MONOGRAPHS ON SOUTHEAST ASIAN SUBJECTS

Edited by

JOHN BASTIN

ESSAYS ON INDONESIAN AND MALAYAN HISTORY

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ESSAYS ON INDONESIAN AND MALAYAN HISTORY

by
JOHN BASTIN
Professor of History in the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur

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PREFACE

FOUR of these essays relate directly to the period of the British occupation of Java and its dependencies (1811-16), and another to the years immediately following the restitution of these possessions to the Netherlands. The remaining essays are concerned with the somewhat broader theme of Western influence in Indonesia and Malaya. Any unity which the essays possess derives from their main, though not exclusive concern with events in the Indonesian and Malayan region during the early years of the nineteenth century.

I am grateful to the editorial board of the *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (The Hague) for permission to re-publish in a revised form essays III and V,[1] and to the editor of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society* (Singapore) for permission to re-publish essay VI.[2] The first essay is a revised and shortened version of an inaugural lecture given in the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur during 1959. Both this and the second essay have already been published in a limited edition in the series *Papers on Southeast Asian Subjects*.[3] Essay IV, which incorporates some new material, was originally published in the now defunct journal, *Indonesië*.[4]

Throughout these essays the term *Spanish dollar* has been used in its widest sense, and has been regarded as the equivalent of approximately five shillings sterling, although in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries its sterling value was rather less. Rijksdaalders, or Rix dollars, and Java rupees may be considered as the

[1] "Palembang in 1811 and 1812", *BKI*, CIX (1953), 300-20, CX (1954), 64-88; and "The Working of the Early Land Rent System in West Java", *ibid.*, CXVI (1960), 301-12.

[2] "Raffles and British Policy in the Indian Archipelago, 1811-1816", *JMBRAS*, XXVII (i) (1954), 84-119.

[3] *The Western Element in Modern Southeast Asian History* (Kuala Lumpur, 1960); *The Changing Balance of the Early Southeast Asian Pepper Trade* (Kuala Lumpur, 1960).

[4] "The Chinese Estates in East Java during the British Administration", *Indonesië*, VII (1953-4), 433-9.

equivalent of three shillings and eightpence, and half a crown sterling respectively.[5]

For information on weights and measures, the reader should refer to Appendix M of T.S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London, 1830), II, clxv-clxvii. A *kati* was equal to about 1¼ avoirdupois lbs., and 100 *katis* made a *pikul* of 125 (Dutch) lbs., or 133⅓ (English) lbs. The Dutch *koyan* was 3,400 lbs., and was considered equal to a *last*, or two tons. The *bahar* varied between 360-600 lbs.[6]

In citing directly from manuscript sources I have sometimes altered the punctuation; and for the sake of clarity I have removed many of the capital letters and replaced the abbreviated & by *and*.

To the following persons who, in one way or another, have contributed something to this book of essays I offer my sincere thanks: Professor V.T. Harlow, Professor W. Ph. Coolhaas, Sir Richard Winstedt, Professor A.A. Cense, Dr. P. Voorhoeve, Dr. H.R.C. Wright, Professor R. Roolvink, Dr. C. Hooykaas, Professor K. Glamann, Dr. D.K. Bassett, J. Ngai, and Miss Khoo Gaik See.

J. B.

Kuala Lumpur
August 1961.

[5] See F. Pridmore, *Coins and Coinages of the Straits Settlements and British Malaya, 1786 to 1951* (Memoirs of the Raffles Museum, 2, (Singapore, 1955); C. Scholten, *The Coins of the Dutch Overseas Territories 1601-1948* (Amsterdam, 1953); E. Netscher and J. A. van der Chijs, "De Munten van Nederlandsch Indië", *VBG*, XXXI (1864), 1-230.

[6] See Art. "Maten en Gewichten", *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Hague/Leiden, 1917-39), II, 684-8. (All future references to this *Encyclopaedie* are to the first edition of 1895-1905).

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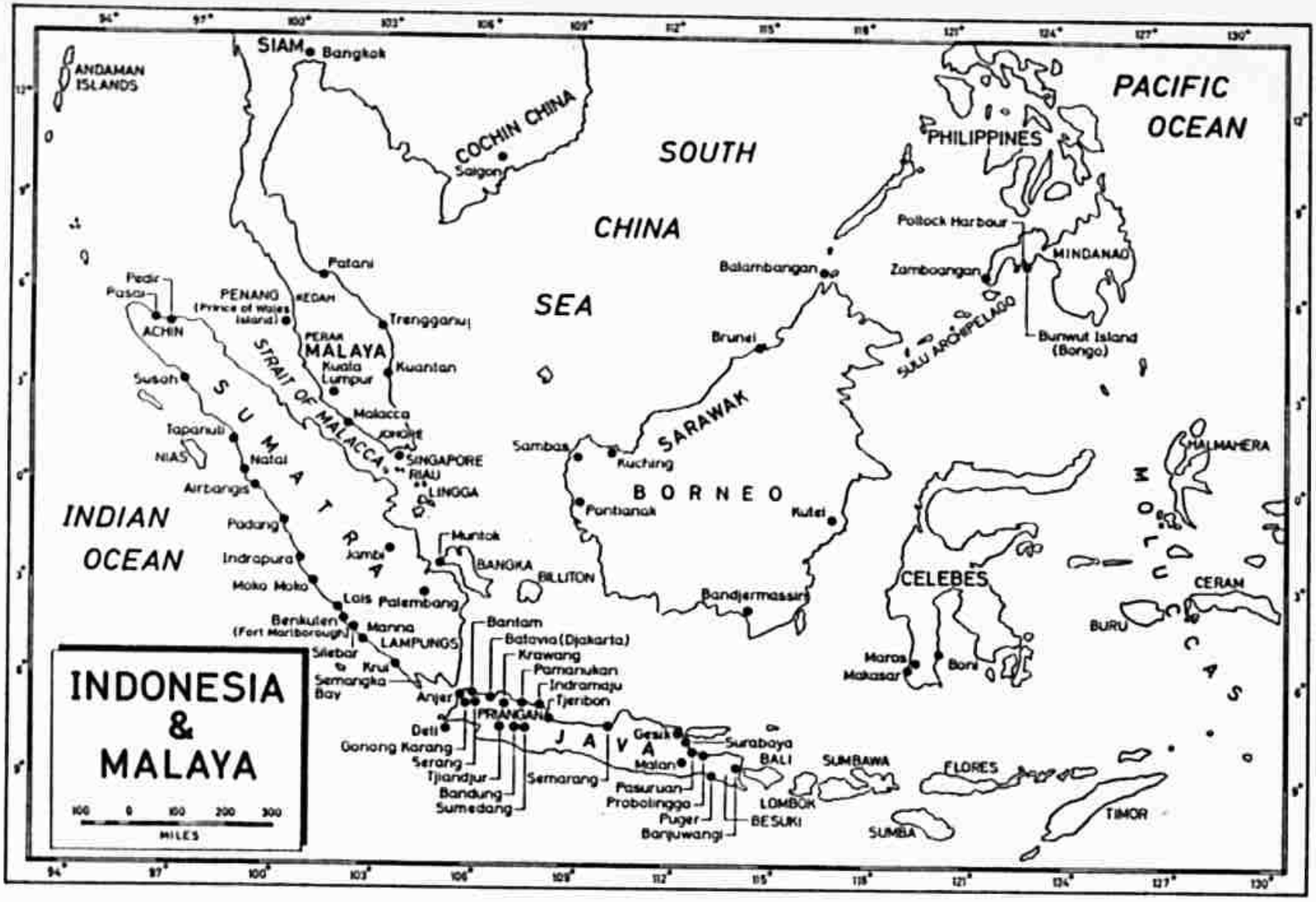
ABBREVIATIONS

Add. MSS.	Additional Manuscripts, British Museum, London.
AN	Arsip Negara (State Archives), Djakarta.
ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague.
BKI	*Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Hague).
BM	British Museum, London.
Gillespie Charges	An untitled volume of documents relating to the charges preferred by Major-General R. Gillespie against Raffles in Java. The volume was printed privately in Batavia in 1815.
IOL	India Office Library, Commonwealth Relations Office, London.
JMBRAS	*Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society* (Singapore).
JSBRAS	*Journal of the Straits Branch Royal Asiatic Society* (Singapore).
TBG	*Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (Batavia).
VBG	*Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (Batavia).
VKI	*Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Hague).


INDONESIA & MALAYA
SIAM
Bangkok
ANDAMAN ISLANDS
COCHIN CHINA
Saigon
SOUTH CHINA SEA
PACIFIC OCEAN
PHILIPPINES
Pollock Harbour
MINDANAO
Zamboanga
Balambangan
Brunei
SULU ARCHIPELAGO
Bunwut Island (Bongo)
Patani
Pedir
Pasai
ACHIN
PENANG (Prince of Wales Island)
KEDAH
PERAK
MALAYA
Kuala Lumpur
Trengganu
Kuantan
Malacca
Johore
SINGAPORE
RIAU
LINGGA
STRAIT OF MALACCA
Susoh
Taparuli
NIAS
Natal
Airbangis
Padang
Indrapura
Moko Moko
Lais
Benkulen (Fort Marlborough)
Manna
LAMPUNGS
Silebar
Krui
Semangka Bay
SUMATRA
Jambi
Muntok
BANGKA
BILLITON
Palembang
INDIAN OCEAN
Sambas
Kuching
SARAWAK
BORNEO
Pontianak
Kutei
Bandjermassin
CELEBES
Maros
Makasar
Bori
HALMAHERA
CERAM
BURU
MOLUCCAS
Bantam
Batavia (Djakarta)
Krawang
Pamanukan
Indramaju
Tjeribon
PRIANGAN
Anjer
Deli
Goniong Karang
Serang
Tjiandjur
Bandung
Sumedang
Semarang
JAVA
Gesik
Surabaya
Malan
Pasuruan
Probolingo
Puger
Banjuwangi
BALI
LOMBOK
BESUKI
SUMBAWA
FLORES
SUMBA
TIMOR
100 0 100 200 300
MILES

I

THE WESTERN ELEMENT IN MODERN SOUTHEAST ASIAN HISTORY

"It seems to me impossible to avoid the conclusion that the new Asia and Africa which are emerging with such revolutionary suddenness do not represent simply the reaction of Asiatic or African culture against the influence of an alien civilization, but rather the extension of Western civilization and Western international society into the extra-European world".

Christopher Dawson, *The Movement of World Revolution* (London, 1959).

(i)

THE task of the historian is to interpret the past to the living, and he should, therefore, be concerned to show how the past actually 'touches on the present'.[1] If he does this then he has fulfilled the main function of his discipline, which is to provide a sense of proportion, of balance, indeed another dimension, to the lives of his contemporaries. The historian is not concerned with the past as such, but with the interpretation of the past; not with the collection of historical facts, but with their significance; not with events and happenings in the past, but with the explanation of those events and happenings. 'The nature of our intelligence is such', the French medieval historian, Marc Bloch, has written, 'that it is stimulated far less by the will to know than by the will to understand'.[2] It is the function of the historian to provide this understanding of the past.

It is obvious, however, that because historians bring to their study widely different abilities, and differing points of view, so their understanding—their comprehension and interpretation—of the past will differ. History can never be produced in a definitive form; it is, to borrow another phrase of Marc Bloch, 'a thing in

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (London, 1956), 22.
[2] M. Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester, 1954), 10.

movement'.[3] There are only interpretations of history by individual historians, and, however much some of them may attempt to hide the fact, historians are human-beings, and therefore subject to the same limitations as the rest of their kind. One should beware, therefore, of those who profess to see patterns of development, those who derive laws of human behaviour from their study of the past. For there are no laws, no patterns to be found in history: there are only those laws and patterns which individual historians impose upon the historical evidence, or lack of evidence. Human behaviour and experience has been too wide, too rich in its variety, to fit the narrow categories of any single interpretation. Every age interprets the past by its own standards; every age writes its own history. The present age is no exception.

Simultaneously with the challenge in Asia and Africa to Western political and economic domination, and to Western ideals and values, has come the challenge to what has been generally described as 'colonial history' — history written by Westerners from their own point of view, with undue emphasis on the activities of Westerners. And the point of view, with its various ramifications, which is now being seriously challenged as being unhistorical, is that early Western penetration into Asia represented a superior civilization on the march: that the early Europeans were responsible for the transmission to Asia of advanced technological forms, of superior political and economic organization, and of more enlightened rules of conduct and behaviour. This view received an apparently decisive blow with the publication in 1953 of the book, *Asia and Western Dominance*, by the Indian historian, K.M. Panikkar;[4] but it was not the first blow delivered, even by Panikkar. Writing nearly a quarter of a century earlier, he had, in his monograph *Malabar and the Portuguese*, employed very forceful language to contradict this view. 'An influential school of history', he wrote, 'holds that the benefits, that India has received from the direct contact with Europe, are of such a nature that, in spite of all their faults, the Portuguese should be considered as the pioneers of civilisation and as the forerunners of the British Empire. It may be permitted however, to question the correctness of the

[3] *Ibid.*, 12.

[4] *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco Da Gama Epoch of Asian History 1498-1945* (London, 1953), 18-19.

point of view, wrongly called historical, which thus tries to import retrospective values into events of an earlier date. Even accepting that the connection with Europe has been beneficial to India, it is open to doubt whether a century and a half of barbarous outrages, of unscrupulous plunder and of barren aggression is not too great a price to pay for the doubtful benefits of having the way opened for other European traders.... The Portuguese could not even claim what the Mahommedan Rulers of India could legitimately put forward in their justification, that they had a cultural contribution to make to the life of India, such as we may, even now, see in the magnificent architectural monuments at Agra, Delhi, Ahmedabad. The Portuguese of the 16th and the 17th centuries had nothing to teach the people of India except improved methods of killing people in war and the narrow feeling of bigotry in religion'.[5]

That the Portuguese intrusion signified a stage of higher economic development for Asia has also been vehemently denied by the Dutch historian, J. C. van Leur. 'The Portuguese colonial regime', he wrote as long ago as 1934, '...did not introduce a single new economic element into the commerce of southern Asia. The forms of political and economic domination — monopolies, financial exploitation, 'fiscalization' of the government — all of them originated in the caliphates and Byzantium, and were transferred to Portugal, and perhaps carried on there, by Jews and Italians. The political power of the Portuguese, based on their military superiority, now made possible the large-scale application of those forms in Asia. That military superiority was the only thing the Portuguese carried overseas to Asia as a new and European element.... The Portuguese regime only introduced a non-intensive drain on the existing structure of shipping and trade'.[6]

Even Europe's supposed advance in technical knowledge, as represented by the improved navigational aids and naval construction which made the early Portuguese voyages to India possible, has now to be seen in an Asian perspective.[7] Bartolomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama's rounding of the Cape of Good Hope had been achieved because of improvements in European shipbuilding

[5] *Malabar and the Portuguese* (Bombay, 1929), 211-12.
[6] *Indonesian Trade and Society: Essays in Asian Social and Economic History* (The Hague, 1955), 118.
[7] *Ibid.*, 159.

techniques during the fifteenth century, among other things by the construction of three-masted ships. Yet these ships, which were not in general use in Europe until the middle of the fifteenth century, were being built in China centuries earlier, and were employed in the Chinese voyages to Southeast Asia and to the east coast of Africa. Those same Chinese ships were frequently larger than seven hundred tons burthen, whereas the average size of the galleons of the Spanish armada was considerably less. It is true that the Portuguese trading carracks and Spanish Manila galleons were often much larger than seven hundred tons, but the perspective is restored by Fernão Peres de Andrade's description of the Sultan of Demak's war-junk, compared to which his own flagship 'did not look like a ship at all'.[8]

If, in recent years, we have had to readjust our thinking with regard to the idea of a primitive and cannibalistic negro Africa, when confronted with evidence which suggests that the contemporaneous cultural development of some of the states of western Africa compared favourably with that of medieval Europe, it is not now so hard for us to arrive at a proper appreciation of the South and Southeast Asian cultures at the time of Western intrusion. If Djenne, Walata, Gao, and Agadès were 'the Milans and Nurembergs of the medieval Sudan: much less magnificient, indeed, yet rich and powerful and imposing in their time and place'; if medieval Timbuktu 'might reasonably have claimed as much of civilisation as most of the university cities of medieval Europe';[9] then it is no longer difficult to understand the feeling of awe which one of the earliest English visitors to Asia experienced when he gazed on the Indian cities of Agra and Fatehpur-Sikri, 'either of them', as he recorded, 'much greater than London and very populous'.[10] Nor is there need to doubt Robert Clive's description of Murshidabad nearly two centuries later, 'as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London, with this difference that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater

[8] B. Davidson, *Old Africa Rediscovered* (London, 1959), 163; C. R. Boxer (ed.), *The Tragic History of the Sea 1589-1622* (Hakluyt Society, Cambridge, 1959), 1 ff.; Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 366 n.2; G. B. Sansom, *The Western World and Japan* (London, 1950), 61-2.

[9] Davidson, *Old Africa Rediscovered*, 89, 79.

[10] J. Courtenay Locke, *The First Englishmen in India* (London, 1930), 103.

property than in the last'.[11] Professor J. M. Romein has done well to remind us that it is only 'the unconscious conceit of a narrow-minded European' to regard as primitive the early Arab, Indian, and Chinese cultures.[12]

(ii)

Yet, as salutary as this new perspective is, and as challenging as it is in calling for a careful and detailed reappraisal of modern South and Southeast Asian history, it is a perspective which is easily capable of distortion. Panikkar has stated that the battles won by the Portuguese in India were more 'mythical than actual', as they never had the mastery of any territory in India 'outside the range of their ships' guns'.[13] That may be true enough; but when this line of argument is extended to include Malaya, as it has been recently,[14] then it seems to me to invite a sharp rejoinder. In a long two-part article entitled 'A New Approach to Malayan History', Professor K. G. Tregonning has contended that although 'it was commerce that brought both [the] Portuguese and Dutch to Malaya, neither of them was able to secure more than a minimum control over the Asia-Europe trade, and even less over the intra-Asian trade. They were a few heretical fish in a Muslim sea, and ... they did not affect Asia much at all. Rather the contrary; Asia profoundly affected them'. And elsewhere: 'Asia, not the European in Asia, must be our theme, and suddenly, if you think of that, it makes the Portuguese and the Dutch most insignificant, and almost extraneous'.[15]

Now whatever one may think, nothing will alter the fact that it was those 'insignificant' Portuguese who brought to an end the Malacca sultanate, and set in motion a whole series of events which affected profoundly the subsequent history of Malaya.[16] It was

[11] Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 282.

[12] J. M. Romein, "The Common Human Pattern: The Origin and Scope of Historical Theories", *Delta*, II (ii) (1959), 12.

[13] Panikkar, *Malabar and the Portuguese*, 212-13.

[14] K. G. Tregonning, *Journal of the South Seas Society*, XIV (i and ii) (1958), 124.

[15] *The Straits Times*, 21 and 24 November 1958.

[16] *Cf.* C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Johore Lama and other ancient sites on the Johore River", *JMBRAS*, XXVIII (ii) (1955), 141-2. Consider also the important rôle which one Portuguese frigate, sheltering against the monsoon, played in Johore politics as late as 1718, T. D. Hughes (transl.), "A Portuguese Account of Johore", *JMBRAS*, XIII (ii) (1935), 111-156.

those few heretical fish in a Muslim sea — in Malacca they rarely numbered more than six hundred[17] — who, by their restrictive policies against Muslim merchants, caused a diversion of the Arab and Gujarati trade to Achin which, with the wealth derived from this trade, set about its imperialistic mission to capture the west and east Sumatran pepper regions.[18] A large part of Sumatra came under direct Achinese control as a result of those few hundred Portuguese in Malacca, and they were indirectly responsible for the port of Achin becoming in the middle of the sixteenth century 'the chief station in the intermediary trade of the Mohammedans of western Asia and India with the Indonesian Archipelago'.[19] Malacca itself, which was the busiest port in the whole of Southeast Asia before the Portuguese conquest — the Italian, Ludovico di Varthema, who visited the city only six years before it passed into Portuguese hands, declared that more ships arrived there than anywhere else in the world[20] — began steadily to decline under the Portuguese regime, and when the Dutch seized control of it in 1641 they pursued a policy of raising Batavia to pre-eminence as a trading centre at the expense of Malacca. From its former position of importance in the Southeast Asian world, Malacca, under Western rule, sank into insignificance.

The fact that in the past some colonial historians exaggerated Western cultural and political preponderance in the Southeast Asian region, particularly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is no reason why the important indirect effects which Westerners had on the course of Southeast Asian history during those centuries should now be totally obscured by the zealous critics of those historians. Professor W. F. Wertheim, a keen admirer of Van Leur, and a leading exponent of the new school of interpretation, has argued, for example, that in general, 'neither Asian agriculture nor Asian industry was affected by Western

[17] I. A. Macgregor, "Notes on the Portuguese in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, XXVIII (ii) (1955), 6; W.H.C. Smith, "The Portuguese in Malacca during the Dutch Period", *Journal of the South Seas Society*, XIV (i and ii) (1958), 70.

[18] B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, 1955), I, 42-4.

[19] *Ibid.*, I, 44.

[20] R. C. Temple (ed.), *The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508* (London, 1928), 84. See also A. Cortesão (transl.), *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1944), I, 228; and P.E. De Josselin de Jong and H.L.A. van Wijk, "The Malacca Sultanate", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, I (2) (1960), 22.

influence in an appreciable way before the beginning of the nineteenth century'.[21] That statement is true, however, only if by *affected* is understood *directly affected*, for the indirect influences which the early Westerners exerted on South and Southeast Asian trade and agricultural development were marked.

Consider, for example, the cultivation of pepper, which was the most important of all the commodities in the East-West trade during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[22] When the early Westerners reached Asia, most of the pepper consumed in Europe came from the Malabar coast of India; the south Indian pepper cultivators had been the traditional producers of this commodity since Graeco-Roman times, and the economic foundations of the Malabar coastal regions rested, to an important degree, upon the pepper trade. But the Portuguese, in attempting to exert monopolistic control over the Malabar trade during the sixteenth century, forced the Muslim merchants to resort to the less developed, but independent pepper producing regions of Malaya and Indonesia: to Kedah, to Achin, to Priaman and Tiku, to Jambi and Palembang, to Silebar and the Lampung districts, to Bantam, and to Banjermassin. Under the stimulus of this new demand, these regions began producing more pepper than previously, and when the additional stimulus was given later by Dutch and British traders, who also found the Malabar ports closed to them by Portuguese action, Malayan and Indonesian pepper production so increased that by the beginning of the nineteenth century it was meeting most of the world demand — Malabar having been reduced to producing less than one-tenth of the total Asian output.[23]

If this changing pattern of agriculture and trade, which was due primarily to the commercial and political conflicts between the Asian and the Western powers, resulted in poverty for the pepper cultivators of Malabar, it meant relative prosperity for the Malayan and Indonesian producers. In Bantam in west Java, for instance, it has been calculated that the Dutch paid to the people of this

[21] W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: a Study of Social Change* (The Hague, 1956), 39.

[22] K. Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1602-1740* (The Hague, 1958), 73. This subject is examined in detail in the second essay.

[23] J. Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China* (London, 1830), II, 178n; W. Milburn, *Oriental Commerce* (London, 1825), 155-6.

region during the eighteenth century more than twelve million Spanish dollars for the pepper which was produced there and in the Lampung districts.[24] The agricultural decline of one part of Southeast Asia, and the agricultural advance of another part during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, is often directly attributable to Western influence.

We may accept the view, although to my mind it requires qualification, that the Portuguese, and the early Dutch and British, were no more than 'country' powers in the Southeast Asian region, to be compared with some of the more powerful of the local Malay and Indonesian sultanates, and we may possibly agree with Professor Wertheim that the trading establishments of these early Europeans were far from being centres for the radiation of Western culture;[25] but the European powers were, after all, new powers, and as such represented new factors in the turbulent and complex Southeast Asian world. It would be extremely dangerous if, in an anxiety to meet the political demands of a resurgent Asian consciousness, historians of Southeast Asia began to minimize too much the part played by the Westerners in the region. The argument that the Portuguese and Dutch were 'most insignificant, and almost extraneous' may meet the demands of the new Asian consciousness, but it does not meet the requirements of impartial history. Surely the plea for reinterpreting Southeast Asian history from an Asian point of view means something more than the convenient removal of Westerners from the historical narrative?

(iii)

It has long seemed to me that the full implications of what is involved in such a reinterpretation, at least for Western historians of Southeast Asia, have escaped serious examination, partly because the appeal for such a reinterpretation has been so constantly voiced, and partly because the appeal itself has seemed so reasonable. One of the implications — perhaps the most important — was touched upon by Professor Pieter Geyl in his valedictory lecture in the University of Utrecht, when he attacked

[24] See p. 33 below.
[25] Wertheim, *Indonesian Society*, 281.

the notion of writing history from a universal point of view. He maintained, and he is surely right, that no matter how noble are the intentions of a Western historian to abandon a Europe-centric outlook, he will never quite escape from his own past, from his own cultural heritage. How, Geyl asked, 'can a human being — and the historian must not, above all, try to pass himself off as anything but a human being — allow his mind, shaped in his own cultural environment and by its centuries of sustained action, to be dissolved in an unorganic and anarchic world without losing hold of his most fertile life-principle'?[26] How, one may equally ask, can the Western historian allow his mind to be dissolved in the strangely different, and frequently confusing, Southeast Asian world? This is not to say that in writing Southeast Asian history the European historian should subordinate everything to a Western interest, nor is it to deny the validity of Asian historians writing Southeast Asian history as they see it, but it does seem to me to set severe limitations to the possibility of Western historians ever successfully interpreting this history from an Asian point of view. The Western historian of Southeast Asia may, with Van Leur, readily deplore the fact that much of Asian history has in the past been observed from the decks of European ships, from 'the ramparts of the fortress, the high gallery of the trading-house',[27] and he may attempt to remedy this defect by concentrating his attention on the Asian scene. But can he do more than this? Can he ever escape the dominating fact that his mind has been conditioned from his birth by Western thought patterns and cultural influences?

In 1955 Professor D. G. E. Hall of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London published his massive *A History of South-East Asia*. In the preface to this book the author stated that he had attempted to analyze the history of Southeast Asia from a Southeast Asian perspective, and he implied that he had done so by concentrating less attention on the activities of Westerners in the region than had the earlier European historians. That statement did not prevent the book from being attacked by historians in Malaya and elsewhere as being thoroughly

[26] P. Geyl, "The Vitality of Western Civilization", *Delta*, II (i) (1959), 14.

[27] Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 261.

Europe-centric in outlook. Another British scholar who has been criticized recently for interpreting Malayan history from a Western point of view is Sir Richard Winstedt, whose distinguished contributions to Malay studies now extend over a period of fifty years. If his critics are correct,[28] then it seems to me that the outlook for a new type of Malayan history is particularly bleak, for Winstedt's historical writings are based not only on a thorough knowledge of the Malay literature, but also of the important Dutch and French sources. Where among his critics is to be found this intellectual equipment, and without it how do they imagine that it is possible to produce the sort of history for which they so earnestly and eagerly clamour?

A further limitation to the reinterpretation of Southeast Asian history from an Asian point of view stems from the nature of the source materials. It is not sufficiently appreciated that for the modern period of Southeast Asian history the bulk of these sources are in Western languages: in the case of Malaya and Indonesia, in English and Dutch. The result is that before he actually reaches the stage of producing his narrative, the historian of Southeast Asia is dealing, to a large extent, with source materials which are Western orientated. Admittedly, there is an extraordinary amount of information on Southeast Asian manners and customs to be extracted from these sources, but the important point is that the sources themselves are comprehensible only within a Western historical framework. They tend, in fact, to establish the pattern of the historical narrative before it is even written. The recent monograph by the Dutch historian, H. J. De Graaf, is a case in point. For his book, *De Regering van Sultan Agung, Vorst van Mataram 1613-1645*,[29] De Graaf used — he is one of the very few historians of Southeast Asia who is capable of doing so — Portuguese, Dutch, and old Javanese sources. Considerable use was made by De Graaf of the Javanese *babads*, but it is clear that the Western sources, especially those in the Dutch language, have proved to be richer on points of detail, and on general matters of historical importance. As a consequence, these sources have tended to dictate the content and structure of De Graaf's

[28] Tregonning, *The Straits Times*, 24 November 1958, 17 December 1959; Lim Say Hup, "The need for a reinterpretation of Malayan History", *Malaya in History*, V (ii) (1959), 41-3.

[29] *VKI*, XXIII (1958).

book, not because he himself is consciously Western orientated — quite the contrary — but simply because the significance of the events and happenings in central Java during the early years of the seventeenth century can best be comprehended against the background of the actions of the Westerners in the region — of the Westerners who have themselves left us a record of those events and happenings, as well as their puzzled, though often acute, observations on the strange and perplexing Javanese world. The fact, therefore, that often the richest sources for the study of modern Southeast Asian history tend to be Western sources would seem to lead inevitably to the imposition of a Western structural framework on that history.

There is still a further initial difficulty involved in any fundamental reinterpretation of Southeast Asian history from an Asian point of view, which was fully recognized by Van Leur when he emphasized the need to establish new historical categories. If European historians, and for that matter Asian historians (for it must be remembered that the majority of these historians are trained in Western historical methods) bring to their study of Southeast Asian history the concepts and categories and periodization of Western historiography, and interpret Southeast Asian history in the light of these concepts and categories, then they can hardly succeed in producing the new sort of history for which there is apparently so great a need. The type of Asian and Southeast Asian history which is being written today, even by Asian historians themselves, is history in the Western tradition; for the kind of history with which we are all familiar is indissolubly tied to the Western cultural base. No amount of emotional criticism of this historiography will alter that state of affairs. If a different sort of Southeast Asian history is ever to be written, then what is required is a revolutionary reappraisal of existing historical methods and techniques, and of existing historical concepts and periodization. But that particular task, which is so often talked about, is fraught with so many difficulties and hazards that it remains unattempted.

What has happened, instead, has been that a neat deception has been perpetrated by a number of historians who, by concentrating their attention on the evils of Western colonialism in Asia,

have come to convince themselves, and their audience, that they have escaped the Europe-centric habit, and succeeded in interpreting Asian history from an Asian viewpoint. They have, of course, deluded themselves, and those who have listened to them, for their particular brand of interpretation bears as much resemblance to history proper, as the comments in a *Pravda* editorial on Wall Street bear to the reality of American business life. The propagandist history which frequently passes today as history from the Asian point of view — history which is loaded with moral judgments on Western colonialism — should not be confused with the sort of history for which Van Leur, among others, so passionately pleaded.

(iv)

This matter of moral and value judgments is one of the most difficult problems connected with the study of modern Southeast Asian history. It is true, of course, that these judgments were a common feature of many of the books written by the older colonial historians, who, because they exaggerated the early cultural contribution which the West made to Asia, portrayed the process of Western colonialism as a process of light flooding into dark and obscure corners of the globe. The Dutch historian, E. S. De Klerck, in the introduction to his two volume *History of the Netherlands East Indies*, which was published in Rotterdam in 1938, wrote: '[I]n the course of the centuries Holland has accomplished a work of civilization [in Indonesia] of which she may be proud . . . .'[30] He did not pause to consider the underlying assumptions of that assertion, or to note that many of the values of that civilization were abhorrent to the Indonesians on whom it was imposed. To De Klerck, and to many of his kind, civilization was by definition Western civilization. If it is true that frequently the history of Asia has been treated by Europeans in a way that has resulted in it involuntarily becoming a tool of Western imperialism,[31] then I think it is not unfair to regard De Klerck's book as a good example of this sort of history writing.

[30] I, ix.

[31] J. Romein and W. F. Wertheim in *A World on the Move: A History of Colonialism and Nationalism in Asia and North Africa from the Turn of the Century to the Bandung Conference* (Amsterdam, 1956), 17.

Pandit Nehru has observed that history 'is almost always written by the victors and conquerors and gives their viewpoint; or, at any rate, the victors' version is given prominence and holds the field'.[32] During the past few centuries those conquerors in Asia have been Westerners; but the tide has turned during the last few decades, and the victors are now the Asians: the Asian view is in the ascendant. And it is interesting, although alarming, to notice that judgments and assumptions of an exactly contrary kind run as freely through the works of the modern interpreters of Asian history as they did in the works of their Western orientated predecessors. Such a judgment we have already met in the earlier quotation from K. M. Panikkar's monograph, *Malabar and the Portuguese*. Another example may be taken from the same writer's book, *Asia and Western Dominance*, where he cites the case of Vasco da Gama setting fire to an unarmed Arab ship, to draw the conclusion that it was 'typical of the policy of terrorism and piracy that . . . [the Portuguese] introduced into Indian waters'.[33] Certainly the incident was horrible enough. On board the ship were between two and four hundred men, women, and children, most of whom were returning to India from the pilgrimage to Mecca. After removing the cargo, the Portuguese locked the passengers in the hold, and set fire to the ship. They broke out, however, and during four long, weary, days and nights attempted to fight the fire, while the Portuguese ships sailed round the doomed vessel, bombarding it all the time, completely oblivious to the heartrending cries of the women 'holding up their babies in their arms, pointing to them and to the few ornaments on their arms and fingers, lamenting pitifully in their native tongues and trying with wild gesticulations to melt the heart' of the Portuguese commander — to no avail.[34]

Little can be said in extenuation of this deliberate act of cruelty, but much can be said against Panikkar's conclusion that this action by early Westerners, and others like it, introduced terrorism and piracy into Asian waters. From the point of view of historical accuracy that is an unwarranted conclusion, and the implication

[32] Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 287.

[33] Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance*, 42.

[34] H. H. Hart, *Sea Road to the Indies: An Account of the Voyages and Exploits of the Portuguese Navigators* (London, 1952), 228.

which it carries — that cruelty and acts of terrorism were prerogatives of the Westerners in their dealings with Asians — is entirely false. The fact that some hundreds of Asian men, women, and children met so barbarous a death at the hands of Europeans may reasonably revolt us; but it should not blind us to the fact that acts of cruelty inflicted by Asians upon Asians were frequently more barbarous. In 1567 Akbar put thirty thousand inhabitants of Chitor to the sword, from which time the city has been held accursed, and the 'sin of the slaughter of Chitor' has become proverbial.[35] The Mughul emperor Jahangir had four thousand of his Rajput prisoners trampled to death by elephants 'as an example to other wretches'; a later batch of prisoners he ordered 'to be flayed alive, some to carry wooden yokes about their necks, others to be drawn through the river, and others to be trampled to death by... elephants'; another seven hundred rebels he had impaled, for, as he explained in his *Memoirs*, 'there cannot exist a more excruciating punishment, since the wretches exposed frequently linger a long time in the most agonizing torture, before the hand of death relieves them....'[36] In 1739 Nadir Shah ordered a day-long massacre of the people of Delhi during which the men were killed 'without regard for age, and all the women dragged into slavery', while the dead and wounded Hindus and Muslims 'were indiscriminately burnt together'.[37] What is to be said of the ruler of the Indonesian state of Mataram, Amangkurat I, who is reported to have ordered the death of twenty thousand of his subjects when he ascended the throne, and who starved one hundred women to death to give vent to his feelings of grief when one of his wives died?[38] And what of Sultan Mahmud Shah of Johore, who at the end of the seventeenth century when presented with a pair of screw-barrelled pistols tried them out by shooting his subjects in the street in order to see how far the pistols would carry; who, because of a slight offence,

[35] H. G. Rawlinson, *India: A Short Cultural History* (London, 1954), 302.
[36] D. Price (transl.), *Memoirs of the Emperor Jahangueir, written by himself* (London, 1829), 69, 147, 153.
[37] R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri, Kalikinkar Datta, *An Advanced History of India* (London, 1948), 533.
[38] C. Day, *The Policy and Administration of the Dutch in Java* (New York, 1904), 16-17.

had his guard break both the arms of one of his mistresses?[39] Where in the whole period of Western contact with Malaya can be matched those frightful atrocities which the Thais inflicted on the Malays when they invaded Kedah in 1821?[40] The knowledge of such actions by Asians should never allow the impartial historian to conclude that cruelty was a monopoly of Westerners in their dealings with Asians. Cruelty is a human failing — a feature of human nature: it is neither Asian nor Western.

And yet Asian historians like Panikkar, and Western historians of what may not unreasonably be described as the sentimentalist school — historians like the Amsterdam Professors J. Romein and W. F. Wertheim — manage to convey the idea to their readers that a gentle and peace-loving Asia was invaded by warring Westerners, who brought nothing with them but an insatiable greed for riches, and barbaric methods of conquest. A rude materialist West forcibly entering the quiet and contemplative world of Asia! There is no need to examine here this caricature of history, which has already been dealt such a devastating blow by the Utrecht historian, Pieter Geyl.[41] All that is necessary to say is that no historian would wish to stand firmly behind the proposition that Western colonialism in Asia was a good thing; or, with Romein and Wertheim, that it was a bad thing, for within a strict historical context such statements are meaningless. The historian is not concerned with the justification or condemnation of colonialism — that is not his task; he is concerned, rather, to understand and to explain this phenomenon of colonialism, and to assess the significance of Western colonialism within the actual historical situation. The historian must accept colonialism as a feature of modern Southeast Asian history, for no amount of solemn moralizing will alter the fact that for the past four centuries Westerners have been in that part of the world. As an historical phenomenon colonialism should not embarrass him: it is not for the historian to ask Asians to forgive and forget the sins — whatever they were — of the colonial past. His task is firm and clear: he must accept the facts as they are, and try to interpret them.

[39] W. Foster (ed.), *A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton* (London, 1930), II, 51-2; R. O. Winstedt, "A History of Malaya", *JMBRAS*, XIII (i) (1935), 146-7.

[40] T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* (London, 1839), II, 8-16n.

[41] Geyl, *Delta*, II (i) 15-17.

His task is finished when he has done this, for the passing of moral judgments is none of his business. As Professor H. Kraemer has rightly observed: 'Of greatest importance in assessing the Vasco da Gama epoch is the necessity to avoid both quasi-objective and moralizing denunciations on the one hand and attempts to rescue the honour of the West on the other'.[42]

(v)

The historian will also beware of generalizations which, in three or four lines, are intended to embrace the complex events of the past three or four centuries. Generalizations about the evil nature of Western colonialism in Southeast Asia may be the tool in trade of the propagandist, but not of the historian, whose job it is to penetrate behind the concept in order to perceive the reality of the situation. The statement by Romein and Wertheim that the Westerners' 'unrestrained lust for gain, which — with all due respect for the exceptions — made them indifferent to the lot of the peoples whose homelands they had broken into . . .'[43] has little meaning when the totality and variety of Western experience in Asia is considered. For greed is not a sufficient motive to explain the actions of the thousands of Westerners who poured into distant and remote corners of Asia during the course of four centuries. Here came the soldiers, the merchants, the priests, the sailors, the businessmen, the administrators, the bankers, the doctors, and the adventurers, each bent on a particular purpose, some of them base and corrupt, some of them elevated and pure; men — and women — who were at times moved by objectives which were sordid and mercenary, and at other times by motives which were disinterested, and even noble. No generalization about the evils or the blessings of colonialism can ever hope to capture the reality of the situation, which is at all times complex and intricate. The sheer delight and subtlety of historical research and investigation will escape those who attempt to fit the events of the past into a mould which has been rigidly fashioned by contemporary political needs.

42 H. Kraemer, "The Grandeur and Misery of the Vasco da Gama Epoch", *Delta*, III (ii) (1960), 8.
43 *World on the Move*, 12.

History is a matter of interpretation, but an interpretation must account for all of the facts, not some of them. An historian is not entitled to ignore evidence which is embarrassing to his thesis, or to use evidence which he does not possess; for if he does so, then he is no longer dealing in history, but in propaganda, and the events of the 1930s in Germany are still too much in our minds to ignore the dangers which arise when history is utilized to justify national policies. We have also seen recently in Russia the withdrawal from circulation of the best-selling history book of all time, *The Short Course of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, and its replacement by an enlarged new version. Since it was published twenty-odd years ago, the old text had run into no less than fifty million copies; now it has been superseded by a book which startlingly reinterprets the history of the Soviet Union during the present century, especially Stalin's rôle in that history. We may not unreasonably expect to witness another 'agonizing reappraisal' of Russian history when the present Premier dies — or is liquidated by his political rivals. Such violent re-writing of history for political ends should serve to warn us that the dividing line between propaganda and history is always finely and delicately drawn.

The warning is timely, because during the last few decades one of the most potent forces in fostering and developing an Asian consciousness, and sense of nationality, has been the fabrication and dissemination of historical propaganda. Every nation appears to have a desire to gild the past to its own advantage, for a national mythology generally precedes a sense of nationality. One of the most pervasive historical myths which seems to be generated in the formative development of modern national states — in Europe no less than in Asia — is the belief in a glorious national past, which has some how been subverted. In Malaya one can observe a tendency to elevate the Malacca sultanate into something that it was not; and in Indonesia the nationalist writers place in the forefront the Madjapahit period, and recount with enthusiasm the exploits of the empire's great *patih*, Gadja Mada.[44] These writers steer clear of the period of Western rule, for they regard it as a time during which Indonesia experienced a loss of her

[44] Muhammad Yamin, *Gadjah Mada: Pahlawan Persatuan Nusantara* (Djakarta, 1953).

former greatness. It would, I believe, be a tragedy if the modern generation of Asian historians were to concentrate their attention on the pre-Western period of Southeast Asian history because they feel a sense of humiliation or embarrassment at the loss of their country's independence. However understandable it is in terms of national psychology, and however satisfying it may be for young Asians to confine their vision to their country's so-called 'glorious past', the continual rewriting of national myths will do nothing to further the proper study of Southeast Asian history.[45]

Nor, as I have already suggested, will that study be advanced if, in dealing with the modern period, historians either underrate Western influence in Southeast Asia during the past three or four centuries, or consciously attempt to remove the Westerners from the historical narratives altogether. Let us beware of the sort of absurd proposition, which has been advanced recently in India, that the study of British rule and administration in that country constitutes an aspect of British, but not of Indian history. Why the proponents of that particular view are prepared to tear the British from the fabric of Indian history, but allow the Turks, Afghans and Mughals to remain, is never made clear. The proposition is, of course, ridiculous; but it is also dangerous, because, if it finds general currency, it will produce distortions of South and Southeast Asian history as gross as those fathered by some of the older colonial historians. The British in India, and the Westerners in Southeast Asia, are as real and integral a part of modern Asian history as the Indians, Chinese, Malays and Indonesians. The exact historical significance of Westerners in the Asian scene may be debated; but it would be a foolhardy historian who would regard them as being extraneous.

[45] "Historical myths", Soedjatmoko warned the Seminar on Indonesian History held at Gadja Mada University in December 1957, "... will, of course, always arise in the life of a nation. ... However, if we let ourselves become tied to these myths, we will be misled in the way in which we place ourselves in the context of the realities of the present and in the way in which we face the future". (*An Approach to Indonesian History: Towards an Open Future* (Modern Indonesia Project: Translation Series, Cornell University, 1960), 21).

II

THE CHANGING BALANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEPPER TRADE

"There must be about twenty thousand bahars of pepper in Malabar, . . . and they take it to wherever they make the most profit, however difficult the journey".

A. Cortesão (ed.), *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1944).

(i)

AT the end of the fifteenth century Venetian merchants were supplying western Europe from the Levant with about 1½ million lbs. of pepper annually. This trade was disrupted initially by the Portuguese discovery of the Cape route to India, but it recovered quickly. Between 1503-6, when some 2 million lbs. of pepper were being shipped annually around the Cape to Lisbon and Antwerp, Venetian spice imports dropped by more than two-thirds, pepper in particular becoming a minor trade commodity.[1] By the fourth decade of the sixteenth century, however, the quantity of spices which was coming up by the old trade routes along the Persian Gulf via Baghdad and the Syrian ports, or by way of the Red Sea, Cairo and Alexandria, was again attaining impressive proportions in relation to Portuguese spice imports;[2] and by the 1560s the Venetians were collecting more than 1¼ million lbs. of pepper annually from Alexandria, where the total importation was said to have been more than 2¾ million lbs.[3] So flourishing had the Levantine trade become that the Fuggers, who previously operated on the Lisbon pepper market,

[1] F. C. Lane, "Venetian Shipping during the Commercial Revolution", *American Historical Review*, XXXVIII (1933), 228-9.
[2] Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 162.
[3] F. C. Lane, "The Mediterranean Spice Trade", *American Historical Review*, XLV (1940), 581-6.

commenced purchasing supplies from Alexandria.[4] Spice imports into Portugal at this period apparently declined, but at the end of the century more than 2½ million lbs. of pepper were reaching the Iberian ports every year.[5]

A direct effect of Portuguese participation in the Asian spice trade was the rapid increase in European pepper consumption. When Vasco da Gama sailed to India, annual imports of pepper into western Europe amounted to between 1½—2 million lbs. These rose to more than 3 million lbs. by 1560, and sixty years later again, English and Dutch estimates placed the figure at between 6—7 million lbs.[6] Partly because of this increase in consumption, and partly because the price level of all commodities was rising, the price of pepper remained high during the sixteenth century. It has been claimed by some writers that the discovery of a direct passage to India led to a fall in the price of pepper, but this could have been only an initial effect because the sixteenth century pepper market was subject to the same shortages which had characterized the mediæval market. The Portuguese Crown, moreover, attempted to retain the royal pepper monopoly at a lucrative level until 1570, when the monopoly was abolished. Between 1509-29 the price of Portuguese pepper sold at Antwerp increased by two-thirds,[7] and although the price thereafter fell, yet even as late as 1592 pepper was still selling in England at fourteen per cent. more than when Vasco da Gama first rounded the Cape, among other reasons because of the continued disruption of the European pepper trade through the capture of Antwerp in 1585.[8] The situation soon changed when the English and the Dutch entered the South and Southeast Asian trade, for it was not

[4] *Ibid.*, 588.

[5] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations between India and England (1601 to 1757)* (London, 1924), 45. *Cf.* Lane, *AHR*, XLV, 587n.; W. H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar* (London, 1920), 224; I. A. Macgregor, "Europe and the East", *The New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge, 1958), II, 601.

[6] Lane, *AHR*, XLV, 587n.; J. Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago* (Edinburgh, 1820), III, 365; W. A. Horst, "De Peperhandel van de Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie", *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde*, III: 8 (1941), 98; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 74; Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 124, 370n. 28.

[7] C. R. Boxer, "The Portuguese in the East, 1500-1800", H. V. Livermore (ed.), *Portugal and Brazil* (Oxford, 1953), 215.

[8] Crawfurd, *History*, III, 362; G. Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada* (London, 1959), 187.

long before they had captured four-fifths of the European pepper trade, and, by throwing larger supplies on to the market, brought about a general reduction in prices.[9]

It has been said, as a matter of fact, that it was the sharp rise in pepper prices in 1597 which made the English fully determined to participate in the Asian trade. The increase in price from 3s. to 8s. lb. was attributed to Dutch machinations on the London market, but it seems unlikely that the Dutch were in any position to manipulate sales to their own advantage until at least July 1599, when Jacob van Neck's four ships returned with 600,000 lbs. of pepper, and possibly not until much later when the contract sales of pepper allowed small syndicates to control the market.[10] Certainly Cornelis de Houtman's first fleet brought only small supplies of tropical produce to the Netherlands in 1597. Whatever the cause, the rise in pepper prices lent added urgency to the deliberations of the London merchants in 1599 when they decided to make another attempt to take part in the direct trade with Asia; but the high cost of pepper was the occasion, rather than the cause, of the founding of the English East India Company.[11]

Before the Company was able to equip a fleet, however, ships of the independent merchants of Amsterdam, Middleburg, and Rotterdam had already returned with cargoes of pepper large enough to cause a fall in prices. Then in 1603 both the English and Dutch East India Companies imported nearly 3 million lbs. of pepper,[12] which had the effect of glutting the local markets. In England, where much less than ½ million lbs. of pepper were consumed annually,[13] the Governor and Committees of the East India Company faced serious problems arising from the heavy importations. Between June and September 1603, ships of Lancaster's fleet returned with cargoes totalling more than 1 million lbs. of pepper, so that prices fell to 1s. 2d. lb.[14] Even so,

[9] Horst, *Bijd. Vad. Gesch.*, III, 98; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 74, 76-7, 79-81.

