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Not Just An Inong:

Acehnese Women in The midst of Conflict and Household Livelihood

Yulia Immajati

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The Australian National University

February 2008
Except as cited in the text, this work is the result of research carried out by the author.

Yulia Immajati  
Department of Anthropology  
Division of Society and Environment  
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies  
The Australian National University
Abstract

This thesis examines Acehnese women's role in maintaining their household livelihoods during violent political conflict, and covers the following issues: How do women survivors of violent political conflict maintain their household livelihoods? What were the choices they made and the strategies they adopted?, What resources did they have at their disposal?. This study is based on field work conducted in the period of July 2003 to August 2004, during which time the region was initially under Martial Law and later began the transition to a Civil Emergency periods.

I maintain two main arguments in this thesis. First, Acehnese women were caught in the intersection between the longstanding violent political conflict and their household livelihoods. Second, in such a situation, they became active survivors and the backbones of their household livelihoods coping strategies. The second argument challenges scholarly works on women and conflict that tend to view women as either passive victims or active combatants. This argument’s theoretical framework is developed from the existing relevant theories in three main conceptual areas of women, coping strategies, and household livelihood sustenance, which are placed in the particular context of violent political conflict. Considering the conflict to be a multi faceted phenomenon, this thesis employs a mixture of economic, anthropological, sociological, and historical approaches.

To date, there have been limited studies, on violent political conflict in Aceh which focus on how the people, especially women, survive in terms of their day to day living. The neglect of women and their livelihood issues in studies on the region actually parallels with the neglect of this issue in Conflict Studies in general, as noted by some scholarly works (Moser and Clark, 2001; Berger 2001; and Sharoni 1995). This study offers different perspective on the way women cope with the effects of the conflict on their daily lives and households livelihood.
Acknowledgements

I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to my supervisory panel: Dr. Kathryn Robinson (main supervisor); Prof. Virginia Hooker (co-supervisor); Dr. Diana Glazebrook (acting co-supervisor); Dr. Elizabeth Reid (Advisor); for their endless support and exceptional guidance. My special appreciation goes to Dr. Robinson for her constant kindness.

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A special thank you to Paul D'Arcy, a dear friend that I met 'coincidentally' when I was in deep anguish and only 'an inch away' from a decision to simply 'walk away' from my PhD. He became 'the angel' that God has sent to me. His kind support has been a true asset that has enabled me to reach this point. Paul, you know very well that I truly appreciate your encouragement!

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To my mother, for her patience, understanding, and constant prayers. A promise is a promise, and I am so delighted to finally able to fulfill my (revised) promises, to go home and be there, for her; and my niece and nephews: Nissaa Adhia Adhani, Hafid Muhammad Sidhik, and Arvin Kristianto, whose laughter have given me positive energy to move on.

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## GLOSSARY

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<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (I) – Indonesian Armed Forces</td>
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<td>ANU</td>
<td>Australian National University</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGAM</td>
<td>Angkatan GAM (I) – GAM’s Military Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API</td>
<td>Angkatan Perang Indonesia (I) – the Indonesia Armed Forces</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>ASNLF</td>
<td>Acheh-Sumatra National Liberation Front (GAM’s official name)</td>
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<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>BAPPEDA</td>
<td>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah (I) – The Regional Development Planning Agency</td>
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<td>BKO</td>
<td>Bawah Komando Operasi (I) – Under the Operation Command, also known as ‘Pasukan Non-Organis’ (I) – ‘non-organic’ troops; troops sent directly by Indonesia Military Headquarters for special tasks in designated regions. They can be sent for security and/or non security purposes to tackle both the man-made and natural disasters that have serious (widespread) impact on society. Examples of man-made disasters are the violent (armed) conflicts between state-society in Aceh, Papua, and former East Timor provinces; religious based violent conflict of Moslems versus Christians in Maluku islands and Central Sulawesi; ethnic based conflict such as in West Kalimantan (the Malay versus Madurese), Central Kalimantan (the Dayak versus Madurese). Examples of natural disasters are the recent Tsunami (Aceh and North Sumatra provinces), earth quakes, land slides, flood, and volcanic eruptions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRIMOB</td>
<td>Brigade Mobil – The Police Mobile Brigade</td>
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<td>Bupati (I)</td>
<td>Head of district</td>
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<tr>
<td>boh jaroe (Ac.)</td>
<td>a gift usually contains of sugar, biscuits, tea, coffee, and alike</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camat (I)</td>
<td>Head of sub district</td>
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<td>Cuak (Ac.)</td>
<td>Acehnese term for Indonesian military’s spies or informers.</td>
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<td>COHA</td>
<td>Cessation of Hostility Agreement</td>
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<td>COR</td>
<td>Conservation of Resources Theory</td>
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<td>CPI</td>
<td>Consumer Price Index</td>
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<td>DI/TII/NII</td>
<td>Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia/Negara Islam Indonesia (The house of Islam/The Indonesian Moslem Military/ The Islamic Republic of Indonesia).</td>
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<tr>
<td>DKI Jakarta</td>
<td>Daerah Khusus Ibu Kota Jakarta (I) – Special region of capital city of Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOM</td>
<td>Daerah Operasi Militer (I) – Military Operation Area</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
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<td>G30S/PKI</td>
<td>Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia (I) – The 30 September Movement/Indonesia Communist Party. This refers to the presumed communist coup in 1965.</td>
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<td>Galasi</td>
<td>Gayo, Alas, Singkil (An acronym for the militia formed by the Indonesian Armed Forces for Gayo, Alas, and Singkil area.</td>
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<td>GAM</td>
<td>Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement)</td>
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<td>GASIDA</td>
<td>Gabungan Saudagar Bagian Aceh (I) - Aceh Section of Indonesia Businessman Association</td>
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<td>GBPK*</td>
<td>Gerombolan Bersenjata Pengacau Keamanan (I) – Armed Gangs of Peace Disturbers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOI</td>
<td>Government of Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOLKAR</td>
<td>Golongan Karya (Functional Group Party), the ruling party during the Suharto regime</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPK*</td>
<td>Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan (I) – Security Disruptor Movement. It is also known as Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan (I) – Peace Disturbing Gang</td>
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GPLHT* | Gerakan Pengacau Liar Hasan di Tiro (I) – the fallow disturbance movement of Hasan di Tiro
---|---
GSA | Gerakan Separatis Aceh (The Aceh Separatist Movement). The term was used by the Indonesian military to refer to GAM in around 1990s.
GSB | Gerombolan Sipil Bersenjata (Armed Civilian Gangs). The term was used by the Indonesian military to refer to GAM in its initial phase in around 1970s to 1980s.
HANKAMRAT A | Pertahanan Keamanan Rakyat Merata (Widespread Society Security Defense)
HDC | Henry Dunant Centre
HIC | High-Intensity Conflict
HREC | Human Research Ethics Committee
ICG | International Crisis Group
IDPs | Internally Displaced Persons
INGO(s) | International Non Government Organization(s)
INPRES | Instruksi Presiden (Presidential Instructions)
Inong (Ac.) | Women
JI | Jemaah Islamiyah
Jilco | Japanese Oil Company
KODAM | Komando Daerah Militer (Regional Military Command)
KODIM | Komando Distrik Militer (Military District Command)
Koh tako or kena tak (Ac.) | An Acehnese term used for cutting someone’s throat to kill them. It is part of the old traditional practice of the Acehnese to protect one’s pride
KOLAKOPS | Komando Pelaksana Operasi (I) – Field Operation Command
KOPASSUS | Komando Pasukan Khusus (I) – Army Special Forces
KOREM | Komando Resort Militer (I) – Sub Regional Military Command
KOSTRAD | Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat (I) – Army Strategic Reserve Command
KTP | Kartu Tanda Penduduk (I) – national identity card
LBH | Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (I) – Institute for Legal Advocacy
LIC | Low Intensity Conflict
<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<td>LIPI</td>
<td>Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (I) – The Indonesian Institute of Sciences</td>
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<td>LNG</td>
<td>Liquefied Natural Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menkosospolm</td>
<td>Menteri Koordinator Sosial Politik dan Keamanan (I) – Coordinating Ministry of Social, Political, and Security Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKRA</td>
<td>Musyawarah Kerukunan Rakyat Aceh (I) – The All Acehnese Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Military Operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP-GAM</td>
<td>Majelis Pemerintahan GAM (I) – Government Council of GAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mugeé (Ac.)</td>
<td>Mobile traders usually riding a motorcycle with two large baskets for merchandise on the back</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAD</td>
<td>Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam – previously the Province of Special Region of Aceh (Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh) – as renamed by Special Autonomy Law of 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO(s)</td>
<td>Non Government Organisation(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NII</td>
<td>Negara Islam Indonesia (I) – Islamic Indonesia State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKRI</td>
<td>Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (I) – Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU</td>
<td>Nadhatul Ulama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPKPH</td>
<td>Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Penegakan Hukum (I) – Operation for Security Restoration and Law Enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORBA</td>
<td>Orde Baru (I) (New Order), Indonesia under the second President Suharto (1966 – 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORLA</td>
<td>Orde Lama (I) (Old Order), Indonesia under the first President Sukarno (1945 – 1965)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTK</td>
<td>Orang Tak Dikenal (I) – Unidentified Person), also used to refer to Organisasi Tak Dikenal (I) – Unidentified Organisation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasukan organis (I)</td>
<td>Locally based troops designated at different levels of the region.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat (Ac.)</td>
<td>The Acehnese slang for soldier (I: tentara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDIP</td>
<td>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (I) – Indonesian Democratic Political of Struggle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDMD</td>
<td>Penguasa Darurat Militer Daerah (I) – Regional Martial Law Administrator</td>
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Pengajian (I) An activity of a group of Moslems for learning to recite Qur'an, usually lead by an ustaz, a Moslem scholar, usually a man.

Pertamina Perusahaan Pertambangan dan Minyak Negara (I) – Indonesia State Mining and Oil Company

PKB Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (I) – National Awakening Party

PKI Partai Komunis Indonesia (I) – Indonesia Communist Party

POLRI Kepolisian Republik Indonesia (I) – Indonesian Police

POLTAS Polisi Lalu Lintas (I) – Traffic Police

Posyandu Pos pelayanan Terpadu – the integrated health services unit

PPP Partai Persatuan dan Pembangunan (I) – Unity and Development Party

PTS Political Tension Situation

PUSA Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh (I) – All Acehnese Ulama Unity

RI Republik Indonesia (I) – Republic of Indonesia

RIA Republik Islam Aceh (I) – Islamic Republic of Aceh

Satgasus Satuan Tugas Khusus (I) – Special Task Force

Sattis Satuan Taktis (I) – Tactical Task Force

SBI Serdadu Bandit Indonesia (I) – Indonesian Bandit-Soldiers

SIDA Swedish International Development Assistance

SIRA Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh (I) – The Information Centre for the Aceh Referendum

SPS Stable Peaceful Situation

Supersemar Surat Perintah 11 Maret (I) – March 11th Command Letter

TNI Tentara National Indonesia (I) – Indonesian National Army

TPO Tenaga Pembantu Operasi (I) – Operational Support Resources, civilians who were recruited by the Indonesian military as track finders during the military operations in Aceh.
UK United Kingdom
UN United Nations
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
US United States
USAID United States Agency for International Development
UU Undang-undang (I) – Law
VPC Violent Political Conflict
Wirid (I) Reciting particular division of Qur’an, usually conducted on a regular basis such as weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or bi-monthly or on a certain occasions, such as funeral.

Note: * The terms were used by the Indonesian military to refer to GAM in its initial phase in around 1970s to 1980s.

A note on transcription and terms

Unless otherwise indicated, the translation from Indonesian text are mine. In the thesis, both Indonesian and regional languages are italicised. These terms are indicated by the bracketed letter: (I) Bahasa Indonesia, (Ac.) Acehnese, (SEA) Southeast Asia, (Ar.) Arabic. There are often several ways of writing Acehnese words. This thesis uses the spelling from the Acehnese-Indonesian-English Thesaurus of Daud and Durie (1999), except in direct citations and when the words cannot be found in the Thesaurus.
Map 1. Indonesia

Source: http://www.countryreports.org/country.aspx?countryid=115&countryName=Indonesia, accessed Tuesday, 18 October 2005, 2.53pm
Map 2. Aceh

ACEH MAP

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Map 3. IDP Source and Recipient Regions: 3 August 2000

IDP Source and Recipient Regions: 3 August, 2000

Total IDPs ≈ 919,600
105,240 less than July 4, 2000

Numbers in ( ) represent change since July 4
Map 4. Map of IDPs, Camps and Burnt Schools in Aceh, August 11, 2003
(Source: IOM Banda Aceh, 2005)
Chapter 1 Introduction

1 Scope of the Study

This thesis discusses the issue of women in the ‘intersection’ of household livelihood and the violent political conflict\(^1\) in Aceh, currently known as Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD), one of the troubled provinces in Indonesia. The study investigates women’s coping strategies to maintain their household livelihood in the conflict situation of Aceh. The term violent political conflict is deliberately used to refer to the manifestation of political conflict in violent actions, in the form of either physical (armed and/or non-armed) or non-physical confrontations which occur habitually and pervade the everyday lives of the people. Violent political conflict has occurred off and on in Aceh since Indonesia gained its independence in 1945.\(^2\) While I take into account the earlier history of violent political conflict in Aceh, I particularly focus on the recent conflict between the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka),\(^3\) well known by its abbreviation – ‘GAM’, and the government of Indonesia. In this thesis, I use the terms Aceh violent political conflict, the Aceh conflict, and the conflict interchangeably.

Focusing on married women and their households, this study attempts to examine the way women cope with the effects of the conflict on their daily lives and their households’ livelihood. This study describes and analyses women’s perceptions and experiences of, and responses to, the effects of the

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\(^1\) Jongman (2001), focusing on the death toll, classifies four stages of situations of violent conflict: High-Intensity Conflict (HIC), Violent Political Conflict (VPC), Political Tension Situation (PTS), and Stable Peaceful Situation (SPS).

\(^2\) See Chapter 6 for the history of the Aceh-violent political conflict. The word ‘Aceh’ refers to the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province and the Acehnese people (mostly in the areas of Aceh Besar, Pidi, and North Aceh), the ethnicity of most GAM fighters.

\(^3\) The Free Aceh Movement (GAM) is an Acehnese independence movement established and led by Hasan Muhammad di Tiro, an Acehnese leader, in 1976. The movement has a central office in Sweden where most of its high ranking leaders live. It is a well organised body with local representation in several other countries and in Aceh. In August 2005, GAM signed a peace deal with the government of Indonesia and changed its armed political struggle to a non armed political struggle. Some scholarly works on GAM are, among others, Schulze (2004), Sukma (2004), Ross (2003), Basuki (2003), ICG (2002), Siapno (2002), and Robinson (2001).
violent political conflict on their role and positions, especially concerning their households’ livelihoods.

In analysing the recent conflict between GAM and the Indonesian government, I deliberately use the term ‘GAM soldier’. This follows the argument of my key informant on the importance of differentiating between the ‘on the ground’ (I: orang bawah) GAM members (including soldiers) and the ‘on top’ (I: orang atas) GAM members and leaders that reside in foreign countries (such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Sweden). The ‘on the ground’ GAM conducted their guerrilla fight against the government in the province, and the ‘on top’ (I: orang atas) GAM made important decisions for GAM’s policies. It has been argued by some local Acehnese and in some ICG reports\(^4\) that there were often some missing links of command between the ‘on the ground’ (I: orang bawah) and the ‘on top’ (I: orang atas). Consequently, what happened on the ground did not always represent what was decided ‘on top’. The concerns of this thesis are with the ‘on the ground’ GAM members, who will be referred to as ‘GAM soldiers’, and the ‘on the ground’ impact of the violent political conflict of Aceh.

Concentrating on the day-to-day lives of Acehnese women, this study provides an angle which is lacking in many other studies: the local level of the conflict and its impact on the daily lives of the Acehnese. It attempts to capture the ordinary people’s perspective on the nature, causes and consequences of the conflict.

Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) refers to the particular administrative area of the province in which, apart from the Acehnese, many other ethnic groups live. The name was given in 2001 to the former Special Province of Aceh (Daerah Istimewa Propinsi Aceh) through law no 18/2001 on the Special Autonomy of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province (Annex 1). This is part of the efforts of the central government to calm down the Acehnese demand for independence. Thus, ‘Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam’ is itself a symbol of the dynamics of the violent political conflict in the region.

\(^4\) See for example ICG, Asia Report, No 17, 2001, p.8; ICG Indonesia Briefing, 27 March 2002, p.3
Without any attempt to disregard the 'name-politisation', in this thesis, I use 'Aceh' and 'Aceh province' interchangeably for convenience to refer to NAD.

It is worth noting that, since I conducted my fieldwork between July 2003 and August 2004, two significant events have occurred. These are the Tsunami that severely hit the region on 26 December 2004, and the 15 August 2005 peace deal signed by the government of Indonesia and GAM leaders, concluding the GAM conflict that cost over 9,000 lives between 1976 to 2005 (ICG, 2005, p.1). While not overlooking the important changes brought about by these two events, I have limited the scope of my study to the period before the 2004 Tsunami. I am fully aware that these important events, in particular the fact that Aceh now enjoys more conducive non-armed conflict circumstances, have made new data and information available. This might require a different approach that possibly affects my analysis. However, I have not attempted to offer a picture of current (2006) Acehnese society but rather a historical account of the society in which violent political conflict was a dominant feature. As stated by Lévi-Strauss (1992, p.7):

I do not doubt for a moment that further information already available or as yet unpublished will affect my interpretation...No matter; in a subject such as this, scientific knowledge advances haltingly and is stimulated by contention and doubt...For this book to be worthwhile, it is not necessary in my view that should be assumed to embody the truth for years to come and with regard to the tiniest details. I shall be satisfied if it is credited with the modest achievement of having left a difficult problem in a rather less unsatisfactory state than it was before. Nor must we forget that in science there are no final truths. The scientific mind does not so much provide the right answers as ask the right questions. (Lévi-Strauss, 1992, p.7)

In this thesis, I intentionally use pseudonyms and do not specify villages where I conducted my research, for the purpose of confidentiality of my research subjects and key informants. This is also part of the commitment I gave them when I obtained their verbal consents at the time of my fieldwork. According to the Australian National University’s Human Research Ethics Committee, later known as the Ethics in Human Experimentation Committee, the protection of research subject is mandatory.

