only destroyed the socio-economic life of the people in the rural areas of Aceh, but it had also increased the number of the unemployed in the urban area.

Furthermore, in terms of socio-political life, the growing number of widows and orphans whose husbands and fathers were arrested and killed by the military reflected the gradual decadence of

³⁰⁶ Cited in Ibrahim Alfian, “The Aceh Question”, 8; *Official Report on the Meeting of the Asian Conference on Aceh*, Bangkok: July 24, 1999, 54; see also, Fikar W. Eda, Ssatya Dharma, *Sebuah Kesaksian: Aceh Menggugat* [A Testimony: Aceh Shock] (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1999), 14.

socio-political life in the village. Many of these victims were living under the poverty line and were unable to send their children to school,³⁰⁷ as they hardly earned enough for living. Despite their devastating conditions, none of the other villagers dared to provide help for them, since most people were afraid of being suspected of supporting the GAM families. At worst, the people even prevented their children to talk or be friends with these families, simply because they were afraid of being labeled as separatist by the army.³⁰⁸

This state of affairs paved the way for political speculation by certain political party such as Golkar. Thereby, during two consecutive general elections that were held in June 1992 and July 1997³⁰⁹, Golkar won a tremendous number of votes, leaving behind the PPP. At this point, apart from money politics,³¹⁰ the Golkar owed a lot to the ABRI who covertly forcing the villagers in the PPP stronghold to vote for Golkar. For instance, the military enforced day and night duty guard on any villages where the PPP was leading. In contrast, the village where Golkar won was exempted from such duty.³¹¹ Such covert action of the ABRI was also reflected in the incorporation of several prominent '*Ulamas* of Aceh, such as Teungku Usman Kuta Krueng, from Ulee Glee district, Pidie, and Abu Tumin, Blang Blahdeh, Aceh Jeumpa (Bireun) into the governmental system.³¹² Both of them were covertly forced to accompany the

³⁰⁷“961 Yatim Korban DOM Putus Sekolah [961 Orphans, Victims of DOM Drop of School],” *Serambi Indonesia*, November 12, 1998, 1.

³⁰⁸“I spotted a friend who was my age, but when I started to talk to him his mother scolded him “Don’t speak to these people.” See “Zainul Abidin’s Story”, 20.

³⁰⁹In 1992, the Golkar won over one million against fewer than 640.000 for the PPP. See, *Kompas*, June 12, 1992, 5; in 1997 Golkar maintained similar record.

³¹⁰Golkar, as the dominant political party gained full financial support from businessmen who in return would be given more tenders by the local government. Each chief of the village would be promised by the local government to have infrastructural development of their respective village. Before the 1997 general election, university student representative were called to the respective regency offices, whereby the regent persuaded them to vote for Golkar. After the briefing, each student would be given an envelope containing some amount of money. A Student of IAIN Banda Aceh, Langsa, interview, 20 April 1997.

³¹¹This incident occurred in Meunasah Mesejid, Bambong, Delima, Pidie. A month before the 1992 general election, the chief of the village was assigned house to house registration for election. During the process, the village chief warned the people to vote for *Golkar*, otherwise all villagers were in trouble with the army who had constructed a check point post in that village. A housewife, Pidie, interview, May 20, 1992.

³¹²Teungku Usman was given privileges and facilities by the government, such as the renovation of the house, touring of Jakarta, and pilgrimage to Makka every year. Abu

Golkar political campaign.³¹³ In case they refused, they would be suspected as GAM supporters, and that might cost them the loss of their lives. On the other, acceptance of the order would give them privilege and material gain, it was “a blessing in disguise”. Though they were well aware of the condition of the people being oppressed by the military, they could not do anything. The military would kill them if they tried to criticize the way they carried out the operation in Aceh. As exemplified by Teungku Achmad Dewi, the outspoken ‘*Ulama* of Aceh, had once criticized the government of being neglectful to the devastating condition of the people in Aceh. He was abducted in late 1991, from his house by a group of men in military uniform, and since then, he had never returned. People believed that he was killed, but no one knew where he was buried.³¹⁴ His disappearance was a great loss to the Acehnese community in the North and East Aceh. Following the incident, other ‘*Ulamas* preferred to keep silent, while continuing to teach Islam in their respective Islamic Traditionalist Boarding School (the *Dayah*). They took such a stand simply to avoid greater loss, as summed up by Teuku Don Zulfahri³¹⁵ in the following term: “if these ‘*Ulamas* are all gone, who would guide these people (Acehnese).”³¹⁶

Consequently, in the long run, the incorporation of ‘*Ulamas* by the Golkar and their silence on the misery faced by the people, had a serious boomerang effect on their status before the Acehnese

Tumin, since he has an Islamic Traditional Boarding School (*Dayah*), was granted several facilities in terms of modern equipments such as satellite dish etc, but these facilities were given when he was not around. TARSA, Kuala Lumpur, interview, August 13, 1998.

³¹³This is to show that Golkar now has become more Islamic, whereby the ‘*Ulama* recited the *do’a* (prayer) at the end of the campaign. In addition, the Governor of Aceh, Syamsuddin, visited several *Dayah* and granted each respective principals of the school, a unit of car, *Kijang*. During the visit, the governor also provided the school with funds for upgrading and renovation. Soon his policy showed encouraging results. For instance, when the university students in Banda Aceh demonstrated demanding for his resignation, the students of *Dayah* came to support him. The Student Representative Council of Faculty of Shari’ah of IAIN, Banda Aceh, interview, 15 May 1999.

³¹⁴“Muballigh Tgk. Achmad Dewi Sejak 1991 Menghilang [Preacher Tgk. Achmad Dewi Disappeared since 1991],” *Serambi Indonesia*, August 14, 1998.