[10] J. K. J. de Jonge, *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag in Oost-Indië* (The Hague, 1862-88), II, 206; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 30-1.

[11] W. Foster, *England's Quest of Eastern Trade* (London, 1933), 145-6.

[12] De Jonge, *Opkomst*, III, 21.

[13] *Cf.* Crawfurd, *History*, III, 365, and Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 90.

[14] Foster, *England's Quest*, 161.

good profits were realized from the voyage, since the price of pepper at Bantam, including the customs paid to the Sultan, did not exceed 6*d*. lb.[15]

The slump in pepper prices led the King in 1609 to prohibit the importation of pepper into England except by the East India Company, since 'a free and generall libertie for all persons whatsouer to bring in those commodities, . . . would be an occasion to ouerlay the trade, and strangers would of purpose vent their spices at small rates, thereby to enforce our owne subiects to desist from trading . . . .'[16] In return for this monopoly, the Company agreed to pay duty on pepper at the rate of 6*d*. lb., and to sell the commodity at not more than 2*s*. 6*d*. lb. The proclamation gave the Company an assured home market, and so enabled it to concentrate upon developing export openings in Europe. Pepper from Java and Sumatra worth £209,623 was re-exported from England to Italy and Turkey in 1615, and in 1624 and 1627 exports of this commodity amounted to £180,000. During the 1630s and 1640s, when the Company was subjected to greatly increased duties on pepper in the home market, and to the arbitrary demands of the King for pepper supplies, profitable export markets were developed at Leghorn and Venice. And when in 1650 prices at home dropped to between 9*d*. and 11*d*. lb., and to 7*d*. lb. in 1657, it could be sold in Italy, and elsewhere in Europe, at 1*s*. 8*d*. lb.[17]

Some idea of the margin of profits made in the early English pepper trade is afforded by the following figures.[18] Between 1616-18 nearly 1½ million lbs. of pepper were purchased at an average cost of 2¾*d*. lb., and were sold at an average price of 2*s*. ½*d*. lb. Imports dropped slightly during the 1620s to an average of 1,428,667 lbs. per annum, and prime costs almost doubled

[15] W. Hunter, *A History of British India* (London, 1919), I, 279n.

[16] Bolton Corney (ed.), *The Voyages of Sir Henry Middleton to Bantam and the Maluco Islands* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1855), App. XV.

[17] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 91-2. Dr. D. K. Bassett, *in litt.* 23 September 1959, states that during 1650-1 Jambi pepper remained at 1*s*. lb., and Malabar pepper at 1*s*. 1*d*. lb. Defective, or damp pepper sold at lower prices. There was a rise in price of about 3*d*. lb. during the Anglo-Dutch war, but it fell to 11*d*. lb. in 1655. In August 1657 unsifted Jambi pepper was selling at between 10½*d*. and 10¾*d*. lb., and garbled Jambi pepper at between 1*s*. ¼*d*. and 1*s*. ¾*d*. lb. Bal Krishna's figure of 7*d*. lb. is therefore puzzling.

[18] *Ibid.*, 89-92, 294-5.

to 4½d. lb., retail prices at the same time fell to 1s. 6d. lb. By the middle years of the seventeenth century, the annual imports of pepper amounted to 7,000 bags, of which only one-fifth was consumed in England, and in the 1660s the importation was 2 million lbs.[19] Between 1672-81 the average annual importation was as high as 4 million lbs.,[20] but the market was so glutted as a result, that for a time the trade in pepper involved a loss to the English Company.

Pepper was also a lucrative branch of commerce for the Dutch during most of the seventeenth century, although the Directors of the Netherlands East India Company experienced similar difficulties to those which confronted the Governor and Committees of the English Company at the beginning of the century in disposing of surplus stocks of pepper due to the initial heavy imports. There were nearly 4 million lbs. of pepper in the Company's warehouses in the Netherlands in 1625, and in the following year the quantity in store increased by almost fifty per cent. The Directors were forced to dispose of part of their stock annually at slightly reduced rates, and to regulate imports from Indonesia. This state of affairs did not last long, however, since the annual imports of pepper varied considerably, and the resultant price fluctuations led to a continued interest in the trade. Even in the crisis year 1625, when their masters at home were becoming alarmed at their enormous surpluses, the Dutch officials at Batavia were expressing the view that pepper was 'now as earlier the most important thing in ... commerce'.[21] Such confidence was not misplaced, for a century later the Dutch Company was still meeting half the annual European demand, although by then supplying the Asian markets had become a lucrative business.[22] And while the pepper trade no longer returned the high profits of the six-

[19] Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 82, estimates that the English East India Company imported 1.4 million lbs. of pepper annually between 1638-53, compared with 4.6 million lbs. by the Dutch East India Company during approximately the same period.

[20] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 148. *Cf.* detailed figures in Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 84. See also D. K. Bassett, "The 'Amboyna Massacre' of 1623", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, I (2) (1960), 12-19, which contains much information on the English pepper trade with Indonesia during the seventeenth century.

[21] Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 50.

[22] Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 76, 83, 85, 90.

teenth and seventeenth centuries, it remained fairly buoyant largely because of increasing demand in Europe, where nearly 16 million lbs. were being consumed annually by the beginning of the nineteenth century.[23] As the trade in pepper, unlike that in the fine spices, was open to the equal competition of all Western nations, it appeared to at least one writer who was familiar with the Asian scene, that the increase in European pepper consumption afforded clear proof of the superiority of free-trade over mercantilist policies.[24]

(ii)

The early pepper which reached Europe came largely from the western coast of India, where the shrub *piper nigrum* is indigenous to the forest regions of Malabar and Travancore. Later, with the development of Arab and Indian trade, the culture was extended to the Indonesian archipelago.[25] If, however, we are to accept the testimony of the early European travellers in the East, Malabar appears to have retained its predominance over the Southeast Asian pepper regions down to at least the sixteenth century. Marco Polo's references to western India are often astray, but his statement that the kingdom of Malabar yielded a great abundance of pepper[26] is borne out by Friar Odoric's first-hand description of its cultivation early in the fourteenth century. Pepper, he wrote, 'is not so plentiful in any other part of the world as it is there'.[27] Two hundred years later the Portuguese chronicler, Tomé Pires, testified to the magnitude of pepper production along the Malabar coast, and in 1563 the distinguished Portuguese botanist and physician, Garcia d'Orta, recorded in his *Coloquios*: 'The greatest quantity of . . . pepper is in Malabar, or along the coast from Cape Comorin to Cananore'.[28]

[23] Crawfurd, *History*, III, 365. The annual domestic consumption of pepper in the United States of America during the early nineteenth century was less than 100,000 lbs., according to J. W. Gould, "Sumatra—America's Pepperpot 1784-1873", *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, XCII (1956), 128.

[24] Crawfurd, *History*, III, 367-9.

[25] *Ibid.*, I, 480-1; I. H. Burkill, *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1935), II, 1747.

[26] A. Ricci (transl.), *The Travels of Marco Polo* (London, 1950), 331.

[27] M. Komroff (ed.), "The Journal of Friar Odoric, 1318-1330", *Contemporaries of Marco Polo* (New York, 1928), 218.

[28] *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, I, 82-3; Burkill, *Dictionary*, II, 1747.

Albuquerque believed that the Portuguese monopoly of Malabar pepper was effective in preventing supplies from falling into the hands of the Moors;[29] but pepper shipped at Calicut and Cochin, perhaps even under Portuguese licence, continued to find its way to Cambay, Aden, Mecca, Cairo and Alexandria.[30] There is little doubt, however, that the Portuguese caused some disruption to the pepper trade of western India, and forced the Arab and Indian merchants to look for alternative supplies in the Indonesian region. Sumatran pepper was already being shipped to Bengal, China, and Mecca at the beginning of the sixteenth century,[31] and pepper consigned from Malacca, where much of the *entrepôt* trade before 1511 was supplied by Perak, Kedah, and the north Sumatran ports, was reaching the markets of the Coromandel coast.[32] In addition, Priaman pepper was shipped regularly to Musulipatam, and large quantities of Borneo pepper were taken to Bengal.[33] Indonesian pepper was thus already in competition with the produce of western India when the Portuguese entered the Eastern trade, so that it would be unwise to exaggerate the influence which their monopoly of Malabar pepper had in stimulating production elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

Most of the pepper which the Portuguese consigned to Europe came from the Malabar coast, via Cochin. The pepper which was collected from Pasai, Indragiri, Kampar, Jambi and Bantam was marketed in Asia, mainly in eastern India and China, where an increase in supply soon led to a fall in prices.[34] In effect, therefore,

[29] W. Birch (transl.), *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1875-84), III, 118. *Cf.* also A. Gray (transl.), *The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1890), II (ii), 355-6.

[30] F. C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India* (London, 1894), I, 126n.; M. L. Dames (transl.), *The Book of Duarte Barbosa* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1918-21), II, 227; Panikkar, *Malabar and the Portuguese*, 206-7; R. Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations . . . of the English Nation* (London, 1926), III, 221; Macgregor, *CMH*, II, 601.

[31] *Book of Duarte Barbosa*, II, 227; *Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema*, 85.

[32] *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, II, 272; Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 33.

[33] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 25; *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, I, 93.

[34] Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 124; B. H. M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia* (The Hague/Bandung, 1959), 101; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 75. *Cf.* Marco Polo, cited W. H. Schoff (transl.), *The Periplus of the Erythræan Sea*, (New York, 1912), 214; L. J. Gallagher (transl.), *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610* (New York, 1953), 18.

the Portuguese entered this sector of Asian trade on equal terms with Javanese merchants, who traded the pepper of Sunda, the Lampungs, Indrapura, Patani and Jambi for Balinese cottons, which were in turn exchanged for the fine spices of the Moluccas.[35] The attempts made by the Portuguese to establish a fort in the Sunda region so as to control this branch of the Southeast Asian pepper trade, and to regulate trade in the Moluccas, had failed by the middle of the sixteenth century,[36] and, as equal competitors with the Javanese in the island trade, they gave very little stimulus to local production compared with later rivals from England and the Lowlands. Having found the Malabar coast closed to them, Dutch and English merchants concentrated their activities in west Java and Sumatra, and it was from there that the enormous quantities of pepper flowed into Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[37] Anglo-Dutch competition to corner the pepper supplies of Indonesia for the growing European market stimulated production to such an extent that the Indian producers found it difficult to meet the competition. Moreover at the end of the seventeenth century the Dutch began to ship Indonesian pepper to Asian markets traditionally supplied by India.[38] By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Malabar coast was yielding only eight per cent. of the total Asian pepper, whereas Sumatra alone was producing more than fifty per cent.[39] Thomas Munro's description of the Kanara pepper gardens in 1800 speaks for itself: 'I was now entering a country which had been long famous for the best pepper in India — an article which had been the grand object of most of the early voyages to the coast of Malabar; but there was not a single plant of it within many miles'.[40]

Despite its eclipse in output, Malabar pepper, which was produced from a smaller berry and was less strong than the Indonesian variety, was still regarded in the early nineteenth century as the best pepper for the European market, followed by that of Siam,

[35] Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 21.

[36] Macgregor, *CMH*, II, 606; Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 47.

[37] Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 75; Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 124-5.

[38] Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 85.

[39] Crawfurd, *Siam and Cochin China*, II, 178n. *Cf.* T. S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London, 1830), I, 238-9n.; Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 155-6.

[40] J. Bradshaw, *Sir Thomas Munro and the British Settlement of the Madras Presidency* (Oxford, 1894), 97. *Cf.* Crawfurd, *History*, III, 371n.

Kelantan, Borneo and west Sumatra.[41] It was not, however, of consistent quality: that of the southern Malabar coast being generally small and light compared with the bigger and heavier pepper of the north, especially that of Cannanore. Certainly some of the pepper which the Portuguese fetched to Lisbon and Antwerp was of very inferior standard; one shipment in particular was so bad that it had to be held in store for thirty-three years.[42]

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the Portuguese were still strongly entrenched along the Malabar coast, the Dutch, English, and Danes secured small quantities of pepper from the Coromandel ports, whence it was brought from Malabar, Achin, and the other pepper producing areas of Indonesia. Malabar pepper was also carried by Indian and Arab traders to Surat where the English, to the annoyance of the Dutch who disliked competition in that quarter as it kept prices high, were able to gain important supplies for both the home and Persian markets,[43] although prior to the second Anglo-Dutch war the Surat Presidency was disinclined to buy the more expensive Malabar pepper unless the shipment of Jambi pepper from Bantam failed to arrive.[44] As the demand for Indian pepper increased in England, and in face of stronger Dutch competition at Bantam, the English made persistent efforts to gain direct access to the Malabar pepper regions. Treaties were entered into with the Indian rulers and for a time Courteen's Association had factories at Bhatkal, Karwar and Rajapur. Later, between 1659-62, the East India Company gained access to Calicut, Karwar and Porakad, near Cochin, whence after 1670, when prices were to their liking, they were able to ship between 400 and 500 tons of pepper to England annually, and in certain years even 1,000 tons.[45]

[41] Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 156; G. Watt, *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of India* (London/Calcutta, 1889-96), VI (i), 261. *Cf.* R. C. Temple (ed.), *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679 by Thomas Bowrey* (Hakluyt Society, Cambridge, 1905), 276 and n.6.

[42] R. S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India 1497 to 1550* (London, 1899), 171.

[43] M.A.P. Roelofsz, "De Vestiging der Nederlanders ter Kuste Malabar", *VKI*, IV (1943), 53-4.

[44] Dr. D. K. Bassett *in litt.* 28 September 1959.

[45] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 147. On Courteen's Association, see Foster, *England's Quest*, 318-20; H. G. Rawlinson, *British Beginnings in Western India 1579-1657* (Oxford, 1920), 103-4, 109-11.

Because of successful English competition in both the Coromandel and Malabar markets during the early decades of the seventeenth century, the Dutch, who were bent upon controlling not only the European but also the Persian pepper trade, resolved to make direct assaults on the Portuguese strongholds along the Malabar coast.[46] Cochin fell in 1663, and the Hollanders immediately directed their attention to undermining the position of the English along the coast. Dutch factors were instructed to purchase all the pepper available in order to forestall English commercial activity, and in May 1667 the Directors informed their officials in India that every means were to 'be employed ... and every effort made to have the English expelled from the land of the Zamorin'.[47] However, despite determined and often highly successful efforts, the Dutch were never able to monopolize Malabar produce to anything like the same extent as the fine spices of the Moluccas. This was due partly to the fact that the English, despite a vacillating policy towards the retention of Karwar, maintained firmly their territorial rights along the coast, even extending them in 1683 to Telicherri, where the ruler of Cannanore refused to obey Dutch injunctions to restrict his trade in pepper with the English; partly because the English, although careful buyers, were often prepared to pay higher prices than the Dutch for pepper on the open market; and partly because Gujarati and English interlopers were very active in the Malabar pepper trade.

Another factor which made it difficult for the Dutch to establish firm control over Malabar pepper was the internal instability of the coastal principalities during the seventeenth century, caused mainly by Travancore which aimed at extending its imperialistic sway over the pepper regions. In 1726 the Dutch had exported nearly 2 million lbs. of pepper from Malabar, but twenty years later, when they were in conflict with Travancore, exports fell by three-quarters. Peace brought the Dutch Company an attractive trading agreement with the ruler of Travancore, by which 1½ million lbs. of pepper were to be delivered annually, and between 1756-60 no less than 10 million lbs. were collected by the Netherlanders from the Malabar coast.[48] Even so, the

[46] Roelofsz, *VKI*, IV, 68ff.; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 78.
[47] K. M. Panikkar, *Malabar and the Dutch* (Bombay, 1931), 118-9.
[48] *Ibid.*, 81-2.

pepper trade there was declining in relation to that of the Indonesian archipelago,[49] and the continued activity of the Dutch in the Malabar trade was due to the same reasons which had led them initially to engage in territorial conquests along the coast. Indian pepper, they found, was useful partly because it offset the effects of local stoppages in Indonesian production, as was shown during the middle years of the seventeenth century, when the temporary loss of Palembang pepper was counter-balanced by increasing exports from Malabar, and in the eighteenth century when Palembang and Bantam production declined; and partly because it was in greater demand than Sumatran pepper in Persia, where high profits were to be made in the spice trade.[50] More and more, however, Dutch interest began to centre on the pepper regions of Indonesia, where pepper was cheaper,[51] and could be supplied in greater quantities.[52]

(iii)

The interference of the Dutch, English, and Portuguese in the Indonesian pepper trade upset the balance of political and economic forces in the archipelago. Chinese merchants who were unable to withstand European competition in west Java resorted to Banjermassin, which soon became an important centre of the island pepper trade,[53] and Portuguese hostility in the Strait of Malacca forced the Arab and Gujarati traders to resort to Achin,

[49] Roelofsz, *VKI*, IV, 152; Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 150.

[50] Roelofsz, *VKI*, IV, 218-9. Later in the eighteenth century Indonesian pepper supplied an increasing part of the Persian demand. (Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 85).

[51] Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 59; F. De Haan, *Priangan: De Preanger-Regentschappen onder het Nederlandsch Bestuur tot 1811* (*Batavia*, 1910-2), III, 846; Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic* Trade, 88.

[52] In an endeavour to control larger supplies of Indian pepper, the Dutch attempted to stimulate its production in Ceylon after they had seized the island from the Portuguese in 1658. The pepper culture was not indigenous to Ceylon, and the earlier efforts by the Portuguese to compel the Sinhalese to plant the vine by stipulating that a part of the village quit-rents should be paid in pepper met with disappointing results. (P. E. Pieris, *Ceylon and the Portuguese 1505-1658* (Tellippalai, 1920), 186). The Dutch were more successful, but only after they had abandoned the early system of forced cultivation which had alienated the people. When adequate payment was made to the cultivators production increased, and in 1753 the export of pepper from Ceylon was nearly 300,000 lbs. (P. E. Pieris, *Ceylon and the Hollanders* (Tellippalai, 1918), 85-6).

[53] Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 29-30.

which resulted in the rapid expansion of the sultanate aimed at securing control of the Sumatran and Malayan pepper supplies required by Europe and China.[54] The Achinese extended their influence over Pedir and Pasai, which were important pepper centres at the beginning of the sixteenth century,[55] and over the west coast ports of Priaman, Tiku, and Silebar, whence the pepper of Indrapura was shipped.[56] Bold attempts were also made to eliminate the competition of the pepper regions of the Malay Peninsula, especially Kedah,[57] and attention was finally directed to Jambi, on which Bantam also had designs. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the sultanates of Achin and Bantam between them controlled, with the notable exception of Jambi, the northern, southern, western and eastern pepper ports of Sumatra.

As a consequence, Jambi was of considerable importance to the early Dutch and English traders, not only because pepper could be purchased there free of the burdensome tolls imposed at Achin and Bantam, but also because it was one of the richest sources of Sumatran pepper, which was at that time fetching more on the European market than Bantam pepper, though less than that purchased at Malabar. Coen calculated that the annual export of Jambi pepper, which supplied part of the Chinese and Malayan demand as well as markets in Achin and Gresik, amounted to between 40,000 and 50,000 Bantam bags.[58] This pepper, and that shipped from Indragiri, came from the Menangkabau regions of central Sumatra, where it was traded for cloth, salt, and other commodities. When the English and Dutch entered the Jambi trade in 1615 they also began exchanging cloths, salt, and iron knives for pepper, and while the English trade appears to have been

54 Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 93; Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 124.

55 *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, I, 139-40; *Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema*, 85; *Book of Duarte Barbosa*, II, 182-3 and n.2; 184-5 and n.5. *Cf.* Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 53.

56 Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 51-3.

57 *Ibid.*, I, 54. According to Luis Vaz de Camões, Kedah was "the chief centre for the production of pepper in these parts, though far from the only one", (W. C. Atkinson (transl.), *The Lusiads* (Harmondsworth, 1952), 242), and Duarte Barbosa recorded (II, 165): "Here grows abundance of fine pepper which they carry to Malacca and China". *Cf.* also *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, I, 106, and *Geographical Account . . . by Thomas Bowrey*, 259n. 2, 276-7.

58 Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I, 55.

as diverse as that of the Dutch, who concentrated their attention on pepper,[59] it was nevertheless the latter who first secured a trading contract with the local ruler in July 1643.[60] The English were not excluded by this, however, and they managed to procure supplies of pepper from there during the next twenty years. Jambi suffered considerably in the war with Johore after 1666, and by 1674 much of the local pepper was being diverted to Indragiri and Palembang. Shipments of pepper from Jambi by the East India Company were small thereafter, and the factory was destroyed by Malays in 1679. Attempts were made by the Bantam agent in the following year to reopen it, but Dutch pressure, both there and at Bantam, soon forced the English to look elsewhere in the archipelago for a pepper stapling port, which they found finally at Benkulen on Sumatra's west coast.[61]

The exclusion of the English from west Java in 1682 marked the culmination of Dutch efforts to secure complete control of Bantam pepper exports, which one exaggerated contemporary account placed as high as 10,000 tons per annum.[62] Even before the advent of the Portuguese, the west Java pepper trade had been fairly extensive,[63] although the early pepper which was shipped from Bantam came largely from the Lampung and Silebar districts of Sumatra. Indeed, even during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the culture was well established in the western highlands of Bantam, the main bulk of the supplies traded in that part of Java apparently still came from the Lampungs.[64] In his agreements with the Dutch of 1684 and 1686, the Sultan of Bantam contracted to sell white pepper to the Company at the rate of 27 Spanish dollars a bahar of 375 (Dutch)

[59] J. W. J. Wellan, "Onze eerste vestiging in Djambi", *BKI*, LXXXII (1926), 359.

[60] J. E. Heeres, "Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum" (i), *BKI*, LVII (1907), 407-12. See W. G. Maxwell, "Barretto de Resende's Account of Malacca", *JSBRAS*, 60 (1911), 9.

[61] Dr. D. K. Bassett *in litt.* 28 September 1959.

[62] *New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton*, II, 68.

[63] De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 380; Raffles, *History*, I, xxn.; *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, I, 168-71; Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade*, 370n. 29.

[64] [J. de Rovere van Breugel], "Bedenkingen over den staat van Bantam", *BKI*, V (1856), 134; J. de Rovere van Breugel, "Beschrijving van Bantam en de Lampongs", *BKI*, V (1856), 343; C. Wilkinson (ed.), *Voyages and Discoveries by William Dampier* (London, 1931), 124; R. A. Kern, "Het Landelijk Stelsel in het Bantĕnsche rijk", *Indische Gids*, XXVIII (1906) 703.

lbs., and black pepper for 15 Spanish dollars a bahar.[65] This latter price for black pepper was paid throughout the eighteenth century, but as the rates of payment in the revised treaties of 1752, 1753, and 1777 were calculated in terms of pikuls, the amount paid for white pepper was increased slightly to 10 Spanish dollars a pikul of 125 (Dutch) lbs.[66] Another feature of these later treaties was that the Sultan was obliged every year to deliver to Batavia 100 bahars of pepper, half white and half black, free of charge, as homage to the Dutch East India Company.[67]

Generally speaking, the Dutch did not play an active rôle in either the Bantam or Lampung pepper cultures, as these were vested exclusively in the hands of the Sultan, who issued proclamations enjoining his subjects, on pain of punishment, to plant the prescribed number of vines.[68] After 1731, however, when it became known that the Sultan's relations and favourities were exploiting the Lampung planters by forcing them to make deliveries of pepper in excess of the legal quantity, and obliging them to accept over-valued cloths in payment, the Company inserted clauses in the treaties and contracts designed to ensure that payment should be made in specie, and directly to the cultivators.[69] Unfortunately the Dutch were unable to police these regulations, so that the culture continued under the supervision of the Sultan's *mandors* and chiefs.[70] In Bantam it was the task of these chiefs to see that every inhabitant in the western highlands over sixteen years of age was actively engaged in cultivating 500 vines annually, and to arrange the collection of the produce.[71] As a reward for these tasks, the chiefs were paid ½ Spanish dollar for every bahar of pepper delivered into Sultan's godowns, but they enjoyed an

[65] Heeres, "Corpus" (iii), *BKI*, XCI (1934), 401. The published version of the appendix to the 1684 contract (*ibid.*, 348) omits the rates of payment.

[66] Heeres, "Corpus" (v), *BKI*, XCVI (1938), 554; Heeres, *Corpus* (vi) ed. F. W. Stapel (The Hague, 1955), 13, 415.

[67] Heeres, *BKI*, XCVI, 556; *Corpus*, 12, 414. *Cf.* De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 116.

[68] J. J. Meinsma, "Eene Proklamatie van een Sultan van Bantam", *BKI*, XX (1873), 152-7.

[69] P. J. B. C. Robidé van der Aa, "De groote Bantamsche opstand in het midden der vorige eeuw", *BKI*, XXIX (1881), 60-3; Heeres, *BKI*, XCVI, 116-7, 185-6, 554; *Corpus*, 13, 415.

[70] De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 342.

[71] *Ibid.*, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Hague/Leiden, 1895-1905), III, 251. *Cf.* H. D. Canne, "Bijdrage tot de Geschiedenis der Lampongs", *TBG*, XI (1862), 514.

additional source of income by purchasing the pepper directly from the cultivators for cloth, opium, pottery and salt, and by selling it to the Sultan for cash. A Dutch observer in 1787 calculated that in this way the chiefs paid about 4 Spanish dollars for a bahar of pepper which was sold for 7 or 8 Spanish dollars to the Sultan, who in turn realized 15 Spanish dollars when he delivered it to the Company.[72] But even this does not account for the full margin of profit enjoyed by the middlemen. Not only was the Sultan entitled to receive eleven per cent. of all pepper collected free of charge, but fraudulent weights were also employed by the chiefs in their dealings with the people, so that altogether the pepper cultivators lost something like twenty per cent. of their produce.[73] The profits remaining to the planters could not have been great, therefore, especially in the Lampungs where the purchase-money provided by the Sultan was often insufficient.[74] Dirk van Hogendorp, Raffles, and later writers, attributed the decline in production of Bantam pepper at the end of the eighteenth century to this forced system of cultivation and to the monopolistic policy pursued by the Dutch,[75] but undoubtedly other important contributory factors were the disruption caused to Dutch commerce during the Napoleonic Wars, and the more active part played by the Americans in the north Sumatran pepper trade.

De Rovere van Breugel calculated that during the century following the expulsion of the English from west Java, the Sultan of Bantam delivered a total of 316 million lbs. of pepper to the Company, for which the Dutch paid 12½ million Spanish dollars. According to this calculation, the average annual delivery of pepper was 3¼ million lbs.[76] Mossel in 1747 arrived at a higher figure of 3½ million lbs. for the first fifty years of the period, which suggests that the culture was in a state of gradual decline during the second half of the eighteenth century. Certainly there was fall in the average annual production to a little more

[72] De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 342. *Cf.* W. Marsden (transl.), *Memoirs of a Malayan Family written by themselves* (London, 1830), 5-6.
[73] De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 319.
[74] De Jonge, *Opkomst*, XII, 127.
[75] Dirk van Hogendorp, *Berigt van den tegenwoordigen toestand der Bataafsche Bezittingen in Oost-Indien en den Handel op Dezelve* (Delft,1799) 69-70; Raffles, *History*, I, 145-6; *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, III, 251.
[76] De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 362n.

than 3¼ million lbs. for the years 1733-43.[77] Average figures, however, hide the great fluctuations which occurred in the annual deliveries. In 1724, for instance, no less than 7 million lbs. of pepper were received from Bantam,[78] whereas twenty-four years later only 2¾ million lbs. were delivered. In 1749 production rose to 4¼ million lbs., but seven years later again, it dropped to a little more than one million lbs. In 1757 some 2 million lbs. were received, and in 1759, 3 million lbs., but in the following year production again fell below 2 million lbs. Ten years later the figure stood at nearly 4 million lbs.[79] According to De Rovere van Breugel, the annual average figure for the century (3¼ million lbs.) was only once exceeded after 1775, namely in 1781, when 4 million lbs. were delivered. Production, by his estimates, declined in 1782 to 1½ million lbs., and during the following five years did not exceed an annual average of 2 million lbs.[80] However, higher figures were given by Reynouts for the 1770s, and another contemporary account placed the annual production for 1783 at 1¾ million lbs.[81] Whatever discrepancy there is between these figures, there is no doubt that during the 1790s the cultivation of pepper declined rapidly in Bantam and the Lampungs, due largely to the serious internal disturbances which resulted from the ineffective supervision exercised by the Dutch at this period. Moreover, the recurrence of piracy in the Sunda Strait and the British naval blockade during the Napoleonic Wars crippled trade between west Java and the Lampungs. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the annual delivery of pepper from Bantam itself averaged not much more than 300,000 lbs.[82] Daendels found the Bantam gardens neglected, and when Raffles arrived in Java neither Bantam nor the Lampungs were furnishing the government with a single pound of pepper.[83]

77 De Jonge, *Opkomst*, X, 122. *Cf.* De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 135.

78 *Cf.* figures in Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, 88-9.

79 De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 343; De Jonge, *Opkomst*, X, 135, 155, 318, 325, 382; XI, 136; detailed figures for the years 1767-77, when the annual production averaged 3¼ million lbs. are to be found, XI, 314-5.

80 De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 343.

81 De Jonge, *Opkomst*, XI, 379-80; XII, 66.

82 *Ibid.*, XIII, 240.

83 H. W. Daendels, *Staat der Nederlandsche Oostindische Bezittingen, onder het Bestuur van den Gouverneur-Generaal Herman Willem Daendels . . .* (The Hague, 1814), 13n., 12; Raffles, *History*, I, 146.

(iv)

As well as securing pepper from Bantam, the Dutch also encouraged its cultivation at Palembang and Jambi, along the north-east coast of Java, and in the Jakatra and Priangan Regencies. During the seventeenth century small quantities of the article were received from the Krawang highlands, Indramaju, Sukapura, Galuh, Bandung, Timbanganten and Sumedang,[84] and larger supplies were obtained from Tjeribon, where in 1681 the Company was given the exclusive rights to all the pepper grown there at bazaar price.[85] In the following year this price was established at 10 Spanish dollars for three pikuls, or about one-third less than that paid to the Sultan of Bantam, although it was increased shortly afterwards in an attempt to encourage the people to plant more vines. As the Directors at home were becoming very interested in extending the cultivation of pepper in Java, the culture was enforced gradually on a number of the Priangan Regents, who by the seventeenth century were making deliveries of pepper as part of their annual dues. For some of the villages in this part of Java, pepper had already become a means of subsistence.[86]

In 1708 Tjeribon and the Priangan yielded 1,341 pikuls of pepper, and in the following two years 1,002 pikuls and 461 pikuls were produced. Five years later, however, the amount of pepper received from these districts dropped to 290 pikuls, mainly as a consequence of the inadequate payments made to the cultivators. In 1707 a pikul of Tjeribon pepper was paid for at the rate of f.13.12., and although this was one-third less than the sum paid for Malabar pepper, yet in 1716 the rates of payment were reduced by one-quarter.[87] The prices paid for pepper were raised to 5 Rix dollars a pikul in the contract with the *Susuhunan* in November 1733,[88] and this price was shortly afterwards proposed to be paid in the Jakatra and Priangan highlands where, for a period of five years, premiums were also to be offered for every 100 pikuls of pepper delivered.[89] During the early 1750s the price paid in the Priangan was raised to 6 Rix dollars a pikul,

[84] De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 382.
[85] *Ibid.*, III, 266, 382; Heeres, BKI, XCI, 236-7.
[86] De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 382-3.
[87] *Ibid.*, III, 846.
[88] Heeres, *BKI*, XCVI, 179.
[89] De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 847.

and shortly afterwards to 7 Rix dollars.[90] The results, even so, were hardly encouraging.

The trouble was that the number of vines in cultivation fluctuated sharply. According to reports of Commissions which inspected the cultures in the Regencies in 1739 there were slightly less than ½ million pepper vines in various stages of growth, but they were mainly young vines which had not reached the productive stage. In the following year, although there were some increases in planting in certain areas, the total number of vines in cultivation decreased. Much planting took place during the next decade, and in 1754 the total number of vines amounted to 1½ million. Ten years later again, however, incomplete figures suggest that there was a marked decline in the number of vines being cultivated. The state of the culture naturally depended on the number of vines in cultivation, but here at any rate there was no direct relationship between this number and the rates of production. Tjiandjur, for example, was one of the heaviest planted of all the Java pepper districts, but returned very irregular supplies compared with Sumedang, Bandung, and P.muntjang,[91] for the very good reason that, although the vines grew well there, they yielded very little fruit. But what was true of Tjiandjur was true also of other pepper regions in the Priangan when compared with those of the west Sumatra coast. At Benkulen during William Marsden's period, for instance, 1,000 vines were estimated to produce 200 kilos of pepper,[92] and if this yield had been obtained in the Priangan, then the vines there should have produced about 5,000 pikuls annually. The return, in fact, was far below this; in 1750 all that the Regencies yielded were 810 pikuls.

In an attempt to boost production, it was laid down in 1752 that coffee would not be accepted from the Priangan Regencies unless it was accompanied by pepper, initially in the proportion of 5 pikuls for every 100 pikuls of coffee, but ultimately, in 1758, at the rate of 40 per cent. of the coffee contingent. Those who delivered less than this proportion of pepper were to be paid 1

[90] *Ibid.*, III, 849-50. The following four paragraphs in the text, unless otherwise indicated, are based on De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 848-56.

[91] *Ibid.*, III, 930-1.

[92] In 1809 the yield was 404 lbs. from every 1,000 vines. (Fort Marlborough to Court, 29 August 1809, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 28 (IOL).

Rix dollar less for every pikul of coffee. However, although the deliveries fell far short of what they should have been in 1752, due to a bad harvest, no deductions were made in the coffee payments, and nothing was heard of any deductions being made later. In 1754 a regulation included the unassessed Regencies in an annual contingent of 3,250 pikuls, but while the order establishing the proportions of pepper and coffee was extended to these districts, the regulation stating that deductions would be made in the coffee payments if these proportions were not delivered, was not enforced lest it should prove harmful to the coffee culture. It was becoming clear, as Governor-General Van der Parra pointed out in the 1760s, that the pepper culture was unsuited to the Batavian and Priangan highlands, Tjeribon, and indeed to most of Java except Bantam, and was a source of oppression to the people. For this reason a number of villages in the Priangan were relieved of the forced deliveries of pepper, and the total pepper contingent was lowered to 1,000 pikuls, of which one-quarter was to come from Tjiandjur. Moreover, 1 Rix dollar was to be added to the price of 7 Rix dollars for every pikul of pepper which exceeded the contingent, but if the contingent were not reached, a fine of 15 Rix dollars was to be imposed. In point of fact, the total contingent was never delivered, nor was the fine ever imposed, which is not to be taken as evidence of any basic humanitarian feeling on the part of the government, but as due to the fact that, in relation to other items, pepper was becoming less valuable as a trading commodity. Certainly this helps to explain why there was an extirpation of vines in Sukapura and Limbangan shortly afterwards.

There were, however, certain Dutchmen, such as Governor-General Reinier de Klerk (1777-80), who considered that the pepper culture should be developed as a safeguard against future uncertainties in the coffee trade, so that in the Instructions to the Overseers of 1778,[93] it was laid down that cultivation of pepper was to continue, especially in Krawang, Tjiasem and Pamanukan. During the 1780s and 1790s, however, it was P.muntjang, Sumedang, Bandung, and Tjiandjur which yielded most pepper; in 1785, for instance, Krawang produced only 8 pikuls of pepper for the Company; Pamanukan 2 pikuls, and Tjiasem nothing, whereas

[93] De Haan, *Priangan*, II, 593-5.

Tjiandjur yielded 29 pikuls, Bandung 24 pikuls, Sumedang 30 pikuls, and P.muntjang 34 pikuls.[94]

Declining production in Bantam and India brought stable prices for Java pepper during the 1790s, and increasing competition among the foreigners for the commodity at Batavia after 1795 finally led to fresh efforts being made to increase the output of Priangan pepper. In the spring of 1797 pepper was again planted in Tjiandjur, and the Commissioners-General decreed that certain exemptions were to be granted in the indigo and coffee cultures in order to re-establish forced pepper cultivation in Bandung, Sumedang, Krawang, Tjiasem and Pamanukan. A survey of the number of vines in relation to the population was ordered, and the people engaging in the culture were to be exempted from all services for a period of five years. Pepper, even in the minutest quantities, was to be handed to the Regents for 5 Rix dollars silver a pikul of 140 lbs., and the latter were to deliver it at Batavia for 7 Rix dollars silver a pikul of 135 lbs. These regulations were modified at the end of 1798, when it was resolved that every family was to plant 100 pepper vines in coffee gardens where the *dadap* trees were old enough to support and to provide shade for the vines, and the re-planting rate for each family was established at 25 vines annually. Even these regulations remained unexecuted, however, and the culture did not succeed there to the extent contemplated. Those with experience in the Priangan and Jakatra regions considered that the unsuitable ground was the main reason for this, and Andries De Wilde, who owned large estates in the Regencies, emphasized that earlier extirpations of vines had undermined confidence in the culture. The government, however, ascribed the failure simply to the indolence of the people in that part of Java. Regulated cultivation of pepper was virtually abandoned in 1805, although a number of vines continued to be grown in parts of the Regencies during the following years. In 1805 the private lands produced 82 pikuls, for which 9 Rix dollars a pikul was paid, and a report of 1808 mentions that pepper was being cultivated in Krawang, where the Regent was paid 8 Rix dollars silver for a pikul of 250 lbs., and the cultivators half that amount.

[94] *Ibid.*, III, 930-1.

Finally, in 1810, Daendels ordered the uprooting of all the unproductive vines in the Regencies.

Thus only a decade after Dirk van Hogendorp's confident prognostication that Java under his liberal colonial system was capable of producing 200,000 pikuls of pepper,[95] the culture was virtually extinguished in the western parts of the island. Even the north-east coastal districts and the central Principalities, which were considered able to produce 4 million lbs. of pepper at the end of the eighteenth century, were, in fact, yielding less than ½ million lbs. to the Dutch.[96] To Daendels at any rate, Van Hogendorp's confidence carried little weight as he found that Java pepper was a most unremunerative trading commodity after the failure of his attempts to sell it to the Americans in proportion to the quantities of coffee which they purchased. With more than 2½ million lbs. of pepper in store, and with little chance of getting rid of it, Daendels decided that it was pointless to revive the culture.

Raffles found himself in a similar position. In 1813 he had seriously considered appointing a British officer under the authority of the Resident of Bantam so as to restore order in the pepper districts of the Lampungs, but nothing came of the idea. Instead, he instructed the Bantam Resident to pay 2½ Spanish dollars for every pikul of pepper delivered to him, so that there would be a market for those cultivators who wished to continue the culture. He was careful to point out, however, that this proposal was not to interfere with the principle of free cultivation established by the land rent system.[97] Yet in 1814 it was stipulated that the people in the Bantam highlands were to plant 100,000 pepper vines as part of their land rent obligation, and during the British period in Java the local Resident continued to enforce a monopoly of the commodity.[98] Altogether, however, Raffles was fortunate that little pepper was received from Bantam during his administration, because in the existing state of the pepper trade the Directors of the English Company would not have welcomed further competition

[95] Van Hogendorp, *Berigt*, 71. Cf. De Jonge, *Opkomst*, XIII, 68.
[96] De Haan, *Priangan*, III, 853; De Jonge, *Opkomst*, XIII, 239. *Cf.* XIII, L.
[97] Raffles to Yule, 26 March 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 12 June 1813 (IOL).
[98] F. De Haan, "Personalia der Periode van het Engelsch bestuur over Java 1811-1816", *BKI*, XCII (1935), 668. See p. 112 below.

with the produce of the English plantations on the island of Penang, and along the west coast of Sumatra.

(v)

The British had established themselves on Sumatra's west coast in 1685, under the terms of a treaty by which the Benkulen rulers agreed to deliver pepper to the Company at the rate of 12 Spanish dollars a bahar.[99] For a time, large quantities were received by the English factors, but deliveries soon began to decline. The cultivators were not entirely to blame for this as the Company's servants attempted to evade making full payment for the deliveries.[100]

When it became apparent that the supply of pepper from the Benkulen districts was neither regular enough nor sufficient to satisfy the Company's demands, subordinate settlements were made further along the coast,[101] but despite these, the export of pepper failed to keep pace with the establishment costs. During the first ten years of settlement, costs averaged £20,000 annually, whereas annual pepper exports amounted to only 430,580 lbs.[102] The local officials tried valiantly to reduce costs, although they realized that the low price paid for pepper was detrimental to increased production, and that the only way of inducing the people to engage in the culture was by employing coercive measures. The Directors in London refused to accept this line of reasoning, believing that compulsion and increased production were incompatible; in practice, however, coercive measures were employed. The Indonesian people were forced to plant 1,000 vines every year; there was an annual survey of the gardens made by the Company's officials, and those cultivators who disobeyed the planting regulations were fined or imprisoned.[103]

By the middle of the eighteenth century the British had

[99] P. Wink, "Eenige Archiefstukken betreffende de Vestiging van de Engelsche factorij te Benkoelen in 1685", *TBG*, LXIV (1924), 464 ff.

[100] "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 4 July 1695, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 3, (IOL).

[101] W. Marsden, *The History of Sumatra* (London, 1811), 450-2n.

[102] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 149. *Cf.* A. Wright and T. H. Reid, *The Malay Peninsula* (London, 1912), 41.

[103] See J. Bastin, *The Native Policies of Sir Stamford Raffles in Java and Sumatra* (Oxford, 1957), 72-89.

established Out-Residencies at Moko Moko, Ketahun, Lais, Silebar, Tallo, Manna, Krui, Kawur and Natal. These districts produced 641 tons of pepper in 1753, 655 tons in 1754, 758 tons in 1756, 873 tons in 1757, and 757 tons in 1758,[104] or the equivalent of roughly half the annual importation of pepper into the United Kingdom.[105] The Indonesian families who were engaged in the forced cultivation of pepper at this period numbered 6,490.[106] In 1767 there were 9,053 planters in the southern Out-Residencies, and in 1770, when the vines in cultivation were fast approaching 1½ million, the number of planters increased by 835, which altogether was about twice the number engaged by the Dutch in the Bantam pepper culture.[107] Production rose in 1773 to slightly less than 1,300 tons, but, despite repeated injunctions from the Directors at home, the Benkulen authorities were never able to increase production much above this level. This was due partly to the indolence of the planters, and partly because there were frequent shortages of specie so that unpopular promissory notes had to be issued by the government to pay for the pepper. By the end of the eighteenth century production had declined to such an alarming extent that there were some like Laurence Sulivan who wished to see a contraction of the British settlements in west Sumatra and an attempt made to establish a British factory at Achin, where pepper could be supplied in greater abundance and at a lower price.[108] Instead, the Directors decided to appoint to Fort Marlborough a special Commissioner with powers to reform the pepper system; but at the very time that his reforms promised a large increase in pepper production, especially in the districts about the main settlement of Fort Marlborough, the Company found itself being undersold on the European markets by the Americans,[109] who traded in the pepper ports of north Sumatra. Prices for

[104] "Produce of pepper at Fort Marlbro' and its dependencies in 1753/54 compared"; ditto 1756/57; ditto 1757/58, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 10-11 (IOL).

[105] Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 308.

[106] "Abstract General of the Surveys of the Pepper Gardens . . . 1754", *Sumatra Factory Records*, 10 (IOL).

[107] Committee of Survey to Fort Marlborough, 9 February 1767, *ibid.*, 14 (IOL); Fort Marlborough to Court, 12 January 1770, *ibid.*, 44; De Rovere van Breugel, *BKI*, V, 136b.

[108] L. Sulivan, "Political Reflections . . . .", 6 December 1784, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 30 (IOL).

[109] Court to Bengal, 30 July 1806, *Despatches to Bengal*, 45 (IOL).

pepper in London slumped to 8½*d.* lb., and with little prospect of making good the heavy financial losses which already had been incurred by the Benkulen government, the Directors decided to limit the export of pepper from the west coast to 1,200 tons annually, and to concentrate upon developing cheaper avenues of supply.[110]

Attempts were made at first to purchase pepper from Susoh, one of the independent Achinese ports, where the Americans also secured an important part of their supplies.[111] A trial shipment of Susoh pepper was sent to England in 1799 and sold at nearly 1*d.* lb. less than Benkulen pepper at the Company's sales. The Directors nevertheless gave instructions that 200 tons of this pepper were to be purchased annually, at a price not exceeding 12 Spanish dollars a pikul, and consigned to England and China in equal proportions. The experiment did not last long. With a total disregard for the Directors' orders, the Benkulen officials despatched 489 tons of Susoh pepper to England in 1804 at an invoice price of 9*d.* lb., which was actually more than the retail price of pepper on the home market. The Directors condemned this 'improper measure', and directed that all shipments of Susoh pepper to England on the Company's account should cease.[112]

This decision left the pepper trade of Susoh and its dependencies in the hands of British 'country' traders and the Americans, who had commenced operations on the west coast during the 1790s. It was, in fact, the realization that the American trade in the northern ports was harmful to British interests that prompted the Benkulen government to disobey the Directors' instructions limiting the annual investment of Susoh pepper. In 1804 a mission from Fort Marlborough was sent to the northern ports where the ruler at Susoh agreed to sell his pepper exclusively to the Company for 8 Spanish dollars a pikul, and to exclude all foreigners from his territories. This well-conceived plan by the Company's officials to undermine the American trade was frustrated by the Directors' orders prohibiting future purchases of pepper there.[113]

[110] Court to Prince of Wales Island, 18 April 1805, *Straits Settlements Records*, 186 (IOL).

[111] Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 104-8, 113ff.

[112] Court to Fort Marlborough, 24 February 1806, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 39 (IOL).

[113] Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 135-7; Fort Marlborough to Court, 29 September 1806, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 46 (IOL).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the annual export of pepper from Susoh and its subordinate stations amounted to about 5,000 tons.[114] Of this quantity the largest part was bought by Americans who shipped it to Salem and Boston, whence most of it was consigned to the Caribbean and Europe, generally to the Mediterranean and Levantine ports.[115] Direct shipments were also made to Europe and China, where there was a useful, but fluctuating, market. The Americans, whose carrying rates were lower than those of the British,[116] found the Sumatran pepper trade so lucrative that their ships left New England ports in ballast carrying only specie to make immediate purchases of pepper.[117] Gross profits of several hundred per cent. were commonly made by American traders during 1797-1824.[118]

In opposition to the well organized and highly competitive Americans, the Directors of the English Company soon began to lose interest in the west Sumatran pepper trade, especially after 1807 when the Berlin and Milan decrees closed the continental markets. In 1806 their London warehouses were full,[119] and in February they directed that the whole of the pepper produce of the west coast should be consigned to China during the ensuing two or three seasons.[120] In July they learned that this was no solution as pepper prices at Canton were again on the decline.[121] A shipment of Benkulen pepper was sold there profitably in 1807, but in the following year 584 tons were disposed of at a loss of 21,500 Spanish dollars. Reporting this, the Supercargoes explained that because of the large quantities of pepper already available at

[114] Fort Marlborough to Court, 29 September 1806, *ibid.*, 46 (IOL); G. G. Putnam, *Salem Vessels and their Voyages* (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass. 1924), I, 50.

[115] Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 128.

[116] C. Assey, *On the Trade to China, and the Indian Archipelago . . .* (London, 1819), 23-4.

[117] J. D. Phillips, *Pepper and Pirates* (Boston, 1949), 40; and the same author's *Salem and the Indies* (Boston, 1947), ch. VIII, 92ff. Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 332, has estimated that the Americans paid to the west Sumatran pepper producers during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries more than 17 million silver dollars, equivalent, in today's currency, of about 170 million U.S. dollars. See G. F. Davidson, *Trade and Travel in the Far East* (London, 1846), 91-2.

[118] Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 107, 113, 129-30.

[119] Court to Bengal, 30 July 1806, *Despatches to Bengal*, 45 (IOL).

[120] Court to Fort Marlborough, 24 February 1806, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 39 (IOL).

[121] Court to Bengal, 30 July 1806, *Despatches to Bengal*, 45 (IOL).