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5 The Australian National University established the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), later recognized as the Ethics in Human Experimentation Committee, in 1986. This is in line with the Australian ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving
2 Why Aceh? About the Research Sites

My encounter with the issue of the conflict in Aceh started in my fourth and fifth year of primary school in the late 1970s in Indonesia, under the nationalist history curriculum of Suharto’s New Order regime. The history of Indonesia was a compulsory subject from elementary school to high school, through which we learned about the state ideology and the presumed insurgencies from different factions and regions, including Aceh. My understanding of the Aceh conflict was deepened during an assignment with UNFPA Jakarta office from the end of 1999 to early 2002, in which I was responsible for the humanitarian program for the troubled areas of Aceh, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, North Maluku, Maluku and the former East Timor provinces.

Through these experiences, I have come to understand that the violent political conflict of Aceh has a longstanding history which has significantly impacted on the society. The people have suffered economically, socially, and psychologically. This understanding influenced my decision to conduct research in the region. I believe that it is not only significant as an academic research but also important in contributing to the wellbeing of the Acehnese society.

With armed conflict predominant in its history, Aceh has always been known as a troubled region and considered a high-risk area. As indicated by Table 1-1, in the contemporary period Aceh falls within the high conflict area.

Humans’, the code of ethics in research in all disciplines. The National Statement was adopted in 1999 with the aim of protecting the welfare and rights of research subjects. It regulates the establishment of human research ethics committees at universities to review all research projects involving human participation. (source: http://www.anu.edu.au/ro/ORI/human.php accessed on 19 September 2006).

6 The insurgencies mostly resulted from political disputes based on different visions for the form of the Indonesian nation. A critical account of the history of political disputes in Indonesia can be seen from, for example, the work of van Dijk (1970). In his analysis on the Darul Islam/Indonesia Moslem Military (Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia – DI/TII) insurgencies, van Dijk revealed how the different factions of guerrilla fighters during the independence struggle transformed into two strong opponents of the official Republican military, and that the ‘irregular units’, mostly locally based, operated in a ‘well-defined area’, and possessed a local ethnic-ideological character, often with a religious orientation.
of Indonesia, with the second highest number of casualties after Maluku, a province in the eastern part of Indonesia which suffered communal clashes between Moslems and Christians in early 2000. At the time of my research, Aceh was also the only region in Indonesia where martial law was imposed for one year from May 2003 – June 2004 (Annex 2).

Table 1.1. Classification of conflict areas in Indonesia, 1990 – 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Incidents</th>
<th>Number of deaths</th>
<th>Dominant Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>With min 1 death</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Conflict Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maluku</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>1238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Kalimantan</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Conflict Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Sulawesi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Kalimantan</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Kalimantan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Nusatenggara</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riau</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Nusatenggara</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Conflict Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bali</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sulawesi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lampung</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Java</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Java</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogyakarta</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Sumatra</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jambi</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sumatra</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Kalimantan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Sulawesi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengkulu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>6012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In the original data, there were some miscalculations which I have corrected.
The region has always been one of the most conflict-prone provinces in Indonesia. Cribb (1990, p.23) states that the history of Aceh holds a number of instances of the ‘rapid and ruthless elimination of political opponents.’ Ross (2003, p.2) argues that the province was perhaps the only area in the country in which civil war existed.

Although Indonesia has frequently suffered from violent conflict, the civil wars in Aceh have been the country’s only civil war since 1960, if the standard definition of civil war is applied...

From the period of resistance to the Dutch to the late 20th century, the region has never experienced sustained peace for more than eight or nine years at a time, resulting in about one-eighth of the population being killed or becoming displaced (Siegel, 1979). Annex 3 supports Siegel’s statement and clearly indicates that during the last 60 years, there were five major peace agreements in the region: in 1948, 1959, 1962, 2002/2003, and 2005, following the devastating Tsunami on 26 December 2004. None of them, has been sustainable, although the last that is still in force.

Historically, the Aceh violent political conflict is a longstanding phenomenon that can be traced from the Aceh War (I: Perang Aceh) (1873-1903) of the Dutch colonial era to the recent conflict between the government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) (1976 – 2005), and can be

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7 There are debates among scholars and practitioners on a workable definition of civil war, due to the lack of clarity and precision on what constitute a civil war in international law (Carrillo-Suarez, 1999; Lopez, 1994). Butterworths Australian Legal Dictionary (1997, p.197), however, provides a simple definition of civil war as ‘armed conflict between members of the same state or political entity’.

8 In 1965/1966 Indonesia suffered from the presumed coup d’etat of the Indonesian Communist Party (G30S/PKI) in the context of the Cold War when between 600,000 and two million people perceived as affiliated with the Indonesian Communist Party were massacred. The killing was a mutual responsibility of the military, under Suharto’s leadership, and ‘civilian vigilante gangs’ (Cribb, 1990, p.3) of Muslim, Protestant, Catholic, and Hindu-Balinese youth groups. Hundreds of thousands were imprisoned without trial for many years, and “...often tortured, starved, and lawlessly deprived of their property” (Anderson, 2001, p.11; see also Ashutosh, 2002; Cribb, 1990). In this episode, Sukarno, the first president, transferred his presidential mandate to Suharto, the second president of The Republic of Indonesia, with the issuance of The 11th of March Command Letter (Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret – Supersemar). Debates on the history of G30S/PKI and existence of Supersemar were quite prominent among scholars, and in fact there are several versions in the Indonesia archives, some of which were banned from Indonesia during Suharto’s era. The Supersemar letter itself is mysteriously missing, which interestingly no one in Indonesia has ever seriously raised special concerns about.

9 The Dutch admitted that the Aceh war (1873-1903) was the longest and costliest in the Dutch East Indies, now known as Indonesia (Annex 4).
grouped into three major periods. These are the Aceh War (I: Perang Aceh) period during the Dutch occupation from 1873 to 1904, the Darul Islam/Islamic Indonesian Military/Islamic Indonesia State (I: Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia/Negara Islam Indonesia - DI/TII/NII) period from 1953 to 1961, and the Free Aceh Movement (I: Gerakan Aceh Merdeka - GAM) period from 1976 to 2005.

Islam persistently underlay the moral fibre of these armed struggles, evident from the Aceh War (I: Perang Aceh) (1873-1903) to the most recent conflict between GAM and the government of Indonesia, as exemplified further in Chapter 5. The Aceh War was considered a holy war (I: Perang Sabil), justified by the belief that fighting against the infidels (Ac.: kaphée), the Dutch, is obligatory for any Moslem. The monotheistic spirit of Islam re-inspired the ulama (I, Ac.), the religious leaders, and their followers, who opted to join Indonesia to fight against some of the ulèèbalang (Ac.), the aristocrat leaders, who were against Indonesia, in the Cumbok War (I: Perang Cumbok) (1945-1946). Similarly, Islamic vigour motivated the Darul Islam/Indonesia Islamic Military/Indonesia Islamic State (DI/TII/NII) (1953 – 1961/1962) movement in Aceh, led by one of the prominent Acehnese ulama, Teungku Daud Bereueh (1898 – 1987). In the most recent violent political conflict of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) (1976-2004), the adoption of Shari’a Law articulates the incessant Islamic force in the ‘everlasting’

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10 This excludes the presumed Communist coup in 1965-1966 that cost approximately 3,000 deaths of Acehnese alone (Siegel, 1979). For further details on the history of conflict and its macro effect on the society, see Chapter 5.
11 According to the Dutch, the war ended in 1904, but history shows that the Acehnese resistance against the Dutch continued to 1945.
12 Due to his reputation as a good ulama, Daud Beureueh (1898 – 1987) was a vital figure and had an extensive influence on the Acehnese society. As a result, he was utilised by the central government and some politicians, including Hasan Di Tiro (the GAM leader) to obtain support from the Acehnese in 1976. The New Order, for example, took advantage of Beureueh’s good reputation to mobilise the ulama to allow the ruling functional group party (Golkar) to win electorally in Aceh in the 1980s. Hasan Di Tiro, in the early stage of the GAM movement in the 1970s also tried to gain Beureueh’s support in order to gain the wide support from the Acehnese.
13 This basically means the Law of Allah as given by the Qur’an and Sunnah. It covers not only religious rituals but all aspects of life, including politics, the economy, banking and business, and social issues (Salim and Azra, 2003, p.xvii). Shari’a means ‘path…to life in the hereafter and proper conduct in the temporal world’ (Hooker and Hooker, 2006, p.137). There are different ways of writing the term, including Syariah, Shariah, Shari’a and Syariat. I use ‘Shari’a’ due to its closeness to its root word ‘Shara’a,’ which links to the idea of ‘spiritual law’ and ‘system of divine law; way of belief and practice’ in the Qur’an (Wikipedia, 2005,
conflict of Aceh. Although the higher level GAM leaders never declared their support for the adoption of Shari’a Law in 2001, contained in law no 18/2001 on the Special Autonomy of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province (Annex 1), considering it to be a political manoeuvre by the government of Indonesia to calm down their demand for freedom, they did not openly came out against it. In fact, evidence on the ground shows efforts from GAM fighters tried to ensure that Islamic tradition was maintained in the society.

The continuous fortitude of Islam in these armed struggles may be explained from the long history of Islam itself in the society. As an entry point of Islam to Indonesia perhaps as early as the 7th century (Al-Chaidar, 1999, p.15), Aceh has always been well-known as an Islamic region. Having been practised for generations, Islamic values are well-integrated into the local/indigenous traditions to the extent that the Acehnese believe that the Islamic law and the local traditions are inseparable, akin to a substance\(^{15}\) and its intrinsic essence (Ac.: \textit{adat ngön huköm lagée zat ngön sifeut}).

Due to its strong nuance of Islam, the region is referred to as ‘the veranda of Mecca’ (Ac: Seuramoe Mekah; I: Serambi Mekah).\(^{16}\) Evoking the name of the traditional Acehnese dagger (I: rencong), the region is also called the land of rencong (I: Tanah Rencong). The idea of rencong is connected to the idea of Islam. It is believed that the shape of the dagger originated from the form of the first Qur’anic letters: \textit{Alif Lam Mim}\(^{17}\) or the calligraphy of \textit{Bismillahirahmanirrahim}\(^{18}\) (In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, The Most Merciful). Plate 1-1 shows that the shape of rencong is very similar to the calligraphy of \textit{Bismillahirahmanirrahim}.

\(^{14}\) Al-Chaidar (1999) refers to the Islamic kingdom of Perlak, which was located near modern Langsa, East Aceh (Reid, 2005, p.5)

\(^{15}\) ‘\textit{zat}’ is also translated as (1) being, existing; (2) substance, matter, agent, essence; (3) essence (of God) (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.1101)

\(^{16}\) The term can be traced as far back as 1641 in ‘Bustan al-Salatin’ (Ar.) (the [spiritual] Garden of King) written by Nuruddin al-Rani, the advisor of Sultan Iskandar Thani (1637-1644). It contains extensive moral lessons and wisdom for the proper conduct of kings and court officials and referred to as the ‘spiritual garden of guidance’ (Harun, 2004, p.28).

\(^{17}\) ‘\textit{Alif Lam Mim}’ is the first letter in the second and longest chapter of Al Qur’an, \textit{sûrah Al-Baqarah} (The Cow Chapter). It is believed that this letter is one of the miracles of the Qur’an and only Allah knows its meaning (See Sûrah 2, Al Baqarah, The Noble Qur’an)

\(^{18}\) The Moslem’s shortest prayer for God’s blessings and guidance usually said before performing any activity.
From the late 1990s, the region began to be labelled the bleeding land (I: tanah bersimbah darah). Reid (2006) named the region ‘Verandah of Violence’. These new labels exemplified the violent political conflict between the government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (I.: Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – GAM), which had dominated the region for almost 30 years. The two labels, however, have only been used recently, especially amongst human rights activists to refer to the harsh military operations conducted by the Indonesian military.

At the time of my research, apart from Islam, the conflict also concerned the local economic struggle. Aceh has suffered from economic exploitation. Natural resources were exploited for the benefit of the central government, with limited benefits to the region. At the micro level, the armed clashes between the Indonesian military and GAM fighters often resulted in disturbances of the day-to-day living of the people. This was especially true for villagers in the ‘hot spot’ areas, in the districts in which the research was carried out – Pidie, Bireuen, Aceh Besar, East Aceh, and North Aceh. The ‘hot spot’ areas are those classified by Indonesian military as having a heavy presence of GAM and requiring the strong presence of Indonesian military. These areas hence had more armed clashes between the Indonesian military and GAM soldiers.

Quite a number of conflict studies have been conducted on the region, especially after the re-emergence of the Aceh violent political conflict in the
1970s. These studies, however, are concerned with the nature and causes of the conflict, human rights violations, political analysis, and the state-civil society power relations. This is particularly true for studies conducted after the late 1990s, when the conflict reached its peak (cf. Siapno, 2002). To date, there are limited studies which focus on how the people, especially women, have survived the Aceh conflict, in terms of household economy.

3 Acehnese Women: In the Intersection of Violent Political Conflict and Household Livelihood

In this thesis I argue that during violent political conflict, Acehnese women were situated in the intersection of the longstanding conflict and their household livelihoods. The term ‘intersection’ relates to the fact that the violent political conflict and its daily effects faced by Acehnese women necessitated the tactical development of coping strategies to maintain their household livelihoods. It is widely acknowledged that the effects of a violent political conflict in generating poverty and vulnerability may be more damaging than other conflicts. This is because a violent political conflict is often characterised by deliberate destruction of political, economic, social and environmental systems. It also involves weakened or absent public institutions, contested state legitimacy and statehood, an informal or illegal economy, extensive violence, life threatening situations, involuntary displacement, deliberate destruction of livelihoods, and political marginalisation of certain groups (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, pp.1-3). The violent situations which were evident in Aceh have consequently led to the ‘loss of livelihood’ (Ohlsson, 2000, p.1) of the affected local community, especially those residing in the black areas (I: daerah hitam),\(^{19}\) the ‘hot-spot’ conflict areas.

The violent political conflict of Aceh exemplifies the unhappy relationship between the centre and the periphery within Indonesia. The conflict is about the exercise of unequal power of an authoritarian central

\(^{19}\)`Daerah Hitam` (I) are areas indicated as having heavy presence of GAM (see Chapter 6 for details)
government and the locals for whom obedience and loyalty should be the main virtue. In such a system, rebelling would be considered an ‘unforgivable sin’ since it manifest doubts concerning the authority’s right to institute norms and its dictum that the norms are established in the best interest of the society. As stated by Fromm (1947, p.6):

The source of irrational authority ... is about power over people. This power can be physical or mental, it can be realistic or only relative terms of the anxiety and helplessness of the person submitting to this authority. Power on one side, fear on the other are always the buttresses on which irrational authority is built. Criticism of the authority is not only not required but forbidden ... Irrational authority is by its very nature based upon inequality, implying difference in value ... (p.6)

It is important to note, however, that the conflict in Aceh was transformed in such a way that the GAM fighters who claimed to represent the oppressed Acehnese became another ‘irrational authority’ towards the Acehnese. In such a situation, obedience and rebellion were perplexing for the civilians. What was considered as obedience by the GAM fighters would be perceived as rebellion by the government, and vice versa. Due to the punitive nature of the irrational authority, Acehnese civilians were consequently sandwiched in between these two repressive parties.

The conflict clearly indicates the mixture of both physical and symbolic (psychological) violence perpetrated by both conflicting parties. Robben and Suárez-Orozco (2000, p.5) refer to this violence as ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ respectively. Physical (‘hard’) violence can be easily identified, named, and measured, and therefore methods to prevent such violence are more visible. Symbolic (‘soft’) violence is problematic for it is indefinite, cannot be easily measured, and has a long term indeterminate effect. Differentiating the two types of conflict, however, is not advisable. “...Like the lines in many maps, such division would be artificial, arbitrary, and even dangerous...” (Robben and Suárez-Orozco and, 2000, p.5).

My thesis does not attempt to make a distinction between the two ‘irrational authorities’ and between the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ types of violence. It is the interconnectedness and multiplier effects of both types of violence perpetrated by the two ‘irrational authorities’ which are central to the study,
which focuses on how Acehnese women cope with their daily household needs in a situation of violent political conflict. As previously stated, this study offers the local experiences of the ordinary Acehnese and the consequences of the conflict on their daily lives.

As many studies on the violent political conflict of Aceh focus more on the conflict itself or adhere to the genealogy of conflict, the issue of women and household economy affected by the conflict in Aceh has been rendered almost invisible. This parallels the absence of these vital subjects in conflict studies and development studies in general. The extensive literature on violence and armed conflict is mostly gender blind, with women’s participation not being recognised appropriately, in either analytical or theoretical aspects (Moser and Clark, 2001). This is despite the ‘gendered effect’, the different consequences of violence and conflict on women and men, as argued by some scholars (such as Berger, 2002; Sharoni, 1995).