³¹⁵Teuku Don Zulafahri is currently the General Secretary of MP-GAM (Majelis Pemerintah Gerakan Aceh Merdeka / Executive Council of the Free Aceh Movement) which was set up in Kuala Lumpur, March 1999. The primary objective of the committee was to continue the struggle of ASNLF to free Aceh from Indonesia colonialism. However, its formation has created serious controversy among the members of the GAM.

³¹⁶Teuku Don Zulfahri, MP-GAM, Kuala Lumpur, interview, August 15, 1999.

community. This generated a sense of distrust and disrespect of people for the 'Ulama. People began publicly accusing the 'Ulama of being bought by the government, and that has made them deaf and blind to whatever the people in Aceh faced.³¹⁷ The Acehnese sense of distrust of the 'Ulamas created a leadership vacuum within the community. As an Acehnese proverb says "*Ureung Aceh ka lagëë bôh trueng lam jè é* [the Acehnese now are like an eggplant in a big plate]". They did not know where to turn for help, as the 'Ulamas are now also wearing the "Yellow Suit" similar to Golkar.³¹⁸

The condition as such, was conducive for the third party to come in and fill the vacuum. Many of the GAM fighters, equipped with weapon, returned to Aceh and began to take revenge. Their return coincided with the incident of *memburu cuak* (Hunting the Traitor) by villagers, as reflected by the incident where a suspected *cuak* was killed by a group of people from other villages. The victim was identified as Rusli Basyah, a resident of Kulam Ara village, Mutiara district, Pidie.³¹⁹ After that incident, a series of murder occurred in Aceh, and most of the victims were claimed as being former *cuak*. However, as the perpetrators have never been arrested, people speculated that the killing was conducted either by the military to eliminate the witnesses of the crime during the "DOM", or by those who took revenge against them. This made most of the *cuak* flee from Aceh since they could no longer live peacefully there. Some of them left the province immediately after the withdrawal of the military force from Aceh.

After the "DOM" status was lifted, the Acehnese were expecting Habibie to keep his promise that the government would carry out a thorough investigation of the human rights violations in Aceh. Nevertheless, after four months of waiting, there was no sign of investigation, and none of criminals were taken into court. It led the people to speculate that the government was having a double standard attitude in dealing with the case of Aceh, as the Acehnese proverb says "*pané na ma jin hukôm aneuk jin* [how could a devil punish his own son]". Therefore, On December 29, 1998, about 200

³¹⁷"Pelanggaran HAM di Aceh Karena Ulama dan Tokoh Masyarakat Bersikap Diam [Violation of Human Rights in Aceh was due to 'Ulama and Community Personages Keeping Silent]," *Waspada*, August 26, 1998.

³¹⁸"Dari Belanda Hingga Habibie[From the Dutch until Habibie,]" *Kompas*, August 3, 1999.

³¹⁹"Diduga Mantan Informan, Tewas Dikeroyok Massa [Suspected Former Informant, Killed by Overwhelming Mass]," *Serambi Indonesia*, October 20, 1998.

civilians together with five well-armed civilians under the command of Ahmad Kandang carried out a sweeping in Lhoknibong, East Aceh. During the sweeping, seven military officers were abducted and killed after they were being severely tortured by Ahmad Kandang's men.³²⁰

After the Lhoknibong incident, the name Ahmad Kandang became famous and most wanted by the military forces. In searching for the 7 missing officers, Jhonny Wahab, the former commander of *Korem 011/Liliwangsa*, launched a *wibawa* (authority) '99 operation. On January 9, 1999, a sweeping was launched in Meunasah Blangkadang, Kandang, North Aceh, to capture Ahmad Kandang. The commander claimed that Ahmad was hiding behind the civilians. Therefore, 55 civilians were attacked, one killed on the spot, 44 wounded and 250 were detained. This incident was followed by another detainment of the 44 civilians who were taken to the building of KNPI (*Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia*/ Indonesian National Youth Committee) which was used as *Pos Sattis* during the "DOM".³²¹ By night fall Major Bayu Najib with 30 other soldiers came into the building through the back door and began to beat the detainees, 2 were killed on the spot, while 24 more were hospitalized with serious head injuries and 2 of whom died on the next day. In response to the *Wibawa* Operation, on January 29, 1999, University students demanded that the operation should be stopped and those soldiers involved in the KNPI incident should be brought to Martial Court.³²² They also demanded that all military forces should be withdrawn from Aceh³²³ and the restoration of *Kodam Iskandar Muda*³²⁴ that was suggested by the Governor on January 26, 1999 should be stopped.³²⁵

³²⁰“Swiping Massa di Lhoknibong, Tujuh Anggota ABRI Diculik [Mass Sweeping in Lhoknibong, Seven Military Officers were Abducted],” *Ibid.*, December 30, 1998.

³²¹“Interview with Munir SH, Coordinator of Kontras (Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan/ Commission for Disappeared People and Victim of Violation),” *Detikcom*, January 11, 1999; “11 Penganiaya Ditahan [11 Abusers are Arrested],” *Serambi Indonesia*, January 12, 1999.

³²²“Major Bayu Divonis Enam Tahun [Major Bayu, Punished with Six Years Imprisonment],” *Serambi Indonesia*, January 28, 1999.

³²³The military had delayed the withdrawal of the remaining troops, following the riot in Lhokseumawe in September; they claimed that the riot was initiated by the GAM. See, “Lhokseumawe Porakporanda [Chaos in Lhokseumawe],” *Waspada*, September 2, 1998.