Canton no rise in prices was anticipated.[122] However, the heavy burden of their stocks in London, which at this time amounted to nearly 17 million lbs.,[123] left the Directors no other choice than to continue to divert part of the annual Benkulen investment to China. In 1809 some 406 tons of pepper, or a little more than half the annual yield of the British settlements along the west coast, were sent there, and in the following year another 394 tons were similarly despatched.[124] This, however, removed only a small part of the west coast stocks, which amounted to 1,279 tons in March 1810, 1,624 tons in October, and 1,847 tons in January 1811. But in reply to urgent pleas by the Benkulen authorities, the Directors explained that they could not despatch a ship to Fort Marlborough during the present season as they had been obliged to authorize a limited investment of Malabar pepper in order to prevent an extirpation of the vines. They therefore recommended that further consignments of Benkulen pepper should be made to China.[125]

The Directors, who were also under the severest pressure from the Prince of Wales Island government to make provision for the produce of the Penang pepper gardens, adopted these *ad hoc* measures as they were unwilling to withdraw from the west coast lest the Dutch should extend their political influence from Padang; but at the same time they refused to adopt the logical alternative of attempting to undermine the American trade in the northern ports. In 1805 the ruler of Achin approached the Penang authorities with the object of selling his pepper exclusively to the Company,[126] and three years later, when the Embargo Act was in force, the Directors were again presented with a golden opportunity to contract treaties with the independent Achinese rulers of the northern ports for the exclusive delivery of their pepper supplies. It was not through want of advice from their officials that the Directors failed to take any positive action. The

[122] Fort Marlborough to Court, 25 August, 8 September 1809, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 28 (IOL).

[123] C. D. Cowan, "Early Penang & the Rise of Singapore, 1805-32", *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii) (1950), 39. *Cf.* Court to Fort Marlborough, 11 January 1811, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 39 (IOL).

[124] Fort Marlborough to Court, 6 July 1810, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 46 (IOL).

[125] Court to Fort Marlborough, 14 January 1311, *ibid.*, 39 (IOL).

[126] Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 25.

Resident of Fort Marlborough in 1809 outlined an interesting plan which would have enabled the Company to control the northern supplies and dispose of them to the Americans at enhanced rates,[127] and Raffles, when he arrived on the west coast in 1818, unsuccessfully attempted to persuade the Court to establish a British post on Pulau Dua in order to dominate the northern pepper trade.[128]

Because the Directors were unwilling to adopt such measures, and because they were unable to make suitable provision for the export of Benkulen pepper, production rapidly declined. Between 1812-15 it fell from 639 to 434 tons, and although it rose to 514 tons in the following year, probably because for a short period after the cessation of hostilities in Europe pepper was selling 1s. 7d. lb., it slumped to 363 tons in 1816-17 when London prices fell to 7½d. lb. The 1816-17 sales of Benkulen pepper in London resulted in heavy losses, which the Directors attributed to high freights from the west coast, but the 1815 consignment contained an insect and this undoubtedly contributed to the loss. In any case, the Directors gave explicit instructions in 1817 that unless pepper could be delivered at Benkulen at an invoice price of not more than 7½—8 Spanish dollars per hundredweight, including export duties and shipping charges, it was to be refused.[129]

Raffles arrived at Fort Marlborough shortly afterwards, and in the existing circumstances of trade he considered that the forced cultivation of pepper at the Out-Residencies should be abandoned, and the pepper for the continental and China markets supplied by the independent ports of the north. He therefore immediately withdrew the establishments from the southern districts, leaving only the northern stations of Tapanuli, Natal and Airbangis under direct British control. It was necessary to retain these because Natal provided a good annual pepper yield, and Tapanuli served as a depot for the collection of Achin pepper.[130]

Raffles had managed to despatch a cargo of pepper to London from the Company's districts in April 1818, but in August he informed the Directors that he was engaged in arranging a purchase

[127] Fort Marlborough to Court, 14 October 1809, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 28 (IOL).

[128] Raffles to Court, 12 April 1818, *Raffles Collection*, I, 31 (IOL); Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 208.

[129] Court to Bengal, 13 February, 6 August 1817, *Despatches to Bengal*, 74-76 (IOL).

[130] Bastin, *Native Policies*, 90-110.

of 1,000 tons of pepper from the independent northern ports for the ensuing season.[131] When the Directors learned this in January 1819 they wrote hurriedly to advise him that as pepper was still selling at 7½d. lb. in London, and as they had no less than 95 hundredweight in store, they were unable to sanction purchases of northern pepper during 1819-20 and 1820-21 beyond an invoice price of 7 Spanish dollars a hundredweight, or 8⅓ Spanish dollars per pikul.[132] Nearly a year later they again wrote informing him that as they had been unable to dispose of much pepper during the year they would be obliged to reduce the retail price to 6d. lb. at the forthcoming February sales so that consignments from west Sumatra invoiced at 7 Spanish dollars a hundredweight would result in a loss to the Company of £1,371 for every 500 tons shipped. Raffles was therefore instructed not to despatch to Europe pepper which exceeded an invoice price of 6½ Spanish dollars a hundredweight, but he was given permission to provide a loading of pepper for China at current prices for the 1821-22 season.[133]

Raffles, of course, was unable to procure pepper for the London market at the low price set by the Directors. Prices ruling in the northern ports in 1820 were about 10 Spanish dollars per pikul, and competition between British free traders and Americans kept prices high. In the 1821 and 1822 seasons, therefore, he was prevented from consigning pepper to Europe altogether, but he managed to send ¼ million lbs. home in 1823-4, when Sumatran prices fell.[134] During the whole period of his administration a total of two million lbs. of west Sumatran pepper were shipped to London on behalf of the Company, but more than double that amount was despatched to China. Profits from the sale of all this pepper amounted to only £6,000,[135] which contributed little to offset the huge annual deficit of the west Sumatran settlements. Between 1818-21 the Company incurred an annual loss of more

[131] Raffles to Court, 15 April, 5 August 1818, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL).

[132] Court to Raffles, 16 January 1819, *Bengal Public Consultations*, 17 December 1819 (IOL).

[133] Court to Raffles, 22 December 1819, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 41 (IOL).

[134] *Cf.* Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 218.

[135] "An account of the profit or loss upon pepper sent from Bencoolen to Europe and China . . . from 1815/6 to 1823/4", 13 March 1826, *Java Factory Records*, 71 (IOL).

than £80,000 on account of these settlements,[136] and as pepper in London fell during December 1823 to 5½d. lb., and in the following year to 5d. lb., the Directors at long last realized that any hopes they entertained of recouping their losses through a recovery in the west coast pepper trade were illusory. In that year they surrendered Benkulen and its subordinate stations to the Dutch in return for Malacca, relying upon Malabar, the independent Indonesian plantations of northern and eastern Sumatra, as well as the Penang gardens, to supply pepper for the China market.

(vi)

The cultivation of pepper was commenced in Penang during 1790, when Francis Light provided a Chinese merchant with enough capital to make an experimental planting of 400 acres with vines imported from Achin.[137] The Company established small gardens in Ayer Itam and Sungai Kluang, and European and Chinese estate owners began an extensive cultivation of the vine soon afterwards.[138] By the beginning of the nineteenth century more than 1¼ million vines had been planted, and pepper had come to be regarded as 'the principal staple' of the island.[139] In 1802 the Penang gardens were yielding between 16,000 and 20,000 pikuls of pepper annually, and in the next few years production reached 4 million lbs.[140] The land for the gardens had been cleared by

[136] "Financial Review", 5 October 1821, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 48 (IOL). The production of pepper in the Company's districts in west Sumatra had declined to about 150 tons by 1823-5 (P. H. van der Kemp, "Eene Bijdrage tot E. B. Kielstra's opstellen over Sumatra's Westkust", *BKI*, XLIV (1894), 532-3).

[137] H. P. Clodd, *Malaya's First British Pioneer: The Life of Francis Light* (London, 1948), 61; L. A. Mills, "British Malaya, 1824-1867", *JMBRAS*, III (ii) (1925), 44; F. G. Stevens, "A Contribution to the early history of Prince of Wales Island", *JMBRAS*, VII (iii) (1929), 395-6; E. G. Cullin and W. F. Zehnder, *The Early History of Penang, 1592-1827* (Penang, 1905), 6; G. Leith, *A Short Account of the Settlement, Produce, and Commerce, of Prince of Wales Island, in the Straits of Malacca* (London, 1804), 65.

[138] H. Popham, *A Description of Prince of Wales Island, in the Streights [sic] of Malacca . . .* (London, 1805), 22n.

[139] Leith, *Short Account*, 30; W. Hunter, "Remarks on the Species of Pepper, which are found on Prince of Wales Island", *Asiatick Researches*, IX (1807), 383, 385.

[140] Hunter, *Asiatick Researches*, IX, 389; N. Macalister, *Historical Memoir relative to Prince of Wales Island, in the Straits of Malacca . . .* (London, 1803), 12n.; Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 24, 141; Mills, *JMBRAS*, III (iii), 185.

Malays, who were paid at the rate of 5 Spanish dollars for every orlong, or approximately 1⅓ acres; Chinese contractors were then employed by the proprietors to dig out and burn the roots, level the ground, plant the vines and their supports, and supervise the whole plantation for a period of three years, by which time it was beginning to reach the productive stage. The proprietor advanced the capital to the contractor during these years, most of which was paid in the first year as the work involved was then heaviest; but one-quarter of the payment was reserved until the plantation was handed over. The proprietor then usually leased out the plantation to another Chinese farmer for five years at rates varying according to the fertility of the vines. Dr. William Hunter, who made a careful study of the Penang pepper gardens in 1802, estimated that the outlay involved was in the proportion of 225 Spanish dollars for every thousand vines planted.[141]

This was a high rate of investment compared with operative costs in Indonesia, but it was compensated by the extraordinary productivity of the Penang vines. For instance, at Benkulen one acre produced 310 lbs. of pepper, and in Malabar 344 lbs., but in Penang the yield was no less than 2,040 lbs.[142] Hunter estimated that one hundred orlongs of ground planted with pepper would, if the produce sold at 10 Spanish dollars a pikul, return to the Penang cultivator in twelve years a profit of about 184,038 Spanish dollars.[143] Little wonder that Crawfurd exclaimed: 'So neat and perfect a specimen of husbandry nowhere exists in the East as the pepper culture of Penang'.[144]

Unfortunately for most of the proprietors, the pepper trade declined at the very time that their gardens were reaching their most productive stage. The planters relied upon British 'country' ships, and American traders to take their produce to the markets of India, China, New England, and the continent, and upon the Company for tonnage to consign additional quantities to Canton. In 1802 nearly 2¼ million lbs. of pepper were shipped from Penang to Europe,[145] but soon afterwards the Napoleonic decrees and the

[141] Hunter, *Asiatick Researches*, IX, 385ff.; Leith, *Short Account* 59-65. The figure of 100 vines given by Hunter on page 385 should be 1,000.

[142] Crawfurd, *Siam and Cochin China*, I, 28; Crawfurd, *History*, I, 485-6.

[143] Hunter, *Asiatick Researches*, IX, 393. *Cf.* W. Hunter, "Plants of Prince of Wales Island", *JSBRAS*, LIII (1909), 65-8.

[144] Crawfurd, *Siam and Cochin China*, I, 27.

[145] Leith, *Short Account*, 49.

Embargo Act affected trade so adversely that cultivation began to be abandoned. Already in March 1806 the Prince of Wales Island government had informed the Court of Directors that the planters and merchants had large quantities of pepper on hand, but that there was no demand for it even though the price had dropped to 9 Spanish dollars a pikul. This was low by local standards, because the initial heavy outlay of capital made Penang pepper an uneconomic commodity if sold for less than 8 or 9 Spanish dollars. The government had tried repeatedly to persuade the Directors to agree to this pepper being included in the Company's home investment, and pointed out, as an additional inducement, that the planters were prepared to receive one-quarter of their contract price in marine stores. The Directors regretted, however, that their enormous stocks in London, and the slump in retail prices, made it impossible for them to authorize an investment at so high an invoice price. They gave strict orders that on no occasion was pepper to be sent home.[146]

Towards the close of 1808 the planters addressed a petition to the government soliciting financial assistance, but although the authorities regarded the pepper and other cultures as being intimately connected with the island's prosperity, they were powerless to act without reference to the Supreme government. Cultivation continued to decline until after the cessation of hostilities in Europe, when a sudden rise in prices resulted in a revived interest being taken in the gardens. The Penang government noted this with satisfaction in May 1815 and July 1816, and again enquired if the Directors were agreeable to a regular investment of pepper being made at an invoice price of about 10 Spanish dollars a pikul. Without approval, the government opened negotiations with the largest of the European proprietors, who contracted to deliver to the Company between 500 and 1,500 tons of pepper at 10 Spanish dollars (11 Spanish dollars garbled) for a period of three years, after which the price was to be lowered to 9 Spanish dollars a pikul. The Directors were highly indignant when they learned of this action, because at prices ruling in London 500 tons shipped on these terms would have resulted in a loss of £5,405. In condemning the government's 'great error in judgment', the Directors pointed out that pepper could be obtained from Malabar at a much cheaper

[146] Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 24, 26-7, 33, 39, 43, 60, 66.

rate than from Penang. It must have been perfectly clear to the Prince of Wales Island authorities after reading this despatch that they could hope for little so far as the Company's home investment was concerned. In fact, during the years 1805-16 only one shipment of Penang pepper was ever made to London by the Company — 7,444 lbs. in 1807 — and that resulted in a loss of £50.[147]

In addition to producing pepper, Penang also afforded an important depot for supplies brought from Trengganu, Achin, Deli, Langkat, and the other pepper ports of east Sumatra.[148] Even in 1801-2, when an import duty of 2 per cent. *ad valorem* was first levied on pepper, imports of that commodity into Penang amounted to nearly 30,000 pikuls.[149] Later, between 1809-18, foreign pepper worth no less than one million Spanish dollars passed through the Penang customs house.[150] During this period Canton provided the main market for pepper shipped from Penang,[151] although after the founding of Singapore it became increasingly difficult for the Penang authorities to combat the restrictive regulations prohibiting the Company's China-bound ships from calling there.[152] Raffles had already attempted to persuade the Directors of the advantages of providing the China pepper investment from Singapore instead of Benkulen,[153] and before he left Asia he had the satisfaction of seeing the island attract to itself a large part of the pepper trade of the free Sumatran ports. In addition, something like one-third of the annual Borneo production of 20,000 pikuls, and about 12,000 pikuls of Riau and Lingga pepper were fetched there every year.[154] Exports from Singapore, largely to China, increased accordingly. In 1822 more than 2¼ million lbs. of pepper were shipped from the island, and by the following year this quantity had almost doubled.

147 *Ibid.*, 35-6, 57-8, 62, 65-7. According to Raffles, considerable quantities of Penang pepper were shipped to the United Kingdom in Company ships calling at Benkulen, because Penang pepper was needed to complete the pepper investment required by the Directors from west Sumatra (*Raffles Collection*), I, no.3 (IOL).

148 Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 156.

149 Leith, *Short Account*, 46.

150 Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 86. For detailed import and export figures during 1814-23, see Cowan, 140, and J. Anderson, *Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra* . . . . (London, 1826), App. E.

151 Anderson, *East Coast of Sumatra*, App. F.

152 Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 6, 15, 142-3.

153 Raffles to Court, 26 February 1823, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 49 (IOL).

154 Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 155-6.

More than 3 million lbs. were exported in 1824, and in 1825 the figure stood at 5,272,850 lbs.[155] Strangely, not all of the Straits export-trade in pepper was drawn away from Penang during the early years; indeed, as late as 1825 the largest importation of pepper ever made cleared the Penang customs house.[156] This was 55,000 pikuls, which represented about one-third of the total annual production of the independent Indonesian ports of east and west Sumatra.[157] In the following year, however, pepper imports into Penang fell, and local production declined to one million lbs.[158]

The same decline in production occurred in Malacca. Writing in June 1827, the Second-Assistant Resident, W. T. Lewis, stated: 'When Pepper a few years ago was as high as 11 to 14 Spanish dollars per picul the Chinese found it worth their while to cultivate it very largely and the produce is said to have exceeded 8,000 piculs per annum, but at present ... it amounts to 4,000 piculs and even this produce cannot be expected to last as ... in many parts of the Country ... several of the Plantations have been deserted for more profitable employment'.[159]

The west Malayan pepper culture dwindled not through any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the European and Chinese planters themselves, but because it had been developed at a time when declining profit margins in the British pepper trade made it impossible to compete with the independent producers of Sumatra, Trengganu, Borneo and Thailand.[160] However, the decline in the economic importance of pepper for both the British and the Dutch, and the destruction of the exclusive Dutch monopoly of Moluccan spices, at least had the effect of removing the traditional factors of rivalry between those nations in the Indonesian area. Although

[155] Crawfurd, *Siam and Cochin China*, II, 368. H. J. Marks, "The First Contest for Singapore 1819-1824", *VKI*, XXVII (1959), 152, citing the *Asiatic Journal* for November 1822, estimates pepper exports from Singapore in 1822 at "upwards of 1,400 tons".

[156] Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 163.

[157] Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 155.

[158] Cowan, *JMBRAS*, XXIII (ii), 170, 163. See Burkill, *Dictionary*, II, 1748-9.

[159] A.H. Dickinson, "The History of the Creation of the Malacca Police", *JMBRAS*, XIX (ii) (1941), 264.

[160] The detailed estimates of Asian pepper production at this time given by Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 155-6, differ from those of Crawfurd, *Siam and Cochin China*, II, 178n., which are: west Sumatra 150,000 pikuls, east Sumatra 60,000 pikuls, islands in the Straits of Malacca 27,000 pikuls, Malaya 28,000 pikuls, Borneo 20,000 pikuls, Thailand 60,000 pikuls, Malabar 30,000 pikuls = 375,000 pikuls, or 50 million lbs. in all.

the restitution of Java and its dependencies to the Netherlands in 1814 was dictated to some extent by British policy in Europe,[161] the withdrawal of the British from Sumatra's west coast ten years later, and the *détente* which resulted, can be explained most satisfactorily in terms of the shifting balance of trade in Southeast Asia itself.

[161] See pp. 137-42 below.

III

PALEMBANG IN 1811 AND 1812

"I am brought . . . into all the misery and disgrace in which you now see me for doing what I was [led] to suppose would be acceptable to the British government. . . . Many, many were the letters and proclamations I received from Mr. Raffles at Malacca urging me to send away the Dutch factory . . . ."

Sultan Mahmud Badr'uddin of Palembang, 1813 (*Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 28 April 1814).

(i)

On 14 September 1811 all twenty-four European and sixty-three Javanese members of the Dutch factory and garrison at Palembang were brutally massacred by Malays at the village of Sungsang, near the mouth of the Musi river. It was felt by some people at the time that the person primarily responsible for the tragedy was Thomas Stamford Raffles; but it was not until 1853, when the former Dutch Governor-General and Minister of the Colonies, J. C. Baud, published an article in the first volume of the *Bijdragen* of the Royal Institute for Linguistics, Geography and Ethnology, that any real proof was adduced to show the degree of Raffles' complicity in the affair.[1] Baud argued the case of the Englishman's guilt in so convincing a manner that his allegation was accepted by most Dutch historians in the succeeding century, and was reflected in their accounts of the British administration of Java.[2]

The controversy surrounding the Palembang massacre was revived in 1949 with the publication in the *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society* of an English version of a letter

[1] J. C. Baud, "Palembang in 1811 en 1812", *BKI*, I (1853), 7-40.

[2] *Cf.* J. J. van Klaveren, *The Dutch Colonial System in the East Indies* (The Hague, 1953), 87; Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 259-60; De Klerck, *History*, II, 42, 48-9; H. D. Levyssohn Norman, *De Britsche Heerschappij over Java en Onderhoorigheden, (1811-1816)* (The Hague, 1857), 84-97. Baud's other article, "De Bandjermasinsche afschuwelijkheid", *BKI*, VII (1860), 1-25, also had an important effect in turning Dutch opinion against Raffles.

addressed by Raffles to Sultan Mahmud Badr'uddin.[3] According to the late C. E. Wurtzburg, this letter showed clearly that the arms despatched to Badr'uddin by Raffles[4] were not intended for use against the Palembang garrison, but against a Dutch naval force which had been reported in the area.[5] In a subsequent article in the same journal, Professor Dr. W. Ph. Coolhaas of the University of Utrecht dismissed this argument on the grounds that the new letter was incorrectly dated;[6] he also contended that Wurtzburg's argument did not answer Baud's allegation that, in his communications with the Sultan of Palembang, Raffles had been guilty of using words in such an irresponsible manner as to cause the death of innocent people.

Baud's case was based upon a number of Malay letters which Raffles had despatched to Palembang during 1810 and 1811. After the return of the Dutch to Indonesia in 1816, the Sultan had forwarded the originals of these letters to a friend in Batavia for presentation to the newly arrived Commissioners-General, in order to convince them that Raffles was the person mainly responsible for the massacre.[7] Baud himself never saw the original letters but only copies which Badr'uddin's friend made for him, and it was these copies which he published in 1853 to support his case against Raffles. However, the discovery in 1953 by the present writer of three of the original Malay letters, now shows that the copies published by Baud were inaccurate, not only because a crude Malay was substituted for the polished Malay of Raffles' scribe, but also because, in certain cases, the meaning was altered due to the compression of phrases.[8] The original Malay letters will be discussed later in this essay, when Baud's textual criticism will be examined; for the moment, it is important to notice that Raffles did not actually compose any of the Malay

3 C. E. Wurtzburg, "Raffles and the Massacre at Palembang", *JMBRAS*, XXII (i) (1949), 38-52.

4 Baud, *BKI*, I, 26-7: Malay letters 4 and 5.

5 The same argument is advanced by Wurtzburg in *Raffles of the Eastern Isles* (London, 1954), 202-3.

6 W. Ph. Coolhaas, "Baud on Raffles", *JMBRAS*, XXIV (i) (1951), 109-20. On the problems connected with the dating of the letters, see C. E. Wurtzburg, "Raffles and the Palembang Massacre", *JMBRAS*, XXV (i) (1952), 178-80, and Appendix I below.

7 Baud, *BKI*, I, 8.

8 The letters were found in private hands in The Hague; they are now in the possession of the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, The Hague.

letters himself, but simply handed English drafts to his scribe who translated them into Malay. It is obvious, therefore, that if Raffles' motives in the Palembang affair are to be deeply probed, it will be necessary to consider mainly the English drafts rather than the Malay originals. Fortunately most of these drafts have been preserved in the India Office Library, London,[9] so that with them, and other manuscripts in the British Museum, we can now present a fairly satisfactory account of Raffles' negotiations with Palembang prior to the British conquest of Java in 1811.

(ii)

In June 1810 Raffles left Penang for Calcutta in anticipation of being appointed to a high official post in the recently captured Moluccas.[10] On arrival in Bengal he found his hopes dashed, and so he turned his attention to Java. That island had interested the Supreme government for some time,[11] and the Governor-General, Lord Minto, expressed his willingness to receive from Raffles any information concerning it. During the following month, Raffles made another determined bid for fresh employment by offering his services to Minto 'for carrying into effect any arrangements which your Lordship may have in contemplation with regard to the Malay countries'. He referred to the general reports already submitted, and expressed regret at his inability to supply more accurate information which, he considered, could be obtained only at Penang or Malacca. If, he wrote, 'your Lordship should be pleased to authorize my proceeding thither with powers to communicate with the Malay States, I think I could venture to promise the most [complete] success in detaching at once the [Sultan] of Palembang from the Dutch, and in obtaining possession of the person of the King of Bantam'.[12]

About this time, Raffles submitted to the Governor-General a long paper in which he outlined in detail his ideas regarding Palembang. 'It has been the surprize of the native powers to the

[9] *Raffles Collection*, IV. Copies of some of the letters are also to be found in the early volumes of the *Java Factory Records* (IOL).

[10] D. C. Boulger, *The Life of Sir Stamford Raffles* (London, 1899), 81.

[11] M. L. van Deventer, *Het Nederlandsch Gezag over Java en Onderhoorigheden sedert 1811* (The Hague, 1891), I, II; Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 100.

[12] Raffles to Minto, 11 July 1810, *Raffles Collection*, I, no.4 (IOL).

Eastward', he wrote, 'that the Dutch should have been permitted so long, and at so little trouble, to retain an influence at Palembang in the immediate neighbourhood of our settlements in the Straits of Malacca, and that the English should obtain by *underhand means* so principal a part of their cargoes to China, while it lies so much within their power to detach the Sultan from the Dutch interests, and to establish the trade on a fair and respectable footing more suited to the British character and reputation'. He dwelt on the profits which the East India Company would derive from a contract with Palembang for the whole of the Bangka tin production, and contended that even if this consideration was not enough to warrant the detachment of the Sultan from his Dutch alliance, then clearly such a course was dictated by the necessity of consolidating British interests at Benkulen. '[A] satisfactory arrangement with Palembang, and the expulsion of the Dutch influence from that rich and valuable province', he stated, 'would . . . tend effectually to reduce the remaining power of that nation on the island of Sumatra, and consequently decrease the expenses incurred in the protection of the English settlements on the west coast'.[13] For these reasons, Raffles suggested that negotiations should be opened immediately with the Sultan of Palembang either directly, or through the *sayids* and other principal merchants trading with Malacca and Penang. 'In the event of the former', he wrote, 'the present opportunity affords a pretext for an Agent proceeding directly to Palembang for the purpose of enquiring into, and demanding a satisfactory explanation of, the circumstances attending the loss of an English vessel lately cut off near [Muntok] in the Straits of Banca. Such [an] Agent might avail himself of personal communication with the Sultan to make him acquainted with the views of the English, and adopt such measures with regard to the Dutch as existing circumstances might require. Should it however appear from local information to be obtained at Malacca and Rhio, that it will be more expedient to proceed to the point more circuitously — there are natives in view, of established character and influence, who may be entrusted in any undertaking of the kind, under the immediate direction of an Agent residing at Malacca and Rhio, which last mentioned place

[13] Raffles to Minto, n.d., enclos. in Raffles to Chairs, 19 March 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 68 (IOL).

is distant only two days sail from Banca. Among these is a Malay Prince born at Palembang and connected by blood with the leading men, if not the reigning family, and who married a sister of the present King of Keddah'.[14]

What particularly concerned Raffles was the basis upon which negotiations with Palembang were to be conducted. He emphasized the importance of Bangka tin to the Company in its trade with China, but, in the event of the Directors showing no interest in the matter, he wondered whether it might not be possible to make some arrangements with the Sultan for 'a fair and safe speculation' for private traders. If negotiations were to be opened on the latter basis, Raffles thought that 'it would be sufficient to assure the Sultan that on the removal of the Dutch Resident, he would not be subjected to any exactions whatever on the part of the English — that his contract with the Dutch would be entirely annulled — and that he would be considered in strict alliance with the English, who would protect him from any interference on the part of the Dutch government at Batavia .... *It may also be necessary that the Dutch Resident and guard should be removed without any interference on his part, in which case the services of one of His Majesty's brigs of war would be very useful and might, of course, be obtained*'.[15] The Sultan knew the power of Great Britain, and realized that the British could with facility take Bangka from him if any misunderstanding arose; he would therefore take seriously any negotiation commenced with him.

At the beginning of August, Raffles' two months' leave from Penang expired, but he continued to reside in Calcutta and to supply the Governor-General with his ideas about the Malay world in general, and Palembang in particular. 'The advantages to be

[14] *Ibid.* The reference is presumably to Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, who was employed subsequently as Raffles' *wakil*, or agent, to Palembang. He was described by Captain D. Macdonald (*A Narrative of the Early Life and Services of Captn. D. Macdonald, I.N.*) (Weymouth, n.d.), 84 as "a near kinsman of the Sultan", and by Raffles, in the letter to Minto of 15 December 1810, given in the text below, as "a relation of the Sultan's". W. Robison referred to him in 1814 as "an adventurer, [and] . . . a fellow of mean extraction and bad character". (*Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*), 29 April 1814 (IOL). On the other hand, the reference may be to Radin Wahib, a fugitive prince of Palembang, who was given asylum by the Sultan of Lingga at this period.

[15] Raffles to Minto, n.d., *Java Factory Records*, 68 (IOL). Author's italics.

derived from an early communication with .. [Palembang]', he wrote on 9 August, '... become more particularly evident from the establishment which appears to have been formed by the people of Lampoon on the western part of Java, and the political importance which Marshal Daendels seems to have attached to their operations. Your Lordship is already aware of the ancient and intimate friendship subsisting between Bantam and Lampoon — the vicinity of the latter to Palembang, while it affords the most favourable opportunity, under present circumstances, for negociation, may enable us successfully to annoy the enemy in this quarter by throwing in supplies of stores to a formidable opponent, and at the same time by taking advantage of the existing hostilities, effectually to cut off all communication between the Dutch government and the island of Sumatra'.[16] The intention of supplying arms to Palembang and the Lampungs for a flank attack on Java could be a point of considerable importance in explaining subsequent events at Palembang. At this period Raffles not only regarded Palembang as a base for possible military operations against Java, but also as a centre where he could himself reside and communicate directly with the Indonesian rulers.

Raffles secured appointment as Agent to the Governor-General with the Malay States in October 1810. He was directed by his instructions to establish cordial relations with the Javanese, in order to secure their assistance in the projected British invasion, and to open friendly negotiations with Bali, Palembang, and the Lampungs. 'Should these people have still been able to keep their ground against the Dutch', his instructions read, 'or even continue in a condition at all capable of recommencing their attack, they may be encouraged in their exertions, *and so far as prudence may warrant, assisted with stores*'.[17] Raffles' task, in other words, was to assist the British invasion of Java by causing as much dissension as possible between the Indonesian rulers and the Dutch.

[16] Raffles to Minto, 9 August 1810, *Raffles Collection*, I, no.5 (IOL).

[17] For a draft copy of the instructions, dated 13 October 1810, see *Raffles Collection*, III, no.5, and for an official copy, *Java Factory Records*, 12 (IOL). Author's italics. The instructions were probably drafted by Raffles himself.

(iii)

Raffles arrived at Malacca on 4 December 1810, and decided that it was the most suitable place to establish his headquarters.[18] He was informed upon his arrival that a number of Dutch vessels had been seen off the Musi river, apparently with warlike intentions towards either Palembang or Lingga,[19] and he learned that a message had been received by a merchant at Malacca from one of the *tĕmĕnggongs* of Palembang, 'intimating in ambiguous terms the desire of the Sultan that the English should interfere in expelling the Dutch'.[20] Raffles immediately opened a communication with the Sultan by despatching the following letter (A) on 10 December 1810:[21]

> I have to inform your Majesty of my arrival at Malacca [in the capacity of Agent to the Governor General with the Malay States][22] for the purpose of explaining and communicating with the princes of the Eastern courts on the subject of many Malay prows and vessels having been lately captured by the English ships of war. ... Since my arrival at Malacca I have heard with much concern of the approach of a Dutch force to the mouth of the Palembang river, and I lose no time in dispatching this letter to put your Majesty on your guard against the evil machinations of the Dutch, a nation that is desirous of enriching itself from the property of your Majesty as it has done with that of every prince of the East with [whom] it has had connection. Their sending a fleet of armed vessels within your Majesty's dominions is a sufficient proof of this, as your Majesty has always been on friendly terms with them. ... I would recommend your Majesty to drive them out from your country at once, but if your Majesty has reasons for not doing so, and is desirous of the friendship and assistance of the English, let your Majesty inform me thereof in a letter stating every particular, and send a confidential Agent of ability and discretion to negociate with me at Malacca—for I have power over many ships of war, and if I think proper to do it, I can drive the Dutch out even were they 10,000 in number.

[18] Raffles to Bengal, 10 February 1811, *Raffles Collection*, III, no.8 (IOL). Raffles' arrival at Malacca in December 1810 makes nonsense of Baud's dating of the early letters to Badr'uddin. See Appendix I.

[19] Raffles to the Sultan of Lingga, n.d., *Raffles Collection*, I, no.8 (IOL). Coolhaas, *JMBRAS*, XXIV (i), 118, identified this Dutch naval force as that under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Voorman, who had been despatched to Palembang by Daendels in September 1810 in charge of a number of gunboats.

[20] Raffles to Bengal, 31 January 1811, *Java Factory Records*, 13 (IOL).

[21] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.4 (IOL). For a variant English version of this letter, see *Java Factory Records*, 13 (IOL). The original Malay letter, dated 5 December 1810, is printed in Appendix IV.

[22] The passage in brackets has been deleted in the manuscript, which appears to be in Raffles' handwriting and is labelled "Translation". The letter (B) of 15 December 1810 is also a draft; the original Malay version of this letter is printed in Appendix IV.

When he heard later that the Dutch vessels had been permitted to enter the Musi river, Raffles despatched a second letter to the Sultan, this time by Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, who had been engaged as his *wakil* in Penang. The letter (B), which was sent on 15 December 1810, read as follows:[23]

> I wrote to your Majesty five days ago, and now, without waiting for an answer, address you again by Tunku Radin Mahomet, whom I have appointed my Agent to proceed to your Majesty's court with this letter. ... With respect to the Dutch, what does it signify that your Majesty should longer remain attached to them and permit them to reside in Palembang—for they are a bad nation and intend to follow a bad course towards your Majesty and your Majesty's country. It is therefore on this account important to your Majesty's interests to become the friend of the English. If your Majesty is desirous of meeting my wishes, I recommend that you should forthwith send me an answer to this letter containing every particular in writing of your Majesty's difficulties with the Dutch, and let a confidential and intelligent Agent from your Majesty convey the letter, in order that I may be able to consult and arrange with him on all matters—and if we can make an agreement that will be satisfactory to your Majesty, the affair shall be immediately settled.

On the same day that this letter was sent to Palembang, Raffles informed Minto of his negotiations in that quarter: 'As the Sultan of Palembang is one of the richest of the Malay chieftains, and is literally said to have godowns stored with dollars and gold hoarded by his ancestors, I considered it a point of some importance to prevent Daendels from availing himself of this extensive source of supply, and in consequence wrote to the Sultan immediately on my arrival here, urging him to be on his guard against the Dutch operations, and assuring him of the friendship of the English should he be desirous of getting rid of them. Having since heard that part of the Dutch vessels have been permitted to go up the river, and that they are likely to succeed in whatever object they have in view—I have this day dispatched a second letter entrusted to [Tĕngku] Mahomed, a relation of the Sultan's, and a confidential Agent whom I have employed as my vakeel on the occasion.... Altho' Palembang is a small point in my general plan of operations, yet as my giving my ostensible attention to it in preference to others, may cover more political measures, I consider it of material importance'.[24]

[23] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.5 (IOL). The date on the original Malay letter has been torn off, but it can be dated exactly by a reference in Raffles' letter to Minto, 15 December 1810, given in the text below. Baud, *BKI*, I, 21-2, printed a corrupt Malay version of this letter (no.1).

[24] Raffles to Minto, 15 December 1810, *Raffles Collection*, XIII, no.3 (IOL).

Having heard nothing directly about the movements of the Dutch naval force, which he thought consisted of twenty-eight vessels, and being uncertain whether or not its objective was Palembang, Riau, or Lingga, Raffles decided to resolve the doubt by despatching a mission to the latter place.[25] The Penang merchant, John Scott, and Tĕngku Pĕngeran of Siak,[26] left Malacca for Lingga on 23 December 1810 aboard the cutter *Arethusa*. They carried with them a letter from Raffles addressed to the Sultan of Lingga, which read: 'Having immediately on arrival at Malacca received intimation from the Commandant that many Dutch vessels had arrived off the mouth of the Palembang river, intending to attack your Majesty's dominions in conjunction with the forces of the Sultan of Palembang, I lose no time in sending to [Lingga] one of the Company's vessels with a gentleman ... named John Scott, Esquire, accompanied by Tunku Pangeran of Siac ... in order that they may ascertain whether it is true or not that the Dutch have such a plan in contemplation. ... I have directed Tunku Pangeran of Siac to go and examine the Palembang country, as well as the shores of Banca and of the Lampun country, in order to ascertain where the Dutch vessels may have taken shelter — and I request your Majesty's assistance in furnishing him with a prow, people etc., that he may be able to effect the service ....'[27] Scott and the Tĕngku arrived at Lingga on 28 December, and, after some initial difficulty, prevailed upon the Sultan to place a *pĕrahu* at the disposal of the Tĕngku, who left Lingga on his mission Eastwards on 9 January 1811.[28]

Meanwhile, as no direct information was received from Tĕngku Radin Muhammad regarding the Dutch naval force, Raffles decided to despatch to Palembang H.M.S. *Phoenix*, under the command of Captain James Bowen, in order to make enquiries about the Dutch

[25] Raffles wrote to Minto on 15 December 1810 (*ibid.*,): "... at the same time that I send a vakeel to Palembang I have deemed it advisable to send Mr. Scott to [Lingga] to put the Sultan there on his guard against Palembang".

[26] Tĕngku Pĕngeran of Siak was the brother-in-law of the Sultan of Siak, and was a pretender to the throne. He is described in "The Hikayat Abdullah", (transl.) A. H. Hill, *JMBRAS*, XXVIII (iii) (1955), 78, as Tĕngku Penglima Besar, and the Ruler of Siak.

[27] Raffles to the Sultan of Lingga, n.d., *Raffles Collection*, I, no.8 (IOL).

[28] Scott to Raffles, n.d., *Java Factory Records*, 13 (IOL). See Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 118-19; Hill, *JMBRAS*, XXVIII (iii), 78-81, 90-5; Macdonald, *Narrative*, 92.

ships, and to convey another letter to Badr'uddin.[29] Of this particular letter we know nothing except that it was delivered safely to the Sultan. It was probably Bowen who handed to the chiefs of kampong Sungsang, at the mouth of the Musi river, Raffles' letter of 13 January 1811 which warned them not to consort with the Dutch.[30]

On 23 January Bowen addressed a letter to Raffles from the Straits of Bangka in which he informed him that the Dutch naval force had been in the region thirteen days previously, and had consisted of three cruisers, four gun-boats, and ten merchantmen. 'They did not', Bowen wrote, 'succeed in obtaining their object with the Sultan, who would not supply them with tin unless they paid for it in hard cash, which they were not prepared to do. It does not appear that the garrison of Palembang has received any reinforcement, and the people who have visited the *Phoenix* have manifested every mark of friendship for the English'.[31]

Raffles must have received Bowen's letter, possibly together with a fuller report, sometime towards the end of January, because in a despatch to the Supreme government on the last day of that month, he outlined the measures which he had already adopted towards Lingga and Palembang. He informed Minto of the apparent withdrawal of the Dutch establishment from the Lampungs, and reported the earlier rumours that Daendels intended marching an army overland to Palembang, and had equipped a naval expedition for use against the sultanate. Fortunately, Raffles wrote, the Sultan had 'been early aware of the hostile designs of the Dutch from the discovery of a quantity of arms . . . concealed in several prows, or boats, sent up the river laden apparently with rice, and in consequence declined giving his permission to the Dutch Commandant to go higher up the river than the Straits of Jarang [Jarat?]'.[32]

Although Raffles' mind was set at rest to some extent by the reports of the departure of the Dutch ships, and by the apparent inactivity of enemy forces in the Lampungs, he was still concerned

[29] It is possible that Bowen left Malacca for Palembang during December 1810, although it would appear that he did not sail until early 1811.

[30] The original Malay letter, dated 13 January [1811] is printed in Appendix IV. A corrupt version will be found in Baud, *BKI*, I, 22-3 (letter no.2).

[31] Bowen to Raffles, 23 January 1811, *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.3 (IOL).

[32] Raffles to Bengal, 31 January 1811, *Java Factory Records*, 13 (IOL).

about affairs at Palembang itself, and especially about his *wakil*, Tĕngku Radin Muhammad. Early in February, therefore, he issued secret instructions to Captain D. Macdonald, of the Company's brig *Ariel*, to proceed to Palembang and find the Tĕngku, and also endeavour 'to ascertain the exact nature and strength of the Dutch force stated to be in the Lampoon country and in the vicinity of Palembang....' Macdonald's instructions continued: 'In the neighbourhood of the Palembang river you will most probably find a small brig, (the *Friend's Adventure*) engaged by me, and under the orders of Toonkoo Radin Mohomed,... for whom I also entrust you with a letter; from *this Person* you will be able to obtain the latest information respecting the state of the country, and the disposition of the Native Chieftains. It would be advisable that you should, if practicable, deliver the letters to the Sultan in person; ... You will be pleased to direct the Commander of the *Friend's Adventure* immediately to return to Malacca, and if convenient, afford a passage to Radin Mahomed on board the *Ariel*, in order to accelerate his return here. You will be *most minute* in your enquiries respecting the state of the enemy's force in the Lampoon and Bantam countries, *and if the Sultan should require your advice and assistance in finally arranging with Dutch persons now residing at Palembang, you are authorized to attend thereto.* You will of course make known to the Sultan the political change by which Holland is become a province of France'.[33]

Macdonald apparently found Tĕngku Radin Muhammad at Muntok, and from him learned of his sorry negotiations with the Sultan, who had refused to recognize him as Raffles' *wakil* because he possessed no official credentials.[34] The Tĕngku sent with Raffles' other agent, Sayid Abu Bakir, the following account (E) of his reception by Bad'ruddin:

[33] Macdonald, *Narrative*, App. C, 245-8. Paragraphs have been joined in the text above, and the latter passage italicized. It is interesting to notice Macdonald's comments on these instructions (*ibid.*, 84): "... I was instructed to go to Palembang and explain to his highness the views of the British government, the attitude they were about to assume in the archipelago, and their wish that I should be allowed to convey the members of the Dutch residency to Malacca, until the result of our operations on Java should be known. Such were my *verbal instructions*...."

[34] *Raffles Collection*, IV, nos. 6 and 7 (IOL): letters C and D in Appendix II.

I have to inform my friend that I arrived safe at Palembang on the 9th of the month [Z]ulhadjeé,[35] and on appearing before the Sultan delivered the letter. ... My friend made mention therein respecting friendship with the Sultan, on which the Sultan observed that he was very glad thereat as it presaged good measures, particularly as his brother had been dispatched to wait on him personally. ... I acquainted His Majesty of my commission, when the Sultan enquired if it was a fact that I was an Agent to Mr. Raffles, to which I replied yes, I am an Agent to him. Afterwards the Sultan asked me if I had any written power besides the said letter, to which I said no, but only the said letter which I had delivered, on which the Sultan said that it was only a letter which was forwarded by the said great man to him, without mentioning to His Majesty that I had any authority. The Sultan then said that if I was in possession of such a written power, he would fully enter into an agreement and decide on every point, but, as it was, it would be better for me to return to Malacca and request such a written power from my friend, which the Sultan seemed to think I had forgot previously to request. After this the Sultan wrote the reply to my friend's letter, and after I received the same, I left Palembang. On my way I touched at [Muntok], where I found a brig belonging to Achmat Sahib from Malacca, in which I wished to obtain a passage, but could not ... and, as my own vessel could not proceed so quick, ... I have dispatched my brother Said Abu Bakir on board the aforesaid brig with the above mentioned letter .... I request my friend to dispatch the said Said Abu Bakir as soon as possible to me, with the required written power as Agent to my friend ....[36]

When Raffles received this letter, and two from the Sultan dated 10 January 1811,[37] together with the verbal report of Sayid Abu Bakir, and news of Macdonald's failure to come to some arrangement about the Dutch garrison, he decided on more determined action with regard to Palembang. The tin mines of Bangka, which had attracted his attention before the threat of a Dutch invasion of Palembang, now became the essential object of negotiation. Obviously, if Badr'uddin could be persuaded to assert his independence, any cession of Bangka would be binding, irrespective of future negotiations for the return of Java to the Dutch.[38] It was on this basis that Raffles issued fresh instructions (F) to Tĕngku Radin Muhammad on 3 March 1811:[39] 'I have received your letter, as also that accompanying from the Sultan of Palembang, and as far as I can judge therefrom, and the representations of Said Abubaker, approve your conduct. In return, I now send by him a further letter for your immediate delivery to the Sultan,

[35] Fifth or 6 January 1811 for the Muslim year 1225. If the date is correct, then it must have taken Tĕngku Radin Muhammed twenty-one days to reach Palembang after leaving Malacca.

[36] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.8 (IOL). The letter is dated 8 February 1811.

[37] See Appendix II.

[38] Lady S. Raffles, *Memoir ... of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles* .... (London, 1830), 42-3.

[39] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.11 (IOL).

and in which I have referred to a deed of treaty to be presented by you for his attestation. I also transmit to you a proper authority constituting you to act as my Agent in receiving and acknowledging the same from his Majesty, as also to confer on all points relating thereto. Whatever observations or proposals may occur to his Majesty you will be the medium of communicating to me, but [you] must observe by an attentive perusal and consideration of the accompanying memoranda, which I enclose for your guidance, how important it is that the deed be as early as possible signed and returned without objection, or the introduction of any new matter rendering further reference necessary'.

The deed of treaty proposed by Raffles was:

Whereas we Paduka Sultan Sri Ratu of Palembang, &c. &c., having long had reason to suspect the sincerity of the Dutch government towards us and our dominions, and late circumstances having convinced us of their sinister disposition, want of faith, and rapacious spirit of aggrandizement, evincing itself as well by their proceedings towards other neighbouring states, as in the late intrusion of a hostile force with [an] attempt at the clandestine introduction of warlike stores, and the unpermitted establishment of a military post within our territory; apprehensive of our danger from continuing the connexion with a power of late equally regardless of individual rights as general alliances; and viewing the [striking] difference of principle which apparently actuates the British government in their intercourse with all native states, . . . do by these presents cancel all engagements that we have hitherto entered into with that nation, embracing, under the following stipulations, the protection of the British government, on whom we rely for the future prosperity and welfare of our dominion.

Article 1. That from and after the date and signing of these presents, there shall be established between his Majesty the Sultan of Palembang and the English East India Company, mutual peace, friendship and alliance, as long as the sun and moon shall shine.

[Article] 2. His Majesty the Sultan hereby engages *to dismiss from his territories the present Dutch Resident, and all persons acting under the authority of the Dutch government*, binding himself hereafter never to re-admit such [a] Residency, or that of a similar agency from any foreign power whatever, with [the] exception of the English, who shall be at liberty to establish such [a] factory, or factories, as may be hereafter agreed upon.

[Article] 3. His Majesty the Sultan agrees to transfer to the English exclusively his contracts with the Dutch for [the] sale of tin, pepper, &c. should they require it, the terms thereof to be finally arranged within twelve months from this date; and, in the meantime, none but vessels having a British pass, expressly for the purpose, be permitted to export tin from the Sultan's dominions; the English Company agreeing to grant such licenses freely, till then, to all British and Eastern native vessels sailing from British ports; the unexceptionable exclusion of foreign flags being admitted as a basis of this and all future agreements between the contracting parties.

[Article] 4. In order that such further arrangements and stipulations as may be necessary should be duly entered into, the Sultan further agrees that an accredited ambassador from Palembang shall forthwith proceed to the seat of the British Eastern government, and, as soon as the terms of a full and detailed treaty shall be drawn out, to receive at Palembang an

Agent from the English East India Company, when the deed may be regularly signed and attested by the contracting parties.[40]

In a covering memorandum, Raffles instructed his *wakil* to emphasize the following points in his discussions with the Sultan:[41]

As the British government meditate the immediate assumption, by conquest, of the authority heretofore maintained by the Dutch over the island of Java, and its dependencies, the advantages that must accrue to the Sultan, by the expediting of this measure, must be evident, being as follow[s] :—

1. By a treaty previous to the fall of Batavia, all existing claims of the Dutch for arrears of contract may be annulled, which otherwise might not be the case, as on so becoming possessed of the original deeds, the nature of our government might make it requisite to exact whatever those deeds might as conquerors entitle them to.

2. The Sultan has now the opening of evincing his attachment to the English interests, which hereafter may be no longer voluntary; consequently, such [a] disposition will entitle him to the more favourable and liberal consideration of the English in arrangements that must necessarily follow the conquest of Java.

3. *The Sultan cannot but be aware that there is always a difference in the political relation of a state which falls after conquest from a European power, and one which commences alliance by negociation with a native prince; the former being subject hereafter to such arrangements as on a peace may take place between the two European powers, whilst the latter, entirely independent of such events, is not liable to be brought into the discussion, and consequently not subjected to the fate of war in Europe.*

4. The English holding such immense territories and power on the continent of India, . . . cannot in their proceedings Eastward be actuated by the rapacious and greedy conduct that has distinguished the Dutch, . . . the views of the British being principally directed, first, to the expulsion of their European enemies; secondly, to the relief and support of the legally established native authorities . . .; and thirdly, to the full establishment of one general system of commercial policy throughout eastern and western India, the principle of which must tend no less to the prosperity of the regular native ports, than to the utter annihilation of all future misunderstandings, and subjection of such ports to the European law of blockade, which as connected with such [an] enemy, they must otherwise be occasionally liable to.