A few recent studies have attempted to integrate gender analysis into their theoretical frameworks, but concentrate more on men as ‘perpetrators’ and women as ‘passive victims’ (Moser and Clark, 2001). Consequently, they fail to perceive women as ‘active agents’. In my study, I argue that women, in violent conflict circumstances, often have to assume responsibilities for household sustenance and become ‘active survivors’ who strive for a better state of affairs for their households. Much research indicates that women often assume responsibility for maintaining their household livelihood in poverty conditions, unstable environments, or where male family members are absent due to chronic violent political conflict, all circumstances which require women to become the cornerstone of a household’s coping strategies.

The link between violent political conflict, the decline of the socio-economic wellbeing of the people and the increase in poverty is also missing in development studies, the framework under which studies on household livelihood sustenance are usually conducted. Development studies, designed and developed within a basic assumption of political stability and normal or non violent conflict situations, have not to date adequately addressed women and household livelihood sustenance in violent political conflict circumstances. Development studies tend to take little notice of the fact that
whilst the conflict occurs, women carry on with their lives, and development assistance continues. However, the development assistance may be inappropriately designed and delivered because of the lack of fit between models of assistance and the conflict situation.

The aforementioned practical and theoretical concerns have motivated me to focus on how Acehnese women and their households cope with the effect of violent political conflict in their day-to-day lives. I have based the theoretical framework, key concepts, and empirical indicators for the study on existing relevant theories that cover the three main concepts of women, coping strategies, and household livelihood sustenance, incorporating them into the particular context of violent political conflict. A mixture of economic, anthropological, sociological, and historical approaches are used in the study. The four approaches are consolidated using the economic approach as the core. Therefore, the investigation is more about how the household economic activities of the Acehnese were formed and evolved within a violent political conflict situation rather than focusing on how the particular Acehnese culture and society shaped and evolved.

4 The Underlying Ethical and Methodological Concerns

Conducting research under complicated circumstances of Islamic traditions, violent political conflict, and ethno-nationalist construction of the Acehnese, the research confronts some fundamental ethical and methodological concerns. This section describes these problematical situations and their challenges for the conduct of the research.

4.1 On the Question of Morality: The Fundamental Ethical Issues

Research for the current study took place between July 2003 and August 2004,\textsuperscript{20} when the province was under Shari‘a Law (implemented since 20 Prior to the conduct of the study, preliminary research was performed in March and April 2003.}
2001), and martial law (from early-July 2003 to mid-July 2004), followed by a transition to the civil emergency period (mid-July 2004 to August 2005). It was also a time of rising Acehnese ethno-nationalism, forming through antagonism towards the Javanese which started as early as 1999/2000. The Javanese were considered to be outsiders, associated with the 'foreign' government of Indonesia, and a 'new colonialist' after the Dutch (Annex 5). The research was thus conducted under complicated circumstances of Islamic traditions, violent political conflict, and ethno-nationalist construction of the Acehnese, of which practical experiences will be further explored in Chapter 2.

These three interrelated contexts of Islam, violent political conflict and ethnic antagonism entailed the practical and ethical issues underpinning my research. The practical issues concern with security and proper Islamic conduct especially considering my ethnic Javanese background, gender, and reality of not practicing Islam. The fundamental philosophical/ethical and methodological issues relate to questions about the morality and moral obligations of the researcher towards the research subjects.

This question of morality is raised by Scheper-Hughes (1995) in her work in a shantytown of Alto do Cruzeiro in Northeast Brazil in 1982 through which she was transformed from an ‘objective’ or disengaged researcher to a politically and morally engaged researcher. For Scheper-Hughes, researchers should be ethically grounded, and she criticizes the insincere, superficial, and fleeting commitment of researchers towards their research subjects.

Another important consideration was the gender issue. Being a woman, travelling alone in the troubled Islamic region of Aceh was both a true asset and a challenge. Similar to Siapno’s experiences (2002, p.xv), I found the liberal Islamic character of the general Acehnese society allowed ample opportunities to move freely in the region. Nevertheless, the enforcement of Shari’'a law by the government and the ‘elite’ Acehnese Moslems limited my mobility as a woman. This was especially true because

21 Under the GAM regime, apart from antagonism to the Javanese, Acehnese identity was constructed with reference to its ‘golden age’, a period in the 16th and 17th century when Aceh was an Independent Kingdom. See Chapter 4, Section 1.3.
of the fact that Shari'a Law was disproportionately understood as placing more control over women by making what is supposedly individual choice into compulsory conduct, such as the Islamic dress code. The 'razia jilbab' (I), also locally known as 'sweeping jilbab' (I), is a Shari'a police raid to coerce women to wear the veil. In addition, some 'razia jilbab' were conducted extra-legally by vigilante groups. Siapno (2002, p.36) refers to this as 'forcibly veiling women'. The 'razia jilbab' was often done without courtesy and they tended to harass women so that some Acehnese women termed it 'street harassment' (Siapno, 2002, pp.36-39). It exemplifies the male political control over women's bodies and sexuality, and serves as a tool for reclaiming Acehnese women from the bad influence of what is termed the 'Madonna' factor (I: faktor Madonna), the local term for Western values, and returning them to the 'authentic' Islamic traditions of the Acehnese.

The uneasy and complex circumstances that prevailed in Aceh during my fieldwork placed me in a dilemma. On the one hand, I was enthusiastic to thoroughly pursue my research. On the other hand, I faced practical questions of whether I should change the research topic or area due to fear of the possibility of being trapped within the 'political' troubles in a manner that might also compromise my research subjects. Luckily, my local contacts in Aceh, whom I had met on my official trips to the region during my assignment with UNFPA, kept on encouraging me and succeeded in convincing me that the research result would, in some way, contribute positively to the future of the region.

Looking at other scholars' experiences of working in violent conflict areas, such as Siapno (2002), I understand that this dilemma is a not-so-new phenomenon. Such violent situations limit the range and intensity of research practice, as well as hindering the researcher's physical movements. However, it does not mean that research cannot be conducted. In fact, much valuable

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22 According to the Qur'an, Moslem women were indeed required to be modest, but it is a very personal choice for a woman to opt for a strict Moslem dress code. Entrenched in this choice is a moral commitment of a Moslem woman to adopt the Islamic way of life.

23 Madonna is a well known pop singer from the United States whose song lyrics and dances are perceived as antithecal to Islamic values. See Chapter 3, Section 2.2. for further details on the 'Madonna factor.'
information can be obtained from such limiting circumstances, especially with regards to the nature and characteristics of the conflict, and how people strategise to cope with the milieu of violent political conflict. Research in violent conflict areas challenges a researcher to possess sound research skills and capabilities, and to employ appropriate strategies that are sensitive in regards to the time, place, and categories of research subjects, as well as foregrounding pressing ethical concerns related to the vulnerability of research subjects. My research approaches and strategies developed in response to these challenges consider four significant related issues. These are gender, the nature of the conflict, political colour and affiliation, and the practical implications of the research results. The situation, however, has allowed me to learn and personally adopt the local coping strategies expressed in the phrases ‘Push the boat when the tide is high’ (Ac.: Tulak Jalo watèe ie paseung) (Siapno, 2002, p.18), that is waiting for the right time to make the right move; and ‘playing beautifully’ (I: bermain cantik), keeping a ‘safe distance’ from both conflicting parties through avoiding too much contact and affiliation with one another of the conflicting parties to maintain neutrality.\(^{24}\) As I further elaborate in Chapter 5 and 6, these two local strategies were quite apparent among my research subjects, especially those from the hot spots.

### 4.2 Practical Concerns: Method and Strategies

One of the major obstacles that I had to face in conducting my research in Aceh was my fear of getting into trouble and, more importantly, the impact of this on my research subjects. I was always reminded of the case of the Australian scholar who was caught by the local government for conducting research in Aceh without a proper visa in September 2002. The consequences of this incident did not stop with the deportation of the foreign scholar, but continued with the ‘displacement’ of the local translators who were forced to flee in the initial phase of martial law. The consequences were thus more severe for the local translators than for the foreign scholar.

\(^{24}\) See chapter 2 for details on these two local coping strategies.
In the context of the violent political conflict in Aceh, which involved the two opposing sides of the government and the GAM, locating myself as a researcher was indeed a significant challenge. 'Playing beautifully' sometimes became problematic, especially when I was asked direct questions, such as how I perceived the Acehnese. Are they rebellious and subversive? What do I think about the future of Aceh? These questions required careful answers, as otherwise they might be wrongly interpreted. It was relatively easy to answer when I had enough background information about the person, but it got harder when those questions were unexpectedly raised in the middle of an interview with my research subjects or in the context of a simple social conversation with villagers.

Discussions on day-to-day economic livelihood could not be simply detached from the issue of violent political conflict. Consequently, isolating research in the neutral zone of economic and culture was not easy. The issue of conflict would always come up, and careful consideration and response to this issue was always required. I needed to always concentrate on keeping the conversations focused on the household economic situation. This was more difficult than simply avoiding too much contact and affiliation with one of the conflicting parties.

In my approach, I adopted Mahmood's (1996 cited in Rodgers, 2002) argument on the importance of understanding the full complexities of violence, in which the purpose, all sides and dimensions of the violent practices, and their overall impact on the affected society are examined. To achieve this, I adopted a historical approach in order to situate household coping strategies, with particular attention on the role of women, within the wider context of violent political conflict and its overall multifaceted dimensions that framed households in terms of developing and exercising coping strategies. The historical approach embraces the personal and the broader regional history of the society and the violent political conflict in Aceh.

Given that the Aceh conflict was (and is still) considered to be a sensitive issue, at the personal and household level, I used the historical approach to the extent that it was possible, in the sense of security and
convenience, for research subjects to share their personal history. Some research subjects, indeed, willingly shared their personal history, while others declined to speak about themselves and their history beyond their current situations. I respected their decisions on the matter.

An historical approach, especially the personal history, required a 'verstehen' or interpretative understanding that relied on intimacy with the research subjects. For this purpose, participant observation, an intimate familiarity of research subjects through intensive involvement with them in their environment, has been identified as the best strategy (Rogers, 2002). Therefore, this method was also employed here. It was well understood, however, that in the context of Aceh, the method was problematical for both myself and the research subjects. Anyone could be seen as being affiliated with a certain conflicting party and become the target of violence. I thus faced a difficult situation. On the one hand, I was well aware of the importance of avoiding a one-sided study. On the other hand, interviewing the survivors of a military operation, who often were perceived as partisans, could have caused me to be seen as ‘affiliated’ with GAM. This would, in turn, have resulted in limited mobility in the region and might have led to my other research subjects, who were perceived as neutral, also falling under suspicion of partisanship.

In order to limit the possibility of these consequences occurring, the method was modified to ‘limited participatory-observation’. 'Limited' here means the research was not conducted with my full participation in the daily lives of my research subjects but only in selected activities which were determined by taking into consideration the security situation, type of activities, areas or regions where the activities took place, and the identity of the participants involved in the activities. These various aspects were always considered in discussion with my local contacts.

Besides direct observation, I also conducted a survey of households in several conflict and conflict affected regions of the province using the ‘snow ball’ sampling method. This sampling began with information from friends at local NGOs about their local women’s groups and which members were approachable for the research, and then continued with information from these
local women. The ‘snow ball’ method seemed the most appropriate method for accessing women from the ‘hot spot’ areas. Using this method, the names of persons I previously contacted became a ‘verbal recommendation’ for others whom I contacted afterwards, and provided as a ‘security guarantee’ that I was trustworthy. Thirty-two households were surveyed, some of which were approached further for in-depth interviews and limited participatory observation. In addition, three formal Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with women from conflict and conflict affected areas. I also interviewed relevant key informants, for example government officers, formal and informal leaders at province, district, village and gampông (Ac.), part of village, levels, UN staff at Jakarta and Banda Aceh office, as well as local and international NGO workers. In addition to these techniques, I also took part in informal conversations that occurred in and around the village where I stayed, at shops, markets, eating places, government offices, university campuses, and on public transport.

Additional data were also collected from scholarly literature and other secondary data sources. The literature study was particularly important for the historical approach of the research project in order to understand how the Aceh violent political conflict had evolved, how it affected women and their households (especially in terms of the household’s structure and composition), and how household coping strategies were exercised and developed into more systematic coping strategies.

Analysis and presentation of the research results also requires care. It is necessary to carefully look at how to present the research findings without doing harm to the research subjects and key informants. As maintained by

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25 A formal FGD can be defined as “A research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher.” (Morgan, 2002, p.141). It is typified by a pre-set time and place; a small group of 8-10 participants led by a moderator; formal structure, content and process; a defined subject, content, and process; in-depth discussion summarized at the end to invite participants to confirm or modify (Khan and Manderson, 1992). This is different from Informal FGD characterized by an opportunistic discussion, varied number of participants, participants define the topic of discussion, possibility for including other activities, no fixed time period, consensus at the end of discussion (Khan and Manderson, 1992).

26 According to Khan and Manderson (1992, p.59) “... conversations occur whenever a researcher is in the field; she or he walks around the village, greets, stops, and chats to those who live there. On the move, it is possible to maintain single casual conversations and informal interviews, but settled on a house step or on a mat, this is less likely...”
Robinson (2004, p.379), writing is “...part of the ethical responsibility of the (ethnographic) writer, including principled responsibilities of authors to the people whose own understandings are contained in the account”. Writing is, therefore, another post fieldwork problematic situation to deal with. Some people from whom I sought advice admitted that it is indeed a tricky situation to write results of research undertaken in an area that involves violent conflict between the state and rebel groups. It is especially true when the conflict has been played out for a long period of time such as in the case of Aceh. Not revealing names, for example, will not guarantee the security of research subjects if locations and other information are not properly disguised. The challenge, then, is how to properly address all the issues without giving away any information that may put people at risk.

5 Organisation of the Thesis

My thesis is divided into seven chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 portrays the research process, elaborating on the methodological issues of conducting research in the context of the Islamic, violent political conflict, and ethno-nationalism construction of the Acehnese.

Chapter 3 outlines the debates and issues around the theoretical framework used in this thesis, in which I examine what I term the ‘triangular ignorance’ and the ‘triangular contextual analyses’ in my study. The ‘triangular ignorance’ refers to the lack of recognition of the important issue of women as ‘active survivors’ in conflict studies, women’s studies, and development studies. The ‘triangular contextual analyses’ applies to the stressors, actions, and expectations that frame women in developing and exercising their coping strategies.

Chapter 4 provides the societal context of the research through describing the region, its society, culture, social-demography, and economic characteristics. This chapter grounds the analysis in a historical narrative of the Acehnese, and gives consideration to gender relations. The historical account is employed by considering the earlier era of the Acehnese Sultanate as the starting point of analysis. This is based on the fact that the golden
history of the Sultanate has often been used as a point of reference for Acehnese pride, in particular by GAM, as the basis of not only independence but also of Acehnese identity. The socio-demographic characteristics and the economy of Aceh are included to provide a more comprehensive picture of the society.

Chapter 5 explores the history of Aceh violent political conflict: its nature, causes, and consequences at the regional (province) level, with particular attention to the people’s livelihoods. Together with chapter four, which has explored ethnographic and Islamic contexts of the Acehnese society, chapter five provides the context in which the contemporary coping strategies of women and their households’ livelihoods can be situated. The historical accounts are looked at from the point of view of economics, politics, and anthropology. In chapter five I argue that the longstanding history of the Aceh violent political conflict has provided a ‘cultural template’ of violence for generations (Juris, 2005, p.415). Together with the existing trauma, the ‘cultural template’ may have fostered and regenerated the conflict. I argue further that there are three important consequences of the prolonged conflict that have, on the whole, been overlooked by scholarly works on Aceh: the ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma,’ the awkward ‘sandwiched position’ of Acehnese civilians between conflicting parties, and the deprivation of the local economy, known locally as penghancuran ekonomi lokal (I).

Chapter 6 provides the main findings concerning the coping strategies women employ to deal with the difficulties of maintaining their household livelihood and other day-to-day problems brought about by the violent political conflict situation. It further exemplifies the impact of the conflict on household impoverishment; examines the social assets or capitals which were available, and choices made by women in using or abandoning these assets for

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27 This is the jargon used by local NGO activists to describe the devastating effect of the conflict on local livelihoods. However, I found the usage of ‘penghancuran’ in explaining the situation is rather too strong. Embedded in the term is the notion of total destruction. The military actions of both GAM fighters and the Indonesian military aimed at or resulted in the hinderance of civilians in performing their livelihood activities rather than a total destruction of their household economies. For this reason, I have chosen to render this term as ‘deprivation’ – which better illustrates the loss, dispossession, removal, destitution, hardship, and stress, experienced by Acehnese households – to bridge the gap between the jargon and the factual situation. I thank Silvia, my local contact, who suggested the term to me.
their household coping strategies; and depicts the ‘conflict poverty entrapment’ of households, in other word, the poverty trap resulting from the conflict. A case study of Nur’s family, who escaped from the conflict in their village of origin only to be trapped within another form of poverty in the slum area of Banda Aceh, is presented to further illustrate the impact of conflict at the household level.

Chapter 7 draws conclusions from the research findings, and discusses the research implications, both theoretically and empirically. Based on this, I highlight some recommendations for future research and development intervention in situations of violent political conflict.
Chapter 2 Amid Martial Law, Shari’a Law, and Ethnic Identity Antagonism

This chapter describes the conduct of the research in the three milieus of violent political conflict, Islamic society, and ethnic-identity construction. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes the main and contingency plans developed for the research considering the violent political conflict in the region. The second section demonstrates the overall stages, processes, problems and challenges of conducting research with people from a region stigmatised as a ‘rebelling province.’ The third section portrays the results of my precarious field work journeys in the region, in which the influence of the three aforementioned milieus are presented. The fourth section illustrates some conclusions on several pertinent issues of conducting research in the mélange of three important milieus of Islamic, violent political conflict, and ethnic identity construction.