³²⁴Aceh was formerly under the Regional Military Command of Iskandar Muda, when its provincial status was restored during the Old Order. However, this Kodam was

Furthermore, KARMA (*Komite Aksi Reformasi Mahasiswa Aceh*/Aceh Students Action Committee for Reform) in collaboration with several other NGOs in Aceh organized a regional congress of Acehnese youth and students on January 31- February 4, 1999 in Banda Aceh. The congress recommended that the only solution for the Aceh case is to hold a *referendum*, in which the people could choose either to remain with Indonesia by voting for autonomy or voting for independent.³²⁶ Following the congress, SIRA (*Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh*/ Aceh Referendum information center) was set up on February 4, 1999. Upon the recommendation, despite all difficulties created by the military, referendum graffiti was displayed on pamphlets in public places all over Aceh, and in North Aceh, even the flag of the GAM was also drawn on pamphlets and government school buildings.

Following the popular enthusiasm to the call for referendum and growing sympathy to the GAM, the military began to conduct new offensive action against the people and several atrocities were committed. For instance, the Idi Cut incident, on February 3, 1999, when a group of soldiers opened fire on the crowds who were coming back from a public speech in Idi Cut, East Aceh. According to the eyewitness, about 28 people were killed and 8 bodies found in sack weighted down with stone into the Arakundo River.³²⁷ Three months later, on May 3, 1999, another massacre took place in Simpang PT. KKA, Dewantara, North Aceh. A group of soldiers of the missile division in North Aceh, opened fire on the crowds, killing 46 people including a baby, and wounding about 56 and 10 disappearances, all of the victims were civilians.³²⁸

After the Dewantara incident, despite of all constraints, a coalition of University Students constructed humanitarian posts all over Aceh, as the place where people could report about their lost family. They continuously demonstrated at the provincial governor

dissolved into Kodam I/ BB of North Sumatra in the middle of 1980s, for the restructuring reason.

³²⁵“Mahasiswa Aceh Unjukrasa Tolak Kodam [Aceh University Student Demonstrated Rejecting the Restoration of Kodam],” *Waspada*, January 29, 1999.

³²⁶“Recommendation of Regional Acehnese Student and Youth Congress,” Banda Aceh, January 31-February 4, 1999.

³²⁷“Tagedi Idi Cut: 4 Mayat Ditemukan di Sungai [Idi Cut Tragedy: 4 Corpses Found in the River],” *Waspada*, February 5, 1999.

³²⁸“Pembantaian Di Dewantara:23 Tewas dan 101 Luka-luka [Massacre in Dewantara: 23 Dead and 101 Wounded],” *Waspada*, May 4, 1999; “Indonesian Today News” *RCTI*, May 4 and 5, 1999, 7: 00.a.m.

office and DPR-I in Banda Aceh, calling for the total withdrawal of military forces from Aceh and the resignation of Syamsuddin, the governor of Aceh, from his post. However, instead of dealing with the issue peacefully, Habibie's government deployed several units of PPRM (*Pasukan Pencegah Rusuhan Masa/ Forces to Prevent Mass Rioters*) that consists of police forces to Aceh replacing the military force. Although, the presence of PPRM in Banda Aceh, North and East Aceh was initially to maintain peace and security, it led to civilian anxiety, particularly when the forces began to move into the village searching for GAM activists.

Fearing that the military would once again use them as the shield against the GAM fighters as it happened during the "DOM", the villagers fled from their houses and stayed in the refugee concentration camps. Until late August 1999, about 200,000 people fled from their homes to the refugee camps located in four regencies, East Aceh, North Aceh, Pidie and Proper Aceh. Among them were children, elders and women. However, neither the central government nor the provincial government showed sympathy towards their devastating condition resulting from under-nutrition, lack of clean water, and medicine. Such conditions were again used by the GAM to win the support among the refugees. This was exemplified by the display of the GAM's flag in one of the refugee camps in North Aceh. In the middle of September 1999, as the military forces withdrew from the village, people began to go home and the Governor promised them three months salaries if they voluntarily went home. Until the late of October 1999, there were still at least two or three more refugee camps in the Pidie and Samalanga districts of North Aceh.³²⁹

The massacre continued. On June 12, 1999 because of the explosion in one of the military truck's tires, several soldiers jumped of the truck and opened fire on the civilians in a coffee shop and petrol station, killing two boys, one pregnant woman and two other civilians. The incident took place in Alue Nireh, East Aceh.³³⁰ On July 23, 1999, another massacre took place in Bentoung Ateueh, West Aceh. A unit of military forces was assigned to search the *Dayah*

³²⁹In Bereunuen, Pidie, one of the refugee camps that consists of 7000 people, herein the children are suffering from bloating from starvation. "Voice of America's" news in Indonesian version, November 1, 1999, 7:00.a.m.

³³⁰*Serambi Indonesia*, June 13, 1999; "Indonesian Today News" *RCTI*, June 13, 1999.

owned by Teungku Bantakiah who was being suspected of hiding the GAM weapons. Having searched all over the place, no weapon was found. The military then gathered all the people including Bantakiah and his family in front of the house and executed them. All of them, 31 in number were buried in one hole. The other 25 alive victims were taken by military trucks to an unknown place, but one week later, another 25 corpse were found and other 15 corpses in different places in the cliff at the side of the road.³³¹

Moreover, a series of massacres occurred in Krueng Tuan, Nisam, North Aceh, where 2 people were killed and 2 were wounded, while 14 were missing. One day later, a mass grave consisting of 7 corpses was found. The victims were identified as the residents of Buloh Berghab, North Aceh.³³² After the killings in Alue Nireh and Bentoung Ateueh, the military claimed that they were ambushed, but investigations, the claim was proven false.³³³ Regarding the other two incidents, the military claimed that all of the victims were suspected GAM activists. The claim contradicted the villagers' testimony that the victims were villagers who work as carpenters and gardeners in the hill.³³⁴