5. It is of importance, in order to secure the advantages above stated, that the Sultan's part of the treaty be dated at Palembang, as early as possible after receipt of this, as there is no saying how soon the hostile force alluded to may make its appearance in these seas, and it be too late for negociation on the liberal principles now contemplated.

In a personal letter to the Sultan (G), Raffles expressed his regret that Badr'uddin had not sent an accredited agent to confer with the British authorities in Malacca, and explained that, because of the shortness of time, he had been obliged to entrust the negotiation to Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, 'to propose that your Majesty, in

[40] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.11a (IOL). The italicized passage (author's italics) is Raffles' English version of the sinister Malay phrase, *boewang habis-kan sakali-kali*, used to such advantage by Baud, *BKI*, I, 16.

[41] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.11b (IOL). Author's italics.

consideration of the late intrusion of the Dutch force, with [the] attempt at [a] clandestine introduction of warlike stores, and the establishment, without your permission, of a military post at Tulang Bawang, should, in cancelling all engagements with them, throw yourself on the protection of the British government, by a spontaneous tender of the following terms: [Here follow the various articles set out in the proposed treaty]. In order the more fully to explain the motives that urge the necessity of immediate arrangements, I have communicated to my Agent Tunco Radin Mahomed such further considerations as I flatter myself must weigh with your Majesty. Considering the form and solemnity due to the regular execution of so important a deed, as that which may regulate the future connexion of your Majesty's rich and important dominions with those of the English, and that the attestation thereof should not in the first instance be delegated to any secondary power whatever, I have entrusted Tunco Radin Mahomed with the form of a treaty drawn out on the foregoing principles, which, if agreeable to your Majesty, I request may be dated at Palembang, and transmitted to me attested under your royal seal, ... and as soon as the same shall be received, and the ambassadors therein proposed shall have arrived, which it is of the utmost importance they should do within a month from the date thereof, a similar deed on the part of the English East India Company shall be immediately returned with due form and solemnity'.[42]

Four days after despatching these documents to Palembang with Sayid Abu Bakir, Raffles reported to the Governor-General on the favourable commencement of his negotiations with the Sultan, and enclosed copies of the letters which he had forwarded to Badr'uddin. 'I trust', he continued, 'your Lordship will generally approve of the motives which have dictated the proposal made to the Sultan with the view of effecting by negociation alone a final arrangement in favor of the English ....'[43]

Raffles' letter of 3 March must have reached Badr'uddin towards the end of the same month, although there appears to have been some delay in conveying a copy of the proposed treaty to him.

[42] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.11c (IOL).
[43] Raffles to Minto, 7 March 1811, *Raffles Collection*, XIII, no.19 (IOL).

The Sultan's first reaction (H) to Raffles' proposals was one of extreme caution:[44]

We have to make known to our brother, Radin Muhammed, with regard to the Hollanders in Palembang, that we wish to conduct the whole matter respecting them as far as in us lies to the satisfaction of the great man in Malac[c]a, for we are by no means desirous of being brought into any trouble from the proceedings of the Hollanders, and therefore we have sent an urgent message to Batavia in order that the [Governor-] general of Batavia may recall them with the utmost speed. We are also entirely unwilling to be involved in the hostilities between the Hollanders and the English. Let not our brother then have any doubt or suspicion further, for we have no inclination to be conjoined or connected with the Hollanders, no inclination in the least.... Again, be it known to our brother, that in all former time[s] from the first introduction of the Hollanders into Palembang, no war has occurred between the Hollanders and the English, and that they have been of the greatest advantage to our ancestors, and therefore our ancestors were desirous of not forgetting their good offices, and thus till the present time they have continued in Palembang....

[W]ith respect to the expulsion of the Hollanders, we shall act to the best of our ability, and in such a manner that our name shall occur [*sic*] no obloquy among great men, and those who are our particular friends. However we have to request of our friend, the great person in Malacca, a little patience.... If, however, any fault should occur on the part of the Hollanders, we shall immediately accomplish our object by force, but if we were to act so without any reason, we should undoubtedly be blamed by our friend for our conduct....

Again, *with regard to the letter, expressive of the wishes of the great man at Malacca, which was brought by the Seyyad Abu Bekir Rumi, we wish our brother to be particularly well apprized that we can by no means assent to it, and we desire him to be informed that, as far as regards its excuses and reasons, it cannot be stable, but, on the contrary, an introduction to destruction, for there is no mutual regard or affection indicated between the parties*....

With respect to the proposed method of trade, we wish our brother to reflect that we must be most gratified by the most numerous concourse of traders, according to the customary method of traders going and coming from the west, according to the long established usages through every season.

With regard to the information which our brother formerly communicated to us, concerning his being appointed authorized vakil of the great man at Malacca, and having with him a paper containing all the propositions of the great man, if we approve of, and are pleased with, the said letter we will affix our seal to it, but the truth is that the paper has not yet been received....

After some negotiation on the part of Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, the Sultan finally committed himself to the treaty;[45] but it was a treaty which differed substantially from the one proposed by Raffles.[46]

[44] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.9 (IOL). The letter is undated. Author's italics.

[45] *Cf.* Baud, *BKI*, I, 12.

[46] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.10 (IOL). Author's italics.

On the 9th day of the month Zu'lhajjeh, and seventh day of the week in the year 1225,[47] Radin Muhammed ben Hussein ben Shehal ed Din brought to the [Paduka] Sri Sultan Ratu Beder ed din, seated on the throne of authority in the land of Palembang, the land of Islam, a letter which he has now delivered to his Majesty, for the purpose of concluding all the proposals of the Sri [Paduka] Thomas Raffles, in order that his Majesty, of his own good pleasure, may ratify them. Now the following are the propositions referred to, and presented by him in the capacity of vakil, fully authorized to conclude concerning them.

If there should be any difficulty in expelling the Hollanders from Palembang, he [Raffles, presumably] will expel them.

If his Majesty should be pleased that he (the said Thomas Raffles Esqre) should take possession of the place occupied by the Hollanders, *yet while Batavia is not yet taken, as this might occasion some distress to his Majesty, the Hollanders shall continue to occupy that place.*

If his Majesty, however, should not be pleased that he should occupy the place of the Hollanders, he shall order him to guard the entrance of the river Palembang with ships, and he shall guard it.

If his Majesty should not be pleased to permit him to guard the entrance of the said river, he shall direct him to return to Pulau Penang, or Malacca, and he shall return, and when any trouble occurs to his Majesty, he shall send and inform him, and he shall come and assist his Majesty.

Again, if his Majesty should be displeased with the price of tin on account of the avarice of the Hollanders, he will cause dollars to be offered up to his Majesty.

And if his Majesty should require a little higher price for his tin than from the Hollanders, he will take it nevertheless, and will pursue no measures of any kind tending to injure the revenues of Palembang.

And if his Majesty should [choose], he may establish such regulations concerning the English trade as are in use in Linga, Rhio, Siak, Tringano, with regard to buying and selling, sometimes cheap and sometimes dear, as in the practice of commerce among all nations.

With regard to the whole proposition of the Sri [Paduka] Thomas Raffles Esqre, . . . there is now between the English and Palembang, who are connected in friendship, the same terms as with all the Rajas of the black [complexion], who constantly [have] been on uninterrupted terms of friendship with them, and they are to use no means whatever to possess themselves of the [revenues] of Palembang . . . .

In this manner are finally concluded the whole of the matters contained in this paper, and terminated through means of the authorized vakil with the [Paduka] Sri Sultan Ratu Mahmud Beder ed din, who has accepted the proposed agreement by virtue of this letter of truth . . . .

The Sultan's seal was affixed to the treaty, and it became the justification for his subsequent actions at Palembang. The treaty, of course, left the initiative with Badr'uddin, for he could adopt a waiting policy so far as the Dutch garrison was concerned; indeed, it clearly stipulated that the garrison should remain at Palembang until after the fall of Java. Why Raffles' *wakils* allowed such vague clauses to be inserted in the treaty can only be guessed. Certainly Raffles heard nothing of the matter until later, because he continued to address further letters to the Sultan, who, in turn,

[47] The Muslim date is obviously incorrect, being equivalent to 5 January 1811.

appears to have waited confirmation of the deed of treaty by Raffles. Although Badr'uddin undoubtedly wished to delay making any definite decision as to the side he would support in the coming Anglo-Dutch struggle, it is obvious that he could not have taken any direct action in support of the British, except at considerable peril to himself, without first having the treaty confirmed. This factor as much as any other explains his delay in not ridding himself of the Dutch,[48] and is sufficiently attested by his reply (I) to the exhortations of Raffles' agents, who were encouraging him to take positive action: '[W]ith respect to the enemies of the English chiefs, the Hollanders who are in Palembang, we will do our utmost to expel them, acting in such a manner as may give no occasion for bringing reproach or disgrace on our name among our friends in future time. But, further with regard to the letter to which we formerly affixed our seal at the representation of our brother that he was the authorized and absolute vakil of the great man at Malacca, and which letter contained so many propositions of the great man at Malacca, and being approved by us had our seal affixed to it. Unto the present time there is nothing more of the matter, which excites in our mind the greatest doubt and anxiety. Our brother is best advised with regard to everything that relates to this letter, but where then is the answer and recognizance of it? ... [O]ur brother wanted it to receive the seal and sign manual of the great man at Malacca, and yet after going away, Seyyad Abu Beker Rumi has returned back privately without bringing back that letter. This is what fills me with the utmost anxiety concerning this matter ....'[49]

In the meantime, Raffles sent a certain Captain Teak to Palembang in order to buy tin, and to convey his explicit wishes to the Sultan.[50] It was apparently in answer to a letter sent about this time, that Badr'uddin wrote on 19 April (J) with reference to the treaty: 'The Paduca Sri Sultan Ratu has to inform his friend,

[48] *Cf.* M. H. Court, *An Exposition of the Relations of the British Government with the Sultaun and State of Palembang* (London, 1821), 3.

[49] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.13 (IOL). The letter is undated.

[50] We learn this fact from one of the Malay letters which was seen by W. Robison at Palembang later. The letter has been dated by Sir Richard Winstedt as 1 April 1811. It is possible that Captain Teak was, in fact, Captain Tait, who commanded the ship *Thainstone*, which brought supplies of muskets and ammunition to Malacca early in 1811 (Raffles to Bengal, 24 January 1811, *Java Factory Records*, 13 (IOL).

the Sri Paduca Thomas Raffles Esqr, that the last letter of our friend has reached us.... With respect to the import of our friend['s] representation — it is all settled, and we have desired the bearer forthwith to set sail on his return with prosperous auspices.'[51]

Such generalities still left Raffles very much in the dark, and, as the British invasion force was already assembling at Malacca, he decided to make a final effort to press Badr'uddin to come to a definite decision. Captain Macdonald was again hastily despatched to Palembang, with letters both from Raffles and the Governor-General, together with copies of the letters which had already been sent — a certain indication that Raffles had not received any of Badr'uddin's replies through his agents. In the message conveyed by Macdonald, Raffles deplored the fact that the Sultan had failed to answer his letters, and informed him that if he wanted to help the British he would have to act swiftly as the invasion fleet was about to leave Malacca for Java. 'As the Dutch are at Palembang', he concluded, 'I send four cases of 80 muskets in all, as well as 10 baskets of cartridges filled with powder and shot. I can send you whatever you want, ships, men or arms'.[52]

When Macdonald arrived at Palembang, he forwarded Raffles' and Minto's letters to Badr'uddin by Sayid Abu Bakir, who also conveyed the muskets and cartridges to Palembang. In informing the Sultan of this, Macdonald wrote: 'As for the Dutch, I am instructed by the Big Man to evict them but it will be as you wish'.[53] On 23 May Badr'uddin replied to Raffles (K):[54]

> ... the Paduca Sri Sultan Ratu has to explain and make known to his friend, the Sri Paduca Thomas Raffles Esqr, ... that his highly honoured and respected letter, with the accompanying presents brought by Capt. Macdulon [Macdonald], has prosperously arrived ..., and has been received with the utmost satisfaction.... The Paduca Sri Sultan Ratu has to make known to his friend, the Sri Paduca Thomas Raffles Esqr, that the whole of the matter alluded to is finished, with everything regarding it, by the

[51] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.14 (IOL).

[52] Baud, *BKI*, I, 26 (letter no.4). The translation has been rendered by Sir Richard Winstedt (Wurtzburg, *JMBRAS*, XXII (i), 52). *Cf.* Baud, *BKI*, I, 13.

[53] Baud, *BKI*, I, 27 (letter no.5), translated by Sir Richard Winstedt (Wurtzburg, *JMBRAS*, XXII (i), 52). The Malay originals and English drafts of these letters do not exist. The fact that arms were received by Badr'uddin is confirmed by the English translation of his reply (K) to Raffles.

[54] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.15 (IOL). Author's italics.

intervention of the authorized vakils appointed to act between us . . . . *They have, however, been exceedingly delayed in returning to Malacca through a variety of obstacles, which it was not in their power to avoid* . . . . We have also to signify to our friend regarding his tokens of friendship and affection, the guns with all their apparatus, that we consider ourselves as highly indebted to his kindness. Let not our friend, however, be displeased at what has occurred [for our friend may be assured that we shall infallibly conduct ourselves in the way which is best, and which it is impossible should lead to any bad consequences][55] . . . . With regard to the Hollanders in the kingdom of Palembang, we request our friend to entertain no doubts or displeasure. The Paduca Sri Sultan Ratu will not enlarge upon this topic in every particular, nor about its conclusion, for there is a letter with our friend's authorized vakils, . . . which will suffice . . . .

The arms despatched to Badr'uddin at this late period can have been intended only for use against the Dutch garrison at Palembang. That was what the Sultan believed,[56] and no other explanation seems possible. As already pointed out, Raffles originally had some vague idea of using Palembang in a flank attack against Java, and it might appear that the despatch of arms to the Sultan could be explained on that premise. Wurtzburg had something of this argument, when he maintained that the arms were sent for use against the Dutch naval force;[57] but in Wurtzburg's case the chronology is impossible, and the first possibility must clearly be ruled out, because of the small quantity of arms sent. Eighty muskets would have been of little use against Dutch forces in Java; they would, however, have been very useful for an attack on the Dutch garrison at Palembang, which Raffles knew had not been reinforced.

Macdonald must have brought the Sultan's reply back to Malacca about the end of May;[58] he also apparently conveyed there the two Palembang agents, Tĕngku Radin Muhammad and Sayid Abu Bakir. With their arrival Raffles learned for the first time of the treaty, and the unsatisfactory nature of its clauses. Realizing that any further negotiation with Palembang before the Java invasion was impossible, he instructed his agents to return to Bangka, and await further orders;[59] at the same time, he submitted

[55] The passage in brackets has been deleted in the manuscript.
[56] Robison to Raffles, 20 July 1813, *Java Factory Records*, 37 (IOL).
[57] Wurtzburg, *JMBRAS*, XXII (i), 47-50.
[58] Together, apparently, with another letter written on 15 May. This letter (L) (*Raffles Collection*, IV, no.12 (IOL) is printed in Appendix III. From the similarity of its contents to the above letter, which Badr'uddin addressed to Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, it should, perhaps, be dated a little earlier. It is important in showing clearly Badr'uddin's reluctance to commit himself to the British side before the treaty had been ratified by Raffles.
[59] They arrived at Muntok on 22 July. See Baud, *BKI*, I, 28.

to Lord Minto a comprehensive report on his negotiations with Palembang.

> Of the importance of Palembang to the Dutch government of Batavia, succeeding inquiries had only tended to convince me the more. Large balances had long been avowedly due to the Dutch regency; the Sultan of Palembang was known to be extremely rich in long-hoarded heaps of precious metals, and it was greatly to be feared that the energy and vigour of Marshal Daendels might so intimidate him as to induce him to pay up these balances, which would have been of the utmost importance to the finances of the Marshal at the present crisis. I knew that the Marshal had not only severely threatened the Sultan, but was taking active measures to compel him to accede to his terms. Upon this circumstance I founded the project of opening a negociation, considering it as certain that, whether the Sultan accepted or refused the terms proposed, the proposal alone would be sufficient to prevent him coming to any accommodation with Marshal Daendels: a circumstance which was sure of inspiring fresh spirit into the Bantamese and Lumpungs, disheartened by their recent defeat. If the Sultan acceded to the propositions offered, we would not only acquire a powerful ally, by whose assistance a formidable demonstration might be made on the side of Bantam without weakening our main attack, and whose voluntary alliance would prevent his being subjected to the fate of war in Europe, but we would also be put in possession without further trouble of the grand monopoly of the tin trade. This, however, I was scarcely sanguine enough to expect, as I knew that not only several of the Sultan's ministers were decidedly in the Dutch interest, but that the whole state of Palembang had been too long accustomed to a contraband traffic to consent readily to resign its advantages. As I expected, the Sultan demurred and adopted a temporizing policy, endeavouring by every means in his power to spin out the negociation till he should perceive what was likely to be the course of events, *although I had taken care to explain to him in the most particular manner the important difference that would occur in the political situation of a dependent state that should submit after the conquest of Java, and one that should voluntarily enter into an alliance with us previous to that event.* Though I believe the fact to be incontrovertible, that the Sultan of Palembang is bound to the Dutch by various agreements and treaties, and though it is certain that various acts of hostility have been committed by the Dutch, in concert with his subjects, on the English shipping within his boundaries, yet he has assumed the character of an independent and neutral power; and because some of the English ships have at times managed to procure cargoes of tin at Banca, in spite of the Dutch prohibition, he wishes to avail himself of this circumstance, to represent that he has always been on terms of amity with the English. The true reason, however, I was soon informed of by means of my agent, Tunku Radin Mahammed, who states that some of the Sultan's counsellors . . . had persuaded him that the English interests were in the utmost jeopardy, not only in Europe, but in Bengal and the rest of India, and that therefore we were anxious to acquire new settlements to the eastward.[60]

Shortly after this report was written, the British invasion force sailed for Java, where it arrived early in August. On 11 September, after the defeat of the Dutch-French forces at Meester Cornelis, the island and its dependencies were proclaimed by Minto to be under the authority and jurisdiction of the English East India Company. A few days later, news of the British conquest reached

[60] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 42-3. Author's italics.

Palembang, and on 14 September all the members of the Dutch garrision were brutally massacred by Malays.

(iv)

Baud's main argument to show Raffles' responsibility for the massacre of the Dutch at Palembang rested upon the use of the words, *boewang habis-kan sakali-kali*, in the letter of 3 March.[61] There has been some argument about the exact meaning of these Malay words. Baud's rendering was 'throw out and destroy', but Professor W. Ph. Coolhaas, and Dr. C. Hooykaas have extended the meaning to 'make an end to all of them so that none remain'.[62] Sir Richard Winstedt, on the other hand, believes that the whole passage should read: 'You must *get rid* of all the Dutch and the Resident *making a complete job of* it', and my colleague in Kuala Lumpur, Professor R. Roolvink agrees with him.[63] Unfortunately, any reconciliation between these interpretations can no longer help to decide the general question of Raffles' guilt, because the discovery of three of the original Malay letters which were sent by Raffles to Badr'uddin, although not the one containing the above passage, show that Baud's versions of the letters were exceedingly bad copies of the originals, and cannot be used as the basis for a fine textual argument.[64] Moreover, Baud's argument on the interpretation of the Malay phrase must also be overruled on the additional ground that we now possess the English draft of Raffles' letter, and no sinister passage appears in it.[65]

While, however, we dismiss one textual argument based upon the Malay word *buang*, we must immediately admit another; for in the very first letter which Raffles wrote to the Sultan, the original of which exists, there appears the phrase *pukul buang sekali-kali*. Raffles' English draft of the letter contains the words: 'I would recommend your Majesty to drive them [the Dutch] out from your country at once'. His Malay scribe wrote instead:

[61] Baud, *BKI*, I, 16.
[62] Coolhaas, *JMBRAS*, XXIV (i), 119.
[63] Winstedt and Roolvink in conversation with the author. After a general discussion with Roolvink in Kuala Lumpur in 1959, Hooykaas was more inclined to accept Winstedt's translation of the phrase.
[64] Printed in Appendix IV.
[65] Page 65 above.

'Therefore I recommend that my friend beat them out definitely' — *pukul buang sekali-kali*. The meaning suggested by these words, according to Professor A.A. Cense, was that Badr'uddin was to drive the Dutch out *in not too gentle a way*. This idea was conveyed by the use of *pukul*, meaning 'to beat', or 'to hit', and *buang*, meaning 'to throw out'. As, however, Raffles in this first letter was warning the Sultan about the approach of a Dutch naval squadron, the words *pukul* and *buang* were probably meant to apply as much to that particular force as to the garrison. In his later letters, as we have seen from the English drafts, Raffles specifically returned to the question of getting rid of the Dutch garrison, and actually sent arms for the purpose. There is little doubt that he intended force to be used in accomplishing the task, but that is not to say that Raffles was advocating massacre. Doubtless he thought that once the fort had been stormed by the Sultan's forces, the Dutch soldiers and their families would have been made prisoners-of-war and treated honourably. There is much to be said in favour of Wurtzburg's view that as Raffles was involved in a war situation, he was quite justified in fomenting opposition against the enemy.[66]

It has been argued, on the other hand, that Raffles was quite irresponsible in thinking that the Sultan of Palembang would behave in a gentlemanly way towards any captured Dutch soldiers. Although there is something to be said for this argument, it does not, in itself, offer a satisfactory explanation for the massacre. Indeed, there is nothing more remarkable in the whole literature of the Palembang affair than the unconvincing explanations advanced to account for the actual massacre. It is usually attributed to the treachery of Pĕngeran Ratu, eldest son of the Sultan, who was supposed to have been insulted by the Dutch;[67] but the evidence shows that Pĕngeran Ratu was a most unpopular member of the Palembang court, and it seems likely that he was made the scapegoat by his enemies when they were later questioned about the massacre.

Clearly, the reason for the massacre was the irresponsible promise of independence which Raffles made to Badr'uddin if he expelled the Dutch from Palembang before the British invasion of Java.

[66] Wurtzburg, *JMBRAS*, XXII (i), 50; Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 203.
[67] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 119.

The Sultan eagerly accepted this promise, and signed a treaty with Raffles' *wakil*, Tĕngku Radin Muhammad; and, although the clauses of the treaty varied considerably from those proposed by Raffles, Badr'uddin appears to have been under the impression that they would prove acceptable to the British. He awaited in vain for ratification of the treaty, as Raffles' agent did not convey it to Malacca until just prior to the departure of the British invasion fleet. It is true, perhaps, that Badr'uddin was playing for time; but it is obvious that he would hardly have risked expelling the Dutch until the treaty had been ratified by Raffles. And then the worst happened. Hearing that Java had fallen to the British, and remembering Raffles' warning that he would not be regarded as an independent prince unless he expelled the Dutch garrison before the invasion, he hastily attempted to put matters right by destroying the fort, and murdering all its inhabitants. The object of the exercise was simply to remove all witnesses who would be able to deny his assertion that the fort had, in fact, been seized prior to the fall of Java. As part of the same plan Raffles' two agents had to be killed, in order to preserve the conspiracy of silence,[68] and later, the British Commissioners sent to Palembang had to be prevented from conversing with the local people, lest the secret should be disclosed.

It seems reasonable to conclude that if Raffles had made no rash promise of independence to Badr'uddin, or if he had only repudiated the treaty concluded between his *wakil* and the Sultan, then the massacre of the Dutch would not have occurred. Certainly Badr'uddin would never have put Dutch prisoners-of-war to death if he had been given clearly to understand that his actions were to be held accountable by the British authorities, by whom he was regarded as a dependent ruler. Just how far the treaty in Badr'uddin's eyes justified his actions, can be seen if we carry the narrative further.

(v)

News of the massacre did not reach Java during the early weeks following the British conquest. Raffles was still in ignorance of it in November 1811 when he despatched three Commissioners to

[68] Baud, *BKI*, I, 31.

Palembang in order to renew the old Dutch agreements for the exclusive delivery of Bangka tin, and to secure the complete cession of the island; they were also instructed to take charge of the fort, and, if necessary, render assistance to the Sultan against pirates.[69] The Commissioners, Captain Richard Phillips, William Wardenaar, and Alexander Hare, arrived at the entrance to the Palembang river on 14 November, having first touched at Muntok, where they received two letters from Tĕngku Radin Muhammad informing them that the Dutch garrison had left Palembang.[70] After waiting a few days, they were met by three of the Palembang *tĕmĕnggongs*, who told them that, 'in compliance with the wish, and upon the suggestion of Mr. Raffles to make a free port of Palembang, they had ... freed[?] themselves from their ties with the Dutch and expelled their Resident, razing the fort to the ground'.[71] They stated further that the agreement proposed by Raffles had been officially executed, and they had taken especial care to see that tin had been conveyed only to Malacca and Penang. When they learned that the Commissioners wished to purchase tin at the old Dutch prices, the *tĕmĕnggongs* urged strongly that Raffles 'had made proposals to the Sultan for throwing open the trade of Palembang, on the sole condition of his turning out the Dutch — that the Sultan had complied, and that they could not conceive any object still remaining for adjustment'.

When the Commissioners met Badr'uddin himself on 23 November, and informed him that they had come to arrange about the transfer of the Dutch factory to the British, the Sultan answered in much the same way. He said that he had received from Raffles many letters which had conveyed friendly sentiments and advice, and that for his part he had not fallen short in fulfilling his engagements. When Phillips pointed out that until the time of the Commission's departure from Batavia, no news had been received of the withdrawal of the Dutch garrison from Palembang, Badr'uddin replied that Raffles had not made any request that he

[69] Raffles to R. Phillips, W. Wardenaar, and A. Hare, 2 November 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 4 September 1813 (IOL).

[70] One of these letters was forcibly extracted from Tĕngku Radin Muhammad by the Sultan (Baud, *BKI*, I, 30). A Malay copy of the letter is in *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.16 (IOL).

[71] Report of Phillips, Wardenaar, and Hare, [6] December 1811, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 4 September 1813 (IOL). The following citations in the text come from the same source.

should be kept informed, and, in any case, he himself had not heard that the British had conquered Java; still, he was quite prepared to adhere fully to the engagement which he had entered into with Raffles' *wakil*, Tĕngku Radin Muhammad. Phillips said that he knew that the *wakil* had brought a signed treaty to Malacca, but explained that Raffles had been disatisfied with it, as it had differed substantially from the one originally proposed. The Sultan did not reply, and the Commissioners withdrew.

On the following day, one of the *tĕmĕnggongs*, who resided with the Commissioners, drew Hare aside and dwelt on Raffles' assurances, and his advice to the Sultan to send the Dutch away from Palembang. Hare repeated Phillips' argument of the previous day that the treaty signed by Badr'uddin was different from the one proposed by Raffles. When, however, the Commissioners were shown a copy of the treaty on 25 November, they were clearly surprised to see that Raffles' agent had affixed his seal to it. Describing the incident later, the Commissioners reported how the treaty was brought in, together with all Raffles' letters, and while Phillips was perusing them, the Sultan said to Hare: " 'Is not the purport of these what one ought to rely on'? Then addressing Mr. Wardenaar, and pointing to Mr. Hare, he added '[H]e, it is, who is acquainted with this business'. He also selected and read aloud from the letters various passages in which Mr. Raffles discanted [sic] on the liberality and munificence of the English character, and more particularly on the total disinterestedness of their views in proposing intercourse with Palembang or any other [of the] native states, in opposition to the contracted selfish policy of the Dutch". Tĕngku Radin Muhammad's paper was then produced, and Phillips, 'expressing surprise at seeing the seals with its purport, added that when we left Batavia we were quite unaware of such a document existing, and requested a copy, which the Sultan promised, saying that he supposed . . . had we been apprised, we, of course, would not have come . . .' In reply to a further request to station a British officer at Palembang, the Sultan laughed, and said: " 'There is here no place, the former Dutch Residence being completely removed from the ground where it stood. I must therefore beg to be excused upon that, not that I have any apprehension [that] the English would ever become oppressors

like the Dutch, but only that it strikes me as unnecessary the placing [of] soldiers here, because I assure you as to pirates or any black-skinned enemies, we have not the smallest occasion for any assistance, being perfectly able to defend ourselves....'"

As they felt that no useful purpose would be served by remaining longer at Palembang, the Commissioners decided to return immediately to Batavia. 'We were principally influenced in this decision', they wrote to Raffles, 'by the consideration that Toonko Mahamat having been apparently vested by you with full powers to come to an agreement with the Sultan, assured us that [although] it was not your intention to entrust him with such, we yet doubted with what propriety we could undertake, without a reference, to assert that such agreement should not be attended to, and, in the event of its ultimately appearing to you only a subterfuge, we were unanimously of opinion that it would be preferable to avoid entering into any terms, as such could only fetter and obstruct the views of government'. On their way down the Musi river, the Commissioners noticed that fresh fortifications were being constructed.

(vi)

Phillips, Wardenaar, and Hare arrived back at Batavia early in December, but, as Raffles was in the eastern districts of Java, he did not receive their report until the middle of the month. At that time, he also received a letter from the Sultan, lamenting the fact that he was unable to hand over the Dutch fort to the Commissioners, as it had been destroyed on the instructions of Raffles, 'whose express wish it was that the Dutch should be removed....' Badr'uddin explained that he had adhered to the principles laid down in the agreement, but had been uncertain how to act as 'he had not at that time any news of his friend, and was in great trouble and distress at not receiving any....'; he appealed to Raffles to honour the agreement which had been concluded with his agent, Těngku Radin Muhammad.[72]

On 19 December, Raffles received brief notification from Malacca that his *wakils* had reported the massacre of the Dutch garrison,

[72] *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 4 September 1813 (IOL).

and on 1 January 1812 their depositions arrived.[73] Two weeks later he wrote to Minto: 'I apprehend there can be but one opinion on the policy we ought to pursue — we evidently, I think, must break with him — block up his river, which we can do with three or four cruizers, and establish ourselves on Banca'.[74] There is little doubt that Badr'uddin's refusal to negotiate with the British Commissioners would have led to punitive measures being taken against him: there was now the added justification of a ruthless massacre. But Baud was correct when he argued that these measures were deemed by Raffles to be necessary, not so much because of the massacre itself, but rather because it took place after the Dutch garrison 'had claimed the protection of the British power, already paramount on Java ....'[75]

The aim of the expedition, which was placed under the command of Major-General Robert Rollo Gillespie, was to punish the Sultan by levying on him a fine, and by securing from him the cession of the island of Bangka. He was to be deposed, however, only if he proved to be uncooperative; indeed, if he was found to be too powerful, Gillespie was told not to risk the lives of his troops, but simply take Bangka. 'The possession of Banca', Raffles declared, 'is to be the *sine qua non*, whether the same is to be obtained by cession, or by the mere act of settling there. But an unqualified cession of that island to the East India Company is to be obtained if necessary'.[76] Should Gillespie be obliged to remove the Sultan from the throne, Raffles considered that his brother, the *Pĕngeran Adipati*, was 'a fit person from his general good conduct, and abhorrence of the late deeds of the Sultan, to obtain a preference in forming any arrangements for the future government of Palembang'. The Sultan's eldest son, Pĕngeran Ratu, was not considered suitable because of his having been 'a principal actor in the late events', and also because he was 'obnoxious to the inhabitants of Palembang, from his crimes and debaucheries'. Still, even he was not to be entirely eliminated

[73] Raffles to Minto, 7 March 1812, *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.23 (IOL); Baud, *BKI*, I, 28-32.

[74] Raffles to Minto, 15 January 1812, "Java letters to Lord Minto, Secret, Jan. to March 1812", *Add. MSS.* 45272 (BM).

[75] Baud, *BKI*, I, 16n.1.

[76] Memorandum for Gillespie, n.d., but March 1812, *Bengal Secret and Colonial Consultations*, 15 May 1812 (IOL).

from consideration if Gillespie felt that his right of birth outweighed the defects in his character. There is no doubt that the main object of the expedition in Raffles' mind was to be the cession of Bangka; the massacre added only a kind of moral cloak for British intervention in Palembang affairs.

Raffles decided to mount the expedition upon his own authority, but he immediately informed the Supreme government of his action. On 7 March 1812 he reported more fully on the failure of the British Commissioners to take possession of the Dutch factory, and outlined details of the massacre as recorded in the depositions of his *wakils*. He also enclosed copies of the letters which he had addressed to Badr'uddin prior to the Java invasion, together with the report he had sent to Minto in June 1811, which summarized his negotiations with Palembang. 'That report, with its several enclosures', Raffles wrote, 'exhibits so explicitly the terms on which a negociation previous to the fall of Java could alone be entered into, that it might be unnecessary to advert to the same, particularly here, if the Sultan had not, to serve his own purposes, grossly perverted the meaning and intention of the same, by the fraudulent creation of papers and reports which he extracted by force from my Agents and others. Fortunately the authority given to my Agent was so defined and explicit, and so well understood by the Sultan, that no explanation is necessary. It is sufficient to state that the Sultan further informed the Commission that he had decidedly acted up to the agreement entered into by him and the agents of the British Government, in sending off the Dutch Residency previous to the capture of Java, and that he conceived himself entitled, in consequence, to be considered as a free and independent prince, and a faithful ally of the British government'.[77]

Having justified himself against some of the more dubious particulars unearthed by the Commissioners at Palembang, Raffles went on to outline the reasons which he considered justified military action against Palembang. These were the rights, following conquest, of entering into all previous contracts existing between the late Dutch-French government and the Sultan; the right of punishing him for the 'cruel murder committed on persons who

[77] Raffles to Minto, 7 March 1812, *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.23 (IOL). See Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 110-12.

already were become presumptive British subjects ....'; and the desirability of affording a salutary lesson to the Indonesian states by exhibiting the full force of British power.

There was also, of course, Bangka. On 10 March 1812 Raffles wrote privately to Minto outlining more explicitly the motives which determined the projected measures against Palembang. 'Waiving the natural impulse of resentment against the barbarous conduct of the Sultan', he stated, 'our interests require that the present opportunity of obtaining Banca should not be passed by — and as the permanent possession of that settlement can never be secured unless the power of the court of Palembang is reduced, I am inclined to contemplate the present state of affairs as fortunate for the eventual security of our interests in that quarter'.[78]

Minto, in the meantime, had received from Malacca copies of the depositions of Tĕngku Radin Muhammad and Sayid Abu Bakir, but he had not committed the Supreme government to any definite line of action, because he felt that any instructions sent to Raffles would arrive too late to cover measures adopted by the local authorities. He considered intervention justifiable, however, on the grounds that the massacre was ' an act of positive hostility towards the British government, since ... [the Sultan] not only destroyed a place which he knew had become the property of the government, for the avowed purpose of dissolving the pre-established relation between him and the ruling power in Java, but sought the lives of the British agents dispatched to his court on a mission of amity'.[79] That Minto was less concerned with the actual massacre of the Dutch, than with the way in which that loss of life was occasioned, is evident from the letter which he sent Raffles on 15 May 1812. 'If he had attempted', Minto wrote about Badr'uddin, 'only to withhold the transfer of his engagements with the Dutch to ourselves, and had denied that a succession to their treaty was one of the fruits of our conquest; if he had even in support of that pretension taken violent possession of the Dutch fort, and either detained the garrison in his custody, or transported them to a place of saftey, he would have afforded a just motive for the employment of our arms .... But since the insult and injury

[78] *Add. MSS.*, 45272 (BM).
[79] Minto Raffles, 25 January 1812, *Bengal Political Consultations*, 25 January 1812 (IOL).

offered to ourselves were united with, and indeed consisted in, a massacre . . . , we have in this war, not only to assert our invaded rights, and interests, but to avenge innocent blood . . . .'[80] For Minto, the dethronement of Badr'uddin was the primary object of the expedition; with regard to Bangka, he advised caution.

Gillespie, in the meantime, was settling affairs at Palembang according to Raffles' instructions. He was still considering whether or not to allow Badr'uddin to remain on the throne, when Minto's orders for his deposition arrived. At first Gillespie turned his thoughts to the Sultan's third son, a boy of twelve, but eventually to Najm'uddin, the Sultan's brother.[81] The *Pĕngeran Adipati* was placed on the throne, and he concluded a treaty with the British which provided for the cession of both Bangka and Billiton.[82] Before his departure, Gillespie made an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the massacre of the Dutch garrison, and concluded that the main responsibility for the act lay with Pĕngeran Ratu, the Sultan's eldest son. Gillespie considered that Badr'uddin himself was 'but an instrument for the protection of his son's wickedness'.

On 21 May, Raffles informed Bengal of the success of the Palembang venture, and of the dethronement of Badr'uddin.[83] Two months later he received a reply from Minto stating that this action was 'entirely consistent' with the policy already outlined by the Supreme government.[84] By then, however, affairs at Palembang had become very unsettled. Badr'uddin with his forces had retired to Muara Rawas, and had successfully overcome all attempts to dislodge him. Into this situation, early in 1813, came one William Robison, who, with extraordinary disregard for his orders, replaced the fugitive Sultan on the throne. The reasons for his action have never been fully examined, but among others was his

[80] *Raffles Collection*, IV, no.25 (IOL). *Cf.* P.H. van der Kemp, "Fendall's en Raffles Opvattingen in het Algemeen omtrent het Londensch Tractaat van 13 Augustus 1814", *BKI*, XLVII (1897), 367.

[81] Court, *Exposition*, 9-11; Gillespie to Raffles, 4 May 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (i) (IOL).

[82] *Ibid.*, 11-14; Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLVII, 367-9; Gillespie to Raffles, 29 May 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (i) (IOL); Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 118-22.

[83] Raffles to Minto, 21 May 1812, *Bengal Secret and Colonial Consultations*, 10 July 1812 (IOL).

[84] Minto to Raffles, 10 July 1812, *Bengal Secret and Colonial Consultations*, 10 July 1812 (IOL).

belief that Raffles, and not Badr'uddin, was responsible for the massacre of the Dutch.

(vii)

The material which relates to the Robison period at Palembang has all to be interpreted in the light of Robison's personal character — of his trustworthiness, or otherwise, as a witness. Because of his bitter dislike of Raffles, P.H. van der Kemp, on extremely slender evidence, questioned the earlier assertion that Robison was guilty of corruption at Palembang;[85] F. De Haan, on the other hand, realised that Robison was by no means a straightforward character.[86] When he returned from Palembang, Robison was charged by the Java government with having doctored accounts, especially in the matter of the money paid by Badr'uddin for his restoration to power. These charges were eventually dismissed by the Supreme government, but this should not be taken as a clear vindication of Robison's actions, as the evidence presented by the Java government against him was so confused that an acquittal was the only possible course open to the Supreme authorities. Certainly the motive of bribery does not sufficiently explain Robison's action in restoring Badr'uddin to the throne; more important was his conviction that it was not the Sultan, but Raffles who was responsible for the Palembang massacre.

Robison had come into conflict with Raffles soon after he had been appointed to the post of Secretary to the Java government. He had been caught in some irregularity, and was dismissed from office. Raffles explained to Minto that the dismissal was necessary because of 'the rapaciousness of Captain Robison [which] has ... passed all bounds'. Raffles explained that he was uncertain how to employ him in Java — 'he certainly has lost my confidence, but still there are many situations in which I hope I shall be able to employ him with advantage to himself, and with benefit to the government'.[87] Shortly afterwards he was appointed Resident of Palembang and Bangka.

[85] P. H. van der Kemp, "Palembang en Banka in 1816-1820", *BKI*, LI (1900), 335.
[86] De Haan, *BKI*, XCII, 630-2.
[87] Raffles to Minto, 15 January 1812, *Add. MSS.*, 45272 (BM).

Robison's main task at Palembang was to overcome Badr'uddin's forces at Muara Rawas, where heavily protected fortifications had been erected. He soon found, however, what had been clear to Gillespie earlier, that the immense power exercized by Badr'uddin's treasure made effective opposition to him impossible. On 18 June Robison was approached by the *Pĕngeran Adipati*, and his brother, the *Pĕngeran Aria*, who pointed out the futility of maintaining Najm'uddin on the throne in the face of the opposition of the Palembang people. With regard to the ex-Sultan's responsibility for the massacre of the Dutch, which was, of course, the main obstacle to his restoration, the *Pĕngerans* declared roundly that 'both the reigning Sultan, and they themselves were as much guilty of it as the old Sultan. They all understood it was what the English desired that they should get rid of them from Palembang'.[88]

Accompanied by a military force, Robison pushed up the Musi river towards Muara Rawas, and on 26 June was met by Badr'uddin himself a few miles below his stronghold. On the following morning, with tears streaming down his cheeks, the ex-Sultan solemnly vowed that he had never given orders for the massacre of the Dutch, and had heard nothing of the act until a long time afterwards; he stated his willingness for Robison to make a detailed investigation into the affair, and promised that he would hand over any person who was found to be guilty. He had ordered the Dutch away, he said, 'because it was what the English had often desired him to do, as he could shew by several letters in his possession, and that ammunition and [muskets] had been sent up to him, to get rid of them by force of arms, if he could not do so by remonstrance'. '[W]hat', he asked Robison, 'have I done to deserve so severe a punishment as you seem to have awarded me? From bad advice and misrepresentation of your intentions, I did not pay the submission expected of me to the persons who were first sent here from Java. I did no affront or offence to them in any way; on the contrary, I received them hospitably and with as much respect as I had been used to pay to the Dutch gentlemen in former times. I thought I had a right to do as I pleased, and I discouraged, as much as I could, another European

[88] Robison to Raffles, 20 July 1813, *Java Factory Records*, 37 (IOL). The following quotations in the text also come from this source.

nation from settling in Palembang as the Dutch had done; but I never supposed this would cause the English to make war upon me — and drive me away . . . .' Badr'uddin had earlier explained to Robison that the reason he had fled from Gillespie was not because he was guilty, but because his *wakils*, who had been sent down river to meet the Britishers, had been made prisoners, and he had been given to understand that if Gillespie captured him, he would be given no quarter.

After protracted negotiations with both Badr'uddin and Najm'uddin, the former was restored to power. Among other conditions agreed upon, was the payment of 200,000 Spanish dollars to the British government at Batavia. The second article of the treaty, which was signed by Badr'uddin on 29 June, stated: 'The Sultan solemnly denies having ordered, or been [in] any way privy to, the murder of the late Dutch factory, and agrees, on condition of his life being spared, to give up his eldest son, the Pangerang [Ratu], who was suspected of being instrumental in that unpardonable transaction, to the discretion of the Java government. He further agrees to deliver up to government [un]conditionally, any other persons who may hereafter be found to have been guilty of that murder'. Having effected the restoration of Badr'uddin, Robison reported to Raffles that there was 'nothing atrocious, nothing of the assassin' in his character; he was more timid than turbulent, kind and indulgent to his children and brothers, and in the highest degree liberal to his subordinate chiefs.

On his return to Batavia at the end of July,[89] Robison took occasion again to mention to Raffles the circumstances connected with the massacre. He admitted that he had difficulty in getting a coherent story from the people at Palembang,[90] but was inclined to doubt the statement contained in the deposition of Raffles' *wakils*, that Pĕngeran Ratu had presented to them for signing the forged letter relating to the departure of the Dutch,[91] because he had never been employed in public business by the Sultan.

[89] Robison arrived back in Batavia on 29 July 1813 (*Java Government Gazette*) (Batavia, 1812-16), 31 July 1813. *Cf.* J. Bastin (ed.), *The Journal of Thomas Otho Travers 1813-1820* (Memoirs of the Raffles Museum), no.4 (May, 1957), 28.

[90] Robison to Raffles, 28 July 1813, *Java Factory Records*, 37 (IOL).

[91] Baud, *BKI*, I, 30.

Robison implied, in fact, that Tĕngku Radin Muhammad had been a dishonest agent, and had fabricated many of his stories.

Soon after Robison's arrival in Java, rumours began to circulate in the capital to the effect that he had been bribed by Badr'uddin, and a Commission was appointed by the Java government to investigate the charges. The Commission, which was also empowered to restore Najm'uddin to the Palembang throne, uncovered some new material concerning the massacre of the Dutch, perhaps the most interesting of which was Badr'uddin's account of the event. The statement was reported in Robison's defence to the Supreme government early in 1814.

I am brought, says he [Badr'uddin], into all the misery and disgrace in which you now see me for doing what I was [led] to suppose would be acceptable to the British government. Many, many were the letters and proclamations I received from Mr. Raffles at Malacca, urging me to send away the Dutch factory and give it over to his Malay Agent, Radeen Mahomed. I never betrayed the wishes of the British government to the Dutch Resident, and I felt every desire to do what they requested me when the proposal first was made; but we all were [led] to form a great idea of the power and forces of [Marshal] Daendels, who then commanded on Java, and I did not think it would be prudent in me to provoke the resentment of so great a man before I had some adequate assurance that the English expedition going to Java [was] strong enough to succeed in taking it. When that assurance came to me, I then sent them away, having provided two vessels by request of the Resident, before we heard of the fall of Java, to carry him and his factory to Malacca.

The murder of these people, I solemnly declare, what may be proved if you enquire, was never an act done by my order. I never knew of it for some time after it happened, and I can attribute it to nothing else but the proclamations of Mr. Raffles, which were circulated among the people of [Sungsang] at the mouth of the Palembang river... [advising] them that the ships cruizing off there were only come to capture all Dutch people and property they could find. Either those [Sungsang] people may have murdered them for the plunder, not to let it fall into the hands of your cruizers, or the prow people must have risen upon them for the same purpose.[92] But if my intention had been either to kill or to plunder them, I need not have sent them away from Palembang to do so. I was then master of their lives and of everything belonging to them. But they left Palembang with all their property and followers. To have demolished the Dutch factory after they went away, it was an act I did by the desire and advice of all my people—and my brother, who[m] you have made [Sultan] being then Radeen De Patty. My first minister is the person who was chiefly instrumental both in sending away the Dutch people, and afterwards in demolishing their fort and houses. If blame is due for these transactions, certainly he cannot be free from it, [for it was he] who led the party of his own zeal to the

[92] The reference is to Raffles' proclamation to kampong Sungsang, printed in Appendix IV. An 1813 account of the massacre also ascribed it to the inhabitants of that village. ("Deposition of [Komis] Mahomed [Hanapiah] ...," *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 2 October 1813 (IOL). It is a different story from that of Willem van de Weteringe Buis, and Louisa Haarvlegter (Baud, *BKI*, I, 32-7).

Dutch factory and destroyed it. Radeen Mahomet . . . was the Agent sent to me by the English, and both he, and the letters he brought me, informed me I was regarded as an independent chief and might dispose of my country and people as I pleased, and especially that the English never meant to establish any factory at Palembang. They only wanted to make a contract with me to get the tin from Banca, and that I made no objection to give them.

The Sultan concluded his statement by producing his correspondence with Tĕngku Radin Muhammad. He then remarked: 'The reasons why . . . Radeen Mahomet has been so much my enemy with the English . . . I suppose are these. He wanted money . . . [from] me to pay his expenses, which I declined to give him. He also took away one of my women from my palace, availing himself of his situation as English Agent. If any other Malay had done such an insult he could not have escaped punishment for so doing'.[93]

Robison stated that he had made a diligent enquiry into the circumstances surrounding the massacre, and had found that everyone at Palembang agreed that it was not the Sultan's doing; he further contended that Raffles' letters to Badr'uddin, a summary of which he submitted, 'might shew plain enough, that the act of sending away the Dutch factory was in some degree an act of our own'. In any case, he stated, it was most unfair to condemn Badr'uddin for the massacre on the evidence of Raffles' agents, Tĕngku Radin Muhammad and Sayid Abu Bakir, because they were unscrupulous adventurers. Lord Minto had given his support to Raffles' policy at Palembang only because he believed that Badr'uddin had been guilty of the massacre; but the Governor-General had probably never been fully informed of Raffles' negotiations with the Sultan of Palembang prior to the Java invasion. These negotiations, 'considering the people with whom [they were] opened, the Agent who had to conduct it on our part, and the whole circumstances of the transaction, might, in some men's judgement, have been considered an extenuation at least of the barbarous offence, if it was even clearly proved that . . . [Badr'uddin] had committed it'.