1 Research In an Area of Violent Political Conflict

When I commenced my PhD project in 2002, and conducted a pre-field work trip from January to April 2003, in both Jakarta and Aceh, Aceh was unstable. However, the situation for the people had gradually improved in the sense that the world donor community had started to pay serious attention to the region and its problems. The international community was also able to compel the Indonesian government to take a more peaceful and non-military approach to the region. Results of this international attention were evidenced by the efforts of both the people and government to reach a more peaceful resolution such as the All Acehnese Women Conference (Ac.: Duek Pakat)

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1 I did my pre-field work through working as an intern with the Save the Children US in the Banda Aceh office and UNDP Jakarta office.
Inong Aceh) from 20 to 22 February 2000 and the Humanitarian Pause agreed to by the Wahid government. In December 2002, several donors made a joint effort to have both the central government and GAM freedom fighters conduct peace talks. Facilitated by the Henry Dunant Centre (HDC), a Swiss-based NGO, both parties finally signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) on 6 December 2002 (Huber, 2004). The agreement caused the people who had suffered during the long conflict to hope that a solution was in sight.

Given these circumstances, in addition to the plan of directly going to the region to conduct the research, I designed a contingency plan. This plan contained three scenarios, based on observations and consultations with local contacts during my pre-field work visit and long distance observation and personal communication with contacts after the pre-field work trip, from May to July 2003.

The first scenario was based on the assumption that although the CoHA period was unstable, it showed the willingness of both conflicting parties to have peace talks towards ending the conflict. Nevertheless, it was well understood that armed conflict was still evident, especially in the ‘hot spot’ areas. In this scenario, the research would be mainly conducted in the municipality of Banda Aceh and District of Aceh Besar.

The second scenario was based on five linked events. First, the CoHA would be broken. Second, both conflicting parties would refuse to have peace talks to end the conflict. Third, tensions and armed clashes would increase in the ‘hot spot’ areas, such as East Aceh, Central Aceh and North Aceh. Fourth,

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2 This Congress, initiated from a meeting held by approximately 200 women of 68 organisations in Aceh to commemorate Mother’s Day (Hari Ibu) in December 1999, is monumental for three reasons. Firstly, it was the first occasion that Acehnese women could independently share their concerns on the conflict in the public sphere. Secondly, it was an inclusive and democratic congress indicated from the diversity of its participants. Thirdly, it was successfully conducted despite some threats and an allegation that the Congress was merely a political tool of the central government to undermine the Acehnese demand to determine their own future. Bianpoen (2000) notes that the organizers were intimidated by both conflicting parties to deliver an outcome that was favorable to them. The congress, despite the threats, interestingly came out with justice and peace restoration as their main concern for the future of Aceh.

3 Abdurrahman Wahid (commonly known ‘Gus Dur’) is the second president of Indonesia in the post-Suharto era, succeeding Habibie, came into power following the fall of Suharto in May 1998 (Reid, 2006, p.350). See Chapter 5, Section 1.3.4. for details.

4 See Chapter 4, Section 2.1. for details.
the Indonesian military would implement a limited martial law that would apply for certain regions only, especially for the ‘hot spot’ areas. Fifth, any activities would need security clearance from the Indonesian military headquarters. In this situation, the research would only focus on the municipality of Banda Aceh with a security clearance from the Indonesian military headquarters in Jakarta.

The third ‘worst-case’ scenario assumed that there were severe tensions and armed conflicts in the overall region of the NAD province, which would lead to heavy and very tight control and no permission for any activities except those that fell within the martial law. If such a scenario occurred, the research would be conducted in Jakarta among Acehnese who had relocated to Jakarta due to the conflict.

As the situation deteriorated in the fourth and fifth month of its implementation, the CoHA was finally ended with the declaration of martial law on 18 May 2003 (Annex 2). During that time, I was waiting for the result of my application to the Australian National University’s Human Research Ethics Committee for approval for my research proposal and aimed to leave Australia as scheduled on 1 July 2003.

The worsening situation made me lose faith as I thought I would not able to get the ethics clearance. One did not need to be a political or military specialist to know that my chance of going to the region was very slim, almost impossible. It appeared that the Indonesian military was likely to implement tight security checks in order to identify and isolate GAM fighters from the populace. The Indonesian military, at that time, had lost track of most of the freedom fighters for two main reasons. Firstly, in the euphoria of reformation in the whole country, the people enjoyed the freedom they had not enjoyed during the Suharto period, e.g. the freedom to speak and stand up for civil rights. Secondly, following the euphoria, President Wahid’s promise that the people of Aceh could determine their own future was understood by the people, taking the East Timor case as a precedent, to mean/imply that a referendum would be held. During this time of euphoria, the Indonesian military had limited movement due to the strong call from the civil society to ‘get back to barracks’ (I: kembali ke barak), so many GAM fighters were able
to simply merge with the civil society with new identities and could not be easily traced.

The implementation of martial law in May 2003 raised further question about the feasibility of my research. As tensions in the region intensified, so did the fears and suspicions of my research subjects. In addition, my Javanese ethnic background was a key factor to consider. Through ‘categorical thinking’ my research subjects perceived me as a Javanese, an outsider and an associate of the central government. While the ethnic categorisation might not be as severe as in other armed conflict situations such as in Rwanda between the Hutu and Tutsi (Malkki, 1995), with the re-implementation of the military approach to the region, I understood that such sentiment might intensify and limit my research activities.

However, contrary to my expectations, on 21 May 2003, a few days after the announcement of the implementation of martial law by the Indonesian government, I received clearance from the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. Prior to the conduct of the research in Aceh, I then decided to spend approximately two to three weeks observing the situation from Jakarta. This observation period turned out to be valuable as it gave me a clearer picture of the situation and helped me to determine what to do next as explained further in the following section.

2 From the ‘Wait and See’ To the ‘Losing of Faith’ Periods

In the conduct of the research, I went through four different stages that illustrate the dynamics of the research and also the development of the conflict in the region. This section details these four stages: the ‘wait and see’ period, the adoption of the third contingency plan, the ‘losing faith’ period, and the return to the original plan.
2.1 ‘Tulak Jalo Watée Ie Paseung’: Waiting For the Right Tide To Launch the Boat (July To August 2003)

‘Tulak jalo watée i e paseung’ (Ac.) is an old Acehnese proverb, which Siapno (2002, p.18) translates to as ‘Push the boat when the tide is high.’ I first heard it from my local contact in Aceh when s/he described how local NGOs conducted their activities in the difficult circumstances of violent political conflict in Aceh. S/he argued that given the unpredictable situation and the persistent volatility, they often had to simply be quiet and wait for the right moment to make a move. It was about silent observation, critical analysis, and making the right judgment on the situation, especially about the timing. This was analogous to Napoleon Bonaparte’s strategy of ‘wait and see’ which well suited my situation at the time.

The assessment performed during the ‘wait and see’ period in Jakarta was conducted through interviews with several key informants and secondary data analysis. My key informants were from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (I: Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia-LIPI), the key policy research institute in Indonesia, colleagues from some universities, as well as my contacts from both the Indonesian military and Police Headquarters, some non government organisations (NGOs), and my international NGO friends. The secondary data was collected from mass media such as newspapers and television broadcasts.

The assessment raised several pertinent issues: firstly, the importance of a local or national institutional affiliation demonstrated by an official letter.5 The letter would be considered as a legal document to justify my presence in Aceh, which was crucial and more important than my national identity card (I: Kartu Tanda Penduduk-KTP). This was especially true during the implementation of martial law when the authorities were restoring security through separating and isolating GAM and its partisans from the rest of the

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5 This followed the general procedure in Indonesia. There was actually no clear rule on the types of documentation required for Indonesians to enter the province in the initial period of martial law. This was different to the case of international workers, where clear policy was applied. The central government issued a special document for international workers (mainly from the UN agencies and International Development Agencies such as SIDA, AusAID, and USAID) which was generally known as a ‘blue book’. 
At this stage, a new identity card was issued for those domiciled in the province, and ID checks, better known as ‘sweeping’ KTP, were often conducted. The new identity card was different from the regular one that applied to the rest of the country and was well-known as the ‘Red-White ID’ (KTP Merah Putih) for its two colours of red and white, representing the National flag, with the picture of an eagle (I: Burung Garuda) as the national symbol, and the national ideology (I: Pancasila), on the front and back pages respectively. The new Acehnese identity card was passport-sized and signed by three authorities: the head of the sub district (I: camat), the military commander at sub district level (Komandan Rayon Militer – Danramil), and the head of police office at sub district (Komandan Polisi Sektor – Kapolsek).

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6 The isolation of GAM members from the civil society was the second phase of the Security Operation conducted by the martial law authority. The Indonesian military acknowledged this as the most difficult phase (Kompas, 18 June 2003)

7 Stevens and Schimdgal-Tellings (2004, p.978) in ‘A comprehensive Indonesian-English Dictionary’ explain that the term derives from the English word and translate it as ‘swiping/sweep (by police/groups seeking to oust foreigners, etc.) The word was indeed commonly used in Indonesia for any actions or operations conducted by either vigilante groups or security forces (such as the Indonesian military and police) to pursue particular groups to eliminate them by expulsion or other means (such as killing, putting in custody, etc.). The term actually illustrates the thinking that the particular group is not welcomed and is considered to be ‘dirty’ or ‘contaminated,’ and need not be allowed to exist in the concerned community. It is also used for checks on identity cards and official documentation, such as driving licences and vehicle registration.

8 Pancasila, proclaimed by Sukarno on June 1, 1945, denotes the Indonesian five principles of national ideology: (1) belief in the one and only God (I: ketuhanan yang Maha Exa); (2) a just and civilized humanity (I: kemauan yang adil dan beradab), (3) the unity of Indonesia (I: Persatuan Indonesia), (4) democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives (I: Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan perwakilan); and (5) social justice for the whole of the Indonesia people (I: Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia) (Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.700)
Plate 2-1. The Red-White ID (KTP Merah Putih) (left) and The Ordinary ID (KTP Biasa) (above) issued by the authority from the respective areas of The NAD province and DKI Jakarta.

This ID card differed from the normal or regular ID which was white and yellow, with no national symbol and no description of ideology, and was only signed by head of sub district (I: *camat*).

In the ‘sweeping KTP’, those who had no ‘Red-White ID’ would have to go through another identification process at the closest military post or office. Those from out of the region like myself, who happened to travel to the region, were therefore required to provide a formal letter from an affiliated institution in which the purpose and period of visit was mentioned (I: ‘Surat Jalan’ or ‘Surat Dinas’). Being present in, or visiting, the region without proper (national) documentation would raise suspicions and would possibly lead to trouble with the martial law authority. Being in a region under martial law would itself immediately appear suspicious, especially for purposes of conducting a research.

These fears were proved well-founded when I finally was able to visit the region in December 2003 to January 2004 and stayed with a friend in village A of Aceh Besar District, located on the border of Aceh Besar District and Banda Aceh Municipality. Identity and security checks were often conducted in front of the house or around the corner of the Banda Aceh – Medan road, where I stayed. Late one evening, at around 09.30 pm, together with a friend who forgot to bring his/her identity card, we were caught in the
‘sweeping’ conducted by the military (the army). The soldier who checked and questioned us was quite polite and nice. He was more interested in questioning me on why and for how long I was visiting Aceh, than in investigating my friend who had not brought his/her ID. But then his commander, who looked tired and a bit distressed, started to yell impatiently at me while pointing his flash light directly at my face:

The Army Commander: This again! What a reason. Visiting a friend in Aceh...don’t you know that this area is under martial law, uh!? Don’t you know this area is under martial law!?! / Ini lagi. Ada­ ada saja. Menengok teman di Aceh...apa tidak tahu ini darurat militer, ha!?..tahu tidak ini darurat militer!?!/

Me: Yes, Sir. /Tahu, Pak.

The Army Commander: So why have you come to Aceh?..where is your ID?..where is your ID?..show it..where are you from!? / Lantas kenapa datang ke Aceh!?..mana KTP!?..mana KTP!?..coba kasihi lihat..dari mana asalnya!?

Me (showing my required identity card): From Jakarta, Sir / Dari Jakarta, Pak.

The Army Commander: When did you arrive from Jakarta!? / Kapan datang dari Jakarta!?

Me (telling him a lie): Two days ago, Sir / Dua hari yang lalu, Pak.

The Army Commander: When will you leave!? / Kapan pulang!?

Me (told him a lie again): Tomorrow morning, with Garuda [the Indonesian flight] / Besok pagi pak, dengan Garuda.

The soldier who first investigated us (speaking to himself in a suspicious tone of voice); Only two days in Aceh then you are going back? / Hanya dua hari di Aceh terus pulang?

Me (telling him lies): Well I went to Medan first then came here / Khair saya ke Medan dulu baru kemari.

The Army Commander (glaring at me): Is it true you are leaving tomorrow!? / Benar besok pulang!?

Me: Yes, Sir / Ya Pak.

The Army Commander (a little bit calmer): Where are you coming from and where are you going to go? / Dari mana dan mau kemana ini tadi?

Me: From home to the city / Dari rumah mau ke kota.

The Army Commander (raised his voice again): Where and what are you going to do in the city at night time? / Kemana dan mau apa ke kota malam-malam!?

Me: Just going into town Sir / Ke kota, Pak.

The Army Commander (impatiently): Yeah, in which part of town? /..Where in the city and what do you want to do there!? / Ya ke kota itu di mananya? .. kemana ke kota itu dan mau apa ke sana!?
Me: To Rex, Sir, to have dinner / Ke Rex, Pak, mau makan malam.

The Army Commander (giving me my ID, and sounded like talking to himself): Women, hanging out at night time! You may go now... / Perempuan, malam-malam keluar! Sudah sana...

This interrogation clearly shows that movement in the region by someone not from the region created suspicions. However, a short itinerary may lessen any suspicions. The interrogation also illustrates how these army personnel perceived the morality of women who were supposed to be at home at night time, as otherwise they would certainly not be ‘good women’ (I: perempuan baik-baik) but ‘naughty women’ (I: perempuan nakal) or ‘night women’ (I: perempuan malam). The interrogation, the underlying presumption of ‘good women’ as opposed to ‘naughty women’, the presence of three army trucks, the soldiers in their dirty uniforms and their guns, and the flash light pointed on my face, which allowed them to see me but not vice versa, created mixed feelings of fear, anxiety, suppression, and annoyance.

The second issue to consider was that my attachment to an Australian university could have led to me being perceived as a ‘foreign spy’ by both conflicting parties, especially the martial law authority. My contacts in the Army and Police Headquarters advised me that this affiliation, as shown in the ‘To Whom It May Concern’ letter from the Head of Department in Australia, might not be favourable for me. Although I am an Indonesian citizen and would not fall under any kind of restrictions in the region at that moment, the fact that I was affiliated with an Australian university might have raised some ‘suspicions’ from the authorities. Both of my contacts referred to the case of an Australian scholar who came to the region without a proper visa and met with GAM fighters. She, with her two local contacts, was caught in one of the sweepings and was later held in custody on two serious charges of misusing her visa and having a link with GAM fighters. My key informant from the police head quarters suggested that I become attached to a national or, preferably, a local university, such as the State University of Syiah Kuala

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9 Rex is the local term for the dining stalls area in Aceh where people usually go to dine or simply to get together for some light meals or drinks. It is located at the centre of the city and was one of the favourite ‘hang-out’ places for the locals.

10 This ‘interrogation’ was not recorded, but I wrote it down immediately after we reached Rex.
located in Banda Aceh. This would be beneficial as the locals would know how, when, and where I would be able to do my research activities. This is because the conflict situation in Aceh was unique, and only the Acehnese, or at least people who had lived in the region for some period of time, would know the best strategy for performing any activities. I was basically advised to wait until the situation calmed down a little, which was anticipated to happen in November or December 2003, when it would be safer for me as a Javanese to move around the region.

The third issue that arose from this initial assessment was the discrepancy between the formal ‘policies and regulations’ and the ‘actual situation.’ On paper, there was no law restricting research activities or people’s mobility in the region at that time. However, for the first 3-4 months of the implementation of martial law, anyone from outside who wanted to enter the region needed to seek permission from the office of The Coordinating Ministry of Social, Political, and Security Affairs (Menteri Koordinator Sosial Politik dan Keamanan – Menkosospol) in Jakarta. Given the fact that I was not attached to any local or national institution or university, most of my contacts advised me to stay in Jakarta for a while and wait until the situation improved. Several operations had been planned by the martial law authority, and if things went as intended, by November or December 2003 the situation was expected to improve. By that time, it would be easier for me to move around the province and visit local institutions in order to negotiate my affiliation for the conduct of my research.

The fourth issue was the feasibility of working under a situation of martial law. Most of the people in Jakarta I talked to, my key informants and friends, responded to an explanation of my research interests with, ‘It is fascinating but would that be feasible?’ The main reason for this statement was the ‘security issue’. Most of them questioned the worth of putting my life at risk for the purpose of an ‘academic exercise’ like research. The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (I: Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia - LIPI), for example, had advised its researchers not to do research in the three conflict
areas of Maluku, Central Sulawesi, and Aceh. Should conflict studies be
my area of concern, they strongly suggested that I do my research in Maluku,
which was considered far less risky than Aceh.