In response to the military brutality, the students of *Dayah* who were formerly very quiet, formed an organization called *Taleban*, which was chaired by Teungku Bulqani with 2000 members from all *Dayah* in Aceh. Despite local government disapproval, on September 12-13, 1999, they organized a congress of '*Ulama Dayah* Aceh in the complex of Syiah Kuala³³⁵, Banda Aceh. During the

³³¹“2 Pelajar Dakwa 70 Korban Serangan TNI [2 Students Claimed that 70 victims of TNI Attack],” *Utusan Malaysia*, July 28, 1999; “25 Mayat Dibuang ke Dalam Gaung [25 Corpses thrown into the Cliff]” *Berita Harian*, July 31, 1999; “15 Mayat Lagi Ditemukan, 30 Hilang [15 more Corpses were Found, 30 Missing],” *Waspada*, August 1, 1999.

³³²“Terungkap 4 Tewas, 7 Hilang [Discovered 4 Dead, 7 Disappeared],” *Serambi Indonesia*, August 10, 1999.

³³³After three month investigation, the TPF found out that there was no armed clash, and asserted that the victims were massacred by the military. “Pembantaian oleh Anggota TNI-AD [Massacre Conducted by a unit of TNI-AD],” *Serambi Indonesia*, October 31, 1999.

³³⁴*Serambi Indonesia*, August 10, 1999.

³³⁵The complex of cemetery which was name after the great *Alim*, Syiah Kuala, who lived during the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam. He was buried there in the cemetery.

congress, Amin Rais and Abdurrahman Wahid³³⁶ were present and gave their full support to the congress's recommendation that a referendum should be held in Aceh.³³⁷ Based on the 'Ulamas' consensus, the GAM gave an ultimatum that within two months, all government offices should stop functioning and this was followed by the resignation of 600 chiefs of villages in Pidie.³³⁸ Since the first of October 1999, almost all government offices were closed in several districts in North, East Aceh and Pidie.³³⁹ And a series of murder cases of the military officers occurred in Aceh conducted either by the well-armed or unarmed civilians.³⁴⁰

Following the success of the August 1999 public strike that almost totally crippled the regional governmental mechanism,³⁴¹ and the 'Ulamas' support for a referendum, a sign of growing solidarity among Acehnese was evident. The central government again offered an old fashion of autonomy to the Aceh people that would give them the right to implement Islamic *Shari'ah*. Would the Acehnese accept the offer, after all the miseries, pain and injustice done to them by the central government? Certainly, only time can answer this question.

In contrast to the university students and 'Ulamas of *Dayah* who called for referendum, the government, and intelligentsia preferred the idea of broad autonomy as the only solution to the Aceh problem. The regional government formed two commissions as preparation for the coming regulation of regional autonomy, (UU) no. 22, year 1999 and regulation of balance revenue between central and regional government of Aceh, (UU) no. 25, year 1999. Prof. Ismail Suny asserted that if these regulations were approved, they

³³⁶Amin Rais is recently elected as the speaker of the upper house, Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat/ People Consultative Council (MPR RI); Abdurrahman Wahid is recently elected President of Republic of Indonesia.

³³⁷"Ulama Tuntut Referendum ['Ulamas Demand for Referendum]," *Serambi Indonesia*, September 16, 1999; "Muslim Leaders Support Referendum in Aceh," <http://cnn.com/ASIANOW/Southeastasia/9909/15/net9-2.html>

³³⁸"600 Kades di Pidie Mundur [600 Village Chief in Pidie Resign]," *Serambi Indonesia*, October 1, 1999. These village chiefs claim that they are in an insecure position. On the one hand, they are responsible for whatever is going on in the village and accountable to the military, while on the other, they have to face the GAM's fighters who live in his community.

³³⁹"Ancaman Mogok Kerja PNS Aceh Meluas [Widespread Threat of Strike by Government Employees in Aceh]," *Ibid.*,

³⁴⁰"TNI Bukan Musuh Rakyat [TNI is not People Enemy]," *Ibid.*, October 20, 1999; Rumah Polisi Dimolotov [Police's House is Exploded by Molotov cocktail]," *Ibid.*,

³⁴¹"Aceh Bangkit [Aceh Awakening]," *Waspada* August 5, 1999.

would not weaken the national integration, instead it would strengthen it, for it would stimulate fast and balanced economic development.³⁴² In line with this idea, Prof. M. Daud Ali stated that only a broad autonomy that would realize the special status of Aceh and the restoration of the social structure that was distorted by the "DOM" would be possible. He further claimed that the problem of Aceh could not be solved by coercive force, instead it should be dealt through religious and societal approaches.³⁴³ These two views were supported by Andi Malarangeng of IIP (*Institut Ilmu Pemerintahan/ Institute of Administrative Studies*), who suggested that there should be a special regulation that grants Aceh a broad autonomy imbued in the government regulation and practice.³⁴⁴ Apparently, these views emphasized the necessity of granting not only a broad autonomy in concept but also in practice.

There are other views that suggest different diagnoses to the Aceh problem. For instance, Hasballah M. Saad, the Minister of Human Rights Affairs, maintained that the case of Aceh would never be solved as long as there is still a military conspiracy to damage the image of Habibie as the only rival of Wiranto for the presidency post. He based his claim on the presence of Mejor Jenderal Syafrie Sjamsoeddin in Aceh who was assigned to arrange the strategy of military operation in Aceh.³⁴⁵ Besides, Dr Mukhtar Azis asserted that TNI³⁴⁶ (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia/ Indonesian National Armed forces*) deliberately delayed the case of Aceh to be solved, pending to the enactment of the new regulation of National Security and Stability (KKN).³⁴⁷ This would enable them to act freely against the civilians in Aceh and to escape from being investigated by an Independent Team, which Habibie has formed for investigating the case of violations of the human rights in Aceh. Thus, he concluded that the case of Aceh would only be solved if the military willingly

³⁴²“Dengan Otonomi yang Lebih Luas Aceh akan Sama dengan Singapore [With Broad Autonomy Aceh can similar to Singapore],” *Ibid*, September 11, 1998.