That would seem to be the most satisfactory point at which to leave Robison's justification of his own and Badr'uddin's actions.

[93] "Case of Major Robison . . . .", *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 28 April 1814 (IOL). The following quotations in the text also come from this source.

There is, of course, some doubt that Robison was bribed by the Sultan; but, despite his eloquent protestations, there can be none that Badr'uddin was the one who ordered the massacre. It is not difficult to understand why no Malay at Palembang was willing to come forward to give evidence against the Sultan, and it is not hard to comprehend how his forceful personality — all observers commented upon it — persuaded Robison that he knew nothing of the massacre. At the same time, the points which Robison made in extenuation of his guilt must be accepted, because there is no question that it was Raffles' irresponsible promise of independence to Badr'uddin which caused the massacre of the Dutch. Raffles himself regarded Robison's charges on these matters as 'a mass of absurdity and trash';[94] with regard to Robison's statement that he had deliberately kept Minto in the dark about his negotiations with Palembang, he retorted: '[A]ll my proceedings as Agent to the Governor General with the Malay States were duly reported to the Governor General, and ... it was with a full knowledge of all the communications I had had with Palembang, that the Supreme government directed, without advices from me on the subject, measures of exactly the same tendency, as those which this government had adopted ....' The Supreme government never thoroughly investigated Robison's accusations, and he was finally acquitted of the charge of bribery, in 'the absence of proof of any corrupt motive'.[95]

In the meantime, Raffles had restored Najm'uddin to the throne,[96] and of the money paid by Badr'uddin for his restoration, 100,000 Spanish dollars were transferred to the former's account. In addition, Badr'uddin's regalia was taken from him and given to Raffles' protégé. The members of the Supreme government agreed to the restoration of Najm'uddin, but condemned bitterly Raffles' action in retaining a portion of the money which Badr'uddin had paid to Robison for his restoration. They ordered that this money, as well as the regalia, should be returned to him, unless the latter had already been surrendered, in which case they

[94] Raffles to Bengal, 1 October 1814, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 17 October 1815 (IOL).
[95] *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 28 April 1814 (IOL).
[96] Court, *Exposition*, 47 ff.

were prepared to sanction the action, but only with the object of achieving a constancy of policy.[97]

The Directors, when they learned of the affair, were more critical still. 'The proceedings which have taken place at Palembang', they wrote to Lord Moira on 5 May 1815, 'have naturally excited our strongest disapprobation. We greatly fear that it will not be easy to remove the disgrace which has been incurred in that quarter: and altho' the re-establishment of the ex-Sultan was wholly chargeable upon Major Robinson [*sic*], who appears to have acted in direct contradiction to the letter and spirit of his instructions, the conduct of the Lieut. Governor of Java is without any extenuation, in having assumed the right to dispose of property that had come into his power by an unauthorized act, which he himself had disavowed and condemned in the most unqualified manner. We regret to find that the resolution you adopted of restoring the treasure to the ex-Sultan was not effectual for preventing a portion of it from being diverted into a channel from which it cannot be recovered, and that, in fulfilling the obligations of honour, you will, probably, be involved in a serious pecuniary loss'.[98] The Directors concluded their strong condemnation of Raffles' general policy by stating that his 'continuance in the government of Java would be highly inexpedient'.

(viii)

The following conclusions regarding the Palembang massacre can now be made. Baud's argument based upon the words *boewang habis-kan sakali-kali* can no longer be admitted, because the Malay letter upon which his case rested, was only a poor copy of the original, and it is by no means certain that the phrase actually appeared in Raffles' letter to Sultan Badr'uddin. The argument that Raffles deliberately advocated the massacre of the Dutch garrison must, therefore, be dismissed. Raffles, however, did encourage the Sultan to storm the Dutch factory, and despatched arms for the purpose; but that is not the same thing as advocating the massacre of the garrison. It is quite clear that the massacre did not stem directly from the action of sending arms

[97] Bengal to Raffles, 30 April 1814, *Java Factory Records*, 41 (IOL).
[98] *Despatches to Bengal*, 69 (IOL).

to the Sultan, but from Raffles' promise of independence to Badr'uddin. At the same time, it must always be remembered that Raffles was acting in a situation of war, and, as Wurtzburg says, '[a] belligerent is fully entitled to promote risings against an occupying power'.[99] Badr'uddin himself was undoubtedly responsible for the actual massacre, so that the part played by his son, Pĕngeran Ratu, must be regarded as minor. Much, however, may be said in extenuation of Badr'uddin's action, the responsibility for which was, in any case, fully shared by Najm'uddin. He should not, therefore, have been elevated to the Palembang throne by the British. Perhaps the final words can be left to the wisest of Raffles' contemporaries, H. W. Muntinghe, who, in a letter to the Dutch Governor-General in 1820, stated that in his view 'the barbarous murder of 1811 ... must be attributed to the at least very imprudent instigations and promises of the British Government'.[100]

[99] Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 203.
[100] Coolhaas, *JMBRAS*, XXIV (i), 114-15.

IV

THE CHINESE ESTATES IN EAST JAVA DURING THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

"On Java, the Chinese . . . when . . . they acquire grants of land, . . . generally contrive to reduce the peasants speedily to the condition of slaves".
T. S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London, 1817).

(i)

IN the middle of 1810 the Dutch Governor-General, Herman Willem Daendels, decided to dispose of a quantity of state lands in east Java in order to raise revenue for his financially embarrassed government. The lands chosen were those of Besuki and Panarukan, and they were sold to the Kapitan-China of Surabaya, Han Chan Pit. The Besuki estate had gradually come under the control of Han's family during the second half of the eighteenth century, when his uncle, and later his father, leased it from the Dutch authorities at an annual charge of 1,000 Spanish dollars. Han Chan Pit had succeeded his father as renter, but after a time had found himself unable to meet his commitments to the government due to the low productivity of the Besuki region. In order to assist him, the Dutch had first joined the Panarukan lands to those of Besuki and leased the whole area to him for 1,500 Spanish dollars per annum, and later, in 1796, had conferred upon him during his lifetime sole rights to the lands for an annual payment of 9,000 Rix dollars and 10 koyans of rice. Daendels now sold the lands to him outright for 400,000 Spanish dollars.[1] Payment was to be made partly by a transference to the proprietor of government-debts at Surabaya, and partly by an issue of promissory notes payable in instalments without interest.

[1] Daendels, *Staat*, Bijl. II, nos.7 and 10 (Finantiëele Zaken).

The success of the sale gave Daendels the idea of disposing of a further quantity of lands to the east of Surabaya. Probolinggo was selected finally because its annual yield to the government was only 2,000 Spanish dollars, 70-odd koyans of rice, some birds'-nests, and trifling amounts of coffee and teak timber. A private offer of 600,000 Spanish dollars was made by the Kapitan-China of Pasuruan, Han Ki Ko, a brother of the proprietor of Besuki and Panarukan, and as this exceeded the current valuation, Daendels ordered his committee-of-sale to dispose of the lands to the Chinese. It was agreed finally that he would pay one million Rix dollars for Probolinggo in twenty half-yearly instalments of 50,000 Rix dollars.[2]

In order to gain immediate financial benefit from the sale, Daendels issued paper money to the value of one million Rix dollars, which was supposed to be withdrawn in proportion to the half-yearly payments of silver made by the Chinese. Discount on the paper notes was forbidden on pain of banishment to the Europeans, and ten years imprisonment to the Javanese. At first, payments made by the government in the paper currency were received as cash, but as it was useless as a circulating medium in the Javanese Principalities, where only Spanish dollars and ducatoons were recognized, the paper began to lose its value. This depreciation was increased by the exceptions made by the government itself in receiving the paper as payment, so that by the time the British arrived in Java in 1811 depreciation had occurred of something between 50 and 90 per cent. The British authorities recognized the paper currency at 6½ Rix dollars paper to one Spanish dollar silver, which had the effect of saving the fortunes of individual Dutchmen in Java, even if it did cause great difficulties to the British government under Raffles.

(ii)

Official recognition of the paper currency did not necessarily imply government acceptance of Daendels' sale to the Chinese, so that Raffles was free to resume the estates provided that he made adequate financial compensation to the proprietors. During the early months of his administration, therefore, he made careful

[2] *Ibid.*, Bijl. II, no.12 (Finantiëele Zaken).

enquiries among various Dutchmen about the best course to follow. One of them, P. A. Goldbach, who had lived twenty-two years in Java, gave this warning to the British Civil Commissioner at Semarang, Hugh Hope, on 1 December 1811: 'If there be a place where riot and rebellion may be apprehended it is at Probolingo, where there are still a number of relations of the former Regent, and who through his removal are deprived of the best rice fields, and dessas, on which they lived in indolence and whose discontent with the landholder has already been very evident .... Besides this, the landholder has dismissed a great number of chiefs, who, however they may have been in prosperity, are now feeling the want and means to maintain themselves, and their families; and who express the greatest dissatisfaction at the Chinaman landholder of Probolingo'.[3] Goldbach thought that rebellion was also likely to occur in Besuki and Panarukan, and so advised the government to annul Chinese proprietorship, and administer the country directly.

Another Dutchman who had a considerable knowledge of Javanese affairs was F. J. Rothenbühler, and he was of the same opinion as Goldbach regarding the evils of Chinese land ownership on the island. It seems likely, therefore, that the recognition accorded Chinese claims by Raffles' Dutch adviser, H. W. Muntinghe, was due to the fact that he could see no solution to the financial difficulties which would have confronted the government had Daendels' sale been repudiated. The hopeless task of withdrawing the depreciated money in circulation could have been achieved only by an importation of specie, and such importations were rare during the early years of the British administration; indeed, the flow of silver went the other way, as Java did not possess an export cargo acceptable either to British India or Europe.

In February 1812, therefore, Raffles was obliged to confirm Daendels' sales in east Java, an action which he justified on the grounds that Chinese proprietorship might well be considered as 'an experiment of private industry, against the feudal system, which so generally exists throughout the island ....'[4]

[3] *Java Public Consultations*, 7 March 1812 (IOL).

[4] Raffles to Minto, 7 March 1812, *Java Public Consultations*, 7 March 1812 (IOL). Raffles' recognition of the sale was made by proclamation on 14 February 1812 (*Java Government Gazette*, 29 February 1812).

(iii)

When the Besuki lands first came under Chinese control in the middle of the eighteenth century, they furnished only grass for horses, and a convenient refuge for wild animals; in fact, even at the end of the century they remained isolated from the rest of Java and were rarely visited by Europeans. Commissioner S. C. Nederburgh went only as far as Pasuruan and Malang at the time of his visit to Java in the 1790s, and even that was considered unusual. It was really not until early in the nineteenth century, when the British fleet commenced an effective blockade of the island, that many Dutch visitors chose to land at Banjuwangi and proceed overland to Batavia. During Daendels' administration a road was laid through the eastern districts, and he himself visited Panarukan. At the time of the sale the Besuki lands were producing not only *padi* and large quantities of maize, but also various fruits, which were exported to Pasuruan, Surabaya, and Madura. So successful had the fruit industry become that immediately prior to the British invasion the Chinese had forced the people to plant water-melons, which were sold for a total sum of 4,000 Spanish dollars. This increase in cultivation had been effected by advancing money and tools to the people, who had been attracted to the Chinese estates from the Oosthoek districts by means of free distributions of rice during periods of famine, and from Madura, whence many had fled to escape military service. By Raffles' period, the total population of the Chinese estates was estimated at approximately 80,000, of whom more than half were settled in Probolinggo.[5]

Of the actual conditions on the Chinese estates, the evidence is conflicting. Colonel Colin Mackenzie who visited them in March 1812, found the lands 'highly productive and a great source of wealth to the proprietors'; he also commented upon the 'bustle and appearance of active industry' in the coastal towns of Probolinggo, Besuki and Panarukan.[6] Even Rothenbühler, who was strongly opposed to Chinese proprietorship, had to admit that

[5] Figures from two surveys exist, one by F. J. Rothenbühler and the other by J. Crawfurd. Rothenbühler estimated the Probolinggo population at 38,800; Crawfurd at 44,573. The total figure of 80,000 given in the text was Crawfurd's estimate.

[6] "Report and Journal of . . . Lieutt Colonel Mackenzie . . . .", *Mackenzie Collection (Private)*, 14, no.15b (IOL).

the villages in the Chinese districts were 'always in a good state'; but, failing to see the contradiction he was advancing, he ascribed this to the freedom engendered by the abolition of the 'feudal' services exacted under Indonesian rule.[7]

John Crawfurd, on the other hand, disagreed with these opinions. After investigating conditions on the estates in the middle of 1813, he wrote: 'It is very generally believed, particularly by European[s], that the Chinese districts were deserts when the proprietors received charge of them, and that their industry, enterprise, and capital have alone fertilized and enriched them. The truth of this opinion deserves to be examined. Probolingo by far the most valuable and most highly improved of these provinces was taken possession of nine months only before the British conquest of the island. With regard to it, therefore, there was no time for improvement. The state of the country when we first discovered it was... no one will deny, just what it is now'.[8]

David Hopkins, who was appointed five months later to finalize arrangements for the repurchase of the estates by the British government, took a contrary line to Crawfurd. When the late Chinese proprietor took charge of Probolinggo, Hopkins informed Raffles, the quantity of *sawahs* amounted to only 919 *jungs*; at his death these had been increased to 1330 *jungs*. 'On enquiry into the general state of the lands', Hopkins continued, 'I have found that an improved mode of irrigation had been introduced in every part, that the division of the rice fields [was] made in a manner better adapted to receive the water, that the several water courses were either enlarged or new made, and that arrangements were on foot for a very considerable extension of the cultivation'. Roads had been improved and public works undertaken; indeed, the improvements made by the proprietor were worth more than he had actually paid to the government in instalments for the estate.[9]

Crawfurd and Hopkins also disagreed about what they found in Besuki and Panarukan. Crawfurd had argued that if these

[7] Rothenbühler to Mackenzie, 30 May 1812, *Mackenzie Collection (Private)*, 35, no.18 (IOL).

[8] Crawfurd to Raffles, 21 June 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 19 March 1814 (IOL).

[9] Hopkins to Raffles, 19 September 1813, *Java Public Consultations*, 24 November 1813 (IOL).

lands were compared with the maritime districts of Pasuruan and Bangil, which had not come under Chinese proprietorship, little evidence of any improvement would be found, despite the fact that Besuki and Panarukan had been let in farm to the Chinese for a period of more than forty years. The only improvements they had effected, he said, were a few roads and some ostentatious bridges. Hopkins, on the other hand, wrote in September 1813: 'The estate itself was a wilderness without people when first leased out to ... [the proprietor's] father, on whose death the lease was renewed in favor of the present proprietor; and the estate was so greatly improved under his management that he was enabled to increase his rents from 500 to 9,000 Rix dollars a year, at which latter sum the estate was leased to him for life'.[10]

Whatever may be said in support of Hopkins' assertions about Besuki and Panarukan, Crawfurd's assessment of the causes of the anti-Chinese riots at Probolinggo has to be accepted, because it is supported by evidence from other sources. The disturbances first occurred in the mountain districts of Probolinggo in the middle of May 1813, when an Indonesian from Ampel, named Kia Maas, declared himself empowered to establish Islam throughout the Oosthoek districts. He was immediately given support by one of the local *dĕmangs*, who had suffered punishment at the hands of the Chinese proprietor, and by the inhabitants of the kampongs Kedompo, Posangit and Ketapan. The rebels, who numbered more than two thousand, killed the proprietor Han Ki Ko, and plundered his property, shortly after which they were routed by a small British force from Surabaya. Reporting the success of this action on 19 May, the British officer in charge, Captain Cameron, warned his superior, Major D. Forbes, that the uprising was not a local phenomenon. 'I feel convinced', he stated, 'that the inhabitants of the country, as well as those in the

[10] Hopkins to Raffles, 12 September 1813, *Java Public Consultations*, 28 September 1813 (IOL). For some discussion on conditions on the Chinese estates, see H. R. C. Wright, "Improvement in the East Indies", *The Cambridge Journal*, VI, No.11 (1953), 688-94. A somewhat misleading account of Raffles' policy towards the Chinese in Java is L. E. Williams, "Indonesia's Chinese Educate Raffles", *Indonesië*, IX (1956), 369-85 (reprinted in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, XXIII (1957), 74-9, under the title: "The Chinese in Indonesia and Singapore under Raffles"). On this article, see J. Bastin, "Raffles and the Chinese of Indonesia and Singapore", *Indonesië*, X (1957), 259-60.

immediate neighbourhood took a decided and active part with the banditti....'[11] Major Forbes, who was himself at Probolinggo, concurred in this opinion when he wrote to Raffles a few days later: 'A general discontent I regret to say manifested itself over all the country under the controul of the late Probolingo Major which... seemed to take its origin in consequence of the heavy taxes imposed by him upon the people, and other severe duties with which they were unable to comply'.[12] It was because of these grievances, he said, that Kia Maas had gained such a strong hold over the people.

Raffles immediately despatched Crawfurd to the trouble-spot to make a detailed enquiry into the causes of the disturbances. The latter was there only one day when he reported: 'The cry against the oppression and maladministration of the Chinese proprietors is... so loud and so uniform, that it seems beyond the reach of doubt, [that] the late insurrection has had its origin in the discontent which these oppressions have produced. The interests of religion on this, as on many former occasions, were made a rallying point....'[13] Crawfurd described as 'monstrous' the prerogative of the Chinese landowners to levy taxes without any restraint, especially the capitation tax which was particularly burdensome, as it exceeded the amount demanded in any other part of Java. Although the Chinese proprietor himself was a 'man of respectable character', Crawfurd declared that his subordinates had treated the people most harshly.

In a more comprehensive report of 21 June, Crawfurd examined closely the reasons for the disturbances at Probolinggo. He pointed to the large payments which the Chinese proprietors had been obliged to make to the government for the purchase of the estates, and indicated that these payments could be met only from the produce of the estates themselves. Taxes exacted by the proprietor of Probolinggo 'exceeded by one fourth at least, the utmost measure of what could be demanded consistent with an attention to the tranquillity of the country; and exceeded out of all bounds what common justice required should have been taken

[11] Cameron to Forbes, 19 May 1813, *Java Military Consultations*, 7 June 1813 (IOL).
[12] Forbes to Assey, 24 May 1813, *ibid.*
[13] Crawfurd to Raffles, 4 June 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 19 March 1814 (IOL).

from the natives'.[14] The proprietor and his Chinese retainers had either entirely neglected the provisions made for the protection of the Javanese on the estates, or had never been aware of them;[15] no police had been established in the Oosthoek districts by the Dutch, and so the Chinese had taken the duties into their own hands. According to Crawfurd, they 'fined, imprisoned, and at pleasure, condemned to the confinement of the stocks'. Their influence was great enough even to ruin any European in their districts.

At first Crawfurd had found it difficult to make the Javanese and Madurese discuss their grievances, but gradually he elicited the facts from them. As well as the oppressive capitation tax, the Chinese had demanded one-third of the produce of the lands, instead of the customary one-fifth; in addition, the proprietor of Besuki had levied a contribution in money, and had also demanded heavy taxes at Puger on goods imported from the districts under British control. Rice, for example, had carried a tax of 20 per cent. of its value, and the tax had been remitted only a few days before Crawfurd's arrival. The Chinese local trading monopoly resulted in much hardship, as the people had to sell their excess produce to the Chinese at arbitrary rates. No competition was permitted because no trader was able to enter the estates without the permission of the Chinese proprietors themselves.

The Probolinggo rising had hardly been suppressed before the Java government received from Han Chan Pit, the landholder of Besuki and Panarukan, a petition stating that, as he had no money to meet further instalments for the purchase of his estate, he was obliged to request that his lands be resumed by the government. Raffles decided immediately to accept the offer, and issued fresh instructions to Crawfurd to begin negotiations for the re-purchase of all the Chinese estates in the eastern districts of Java. The latter soon concluded an agreement with Han Chan Pit, and this was forwarded to Raffles for approval. Meanwhile, Crawfurd handed over the charge of the Chinese estates to Lieutenant W. Cotes, who was told to continue receiving rents from the estates

[14] Crawfurd to Raffles, 21 June 1813, *ibid.*

[15] In the original contracts with the Chinese there were no provisions which afforded protection to the Javanese peasants. The sale of opium, and import and export duties, were reserved to the government, and the Chinese undertook the upkeep of the roads and bridges.

upon the same basis as that previously adopted by the Chinese, except that the capitation tax was to be entirely abolished.

On 13 July 1813, the Java government agreed to repurchase the Chinese estates, but postponed consideration of the means of paying for them. Early in the following month, Hopkins was instructed to carry into effect the agreement concluded by Crawfurd for the purchase of Besuki and Panarukan, and to introduce the new land rent system into the Oosthoek districts. When he arrived in east Java, Hopkins found much evidence of the beneficial effects of Chinese proprietorship, especially in Panarukan and Besuki. 'Whatever truth may be... in the opinion that tyranny and oppression were the active causes of the insurrection in Probolingo', he wrote, 'that opinion cannot be applied to [Besuki], for the people of that district, when they heard of the calamitous event, so far from rising against their chief, collected round his person, armed for his defence, and proceeded under his command to the frontier to be ready to resist the insurgents, and to execute any orders which might be transmitted by Government'. If tyranny and oppression had been general, Hopkins continued with some degree of logic, revolt would not have been confined to Probolinggo alone. 'That the spirit of insurrection had been general or was then active', he argued, 'is contradicted by the express testimony of Mr. Commissioner Crawford [*sic*], who reports the return of the inhabitants to their customary avocations, and bears evidence of their contented as well as industrious appearance'.[16]

The agreement which Hopkins concluded with Han Chan Pit for the re-purchase of his estate, provided for the payment to him by the government of 400,000 Spanish dollars, the original purchase money, in four annual instalments of 100,000 Spanish dollars, with interest calculated at 6 per cent.[17] In addition, 8,000 Spanish dollars were to be granted in compensation for the expenses incurred by the Chinese in the erection of houses and offices on the estate, and another 7,000 Spanish dollars were to be paid as a contribution towards the cost of erecting a fort at Panarukan. Han Chan Pit was to remove himself and his family

[16] Hopkins to Raffles, 12 September 1813, *Java Public Consultations*, 28 September 1813 (IOL).

[17] The first instalment was to be paid on 15 September 1814.

to Surabaya, where he was given a quantity of rent-free land. The government confirmed these conditions on 26 September, and specified the land grant at Surabaya as one capable of yielding 2,000 Spanish dollars per annum.

Hopkins had also come to an agreement for the re-purchase of Probolinggo with the family of the late Chinese proprietor. The Probolinggo arrangements were most complicated because the fifth instalment, which was due from the proprietor in July 1813, had not been paid to the government, and technically this should have led to a mortgage of foreclosure under the terms of the original contract. Some difficulties were avoided by the family of the late Chinese proprietor stating their willingness to surrender their rights to the estate, provided that they were relieved of the payment of future instalments, and on condition that they were given an adequate monetary compensation by the government on the resumption of the estate. Hopkins advised Raffles to grant life pensions of 50 Spanish dollars a month to each of the late proprietor's six children, as well as an additional allowance when they married. The government was also to purchase a sugar-mill at Pasuruan with 30 *jungs* of land for their support, and to assume all debts incurred by the late proprietor. These amounted to 32,774 Spanish dollars, which, together with the estimated cost of 21,200 Spanish dollars for the sugar-mill and its lands, as well as the children's pensions, committed the government to the extent of 93,974 Spanish dollars for the re-purchase of the Probolinggo estate.

On 16 November 1813, Raffles agreed to these terms, and the British government immediately assumed full control of the Chinese estates. Shortly afterwards, these districts were subjected to a direct form of Western administration, when the new land rent system was extended to the eastern part of Java.

V

THE EARLY LAND RENT SYSTEM IN WEST JAVA

"I cannot but look upon the accomplishment of this undertaking [the new land rent system] as the most conspicuous and important under my administration; and in its success or otherwise I am willing to stand or fall".

Raffles to Lord Minto, 13 February 1814 (Lady Raffles, *Memoir . . . of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles . . . .* (London, 1830).

(i)

'IN the course of the years 1814 and 1815', Raffles wrote in *The History of Java*, 'the new [land rent] system was introduced into *Bantam, Chéribon*, and the eastern districts, over a population of a million and a half of cultivators, not only without disturbance and opposition, but to the satisfaction of all classes of the natives, and to the manifest increase of the public revenue derivable from land. In several journies which I undertook into the different provinces, for the purposes of examining in person the effect of the progressive system of reform which I had the happiness to introduce, and of lending the sanction of official authority to such modifications of it as local circumstances might render advisable, I was a pleased spectator of its beneficial tendency, and of the security and satisfaction it universally diffused'.[1] The documentary evidence relating to the functioning of the land rent system in west Java during these years would appear to warrant a somewhat different conclusion from that of Raffles.

(ii)

In February 1813 the Bantam lowlands, lying to the north and west of the Great Post Road from Tjikandi, through Undarandir, Serang, Tjilegon, Anjer, Tjarita, and including Tjaringin, were leased out on a *zamindari* basis to *pĕngerans, tĕmĕnggongs, arias,*

[1] Raffles, *History*, I, 177.

ngabèhis, and other members of the rural nobility, at an annual rental of 19,941 Spanish dollars.[2] The lessees engaged either to cultivate the lands themselves, or to sublet them at a moderate, fixed rent to the peasants, and on no occasion to hire them out to other Indonesian rulers at advance rates. They also agreed not to levy taxes on, or demand services from the people on their lands.[3] In the following month, when the Sultan of Bantam ceded the highlands to the government in consideration of an annuity of 10,000 Spanish dollars, payable in monthly instalments from the local revenues,[4] Raffles advised the British Resident, Major Udney Yule, to pursue a similar policy to that already adopted in the lowlands, and grant leases in the highlands to a renter class on an annual or triennial basis, whichever were deemed the more satisfactory. 'An equitable and moderate land rent now established throughout the country in lieu of the feudal services, forced deliveries, and arbitrary taxes heretofore demanded', Raffles continued, 'cannot fail to ensure to the cultivator the fruits of his industry, and induce habits of civilization, while the immediate interference of the European authority may be expected in a short period to establish a vigilant police of which the country, particularly the highlands, stands so much in need'. It was to remain a matter for future consideration whether or not the monopolies on the coast were to be abolished, and the duties at the various ports collected by the government instead of being farmed out to individuals; but independent of these considerations, and the introduction of a land rent system, Raffles thought that it was possible to obtain a substantial increase in the local revenues by the establishment of opium farms in the highlands, and the Lampungs, in order to counter clandestine importations of that commodity. Yule, in the meantime, was instructed to pay for all pepper, cotton, rattans, and hemp delivered to the government storehouses at Serang, on the explicit understanding that this

[2] For details of the 1813 land rent assessment of the lowlands of Bantam, see J. Bastin, "Raffles' Ideas on the Land Rent System in Java", *VKI*, XIV (1954), 109.

[3] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 16-17; *Java Public Consultations*, 12 March 1813 (IOL).

[4] *Java Public Consultations*, 21 April 1815 (IOL); [W. B. Bergsma], *Eindresumé van het . . . Onderzoek naar de Rechten van den Inlander op den Grond op Java en Madoera* (Batavia, 1876-96), II, Bijl. A, 16.

arrangement was not to interfere with the principle of free cultivation established by the land rent system, but was merely to provide an accessible and ready market for the benefit of the local producers.[5]

Towards the end of May 1813, Yule made his first report on the Bantam highlands. He explained that, as he had been unable to find Indonesian rulers willing to rent districts on condition of residing on them, he had been forced to conclude that the lands would have to be 'let out . . . without any intermediate rank between the Government and peasantry'; moreover, as the cultivators in these districts had already made advances to the Sultan before the cession to the British government, arrangements for establishing a fixed moneyed rent in the highlands would have to be suspended until the beginning of 1814. Until then, Yule recommended that the balance due for 1813 should be accepted not only in specie but also in *padi*, at the rate of 13 Spanish dollars per *tjiang* of 2,400 *katis*.[6] The government's reply to these suggestions was that where it was deemed unnecessary to establish Indonesian rulers as a renter class, lands should be leased as closely to the cultivators as possible.[7] During the remainder of the year attention was concentrated upon completing a survey of the highland districts preparatory to the full introduction of the land rent system in the following year.

In the lowlands, meanwhile, the half-yearly land rents due on 1 July 1813 were all paid to the government on time, with the exception of rents from the four eastern districts of Tanara, Pontang, Tambakbaya, and Trate[?]. In this part of the Bantam Residency, drought conditions resulted in an entire failure of the rice crops, with a consequent deficiency of 1,625 Spanish dollars in the land rent collections.[8] Yule hoped that part of these arrears would be realized from the second crops during the remainder of

[5] Assey to Yule, 26 March 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 12 June 1813 (IOL).
[6] Yule to Assey, 28 May 1813, *Java Public Consultations*, 7 June 1813 (IOL).
[7] Marginal reply, dated 20 June 1813, to *ibid.*
[8] Yule to Assey, 2 August 1813, *Original Documents 1813*, Revenue Department, E.T. 75 (AN).

1813; but in fact the total deficit for the lowlands had increased threefold to 9,957 Java rupees before the year was out.[9]

Early in 1814, Yule forwarded to the government at Batavia a schedule of both the Bantam lowlands and highlands, giving a complete and revised land rent assessment for the new year. The lands had been divided into 'farms' — 331 in the lowlands, and 393 in the highlands, — each of which in the northern highlands contained an average of about thirty-four Indonesian families.[10] The 'farms' were all let out to *mandors*, or heads of villages, except the district of Tjilegon in the lowlands, where the Malay 'kapitan', who had held the district on lease during the previous year, had been so energetic in turning 'a wilderness [in] to a garden', that Yule thought that special consideration should be shown to him. His lease was therefore continued.[11] Otherwise, the land rent system in Bantam was organized during 1814 entirely on the village basis.[12] The total revenue assessment for the year, including a sum of 18,012 Spanish dollars derived from the sale of other farms and bazaars, was calculated at 58,142 Spanish dollars.[13] The assessment for the lowlands was increased

[9] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 147. Extracts from a variant report are printed in S. van Deventer, *Bijdragen tot de kennis van het Landelijk Stelsel op Java* (Zalt-Bommel, 1865-6), I, 363-6.

[10] This average is calculated from a separate "Schedule of the Northern Districts of the Highlands of Bantam, exhibiting the Number of Farms and the Number of Families, and the amount of Monied rent for which each has been let for the year 1814 . . . .", *Original Documents 1813*, Revenue Department E.T. 75 (AN). The number of families involved in the other highland districts, and in the lowlands, was not given in the table printed below. However, Yule's "Table of the Districts of Coast Landa Bantam . . . ." [Nov. 1812], *Mackenzie Collection* (*Miscellaneous*) I, no.13 (IOL) listed 15,186 families in the lowlands.

[11] Marginal note to "Schedule of the Bantam Districts exhibiting the Number of Farms and the amount of Monied Rents for which each has been let for the year 1814". *Original Documents 1814*, Revenue Department, E.T. 58 (AN).

[12] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 148-9.

[13] The assessment was therefore 40,130 Spanish dollars, which is the figure, in Java rupees, given by the General-Inspectorate of the Land Revenue (Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 148n.). J. de Bruijn's figure of 98,846 Java rupees is obviously incorrect, as are the figures in Bastin, *Native Policies*, 53, where, in order to reconcile De Bruijn's figures with those given by Raffles in *Substance of a Minute recorded . . . on the Introduction of an Improved System of Internal Management and the Establishment of a Land Rental on the Island of Java . . .* (London, 1814), 24, and Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 218, I went against the actual sense of the text. It is now clear that Raffles' statement that the Bantam "territorial revenues" for 1814 amounted to 100,000 Java rupees, was meant to include the sale of farms, bazaars, *et cetera*.

by some 6,000 Spanish dollars beyond the figure of the previous year to 26,598 Spanish dollars, and the highlands assessment was established at 13,532 Spanish dollars. An unusual feature of the assessment of the highlands was the stipulation that 100,000[?] pepper vines were to be planted as part of the land rent obligation.[14] It is evident from this, that an effort was being made to re-establish in the highlands the lucrative pepper culture which had declined during the Napoleonic Wars;[15] but how exactly a stipulation which enforced planting was capable of being reconciled with the principle of free cultivation, so often insisted upon by the British government, is not easy to see.

Details of the 1814 land rent assessment of the Bantam lowlands and highlands are given in the following tables.[16]

Of the total 1814 land rent assessment of 40, 130 Spanish dollars, or 88,287 Java rupees, all except 674 Java rupees appears to have been collected.[17] In February 1814, when reporting that great promptness had been shown by many of the lowlands cultivators in coming forward with their half-yearly rents, Yule expressed concern at the tardiness exhibited in this respect by the people in the hills, and doubted whether returns would be received from some of the highland districts.[18] According to J. de Bruijn, who reported on the Bantam Residency to the Dutch Commissioners-General in 1817, the southern highland districts were never surveyed during the British administration because piratical incursions into that part of the country produced general insecurity, and caused depopulation.[19] Undoubtedly the small arrears in the 1814 land rent collection occurred in these districts.

At the beginning of 1815 the detailed, or *ryotwari* land rent system, the principles of which Raffles had outlined in his minute of 11 February 1814,[20] was supposed to be introduced into Bantam.

[14] Marginal note to "Schedule of the Bantam Districts . . . 1814", *Original Documents 1814*, Revenue Department, E.T. 58, (AN). The total figure is difficult to decipher, but the number specified for the northern districts of the highlands was 34,500 vines.

[15] Daendels, *Staat*, 12; Raffles, *History*, I, 146.

[16] The tables are based on "Schedule of the Bantam Districts . . . 1814", *Original Documents 1814*, Revenue Department, E.T. 58 (AN). The 1813 figures come from a more detailed table printed in Bastin, *VKI*, XIV, 109.

[17] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, 1, 148.

[18] Yule to Assey, 5 February 1814, *Original Documents 1814*, Revenue Department, E.T. 58 (AN).

[19] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, 1, 148-9.

[20] Raffles, *Substance*, 1-215.

LOWLANDS					
DISTRICTS	Number of farms	Assessment of land rent			
		1814		1813	
		Spanish dollars	Sts	Spanish dollars	Sts
Tjilegon	4	2,500		1,813	
Tjiruas	54	1,742	33	1,284	36
Kalodran	14	1,153		981	
Panjairan[?]	21	1,485		1,091	
Tjibening	8	399		221	
Anjer	33	2,305		1,038	16
Serang	27	1,172		563	32
Jawana	6	118		28	
Bantam	17	510		298	44
Trate	16	779		with Sardang 3,057	48
Bodjonagara	13	1,652	33	936	16
Serdang[?]	32	3,383	33	[see Trate]	
Tambakbaya	19	2,452	33	2,219	6
Ragas	13	1,107		1,507	
Undarandir	10	301		207	
Tjikandi	7	211		121	
Pontang	21	2,518		2,194	
Tanara[?]	9	752		887	
Tjarita	7	455		72	
[Tjaringin]	?	[1,602]		1,421	
Total:	331	26,598		19,941	

HIGHLANDS			
DISTRICTS	Number of farms	Assessment of land rent 1814	
		Spanish dollars	Sts.
Baros	49	1,021	
Tjiomas	33	1,452	
Tjimanuk	15	750	
Lanchar[?]	20	1,123	33
Tjadasari	24	602	
Tjekek	20	453	
Pandeglang	19	237	
Kontjang[?]	16	615	
Tjipete	13	399	
Pakam	17	634	
Kolelet	11	361	
Pamarayan	12	451	
Parung-Kudjang	14	200	
Bojong	1	100	
Sadjira	1	500	
Samang	1	300	
Binguangeun	18	683	
Tjianggasa	20	1,430	
Menes	15	456	
Panimbang	9	309	
Kananga	25	545	
Parayan[?]	22	231	
Kosik	18	680	
Total:	393	13,532	33

Unfortunately, the cadastral survey, which was an essential prerequisite for the introduction of the system, had not proceeded very far by the beginning of the new year. As late as March 1815 Yule informed the government that although he had surveyed most of the lowlands except Tjarita and Tjaringin, and had made considerable progress in surveying the districts around Gunong Karang, his general progress in registering the quantities, descriptions, and other particulars of the lands, had been 'very trifling when compared to the whole extent of the district', and he feared that it would be impossible for him to complete the survey for several months. As there were very few districts, or even villages, where the land annexed to them had been completely rented out, he was unable to give anything more than an estimate of the expected land rent yield under the *ryotwari* system; but on the basis of what had already been achieved, he predicted that the 1815 assessment would exceed that of the previous years 'in a very extraordinary degree'. He reported that the people in general were very satisfied with the principles of individual property established by the new system, even allowing that the rents proposed by the government were 'moderate and easy'.[21]

What, in effect, Yule had surveyed by March 1815 were the lands of some 356 (of a total of 458) villages in the Tjilegon, Serdang, Jawana, Panjairan, Baros, Tjekek, Tjadasari, Kalodran, Tjibening, Bantam, Serang, Tjiruas, Tambakbaya, Pontang, Pakam, Tjiomas, and Anjer districts. He had granted leases to 14,703 cultivators in these districts, at an estimated rent of 145,831 Java rupees. According to a statistical table printed in *The History of Java*, some 23,719 leases were finally granted in these districts, and in the whole Residency of Bantam, a total of 41,444 leases.[22] Obviously, therefore, the survey of the additional districts, and the granting of the additional leases, must have kept Yule busy during the remainder of 1815. Thus, while in theory the *ryotwari* system was supposed to have been functioning in Bantam during that year, in practice the greater part of the country continued under the village system. No further reports on the land rent system in Bantam were apparently made by Yule; certainly there

[21] Yule to Assey, 3 March 1815, *Revenue Stukken 1815*, E.T. 63 (AN).
[22] Raffles, *History*, II, 268-9.

are none among the revenue documents in the *Arsip Negara*, Djakarta, and the Accountant-General, J. G. Bauer, testified in May 1817 that no regular statements of land rent assessments were made by Yule during 1815-16.[23] We are, therefore, entirely dependent on a number of Dutch reports of 1817 for information on the Bantam land rent system during these years, and especially upon the report of J. de Bruijn, who took control of the Bantam Residency from the British in the latter half of 1816.

According to De Bruijn, the total 1815 land rent assessment for Bantam was 349,271 Java rupees, which was no less than an increase of nearly four times that of the previous year. Of this amount, however, only 160,211 Java rupees were received, so that the arrears in the land rent collection for that year amounted to 189,060 Java rupees.[24] Then, in the following year, the system was continued on the same basis, but until August 1816, when the British administration ceased, only 812 Java rupees had been collected. De Bruijn estimated that at that time the land rent arrears amounted to 549,150 Java rupees.[25] Figures from other sources suggest that this estimate of arrears is not much exaggerated.

In May 1817 Bauer stated that until the end of July 1816 some 995 Java rupees had been received in payment of land rents for that year (that is, 183 Java rupees more than De Bruijn allowed), and another 2,586 Java rupees were paid in by December. The total receipts from the land rents of Bantam during 1816 amounted, therefore, to 3,580 Java rupees. Another report, compiled by both British and Dutch officials some time earlier, stated that until the cession of Java to the Netherlands, a total of 59,182 Java rupees had been collected as part of the 1815 land rent arrears in Bantam, and that between August and December 1816 another 7,650 Java rupees had been paid to the Dutch collectors. If the 1815 assessment was continued at the same level during 1816, as stated by De Bruijn, then the total assessment of the land rents of Bantam for these two years may be calculated at 698,542 Java rupees; and if each of the collections mentioned above are accepted as *separate* items, when clearly they overlap,

[23] Van Deventer, *Landelijk Stelsel*, I, 364.

[24] *Ibid.*; Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 149 appears to confuse arrears with collections.

[25] Van Deventer, *Landelijk Stelsel*, I, 364-5.

then we would be safe in assuming that the total maximum amount realized from the Bantam land rent system during 1815 and 1816 was 230,624 Java rupees. As the resultant total arrears of 467,918 Java rupees are only 81,232 Java rupees less than De Bruijn's figure of 549,150 Java rupees, we may average the two figures, and for convenience take the round figure of half-a-million Java rupees as constituting the total arrears in the Bantam land rents during the British administration.

One of the reasons for this enormous deficit was the extraordinarily high assessment of the lands. The rates of hire established by Yule for a *jung* (2,000 square roods) of each kind of land were 66 Java rupees on the first quality *sawahs*, 37:2 Java rupees on the second quality, and 25:2 Java rupees on the third quality. On the first quality *tegals*, the rates were 37:2 Java rupees, on the second quality 25:2 Java rupees, and on the third quality 14 Java rupees.[26]

It was not only a matter of excessive rates being charged for the lands; what was equally important was the unavailability of specie with which to pay the rents. As early as 3 March 1815 Yule had warned the government that despite favourable appearances, it was impossible to expect all rents to be paid in cash, 'for such is the poverty of the inhabitants that ... all the money in the district would be [in]sufficient to pay a third of the revenue'. He therefore recommended that besides *padi*, other articles such as pepper, betelnut, coffee, and stick-lac, should be received in payment of the land rents.[27] But from the later severe strictures passed by De Bruijn on the stubborn attachment of the Indonesian peasan's to rice cultivation, and the sacrifice which this entailed in the matter of production of lucrative commodities like pepper, coffee, sugar, indigo, and cotton for the world market,[28] as well as from the direct statement of the General-Inspectorate of Land Revenues in April 1818 that all cultures, except that of rice, were in a state of decline,[29] it would appear that during the British administration land rents in Bantam were paid for the most part in *padi*, or specie. It is possible, however, to infer from an 1817 report of the Netherlands-Indies

[26] *Ibid.*, I, 365.
[27] *Revenue Stukken 1815*, E.T. 63 (AN).
[28] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 152-3.
[29] *Ibid.*, I, 152n.

Council of Finance that the pepper monopoly was continued by the British Resident in Bantam contrary to the regulations which enjoined freedom of cultivation,[30] so that some rents from the highland districts may well have been paid in pepper.

The liberal principles established by the government conflicted with reality in another way. According to these principles, the cultivator, once he had paid his annual rent, was freed from all further obligations either to the European, or to the higher Indonesian authorities; indeed, the whole justification for the land rent system was that it did away with all the arbitrary impositions which previously had been laid upon the peasantry, and established in its place a system of regular and fixed taxation. And yet what happened in practice was that the old system of hiring out bazaars and farms to the highest bidders, often Chinese, continued. A host of minor farms were auctioned by the government in 1813,[31] and although a number of these were later abolished, farms for the sale of gambier, tobacco, fish, and other produce, continued throughout the period of British rule. The auctioning of these farms, together with the leasing of the bazaars, led to 'heavy and irregular' taxation, and, according to De Bruijn, had a pernicious influence on the Indonesian small-scale trade. It was, he stated, absolutely incompatible with the land rent system, because the cultivator, who had already paid rent for the use of land necessary to raise produce for the local market, had in addition to meet levies imposed at the bazaars by persons who had hired them from the government. The result was that the cultivators in Bantam were double-taxed, despite the paper regulations of the British Lieutenant-Governor.[32]

Equally, if not more important than all of these reasons for the failure of the land rent system in Bantam, was the defective administrative machinery established by the regulations of February 1814. The regulations contained 'many fine and useful arrangements', which, if they had been exactly observed, would doubtless have attained the object of a regular and equitable system of taxation; but unfortunately in Bantam the means were lacking to put them into operation as the Indonesian rulers were either unwilling to cooperate or were unsuited to the duties laid upon

[30] De Haan, *BKI*, XCII, 668.
[31] *Java Government Gazette*, 5 December 1812.
[32] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 135-4.

them.[33] Yule had informed the government early in 1815 that although the people seemed happy with the *ryotwari* system of collection, the *mandors*, and other petty chiefs of the villages, were opposed to the system and were throwing obstacles in the way of its introduction.[34] As the burden of the administration of the land rent system fell upon these particular chiefs, their opposition was a vital factor in accounting for its eventual failure. Yet, even with the best will in the world, these village chiefs were incapable of carrying out the tasks imposed on them. Paragraph fourteen of the 1814 regulations enjoined them to furnish the Collectors with full accounts and statements relating to the revenue affairs of their villages, when, in fact, they could neither read nor write. The consequence was that Indonesian writers had to be called in, but as there was only one of these to each district, which often included many widely scattered villages, it is not difficult to understand the resultant entanglements in the accounts. These increased in proportion as the *mandors* and writers joined together in concocting false reports in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the government and the people.[35]

These criticisms of the Bantam land rent system made by De Bruijn appear to be incontrovertible, not only because he was long familiar with conditions in that part of Java, having occupied the position of *Landdrost* at the time of the British conquest,[36] but also because he was himself an enthusiastic supporter of the land rent idea. He informed the Commissioners-General that in his view it was to be much preferred to any other system which could be devised, but recommended the lowering of the assessment by one-third, and the appointment of sufficient European revenue officers to administer the system. Moreover, unlike other Dutchmen who favoured a continuation of the land rent system, De Bruijn supported the *ryotwari* method of collection as the only one which could promise permanent advantage. '[I]t has seemed to me', he wrote to the Commissioners-General in 1817, 'that this

[33] *Ibid.*, 150-1.
[34] Yule to Assey, 3 March 1815, *Revenue Stukken 1815*, E.T. 63 (AN).
[35] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 151.
[36] De Bruijn forwarded a useful "Memoir" on Bantam to Raffles on 30 September 1811, as a guide to the new administration. (*Mackenzie Collection Private*), 4 No.7 (IOL).

part of the administration introduced and put into operation by the British Government of Java is highly useful and important and that, although there are still many defects to redress, nevertheless the late British administration, by the first introduction of the land rent system, has rendered to the Netherlands Government a principal and essential service, from which in future the most salutary results will originate, [because] it is . . . beyond all doubt that the land rent, modified and improved on a well considered and regulated plan, is the only true and sufficient way to pour out the rich produce of these remote regions into the lap of the Motherland . . . .'[37]

[37] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 160-1.

VI

RAFFLES AND A BRITISH INDONESIA

"By fixing ourselves in Banca, Bali, Celebes, and Jelolo, we should have a chain of posts which would prevent the enemy entirely from attaining very formidable power, or deriving his former advantages from the possession of Java and the Moluccas; and by forming a settlement in Borneo, connected with the interior of that country, . . . we should soon be in a condition to compete with them on equal terms".

Raffles to Lord Minto, 1811 (Lady Raffles, *Memoir . . . of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles . . .* (London, 1830).

(i)

THE Dutch monopoly of trade in Indonesia during the eighteenth century was often more effective than the early exponents of free trade were prepared to admit. Ultimately, however, the resources of the Dutch East India Company proved to be inadequate for the task of restricting commerce, and by the end of the century the British 'country' traders had come to enjoy such a measure of success, particularly after 1784 when British ships were accorded the right of free navigation in the Eastern seas, that the Dutch recognized that at long last their English rivals had grown too strong for them, and that is was only their territorial possessions in Indonesia which prevented a serious breach in the spice monopoly.[1]

Spices, together with tin, birds'-nests, sea-slugs, bees-wax, sandalwood, and other products of the archipelago, were of some importance to the British for their trade with China. Earlier in the eighteenth century, as the supplies of specie available for shipment to Canton declined, the need for these archipelago products increased, and the lack of them constituted one of the major obstacles to the development of this trade; the other great obstacle was, of course, the monopoly enjoyed by the Hong

[1] De Jonge, *Opkomst*, XII, 349.

merchants,[2] which made Canton as hard to enter as Heaven, and as difficult to get out of as Chancery.[3] In order to overcome both of these difficulties, attempts were made by Alexander Dalrymple during the 1760s and 1770s to establish an *entrepôt* at Balambangan, where it would be possible not only to trade with Chinese merchants unhampered by commercial restrictions,[4] but also to capture some of the archipelago trade, and so add cloves, nutmegs, and cinnamon to the China investment.[5] The Balambangan settlement soon had to be abandoned; the China trade, however, continued to expand. It trebled during the closing decades of the century,[6] and in 1792 Henry Dundas calculated that by the sale of British and Indian manufactures, China could furnish for the European investment annual resources of no less than £1,400,000.[7]

Tea was by far the most important commodity in the trade and the most lucrative.[8] During the period 1793-1810 the Company's India and China goods had sold for £103 million, and of this no less than £55 million had come from the sales of tea.[9] In exchange for tea, the Company shipped iron, Indian cotton, pepper, spices, woollens, and sandalwood to Canton. After the turn of the century, however, Indian cotton and opium began to dominate the market, and together with metals left an insignificant place for spices. Despite this, and the fact that they made up only a small percentage of the Company's sales on the home market,[10] the British quest for spices had a lingering death. As late as 1780 the

[2] V. T. Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793* (London, 1952), I, 67, 71.