2.2 From the Third Contingency Plan Back To ‘Wait and See’ (September – October 2003)

Based on my assessment on the situation, and the suggestion of my
supervisor, I decided to focus on the third contingency plan: to conduct
research on the Acehnese who had relocated to Jakarta due to the conflict in
Aceh. A number of them had moved to Jakarta since the conflict, especially
in the early 1970s and late 1990s. Unfortunately, in interviews with
Acehnese in Jakarta, I had to face the deep suspicions of the male members of
the families. Their suspicions were clearly evident from their body language
and questions directed towards me.

These suspicions were based on their fear that my research had
something to do with the current political situation of the region. The very
first question that usually emerged was “does it have something to do with
politics?”/“Ini ada hubungannya dengan politik tidak?” or “There is no
political interest, right?”/“Tidak untuk kepentingan politik khan?.” Even
when I had already told them that my research had nothing to do with politics,
but was purely about household economics, they still showed their reluctance
by not answering my requests for their families to be my research subjects. I
think this is understandable considering the fact that my research was taking
place at the very initial stage of martial law. It was, therefore, logical for them
to be extra cautious.

Male dominance was another problem that I faced. Women usually
turned to male family members, such as husbands or brothers, to answer my
question. A woman that I met in the western part of Jakarta politely refused to

11 At the time, no formal letter to this effect had been issued by LIPI. The decision was made
at a LIPI staff meeting.
12 Unfortunately there were no statistics available on the exact number, but they can be
classified into two main groups, i.e. the 1970s and 1990s groups. The 1970s group were those
who resided in Jakarta due to the DI/TII/NII conflict (see Chapter 4 for details); the 1990s
group were those who fled to Jakarta due to the GAM conflict.
be my research subject by asking me to talk to her brother instead, even though I had clearly explained that my research was about Acehnese women and not men. The men, who usually came forward to show that they were protecting their women, talked to me warily. It was clear that the husband’s or male family members’ consent was essential if I wanted to approach the women. Even when I was able to obtain the male’s approval, I was not able to satisfactorily obtain the information that I needed as women tended to speak with me hesitatingly.

Although it was quite disappointing for me, I understood and did not feel offended by the situation. To me, it was understandable given the fact that I was simply a stranger that had arrived from ‘nowhere’ and was attempting to enter their ‘social circle’. This implies an attempt to become familiar without being kin or acquaintance and without sharing any basis for a relationship. For them, I could be ‘anyone’ that could put them in danger. I could be a military spy (Ac.: cuak) \(^{13}\) or worse than this, a military soldier (Ac.: si pai).\(^{14}\) The fear and suspicion that I thought would not be so apparent in Jakarta, was greater and more evident than in Aceh. Similarly, the male dominance that I faced in Jakarta was, interestingly, not so evident in Aceh.

Their reaction may have been due to several factors, namely the trauma of previous military operations, the need to protect their families, and the internalised distrust and suspicions. The implementation of martial law in Aceh caused these displaced persons to be extra cautious in relating with others, especially with Javanese. At the time, there was also an influx of people from Aceh to Jakarta whom I termed ‘political internally displaced persons’. These were political and human rights activists who were targeted or

\(^{13}\) This is the local term for a spy of the Indonesian military. For the Acehnese this term used to carry strong cultural implications. An Acehnese who is considered cuak would not be well accepted by society and, worse than this, would not be considered as a non Acehnese.

\(^{14}\) This is the local slang for soldier (I: tentara), which was usually used by the pro-independence movement to call the Indonesian military soldiers. The term carries strong hatred against the Indonesian military, especially the Army. There was no firm explanation on the meaning and origin of ‘Si Pai’. The word may referred to ‘pat’, the lowest rank of soldier in sultanate era (Zainuddin, 1961). Some Acehnese, however, believed that it is the abbreviation of Anti Islam Soldiers (I: Pasukan Anti Islam - PAI), the label used to refer to the Indonesian Armed Forces sent to Aceh during the DI/TII/NIH clash (Saleh, 1992). The term, with the ‘attitude’ implied in it, is socialized and cultivated not only in the adult population but also the children. See Chapter 4, Section 2.2.1
believed they would be targeted in the operation due to their activities. The mass media coverage of the initial phase of the implementation of martial law and the comprehensive operation in Aceh, in which the military played a major part, may have given these political IDPs the impression of the serious stance of the Indonesian government and have contributed to their fear.15

Apart from the fear, they also suffered from 'stigmatization' in their surroundings. They carried the stigma of coming from a part of the country seen to be in a state of rebellion. I met a Minang family from West Sumatra who happened to be the neighbours of a group of Acehnese who were living in Jakarta due to the conflict. When we sat down together one evening, they started to make a joke about the Acehnese being GAM members and fighting for freedom. This same joking stereotype emerged amongst the Javanese who I met during my flight to Banda Aceh in December 2003. These jokes not only illustrated the stereotyping and stigmatisation of a rebelling ethnic group, but also signified the presumption that the ‘rebels’ lacked a sense of nationalism, that is a sense of belonging and togetherness as Indonesian citizens. The nervousness the Acehnese showed towards me mirrored the nervousness other Indonesians felt towards them.

From that experience, I learnt several valuable lessons. First, ‘timing’ is important. My timing was obviously not right. Interviewing or even approaching the people at the ‘hot time’ of the very initial stage of the implementation of martial law was not a wise move. Second, internal contacts are vital. Having a contact and being recommended by someone from their inner circle is essential for gaining access. Contacts facilitate the establishment of a more relaxed and trustworthy relationship and helped overcome the idea that I was ‘unknown’ and ‘suspicious’, and therefore an ‘unwelcome’ outsider.

15 Some of these activists said that they had been informed by internal contacts in the Indonesian military and police that their names were in the military and police list. Some others did not receive any information on whether or not they were on the list but believed that they would be targeted because of their history of activities. Two local activists who opted to stay in the province during the martial law period labelled those who were not listed but decided to flee as suffering from ‘activist paranoia’ or being paranoid for being an activist.
The aforementioned situations frustrated and upset me; especially knowing that time was slipping by. I then decided to go back to the ‘wait and see’ strategy, with some hopes of being able to go to the region itself. I focused on collecting secondary data from any possible sources such as LIPI, UN agencies, and NGO friends. I attended an UN-NGO-INGO coordination meeting on Aceh, and collected clippings of the news and articles from national and local newspapers. There were several national newspapers in the country, and I choose the Jakarta metropolitan daily, Kompas, which is well-known and considered to be a relatively reliable source of news. On its fifth and sixth page, for several months Kompas dedicated a special section to the issue of Aceh. I also chose Serambi, the only Acehnese newspaper accessible to me in Jakarta.

2.3 Losing Faith: Diverting My Research Interests 
(November – Third week of December 2003)

As time passed, the frustration did not disappear but instead increased. This led me to look at two other conflict areas, Poso, in central Sulawesi and the Maluku islands. Both areas were interesting and, although the nature of conflict was different, these two areas still fitted with my research framework of conflict and household coping strategies. I also managed to establish some contacts in both regions. I was seriously thinking of changing my research area from Aceh to either Poso or Maluku. I spent almost one month learning about the conflicts and their development in both areas, always bearing in mind the concept of ‘coping strategies’.

Compared to Maluku, Poso seemed to be more interesting as the conflict was re-emerging during that time. Maluku, on the contrary, had steadily developed into a more conducive situation. Poso appeared to better fit my research interests on the ‘coping strategies of women within conflict situations’. I decided to change my research area from Aceh to Poso, and

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16 Both areas suffered from religious based social unrest which differs from the violent political conflict in Aceh. Nevertheless, this research proved useful in analysing my results from Aceh.

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started to write a position paper that explained my overall arguments for my supervisory panel.

However, while I was writing, something inside kept on telling me strongly that I would be better to focus on Aceh, as I would eventually be able to go to the region. The echo of my inner voice was so strong that I decided to go back to my original research area.

2.4 Returning to the Original Research Topic (Fourth Week of December 2003 to August 2004)

The decision turned out to be wise. In the second week of December I was informed by my local contact that the situation was conducive to my going to Aceh. I was told that the Indonesian military and police security checks were still tight, especially for visitors from outside the region, but it was much less stringent than before. My NGO friends, whom I met on my official trips to the region during my assignment with UNFPA, came up with the excellent suggestion that I use the excuse of visiting family and friends, and no one would be suspicious of this as it was a holiday period.

I immediately booked my ticket to Banda Aceh and contacted friends in the region, especially requesting them to find a place to stay for me. Booking a ticket to Banda Aceh was not an easy task as it was the time when the intense negotiations on the release of Ferry Santoro and Elsa Siregar, two Indonesian Journalists who were kept by GAM as hostages, was taking place. The flights to Banda Aceh were usually full with negotiators from Jakarta. I was finally able to get a flight to Banda Aceh in the fourth week of December 2003.

I had visited Aceh a couple of times before beginning research and had previously stayed there for periods of 1 week to 3 months. These visits were conducted during my previous assignment with UNFPA in 2002 and during my pre-field work in the early 2003. Given this experience, I did not feel uncomfortable flying alone to the region. I knew that a friend who worked for a local NGO in Banda Aceh would pick me up at the airport and that further increased my confidence for the visit.
3 The Precarious Excursion

During my one year research period, I visited Aceh four times, with visits ranging from periods of two weeks to 1.5 months. During these visits, I frequently travelled, especially from Banda Aceh to Aceh Besar. On one occasion, I also travelled further to North and West Aceh. Travelling in Aceh during martial law was a true challenge requiring constant attention to the security situation. On each visit, the security situation improved. In conjunction with martial law, Shari'a law was also implemented. As further described in Chapter 5, the adoption of Shari'a Law was actually part of the politics of the central government to dampen down the Acehnese demand for independence. This section illustrates the conduct of the research in both the Islamic and conflict contexts.

3.1 Snapshots of the Region: From Martial Law to Civil Emergency

During my field visits, I learned that security was the main issue: I always needed to be alert, and make the right decisions at the right time. I once tried to go to Tapaktuan (South Aceh District), for example, but decided to stop at Meulaboh for security reasons. During this trip I observed several alarming signals: the fact that there were only four passengers, myself, a friend who was on a return trip to Medan, and a mother and her son (of 8 or 9 years), who were picked up from their house and seemed very familiar with the driver; the driver did not pick up passengers who hailed the car along the way, the usual way of catching these public vehicles; the driver refused to speak in Bahasa Indonesia and always used his co-driver as translator. He also stopped more than the usual practice, as if he was trying to lengthen the trip.

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17 According to the co-driver, the car usually carried around 10 passengers.
18 In responding to my question on why the driver refused to take more passengers, the co-driver answered that he did not know as it was the decision of the driver and not his.
19 He actually could speak Bahasa Indonesia because I once asked him directly in Bahasa Indonesia about the name of the place where we had a second stop and he could understand.
It was apparent that the driver purposively limited the number of passengers to avoid being stopped at the army’s and police’s security check points which were established every 300 to 500 meters along the main road from Banda Aceh to Medan. Approaching these check points, the driver usually slowed down to allow the army or police officers to see that there were only three women, one boy, and two men (including the driver) in the car. While other cars were stopped at some of these check points, we passed through without being stopped. These signs caused me to cancel my trip to Tapaktuan since I did not feel comfortable with the situation. I estimated that when we approached Tapaktuan, it would be around 7pm. At around this time, we would pass through some forests and mangroves areas, where kidnappings often took place. Judging from the driver’s behaviour and the estimated time we would enter the forests and mangroves areas, I considered the trip too risky to continue.

Each time I visited Aceh, however, it was apparent that the security situations were becoming less and less stringent. Arriving on Monday morning, 17 May 2004, on my second visit to the region during the period of martial law, I observed that there was a less tight security check at the airport than on my previous visit in December 2003. This was evidenced by the decreased numbers of security personnel at the airport. On the way out, however, there was still an army post, and as usual, we had to open the window screen and smile or wave at the young army troops in the post. But unlike my previous trip, they looked much more relaxed and did not stop us. According to the friend who met me at the airport, his/her brother was once stopped and ordered to get out of the car for not opening the window screen. He was then ordered to read the sign in front of the post which stated that any cars passing through the gate had to have their window screen opened. The airport was located in the Aceh Besar District and the road to the airport used to be considered unsafe, especially during 2000/1. According to the UN security management, the road to the airport was under security phase III at that moment, while the District itself was under security phase IV. ²⁰ Both

²⁰ Interview with a UN officer in Banda Aceh in April 2002.
security phases require restricted movements and a security clearance from the UN designated official in Jakarta. The highest security phase is V, indicating the most unsafe situation with a UN presence is not allowed, and travel requires a security clearance from UN Headquarters.21

The immediate impression was that the atmosphere of conflict had decreased since my last visit in December 2003. People carried out their activities as if under normal circumstances. We passed through a local market where people were trading as if there was no armed conflict in the region. It was as busy, jostling and noisy as other markets in Indonesia. In the city, the situation looked ‘normal’, with people out on the streets and going about their daily lives.

Everyday activities were taking place. Youths were hanging around in the city, and the public offices, schools, hospitals, shops and markets were running on normal working hours like in many other parts of Indonesia. Public transport, including motorised rickshaws (I: becak motor), city public transport (Ac.: labe-labe), even inter city buses which operated at night time were running on normal timetables. The small burger stalls, which had mushroomed especially during CoHA period (16 December 2002 to 19 May 2003), were busy with customers.

21 The primary responsibility for the security and protection of UN staff, their dependant families, and properties as well as property of the Organization actually rests with the host government, but for various reasons the host government has not always been able to assume this responsibility (UN 2003, p.135). Responding to the increased number of casualties of UN personnel in the early 1990s, on 9 December 1994, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/49/a49r059.htm accessed on 6/07/2006). There are five security phases outlined in the UN Field Security Handbook which are standards for all UN duty stations and must be included in their security plan (Peace Keeping Best Practices Unit, 2003; the Independent Panel on the Safety and Security of the United Nations Personnel, 2003, pp.34-35). Phase I (precautionary phase) necessitates caution to be applied and all travel to the duty station require a clearance from the Designated Official (normally the UN Resident Coordinator). Phase II (restricted movement phase) indicates a higher level of alert with major restrictions for staff members and their families to remain at home unless otherwise instructed. Phase III (relocation phase) denotes a significant deterioration in the security situation that may necessitate the relocation of staff members or their eligible dependants. Phase IV (programme suspension) is usually applied to enable the Designated Official to recommend to the Secretary-General the relocation outside the duty station of all remaining internationally recruited staff members except the emergency or humanitarian relief personnel who are considered to be essential to remain in the duty station. Phase V (Evacuation) is the highest phase which can only be declared upon approval from the Secretary-General. This phase signifies that the situation has deteriorated to such a point that all remaining internationally recruited staff members should leave. This was applied in West Timor during the East Timor/West Timor Crisis, following the killings, conducted by militias, of UNHCR officers in Atambua, Belu District, West Timor in September 2000.
were operating as usual along the main road of Banda Aceh city leading to the Darussalam Sub-District. They mostly operated between 3-4 pm until 10-11 pm local time. They could be easily identified by their red tents and red lanterns along the road. The coffee shops (Ac.: keudè kopi, I: warung kopi), which were popular in Aceh and considered to be part of everyday life, were also open during their normal working hours of around 7.00 a.m to 11.00 p.m. Even the famous Keudè Kopi Solong at the 7 road intersection (Simpang Tujuh) in Ulee Kareng, well known as a GAM area that people usually avoided after 9 pm, was operating. Rex, the dining centre in town, was also doing business during its daily opening hours of around 4 pm to midnight (some said it was open until 02.00 am). Rex was one of the favourite places in town for evening social life and was always full of people having dinner or simply meeting up with friends.

In the countryside, along the way from Banda Aceh to North Aceh, the evidence of conflict had become less obvious. Farmers worked normally in their paddy fields, either to harvest or start ploughing. Some areas were ready to harvest while some others were already harvested and ready for the new planting cycle. The locals, mostly women, worked in their fields as if there was no conflict at all. They smiled and even waved their hands when I filmed them. Schools also functioned normally. I saw a group of students walking along the dike (I: pematang sawah) in Aceh Besar District after school. It was, according to my local contact, an unusual scene from 1999 to 2001. In that period of time, in areas that directly suffered from the conflict, students often had to skip their classes for security reasons.
The only visible sign of martial law that distinguished the province from many other provinces in Indonesia was the large number of army personnel and police officers who were well armed and often moved around the region, even in the city. It was a common scene in the city of Banda Aceh during the hectic morning hours of around 7.30 – 9.00 am, to see the traffic police (Polisi Lalu Lintas – Poltats) accompanied by army personnel while directing the traffic. However, compared to my previous visit in December 2003, the number and frequency of patrols were reduced. The number of security checks along the roads of Banda Aceh leading out of the city was also reduced. On the way to Lhokseumawe in North Aceh, for example, I passed several army check points that were no longer occupied.
The lifting of martial law and its downgrading to a civil emergency, announced by the local government on 19 May 2004 at 01.00 pm, however, was perceived by the local people as a ‘camouflage’ only, especially when the military announced that the number of troops would remain the same and that the security operation would continue. People perceived that martial law still existed and was ‘disguised’ in the different clothing of the civil emergency. This was especially true for the conflict zone areas, particularly villages close to the mountains and hills, such as village N in Aceh Besar District, which was only around 1 hour from Banda Aceh. Security checks and ‘sweeping’ of villages were still being conducted, and villagers were often ordered to leave their villages to live in temporary camps provided by the martial law authority for a week or so, depending on the situation. On a return trip from Lhokseumawe, for example, I met a convoy of 10 army trucks and a tank, plus an apparently private vehicle with its front window wound down displaying the guns held by the persons inside, whom my local contact identified as Indonesian intelligence. The locals usually could easily identify ‘who are with which side’ or ‘who are from what sort of institutions’. There were several signs that the locals had learnt from past experiences, some of which were types of car, windscreen, and physical appearance.