³⁴³*Ibid.*,

³⁴⁴“Malarangeng: Penyelesaian Kasus Aceh Harus Gunakan UU Kusus [Malarangeng: Special Regulation needed for Solving Aceh Case],” *Serambi Indonesia*, August 11, 1999.

³⁴⁵*Gema Warta Siaran Radio Nederland* [The Voice of Netherlands], August 13, 1999, 22:00.p.m.

³⁴⁶TNI was the former name of the ABRI, and after the reformation, the government restored the name TNI, instead of the ABRI which is closely associated with the New Order regime.

³⁴⁷KKN (*Keamanan dan Ketertiban Nasional/ Security and Stability of the Nation*).

gave full support and help to the effort of that Independent Team. If the KKN regulation is passed, the hope of the Aceh people to bring to justice the criminals of the violation of human rights ends with no success.³⁴⁸

Thus, only Dr. Lukman Thaib³⁴⁹ seems to support the demand of the university students and the people in Aceh. He suggested three possible solutions to solve the Acehnese case. Firstly, Indonesia should adopt a Loose Confederation System of Governance. Secondly, independence for Aceh, and finally, Broad Autonomy for Aceh, provided that the case should be solved through the United Nations. This implies the need for a referendum to be held in Aceh, as he asserted that “let the Acehnese decide for their own future.”³⁵⁰ This view corresponds with Teuku Don Zulfahri, the General Secretary of MP-GAM, who asserted that the new regulations of broad Autonomy for Aceh created and forced on Aceh is another deception of the Republic of Indonesia towards Aceh. Thereby, the GAM strongly rejected the offer. He further insisted that DPR-I, DPRD, and the regional government should be dispersed and returned all matters regarding governance of Aceh to the ‘*Ulamas* and intellectuals of Aceh. He concluded that the loss of many Acehnese lives could never be paid, while the sin of the Republic to the Acehnese could only be paid by either acceding to the demand made by the GAM, independence, or to the people of Aceh’s call for a referendum.³⁵¹

Since the result of voting in the Parliament on October 20, 1999, in which Abdurrahman was elected as the fourth President of Indonesia, the SIRA mobilized the Students of Aceh to intensify their call for a referendum in Aceh. On October 23, about 100.000 people from East Aceh regency moved in procession to demand for a referendum to be held in Aceh. Then, on November 8, 1999 another mass assembly in Banda Aceh took place, in which the demand for a

³⁴⁸“TNI Sengaja Mengantung Penyelesaian Masalah Aceh [TNI Deliberately delay to Solve the Case of Aceh],” *Waspada*, August 26, 1999.

³⁴⁹Lukman Thaib is currently lecturing at University Kebangsaan Malaysia, in the Department of Political Science. He has written three books and articles on the GAM, which he refers as ASNLF.

³⁵⁰“Alternatif Penyelesaian Konflik Aceh [Alternative Solution for Aceh Conflict],” *Massa*, Julai 10, 1999, 44-46.

³⁵¹“GAM Tolak RUU Keistimewaan Aceh [GAM Rejects the Regulation of Autonomy for Aceh],” *Waspada*, September 24, 1999.

referendum was manifested in the Petition of Banda Aceh.³⁵² The petition urged the people's representative from Aceh to voice up the demand for a referendum to be held in Aceh, at MPR and DPR RI in Jakarta.³⁵³ Thus, taking into consideration the East Timor experience, will Wahid keep his promise to the people and the 'Ulamas of Aceh that he would grant Aceh a referendum? Was his support of a referendum merely a personal opinion that was primarily aimed to win the political legitimacy from the Acehnese? If the Wahid's government fails to hold a ballot in Aceh, it will escalate the awareness of the Acehnese that the central government has been fooling them again. Perhaps, in this case, the only hope for the government to keep Aceh integrated is by anticipating the "boomerang effect" of a ruthless military operation, "DOM", in Aceh, which has attracted the world attention. That is by ensuring that the GAM will not get the support from the international community.³⁵⁴ However, the perpetuation of mass killings, destruction of civilian houses and refugee camps reported by foreign media certainly has invited the attention of the international community.³⁵⁵ Hence, to ensure this not to happen, the government must adopt an immediate and wiser policy that overtly represents the interests of the Acehnese. That is to accept the existence of the GAM and begin a comprehensive dialogue with them in order to avoid further bloodshed and to find out a peaceful solution to the Aceh problem.

CONCLUSION

Above all, any policy adopted by the government will have either positive or negative results, and the success or failure of the policy will greatly depend on the feedback that people will give in response to that particular policy. In the case of Aceh, the

³⁵² *Sidang Umum Masyarakat Aceh Memperjuangkan Referendum* [Acehnese Assembly for Referendum], 1999, Video, Banda Aceh, FARMIDIA

³⁵³ MPR/DPR RI is the people representative council at the center, in Jakarta. DPR Tk.I is the people representative council at the regional level, and DPRD Tk II is the people representative council at the regency level.

³⁵⁴ As aforementioned, there are four factors that contribute to the success of separatist movements: firstly, the group's severity of deprivation; secondly, government policy of violence; thirdly, cohesiveness of the group, and finally, the external support. Ted Gurr, *Minority at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*, 123-138. Regarding the GAM in Aceh, the only shortcoming is that, the group has no clear sign of external support, and this gives the government a room to breathe.