[3] C. N. Parkinson, *Trade in the Eastern Seas 1793-1813* (Cambridge, 1937), 58.

[4] On Dalrymple, see Harlow, *Founding*, I, 70ff.; J. Willi, *The Early Relations of England with Borneo to 1805* (Langensalza, 1922), 34ff.

[5] T. Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas, from Balambangan* (London, 1779), 2.

[6] E. H. Pritchard, *The Crucial Years of Early Anglo-Chinese Relations, 1750-1800* (Washington, 1936), 144.

[7] H. B. Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company trading to China, 1635-1834* (Oxford, 1926-9), II, 233.

[8] C. N. Parkinson, "The East India Trade", *The Trade Winds, A Study of British Overseas Trade during the French Wars 1793-1815* (London, 1948), 142; M. Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42* (Cambridge, 1951), 3-4; Marks, *VKI*, XXVII, 12-13.

[9] Parkinson, *Trade*, 96. The Company sent eighteen to twenty ships to Canton annually, and during the period of the British occupation of Indonesia, they were fetching some 30 million lbs. of tea. (Morse, *Chronicles*, III, 290).

[10] Parkinson, *Trade*, 97.

Directors were still casting envious eyes on eastern Indonesia. 'It is there', they wrote to Lord Hillsborough on 19 August, 'that the East India Company desire to have an Establishment, as it would secure them a share in the most valuable of all Commercial Branches, the Spices'.[11] Some Britishers were perspicacious enough to realize that such a desire no longer accorded with the marked changes which had occurred in Sino-British trade during the last decades of the eighteenth century; but they could not persuade the Company to leave the out-worn spice monopoly in Dutch hands.[12] In 1796, when the French invasion of the Netherlands had provided sufficient justification, an expedition under Admiral P. Rainier was despatched to the Moluccas, and nutmeg and cloves seedlings were transplanted to gardens along the west coast of Sumatra and Ceylon.[13]

Once, however, the Dutch spice monopoly had thus been so effectively shattered, the Moluccas soon proved to be of little use to the Company. Accordingly, the British Resident at Amboina, R. T. Farquhar, was instructed in 1802 to leave the island and proceed to Balambangan, in an attempt to resurrect it as a military and naval establishment.[14] After an inauspicious beginning, the Balambangan settlement again came to nothing, and Farquhar received orders to abandon, what a contemporary writer described as, that 'sterile, uninhabited, and ... most piratical and barbarous neighbourhood of the whole Archipelago'.[15] The disappointed Farquhar bluntly reprimanded the Supreme government in his last despatch as Lieutenant-Governor of Penang for its indifference to piracy in the Eastern seas, for he ascribed to piracy 'the cause of the British settlements heretofore formed by the Honourable Company, to the eastward of the Bay of Bengal, having ended almost invariably in a tragical manner'.[16]

On the same day that Farquhar wrote those words, Raffles arrived at Penang as the new government's Assistant-Secretary.

[11] Harlow, *Founding*, I, 40.
[12] Dundas to Grenville, 2 September 1787, Fortescue MSS. preserved at *Dropmore* (Hist. MSS. Commission) (London, 1899), III, 419-21.
[13] J. E. Heeres, "Eene Engelsche lezing omtrent de verovering van Banda en Ambon in 1796 ...", *BKI*, LX (1908), 249-365; C. N. Parkinson, *War in the Eastern Seas 1793-1815* (London, 1954), 91-5.
[14] Willi, *Early Relations*, 118ff.
[15] J. Crawfurd, *A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands & Adjacent Countries* (London, 1856), 27.
[16] Willi, *Early Relations*, 134.

Farquhar's despatch was therefore among the first official documents that he ever read in Asia, and he took its lesson to heart.[17] From Farquhar and Dalrymple he imbibed the enthusiasm which was to result in a further attempt to revive the Balambangan idea after Java had fallen to the British in 1811.

(ii)

The tremendous possibilities which the conquest of Java opened to the extension of British influence in the Southeast Asia were apparent to Raffles from the beginning. 'The annexation of Java and the Eastern Isles to our Indian empire', he wrote to Minto in June 1811, 'opens to the English nation views of so enlarged a nature, as to seem equally to demand and justify a bolder policy, both of a commercial and political kind, than we could have lately contemplated'.[18] However, although he was very critical of certain restrictive tendencies in Dutch economic policy, he refused to abandon entirely all ideas of monopoly because of the commercial advantages that the possession of Java was likely to afford the East India Company and the British nation. Indeed, he considered that in future Britain's 'Empire of Colonies', both in the East and West Indies, should be regulated on 'one liberal and national principle of commercial monopoly' in order to balance France's domination of Europe. It was, he wrote, 'as essential to the commerce and welfare of the Eastern islands, as to the support and prosperity of our more permanent possessions, that the Eastern trade should be subject to certain restrictions — and that [although] the Dutch have been generally condemned by us for the severe restrictions and monopolies they have adopted, yet there are many of their regulations which we must approve, while their general principles of government and policy cannot easily and without actual experience be controverted. By continuing, therefore, until we see cause to alter all existing restrictions and regulations for trade, we shall only do what prudence, caution and our own interest dictate'.[19]

[17] Raffles to [W. Ramsay], 10 November 1805, *Raffles Collection*, I, no.3 (IOL); "Memo proposing the Capture of Java from the French . . . ", n.d., *ibid.*, II, no.1 (IOL); Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 56; Raffles, *History*, I, 258.

[18] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 69.

[19] "Memoir on the value, . . . of the Dutch possessions in the East", May [1811], *Raffles Collection*, II, no.3 (IOL).

Raffles had in mind the exclusion of all Western nations from the Indonesian trade, which was henceforth to be carried on through regulated ports under the control of British authorities, rather on the same principle 'as existed heretofore in the more prosperous times of the Dutch East India Company, and which has only been broken through of late from the gradual decline of their power, and consequent interference of a more general and irregular trade'.[20] He justified the continuation of the Dutch monopoly system on the grounds that the Indonesians were not advanced enough to meet the rigours of an unregulated and free intercourse with Western nations: 'It may also be observed that this exclusive trade is peculiarly adapted to the present character and habits of the inhabitants of the Eastern islands. Being very little advanced in civilization, rude in their manners and ideas, and poor because they have not hitherto had an idea of property, or of attending to agriculture and commerce beyond their personal and immediate wants, an open and free trade with these people would be equally injurious to them, and ruinous to the adventurers who might be engaged in it'.[21] Six years later, when Singapore was founded on free trade principles, this argument was to be entirely reversed.

While Raffles' economic ideas followed closely those of the Dutch, his political views were conceived to be 'radically different' from the divide-and-rule principles which he believed had been pursued by them in Indonesia. 'The policy which I conjecture we shall subsequently find it proper to follow', he informed Minto, 'is exactly the opposite of this. We may, with great facility, and without much trouble, employ our influence and mediation to heal the dissensions of the native princes, to establish firmly ancient authorities, check innovations, and prevent civil wars as much as lies in our power....'[22] This was the conservative line in Raffles' policies, which applied generally to all the Indonesian islands with the exception of Java. Where rule could not be exercized directly by a beneficent British government, the Indonesian rulers were to be afforded support to maintain their

[20] Raffles to Hare, 7 April 1812, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 8 January 1814 (IOL).
[21] Raffles to Secret Committee, 30 June 1813, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (iii) (IOL).
[22] Raffles to Minto, 10 June 1811, Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 64-5.

authority. Raffles thought that, applied to the islands of the archipelago, such a policy would render British influence permanent irrespective of the political fate of Java,[23] and would, at the same time, keep piracy in check. 'Nothing', he wrote, 'can tend so effectually to the suppression of piracy, to the encouragement and extension of lawful commerce, and to the civilization of the inhabitants of the Eastern islands, as affording a steady support to the established native sovereigns, and assisting them in the maintenance of their just rights and authority over their several chiefs . . . .'[24]

It was in an attempt to meet the menace of piracy, and to regulate the commerce of Indonesia, that Raffles adopted a forward policy off the west coast of Borneo. The only justification that he could offer for this policy was the importance of British trade in the Indonesian archipelago. But even before 1813, when the revision of the Company's charter meant that the Directors could no longer insist upon monopoly rights in the region, the archipelago trade constituted a rapidly declining asset in the over-all trade with China; and, as Java proved to be anything but self-sufficient, Raffles' persistent appeals to the Directors to retain the Dutch possessions in Indonesia after the war met with very little response. Those 'chaste managers of Leadenhall Street' were quite content to see the Indonesian islands restored to the Dutch so long as the Cape of Good Hope remained in British hands, and they were allowed a free and uninterrupted trade with Canton. Only among the British cotton interests and the private traders was there any real interest shown in the Indonesian region.[25] Raffles' forward policy in the archipelago during 1811-16, when he tried to extend British power in the region by means of subsidiary alliances with the Indonesian rulers, therefore never found support among the Directors. The Company realized from its experience on the Indian continent that these alliances always resulted in trouble, and, inevitably, in further acquisitions of territory. Indeed, it is fair to conclude that Raffles' founding of Singapore in 1819, although it provoked much criticism in England, met with more

[23] *Ibid.*, 66.

[24] Raffles to Penang, 18 February 1814, *Raffles Collection*, X, no.1 (IOL).

[25] H. R. C. Wright, "The Anglo-Dutch Dispute in the East, 1814-1824", *Economic History Review*, III (1950-1), 229-39 examines certain aspects of this question.

ready support than did his actions during his period in Java. The apparent hostility which the taking of Singapore caused on the one hand, but the reluctance to surrender it on the other, is pointed to by Dutch historians as further evidence of the Machiavellian ways of British policy. But while the founding of Singapore represented in many ways the climax of Raffles' efforts in Southeast Asia, in the early years his hopes of consolidating British power lay further eastwards.

(iii)

As late as the 1790s Dalrymple continued to urge the necessity of an *entrepôt* at Balambangan, although by then his ideas were changing and showed a marked preference for a trading station in Cochin-China.[26] Raffles was familiar with his essays in the *Oriental Repertory* and, as already indicated, had received a first-hand account of Balambangan from R. T. Farquhar at Penang. It was from the latter that Raffles imbibed the idea that the extension and security of British settlements in the archipelago depended upon a ruthless suppression of the Indonesian and Malay pirates. Certainly his own schemes in Borneo, like those of Sir James Brooke later in the century, were intimately connected with a rigorous anti-piracy campaign.

Raffles considered that Dutch territorial claims to Borneo were weak,[27] and so concentrated his attention on the island as a suitable place where British power could be consolidated if ever the Dutch returned to Java. The Sultan of Pontianak had requested a British connection in 1803 and 1810, at which time the Sultan of Brunei also made overtures for some form of alliance.[28] Two years later, the British trader, John Hunt, who had spent part of 1810 in the Sulu region, sent Raffles a comprehensive report on Borneo in which he appealed for the development of the island's untold wealth, and for the civilization of its inhabitants. The report, which had a profound influence not only on Raffles but

[26] "Some Notes concerning the Trade to China", *Oriental Repertory* (London, 1790-4), II, 321-2; "Memorandum on Trade to the South Seas . . .", V.T. Harlow and F. Madden, *British Colonial Developments 1774-1834* (Oxford, 1953), 38-9.

[27] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 258; Raffles, *History*, I, 267.

[28] Willi, *Early Relations*, 134.

also on Brooke, argued that the best way to effect these particular objects was to engage in a vigorous campaign against the Borneo pirates, in order to make the river estuaries of Sambas, Brunei, and Pasir safe for the establishment of British stations.[29]

Raffles soon showed his willingness to undertake positive measures against piracy. After an abortive mission in 1812,[30] the pirate stronghold of Sambas was reduced in June of the following year,[31] and, in order to use the example afforded by its destruction as a deterrent to the other Indonesian rulers, he appointed Captain B. C. Garnham as 'Political Agent' to confine the foreign trade of Borneo to the regulated ports of Banjermassin, Pontianak and Brunei.[32] Minor ports dependent upon them were to be opened later, and the country brought gradually under control. A British agent was to be established at Pontianak, and Garnham was instructed to settle the government of Sambas on the Sultan, provided that he agreed not to give further shelter to the pirates. The Sultan of Brunei was to be accorded official recognition, but warned of the fate of Sambas if he displayed any hesitation about complying with the anti-piracy regulations. Similar warnings were to be addressed to the Sultan of Kutei.[33] The whole object of the mission was to ascertain whether or not an expedition, similar to that sent against Sambas, was necessary to impress on the Indonesian rulers the firm determination of the British government to stamp out piracy in the Eastern seas; it was on no account designed to extend British territorial commitments.[34]

Garnham despatched Raffles' letters to the Sultans of Kutei and Pasir on 25 August, and during the following month prevailed upon the Sultans of Pontianak and Brunei to comply with the

[29] "Sketch of Borneo or Pulo Kalamantan", J. H. Moor (ed.), *Notices of the Indian Archipelago, and Adjacent Countries* (Singapore, 1837), App., 12-30; also printed as an Appendix to H. Keppel, *The Expedition to Borneo of H. M .S. Dido* (London, 1847), I, 382-429.

[30] *Gillespie Charges* (Batavia, 1815), 318-23.

[31] *Java Government Gazette*, 24 July 1813.

[32] Instructions to Garnham, 10 August 1813, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 18 August 1813 (IOL). See also Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, XLV.

[33] Raffles to the Sultans of Brunei and Kutei, 9-10 August 1813, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 18 August 1813 (IOL).

[34] Raffles to Bengal and Sir Samuel Hood, 23 September 1813, *ibid.*, 25 September 1813.

wishes of the British government.[35] At Sambas he persuaded the Sultan to enter a treaty which accorded him British recognition and protection, but bound him to enforce Raffles' piracy regulations.[36] So far as it went, the mission appears to have satisfied Raffles; it did not, however, meet with the entire approval of the Supreme government in Calcutta. The military measures against Sambas were sanctioned, but Minto came down firmly against the idea of confining the Indonesian trade to certain specified ports. 'With respect to your projected plan of confining the trade of the Eastern islands to certain specific ports', he wrote on 10 July 1813, 'we must observe that we are not quite satisfied of the policy of the restrictions which you intended to impose, and that we are still more inclined to doubt the competency of your government to enforce any such restrictions as far as they may regard the ports of the different independent chiefs holding territory in the Eastern islands. We would recommend, therefore, that you suspend any arrangements which you have had it in contemplation to adopt for this purpose until you may be made acquainted with the determination of the public authorities in England, with respect to the future administration of our possessions in the Eastern islands . . . .'[37]

Before this despatch reached Batavia, Raffles was already pursuing a forward policy to the west of Java. On 4 September 1813 a small mission was sent to Lingga and Riau with the object of impressing upon the Bugis and Malay rulers the extreme displeasure of the British government at the recent piratical raids against Bangka, and the continued smuggling of Bangka tin. They were requested to seize any boats employed in this trade, and Raffles announced his intention of stationing a British agent at Lingga under the authority of the Resident of Bangka,[38] apparently for the purpose of enforcing the tin monopoly.

[35] Garnham to Raffles, 25 August 1813, *ibid.*, 23 September 1813 (IOL); report of Garnham, 15 November 1813, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 5 February 1814 (IOL).

[36] Treaty with the Sultan of Sambas, 23 October 1813, *ibid.* (IOL).

[37] Minto to Raffles, 10 July and [22] November 1813, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 23 October 1813 (IOL); Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 197.

[38] Instructions to Captain Macdonald, 3 September 1813; Macdonald to Captain Court, 13 September 1813; Raffles to Captain Court, 11 October 1813, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 29 October 1813 (IOL).

(iv)

Although positive orders had been received from Calcutta not to enter into further engagements with the independent Indonesian rulers until the wishes of the home authorities were known, Raffles felt that time was short, and that he must act without authority if a British sphere of influence was to be created in the archipelago. Early in 1814, therefore, he despatched the English trader, John Hunt, to Mindanao and Sulu with the object of informing the people of the establishment of a British government in Java, and of the active measures which had already been taken against piracy. Hunt was to obtain as much accurate information as possible about the state of piracy in the Sulu archipelago, and to suggest means of suppressing it; he was presented with letters of introduction to the rulers of Sulu, Mindanao, and Brunei, and also to the Spanish Governor of Zamboangan, who was to be told of the object of the mission only in so far as it related to the extirpation of piracy.[39] In addition to these aims, the mission also had commercial objectives designed to raise a favourable credit in Calcutta for a depleted Java treasury. The idea was to despatch from Batavia a cargo of produce which was to be disposed of at Sulu; local goods were then to be shipped for sale at Canton, and Chinese wares consigned back to Sulu and sold for pepper and other articles suitable for the European investment. Raffles estimated that something like 100,000 Spanish dollars was likely to result from these transactions.[40] Hunt was also to effect some arrangement by which he could continue to reside in the region as an official British agent, and in that capacity he was to open a regular commercial intercourse with China, and the surrounding islands.

Hunt left Surabaya at the end of January, and in the middle of March arrived in the Mindanao roads, where the Sultan apparently expressed some satisfaction at his arrival.[41] The British had shown an interest in Mindanao as early as June 1762, when

[39] Instructions to Hunt, and Raffles to the Governor of Zamboangan, 20 January 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 13 May 1814 (IOL).
[40] Raffles to Court, 11 February 1814, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 25 March 1814 (IOL).
[41] Hunt to Raffles, 17 March 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 13 May 1814 (IOL).

Rear-Admiral C. Steevens had received secret instructions to assist, after the cessation of hostilities against Manila, the Company's officers to form a settlement there.[42] Thirteen years later, Captain Thomas Forrest was granted the island of Bunwut by the Sultan. The failure of Dalrymple's ventures at Balambangan caused the Directors to lose interest in the area, however, even though the Sultan, in order to gain some support against rebellious subjects, continued to make strong endeavours to secure a British alliance. He despatched an envoy to Madras in 1809, when Minto was there investigating the revolt of the officers, but as the Governor-General was evasive, the Sultan was obliged to solicit the help of the Spaniards at Zamboangan.[43] Hunt explained to the Sultan that the British had no desire to extend their territories nor any wish to interfere in his affairs; but, apparently because the Sultan was insistent upon a treaty, Hunt suggested that the British might be willing to establish a Residency in his territories. He explained that Bunwut island, which had previously been ceded to Forrest, was unsuitable for such an establishment, and proposed instead Pollock harbour. The Sultan demurred on the grounds that the people there were not directly under his authority, and he suggested Balankay as an alternative; but in the treaty which he signed on 17 March this matter was left open for future negotiation. The treaty itself permitted a British agent to reside at Mindanao with complete jurisdiction within the Residency, and granted the Company exclusive trading rights, and a half share in the Sultan's revenues.[44]

Hunt left Mindanao at the end of March for Sulu, where his proposal to renew Dalrymple's treaty of 1763 met with hostility. The Sultan himself was prepared to allow a British agent to remain in his territories, but his chiefs were resolutely opposed to the idea. Some anti-British demonstrations occurred, but after involved and confused negotiations Hunt managed to secure the Sultan's signature to a treaty which confirmed all the privileges formerly granted to Dalrymple.[45] Hunt remained at Sulu for some time selling the Java investment, but the arrival of Chinese junks,

[42] Harlow, *Founding*, I, 22.
[43] Minto to Sultan of Mindanao, 3 October 1809, Hunt to Raffles, 17 March 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 13 May 1814 (IOL).
[44] Treaty with the Sultan of Mindanao, 17 March 1814, *ibid.* (IOL).
[45] Treaty with the Sultan of Sulu, 2 April 1814, *ibid.* (IOL).

vessels from Manila, and the brig *Thainstone* from Penang, which carried goods sponsored by the Calcutta agency-house of John Palmer, swamped the local market and the Java produce sold cheaply. To add to his difficulties, Hunt was also intimidated by the Sulus into buying a return cargo for China at exorbitant rates. He left Sulu at the end of August, and at Zamboangan received the Spanish Governor's permission to leave part of his force until he returned from Canton. Shortly afterwards he was obliged to abandon his ship, and although he saved its cargo, he was unable to consign it to China. He informed Raffles of the disaster in December, and stated that he would remain at Manila until the Chinese junks arrived in the following April, when he thought it would be possible to dispose of the cargo.[46]

When Raffles learned of the failure to secure the commercial objects of the Sulu mission, he ordered one of the ships of the Makassar station to proceed to Manila with fresh instructions to abandon all further interference or intercourse with Sulu and its neighbourhood.[47] Hunt returned to Batavia in April, and the remainder of his cargo was auctioned. Far from making the huge profits anticipated, the mission resulted in a considerable financial loss; it also failed to achieve its prime object of establishing 'a permanent interest in the islands to the north of Borneo'.[48]

(v)

At the beginning of 1814, when Hunt was on his way to Sulu, and the finishing touches were being put to the new land rent system in Java, Raffles had arrived at a fairly coherent policy for the archipelago. His ideas found their completest expression in a long paper of 11 February 1814, which was perhaps the most important document of its kind that he ever sent home. 'The period is now arrived', he wrote, 'when it becomes necessary to decide upon the general policy which we shall pursue towards the different native states in these seas ... [T]he policy uniformly

[46] Hunt to Raffles, 1 September 1814, 3 January and 21 April 1815, *Java Public Consultations*, 22 December 1814, 29 March and 21 April 1815 (IOL). See also *Consultations* of 13 and 26 May, 9 June 1815.

[47] Raffles to Hunt, 30 January 1815, *Java Separate and Political Department*, 7 February 1815 (IOL).

[48] Raffles to Court, 11 February 1814, *Java Separate Department Proceedings*, 25 March 1814 (IOL).

recommended and adopted by this government has been that of supporting the long established and acknowledged sovereigns, and of supporting order and subordination within their respective empires as anciently established'. Piracy had resulted from the inability of minor Indonesian chiefs to assert authority over their own ports, so that it was desirable to strengthen the power of the hereditary rulers, if necessary by affording them the support of local British Residents. A policy of this sort was warranted, especially in Borneo, where the rulers wished to ally themselves with the British. Moreover, in order 'to avert the possibility of these acquisitions of British policy and arms being confounded and lost in any arrangements that may eventually take place', it was essential that a line should be drawn which would 'distinguish the states in connexion with the British government exclusively from [those] which have been immediately and formerly dependencies of the ruling power in Java'. The independent Indonesian states which had been brought within the British sphere of influence should, therefore, be divested of any relationship with Java: 'I cannot hesitate to record my opinion that it is now consistent with the honour, character, and interests of the British nation, and of the East India Company in particular, and at the same time most conducive to an improvement in the condition and happiness of the natives of these islands, and to the extension of commerce and prosperity, that these states should continue to be separated from the political fate of Java....' Of course, it was to be hoped that Java would be retained by the British crown, but if it was not, then

> it behoves us to adopt such measures, while within our power, as may establish a counterpoise to its importance and to the influence which the administration of Java must naturally give to its possessors. We must calculate that unless establishments are now resolved on and fixed, it may neither be consistent with the political rights of other countries nor practicable in effect to execute them hereafter.... While this island is held by the East India Company, the rule which I have laid down for my own conduct in separating as far as practicable the possessions exclusively British, from those which fell into our hands as the immediate consequence of the conquest of Java, may at all times enable the Supreme government to draw the line. In the former case, I have considered myself as continuing to act in my capacity as Political Agent for the Governor General in the Malay States—and in the latter as simply Lieutenant Governor of Java and the dependencies attached to it at the conquest. But contemplating the probability of Java being transferred to the crown, I am anxious to ascertain in what manner a provision is to be made for these states, and in particular for such as have had long standing connections with the British government

where the East India Company possess extensive territory—as at Borneo Proper [Brunei] and the north coast of Borneo.[49]

Borneo was important in Raffles' plans for creating a British sphere of influence in the Indonesian archipelago. In his official despatches describing the Garnham and Hunt missions he had explicitly denied that their object was the extension of British territorial claims in Borneo; but earlier he had told Minto that Borneo formed an exception to the general policy of forming settlements for commercial reasons only.[50] Raffles apparently thought that Dalrymple's treaty, Forrest's cession of Bunwut, and John Jesse's agreement with the Sultan of Brunei,[51] had already given to the British territorial rights which the arrangements made by Garnham and Hunt had only confirmed; but to view these cessions as extensive is puzzling, especially as he himself regarded Balambangan as a settlement suitable only for trade.

The one settlement which was formed on a clear territorial basis during his administration was at Banjermassin, where the local ruler had ceded a strip of his territory to the British trader, Alexander Hare, in October 1812.[52] In order to furnish labour for Hare's estates, Raffles arranged for large numbers of Javanese 'criminals' to be transported to Banjermassin, an action which later evoked sharp criticism from Dutch colonial historians, who regarded it as a complete denial of Raffles' avowed liberal principles of freedom of labour.[53] He had also sent Javanese to colonize the islands of Karimon Java towards the end of 1812,[54] but this can hardly be viewed in the same political light as Hare's venture, since at Banjermassin he was attempting to build a settlement which would challenge the power of the Dutch if ever they returned to Java.

[49] Raffles to Secret Committee, 11 February 1814, *Java Factory Records*, 61 (i) (IOL).

[50] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 61.

[51] Willi, *Early Relations*, 98; Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory*, II, 1-8.

[52] *Java Government Gazette*, 12 December 1812.

[53] Baud, *BKI*, VII, 1-25; P. H. van der Kemp, "Het Afbreken van onze Betrekkingen met Bandjermasin onder Daendels . . . ", *BKI*, XLIX (1898), 5 ff; Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, XLV-I. Raffles' case is argued by C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Documents relating to John Clunies Ross, Alexander Hare and the establishment of the Colony on the Cocos-Keeling Islands", *JMBRAS*, XXV (iv) (1952), 21ff. A number of unpublished documents on the Banjermassin "atrocity" are in the *Baud Collectie (Geheim)*, no.121 (ARA).

[54] *Java Public Consultations*, 26 February and 14 May 1813 (IOL); H. R. C. Wright, "The Freedom of Labour under Raffles' Administration in Java (1811-16)", *JMBRAS*, XXVI (i) (1953), 108-10.

The British settlement at Banjermassin had resulted from the wishes of the Sultan. Despite his treaty obligations to the Netherlands, he had made overtures to the Penang government in 1797 for assistance to drive out the Dutch,[55] but nothing was done until 1809 when Daendels withdrew the Dutch factory and garrison.[56] The Sultan then invited Hare to settle in his territory, and in 1811 sent two agents to Malacca to negotiate with Raffles,[57] who apparently persuaded the Governor-General of the desirability of despatching Hare to Banjermassin as a fully accredited British agent. On 7 April 1812 Hare received permission to negotiate an official treaty: 'You are to consider that the object to be kept in view is neither that of extension of territory for the sake of dominion, nor that of monopoly for the sake of universal exclusion, but the attainment, by such means as may be consistent with our possessions, of that superior influence in the country which may enable the British government to check piracies, regulate trade, and effect the general ends of civilization'.[58] In the following October, when Hare was ceded a large part of the Sultan's territory, Raffles considered that the British government was firmly committed, for, as he explained to Minto, the Banjermassin settlement 'is not so much to be occupied as a dependency attaching to the conquest of Java, but rather as accepted on the explicit and voluntary invitation to the British government by a competent and acknowledged independent native authority'.[59]

The more certain it became that Java was to be returned to the Netherlands, the more Raffles concentrated his hopes on Banjermassin. In his despatch to the Secret Committee of 11 February 1814, he drew particular attention to the Banjermassin treaty. 'The circumstances under which this connexion was formed', he wrote, 'appear to me to preclude the possibility of its reverting to a foreign power .... [The] terms of our treaty are decidedly different from those which subsisted with the Dutch. We have obtained a cession of territory which, though not

55 Willi, *Early Relations*, 134.
56 Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIX, 1ff.
57 Raffles to Minto, 31 January 1811, *Raffles Collection*, II, no.6 (IOL).
58 Raffles to Hare, 7 April 1812, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 8 January 1814 (IOL).
59 Raffles to Minto, [1 May 1812], *Mackenzie Collection (Private)*, 13, no.7 (IOL).

immediately productive of revenue, will afford extensive facility at any future proceeding to the improvement of the extensive and valuable island of Borneo which government may be inclined to contemplate'.[60]

The Supreme government in Calcutta was not much impressed by this argument. Raffles' proposal to regulate the trade of the archipelago by stationing British Residents at various ports was strongly attacked,[61] and Garnham's mission was condemned as 'liable to involve ultimately so heavy an expense, such a waste of troops, and such important political consequences, as to require that they should not be engaged in without the previous consent of this government'. He was ordered to 'abstain from any measures which may place the Supreme government in the dilemma of either prosecuting an attempt which may appear ... impolitic, or of receding from such attempt[s] under circumstances which may be calculated to produce an embarrassment'.[62]

The home authorities were no more enthusiastic. On 9 January 1815 the Secret Committee wrote to Lord Moira: 'We have viewed with considerable anxiety the engagements proposed to be entered into by the Lieutenant Governor of ... [Java] with petty states in the Eastern seas, and especially the treaty he had actually concluded with the Rajah of Banjermassing. We are decidedly of opinion that such engagements are impolitic, and injudicious, [and] that they are calculated to involve the British government in the internal concerns of those states, and the perpetual contests which they are carrying on with each other. It is also in our opinion extremely doubtful whether partial connections with some of the piratical states is not more likely, upon the whole, to injure than promote commercial intercourse between our settlements in India and the Eastern islands'. Hare's treaty with the Sultan of Banjermassin was explicitly disavowed, on the ground that it was only 'a provisional arrangement, wanting every proper sanction to render it binding upon the British government'. Moira was instructed to annul it, and to withdraw immediately the Ban-

[60] *Java Factory Records*, 61 (i) (IOL).

[61] Some of the official documents on this subject have been published in "Raffles and the Indian Archipelago", *Journal of the Indian Archipelago* (ed.) J. R. Logan (Singapore, 1856), I (n.s.), 266-90.

[62] Bengal to Java, 22 January 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 8 March 1814 (IOL).

jermassin establishment, 'unless you should be of opinion that Mr. Raffles had been misinformed, and that, in point of fact, the Dutch had not, as supposed by him, formally abandoned the connection with Banjermassing previous to the capture of Java....' The Secret Committee concluded by stating that had Java and its dependencies remained permanently in British hands, 'a different course with regard to our connection and intercourse with the petty states in the Eastern seas might have been taken, from that which under present circumstances it would seem advisable to pursue'.[63]

(vi)

Before a copy of this important despatch reached Java, Raffles found himself in fresh difficulties with Bengal because of his interference in the affairs of Lingga and Riau. The dispute arose following the seizure of a number of Penang junks by the Company's cruiser *Aurora*, which was under Raffles' orders. The Penang authorities protested at this unwarranted interference in their sphere of influence, and the Supreme government, in a despatch of 9 April 1814, demanded to know why a mission had been sent to Riau and Lingga.[64] Raffles attempted to justify his action by asserting that such interference was the only means of enforcing the Bangka tin monopoly; he did not refer to his idea of stationing a Resident at Lingga, and pleaded ignorance of the fact that Riau and Lingga were within Penang's jurisdiction. He requested the Supreme government to give maturer deliberation to a proposal that Riau and Lingga be placed under the authority of the Resident at Bangka.[65]

Bangka itself constituted an important element in Raffles' archipelago policy. In May 1812 he had secured the cession of the island after sending a punitive expedition against Palembang in connection with the massacre of the previous year. Thereafter he expressed the hope that Bangka tin would be collected by the outward-bound China ships, and remittances made to Calcutta by

[63] *Board's Drafts of Secret Letters to India*, 5, no.98 (IOL).
[64] Penang to Bengal, 2 February 1814; Bengal to Java, 9 April 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 4 August 1814 (IOL).
[65] Raffles to Bengal, 4 August 1814, *ibid.* (IOL).

the Supercargoes at Canton in favour of the Java treasury;[66] he thought that in time these remittances would amount to no less than one million Spanish dollars annually.[67] The island was therefore clearly of considerable importance to the British, who could also, if it were deemed necessary, restrict the output of Bangka tin in favour of home production.[68]

As it happened, the Directors were neither interested in shipping more Cornish tin to China, nor in increasing Bangka production. Since 1789 when they had first entered into an agreement to consign regular supplies of British tin to Canton, 16,650 tons had been sent eastwards at an annual export rate of 756 tons, and sold at an average price of £84 per ton. As the total annual import of all tin at Canton was only 1,800 tons, the British home export was very high; but at the very time that Raffles was urging an increase in Bangka production, the Company was undergoing the tedious business of negotiating for a continuation of its charter, and was under the severest pressure from the Cornish tin magnates to increase the home export to 1,200 tons annually.[69] The Directors firmly resisted this pressure, but they were undoubtedly embarrassed by Raffles' appeals to increase production on Bangka. Embarrassment, indeed, was the reason given by Castlereagh for the transfer of that island to the Dutch in 1814.[70]

Before the cession of Bangka to the British in May 1812, Raffles had told Minto that in his opinion the harbour of Klabat was the most secure in India, and the situation of Muntok the most commanding in the whole of the Indonesian archipelago.[71] On 24 October 1812 he forwarded to the Secret Committee a report on the island, and argued that 'if the course of events at home should ever oblige us to give up Java, we have in Banca a possession not

[66] Raffles to Secret Committee, 19 May 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 67 (IOL).

[67] Java to Bengal, 15 August 1812, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 27 February 1813 (IOL). The production of Bangka tin never lived up to these expectations, although the output increased from 7,290 pikuls in 1813 to 26,670 pikuls in 1815. (Court, *Exposition*, 167-8). *Cf.* Assey, *Trade to China*, 7n.

[68] Raffles to Secret Committee, 24 October 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (i) (IOL).

[69] Chairs to Melville, 21 March 1812, *Letters to the Board*, 4 (IOL).

[70] Castlereagh to Clancarty, 30 July 1814, H.T. Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der Algemeene Geschiedenis van Nederland van 1795 tot 1840* (The Hague, 1914), VII, 169.

[71] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 112.

one hundred and thirty miles from it, with all the advantages we have enumerated, to which no European power can lay claim, and one, too, that will render us [as] large a surplus revenue'.[72] Minto, however, had attempted to cool his enthusiasm by pointing out that while 'the acquisition of a station in the geographical position of Banca, unburthened with the claims of any European nation, and ... less dependent on the eventual results of a general peace, may be an object of reasonable policy; ... in the first place it is not manifest that any rights of dominion, which may flow to us from the Sultan of Palembang, whether by cession or conquest, will not be claimed by a future sovereign of Java, as an inseparable appendage of that colony, and if Great Britain should [negotiate] with France either in such circumstances, or in such a spirit as should induce the restitution of Java, and consequently the [Moluccas], she would not be likely to stop at the surrender of an acquisition so much inferior in value and consequence as Banca'.[73] Nevertheless, when Bangka was later returned to the Netherlands in exchange for Cochin on the Indian sub-continent,[74] Raffles liked to pretend that he had never once envisaged this possibility.

(vii)

In 1814, when his reforms in Java were bringing him into direct conflict with Bengal, things may have gone better for Raffles if he had proceeded cautiously with his archipelago plans; unfortunately, he felt obliged to adopt active measures in Bali and the Celebes. Before the conquest of Java, he had regarded Bali as a state friendly to the British, and, as the island had never been conquered by the Dutch, he considered that any treaties entered into with the Balinese rulers were 'likely to survive any arrangements which might be the consequence of a peace in Europe'.[75] Early in 1814, however, the friendly disposition of the ruler of Buleleng changed, apparently because of the diminution of his revenues due to the

[72] Raffles to Secret Committee, 24 October 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (i) (IOL).
[73] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLVII, 437.
[74] G. J. Renier, *Great Britain and the Establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 1813-1815* (London, 1930), 332.
[75] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 32.

abolition of the slave trade, and to the regulation of the sale of opium.[76] At any rate, he seized one of the Company's ships, and sent some of his people on a raid along the Banjuwangi coast. Raffles hastily assembled a force under Major-General Sir Miles Nightingall, and it arrived in Bali about the middle of May. No opposition was offered by the Raja, so he was pardoned. 'The humblest subject of Great Britain will now find favour and protection on Baliling', Nightingall wrote to Raffles, 'and affairs are left on so favourable a footing that they are open to any arrangement that competent authority may deem it either beneficial or necessary [to effect]'.[77]

During the following months no attempt was made to follow up Nightingall's success; but at the end of the year, because of continued misunderstandings between Batavia and the Balinese rulers, Raffles decided to appoint Dr. D. Ainslie as British Agent 'with the states of Bali and the adjacent islands, extending from Bali to the outsettlements now dependent on the Residency of Macassar'.[78] The appointment was not only designed to promote harmonious relations between Java and Bali, but also to prepare the way for the establishment of British power in that part of the archipelago should the Dutch return to Java. Ainslie's instructions read: 'Contemplating the probable return of these colonies [Java and its dependencies] to the Dutch government, it is important to uphold the British interests with these states. In your communications, therefore, you will appear rather as the British Agent [than] as the Agent of the colonial government, and you will endeavour to preserve the delicate distinction, considering the connection with the states of Bali as a matter that may hereafter be made use of when these islands may have reverted to a foreign power without bringing into view an immediate connection with this island'.[79]

In the Celebes, unrest also developed during 1814, when the troublesome Raja of Boni committed certain unfriendly acts, such as murdering an Indonesian in British employ and intimidating the Resident at Maros. After the Bali episode, Raffles sent

[76] *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 8, 16, and 30 March 1814 (IOL); *Java Government Gazette*, 9 April 1814.

[77] Nightingall to Raffles, 19 May 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 1 June 1814 (IOL).

[78] *Ibid.*, 6 December 1814 (IOL).

[79] Instructions to Ainslie, 12 December 1814, *ibid.*, 12 December 1814 (IOL).

Nightingall and his force to Makassar, where the Raja was called upon to acknowledge British supremacy in the Celebes, and not to interfere further in the affairs of Makassar. His failure to give this guarantee led to the town and fort of Boni being stormed and destroyed. "I flatter myself", Nightingall wrote to Raffles on 21 June 1814, 'you will agree with me in opinion that it was quite impossible to avoid the rupture which has taken place with the Rajah of Boni, and which has terminated in the subversion of his authority at Macassar .... I confess it is a most fortunate event for us, as without a rupture, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to have removed the Rajah from this neighbourhood, nor would he have ever consented to cede any part of the territory which he occupied under the very guns of Fort Rotterdam ....'[80]

(viii)

Although Raffles was fully prepared for the return of the Dutch to Indonesia, and founded his archipelago policy upon that assumption, he had great hopes that Java would, in fact, be retained either by the Company or the British crown. In June 1812 he predicted that the island would yield a surplus revenue of more than four million Spanish dollars,[81] and during the remainder of the year he outlined plans for expanding the local market for the consumption of Western manufactures.[82] Early in the New Year he wrote to the Directors: 'The conquest of this colony, and the control which it will enable the British government to exert over the commerce of the Eastern islands, promises an extensive and advantageous field [for] speculation in printed cottons, more especially if the patterns of the Javanese and Malay cloths be successfully imitated, and the cottons can be exported at a price sufficiently low to undersell the local manufacturers'. The only difficulty was that in the existing state of affairs in Europe, Java would be unable to provide direct exports to pay for these imports. Thus it was 'only ... in China that the trade can be

[80] *Java Government Gazette*, 16 July 1814; Nightingall to Raffles, 21 June 1814, *Raffles Collection*, V, no.1 (IOL); Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 352-3; Levyssohn Norman, *Britsche Heerschappij*, 102-5.

[81] Raffles to Bengal, 5 June 1812, *Java Factory Records*, 60 (ii) (IOL).

[82] Raffles to Chairs, 29 October 1812, *ibid.* (IOL).

considered favourable to this colony, and it is only in that quarter than an opportunity presents itself of making an adequate return for the cargoes received from England, without a command of specie which it is impossible to obtain'. He envisaged Java as a valuable *entrepôt* between the manufactures and commerce of Great Britain and the produce of the archipelago, and argued, as Dalrymple had done in connection with Balambangan nearly fifty years earlier, that 'its immediate and constant connection with China by means of the China junks may probably be made a channel of introducing British manufactures into that Empire through Amoi and the northern ports, with which there is a direct and constant intercourse from Batavia by means of Chinese capitalists, and of lessening the influence of the Hong merchants . . . .'[83]

Trade between Java and China during Raffles' administration did not, in fact, develop quite so happily as was expected. The Supercargoes at Canton had opened negotiations at the end of 1812 by requesting a consignment of Bangka tin,[84] but instead of sending a full cargo of tin, Raffles shipped only between 5,000 and 6,000 pikuls, and drew nearly 180,000 Spanish dollars upon the Supreme government for the remainder of the shipment which included birds'-nests and spices.[85] The tin and the birds'-nests sold profitably, but the spices were disposed of at a heavy loss. The Supreme government therefore forbade any further consignments from Java to Canton without prior approval.[86] Another shipment of local produce was made in the following year, but the poor sales did nothing to placate the Bengal government, which showed marked disapproval of Raffles' commercial ventures with China.[87]

Raffles' efforts to establish a commercial connection with Japan were also resolutely opposed by the Governor-General and his Council. An expedition in 1813 carried spices, sugar, cotton-

[83] Raffles to Court, 12 January 1813, *ibid.* (IOL).
[84] Canton to Java, 24 November 1812, *Java Public Consultations*, 5 January 1813 (IOL).
[85] Raffles to Canton, 26 June 1813, *ibid.*, 3 July 1813 (IOL).
[86] Bengal to Java, 18 September 1813, *Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 18 September 1813 (IOL).
[87] Canton to Java, 26 March 1815, *Java Public Consultations*, 26 May 1815 (IOL). See also *Consultations*, 19 August 1814; Raffles to Court, 15 November 1814, *Java Factory Records*, 67 (IOL).

thread, woollens, chintzes, lead, and sapan-wood to Nagasaki, and in return fetched nearly one million lbs. of copper, and 60,437 lbs. of camphor;[88] but although a favourable balance of 43,975 Spanish dollars was shown on the voyage, the Supreme government considered that the outlay necessary for a future venture was too large for the small profits envisaged.[89] The Directors, on the other hand, were more favourably disposed to the idea of breaking the Dutch copper monopoly, and at the end of 1814 gave instructions to Bengal to send a British agent to Japan.[90] The initial enthusiasm of the Court was somewhat cooled by Bengal's unfavourable reaction, but even as late as May 1815, although aware that they had overrated the value of trade with Japan, the Directors still thought that it 'would be inexpedient to suffer the commercial intercourse between Java and Japan to die away for want of any reasonable effort on our part'.[91] It was, however, much too late for the British to do anything in that quarter as the Dutch were on the point of returning to Southeast Asia.

(ix)

The unfavourable attitude of the East India Company towards Java considerably influenced the British government in its decision to restore Indonesia to the Dutch. The Company's Secret Committee of Correspondence, which met at the end of 1813 to consider the forthcoming peace negotiations, recommended to the government that 'the island of Java and the Moluccas should be restored in preference to any other acquisitions [of] the Dutch', but that the Cape and Ceylon should on no occasion be

[88] Raffles, *History*, II, App.B, xvii-xxxvii. On this subject, see *Raffles Collection*, X, no.3 (IOL); *Java Factory Records*, 61 (i) (IOL); *Java Government Gazette*, 3 July 1813; M. Paske-Smith, *Report on Japan to the Secret Committee of the English East India Company, 1812-16* (Kobe, 1929); Assey, *Trade to China*, 26ff., App. B-F; Levyssohn Norman, *Britsche Heerschappij*, 106-13.

[89] Bengal to Java, 29 January and 5 February 1814, *Java Separate Dependencies Consultations*, 25 April 1814 (IOL).

[90] Secret Committee to Bengal, 8 November 1814, *Secret Despatches [to Bengal]*, 32 (IOL).

[91] Court to Bengal, 5 May 1815, *Despatches to Bengal*, 69 (IOL).

surrendered.[92] The Company never ceased to regret that it had been forced into Java.[93]

The government, on the other hand, was prepared at first to view the conquest somewhat differently, and contemplated making Java a crown colony. Bathurst told Buckinghamshire in October 1813 that he had recommended this course of action to the Prince Regent,[94] and he informed G.K. van Hogendorp in the following year that he had actually signed the instrument delivering Java to the King, when news of the revolution in the Netherlands caused him to withhold it, 'because I thought that the act of making it own [over?] to His Majesty would give the appearance of our intending to keep it at a Peace, at a time, when the glorious news from Holland gave us a prospect of seeing the House of Orange restored; and I conceived that our appearing to choose that moment to take to ourselves, what I know to be a possession much cherished by the Dutch Nation, would be prejudicial to the Orange interests and discreditable to the British Character'.[95]

Soon the British government was engaged in negotiations with the Dutch for the return of their colonies. In February 1795 the Stadhouder had directed the Dutch colonial authorities to surrender to the British as friends, but as none of the local governments had obeyed, all Dutch colonies had fallen to the British by right of conquest. The Dutch realized that they therefore possessed no legal claim for the restitution of their possessions, and depended upon the goodwill of the British government.[96] Castlereagh depicted this goodwill as 'a desire, almost romantic, to serve Holland',[97] but the real motive was to fashion again a workable balance of power on the continent, to which end an independent Netherlands was considered to be essential.

Towards the close of 1813 the British cabinet adopted the following principle for the return of the Dutch colonies: 'If the maritime power of France shall be restricted within due bounds by the efficient establishment of Holland, the Peninsula and Italy in

[92] *Minutes of the Secret Committee of Correspondence*, 1813-14 (IOL).
[93] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 115.
[94] P. H. van der Kemp, "De Sluiting van het Londensch Tractaat van 13 Augustus 1814", *BKI*, XLVII (1897), 281.
[95] P. H. van der Kemp, "De Geschiedenis van het Londensch Tractaat van 17 Maart 1824", *BKI*, LVI (1904), 24.
[96] Renier, *Establishment*, 318-20.
[97] Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 37.

security and independence. Great Britain consistent with her own security may then be induced to apply the greater proportion of her conquests to promote the general interests. If on the contrary the arrangement should be defective in any of these points, Great Britain must reserve a proportionable share of those conquests to render her secure against France'.[98] From this, a somewhat circuitous principle developed in Castlereagh's negotiations. In order to create a strong and united Netherlands, the restitution of her colonies was deemed to be essential; yet Holland would have to be strong before Great Britain would agree to transfer them. In 1813 he proposed to the allied ministers that all Dutch colonies should be returned with the exception of the Cape, 'provided Holland could be rendered ... effectually independent of France';[99] Liverpool, however, although in agreement with this principle, was not prepared to apply it to the West Indian colonies, which he thought were 'purely commercial' possessions, but only to the Indonesian possessions which were 'points of strength and empire'.[100] As it happened, this position was never seriously advanced, for soon pressure was being brought to bear on the government by West Indian interests, especially the port of Liverpool, for the retention of Demerara, Berbice and Essiquibo. By April the enlarged British demands began to worry Castlereagh. 'I still feel great doubts', he confided to Liverpool, 'about the acquisition in sovereignty of so many Dutch colonies. I am sure our reputation on the continent, as a feature of strength, power and confidence, is of more real moment to us than an acquisition thus made'.[101]

The official negotiations between the Dutch and the British opened in London in July 1814. The Netherlands' ministers were at first suspicious, but Castlereagh's threat to transfer negotiations to Vienna allowed good sense to prevail. The British demands in the West Indies and South Africa drew attention away from Southeast Asia. Castlereagh demanded the Cape because of a 'prejudice' which he said existed in England for its retention, even though he himself considered that it was an unimportant

[98] Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken*, VII, 16.
[99] Renier, *Establishment*, 321.
[100] Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken*, VII, 31.
[101] Renier, *Establishment*, 323-6.

commercial acquisition;[102] but the prejudice was not wholly shared by British parliamentarians, some of whom argued that it should be returned to the Dutch.[103] In Southeast Asia, the Netherlands were given Java and its dependencies, the Moluccas, and the island of Bangka, the latter being exchanged for Cochin in India because the Bangka tin mines, according to Castlereagh, 'embarrass us somewhat with our Cornish subjects'.[104] Billiton, however, remained in British hands.