Interestingly, around a week before the lifting of martial law, a group of people demonstrated against this change. There were varied opinions in the civilian community concerning this action. Some people, especially NGO activists, believed that the demonstration was ‘engineered’ by the army using local people. Nevertheless, my interviews with research subjects indicated that many preferred to have martial law rather than a civil emergency. The general view from the ordinary people was that they were not ‘ready’ to enter the civil emergency. A woman from a conflict zone told me that people from her village felt so unsafe after entering the civil emergency that they asked the army to stay when they were ordered to relocate\textsuperscript{22} from their village.

\textit{The people are afraid to die. We do not agree with the civil emergency. We are frightened} / \textit{Masyarakat takut mati. Kami tidak setuju darurat sipil. Masyarakat was-was} (An interview on 29 May 2004)

\textsuperscript{22} The Indonesian military’s soldiers were usually relocated to another post after every three months.
Interestingly, the civilians usually identified the party that they were afraid of as ‘OTK’ (I: Orang/Organisasi Tak Dikenal), an unidentified person/organisation, or sometimes ‘orang tu’ (I) or that particular person without specifying who or which party these two terms referred to, leaving it open for interpretation. This was due to the absence of any claims of responsibility for violent actions. The ‘OTK’ and ‘orang tu’ could be anyone: GAM soldiers, police, army, or any other unidentified person or group. To outsiders who were not used to the current situation and did not share common knowledge about the conflict, it was not easy to judge who the ‘OTK’ might refer to. Only after some time getting to know the context and to obtain skills to understand and pick up the main idea of the conversation could one guess which party or person these two terms might refer to.

Learning from past experiences, the villagers usually knew who belonged to which side and who could possibly conduct a certain action. Perpetrators of an assassination, for example, could be determined from the type of wound, guns or equipment used. Over time, however, it became harder to identify the perpetrator as both sides learnt tactics and strategies from each other and tried to mislead by using the enemy’s tactics. The word OTK (I: Orang/Organisasi Tak Dikenal) was then developed to refer to the unidentified person or organisation behind the incidents.

Embedded within this term OTK was the assumption of knowledge and understanding of the nature of violent political conflict of the GAM versus the government in the region. I asked various women from different villages to specify who or what OTK referred to, and their answer remained the same “well, that person” (I: ya, orang tu). The bottom line of this short answer was as simple as ‘you know what I know and that we are not supposed to mention it’. Embedded here is the presumption that everyone should have the knowledge of the situation to determine who might possibly conduct a certain action. Naming the perpetrator, however, should be avoided since it carried the risk of false accusation, and might lead to a punishment from the arraigned party.
The usage of ‘OTK’ and ‘orang tu’ was quite widespread in the region, and can be seen as part of their coping strategy. One woman from a different conflict zone, however, implied in the following statement that the police were a source of her fears.

The army still have manners. [They are] Still willing to ask. Still willing to listen to what we say. But the police, there is no way for them to listen ... orang tu (those people) only know how to beat us ... and we’re finished ... /

Tentra itu masih ada sopan-sopananya. Masih tanya kita. Mau dengar apa kata kita. Tapi polisi, mana mau dengar...orang tu taunya bak buk bak buk...habis kita... (An interview on 29 May 2004)

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The civil emergency implied the restoration of the authority of the civil government, and the return of the responsibility for security in the region from the military to the police. In this woman’s understanding, the situation would be worsened if the police took over.

The general feeling was that the martial law had not been ‘completed.’ Most of my contacts said that if martial law has been chosen to resolve the problem in Aceh, then it should have remained in force for longer. This was also the general opinion of village women, as exemplified in the following statement of a woman from a village in Aceh Besar, an area considered to be a ‘black area’, classified by the military as having heavy presence of GAM and therefore in need of a heavy military presence.

It [martial law] should have been conducted totally and not partially like this. We are the ones who will suffer later... / Mestinya sekalian saja, jangan tanggung-tanggung seperti ni. Kita yang susah nanti khan... (An interview on 29 May 2004)

Frustration, confusion and fear clearly showed not only on her face but also on the faces of her fellow villagers. It was not because she approved of the military that she said this, but she was tired of feeling ‘sandwiched’ in between two conflicting parties. Therefore, she considered it better to let the stronger party, the army, complete their operation so that villagers would feel safer and less fearful. If they had to suffer fear, she said, it was better to fear only one side and not two sides. There was no further explanation of what ‘complete’ refers to here. Some villagers, however, suggested that it meant

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23The ‘sandwiched position,’ as I further elaborate in Chapter 4 Section 2.2.2, was one of the significant effects of the conflict that women had to deal with daily. I thank my supervisor, Dr. Robinson, for this term which helped me to articulate the difficult position of the Acehnese who were trapped between two conflicting parties.
eradicating GAM and not maintaining and prolonging the conflict. There was quite a widespread opinion that the conflict had actually been prolonged by the military, in particular, so that poorly paid military personnel could corruptly seize assets and income from the people.

These are the voices of women civilians whose main concern was merely to continue their daily lives and be free of fear in living in their own villages. This may indicate their limited education and understanding of the wider causes of the conflict, such as the unequal political-economic power between the central and local government, resulting on the impoverishment of the people, or ignorance of a civilian’s rights in general. However, the difficult circumstances that they referred to were those they had been facing in their daily lives for years. With their limited information and education but abundance of fearful experiences, they knew that what they were currently facing was nothing more than choosing the best among the worst, in which case, they would prefer the Indonesian military. However, this should not mislead us to underestimate their strong hope of being free of fear and suppression from the Indonesian military.

In contrast to the voices of these village women, the middle class and the elites were more in favour of the civil emergency, for they understood that the military approach would never solve the problem in the region. In fact, according to them, the longer the military operation was conducted the more resistance the government would face from the Acehnese. They claimed that the GAM was under ‘everybody’s tongue,’ meaning that everybody supported the movement. The conflict, for them, was about minds and spirits, and not guns, and therefore should be solved with a more peaceful persuasive approach. It is important to note, however, that these elites lived mainly in towns which were far safer than villages located in the rural areas. With their good educational background, they possessed better economic status and did not have to face direct attack in their neighbourhoods. They also better understood the macro political context.

\[24\] The original term used in here was actually ‘diproyekkan’ or making the conflict a project for one’s own financial benefit.
As for local NGOs, although they were very sceptical of the civil emergency, they did hope for a better environment in which to work. It was well-known that under martial law, local NGOs had to obtain a recommendation letter from the martial law authority and send reports to them regularly. Some NGOs were able to obtain the letter while others were not. Most of the groups that were unsuccessful worked on issues of human rights, civil education, and legal advocacy. Some of the NGOs denied permission, however, actually focused on economic empowerment or children's education. It was their activities in areas that were considered 'hot spots' that made them unable to obtain the recommendation letter. Understanding that these areas were in need of assistance, these NGOs opted to take the risk of secretly continuing their work without permission from the martial law authority. No data on the number of local NGOs working under martial law was available, but according to local NGO contacts, the number had decreased significantly from the pre-martial law period. This was not only due to the limits imposed by the martial law authority, but also due to limited funding as many donors, especially from foreign countries, stopped supporting projects in Aceh.

3.2 On Women and Shari'a Law: The Silent Backslider

Being a woman travelling alone in the troubled Islamic region of Aceh was simultaneously an asset and a challenge. Nevertheless, Shari'a law enforced by the government and supported by the modernist Islamic group placed certain limitations on my mobility as a woman.

The Shari'a Law was narrowly understood as being the Islamic dress code for women. In order to show that the Shari'a Law was implemented, the Shari'a police in Aceh often conducted 'veil raids' (I: razia jilbab or sweeping jilbab) which tended to harass women. In practice, a 'veil raid' went beyond requiring that women covered the parts of the body that according to Islam should not be exposed (I: aurat). Once, when travelling with other female passengers, we were shouted at by the Shari'a police to get out of the public transport (Ac.: lab-e-labe) because we were wearing trousers. Our
names were listed in their logbook due to either our tight trousers and/or tight and short tops/blouses. We were told that it was our first warning (I: *peringatan*) for breaching the law and that this would be tolerated only three times. After the third warning, an official letter would be sent to us for a tribunal or court session. Not surprisingly, most of the police were men, who considered that they possessed higher moral values than us (women). Although we were wearing veils, we were wearing trousers, which are supposed to be men’s clothes, instead of suitably ladylike long dresses.  

The local women cynically called this enforcement of the women’s Islamic dress code ‘*jilbabisasi*’ (I), a systematic attempt to force women to wear the veil, which targeted the women’s body and sexuality. The male voice of the *Shari’a* law, interestingly, also referred to the morality of women. *Shari’a* law was perceived as a tool for reclaiming Acehnese women from the bad influence of the ‘Madonna factor’, the local term for western values, and returning them to the authentic Islamic traditions of the Acehnese, as illustrated in the following pop song:

May peace be with you, Acehnese women / Assalam Muatalkum hai inong Aceh
I would like to say a little about you/ Bacut lon cuk ek keu kawom hawa
Please take care of your morality/ meu jaga akhlak gat abeu saheh
Don’t let it be undermined by women from out of the region/ bek di peu eleh tee inong luwa/
You are flowers, not just flowers/ Nyoe bungong, kon sembarang bungoeng/
You are flowers, strong flowers/ nyoe bungong, bungoeng teu seubeh/
You are women, not ordinary women/ Nyoe inong kon sembarang inong/
You are Acehnese women/ nyoe inong, si inong aceh/
...
Since the beginning you have the pre-eminence/ Yoh jameun phon ka hawan ieubeh
Acehnese women are well-known for having good morality/ Nyan inong aceh beu he’ ngon akhlak mulia
You have faith and are full of courtesy/ kong iman sopen ngon santen
What a fragrant magnolia/ leupah that harom si bungoeng jeumpa
Religion is the primary guidance/ agama teuma jeut keu peununtun/
Immediately met by devoted women/ meu samboet langsoeng ngon inong setia
...
Lyrics written by Said Ayuzar  

25 Trousers are actually part of the Acehnese traditional dress for women, but they are usually covered up by long blouses which go down to the knees.
26 The term denotes a forced process of making the Islamic dress code (I: *jilbab*) compulsory for women.
27 This song was in the album ‘Rapai House Atjeh’ of a local pop group, Safa’i. It was not clear what year the song was composed in, but the album cassette was released in early 2000.
Interestingly this was the predominant view of Indonesian men in general, not solely amongst the Acehnese. My interrogation by the Indonesian soldier described on p.30 clearly illustrates male control over women’s morality. A good woman would stay at home and not move around in the city at night. Siapno (2002), in her analysis of women’s agency (by using their femininity) in dealing with the army soldiers, depicted the male authority’s conception of good women and how male officials showed respect and were helpful to women who demonstrated ‘the traditional models of good behaviour,’ exemplified in the following citation:

...Male persons of authority seemed to be much more willing to give favours to women who can perform and cultivate the deferential, predictable traditional models of good behaviour, as good daughters, good wives, good mothers... (Siapno, 2002, p.18)

Women in Aceh silently rebelled against the control over their body and sexuality by, for example, simply not wearing the veil unless in public places such as schools, markets, and government buildings. Some women did not wear the veil even in public places, but they always had shawls ready, often put over their shoulders, to immediately turn into a veil whenever they encountered a veil raid. This exemplifies women’s agency in negotiating their position within their society. Knowing that protesting Shari’a Law was unfavourable, they conducted ‘silent protest’ by not veiling when they did not want to do so.

The Shari’a Law does not entirely represent the daily practice of Islam in society, as it merely represents politicised Islamic values at a policy level. These were different from Islam’s actuality in the day-to-day lives of the people. Far from the general picture of being militant and fundamentalist, the Acehnese society was actually quite moderate and accommodating of other values. This can be clearly observed from, for example, the physical existence of churches, and Buddhist and Hindus temples. Most of my local friends were not concerned about my constant non-observances of the five times a day
prayers. They considered this to be a personal relationship between me and God (SEA: hablu minallah). I was simply perceived as having not yet been enlightened by God (I: belum menerima hidayah). They often said that once I got the ‘hidayah’ (I), I would automatically perform my personal duty as a good Moslem without being asked to do so. The implementation of Shari’a law did not affect or limit my research in the way that the violent political conflict situation did.

3.3 Obtaining a Research Permit: The Confused Authority

One of the main difficulties of conducting research in the area under martial law was the ‘legal status’ of my presence in Aceh province. The ‘sweeping KTP’ I described in section 2, exemplifies the need for a proper legal status in accordance with the martial law authority. A research permit, therefore, was essential.28 This permit, however, was not easy to obtain due to unclear policies of both the martial law authority and the local civil government. I had to go through a lengthy bureaucratic process due to the lack of clarity on where and how to obtain the necessary research permit, in early 2004.

The confusion was evident within the martial law authority29 as well as at the local civil government office. I remember obtaining a letter from the University of Syiah Kuala one day at around 2 o’clock. Immediately, I went to

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28 I spent some time thinking about whether or not I needed to obtain a research permit, and the consequences of attempting to research without one. Having a research permit in hand would enable me to move around and avoid trouble with the martial law authority. However, this also carried the risk of being seen as a government spy by GAM and would certainly limit my contact with my research subjects, especially those from the conflict zones. Following the suggestions of my local contacts, I started to apply for a research permit from the local authority in March 2004. I was provided with a notification letter by the head of the Research Institute of Syiah Kuala University, which was supportive and gave me an immediate response. The letter stated that I was truly a student of the ANU planning to conduct research in the NAD province, purely for academic purposes, and that the university supported the research as long as it was conducted in accordance with the existing rules and regulations.

29 Prior to going to the University, I went to meet an Army official from the martial law authority responsible for, among other things, information dissemination on the martial law policies. He gave me the overall policies on activities conducted in the region by non-government organisations and journalists, but there seemed to be no indication of any rules relating to academic research, as in my case. He suggested that I visit the civil government authority (Pemerintahan sipil daerah). According to this Army official, things not regulated by new regulations or policies issued by the martial law authority would follow the existing local civil government’s regulations and policies.
the Governor’s office to obtain a research permit. I was asked to come again
the next day as the office was about to close (I: hampir tutup). I knew that
would be the response as this is a very common ‘delaying mechanism’ in
many government offices in the entire country, but I just tried my luck. On the
next day, I went back to the office to seek information on how to obtain a
research permit and I ended up with several different answers. This gave me
the impression that there was no clear policy on which section was
responsible for issuing the permit. I was then directed to the General Section
(I: Bagian Umum). I entered this small dull office that was full of staff. Some
of them were chatting, some were reading the newspaper, and some looked to
be seriously writing, working on a spreadsheet, or reading at their desks.
They did not really pay attention to me when I entered the office. However,
once I said that I was a student from the National University of Australia, a
foreign university, and looking for some advice on where to go and what to do
to obtain a research permit, they suddenly changed their attitude. Their
attentiveness may have been due to their local tradition of respecting guests
(Ac.: peumulia jamee).

This changed attitude was clearly shown when they were suddenly
busy giving me advice, which seemed to be more of a discussion and debate
among themselves. I immediately regretted my decision to obtain the research
permit. I was thinking that if only I had known that there was no clear policy
on this, I would not have spent my time trying to obtain the permit and risking
not getting it. But since I was already there, I prepared myself for a long
process that would take up much of my time and energy. Besides, if I could
get the permit, it could really simplify my research. I was then advised to
leave the letter with them and to come back the next day.

I turned up at the office early the next day as I knew I would have to
wait in turn in several other sections. I was met by the Head of the General
Section (Kepala Bagian Umum) who asked me several questions, mainly on
what my research was about, the purpose of doing it, why Aceh and not
another region, whom I had been in contact with, had I met with the martial
law authority and what did they say about it. Considering my research topic
was about women, he gave me a disposition letter (I: surat disposisi) and sent
me to the Women Empowerment Section (I: Bagian Pemberdayaan Perempuan). With the letter in hand, I went upstairs to the third floor. A lady, who was the chairperson of the women’s section, immediately received me at around 2 pm after she arrived from a meeting. She was a bit confused about how to proceed with my letter and asked advice from her staff. She then gave me another disposition letter to the Special Section for The Province of NAD (I: Bagian Kekhususan Propinsi NAD) which was on another floor. The Head of this section finally gave me a clearer directive on how to obtain my research permit. He directed me to one of his staff who was responsible for permits, who then passed me on to another of his staff, a friendly young official who had just arrived from the Philippines to study for his masters’ degree.

I was then requested to hand in a copy of my research proposal in English, as well as a list of the questions I would be asking. I was re-interrogated, with questions similar to those I had received from the head of the General Section. This was called ‘staff investigation’ (I: investigasi staff), one of the standard procedures applied in the office, based on which the official would advise his head of section, who would write a recommendation letter to the First Secretary of the Governor (Sekretaris I Gubernur) with whom the final decision lay.

Three days later I came to the office and met with somebody else who advised me to wait, as once it was approved, the letter would be sent to my address in Banda Aceh. With a big question mark in my mind, I simply followed the suggestion. After a few days of hearing nothing, I had lost my faith. I decided to concentrate on the meetings with local NGOs that I had been conducting while waiting for the letter to come. Later on, around two weeks after I left the region to return to Jakarta for the general elections, I was informed that the letter had finally arrived (Annex 6).