³⁵⁵ "Aceh Dapat Perhatian Luar Negeri [Aceh Gains International Attention]", *Waspada*, January 6, 1999.

government has used a carrots-and-stick strategy to counter the insurgency. On the one hand, the well-equipped and organized army continued its ruthless suppression in the province, while on the other, greater allocations of development funds were used in the hopes of reducing local discontent. Thus, did the government succeed in silencing the insurgency?

Since the insurgency in Aceh has its roots in social, political and economic discontent, the enforcement of “DOM” in Aceh has not only failed to overcome the crisis, but has also directly caused misery and psychological pain to the Acehnese. This has stimulated people to hate and distrust the government. Hence, no matter how hard the government makes an effort to win back the trust of the Acehnese, by promising them broad autonomy and implementation of *Shari’ah* in Aceh, as long as the ruthless treatment by the military of the innocent and helpless civilians continues, these efforts of the government are fruitless. For the enforcement of “DOM” has encouraged people to rationalize that the Indonesia- Java neo-colonialism over Aceh truly exists. Such vulnerable conditions pave the way for the insurgency to gain increasing support from the people, though in the form of calling for a ballot to be held in Aceh. That will give the Acehnese the right to decide whether to remain as part of Indonesia or to stand as an independent state of Aceh.



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To sum up, the socio-political and cultural beliefs of the early Buddhist Kingdom of Shrivijaya and the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit completely failed to penetrate into Aceh. Therefore, Islam easily came to Aceh as early as the 7th century A.C, primarily because of the king himself who warmly welcomed Islam by embracing it, and declared it as the only religion of the Sultanate. It was from here that Islam expanded to all over the Southeast Asian region, along with the expansion of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam to become one of the five great powers of the Muslim Sultanates in the 15th century A.C. Along with the emergence of the Muslim Sultanate of Demak in Java, succeeding the decaying Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit.

Therefore, there is a clear line of difference between the two Sultanates, particularly on the socio-religious and political development of the community. In Aceh, there was a strong and obvious influence of Islam on the community's way of life, in which the people had been experiencing a system well governed by the Islamic *Shari'ah*, which was directly supervised by the council of '*Ulama*. Meanwhile, the emergence of the Muslim Sultanate of Demak, in Java, did not mark a complete penetration of Islam into the community. This was due to the solidness of the influence of Hinduism on the people's way of life. Accordingly, they were two different communities with different self-perceptions. One was the community that proudly represented the Islamic heritage, while the other one was the community that proudly represented the heritage of the Old Kingdom, the Hindu Majapahit. Such differences were reflected in the later political developments in the two communities, which were manifested in the thought of each of the political élite group, be it during the colonial period or after Indonesia gained its full sovereignty from the Dutch in December 1949.

The influence of Islam on the Acehnese community was reflected in their struggle against the colonial forces, the Dutch and the Japanese, under the direct command of '*Ulamas* such as Teungku Chi' diTiro and Teungku Abdul Djalil Cot Plieng. As a result of their

willingness to sacrifice their lives in the holy war against the infidel colonial forces, their strong faith in Islam, and their great respect to the 'Ulamas, Aceh was the only region which was not completely pacified by the colonial rules. It was for Islam that the Acehnese were ready to support fledgling Republic of Indonesia during the national revolution since 1946 till 1949, resisting against Dutch military aggressions in 1947 and 1948 in the Medan-area that paved the way for the *Round Table Conference* in the Hague in December 1949.

In the early 1950s, Islam again became the motivation for the Acehnese to resist the secular central government that had deviated far from the stated primary objective. Instead of establishing an Islamic State of Indonesia that was imbued in the first principle of *Pancasila*, the belief in One Supreme God, Sukarno tried to revive the Hindu heritage with Indonesian nationalist clothing. Hence, being betrayed by the central government, the PUSA, under the leadership of Teungku Daud Beureueh, declared the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Aceh under the federation of the Islamic State of Indonesia (DI/TII) which was previously declared by Kartosuwiryo in late 1948 in West Java. Consequently, civil war was inevitable, with more than a thousand casualties from both sides. After seven years of war, peace was restored in Aceh following the restoration of Aceh as a province with a special status in religion (Islam), education, and customary law and the implementation of some elements of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

However, the period of peace in Aceh was so brief, primarily because of the political change that occurred in 1968. The New Order military regime did not promote the interest of Islam either and instead, it adopted *Pancasila* as the sole ideological foundation of the State. Its aim was not only to silence the debate about the state's ideology, but also to put any alternative sources of political power under full state control. Islam was no exception. Moreover, the vagueness of the *Pancasila* and the 1945 constitution gave room for different interpretations which were subjected to the belief system of the interpreter. This indirectly destroyed the cohesiveness of the 'Ulamas in Aceh. Therefore, the 'Ulamas of PUSA failed to initiate another revolution because they were not supported by other groups of 'Ulamas. These 'Ulamas included those who tried to Islamize the *Pancasila* by joining the MUI, and also those conservative 'Ulamas who emphasized the importance of educating the civilians and seek refuge in the *Dayah*.

In order to prevent the possible re-emergence of regional cohesiveness under the leadership of the '*Ulamas* who felt discontented with the political change, Suharto created a strong patrimonial political system, of which the military was the backbone. At the same time, he nurtured the factional political élite within Acehese politics by recruiting the Acehese secular educated élite to counter balance the '*Ulamas*. With the help of the local élite, the central government introduced a new economic policy that would transform Aceh from an agricultural to an industrial zone, as the way to enhance the prosperity of the people. Nevertheless, in spite of the creation of the ZILS in Aceh, the region remained underdeveloped and many of its people continued living below the poverty line. The ZILS did not provide the Acehese with jobs and instead, it brought in much of their staff from Java. Certainly, it infused more frustration and discontent among the Acehese due to the exploitative nature of the central government policy in Aceh.