The news of the Anglo-Dutch treaty reached Java early in 1815 and Raffles prepared for its abandonment. Shortly afterwards, however, Napoleon's sudden return to France gave him fresh hopes, and he immediately sent to the Earl of Buckinghamshire public and private letters in which he argued for the retention of Java as a British possession.[105] However, not placing too much reliance on these despatches, he began to fall back upon his second line of policy — Banjermassin. On 25 April 1815 he wrote to Hare asking for full information regarding the settlement, 'and of the expenses that would have to be incurred either in maintaining the present settlement and promoting its influence within its immediate sphere, or in extending that influence to the neighbouring states, and establishing it as the centre of a future British power in these seas . . . .'[106]

Before a reply was received, the British government's own plans with regard to the Dutch colonies had undergone a modification due to Napoleon's return. On 5 May a despatch was sent to Moira explaining that, because of the events in Europe, it was 'out of the power of the Netherlands to spare any portion of its force for the occupation of its Asiatic Colonies; and until a more settled order of things shall be established, the Island of Java and its dependencies must remain in the custody of the British Government'.[107] Three weeks later Castlereagh informed Fagel of this decision.[108] Thus, when Colonel Nahuijs arrived at Batavia on 5 March 1816 as the forerunner of the Commissioners-General, he found not only the British administration undergoing a change,

[102] Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken*, VII, 168.
[103] *Ibid.*, lxi-lxii.
[104] *Ibid.*, 169.
[105] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 252ff.
[106] *Java Factory Records*, 42 (IOL).
[107] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLVII, 421.
[108] Renier, *Establishment*, 336.

but John Fendall, who had replaced Raffles, was not at all certain that Java was to be handed back to the Dutch. Even when the Commissioners-General themselves arrived two months later, Fendall had not received instructions to relinquish his authority.[109] The delay caused in transferring the Indonesian possessions caused much ill-will between the British and the Dutch.

Fendall had his own ideas as to how the Dutch should be treated, especially with regard to Banjermassin. Only three days after he had assumed control of the government, he suggested to Bengal that Hare's settlement was not adequately covered by the 1814 treaty, because the stipulation providing for the return of all Dutch territories in their possession at the Peace of Amiens could not be applied to Banjermassin, as this had been formally abandoned by Daendels. As a compromise, he suggested that both nations should withdraw from southern Borneo, and the Dutch declare the validity of their act of abandonment.[110] The Supreme government was inclined to agree with this reasoning. While no official instructions about the Dutch possessions had been received from London, Moira nevertheless thought that Banjermassin should not be surrendered like the other dependencies, because of 'the tenor of our engagements with the native prince of that place'.[111] On 3 September, Fendall, acting on this advice, informed the Commissioners-General that he could not return the Banjermassin settlement to them as it stood.[112] On their side, the Dutch argued that Daendels' withdrawal from southern Borneo in 1809 had been dictated by strategic considerations, and did not in the least constitute formal abandonment. They managed to persuade Fendall to send a British commission to Banjermassin to withdraw the settlers, but he still insisted that the British would 'retain any rights ... acquired by the present settlement ... and by the treaty with the Sultan ....'[113] On 9 November, however, the British commission formally transferred to the Sultan all rights granted by him four years previously, and withdrew the colony.[114] In vain did Hare protest that he had occupied Banjermassin as a

[109] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLVII, 345, 429, 489-90.
[110] *Ibid.*, 483-4.
[111] *Ibid.*, 494.
[112] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIX, 114-15.
[113] *Ibid.*, 118.
[114] Commissioners-General to Goldberg, 16 May 1817, *Baud Collectie (Geheim)*, no.989 (ARA).

private individual, at the express invitation of the Sultan.[115] His strategy had always been, as Clunies Ross explained later, to make the settlement independent of Java, and inexpensive to the Company. 'He was fully persuaded', Ross wrote, 'that if this were done the British Territories in Borneo would most certainly be retained and he had no idea that they would in any event be adandoned'.[116]

This had been Raffles' hope also, and the evacuation of the British settlement from Banjermassin saw the collapse of his early endeavours to establish permanent British control over Indonesia. But not for long. Within a few months of his arrival at Benkulen in 1818 he began again to lay careful plans for creating a British empire in the Eastern seas.

[115] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIX, 110.
[116] Extracts from a Journal of John Clunies Ross, *Raffles Collection*, XIV (IOL); Gibson-Hill, *JMBRAS*, XXV (iv), 120-8.

VII

THE BRITISH IN WEST SUMATRA

"Certainly, the period of a man's life passed at [Fort] Marlbro' may be considered as a perfect blank. It is little better than banishment. The place, being so completely uninteresting, is rendered far worse by not having a good society".

Captain Thomas Otho Travers, May 1819 (*Journal* (ed.) J. Bastin, Memoirs of the Raffles Museum, no.4, Singapore, 1957).

(i)

WHAT began in 1681 as a local dynastic conflict between S. Abulfath Abdulfatah (*Agong*) and his son, Abunasr Abdulkahar (*Haji*), for control of the Bantam sultanate,[1] soon developed into a bitter struggle between the Dutch and English East India Companies for control of the lucrative west Java pepper trade. The Directors of the English Company were aware of the importance of the struggle from the beginning. 'If the present misunderstandings between the two nations should ferment to an open war', they wrote, 'it would be thought by the vulgar, but a war for pepper which they think to be [a] slight thing, because each family spends but a little [on] it. But at the Bottom it will prove a war for the Dominion of the British as well as the Indian seas, because if ever they come to be sole masters of that Commodity, as they already are of nutmegs, mace, cloves, and cinamon [sic], the sole profitt of that one commodity pepper being of general use, will be more to them, than all the rest and in probability sufficient' to defray the constant charge of a great navy in Europe'.[2] Despite these forebodings, the Dutch in 1682 were successful in securing the re-elevation to the throne of the young Sultan, who in turn granted his supporters the privilege of exclusive trade in his territories.

1 C. Lekkerkerker, *Land en Volk van Java* (Groningen/Batavia, 1938), 357-60.
2 Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations*, 149.

As the expulsion of the British meant that almost the only supplies of Indonesian pepper now available to them were those which were doled out at exorbitant rates by the Dutch at Batavia, frantic efforts were made to find an alternative pepper port in the archipelago. In 1684 a mission consisting of two Madras officials, Ralph Ord[3] and William Cawley, was despatched to Achin with the object of reviving the old English factory, but Sultana Zaqiyat ud-udin Inayat Shah refused them permission to build a stone fort as it was feared that it might be used to enslave the country or embroil Achin in squabbles with other Western powers.[4] The mission was not entirely without results, however, for during their stay at Achin, Ord and Cawley were approached by some Priamanese rajahs who expressed their willingness to grant the British a monopoly of the pepper produced in their country, as well as land on the which to build a fort, provided that they were protected against Dutch aggression from the south.[5] As the British had traded pepper at Priaman earlier in the century, this offer was welcomed by Ord and Cawley, and they persuaded the chiefs to return with them to Madras where a formal treaty was concluded early in the New Year.[6] An expedition under Ord's command was hastily fitted out for the purpose of taking possession of Priaman for the East India Company; but when the British finally settled on the west coast of Sumatra in the middle of 1685, it was not at Priaman but at Benkulen some three hundred miles to the south.

According to Marsden, this change of plan occurred because a day or two before the expedition left Madras, a message was received from the rulers of Benkulen inviting the Company to establish a settlement on their part of the coast. As Benkulen was close to Silebar, which supplied a large part of the pepper shipped from Bantam, it was apparently considered advisable by the Madras authorities that Ord should first proceed there, possibly because at that time of the year Benkulen was a wind-

[3] Ralph Ord, the founder of the British factory at Benkulen, was apparently poisoned by the Dutch in 1687. For some particulars about him, see G. R. Kaye and E. H. Johnston, *India Office Library: Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages* (London, 1937), II (ii), 774; T. G. P. Spear, *The Nabobs* (Oxford, 1932), 107; H. D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras 1640-1800* (London, 1913), I, 464-5, *passim*.

[4] Marsden, *History*, 449-50.

[5] *Ibid.*, 450-1n.; Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 26-7.

[6] Love, *Vestiges*, I, 464-5; Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 85-6.

ward port,[7] but more probably because in the middle of the seventeenth century the British had a short-lived factory at Silebar.[8] However, as the Directors in London had ordered that the settlement was to be made at Priaman,[9] it seems likely that the instructions given to Ord by his superiors at Madras suggested only that he should investigate the Benkulen region before establishing permanent connections with Indrapura and Priaman. Certainly the subsequent settlement at Benkulen needed explicit explanation by Ord's deputy, Benjamin Bloome, who stated that the decision to establish a factory there had been made partly because at Silebar they had found three Dutch ships, which apparently had been sent to forestall a British settlement, and partly because they had been informed by the local people that it was from Benkulen and adjacent districts that Bantam was supplied with pepper.[10]

Bloome's explanation did little to assuage the grave displeasure of the Directors of the Company in London. 'It was', they wrote, 'a fatall and never enough to be repented errour of our President and Council of Fort St. George [Madras] to break all our orders for a settlement at Pryaman upon a caprice of their owne to send our ships, spend our strength, our money and soe many men's lives upon a settlement at such an unhealthful place as Bencoolen, because they heard there was more pepper there, which was noe news to us before we writt a line concerning Pryaman, but wee avoided that place and others neare Sillebar because they were too neare Batavia and that we knew by long and ancient experience that they were unhealthful and, therefore, did purposely direct and enjoin Pryaman to be ye principall place of settlement and first secured and made as strong as Fort St. George.'[11] This was written after Benkulen had proved itself to be a malaria-ridden graveyard for numbers of the Company's servants,[12] but in June 1685, when

7 Marsden, *History*, 451n.

8 The Silebar factory was maintained by the East India Company between 1646-50.

9 Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 28.

10 Wink, *TBG*, LXIV, 469-71.

11 Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 31.

12 For a description of the British graves at Benkulen, most of them of a much later date, see C. J. Brooks, "English Tombs and Monuments in Bencoolen", *JSBRAS*, LXXVIII (1918), 51-8; F.D.K. Bosch, "Hollandsche en Engelsche Oudheden", *Oudheidkundig Verslag 1920* (Weltevreden/The Hague, 1921), 88-92.

Ord's ships first arrived in the roads, it seemed to hold promise of a brighter future.

(ii)

After some initial disagreement about the conditions of settlement, the Indonesian rulers on 12 July 1685 signed a treaty which gave the Company an extensive area of ground for the erection of a fort and storehouses, as well as a large measure of control over the local supplies of pepper; on their part, the British officials agreed to pay twelve dollars for every bahar of pepper delivered to them.[13] For a short time they were deluged with supplies of the commodity, but these soon fell off, partly because of the interference of some of the chiefs who were not properly provided for in the treaty, partly because the chiefs themselves had little control over their people, partly because the fasting month of *Ramadan* intervened, and, later, because of the activities of the Sultan of Bantam's deputy (*jĕnang*), Karia Sutra Gistra, who arrived at Silebar with two or three hundred Javanese troops in order to reassert his master's control over the Benkulen-Silebar region.[14] His intrigues with the local rulers forced the British to the point of abandoning their settlement, but after a time he was obliged to return to Java. The rulers of the Lemba and Redjang areas were raised to the independent status of *pĕngerans*, and during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they remained the two most important of the Indonesian rulers in alliance with the English East India Company.

Gradually other rulers and their districts were drawn into the British sphere of influence. The Dutch prevented a connection from being formed at Priaman,[15] but Indrapura was occupied in 1685, and in the following year Manjuta was settled. The Dutch withdrew from Silebar during the 1690s, and the British took the opportunity to make an agreement with the local ruler. By the terms of this agreement of August 1695, the ruler ceded his seaport and two miles of ground, surrendered his rights to the levying of customs duties at his port, and granted the Company a monopoly of the pepper grown in his territory. The Company in return

[13] Wink, *TBG*, LXIV, 467.
[14] *Ibid.*, 488ff.
[15] Marsden, *History*, 451n.; *Cf.* F. C. Danvers, "The English Connection with Sumatra", *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, I, (1886), 416.

agreed to pay ten dollars for every bahar of pepper delivered to its storehouses, plus one dollar as custom to the *pĕngeran* himself, and an annual contribution of 400 dollars.[16] The payment of a fixed sum for the delivery of pepper was an unusual feature of this treaty, and was never repeated in others contracted at this period. Indeed, as early as 1701 the British were attempting to find a way of evading this clause — a difficult task since it was contracted with the *pĕngeran* for his heirs also — because it was a 'great cause of jealousie to y^e^ rest of y^e^ Rajahs'.[17] Whether or not the stipend was subsequently abolished is uncertain, but it seems probable that it was, and that the *pĕngeran* of Silebar, like the other rulers on the west coast, was left only with the customs on the pepper delivered by his subjects to the Company.

During the early years of settlement, the Company's servants, while abstaining from direct interference in the actual details of Indonesian administration, often took a keen interest in the political relationships existing between the various rulers. This policy was aimed at maintaining harmony in the pepper districts, but it sometimes resulted in the extension of Western territorial control, as occurred, for instance, in 1695 when the British intervened in a dispute between two contenders for the Anak Sungai region, and thereby acquired sovereign rights over the districts between Manjuta and Ketahun.[18] By the treaty concluded with the two rulers, all the pepper produced in these districts was to be delivered to the British at the rate of twelve dollars a bahar; but as only half of this amount was to be paid in specie, it was an arrangement which opened the way to much abuse. A new and highly important article of the treaty stated: 'Wee doe further covenant and agree to engage all our Mandareens and Proarteens y^t^ each house or familey in their respective towns shall plant every yeare 2,000 pepp^r^ treas, and that this our contract may be duely observed we doe promise to give our assistance w^th^ men when y^e^ Cheif and Councill shall desire itt on a certaine fixt time of y^e^ year to

[16] "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 15 August 1695, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 3 (IOL).

[17] York Fort to London, 5 June 1701, *ibid.*, 5 (IOL).

[18] "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 16-26 September 1695, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 3 (IOL); Marsden, *History*, 354; Danvers, *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 1, 417. For further details, see O.L. Helfrich, "De Adel van Bĕngkoelen en Djambi", *Adatrechtbundels* (The Hague, 1923), XXII, 314-16; E. B. Kielstra, "Onze kennis van Sumatra's Westkust, omstreeks de helft der achttiende eeuw", *BKI*, XXXVI (1887), 555-7.

view all plantations, and if anyone of ye above sd Mandareens or Proarteens have been wanting in performance of yt our contract, they shall be lyable to pay such [a] fine as ye Cheife and Councill shall think fitt to put upon them'.[19] This and similar clauses in later treaties, which provided for a reduction in the planting rate, established the basis of British rule on the west coast of Sumatra down to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Further subsidiary stations were formed at Triamang in 1695 and at Ketahun and Seblat shortly afterwards. The Silebar treaty had given the British protection against the Dutch on their southern frontier, and in 1701 this boundary was extended further southwards when the '*dipati* of Seluma visited York Fort and engaged to deliver the pepper of his districts exclusively to the Company, and to encourage his people to plant more vines.[20]

Although the British were thus rapidly extending their territorial commitments in west Sumatra, the production of pepper failed to meet the rising administrative costs, with the result that complaints from the Madras government, to which Benkulen was still subordinate, became more frequent. By way of justification the York Fort officials could only point to the low prices which were paid to the Indonesian planters for their produce. '[T]ho' ye Rajas' constant story is that they doe industriously promote ye planting of pepr', the Benkulen Council wrote to Madras in July 1695, 'yet considering the great care and trouble that is required in ye planting and cultivating ye peppr gardens, our present price is so low that it is but a small incouragemt for ye natives to apply themselves to ye improvemt of ye same, and not only so, but what pepr they reap out of their plantations already cultivated, both their people and ye Raja's themselves doe indeavour clandestinely to convey it to other places where they can gett more money for it ....'[21] The Council suggested that an incentive might be provided by granting to the *pĕngerans*, in addition to the usual customs, a bonus of half a dollar for every bahar of

[19] "Articles of a Grant and Covenant made by ... [the] Kings of Manduta [Manjuta] ....", n.d., but 16 September 1685, "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 26 September 1695, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 3 (IOL).

[20] "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 16 December 1701, *ibid.*, 4 (IOL).

[21] "Diary and Consultation Booke", York Fort, 24 July 1695, *ibid.*, 3 (IOL).

pepper delivered to the Company in excess of one thousand bahars. However, as no payment was to be made unless this minimum of one thousand bahars was produced, it is little wonder that the rulers showed little enthusiasm for the scheme, and refused to participate in it.

The failure to increase the production of pepper by such means led the British to resort to coercive and repressive measures. When William Dampier was at Benkulen in 1690 he found two of the neighbouring Indonesian rulers in the stocks, 'for no other Reason but because they had not brought down to the Fort such a quantity of Pepper as the Governour had sent for',[22] and such treatment, despite the protests of the home authorities, continued to be meted out during the eighteenth century.

(iii)

During the early years of settlement, the defensive position of the British at Benkulen was extremely precarious. The work of building the fort proceeded slowly and laboriously, and to make matters worse, the engineer died only a few months after building had commenced, at which time it was found that the foundations laid by him were most insecure. The structure that finally arose on the banks of the Benkulen river looked imposing from the sea, but, on closer inspection, was found to be anything but formidable. William Dampier, who served as gunner at Benkulen for a short time, declared it to be the most irregular piece of defensive work he had ever seen. 'I told the Governour the best way was to new-model it, and face it with Stone or Brick, either of which might be easily had. He said he liked my Counsel, but being saving for the Company, he rather chose to repair it, by the making some Alterations; but still to as little purpose, for 'twas all made ground, and having no facing to keep it up, 'twould moulder away every wet Season, and the Guns often fall down into the Ditches'. Dampier did what little he could to improve the structure: 'I made the Bastions as regular as I could upon the Model they were made by: And whereas the Fort was

22 *Voyages and Discoveries by William Dampier*, 125. Dampier continued: "Yet these *Raja's* rule in the Country, and have a considerable number of Subjects; who were so exasperated at these Insolencies, that, . . . [later] they came down and assaulted the Fort, under the Conduct of one of these *Raja's*".

designed to be a Pentagone, and there were but 4 of the Bastions made, I staked out ground for a 5th, and drew a Plan of it, which I gave the Government; . . . but the whole Plan is too big by half for so sorry a Garrison; and the best way of mending it, is to demolish all of it, and make a new one'.[23] This was eventually done, but not until 1714, when the original site was abandoned, and the formidable Fort Marlborough was erected on an elevated and secure position some two miles to the south. In the meantime, however, something like a quarter of a million pounds sterling of the Company's money had been squandered on York Fort.[24]

If the actual defensive works of Benkulen were poor, the human material which manned them in the early years was if anything, worse. Topazes, or Portuguese Eurasians, were reinforced by a number of young soldiers sent out from England. Most of them appear to have succumbed either to disease or the rigours of a dissipated life. Disease — probably in the form of malaria — so reduced their ranks at the time of the initial settlement, that the military force defending Benkulen numbered no more than eleven British and nineteen Portuguese, of whom not more than eleven were able to hold a musket. These men naturally showed some reluctance to face the two or three hundred Javanese troops who had been sent by the Sultan of Bantam to reassert his claims to the Benkulen-Silebar region.[25] In this, and later precarious situations, the British authorities decided against arming the local people, 'for being such perfidious people as by daily experience wee find them to be wee should only furnish them with arms to do ourselves an injury'.[26] This proved to be a wise decision in the event, as the Indonesians actually made sorties against the British stronghold during the 1690s, and even captured Fort Marlborough in 1719, driving the British into the sea.[27]

With an eye to limiting expenses, the home authorities suggested that slaves from Madagascar might be enlisted for military service. 'They would', the Directors wrote, 'maintain the ballance in case of need against an enemy, they being as much strangers to ye Sumatrans as they are to us, and wee suppose five of them will

[23] *Ibid.*, 125.
[24] Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 41.
[25] Wink, *TBG*, LXIV, 506.
[26] Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 37.
[27] *New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton*, II, 183; Danvers, *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, I, 421; Marsden, *History*, 452n.

not cost us so much to maintain as one English soldier: soe that if upon consideration you find [it] convenient you may encourage some of them to keep guarde and watche in their courses at convenient places there and under such officers as you shall appoint them, with lances, darts and swords and other weapons of India, but teach them not ye use of firearms'.[28] The instructions were repeated in a later despatch: 'Some of ye blacks that speak English, if in want of soldiers you may arme and may make them keep guarde to ease your English soldiers; but trust them not too much; neither ever arm or exercise of them above 10 of them to 30 English soldiers, and in an especiall manner we require you not to give any of your soldiers any arrack or brandy by weekly allowances, but by a stewart one dram at a time, three times as ye think best in each day for which they are to allow out of their pay (since wee have so great increased their wages) as they are for all other clothes and provisions which ye shall shall spare them'.[29] The slaves, however, proved themselves to be poor soldiers, so that the main military force continued to be drawn from the ranks of the Sepoys and British in India. Later in the eighteenth century the newly arrived Bugis people were armed, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century they constituted a most important, if somewhat independent part of the Benkulen military establishment.

(iv)

For the British soldiers and officials, life at Benkulen during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was generally brutish and short. The Bombay proverb that two monsoons were the life of a man, applied with even less exception in west Sumatra. 'All our Servants are sick and dead', Benjamin Bloome and Joshua Charlton lamented in October 1685, 'and at this minute [there is] not a cooke to gett victualls ready for those that sett at the Companyes table, and such have been our straites that wee many times have fasted. The sick lyes neglected, some cry for remedies but none [are] to bee had: those that could eate have none to cooke them victualls, soe that ... the one dies for hunger and the other for want of remidies, soe that wee now

[28] Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 37.
[29] *Ibid.*

have not liveing to bury the dead, and if one is sick the other will not watch, for hee sayes that better one then two dies, soe that people dies and noe notice [is] taken thereof'.[30]

For those who were fortunate enough to survive the attacks of malaria and small-pox the actual living conditions were far from pleasant. Food was scarce and, therefore, expensive and as labour costs were high, a long time elapsed before satisfactory accommodation was able to be provided for all members of the settlement. There were, moreover, few of the diversions in west Sumatra which made factory life in India at this period bearable. The west coast afforded few opportunities for travel, and even in the middle of the eighteenth century when this became to a certain extent obligatory by the Directors' injunctions that annual surveys of the country districts were to be made, journeys into the hinterland were never much enjoyed. William Marsden, who served in the secertariat at Fort Marlborough during the 1770s, could, in a sense of fun, pen the following verses when his brother was absent on such a survey;[31] but for the officials who had to perform these journeys for weeks on end, through wild and difficult country, there was little in them which afforded much pleasure.

Through what rude deserts have you been,
Thick woods and torrents too, I ween;
How many monsters have you seen, so frightful!
And then how strange, at night oppress't
By toil, with songs you're lull'd to rest;
Of rural goddesses[32] the guest delightful!

It was not until the very end of the British period in west Sumatra that an Englishman undertook journeys into the interior of the country for pleasure alone.[33]

In the narrow and confined circle of Benkulen society, quarrels were both inevitable and frequent. In 1690 there was a typical occurrence involving a junior military officer, who, 'after supper being heard a little louder than ordinary and somewhat lavish and prodigal in his tongue . . . he was commanded to be silent, but instead of obeying he came up to ye head of ye table and daming ye chiefe and all present and declaring he wore a sword with abundance of insollent, disrespectful, saucy language so

[30] Wink, *TBG*, LXIV, 476.
[31] W. Marsden, *A Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the late William Marsden* (London, 1838), 14.
[32] A pun on the Malay word *gadis*, meaning "a maiden", or "a girl".
[33] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 313ff.

much used by him to be tedious by repetition upon which he was forbid ye Honble Company's table'.[34] To judge from Captain Thomas Otho Travers' observations on Benkulen, there was little change in the social situation during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Fort Marlborough, he wrote in April 1819, 'without exception, is the most unpleasantly circumstanced place with respect to society I ever knew. In limited circles such as here, petty feuds generally exist but here we have greater annoyances. The younger part of the society [is] in one continued state of warfare with Government'.[35]

The presence of European women would doubtless have had a salutary effect in easing such tensions, but there were none at first, and at no time during the eighteenth century did they constitute more than a sprinkling of the total population. The feminine part of Benkulen society did not impress Governor Collet when he arrived on the west coast in 1712: 'And for the Ladies I'll tell you in what Condition we are. There are but 5 White things in Petticoats upon the Coast, one I am sending away with her husband, tho' she petitions to stay behind in the Quality of Nurse alias Bawd. Another is sent away by her husband with my consent because she is so free of Tongue, Tale and Hands that the poor man can't live in quiet with her. A third is non-compos and actually confin'd to a Dark room and straw. A 4th is really a good Wife and a modest Woman but the malitious say, that her person never provok'd any one yet to ask her the question. The 5th is a young Widow suppos'd to have a little money, of the rt. St. Helena breed, as well shap'd as a Madagascar Cow, — and so much for Women'.[36]

[34] Wright and Reid, *Malay Peninsula*, 34.

[35] *Journal of Thomas Otho Travers*, 122. Another early nineteenth century visitor to Fort Marlborough, Benjamin Heyne, was also very critical of the European society, especially the non-official elements. These, he wrote, were "adventurers, who, for anything that is known, may have dropped from the clouds; or they are runaways from ships, mostly from menial situations; all of whom by various means . . . have amassed wealth, and consequently acquired consideration. They are all in their own estimation gentlemen of consequence, and live in hopes (as money in their opinion is the only qualification in England requisite for a great man) 'to spend some jolly days with the Prince Regent, the Duke of York, and such other good company!' ". (*Tracts, Historical and Statistical, on India; . . . also an Account of Sumatra* (London 1814), 385).

[36] H. H. Dodwell (ed.), *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet* (London, 1933), 33.

The lack of European women meant that the British in west Sumatra followed the early example of their compatriots on the Indian sub-continent and formed connections with the local people. Unlike the situation in India, however, the Eurasian population of Fort Marlborough became a notable and important part of official society, so much so that British critics described Benkulen as a regular Batavian colony. By the end of the eighteenth century a number of Eurasians had become full covenanted servants of the Company, and occupied some of the highest posts in the service. In addition, the 'men of colour' filled many of the junior posts on the civil establishment.[37]

(v)

The officials sent out from Great Britain by the Company's Directors to administer their possessions along the west coast of Sumatra were generally of poor quality. The founders of the settlement — Ord, Bloome, and Charlton — appear to have been men of some character, but their immediate successors were of a different stamp. Dampier has left us a bad character of James Sowdon, and his sorry administration of the infant colony during 1690-1: 'I saw so much Ignorance in him, with respect to his charge, being much fitter to be a Book-keeper than Governour of a Fort; and yet so much Insolence and Cruelty with respect to those under him, and Rashness in his Management of the *Malayan* Neighbourhood, that I soon grew weary of him, not thinking my self very safe, indeed, under a Man whose Humours were so brutish and barbarous'.[38] Towards the end of 1691 Sowdon was recalled to Madras on the strength of the numerous complaints made against him of ill-treating the Indonesians.[39]

Those who followed him were not much better, however, and it was not until the arrival of the energetic Joseph Collet as Deputy-Governor in September 1712 that Benkulen was really in competent hands. During his administration the old settlement of York Fort was abandoned, and the new defensive works and

[37] Heyne, *Tracts*, 372.
[38] W. Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (introd.) A Gray (London, 1927), 346.
[39] *A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton*, II, 183.

town of Fort Marlborough were laid out two miles to the south. But an even more important feature of Collet's rule was that he was able to establish friendly and cordial relations with the local people, whom, he asserted, were 'not the Brutes they have been represented, they can distinguish between Justice and Villany, Kindness and Cruelty'.[40] To the Directors he wrote in October 1712: 'We have taken y^e^ utmost care to establish a good correspondance with y^e^ Mallays, and in order to [achieve] it have enquired largely into y^e^ causes of difference both with us and one another, and we are very sorry that for y^e^ time past they have had so much reason of offence given them by our predicessors. They have been treated with injustice and barbarity, and your hon^rs^ servants, who's business it was to conciliate all differences, have been y^e^ fomentor's of them by which they have not only interrupted the course of a free trade, but also prostituted your Hono^rs^ authority, and expended your treasure by making themselves parties in y^e^ triffling quarrells amongst y^e^ natives. We have, according to our duty, and in obedience to your Hono^rs^ commands, taken very different methods. We have assured the several princes y^t^ wee will not interpose in the administration of their civill government, nor in y^e^ dispute[s] y^t^ may arise amongst themselves, provided they doe not interrupt the com[m]erce of our Honor^able^ masters. We have promised them that they shall no more find barbarous usage, unjust treatment, or any kind of incivillitys... We only require in return a like treatment from them, with a diligent application to the increase of their pepper plantations....'[41]

Collet's humane principles were forgotten soon after his departure from the west coast in 1716, and the rapid deterioration in Anglo-Indonesian relations reached a bitter climax in March 1719 when the people revolted, stormed and burned the fort, and forced the British to flee in their ships first to Batavia, and later to India. Several months elapsed before Benkulen was re-occupied,[42] after which the treaty obligations of the people to plant pepper were

[40] Dodwell, *Letter Books*, 42.

[41] York Fort to Court, 22 October 1712, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 8 (IOL).

[42] During which time St. Helena was substituted as a convict colony. (Love, *Vestiges*, II, 176).

considerably modified. By a new agreement of 1724 with the rulers of Benkulen it was provided that every Indonesian family would undertake the cultivation of one thousand vines annually, or half the number previously specified.[43]

(vi)

The constant burden of the despatches which the Court of Directors addressed to the Fort Marlborough government during the eighteenth century was the desirability of increasing the production of pepper from the west coast without raising the establishment costs. 'The encreasing the investment of pepper [is] the material point in view for the interest of the Company', the Court wrote on 3 December 1755, 'and if a sufficient quantity is not procured for full loadings for two ships in a year at least, notwithstanding the greatest care and œconomy in your manage[ment], and the reduction of expences to the utmost prudent extent, we are satisfied [that] our settlements on the west coast will be a continual drain [on] our estate....'[44]

The excuse offered by the local authorities for their failure to increase production was the indolence of the people in planting pepper, and they advocated a policy of strict compulsion in order to overcome this obstacle.[45] The Directors, however, were opposed to compulsive measures, contending that unless the cultivators were well treated all attempts at increasing the investment would be defeated.[46] 'The first steps towards renewing and encreasing the pepper investment', they wrote in November 1763 when dealing with the subject of the Out-Residencies seized by the French three years previously,[47] 'most certainly are to conciliate and encourage the people in general, and the chiefs in particular, and make them sensible that a good harmony between the Company and them will tend to the mutual advantage of both'. The Directors continued: 'You hint that some restrictions may be necessary to enforce the observance of their agreements, which they in their present licentious state may not like, but that you will draw the lines of

[43] *Sumatra Factory Records*, 8 (IOL).
[44] *Ibid.*, 31 (IOL).
[45] Fort Marlborough to Court, 20 March 1765, 18 April 1766, *ibid.*, 44 (IOL).
[46] Court to Fort Marlborough, 13 February 1759, *ibid.*, 31 (IOL).
[47] Court to Fort Marlborough, 16 November 1763, *ibid.*, 31 (IOL).

restraints with all the prudence you are masters of. Wee shall accordingly depend upon this assurance, as wee are satisfied lenity and good usage will operate much better upon them than any kind of severitys, which latter should never be made use of without a real and absolute necessity'.

Earlier, when the Fort Marlborough government was unable to explain why disturbances had occurred at Lais, the Directors issued this stern admonition: '[I]t appears to us strange and extraordinary that such general discontent should spread through the country and insurrections be planned in so many different places upon such slight grounds as you mention, and therefore wee cannot be without our suspicions that tyrannical and arbitrary, or selfe interested measures injurious to the natives have given rise to this hatred and opposition to our government. [A]nd should this prove a fact, such as are culpable shall feel our severest resentment. If the governing persons among the natives have been stripped of small emoluments formerly indulged, wee condemn the same as a weak and foolish measure, and wee direct that the whole be in our name restored and continued to them, and in all instances consistent with our interests endeavour to render their subjection to us gentle and easy, for unless the natives in general are used well, all attempts to encrease the investment will be defeated'.[48]

It was with the object of increasing the pepper investment that the local officials began offering small presents to industrious planters,[49] a measure doubtless initiated with an eye to the Directors' approval, for the Fort Marlborough government held generally firm to the conviction that direct compulsion was the only sure means of stimulating industry amongst the Indonesians.[50] The Directors were so enthusiastic about the idea that in 1768 they undertook to pay the people five dollars more for each bahar of pepper if a constant and ample supply could be assured. This proposal was not carried into effect until twelve years later, however, when fifteen dollars a bahar was paid in an

[48] Court to Fort Marlborough, 13 February 1759, *ibid.*, 31 (IOL).

[49] Presents were given to planters in the Manna districts in 1767, and in the following year the *proatin* and planters at Seluma and Lais were given "scarlett Badjoos and Drawers". (Fort Marlborough to Court, 4 January 1768, 7 January 1769, *ibid.*, 44 (IOL). [*baju*, Malay, meaning "a coat"].

[50] Fort Marlborough to Court, 18 April 1766, *ibid.*, 44 (IOL).

attempt to boost production;[51] but either because the British officials failed to observe strictly the injunctions of the home authorities, or because the planters themselves considered the payments inadequate, it was soon found that pepper could be produced in sufficient quantities only if coercive measures were adopted. The Directors were forced into a reluctant recognition of this fact. 'We should not have been averse to the granting [of] any reasonable addition of price that might have operated as an inducement to the natives to extend their pepper plantations', they wrote in February 1793, 'but as you are decidedly of opinion [that] the object is not likely to be accomplished in this way, we must leave it to your discretion to pursue such other means as from your local knowledge and experience you may deem better suited to the purpose'.[52]

Even so, the Directors refused to tolerate instances of gross oppression by their servants. In 1778, for instance, when the Resident of Seluma, in order to fulfil his pepper quotas, resorted to various harsh measures, such as confining the *kalipahs* in the stocks, imprisoning recalcitrant planters, and offering indignities to the wife of the *'dipati*, the Directors immediately ordered his removal, and issued a strict warning that in future any officials who were found guilty of oppressing the Indonesians would be dismissed instantly from the Company's service.[53] This order seems to have been observed, at least to some extent, for in 1798 when the Sultan of Moko Moko made complaints against the local Resident, the Fort Marlborough government acted promptly by demanding his resignation.[54]

The production of pepper, in the meantime, had shown a gradual upward trend, although the increase did little to satisfy the home demand. During the 1770s some 1,300 tons were being produced,

[51] Court to Fort Marlborough, 14 December 1768, *ibid.*, 32 (IOL); Marsden, *History*, 130.

[52] Court to Fort Marlborough, 15 February 1793, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 36 (IOL). The Directors, however, added: "The proposition . . . of trying the effect of some honary [*sic*] distinctions, we are in hopes may be found useful, and we shall be happy to hear of its having been attended with the desired success".

[53] Court to Fort Marlborough, 27 May 1779, 19 May 1790, *ibid.*, 34 and 43 (IOL).

[54] Fort Marlborough to Court, 18 May 1798, *ibid.*, 45 (IOL). The Court approved the action in a despatch of 13 April 1800, *ibid.*, 45 (IOL).

but as this fell far short of the amount promised, the Directors warned their servants on the west coast that the £3 per ton bounty on pepper exports was likely to be withdrawn. '[O]bserving how disproportionate the profits of the [pepper] investment are to the charges of the settlem[en]t', they wrote early in 1775, 'we consider you highly reprehensible for thus neglecting the welfare of your employers; and we must declare that if better proofs of your attachment to our interest be not speedily manifested by the increase of this material article of our commerce, we shall certainly discontinue our bounty, and withdraw those emoluments which have been designed to excite your attention to our interest'.[55] The Directors believed that the failure to increase production was due to the laxity of their officials in conducting the annual surveys of the pepper gardens, and they now ordered that these surveys should take place regularly. Despite every effort, however, pepper production on the west coast of Sumatra increased very little during the ensuing twenty years, and even declined in 1792 to 650 tons. Between 1794-9 the annual average export to Great Britain and China amounted to 960 tons and 300 tons respectively.[56]

The main reason for the failure to increase the production of pepper at this time appears to have been due to a deficiency in the supply of specie necessary to pay the cultivators. Promissory notes were issued, but these were not popular with the Indonesians, so that the British authorities were obliged to rely upon imports of opium, and occasional supplies of American silver exchanged for bills on Calcutta to meet the requirements of the planters.[57] In these circumstances it was not surprising that the costs of administration produced a heavy annual deficit of £87,000,[58] which gave the Directors good cause to regret that they had been foolish enough in 1760 to give Fort Marlborough presidency status.[59] In 1801, after careful consideration had been given to the question, the settlement was reduced to the status of a factory under the

55 Court to Fort Marlborough, 24 February 1775, *ibid.*, 33 (IOL).
56 Court to Bengal, 29 May 1799, *ibid.*, 52 (IOL).
57 Fort Marlborough to Court, 18 May 1798, 4 January 1800; 1 May 1801, *ibid.*, 45 (IOL).
58 Court to Bengal, 31 August 1801, *Despatches to Bengal*, 36 (IOL).
59 Fort Marlborough remained a Presidency until 1785, when it was made a Residency dependent upon Calcutta. It was reduced to factory status in 1801, and not, as stated by Marsden, *History*, 452n., in 1802.

jurisdiction of the Supreme government in Bengal. 'We are decidely of opinion', the Directors wrote to Calcutta in August 1801, 'that no reason exists to justify our maintaining this settlement at so enormous an expense. Its chief importance to the Company is in a commercial view, and in this view it is evident we have been very considerable losers, from the small quantity of pepper supplied, and the increasing charges of the establishment in every branch'. The Directors continued: 'It was therefore a matter of some doubt with us whether it might not be expedient to withdraw our settlements on the west coast of Sumatra altogether. Against this determination; however, some arguments of a political nature occurr'd which appear to us of too much weight to justify that decision. After mature consideration we have come to the resolution of making very considerable reductions in the establishment at Fort Marlbro', and of withdrawing the subordinate residencies in general . . . .'[60]

In the meantime, however, the Supreme government itself had already taken positive measures to meet the critical situation which had arisen at Benkulen by appointing a special commissioner with full powers to suspend the existing local government. The commissioner was the former High Sheriff of Calcutta, Walter Ewer, who was a close friend of William Hickey.[61] Ewer was a man of considerable ability, but possessed a mind too independent for the narrow confines of the Company's service, so that although he assumed a natural and easy authority over the Fort Marlborough administration, his inclination to adopt original measures, without first securing the approval of his superiors, led finally to his ruin.

Ewer's attempts at reform can be stated briefly. Acting on the dubious assumption that his task was to increase pepper production to the greatest possible extent, he advanced large sums of money to the Indonesians living in the Benkulen regions so as to encourage them to cultivate pepper, and gave promises to purchase the produce at enhanced rates. Moreover, he entered into a contract with a private British planter, R. S. Perreau,[62] to develop a similar system of cultivation in the Sungai Lemau districts, and in the expectation of raising extensive plantations by means of Chinese labour, he

[60] Court to Bengal, 31 August 1801, *Despatches to Bengal*, 36 (IOL).
[61] A. Spencer (ed.), *Memoirs of William Hickey* (London, 1948), IV, 194-5, 208-10, 220, 241-2, 291, 349-50, 361, 376-7, 446-7.
[62] *Ibid.*, IV, 324, 447-9.

agreed to accept the first produce of Perreau's vines at the rate of 10 Spanish dollars per hundredweight. Perreau was also given an advance of 25,000 Spanish dollars from the government treasury as capital for the scheme.[63]

Early in 1803 Ewer reported these various transactions to the Directors, informing them that some 2 million vines had been distributed among the Benkulen people and advances made to them at the rate of fifty dollars for every thousand vines planted. In full maturity he estimated that these vines would add another 1,000 tons of pepper to the Company's annual investment from the west coast of Sumatra. Of the attitude of the Indonesians to the new 'free' system of cultivation, Ewer wrote: 'The rooted objections heretofore urged under the old system are no longer heard, but by raising the price of the pepper to six dollars per cwt., which holds out to the planters an encouragement for their labour, making all the planters of a village reciprocally answerable for the sum advanced, and considering every garden entirely free, they have engaged in the cultivation with an alacrity I could have hardly expected. The country... is already become in a state of cultivation, and when I have fully satisfied myself that the conditions of the existing contract are duly observed, I am persuaded I can extend the plan to nearly double the quantity, or at least ensure a regular annual succession, which is the most important point to be attended to'.[64]

By 1805 something like 2½ million vines had been planted in the Benkulen districts, and of these half a million were being cultivated by Chinese farmers, recently arrived from Macao, under Perreau's direction.[65] Ewer estimated that the future produce of pepper from the Fort Marlborough 'free' gardens would treble the former output.

On learning of these measures the Directors were both alarmed and annoyed. Pepper on the London market had experienced a sharp fall in price, and the Company was finding itself being undersold on the continent and in the Mediterranean regions by

[63] Court to Bengal, 30 July 1806, *Despatches to Bengal*, 45 (IOL).

[64] Fort Marlborough to Court, 12 March 1803, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 45 (IOL).

[65] Fort Marlborough to Court, 30 June 1805, *ibid.*, 45 (IOL). Of the 2 million vines in the "free" gardens in 1805, only 1¼ million were found to be in cultivation in the following year.

the Americans, who were collecting pepper in ever increasing quantities from the north Sumatran ports.[66] The Directors refused to sanction Ewer's agreements, and ordered him to make full financial restitution to the Company of the advances made to Perreau, together with payments of interest at eight per cent. during the period of the loan.[67] This rather harsh treatment, together with other factors, contributed to Ewer's financial ruin and premature death in a Calcutta prison.[68]

Earlier, Ewer had attempted to pursue a policy of retrenchment by abolishing the Out-Residencies of Kaur and Ketahun, and placing them under the jurisdiction of Manna and Moko Moko;[69] and in an endeavour to carry out the terms of the Directors' instructions to reduce the establishment costs, he introduced into the out-settlements an ingenious system of contract by which the Residents ceased to operate as agents of the Company and became instead largely independent traders, who sold pepper to the Fort Marlborough government at fixed contract prices.[70] This system soon proved to be impracticable, and the Out-Residencies became again the direct concern of the Company, which had to meet the costs of administering them.

During the last years of British rule in west Sumatra — years which were marked by the barbarous murder of the Resident, Thomas Parr, in December 1807,[71] and by the administration of Sir Stamford Raffles (1818-24) — vigorous attempts were made both to limit public expenditure, and to increase the general level of prosperity of Fort Marlborough by introducing the cultivation of spices. But as the market for nutmegs, mace, and cloves, as well as pepper, declined sharply after the Napoleonic Wars, such attempts were made in vain. Between 1800-24 the East India Company suffered an annual loss of something like £100,000 on

[66] Gould, *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll.*, XCII, 90ff.
[67] Court to Bengal, 30 July 1806, *Despatches to Bengal*, 45 (IOL).
[68] *Memoirs of William Hickey*, IV, 349-50, 376-7; Heyne, *Tracts*, 383-4; *Personal Records*, 16 (IOL), 897.
[69] Fort Marlborough to Court, 1 May 1801, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 45 (IOL).
[70] Bastin, *Native Policies*, 80-9.
[71] *Oudheidkundige Verslag 1920*, 90-1; Heyne, *Tracts*, 372-3, 375, 377-83; Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 301-2; *Journal of Thomas Otho Travers*, 102.

account of Benkulen and its dependencies,[72] so that it was not surprising that, given the opportunity of controlling the Malacca Strait through official Dutch recognition of British rights to Singapore, the Directors willingly ceded their west Sumatran possessions to the Netherlands. That occurred in 1824; in the years immediately prior to the cession, however, vigorous attempts had been made by Raffles to extend British influence and power throughout the island.

72 Between 1800-18 the annual loss was £100,000; it dropped to £83,000 during 1818-21.

VIII

RAFFLES' ATTEMPTS TO EXTEND BRITISH POWER IN SUMATRA

"Sumatra should undoubtedly be under the influence of one European Power alone, and this power is of course the English".

Raffles to the Secret Committee, 1818 (M.L. van Deventer, *Het Nederlandsch Gezag over Java* . . . (The Hague, 1891).

(i)

THE decision of the British government to return Java and its dependencies to the Netherlands, and the rejection of Raffles' plan of stationing British Residents at the various independent ports of the Indonesian archipelago, led him to formulate a rather different policy for extending British power in the region. His new ideas found expression in a paper entitled 'Our Interests in the Eastern Archipelago', which he addressed to George Canning, President of the India Board of Control, in 1817.[1] In this long document, Raffles argued that, in order to counter any Dutch attempt to exclude them from the Southeast Asian trade, the British should take 'immediate possession of a port in the Eastern Archipelago, the best adapted for communication with the native princes; for a general knowledge of what is going on at sea, and on shore, throughout the Archipelago; for the resort of the independent trade, and the trade with our allies; for the protection of our commerce and all our interests, and more especially for an *entrepôt* for our merchandise'. He considered that the Company's existing stations at Benkulen and Penang were too remote to serve any of these purposes: 'The former is on the western coast of Sumatra, out of the reach of the native trade of the Archipelago, and independent of this disadvantage, from the nature of the coast, and the occasional violence of the sea and surf, not to be approached by the native craft without great danger of loss. The latter is

[1] Enclos. in Raffles to Nicholas Vansittart, 23 October 1817, *Add. MSS.* 31237 f.241 (BM); Boulger, *Raffles*, 268-73.

situated considerably to the northward of Malacca, and, though to be approached with safety by native vessels, is so distant from the principal native ports of the Archipelago, that, under the uncertainty of the passage up the Straits, but few native vessels are induced to go there; for the small portion of the trade it has hitherto enjoyed, it was chiefly indebted to the temporary possession of Malacca, where heavy duties were imposed to force the trade up....' In order to overcome these disadvantages, he suggested that the British should form a settlement on Bangka, or on Pulau Bintan in the Riau archipelago. The latter was particularly well adapted for the purposes in mind, as it possessed one of the best harbours in the archipelago, and could easily become 'a commercial station for communication with the China ships passing either through the Straits of Sunda or Malacca, [and could] completely outflank Malacca, and intercept its trade in the same manner as Malacca has already intercepted that of Prince of Wales Island'. If, however, it were found impossible to secure possession of Pulau Bintan, there were places on the west coast of Borneo, especially in the vicinity of Sambas and Pontianak, where a British commercial settlement could be established. Another station in the archipelago, where British goods could be obtained 'free of duty', would counter the economic and political ambition of the Dutch, and ensure British commercial supremacy in Southeast Asia. But aware of the disfavour which further territorial expansion would arouse, he was careful to point out that this port was to be regarded only as an outpost erected for the security of British trade, and not for the purpose of obtaining dominion. Shelburne's dictum of 1782 — 'We prefer trade to dominion' — was still apparently to apply in 1817.