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30 This questionnaire was more important than the proposal itself, as it would show exactly what kind of data I planned to collect.
31 In Bahasa Indonesia people tend to use ‘interview’ rather than ‘interrogate’ to avoid the militaristic sound of the term ‘interrogation’.
32 According to him, when there were no objections from the staff investigation level, the letter would most likely be approved. He asked me to come again in two or three days.
The aforementioned chain of events clearly indicates the uncertainty about policies and regulations with regards to research permits resulting from the unclear policies of the martial law authority. Although most of the government officials whom I met demonstrated their support for the research, which they perceived as not merely research but an education, the absence of guidelines, rules, or policies on the matter prevented them from speeding up the process.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the letter I eventually received from the governor's office did not clearly mention that I was granted a research permit. Instead, it stated that the provincial governor's office supported the research to be conducted in the province as long as it followed the existing policies. This became problematical considering the absence of policies on conducting research in the province under martial law. Although this lengthy process indeed hindered my research activities, it allowed me to learn more about the violent political conflict circumstances and its effects on the lives of people in the region. I also learnt how to conduct myself and my research under such circumstances in a 'beautiful way', as further exemplified in the next section.

3.4 'Bermain Cantik': Adopting Local Coping Strategies

While waiting for the official letter to be issued, I tried to use my time to meet local contacts and some research subjects. I knew that getting to the region was quite an extraordinary thing as not many people from outside Aceh could get there easily and, therefore, I needed to maximise my use of the

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33 In Aceh, I often heard general statements made regarding research being equal to education, and education being important. This illustrated the serious concern of these government officers at NAD province for education.

34 A student from the local university, who happened to be also conducting research for her BSc, told me that she did not encounter any problems from the authorities, although she did not have any research permit. Unfortunately, with different research topics, we faced different situations. Her research topic was not on the effect of conflict but on small firm management in Banda Aceh, and therefore did not require travel to 'hot spot' areas or meeting affected members of society. Even when travel was required, she had a proper ID, the Red-White ID (I: KTP Merah Putih). In my case, my research required me to travel to 'hot spot' areas and meeting the affected community. In addition, I did not have the Red-White ID. The research permit was, therefore, crucial, especially as the Indonesian military and police often conducted their sweeping operations in the 'hot spot' areas.
available time. However, with no proper letter in hand, I admit that I was both nervous and afraid, especially when meeting with the local people. Luckily, a friend who worked for local NGOs allowed me to work closely with their organisations. These NGOs had received some funds from a US based international NGO for women’s economic empowerment activities in the District of Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh Municipality. Through these local NGOs, I was able to meet up with two groups from Aceh Besar District and Banda Aceh Municipality respectively, as well as with other local NGOs, and so conducted my interviews with them.

Two good Acehnese friends always advised me to ‘playing beautifully’ (I: *bermain cantik*), which basically meant taking both the conflicting parties and their dynamics into account to maintain neutrality. This is done by keeping a ‘safe distance’ to the conflicting parties and by being tactful in responding to queries. In my case, it was about isolating research in the neutral zone of economic and culture as much as possible, and avoiding too much contact with, and affiliation to, one of the conflicting parties.

Nevertheless, ‘playing beautifully’ was not easy. With the guerrilla setting as the context, determining the affiliation of particular groups or contact persons involved, at the very least, careful observation and adequate information. Observation and information are intermingled in that good observation can provide adequate and proper information, and the appropriately adequate information can then lead to careful observation in terms of what and how to observe.

However, meaningful information only resulted when a trusting relationship could be developed and maintained with local contacts. Once trust was established, information would then be more readily collected. Nevertheless, sometimes, some doubts appeared in my research subjects, especially in regard to my intentions, identity, and motivation as a Javanese

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35 This was a common strategy of civilians in their ‘sandwiched position’ between the two conflicting parties. Embedded in the ‘play beautifully’ (I: *bermain cantik*) concept were the old (traditional) concepts of *muslihat* and *'lheuk jago meuleut*. These three concepts had become the coping strategies of the Acehnese in dealing with the impact of conflict on their daily lives in order to survive and continue their ‘normal’ lives. The three concepts cannot be easily translated in one single phrase without elaborating the cultural context. Discussion of these three local concepts, however, can be found in Chapter 4 Section 1.2 and 2.2.3.
interested in the Acehnese. They also questioned the source of funding for my research. Although resentment towards the Australian government was not as strong as resentment against the American government, the suspicion was there, and quite strongly. In responding to such concerns, I usually referred to my prior humanitarian activities with the United Nations in conflict areas including Aceh province in 2000-2002 to demonstrate that I am basically a humanitarian minded person who would always certainly work for those who are in need regardless of their religion, ethnic background, or political affiliation. This created connectedness with my local contacts as most of them were NGO workers.

Moreover, in a guerrilla setting in the province, it was not easy to get adequate information as sometimes even trusted local contacts had their own agenda with regard to my research, an agenda related to their political affiliation. Some perceived that my status of a foreign university researcher would provide a means of disseminating information about the Aceh conflict to the international community.

This required me to always be critical of, and respond diplomatically to, any demands made. I remember one of my conversations with a local NGO activist who questioned my decision to include, among my research subjects, women from the ‘other side’, i.e. those whom s/he referred to as not supporting the dream of the Acehnese. According to this friend, the answers of these women would make my research biased. In his/her view, taking other angles, sides, or groups into account in my research would negatively influence my findings. We had a lengthy discussion on this, and I had to explain in a delicate manner what bias in research actually means, i.e. taking one side only would be considered ‘biased’ as I would fail to capture the overall picture. In responding to this problem, I triangulated data from different sides by cross-checking with other sources.

Another difficulty that I encountered was the authorities’ wish that I confine research to the neutral zone of economics and culture. In practice, political issues unavoidably arose in conversations which, in some cases, limited the scope of these interviews. For example, during an in-depth interview that I conducted with one of my key informants on the society and
culture of the Acehnese, s/he enthusiastically spoke about the rich culture of Aceh and how different regions or even villages may have different traditions and customary habits (I: *adat istiadat*). Suddenly s/he showed reserved body language when I asked about how the violent political conflict had affected these local customs and traditions. It was obvious that s/he was hesitant to answer, and when s/he did, s/he was very diplomatic, saying that whether or not violence exists, traditions will always change in one way or another as they involve interactions between human beings. Although I wanted to pursue the issue, her/his reserved body language convinced me not to press him further. This might only have resulted in disruption to the good ‘probing’ that I was able to develop in the interview.

Nevertheless, this reluctance was not always the case. Discussion of such issues could be easily conducted with most of the women’s groups, especially those in Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar, with whom I had frequent contact. They usually approached me ‘secretly’ when they had something that they wanted to talk about in private. ‘Secretly’ here meant approaching me in a way that was not too obvious to other group members, and in a way that was not easily identified as having a private conversation. Sometimes it felt odd when these women came to see me individually, with something in their hands: food, their children’s toy, or their handicraft (I: *kerajinan tangan*) that they were working on, silently sat next to me and whispered to me while their eyes stayed fixed on their hands which were busy playing with, or working on, the particular thing that they had brought along, as if we were talking about that and not the violent political conflict situation of Aceh. The topic would suddenly change completely when somebody else approached us.

The ‘clandestine gesture’ of these women clearly demonstrates the fear, distrust, and suspicions that prevailed in the society. The general mind set was that ‘everyone can be anyone’, and therefore self consciousness was paramount. One of the women said that even walls have ears (I: *bahkan dindingpun bertelinga*). This ‘extra carefulness’, which does not appear in other regions of Indonesia, was quite evident in Aceh. This clearly signifies that the *bermain cantik* was not only applied to the conflicting parties but also
to neighbours, friends, and even relatives. It truly amazed me to see how people could relate to each other under such circumstances.

The ordinariness of ‘play beautifully’ (I: bermain cantik) suggests that the situation was perceived as part of the normality that had to be simply accepted and lived in. *Bermain cantik* had also become a code through which people were expected to interpret each others’ actions and statements. This had, certainly, brought some changes in the people’s attitudes and behaviour. Given the fact that they had been in a situation of conflict for more than 20 years, these changes significantly affected their culture and traditions as well.\(^{36}\)

### 4 Conclusion

From my experience, conducting research under martial law was certainly not an easy task and demanded certain strategies which allowed the research to be done while maintaining the safety of both research subjects and researchers. It was, however, a privileged opportunity for me to be able to conduct the research regardless of these difficult circumstances. The following are some conclusions that I have drawn about conducting research in an Islamic and violent political conflict setting.

First, institutional status for the research that can be obtained through a local or national institutional attachment is important. This basically refers to an official letter (I: surat dinas) which gives a clear legal status to the research and researcher. This was true despite the difficulties I encountered because of the unclear policy on the conduct of academic research under the period of martial law, the first martial law declared in Indonesia since 1965, which placed me in a problematic situation, and the requirement to follow the existing vague rules and regulations of the Province.

Second, socio-political and socio-cultural issues need to be carefully addressed. At least five such issues arose during the conduct of the research:

\(^{36}\) Such changes might be an inconvenience for some people, such as the aforementioned key informant. This may also explain why s/he gave me such a strong sign not to elaborate the issue further.
how male dominance affected women’s voices; suspicions and fear that resulted in ‘hesitancy to be a research subject’; unclear regulations on research permits; my ethnic background; and the implementation of Shari’a Law, which impacted more on ‘women’ because of veil raids.

Third, the unstable and unpredictable security situation hampered my research. Armed clashes could emerge at anytime and anywhere. Killings and kidnappings had become part of ‘normal life’ in the region. Under such circumstances, the how, when and where to meet research subjects needed careful planning. To organise an interview, a thorough discussion with local contacts was needed. Nevertheless, in many cases, I followed my inner voice. The ‘intuitive feelings’, which might have been fortified by learning to read signs of danger and neutrality that I developed during the fieldwork, became essential here.

Fourth, varying strategies needed to be developed and adopted to conduct the research according to the situation. No single formula was sufficient. Several basic principles of humanitarian activities in complex emergencies were adopted. The followings are seven strategies that I employed in the field, some of which were developed due to the situation: a ‘do-no-harm’ approach; impartiality; limited participatory approach (in terms of time, place, and persons involved); gaining updated information on where and when the armed conflicts were and would be, in many cases collected from coffee shops (Ac.: keudê kopi) and text messages; ‘playing beautifully’ (I: bermain cantik); data triangulation; and personal judgement, especially on security issues, which often relied on personal feelings and intuition.

The ‘do-no-harm’ approach relates to the adoption of an impartial attitude in order to maintain security and reduce the risk of informants being perceived as supporting one particular party in the conflict. As in many other conflict situations, security and impartiality were two important interconnected issues for the conduct of the research in Aceh. Impartiality, in particular, determined not only my safety but also the safety of my local contacts. This is true not only for those from the affected areas but also in relatively safe areas such as Banda Aceh where fear, distrust, and suspicion
were also evident. The adoption of these approaches further opened up access
to the local women from both directly and indirectly affected areas.

Limited participatory observation was undertaken in consultation with
the research subjects and key informants, particularly those from the ‘hot
spot’ areas. In contrast to research in non-violent political conflict situations,
negotiations about time, place, and the other people to be involved in the
survey, interview, participatory observation, or focus group were vital. Often
these research activities depended on the availability and the security situation
of the research subjects.

The ‘playing beautifully’ (I: bermain cantik) approach involved
paying attention to the ‘dialectic’ between good observation and accurate
information. ‘Playing beautifully’ should not to be understood as presenting
oneself as supporting one party, but as displaying an impartial attitude through
word and/or action in responding to queries from the field. My previous
experience as a humanitarian worker for a UN agency in Jakarta was an asset
for this.

Data triangulation was employed to minimise the possibility of
providing information that served political interests; being affiliated with a
foreign university caused me to be often seen as having the potential for
disseminating information to the international community. Personal
judgement was also often needed, not only to determine how the research
could be conducted while maintaining the security of research subjects, but
also to decide questions of what, when, where, and how my research activities
were to be conducted, especially when travel to ‘hot spot’ areas was required
and security was a serious issue. I often relied not only on the accuracy of
information, but also on personal feelings and intuition about the situation.

Lastly, research in violent political conflict circumstances necessitates
the ‘wait and see’ strategy that requires patience to wait for the right time
and a good judgement on it. The old Acehnese proverb ‘tulak jalo watèe ie
paseung’ (Ac.), translated as ‘push the boat when the tide is high’ (Siapno
2002:18), well explain this ‘wait and see’ strategy. The proverb refers to
making the right move at the right time. Implied in here is the need for skilled
observation and the ability to judge political situations in order to achieve the best result with the least action.
Chapter 3  On Women, Household Livelihood, and Violent Political Conflict: Some Theoretical Debates and Issues

This chapter examines the debates and issues surrounding the theoretical framework used in this thesis. It contains four sections. Firstly, I address the ‘triangle of ignorance’, by which I mean the lack of recognition of women as ‘active survivors’ in violent political conflict situation in the three areas of Conflict Studies, Women’s Studies, and Development Studies.

Section 2 discusses the existing theories of violence and how they contribute to an analysis and understanding of situations of violent political conflict in general and in Aceh in particular. It also considers the gendered impact of violent political conflict on the overall political, economic, social, and environmental situation. This examination serves as the context for the multifaceted framework to examine the aforementioned three core issues of the research, i.e. women, coping strategies and household livelihood.

Section 3 reviews the literature on coping in order to provide some theoretical considerations on the use of the ‘triangle of contextual analyses’ of economic stressors, actions, and expectations as the main tool of analysis in this research. The word ‘contextual’ here implies the violent political conflict situation with its overall socio-cultural and socio-economic circumstances that frame women as they develop and exercise their economic coping strategies to sustain their household livelihoods. In addition, a gender perspective, with particular attention to women, is also employed in the theoretical framework as well as the overall research process.

Finally, I consider approaches to studying household livelihood and coping strategies, and discuss the key concepts and empirical indicators derived from the theoretical frameworks. This section presents the indicators of livelihood
coping strategies, developed on the basis of a household’s assets, used in this research.

It is worth noting that the concept of violent political conflict employed here is rather different from that proposed by Jongman (2001).¹ Focusing on the death toll, Jongman defines violent political conflict (VPC) as an armed conflict that causes less than 100 deaths (not necessarily battle related) in a year. It is characterised by conflicting parties gradually moving from non-violent to violent strategies, starting from small-scale violent confrontations to terrorist movements with an action-oriented leadership, and the government’s legitimacy is in question. In this thesis, I argue that regardless of the number of deaths, once the conflict involves both physical and non-physical violence, it should be considered as a violent political conflict. Together with other types of casualties, the death toll signifies the degree of violence rather than violent action itself, which certainly needs to be analysed in conjunction with what types of violence occurred.

1 The Triangle of ignorance

Studies on violence and armed conflict are largely gender blind, with women’s participation under-recognised, in both analytical and theoretical terms (Moser and Clark, 2001; Date-Bah, 2001). This is regardless of the fact that most victims of violence and armed conflict in the world are women and children (UNHCR, 2001 in Berger, 2002) and the reality that violence and conflict affect women and men differently (Berger, 2002; Sharoni, 1995). Women suffer the anguishes of physical, economic, and mental distress as illustrated in the following letter from 11 women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) expressing anger at their gender-specific experience of war:

¹ Jongman (2001) uses number of deaths per year to classify conflict in five different stages. These are: High-Intensity Conflict (HIC), when the death toll reaches more than 1,000; Low-Intensity Conflict (LIC), with 100 to 1,000 deaths; Violent Political Conflict (VPC), causes less than 100 death; Political Tension Situation (PTS), in which the parties in conflict start to adopt militant but non-violent strategies; and Stable Peaceful Situation (SPS) in which state and society are in harmony.
Too much is too much, we mothers are angry, outraged. We pay the high price of this dirty war. We become widows prematurely, we suffer rape and violence, and economic burden ... What are you seeking men of war, who get drunk on blood? Why this endless provocation, what do you hope to win with this blood bath...? (Double Agony for Women Refugees, in Ochieng, 2001).

In order to counter these gender blind studies, some recent studies by Kelly (2000), Pankhurst (2000), Yufal-Davis (1997) and Burguieres (1990) have tried to incorporate gender analysis in their theoretical frameworks (Moser and Clark, 2001, p.3). Some works of Benjamin and Fancy (1998), Turshen and Twagiramariya (1998), and Bunch and Carillo (1992) have also tried to include discussion of the abuse of women’s human rights during conflict, women’s roles as mothers and wives, and their vulnerability in displaced situations.

However, as observed by Moser and Clark (2001), these limited studies carry a strong assumption of armed conflict as a male domain, and present a simplistic portrayal of women as ‘passive victims’, ‘particularly of sexual abuse and forced abduction’, with men as perpetrators. In contrast, analyses portraying women as ‘active agents,’ have defined them as ‘perpetrators’ or ‘combatants,’ which means that the women are also actively involved in the violent, including armed, conflict. Consequently, the greater number of women who are neither ‘active participants’ nor ‘passive victims’ of the conflict has been overlooked.

The majority of women in violent conflict situations, take responsibility for household sustenance and become ‘active survivors’ that strive to sustain their household and, as much as possible, struggle for better conditions, especially for their children and elderly household members. They often become the backbone of the household, having to cope with poverty, unstable conditions and the absence of male family members in chronic violent political conflict circumstances. In such environments, which in most cases include some armed clashes, households will unavoidably face not only the aforementioned state of affairs but also instability and insecurity. In such situations, women often become the anchor for the household’s coping strategies.
As noted above, the link between household livelihood difficulties and violent political conflict situations is not only missing in Conflict Studies but also in Development Studies. Studies of household livelihoods have typically been conducted with an assumption of political stability. However, with the mounting level of global conflict and political violence, as well as the many ongoing national-level confrontations, development theorists and practitioners are currently facing critical challenges in both their studies and practices of development (Moser and Clark, 2001). That is, conflict is becoming part of the normative environment for development practice.