Such an exploitative nature of the central economic policy led to the emergence of the third élite group, which was initiated by an Acehese businessman, Teungku Hasan Muhammad diTiro. He suggested a different panacea for the problem of Aceh's underdevelopment. This group claimed that the backwardness and underdevelopment of Aceh was not because of its Islamic fanaticism, but because of the exploitative nature of the center-regional relationship, or an internal colonialism. Therefore, Aceh should free itself from the status quo by becoming an independent state of its own. Due to its nationalist base, the insurgency failed to win the support of the '*Ulamas*; and therefore, it was easily silenced and many of its prominent leaders were driven overseas to live in exile in Sweden. However, the idea of separatism has not been completely wiped out and in the middle of 1989, the Acehese witnessed the resurrection of the GAM. As the gap between the have and the have-nots was escalating in the region, many Acehese, including the trishaw drivers, intellectuals, businessmen, civil servants and the alienated political élite began to grasp the idea of separatism.

In response to the second phase of Acehese insurgency, the government used carrot-sticks strategy that centers at shock therapy and development. Nevertheless, the shock therapy which aimed at creating fear and terrorizing the community, overshadowed the development policy primarily because it caused serious violations of human rights committed by the military in Aceh since 1989. Accordingly, the development scheme introduced by the regional

government during the period of the “DOM” did not seem to heal the wound and reduce the people’s hatred towards the government and armed forces in particular.

The implementation of the “DOM” not only had profound effects on the psychological aspect of the community, but also on their socio-cultural, political and economic life. The creation of militias and *cuak* groups among the Acehnese has destroyed the cohesiveness of the community and diminished a cooperative sense among the villagers. People began to evolve a sense of suspicion and prejudice towards each other, and no one felt safe to stay in the community. In the past, such conditions could be solved by the ‘*Ulamas*, but their association with the ruling Golkar Party during the “DOM” had damaged their reputation. People have lost their trust in the ‘*Ulamas* and this was signified by the vacuum of authority following the withdrawal of the military from Aceh. The GAM fighters who wanted to take revenge for their lost families soon filled this vacuum. Following the abduction of seven military officers and the killing of former *cuaks*, the military then launched a *wibawa* ‘99 operation to search for the missing officers. But during the operation, many civilians were arrested and even killed by the soldiers. This brutality of the soldiers motivated the Students and Youth to call for a referendum to be held in Aceh along with the demilitarization of the region.

In response to the intensified demand of the students and the youth, the government deployed more than 500 members of PPRM that initially was assigned to restore peace and security in Aceh. Yet, as the atrocities continued, PPRM began to launch operations into rural areas to search for the GAM fighters. This created fear and anxiety among the villagers who began to flee from their villages and seek refuge in the concentration camps in their respective regencies. Until the end of 1999, there were still 7000 refugees living in the Camp of Daud Beureueh Mosque, in Beureunun district, Pidie.

Following the incident of Beuntoung Ateueh, the *Taleban* and the ‘*Ulama of Dayah* in the two days congress declared their support for the Students’ call for a referendum. It was then followed by the greatest ever Acehnese Assembly on November 8, 1999, in front of Baiturrahman Mosque, Banda Aceh. About more than one million Acehnese pledged to each other a commitment to the call for a referendum. Was it the sign of the awakening of the Acehnese? Only time can answer. Thus, the military operation which sought to silence the idea of separatism in Aceh has indeed failed. In fact, it is

backfiring for the government, with a more serious problem of disintegration of Aceh from Indonesia.

The study began with three basic questions on the case of Acehese separatism in the light of Indonesian politics of maintaining its territorial integration. The study finds that there is a perpetual tension between the separatists and the central government, as the former groups have gained more support from the Acehese. This reflects the crisis of central government legitimacy in Aceh. It shows that the maintenance of national integration strongly depends on the policy that the central government adopts to silence the insurgency. This is primarily because the policy might either induce a positive or negative boomerang effect. It might strengthen the sense of patriotism or it might cause a sort of identity crisis which simultaneously puts national integration in jeopardy. Furthermore, the nature of the policy that the government adopts will manifest itself in the feedback from the affected community. Does the community feel more integrated after the enforcement of the policy or is it the other way around? As mentioned above, there are at least four interlocking dimensions of national integration which require the state to create a dynamic equilibrium among these dimensions. Once a government fails to create such an equilibrium, a serious disintegrative force might emerge and threaten the state's territorial integrity. If such an affair is perpetuated, it requires the state to work hard to silence the insurgency. Accordingly, the state can either adopt a persuasive policy that may take a long time and have an uncertain final outcome, or a coercive policy that will completely destroy any suspected stronghold of the insurgency at a very short time. Therefore, the government needs to act wisely by having a clear picture and definition of what sort of crisis it is facing. This is due to fact that most of the insurgency or revolution emerges as the outcomes of the perpetual relative deprivation of rights that includes political, economic and socio- religious rights.