Early in the following year, however, the measures which Raffles adopted as Lieutenant-Governor of Benkulen clearly aimed at the extension of British control over the whole of Sumatra. The main reason for this change of emphasis was apparently the realization that events in Indonesia had moved more quickly during his two years' absence than anticipated. 'Prepared as I was for the jealousy and assumption of the Dutch Commissioners in the East', he wrote to the Secret Committee a month after his arrival at Fort Marlborough, 'I have found myself surprised by the unreserved avowal

they have made of their principles, their steady determination to lower the British character in the eyes of the natives, and the measures they have already adopted towards the annihilation of our commerce... throughout the Malayan Archipelago. Not satisfied with shutting the Eastern ports against our shipping,... they have dispatched commissioners to every spot in the Archipelago where it is probable we might attempt to form settlements, or where the independence of the Native Chiefs offered any thing like a free port to our shipping'. They had thus resumed not only the Lampungs, but also Pontianak, the minor ports of Borneo, and even Bali; in addition, a Dutch Commissioner had recently been dispatched from Batavia to Palembang 'to organize, as it is said, all that part of Sumatra'. As a result of these activities the British had been left without 'an inch of ground to stand upon between the Cape of Good Hope and China....'[2]

Strong counter-measures were clearly called for. On 3 July 1818 he informed the Secret Committee that he proposed fixing 'a respectable establishment' at Kalambajang Harbour in Semangka Bay, in order to secure the passage of the Sunda Straits, and that he intended to maintain it, 'pending the reference to Europe'. Further, in order to induce the Dutch to withdraw from Palembang, he informed the Batavian authorities that Padang and Malacca would not be returned to them as provided in the 1814 Convention. 'The position, I have taken up', he wrote, 'is that the Dutch can have no claim to possession where their flag did not fly on the 1st January 1803; and under this view, [their] claim to *Malacca* and *Padang* is at least questionable, these stations having been under the English flag since 1795'. Still, in case the British were ultimately obliged to give up Malacca, there was always the possibility of forming an establishment at Riau, or in some adjacent island. Meanwhile, he intimated to the rulers of Riau and Pontianak that, as independent princes, they were not bound to admit the Dutch to their territories. If, however, the latter persisted in forming a connection with Pontianak, the British could reasonably establish a rival station at Sambas. This, of course, would lead to regional conflicts, and it would be better if the

[2] Raffles to Secret Committee, 14 April 1818, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL). A slightly variant despatch is printed in Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 305ff.

Dutch were compelled to withdraw from Borneo altogether, or at least be obliged to recognize the Equator as the boundary of their settlements. Java was exclusively theirs, but their pretensions to Sumatra should be discounted, and the integrity of the island maintained. 'Sumatra', he wrote, 'should undoubtedly be under the influence of one European Power alone, and this power is of course the English'.[3]

(ii)

Raffles initiated his forward policy by stationing a small British force at Kalambajang Harbour in Semangka Bay, thereby disputing the ancient rights of the Sultan of Bantam to the Lampungs.[4] 'I am already at issue with the Dutch Government about their boundaries in the Lampoon country', he wrote to William Marsden in April 1818, '... I demand an anchorage in Simangka Bay, and lay claim to Simangka itself. If we obtain this, we shall have a convenient place for our China ships to water; and should we go no further within the Archipelago, be able to set up our shop next door to the Dutch. It would not, I think, be many years before my station in the Straits of Sunda would rival Batavia as a commercial *entrepôt*'.[5] The Supreme government, however, refused to sanction this extension of territory, especially as the advantages of possessing a station in the Sunda Straits were hardly likely 'to compensate for the inconvenience of a collision with the Netherlands authorities'.[6] Raffles was therefore instructed to withdraw the British post.[7]

His endeavours to prevent the Dutch from re-establishing themselves at Palembang were no more successful.[8] In 1818 Sultan Ahmad Najm'uddin, who had been placed on the throne during the British occupation of Java, appealed for assistance against the

3 Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 257-9.

4 P. H. van der Kemp, "Raffles' Bezetting van de Lampongs in 1818", *BKI*, L (1899), 1-58; P. H. van der Kemp, *Sumatra in 1818* (The Hague, 1920), 37-72; *Journal of Thomas Otho Travers*, 83ff; Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 437ff.

5 Raffles to Marsden, 7 April 1818, Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 293-4.

6 J.S. Tay, "The Attempts of Raffles to Establish a British Base in South-East Asia 1818-1819", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, I (2) (1960), 37.

7 Van der Kemp, *BKI*, L, 36; Court to Raffles, 7 January 1819, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 41 (IOL).

8 Van der Kemp, *BKI*, LI, 384ff.; *Sumatra in 1818*, 97ff.; Tay, *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, I (2), 37-41; and various correspondence in *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL).

Dutch, and Raffles promptly despatched a small military force overland from Fort Marlborough. The Dutch Commissioner at Palembang was equal to the occasion, however, and placed the British party under arrest. The serious repercussions which this action had in Europe led to Raffles being censured, for the Company had no wish to become involved in disputes in that quarter of the world. 'Having attentively examined the agreement concluded with the present Sultan of Palembang upon his elevation to the throne', the Secret Committee wrote to Lord Moira on 30 October 1818, 'we find no article by force whereof we are under any obligation of interference, or have any right to interfere in the manner described by the Lieutenant Governor of Bencoolen. If the Dutch, or any other European power, shall wantonly oppress that weak state, still more, if their oppressions shall be auxiliary to hostile projects against the British government, there may exist a case for extraordinary interference, in which you will doubtless act.... But it would be a strong measure to object to the establishment of a Dutch Residency or factory in the Palembang country merely because the ancient practices of that nation give us reason to apprehend that their ulterior designs may be mischievous or inconvenient to us'.[9]

It was only in Pasemah Ulu Manna that Raffles' attempts to exert formal British control over the peoples of southern Sumatra met with any success. Raffles visited these districts in May 1818 with the object of preventing further Pasemaher incursions into the Manna Out-Residency. Before his visit, local British officials had tried to eliminate friction between the Pasemahers and the people of the coast by regulating trade, and by issuing passes to those Indonesians who wished to enter the Company's districts; but when the contract system of supplying pepper was introduced along the west coast at the beginning of the nineteenth century,[10] European supervision of the remoter districts was withdrawn, and this left the Manna people largely unprotected against the attacks of their more robust neighbours.[11] In 1815 the Resident had concluded a

[9] *Despatches to Bengal*, 79 (IOL).
[10] Bastin, *Native Policies*, 87-9.
[11] Court to Bengal, 5 April 1816, *Despatches to Bengal*, 72 (IOL); Van der Kemp, *BKI*, LI, 665-6; *Bengal Public Consultations*, 18 March 1814 (IOL).

treaty with the Pasemahers,[12] but, according to Raffles, this had been broken by the British officials.[13] He himself found the Pasemahers 'reasonable and industrious, an agricultural race more sinned against than sinning',[14] and, after a series of consultations with their rulers, agreed to pay compensation for the reprisals carried out by the Company's servants. The people were given the option of planting pepper on the same terms as those obtaining in the coastal districts, and were permitted to settle wherever they chose. The issue of passes and the collection of tolls were abolished, and the rulers agreed to accept the Company's protection over their country.[15]

Raffles was very satisfied with the treaty; the Dutch regarded it as a farce. The Commissioner at Palembang reported to his superiors at Batavia that it had been contracted with only a few Pasemahers, who had been won over by money and fair words; the bulk of the people had hidden themselves in the forests on Raffles' approach.[16] On this evidence the Dutch dismissed the whole agreement as a fabrication; but that conclusion ignored the fact that Raffles' measures at least produced general peace in the Pasemah Ulu Manna districts during his administration. The Supreme government gave its sanction to the treaty, declaring that it was 'well calculated to promote the welfare and happiness of the inhabitants', and the Directors concurred in this opinion.[17]

(iii)

When Raffles returned to Fort Marlborough from Pasemah Ulu Manna at the beginning of June 1818, he found a Dutch officer waiting to take charge of Padang.[18] That settlement had been in

[12] H. Visser, "Iets over het Landschap de Pasemah Oeloe Manna en zijne tijdelijke onderwerping door Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles", *TBG*, XXVIII (1883), 317.

[13] "Extract proceedings of the Lieutenant Governor of Bencoolen", 23 May 1818, *Bengal Public Consultations*, 31 December 1819 (IOL).

[14] Raffles to Duchess of Somerset, 11 July 1818, Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 318.

[15] A manuscript copy of the treaty, dated 23 May 1818, is in *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL); it is printed in Visser, *TBG*, XXVIII, 324-6.

[16] Muntinghe to Elout, 19 November 1818, Van der Kemp, *Sumatra in 1818*, 81.

[17] Bengal to Court, 31 December 1818, *Bengal Letters Received*, 80 (IOL); Court to Bengal, 28 June 1820, *Despatches to Bengal*, 84 (IOL).

[18] P. H. van der Kemp, "Sumatra's Westkust naar aanleiding van het Londensch Tractaat van 13 Augustus 1814", *BKI*, XLIX (1898), 205-22; Tay, *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, I (2), 39-41; Wurtzburg, *Raffles*, 442 ff.

British hands since 1795,[19] and as the Anglo-Dutch Convention of August 1814 had referred only to the cession of those colonies which had been in the possession of the Dutch at the Peace of Amiens, Raffles declined to return it until he was given some guarantee for the payment of the debt incurred by the British in administering it.[20] But, apparently aware of the weakness of his case, he immediately departed for Padang to seek some local justification for his action. He informed the Secret Committee in August that the Indonesian rulers were in great apprehension at the prospect of the Dutch restoration,[21] and contended that, as the claims of the Netherlands to Padang were based only on trading contracts with the local chiefs, the Dutch should be refused readmission to the west coast altogether. In order to reinforce this contention, he travelled inland and entered into treaties with the rulers of the Padang highlands, and the Emperor of Menangkabau, who vested in the English East India Company full sovereign rights over the coastal districts.[22] The Indonesian rulers also addressed a petition to the King of Great Britain expressing their 'sorrow, alarm, and astonishment' at the news of the intended Dutch return to Padang,[23] and the Emperor of Menangkabau was prevailed upon to create Raffles his 'Representative in all the Malay States'. In this particular rôle, Raffles imagined himself re-establishing the ancient authority of Menangkabau, thereby forming a strong central government in the island of Sumatra.[24] He stationed a British Resident with a small Bugis contingent in the Menangkabau region,[25] and notified the home authorities that he intended to oppose Dutch admission to Padang.[26]

[19] The articles of capitulation are given in Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIX, 239-40; and E. Netscher, "Padang in het laatst der XVIII• eeuw", *VBG*, XLI (1880), 90-1.

[20] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIX, 252ff.; *Sumatra in 1818*, 73ff.; E. B. Kielstra, "Sumatra's Westkust van 1819-1825", *BKI*, XXXVI (1887), 8ff.; and various correspondence in *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL).

[21] Raffles to Secret Committee, 5 August 1818, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL); Raffles to Bengal, 12 August 1818, *Raffles Collection*, IX, no.3 (IOL); Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 340ff.

[22] Treaties with the rulers of the Padang highlands, and Emperor of Menangkabau, 20 and 24 July 1818, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL).

[23] Letter of friendship, 20 July 1818, *ibid.* (IOL).

[24] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 363, 480.

[25] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, XLIV, 264-5.

[26] Raffles to Secret Committee, 5 August 1818, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 47 (IOL).

The reaction was sharp. The members of the Board of Control informed the Directors that, in their view, 'the conclusion, without any instruction or authority whatever, by a gentleman in charge of a subordinate commercial factory, of a treaty by which the British government is bound in new engagements with a native prince of Sumatra, ... afford[s] a fresh proof of the inconvenience that cannot fail to result from the continuance at Bencoolen of a person, however individually respectable, who has in so many instances over-stepped the limits of his duty'.[27] Instructions were immediately issued to annul the treaties with the Padang rulers and the Sultan of Menangkabau, and to withdraw the British military force from Padang.

(iv)

In August 1818 when Raffles was attempting to persuade the Directors of the advisability of maintaining intact the integrity of Sumatra by extending British control over the whole island, he was at the same time advocating the establishment of a British station on Pulau Dua, north of Tapanuli, with the object of capturing the northern pepper trade, and reducing the commercial importance of Padang. 'If these islands could be obtained by negociation with the Rajah of Singkel, or the King of Acheen, and our settlement made on one of them', he wrote, 'the whole of the coast from Tappanooly north to Acheen would soon fall under British influence, ... [and] we might, according to the information we received on the spot, interfere or not in the affairs of Acheen generally'.[28] The Directors' reply to this suggestion was to remind him that the affairs of Achin fell within the jurisdiction of the Penang government, and that therefore he was not entitled to interfere in matters that did not concern him.[29] Still, when Raffles was in Calcutta at the close of 1818, he managed to persuade the Governor-General to send him and another Commissioner to Achin in order to secure a commercial treaty, and

[27] Board to Court, 25 March 1818, *Letters from the Board*, 5 (IOL).
[28] Raffles to Court, 12 April 1818, *Raffles Collection*, I, no.31 (IOL).
[29] Court to Raffles, 7 January 1819, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 41 (IOL).

to resolve the conflict between the two contenders for the sultanate.[30]

This was not the first mission which the Company had sent to Achin, nor was it the last. In 1772, when the Hon. Edward Monckton was despatched from Madras to conclude a commercial alliance with Kedah, Charles Des Vœux was sent to Achin with the same objective;[31] and later, when plans were being laid for the establishment of a British naval station at Penang, alternative proposals for a settlement at Achin were advanced, among others, by Laurence Sulivan.[32] At that time, however, as in the days of Ord and Cawley, a favourable treaty with the Achinese was unobtainable.[33] In 1805 and 1807 the Directors again expressed a desire for a footing there, but nothing positive was attempted until 1811, when a mission was sent from Malacca to gain support for the British invasion of Java. This was followed by a more substantial mission three years later, but neither was productive of very fruitful results.[34]

When Raffles and his fellow Commissioner, Captain John Monckton Coombs, arrived at Achin in the middle of March 1819, much time was spent debating the claims of the two contenders to the throne, and after a long paper-war on the subject,[35] Raffles managed to secure the elevation of Sultan Jauhar Alam Shah. In a treaty concluded on 22nd April, the Sultan granted the British free access to all the northern ports, and the right to station an accredited agent in his territories; he also contracted 'to exclude the subjects of every other European power, and likewise all Americans, from a fixed habitation or residence in his dominons', and also agreed 'not to enter into any negotiation,

30 P. H. van der Kemp, "Raffles' Atjeh-overeenkomst van 1819", *BKI*, LI (1900), 159-240. An interesting aspect of Raffles' relations with Achin is discussed by C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Raffles, Acheh and the Order of the Golden Sword", *JMBRAS*, XXIX (i) (1956), 1-19.

31 Clodd, *Malaya's First British Pioneer*, 14ff.

32 "Political Reflections . . . .", 6 December 1784, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 30 (IOL).

33 A useful summary of British relations with Achin is contained in a memorandum entitled, "Acheen", n.d., prepared by the Board of Control, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 30 (IOL). See also *Dutch Records* A, 28 (IOL), and T. Forrest, *A Voyage from Calcutta to the Mergui Archipelago* (London, 1792) 49ff.

34 ". . . Captain Canning's Report of his proceedings at Acheen . . . .", 1815, *MSS. Eur.* E. 94-5 (IOL).

35 T. Braddel, "On the History of Acheen", *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, V (1851), 22.

or to conclude any treaty, with any power, prince, or potentate whatsoever, unless with the knowledge and consent of the British Government'.[36] Unfortunately Raffles' protégé found it difficult to maintain his position, and the treaty was never carried into effect.[37] However, the fact that he had contracted an alliance with the most powerful of the independent states of northern Sumatra, led Raffles to reconsider the possibility of founding a commercial post off the west coast, which, when united with the Out-Residencies of Tapanuli, Natal, and Airbangis, would ensure British commercial supremacy over that part of the island. The policy evolved in its completest form when Natal and Airbangis were being threatened in 1820 by a powerful and fanatical group of Indonesian Muslims, known as the Padri's.[38]

(v)

The origin of the Padri sect dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century, when some *haji's*, in opposition to the matriarchal institutions of Menangkabau, attempted to initiate reforms according to Wahhâbî doctrines. It was a puritanical reform movement aimed at the abolition of opium, tobacco, betel-nut, gambling, cock-fighting, and the wearing of Malay dress; and it was ruthless in overcoming all opposition to its tenets.[39] The Padri's came into headlong collision with the Dutch at Padang, when the latter were attempting to reassert their authority over the highlands, and in 1820 they were threatening the British settlement at Airbangis.

Raffles' first experience of the Padri's was in 1818, when he made his famous journey into the Menangkabau districts of central Sumatra.[40] He was not unduly impressed by the reformers, but,

[36] J. Anderson, *Acheen, and the Ports on the North and East Coasts of Sumatra* (London, 1840), 218-21.

[37] Van der Kemp, *BKI*, LI, 191n.(a). Some attempt was made by the British in 1824, when the Treaty of London was concluded, to preserve certain advantages of Raffles' treaty with Achin (Marks, *VKI*, XXVII, 258, 260-1).

[38] On the Padri's, see *Encylopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, III, 168-70; Moor, *Notices*, 133-5; Anderson, *East Coast of Sumatra*, 343-4; Crawfurd, *Descriptive Dictionary*, 275-6.

[39] "Malay Account of the Mallims or Padries", n.d., *Raffles Collection*, IX, no.9 (IOL). Part of this account is printed in Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 429-30.

[40] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 342, 349-50.

as he was disinclined to interfere in the people's religious disputes, he advised the British Resident at Tapanuli to adopt a conciliatory policy towards them.[41] At the same time he took measures to protect the northern settlements by placing a small military outpost in the Batak country. The Padri's, however, showed no inclination to come to terms with the British, and in 1821 they began making monetary demands on the merchants at Natal.[42] This, of course, led to the abandonment of the government's conciliatory attitude, although Raffles himself was inclined to think that the Padri's' opposition to the East India Company stemmed from the monopolistic system enforced by the British traders at Tapanuli and Natal. He felt that if free trade were introduced at the northern ports, and the people permitted to send their produce freely to the Company's settlements, such a harmony of interests would result that British manufactures would be able to be introduced freely into the interior of the island. Moreover, as the rise of the Padri's represented the first real attempt made by an Indonesian group, since the decline of the power of Menangkabau, to assert political authority over the inland peoples, he thought that it might be possible for the British to turn the situation to their own advantage. '[At] the present moment', he wrote in July 1821, 'arrangements might be advantageously commenced by which the interposition of the superior authority of the Company might be made the means of promoting the interests of all parties, and establishing on a permanent basis the future tranquillity and prosperity of the country, provided it be not exerted as heretofore in favor of monopoly and restriction, but on the higher and more honorable principle of opening the avenues of commerce, and thereby encouraging the industry and civilization of the people'.[43] Just as in the case of Singapore, free trade was to be used as a political weapon to counter Dutch ambitions, and to establish British influence in the independent regions of the Indonesian archipelago.

So far as Sumatra was concerned, Raffles believed that political control could be firmly maintained without the British becoming too involved in territorial conflicts. All that was needed was to

41 Raffles to John Prince, 3 July 1821, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 50 (IOL).
42 *Raffles Collection*, IX, nos.4-8 (IOL).
43 Raffles to Bengal, 3 July 1821, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 50 (IOL).

despatch a battalion of troops inland to effect a display of force, and to have a factory either at Natal, Airbangis, or any more suitable situation, 'exactly on the same footing politically and commercially as Singapore'. Such an establishment would soon become 'the general depot and trading port of the northern part of Sumatra, extending its influence from Acheen on the north, to Padang on the south'. If, however, the Supreme government was opposed to this scheme, the best solution would be to withdraw as far as practicable from Sumatra, and to occupy a commanding station on one of the small islands off the west coast. The Sumatran rulers could then be left in independent control of their countries, but obliged to maintain the former British stations on principles beneficial to regular commercial intercourse. If such a policy commended itself to the authorities, Raffles though that Pulau Nias afforded the most advantageous position 'for becoming the depot and centre of an extensive commerce, and the establishment of the British flag under a liberal system'.[44]

(vi)

Pulau Nias, which was the main source of slaves for the whole of the west Sumatra coast, had attracted Raffles' attention during 1820, when he was regulating the slave trade at Benkulen. What had also excited his interest in the island, however, was the fact that it was capable of providing an additional supply of rice to feed the European and Indonesian population of the Fort Marlborough districts. After first securing permission of the Supreme government, he sent an agent to survey the island in July 1820, but shortly afterwards, on this occasion without authority, he appointed two Commissioners to enter into specific agreements with the Nias rulers. In December a treaty giving the Company rights of interference in the domestic concerns of the island was signed by the major chiefs, and a small military post was established to prevent traders from carrying off any more slaves.[45]

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] On Pulau Nias, see P. H. van der Kemp, "Raffles' Betrekkingen met Nias in 1820-1821", *BKI*, LII (1901), 584-603; Moor, *Notices*, 185-8; T. S. Raffles, *Statement of the Services of Sir Stamford Raffles* (London, 1824), 45-8; Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 487-94; *Raffles Collection*, IX, no.15 (IOL); and various correspondence in *Sumatra Factory Records*, 48 (IOL). What appears to be the original treaty with the Nias rulers, dated 31 December 1820, is in *Raffles Collection*, VII, no.9 (IOL).

Raffles thought that if the Supreme government considered the question with reference either to the humanitarian motive of abolishing the slave trade, or to the importance of the island's economic resources, 'the result of the measures which have been adopted must prove highly advantageous, and no less creditable than beneficial to the power and interests of the Honble. Company in this part of the East.'[46]

The Supreme government was not impressed with this argument, and ordered that the settlement be withdrawn and the treaty annulled. The action of appointing Commissioners to enter into formal engagements with the Nias rulers was condemned because, as Moira was careful to explain to the Directors, the mission was sanctioned only on the understanding that its purpose was to obtain information about the island. The Supreme government had no idea that a treaty was to be concluded with the Indonesian rulers, and a military post established, particularly as in the letter proposing the mission, Raffles had 'dwelt upon the expediency of having recourse to that mode of procuring information in preference to sending any gentleman of higher pretensions'.[47] The Directors were equally outspoken on the matter. Only a decade earlier they had given explicit instructions to their Fort Marlborough servants not to form any connections with the rulers of Nias, or to take any part in their affairs.[48] Raffles' action was therefore 'unsanctioned by law, and in direct opposition to our positive and repeated instructions that he should on no account conclude any treaty or engagement on the part of His Majesty or of the Company with any native prince or state without . . . special authority and sanction'.[49] Only the knowledge that he was on the point of departure for England prevented the Directors from passing further censure upon him.

(vii)

When Raffles did leave for England in April 1824, his determined efforts to establish British power in Malaya and Indonesia had, with one exception, been frustrated: but that exception more than

[46] Raffles to Bengal, 25 January 1821, *Sumatra Factory Records*, 48 (IOL).
[47] Bengal to Court, 2 July 1821, *Bengal Letters Received*, 86 (IOL).
[48] Court to Bengal, 21 October 1812, *Despatches to Bengal*, 59 (IOL).
[49] Court to Bengal, 12 March 1823, *ibid.*, 93 (IOL).

compensated for the failures which had continually dogged his efforts. As he sailed for Europe, he left behind him, at the southern extremity of the Malay peninsula, an *entrepôt* which, during the five years of its existence, had changed the balance of the archipelago trade, had provided the China ships with a port of refreshment, and had given the British full command of the Strait of Malacca. 'Singapore is every thing we could desire', he had written jubilantly shortly after its founding early in 1819, '... it will soon rise into importance; and with this single station alone I would undertake to counteract all the plans of Mynheer; it breaks the spell; and they are no longer the exclusive sovereigns of the Eastern Seas'.[50]

Raffles had won the Governor-General to his view of the exclusive nature of Dutch policy during a visit to Calcutta at the end of 1818. Moira was so convinced by Raffles' arguments that he agreed to despatch a mission to the southern entrance of the Malacca Strait in an attempt to forestall Dutch activities in the Riau archipelago. At the same time he addressed to the Directors a long paper justifying this action. 'Considering attentively the conduct of the Dutch since our restitution of Java to them', Moira wrote, 'it is impossible not to be convinced that they are actuated by a keen anxiety to secure to themselves unlimited power in the Eastern archipelago, and that this power, if attained, will be directed, not only to the extinction of our political influence, but to the utter exclusion of our commerce in those seas.... It is unnecessary to dwell on the nature of the commerce carried on from the British ports, especially Calcutta, with the Eastern islands. They not only afford an extensive market for the manufactures of Western Asia, and furnish China with supplies at all times in demand in that Empire, but it is [through] the seas in which they are situated that our China ships... must pass. This last consideration is most important in the present juncture. The recent Convention between the British and Netherlandish governments has placed in the hands of the latter the two great passes of communication with China — namely, the Straits of Sunda and the Straits of Malacca. Not only our trade with the Eastern islands, but our commerce with China is thus at their mercy'.[51]

[50] Lady Raffles, *Memoir*, 377.
[51] Minute by Moira, 2 January 1819, *Bengal Secret Consultations*, 2 January 1819 (IOL).

This view gradually won adherents in Great Britain, although responsible circles there were never much inclined to exaggerate the dangers arising from an exclusive Dutch policy in Asia; they understood more clearly than officials on the spot that a small nation like the Netherlands, which was so dependent upon British support in Europe, could never in the long run constitute a serious threat to British commercial interests in Southeast Asia. Thus while the Secret Committee instructed the Supreme government to remain alert for any indication of Dutch attempts at commercial restriction, Raffles' apprehensions were considered to have originated 'rather in a general impression, which his intercourse with the local authorities of that nation in Batavia and Malacca, and his observation of their movements, have produced upon his mind, than in any particular act or assumption on their part.'[52] In a further despatch of 22 May 1819 the Secret Committee reiterated its 'decided disapprobation of the extension in any degree to the Eastern islands of that system of subsidiary alliance which has prevailed perhaps too widely in India . . . [as] too ostentatious an indication during peace of a desire to connect political power with commercial enterprize would ill agree with the spirit of moderation which actuates the British government'.[53]

When, therefore, news of the founding of Singapore reached London shortly afterwards, at a time when the British were about to open discussions with the Netherlands government on Anglo-Dutch differences in Southeast Asia, the immediate reaction was one of alarm, particularly as it was felt that if the Dutch attempted to dislodge the British from the island, Great Britain would be committed to war.[54] The members of the Secret Committtee clearly understood that a free passage to the Indonesian and China seas was 'the one clear and indispensable object which this country must always have in view', but they considered that this objective could best be secured by amicable negotiation.[55] Once, however, commercial interests in London began to give maturer consideration

[52] Secret Committee to Bengal, 30 October 1818, *Board's Drafts of Secret Letters to India*, 5, no.126 (IOL).

[53] *Ibid.*, 5, no.133 (IOL).

[54] C. H. Philips, *The East India Company 1784-1834* (Manchester, 1940), 232.

[55] Secret Committee to Bengal, 14 August 1819, *Board's Drafts of Secret Letters to India*, 5, no.135 (IOL).

to the subject, and it was realised that Singapore was likely to afford not only an *entrepôt* for Indonesian produce, and a long-sought port of call for the China ships, but also a strategic base at the entrance of the Malacca Strait, opinion in Great Britain began to harden in favour of its retention. Early in 1820 the members of the Secret Select Committee, which had been appointed by the Company to advise the government on the East Indian trade during the Anglo-Dutch negotiations, informed Canning that they were strongly opposed to abandoning the settlement, and in the following September they expressed the earnest hope that it would be possible to retain the island, 'persuaded as we are that it possesses advantages far surpassing those of any situation in the archipelago in which a settlement could be formed'.[56] Sometime earlier, the British ambassador at The Hague impressed upon the Dutch Foreign Minister that the British could not 'acquiesce in a practical exclusion, or in a mere permissive toleration of British commerce throughout the immense extent of the Eastern Achipelago; Nor [could] they consent so far to expose the direct commerce of ... [Great Britain] with China to all the obvious dangers and disadvantages which would result, especially in time of war from all the military and naval keys of the Straits of Malacca being exclusively in the hands of the Netherlands government'.[57]

Thenceforth, the frail legal rights of the British to Singapore mattered little. Canning confessed in the House of Commons in 1824 that the British could not substantiate their title to the island, but that 'as all titles in the East are not of a very accurate and defined nature, I thought it would be a great mistake to apply to this particular case the general principles of European policy or any high romantic feelings of morality'.[58] The Company too, realizing the weakness of its case, expressed the hope that the conflicts and proceedings of its agents in Southeast Asia would soon be buried in oblivion.[59]

[56] Canning to Secret Select Committee, 23 June 1820, Secret Select Committee to Canning, 12 July, 4 August, 20 September 1820, *Correspondence between the Secret Select Committee and the Board* (IOL).

[57] Clancarty to Van Nagell, 20 August 1819, Marks, *VKI*, XXVII, 69 and n.14. *Cf.* Van Deventer, *Nederlandsch Gezag*, I, 283.

[58] Levyssohn Norman, *Britsche Heerschappij*, 119. *Cf.* Philips, *East India Company*, 233.

[59] Secret Select Committee to Canning, 20 September 1820, *Correspondence between the Secret Select Committee and the Board* (IOL).

APPENDIX I

The Dating of the Palembang Correspondence

THE exact dating of the Raffles-Badr'uddin correspondence presents many difficulties, not the least because most of the dates ascribed by Baud to the early letters are incorrect. Baud's letter no. 1 (my letter B) was dated 11 December 1809.[1] The original Malay letter, printed in Appendix IV, has had the date torn off, and the English draft is undated; but the letter can be dated exactly as 15 December 1810 from a reference in the letter which Raffles addressed to Lord Minto on that day. Moreover, because Raffles stated in his second letter to Badr'uddin that he had sent his first letter five days earlier, it is clear that letter A must have been despatched to Palembang on 10 December 1810. However, the original Malay letter, printed in Appendix IV, carries a Muslim date of 5 December 1810. It would appear, therefore, that there was a delay of five days in despatching the letter from Malacca.

The English translations of Badr'uddin's replies to Raffles (letters C and D, Appendix II) can be dated 10 January 1811, as they carry both Muslim and Christian dates. This dating is further confirmed by a reference in Letter E which states that Tĕngku Radin Muhammad arrived at Palembang on 5/6 January 1811. Letter E has both Muslim and Christian dates of 8 February 1811.

Baud's letter no.3, which contained the sinister Malay passage, *boewang habis-kan sakali-kali*, was dated by him as 2 March 1810. Professor Coolhaas made this date 16 March 1810,[2] but both are clearly impossible. Baud was exactly one year in error, because the English draft of the letter (G) carries the Christian date of 3 March 1811.[3] The accompanying letter of Raffles to his *wakil*, as well as

1 Coolhaas, *JMBRAS*, XXIV (i), 118.
2 *Ibid.*
3 Robison's version of this letter (*Bengal Civil Colonial Consultations*, 28 April 1814 (IOL) has a Muslim date of 4 March 1811.

the memorandum and proposed treaty, must all, therefore, have been written on 3 March 1811.

Badr'uddin's reply to Tĕngku Radin Muhammad, which was written after he had received Raffles' letter of 3 March 1811, bears no date, but must have been written at the end of March (letter H).

The treaty, which was negotiated about this time, has an internal Muslim date of 5 January 1811, which is, of course, impossible. Letter I has no date, but was written sometime after the treaty had been concluded.

Letter J has a Muslim date of 19 April 1811, which is acceptable. Baud's letter no. 4 was dated by him as 22 April 1811, but Coolhaas' opinion is that it should be 5 May 1811, and that Baud's letter no. 5 should be dated 19 April 1811, and therefore actually precede letter no.4. I have preferred to follow the sequence of Baud's letters, which appears to me to be correct; his dates, however, are certainly incorrect, especially that of letter no. 5. Badr'uddin's reply to Raffles (K) has a Muslim date of 23 May, so that Coolhaas' dating of Baud's letter no. 4 is probably correct. If it is, then Baud's letter no. 5 must also have been written in May.

Letter L (Appendix III) has a Muslim date of 15 May 1811, but from internal evidence it would appear that it should be dated a little earlier.

The original Malay proclamation to the chiefs of kampong Sungsang in Appendix IV carries the Muslim date of 13 January [1811].

APPENDIX II

Palembang Correspondence
Letters C and D

LETTERS C and D were written by Badr'uddin on the same day — 10 January 1811. Letter C was dated at one o'clock on that day and addressed to Raffles; letter D was dated three hours later, but not addressed. It stated in clearer terms Badr'-uddin's objections to concluding a definitive agreement with Tĕngku Radin Muhammad. The letters are in the *Raffles Collection*, IV, nos. 7 and 6 (IOL).

LETTER C :

I have to inform my friend Thomas Raffles Esquire that his Letter with the presents sent by the hands of my Brother Radin Mahomed, as well as his former letter, have reached me in safety . . . .

With respect to the tenor of my friend's letter. I have not yet fully answered it in consequence of my Brother Radin Mahomed, who brought the letter not being furnished with credential Letters from my friend for the purpose. If my friend looks forward to good measures and Tranquility, and is desirous of avoiding measures that would be against the Interest of the Rajahs of different black People, let my friend forthwith deliver the same to my Brother Radin Mahomed and dispatch him back again to Palembang with every expedition, when I will comply with my friend's letter.

The people (ambassadors) whom my friend requests cannot now be sent . . . as my Brother Radin Mahomed will fully inform my friend, who I hope will be satisfied and induced immediately to dispatch back my Brother Radin Mahomed with a letter on that subject, and a written Power.

LETTER D :

Whereas my Brother having brought a letter from a great man of the English Nation, informs me that he is further directed to lay before me the following good advice with which he is commissioned, viz :

That the said great man desired the two Brothers, my subjects, to acquaint me respecting the Commission which is not mentioned in the letter, that is to say, that if it is difficult for me to drive the Dutch from Palembang, that the English will then do it, and that if I was apprehensive of trouble in consequence, they would wait at the mouth of the river of Palembang, with ships or otherwise as I should request—And further that if I was in distress to dispose of the Tin, on account of hostilities with the Dutch, that the English would either purchase the same with cash—even at a dearer rate than for that now delivered to the Dutch, because they don't think of taking advantage of Palembang, or otherwise they would allow a Trade to be carried on with Palembang on the same footing as it is at present with [Lingga], Rhio, Siac, and [Tringgano] agreeable to the chance[!] of Trade with other Nations.

These two subjects further stated that they were charged with a Commission from the Great man, should I desire it to make an Agreement conformable thereto.

To the above I replied that what they stated was certainly the desire of a great man in every point, and that it comprehended good advice, without inclination to any improper measure, but there was not a token with them from this Great Man, duly accrediting them. On this account I dispatched my Brother back with every speed in order to obtain what is wanted.

I further informed them that as the Dutch were still at Palembang they could not act against them, and as their Power did not appear yet from that Great Man we could not enter into any agreement on the subject.

I have not yet dispatched my Ambassador to the great man, but on the return to Palembang of my said Brothers with proper Powers for that purpose, I will not fail to dispatch my Ambassador, if nothing [prevents] me from doing it.

APPENDIX III

Palembang Correspondence

LETTER I. (*Raffles Collection*, IV, no. 12 (IOL):

. . . the Paduca Sri Sultan Ratu wishes to make known to his friend the Sri Paduca Raffles Esq^{r} . . . that his respected letter, with what accompanied it, brought by Seyyad Abu Beker Rumi, has fortunately arrived & been received with great satisfaction . . . .

We have also been informed with regard to the wishes of our friend respecting your enemies the Hollanders which are in Palembang. Let not our friend have either doubt or fear any longer regarding them, for in truth we will conduct ourselves regarding them with the utmost of our ability, so that everything shall proceed agreeably to the wishes of our friend. Besides with respect to this conduct nothing whether right or wrong shall be concealed, nor shall there be either failure or fault on my part to interfere with our friendship for the future. *I have accordingly sent to Batavia that they may take away these Hollanders with all speed who are in Palembang*, & *if they are not speedy in taking them off, some misfortune will befall them* & *the blame will not be mine.*[4] Such is the state of the matter, but the message has not yet arrived. In this matter however we are not in truth devoid of resources in order to accomplish our purpose with all speed according to the desire of my friend. Let not therefore my friend have any further doubts about these Hollanders, for I have no intercourse nor connection with them.

It is however proper that we should inform our friend concerning the first introduction of the Hollanders into Palembang for in former times they were of great utility to our ancestors, and our ancestors did not wish us to forget their good offices, & thus the Hollanders have continued in Palembang to the present time, but at present we have no connection with them, & no desire to be concerned in the operations of the Hollanders, for they are only aliens in effect and it is to us that the country belongs. Therefore let not our friend have any doubts regarding them for we will do our best to expel the enemies of our friend.

With respect, however, to the paper to which I have affixed my seal, I have received no notice of its having reached you. We therefore request the earnest attention of our friend to it who is sagacious & wise, for everything with regard to this paper has been concluded with my friend's authorised Vakil Radin Muhammed, & everything required by my friend being acceded to, I have affixed my seal to it as a token . . . .

[4] Author's italics.

APPENDIX IV

The original Malay letters to Palembang

HERE follow the texts of the original Malay letters which Raffles sent to Palembang. They have been transcribed by Professor Dr. A. A. Cense, who has also rendered an English translation of the most important parts of the letters. In this transcription *j*, *tj*, *dj*, *sj* represent English *y*, *ch*, *j*, *sh* respectively.

Letter no. 1, which corresponds with Raffles' English draft letter A:

Above the letter : the Arabic formula *Kauluhu 'lhakk*; to the right : seal in Arabic characters: *Maharadj Governor General Banggala*, beside which is the signature : Thos Raffles.

Surat tulus i[khlas] serta kasih dan sajang jang tiada berkesudahan daripada béta Seri Paduka Thomas Raffles Esquire[5] jang ada ganti dari Paduka Gilbert Lord Minto[6] Guwernur Djeneral radja diatas segala radja[2] jang ada taclu' dibawah bandéra radja mahabesar negeri dari atas angin sampai kebawah angin jang dipertuan-besar negeri Benggala. Telah sampailah warakat al-ikhlas ini kehadapan sahabat béta Sultan Mahmud Badr ad-Din jang ada semajam diatas tahta keradjaän negeri Palémbang serta dengan bidjaksana telah terma[sj]hur nama kepudjian sampai kemana[2].

Wabacdahu kemundian dari itu béta maclumkan ahwal maka adalah béta baharu sudah datang [da]ri negeri Benggala sampai kenegeri Malaka mau buat bitjara sama dengan segala radja[2] negeri dairah timur pasal segala kapal[2] [pe]rang ini djangan lagi ia tangkap segala perahu[2] orang pergi datang berniaga dari negeri Palémbang dan negeri lain[2] sampai kenegeri Kompeni Inggeris djika ada masing[2] dengan tjap béta. Dan lagi apakala béta sudah sampai ke Malaka maka ada béta dengar khabar daripada radja Malaka mengatakan ada banjak kapal perang orang Belanda sudah sampai kekuala Palémbang maka bétapun mendjadi banjak susah hati menengarkan khabar itu karena dari dahulunja Sultan Palémbang ada bersahabat betul sama dengan orang Belanda ka[rena] djikalau Sultan Palémbang tiada bersahabat jang betul sama dengan orang Belanda mengapa maka sampai sekarang ini dibe[ri] orang Belanda tinggal didalam negeri Palémbang itu. Maka apabila béta sudah dengar khabar itu maka bétapun sigera berkirim surat ini kepada sahabat béta boleh sahabat béta djagakan baik[2] diatas orang Belanda karena ia orang djahat ia hendak mendjadi orang kaja dengan harta dan réal daripada sahabat béta. *Maka hendaklah sahabat béta pukul buang sekali*[2] djika orang Belanda tiada mau bitjara baik[2] seperti kehendak sahabat béta dan lagi djika sekarang ini sahabat béta tiada *boleh buang sekali*[2] *orang Belanda* dan djika sahabat béta ada mau djadi sahabat betul sama dengan orang Inggeris boleh sahabat béta kirimkan satu surat dengan sigeranja mengatakan segala pasal[2][nja] itu serta dengan satu orang wakil

5 In these letters written : *Tamas R.ffl.s Eskuir.*

6 The name *Gilbert* is written in these letters with the consonants Glbtlt; *Lord* is spelled *Lard* or *Lart* (in letter no.3 erroneously *Ladr*).

jang baik akal bitjara daripada sahabat béta sampai kepada béta boleh béta bitjarakan djika dengan suka sahabat béta dan suka béta berkehendakkan *boleh béta habiskan segala bitjara* karena dibawah hukum béta ada banjak kapal perang boleh buang orang Belanda djika selaksa adanja sekalipun.

Dan lagi ada . . . segala jang tersebut didalam surat ini djangan sahabat béta beri lain² orang tahu karena segala bitjara jang . . . Maka apabila sahabat béta hendak beri surat serta dengan orang wakil itu mari kepada béta pu . . . djangan lain orang ketahui, biarlah datang seperti satu orang berniaga sahadja kenegeri Malaka ini. Maka a[pab]ila sampai ia ke Malaka ini béta sendiri boleh bitjarakan sama dengan dia. Maka inilah tanda ikhlas daripada béta ada k[ai]n khas[7] bunga emas sekaju dan kain emas bebunga satu gulung dan kain sal sehelai, boleh sahabat béta terima dengan putih hati tanda sahabat jang betul. Ahwal inilah béta maᶜlumkan. Diperbuat surat pada delapan hari bulan Dhu 'l-Kaᶜida pada hari Kemis sanat 1225 tahun² djim. Tammat.

Translation from *maka apabila béta* to *mengatakan segala pasal² [nja]*:

When I heard these tidings [the approach of the Dutch naval force to Palembang] then I sent quickly this letter to my friend that my friend may be on his guard towards the Dutch because they are bad people. They wish to become rich people with the goods and the money of my friend. Therefore I recommend that my friend *beat them out definitely* [pukul buang sekali²], if the Dutch are not willing to consider things well according to the will of my friend. If now my friend cannot throw out the Dutch entirely, and if my friend is willing to become a good friend of the English, then can my friend send a letter quickly, mentioning the affair . . .

Letter no. 2, which corresponds with Raffles' English draft letter B, and Baud's Malay letter no. 1.

Above the letter : to the left : three cartouches with Arabic words and formulas :

1. *al-mustahakka*(?)
2. *Kauluhu 'l-hakk*
3. *ya Kadiya 'l-hadjat*

to the right : seal (the same as in the first letter) beside which is the signature : Thos Raffles.

Surat tulus ikhlas serta kasih dan sajang jang tiada berkesudahan selagi ada perkitaran tjakrawala matahari dan bulan daripada béta Seri Paduka Thomas Raffles Esquire jang ada ganti daripada Seri Paduka Gilbert Lord Minto Guwernur Djeneral di Benggala radja diatas segala radja² jang ada taᶜlu' dibawah bandéra radja mahabesar negeri Inggeris dari atas angin sampai kebawah angin jang ada terhenti didalam negeri Malaka. Telah terletaklah warakat al-ikhlas ini kehadapan sahabat béta Sultan Mahmud Badr ad-Din jang ada mempunjai tahta keradjaän negeri Palémbang serta dengan darirahnja dar as-salam serta limpah maᶜmur daripada Tuhan seru ᶜalam serta dengan bidjaksana telah termasjhur nama kepudjian sampai kemana² daripada tulung menulung sahabat dan handai jang amat sempurna budi bitjara.

Wabaᶜdahu kemundian dari itu béta maᶜlumkan ahwal maka adalah dahulu daripada surat ini lima hari béta ada beri suatu surat pinta bawa'kan kepada sahabat béta maka dari belakang surat itu inilah pulak suatu surat lagi béta beri kepada Tenku Radén Muhammad mendjadi utusan serta wakil daripada béta pergi membawa' surat ini sampai kehadapan sahabat béta. Maka inilah béta sudah ada ganti Guwernur Djeneral di Benggala mari mau buat bitjara jang besar sama dengan segala radja² Melaju negeri dairah

[7] Usually written *khasa*.

timur ini sampai kenegeri Palémbang karena Guwernur Djeneral di Benggala ada banjak suka mau mendjadi sahabat jang betul sama dengan segala radja² Melaju negeri dairah timur ini dan sahabat béta. Maka inilah béta ada banjak kasih kepada sahabat béta mau mendjadi sahabat jang baik serta dengan putih hati djangan lain lagi pada kemundian harinja. Maka adalah pasal orang Belanda itu apa guna sahabat béta benarkan beri ia tinggal didalam negeri Pelémbang itu karena orang Belanda ada banjak djahat ia mau buat sesuatu djalan [the letter is broken through here by the fold in the paper. It is possible to read : kedjahatan . . . djadi susah hati] sebab sahabat béta tiada djadi sahabat betul sama dengan Kompeni Inggeris dan djika sahabat béta ada suka mau mendjadi sahabat jang betul sama dengan Kompeni Inggeris hendaklah sahabat béta tentukan sekali² serta beri balas surat ini dan surat dahulu itu dengan sigeranja serta dengan segala pasal²nja orang Belanda dengan sahabat béta serta dengan satu orang wakil daripada sahabat béta jang baik akal bitjara datang kepada béta. Dan lagi lepas tudjuh hari Tenku Radén Muhammad didalam negeri Palémbang boleh sahabat béta hantarkan ia balik dengan sigeranja boleh sampai kepada béta. Maka djika sudah baik segala bitjara dan djanji sahabat béta antara béta boleh béta habiskan sekali² dan lagi maka adalah didalam surat ini béta ada beri suatu salinan seperti jang tersebut didalam surat jang sudah béta hantarkan dahulu daripada surat ini dan inilah tanda ikhlas daripada béta ada kain tjita Eropa dua kaju dan permadani dua helai boleh sahabat béta terima dengan putih hati . . . (Because the remainder of the letter is torn away the last lines are lacking; after the word 'hati' only the following words can be read : tiada dengan . . . inilah béta maclumkan. Diperbuat surat . . .)

Translation from *maka adalah pasal orang Belanda itu* to *satu orang wakil . . . . datang kepada béta:*

As to the affair of the Dutch, what is the use of it that you comply with letting them stay in Palembang because the Dutch are very bad. They will make a bad way . . . I feel troubled because my friend is not a true friend of the English Company, and when my friend wishes to become a true friend of the English Company, I ask my friend to show this in a clear way and to send quickly an answer to this letter and that former letter concerning all the affairs between the Dutch and my friend, and to dispatch to me a clever wakil of my friend.

Letter no. 3 Raffles' letter to kampong Sungsang,[8] which Baud printed as letter no. 2.

Above the letter : to the right : seal (the same as in the first letter) beside which is the signature : Tho Raffles.

Warakat al-ikhlas hormat mulia kasih serta sajang jang tiada berkesudahan fi'l-laili wan-nahari iaitu daripada béta Seri Paduka Thomas Raffles Esquire jang ada ganti Seri Paduka Gilbert Lord Minto Guwernur Djeneral di Benggala radja diatas segala radja² jang ada tacluk dibawah bandéra radja mahabesar negeri Inggeris dari atas angin sampai kebawah angin. Ini sekarang béta ada terhenti didalam negeri Malaka ini. Maka adalah béta memberi surat al-ikhlas kepada sahabat béta orang besar² atau datu'² dan penghulu sekalipun jang duduk dikuala Palémbang kampong Sungsang perihal béta menjatakan didalamnja ini daripada hal kapal perang ini tiga buah datang kemari. Béta ada mendengar khabar kapal Wilandis ada dikuala Palémbang ini béta mau halau, djanganlah sahabat béta mendjadi susah hati karena béta tiada mengapa-mengapakan kepada sahabat béta orang Melaju segala-galanja atau paru²nja (sic) Melaju ketjil dan besar

[8] This letter is rather slovenly composed, and contains several mistakes : three times behind the end *-wau* of *Melaju* and *seteru* a superfluous *alif* is written; the word *hal* is written *hal*; in the date the digit-figure is missing, etc.

sekali². Djanganlah sahabat béta takut dan lagi djangan sahabat béta masuki pada Wilandis itu. Dari itu béta suruhkan kapal perang mengaalaukan padanja dan sahabat béta boleh tinggal diam baik² djangan mengambil susah hati, bagaimana dahulu begitu sekarang djuga sahabat baik djuga pada béta pada segala-gala Melajunja datanglah sekarang i[ni]. Demikianlah adanja dalam itu djikalau sahabat béta masuki pada Wilandis itu nistjaja sahabat béta mendjadi seterulah pada béta sekalian orang Inggeris itu adaja.

Maka termaktub surat ini kepada tudjuh belas hari bulan Dhu 'lHidjdja pada tahun sanat 122[?].

Translation from *sekarang béta ada terhenti* .... to *sekalian orang Inggeris itu adanja:*

I am staying now here in Malacca, and am now sending a letter of good faith to my friends, nobles or Datus and Penghulus, who live at the mouth of the Palembang River at Campong Sungsang in which I write about these three men-of-war that came here (Malacca?). I heard that Dutch ships are in the mouth of the Palembang River. I will chase them, do not be afraid because I do not wish to do anything to my friends the Malays, or to Malay praus small or great. Do not be afraid, and do not mix with the Dutch. Therefore I give orders to men-of-war to chase them so that you may stay quietly, and that you do not feel troubled; now as formerly there is good friendship between me and the Malays. So be it, if however my friends mix with the Dutch they become enemies of us, the English.

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