On the contrary, the success of the insurgency may also depend on the type of policy that the central government adopts. For instance, the government's excessive use of force, rather than economic and political measures to curb the minority insurgency, will create a state of alienation and deepen a sense of frustration. This sentiment paves the way for the minority élite to mobilize support from the community for the insurgency, and it is the base for maintaining group cohesiveness as can be seen in the case of Aceh's

separatism in Indonesia. Hence, from the study of politics of national integration it appears that in the case of Aceh in Indonesia, there are five serious problems:

Firstly, since Indonesia gained its full sovereignty on December 14, 1949, there has been a prolonged crisis of government legitimacy in Aceh, due to the failure of the central government to become an Islamic State of Indonesia. This is primarily because of two factors. Firstly, during the Old Order, the regime failed to establish an Islamic State of Indonesia, or even at least to make Aceh an Islamic province. Secondly, when the New Order went into effect, instead of promoting Islam, it has restricted Islam from becoming the source of political power by adopting *Pancasila* as the sole ideological foundation of Indonesia. This has become an obstacle for Aceh to implement Islamic *Shari'ah* as an Islamic province.

Secondly, the New Order regime under Suharto's leadership turned out to be a completely centralized government. It not only controlled the revenues accrued from Aceh, but also concentrated authority in Jakarta over industrial policy and on the issuing of licenses for new industrial projects. This reflects the effect of strong Java-centrism. This, has not only restricted the freedom of Aceh to reestablish its past commercial relationship with outside world, but by closing all the ports in Aceh, it has made it strongly dependent on the Belawan Port of North Sumatra for export activities. Now, all the duty taxes go to North Sumatra. Therefore, Aceh remains underdeveloped side by side with rapid development taking place at the center. Gradually, it created a serious state of relative deprivation that at any time may lead to a regional revolution.

Thirdly, it is apparent that the reemergence of the Acehese separatist movement was primarily centered, firstly at the frustration caused by the exploitative economic policy of the center towards Aceh's natural resources. The second factor is ideological differences. However, despite prudently addressing the causes of the insurgency, the central government has adopted a carrot-sticks strategy that centered at shock therapy to silence the insurgency. Due to some irresponsible soldiers who had seriously violated human rights in the region, the Acehese hatred of and discontent with government and its armed forces has escalated. Consequently, the government had to face a boomerang effect for its wrong policy, which not only failed to curb the insurgency, but it has also backfired and affected the legitimacy of the state.

Fourthly, the coalition of university students, Acehnese youth, and the '*Ulamas of Dayah* in Aceh, who has intensified the call for a referendum to be held in Aceh, poses serious pressure on the regional and central government. And this indicates that the Acehnese refuse to accept the offer of broad autonomy for Aceh by the central government and they consider the offer as another political deception.

Finally, having had a bad experience with the case of East Timor, there is very little chance for a referendum to be held in Aceh. This is because the government believes that if they lost Aceh, there is a great possibility of the total disintegration of Indonesia, as many other regions will follow the footsteps of Aceh, such as West Irian, Sulawesi and Riau. Thus, it places the government in a serious dilemma. On the one hand, it has to face the intensified call for a referendum in Aceh, while on the other, it has to keep Aceh within Indonesia and also has to face another bloody clash with the separatist group. At this point, improper policies may lead to further undesirable bloodshed and prolong the crisis of national integration.

Correspondingly, these are some possible solutions to the disintegrative problem of Aceh in Indonesia. **Firstly**, in order to enhance its legitimacy and confidence among the Acehnese, the government must immediately pass a regulation for broad autonomy for Aceh that guarantees the territorial freedom for the total enforcement of the Islamic *Shari'ah* in the region. The government also has to pass a regulation that grants a balance of revenue distribution between the center and regional governments, so as to enhance rapid and sustainable development in all aspects of life in Aceh.

Secondly, the government has to show real political and economic actions to overcome the problem in Aceh. Firstly, the government has to provide funds for sustaining those widows and victims of the "DOM", and provide good education for their children by granting them scholarships. Secondly, the government has to initiate upgrading programs that provide those victims with adequate skills for starting a new life, and employ in government civil service those among them who are qualified.

Thirdly, the government has to immediately end any atrocities, by totally withdrawing the remaining *non-organic* troops from Aceh, and by quickly carrying out intensive investigations into cases of violation of human rights that involved army personnel in

Aceh. The government also has to be bold enough to give severe punishment to those found guilty.

Fourthly, the government has to take into consideration the Acehnese enthusiasm for a referendum, in which one of the options is independence of Aceh. This implicitly signifies the profound influence of the GAM on the Acehnese community, and the government has to recognize the political existence of the GAM in Aceh. If the government refuses to hold a referendum in Aceh, a serious and comprehensive negotiation should be held between the government and the GAM leaders, in order to avoid bloodshed and to realize peace and prosperity in the future.

Finally, although the case of Aceh is an internal political problem of Indonesia, the discovery of several locations of mass graves in Aceh is an evidence of serious violation of human rights. Therefore, international community has to play its role by urging the Indonesian government to stop the violence and begin a dialogue or negotiation with the GAM to find a better solution to the problem. The dialogue definitely necessitates a third party, such as the United Nations, or one of its members, which is acceptable to both parties. Such a third party will mediate the negotiation between the Indonesian government and the GAM. In case the negotiation meets a deadlock, it is the responsibility of the international community to support the call for a referendum to be held in Aceh, since majority of the Acehnese demand for it. Let the Acehnese decide in a democratic manner the future of their own land, whether to stand alone as an independent state of Aceh or, to remain with Indonesia as an autonomous region.



The socio-political and cultural beliefs of the early Buddhist Kingdom of Shrivijaya and the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit completely failed to penetrate into Aceh. Therefore, Islam easily came to Aceh as early as the 7th century A.C, primarily because of the king himself who warmly welcomed Islam by embracing it, and declared it as the only religion of the Sultanate. It was from here that Islam expanded to all over the Southeast Asian region, along with the expansion of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam to become one of the five great powers of the Muslim Sultanates in the 15th century A.C. Along with the emergence of the Muslim Sultanate of Demak in Java, succeeding the decaying Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit.

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