In this context, a more suitable approach to examining ‘household livelihood’ in violent, including armed, conflict areas is needed. Some limited studies have been conducted in this context, such as the Political Economy of Conflict and Livelihood project of the Overseas Development Institute (Collinson, 2003). However, whilst there is an emerging recognition of the need for a new (or revised) tradition in Development Studies, there is limited room for discussion of this issue in conflict studies, in either theoretical debates or practices.

The above discussions clearly show that Development Studies, Conflict Studies, and Gender Studies have all ignored women’s active roles in developing their household coping strategies in violent political conflict situations. In this thesis, I term this ‘the triangle of ignorance’ since it involves three disciplines, and point out the need for further study on the cross-cutting issues of women, household livelihood, and situations of violent political conflict. Such study is required to contribute to a more adequate and appropriate theoretical or conceptual framework on the issue. This is important both theoretically and practically since it will provide proper tools and frameworks for well-equipped humanitarian and development programmes that aim at addressing the overall needs of women in chronic violent, including armed, conflict situations. Hence, this research is situated in, and aims to contribute to, the current limited works in this area in Development, Conflict and Gender Studies.

2 See Ohlsson (2000)

Writing from the perspective of psychology, Muro-Ruiz states that (2002, p.109), up to now, "... there is no synthetic, general theory of violence able to integrate the less complete theories of violent behaviour..." Muro-Ruiz (2002) suggests that two generations of theories of violence have attempted to capture the cause and nature of the violent behaviour of human beings. The two generations represent the debates between those who believe that violence emanates from intrinsic factors and that social factors induce violence to materialise, and those who believe in the rational choice, a 'conscious and instrumental act,' of violence (Muro-Ruiz, 2002, p.110). On closer examination, the development within and across these two generations of theories of violence exemplify the shift from the essentialist to social constructionist points of view. In this section, I attempt to present these debates and the shift in the orientation for these theories on violence, and my standpoint on the importance of a multi approach framework in my research.

2.1 The Theoretical Debates: From the Essentialist to Social Constructionist

Focusing on the 'instinctual forces' of human beings, and perceiving violence as a reaction to, and expression of inner forces or motivations of violent behaviour, the first-generation theories of violence clearly exemplify an essentialist standpoint. Implied in this theory is the assumption that human beings are naturally aggressive. The three theories of violence developed in the first generation – psychoanalytical instinctual, aggressive drive, and social discontent theory – have their foundation in the work of Sigmund Freud (1856-
1939), particularly his ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’. In this particular work, Freud modified his theory on ‘instinctual forces’ with the ‘dialectical relationship’ between the ‘life instinct’ (Eros) and ‘death instinct’ (Thanatos), in which the ‘death instinct’ is perceived as the ‘individual’s own innate self-destructive life’ (Muroz-Ruiz, 2002, p.110; Suárez-Orozco and Robben, 2000). In contrast, the second-generation theories – psychological, rational choice and social learning theories – are prone to the constructionist point of view. These theories, especially the last two, with their focus on the ‘conscious and instrumental act’ of violence and the reciprocal ties between the psychological forces and the political and social contexts. The second-generation theories, concentrating on the reciprocal ties of internal forces and socio-political context, offer a more complex explanation of violent political context. Hence, the second-generation theories are better known amongst political scientists and group-behavioural sociologists than the first-generation theories.

Although the first-generation theories of violence do not well explain violent political conflict, they have had a fundamental influence on the theory of violence. This is especially true for the social discontent theory, instigated by Gurr (1970) and further developed by Schwartz and Burton (Muroz-Ruiz, 2002, pp.111-112). Gurr proposed ‘grievances-induced social discontent’ which placed the individual in a wide political, economic and social framework. Gurr (1970) differentiates three stages of the emergence of political violence in individuals:

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3 This work is a modified theory of his original argument that human instinct was basically regulated by two main principles for discharging tension, namely the ‘pleasure principle’, which is the driving senses of ‘immediate’, ‘impulsive’, as well as ‘wish-fulfilling gratification’, and the ‘reality principle’, that is the toleration of delay and satisfaction postponement. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud attempted to explain the internal driven forces of the European war (Muroz-Ruiz, 2002, p.110).

4 This theory was developed after the WWI, when Freud became frustrated with human nature and came to a belief that the ultimate need of human beings is death.

5 Thanatos is from Greek Myth. It personifies death. He is the son of Nyx (God of night and the offspring of Chaos which is perceived as the shapeless and disordered mass that occupied all space before the creation of living beings). He has a twin brother, Hypno, who personifies sleep.

6 Although Freud’s theory was widely criticized for its lack of evidence of the internal drive; his theory was used widely. This is especially true for scholars who attempt to elaborate the destructive acts of terrorists and terrorism, such as Morgan (1989) who, in her Chapter 2 on the analysis of the compartmentalisation as the positiveness of patriarchy system, clearly illustrates the use of the ‘dialectical relationship’ between, for instance, intellectual vs. emotion and sex vs. love.
the development of dissatisfactions, the politicisation of these dissatisfactions, and its materialisation in a form of political violence. As cited by Muro-Ruíz (2002), Schwartz argues that political alienation results from a psychological conflict of an individual’s value hierarchy and contradictory values s/he believes to be functioning in the political system, leading to a revolutionary outbreak. Therefore, political violence occurs from psychological dissatisfaction since “…the values that guide the behaviour of the regime are perceived by the citizens as violating their own individual values” (Muro-Ruíz, 2002, p.112). Burton (1975), supporting the ‘structural violence’ concept of Galtung (1969), argues that political violence emerges when societal institutions suppress human needs of personal status, recognition and identity satisfaction. Burton bases his argument on the assumption that human needs demand constant satisfactions (fulfilment), are inherent in human beings, and that these needs are cultural and universal.

Social suppression resulting from a culture of dominance instituted by a certain ethnic group will lead to unequal access to political, economic, and social resources for different ethnic groups (Collier, 2001). Although this (cultural) ethnic-based inequality does not necessarily result in severe violent conflict (Langer, 2005), the possibility for it to lead to do so unavoidably exists. This is especially true when cultural differences can be the basis for mobilisation in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society where inequalities are quite evident, such as the case of Indonesia. This is in line with the following statement of Stewart (2002, p.3):

…where there are such inequalities in resource access and outcomes, coinciding with cultural differences, culture can become a powerful mobilising agent that can lead to a range of political disturbances…

In such situations, violent conflict can take the form of horizontal conflict among different segments of the society, vertical (political) conflict between the state and society or segments of society (the suppressed ethnic group), or a combination of both. The combination of horizontal and vertical violent conflict was apparent in the case of Aceh where grievances were rooted in the

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7 Gurr’s theory, however, suffered from the same problem of lack of empirical verification since it is theoretically developed from the frustration-aggression theory.
asymmetrical relations of the state and Acehnese society, manifested in the unequal access to political, economic, and social resources of Acehnese and, especially, Javanese ethnic groups. In addition, there was a longstanding conflict and imbalance of power among political elites in Aceh. As described in Chapter 5, the violent political conflict of Aceh re-occurred from time to time due to three main correlated reasons: the people’s discontentment with the central government; a struggle for greater recognition of their culture and identity as a great society with a fine history of a strong Islamic Sultanate, especially under Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636); and the power struggle among the elite groups, particularly between the religious leaders (I, Ac.: ulama) and aristocrat leaders (Ac: ulêbalang), and their descendants.

Violent political conflict often appears as extensive, and not individual, conflicts and reflects the political beliefs and aspiration of a large segment of society (Muro-Ruiz, 2002). The second generation theories of violence, especially the rational choice and social learning theories thus propose a more useful theoretical framework since they view violence as ‘a conscious and instrumental act’ to attain certain goals, which commonly transpire at the instigation of small and tightly organised groups rather than at the hands of unorganised crowds (Muro-Ruiz, 2002, pp.109-110). Among the three theories developed in the second generation, rational choice and social learning theories are more useful in explaining the Aceh conflict than the psychological theory. This is because the psychological theory generally used to explain the phenomena of terrorism and tied to internal mechanisms of perpetrators who are believed as individuals with “...a damaged self-concept that has never fully integrated the good and bad parts of the self...” (Muro-Ruiz 2002, p.113).

The rational choice theory views violent political conflict as a display of ‘collective rationality’ in which “...groups employ violence strategically as a means to produce their joint goods” (Hechter, 1995, p.62 in Muro-Ruiz, 2001, p.114). Political violence is a rational means of pursuing extreme interests in the

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political sphere, a well calculated instrumental action carried out to deliberately achieve a purpose that goes beyond hurting and injuring others. Among those supporting rational choice theory are Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1997), Keen (1998 in Ohlsson, 2000, p.4), and Blok (2000), who argue that violence should not be understood as 'irrational.' Chaos, created by perpetrators, is readily exploited for economic purposes by segments of elites whose aspirations to ascend to a powerful position in society have been thwarted by competing elites. This was also the case with the GAM of Hasan di Tiro that was rooted in the competition between elites in sharing political power and resources in the province. Keen (1998 in Ohlsson, 2000) furthermore argued that conflict represents more than the breakdown of the social order as it also comprises a method for creating new business that generates profit and power. This further indicates the multi-faceted phenomena of violent political conflict as a rational act with rational underpinnings, causes and impacts.

The social learning theory argues that 'psychological functioning' is best understood in terms of the continuous reciprocal interaction between behaviour in a social setting (Muroz-Ruiz, 2002, p.115). It examines individual violent behaviour in a social context with the basic premise that such behaviour is learned from role models and life experiences, both consciously and unconsciously.

Violent political conflict can also be "...a changing form of interaction and communication, ...a historically developed cultural form of meaningful action" (Blok, 2000, p.24). In some situations, violent political conflict can become almost completely symbolic (Derrienic, 1972, p.370) and instituted in a ‘conflictual interaction’ of collective 'political ethos' (Jenkins, 1998; see also Knox and Monaghan, 2003). In the light of the ‘breeding theory’ of violence proposed by Galtung (1969), in which he argues that structural violence and personal violence often breed other violence, either individually or in conjunction

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9 The Sweden-based leader of GAM; for details see Chapter 5, section 1.3
with each other, violent political conflict can extend over generations. This is illustrated by the work of Dickson-Gómes (2002) on the ‘transgenerational’ cultural impact of violence among the post war Salvadorian families where trauma has been socially and culturally transmitted over generations in similar manner to the way “....cultural beliefs are transmitted from parents to children...” and consequently create continuing violence in the society (Dickson-Gómes, 2002, p.434).

The rational choice and social learning theories readily explain the emergence of young GAM soldiers in the violent political conflict in Aceh, who joined GAM due to what they had witnessed, experienced, and learned from the devastating impact of the Military Operation, as well as the poverty of their circumstances. With an approximate monthly salary of Rp 200,000 or US$ 2212 as a GAM soldier and the promise for a better nation, joining the movement can be considered a rational choice. In their propaganda in villages, especially during the Cessation on Hostility Agreement (COHA) period, GAM promised that once they gained independence there would be no unemployment and no poverty, because the new state would ensure that everybody was employed and that those who were unemployed would receive support from the state every month until they found a job. This suggests the adoption of a social security system for the people, offering a better option for the poor and unemployed. The monthly salary and the promise of a new state with a social security system certainly played important roles as social rewards. These rewards were apparently perceived as higher than the social punishment of being captured, being stigmatised as rebels, and/or getting injured and killed in battle. Moreover, these two theories also

10 It is worth noting, however, that Galtung’s theory on personal and structural violence has problems of the ‘internal coherence of the conceptual frameworks, and relations between this one [the conceptual framework] and current ideologies on violence’ (Derriennic, 1972, p.362), which consequently limit its application in explaining violence in different cultural contexts. Different cultures may embrace different notions of violence as argued by Knox and Monaghan (2003, p.198): ‘...the meaning of violence is closely bound to its social context.’ What considered as symbolic violence in one culture may not be so in another culture.

11 See Chapter 5 for more details on the adopted hatred and trauma.

12 With US$1 = Rp 9,000

13 The Cessation on Hostility Agreement was the first peace agreement signed between the Government and GAM in late 2002 to early 2003, facilitated by Henry Dunant Centre – A Sweden-based International NGO. See Chapter 2, Section 1 and Chapter 5, Section 1.3.4.
support the analysis of the link between the Asian Financial Crisis that severely hit Indonesia in 1997 and the increased support of the Acehnese to GAM around 1998 to 2000.

In addition to the breakdown of social order, violent political conflict can also result in new businesses that generate profits and power in political, economic and social spheres (Keen, 1998 in Ohlsson, 2000; Moser, 2001, p.36). This further indicates the multi-faceted phenomena of political violence as a rational act with rational underpinnings, causes and impacts. While theoretically it may be easy to distinguish different forms of violence, in reality these are usually intertwined (Moser, 2001). It is possible for political violence, for example, to take the form of economic violence or social violence, or vice versa. This will lead to political, social, and economic violence to emerge at the same time. As happened in Aceh, the conflicting parties imposed war taxes on the society that were often followed by threats, terror, and even physical violence, if the people failed to pay these taxes on a specified date. Nordholt (2000) argues that in conflicts in Indonesia, these three different types of violence (political, social, and economic) may indeed become overlapped, especially when they benefit for each other.

The gender dimension adds to the complexities of violent political conflict. In many cases, political conflict is sexualised (Olujic in Jenkin, 1998). The conflict is engendered in such a way that women are often victimised due to their womanhood and have to employ coping strategies, which basically reflect the extended gender stereotypes of domestic, nurture, and self-sacrifice; and experience the gender-imbalanced power structure (McLean, 1999).

The multi-faceted complexity of violent political conflict defies the mono-causal explanation proposed by Margold (1999). The intricacy and multi-dimensional phenomena of violent political conflict are clearly suggested in both the first and second generations of theories of violence (Muro-Ruiz, 2002; 

14 Margold (1999, p.65) defines political violence as "...a set of practices that manipulate cultural understandings through performed displays of threat..." Through this, she proposes a one-facet approach and suggests a mono-causal explanation on violent political conflict. Consequently, she leaves out other considerations; the cause, nature, manifestation and effects of violence in different forms and at different levels, as well as their inter-relatedness.
Suárez-Orozco and Robben, 2000). In this thesis, I argue that a multi-faceted framework, including the gender dimension of the power structure of the society in conflict, is essential in examining violent political conflict. Furthermore, following Blok (2000), violent political conflict needs to also be viewed from the following aspects: the ‘instrumental’ (the means), ‘expressive’ (the symbols and language),\(^{15}\) and its magnitude.

### 2.2 The Multi-Faceted Framework to Violent Political Conflict

The multi-faceted framework to or the emergence of violence is derived from the ‘ecological model’ (Moser, 2001) and used by feminist theorists to explain gendered violence. The framework suggests four different levels — structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual — that play ‘mutually reinforcing roles.’ Gender is a cross-cutting issue which encompasses women’s and men’s experiences of violence, either as perpetrators or survivors (Figure 3-1).

![Figure 3-1 Framework for causal levels of gendered violence](image)

This multi-faceted framework assists in understanding the most recent Aceh violent political conflict between the GAM and government of Indonesia,\(^{15}\)

which operated at structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual levels. At the structural level, the framework helps to identify the macro-level of political, economic, and social-structure issues that have been employed as tools of the conflict in the region. Examples of these tools are the policies for special regional autonomy\(^\text{16}\) and *Shari’a* law from the government, and the policies for establishing their own administrative and taxation systems from the GAM. These tools, especially the *Shari’a* law, to a certain extent have shaped the gender norms and ideology of the society.

At the institutional level, the framework is valuable in identifying how the gendered formal and informal institutions and organisations as well as the social networks of the society have been utilized by the community to cope with the effect of violent political conflict in their day-to-day living. It was generally true of the region, for example, that women’s organisations would be less suspected than men’s organisations, by both conflicting parties, and that men found it easier to move around the region during the conflict period if they were accompanied by women and/or children. The perceived gender norm that women were less harmful than men was apparently crucial in people’s coping strategies.

At the interpersonal level, it is important to explore how the norms of gender relations reflect different situations with regard to the violent political conflict. At the time of research, in the ‘hot spots’ or conflict zones areas, women tended to assume heavier responsibilities than women in relatively ‘normal’ areas. Women would stay at home and face the government soldiers during the ‘sweeping’ operations to seize GAM soldiers. They would also confront the military and other authority figures to find the corpses of their family members after armed clashes. The behaviour of a strong woman that clearly demonstrates her agency, however, was not what I discovered in seemingly normal areas, such as Banda Aceh, the capital city of the province. As described in chapter 6, in such areas, women tended to adopt the patriarchal system and were more compliant to their male counterparts.

\(^{16}\) See chapter 4 section 1.3 for details on the special regional autonomy for Aceh.
At the individual level, the multi-faceted framework was essential for elaborating women's personal history. However, the framework was employed only to the extent it was possible, especially with regards to making the research subjects feel secure and comfortable enough to share their personal histories. In this connection, the genealogical factors, as suggested by Blok (2000), was not elaborated in my research since they require a thorough exploration on the personal history. Apart from the risk of creating inconvenience and insecurity to my research subject, the ontogenetic approach is also beyond the scope of my study.

2.3 The Sources of Violent Political Conflict

Before considering theories about the source and cause of conflict, one needs to distinguish between 'political violence' and 'armed conflict'. Many scholars define 'political violence' as closely linked to, or even interchangeable with, 'armed conflict' (Moser and Clark, 2001). In practice, however, 'political violence' does not necessarily mean 'armed conflict' and vice versa, for violence does not always imply physical and armed action. Moreover, referring to the armed conflicts in several regions in Indonesia, Nordholt (2000, p.1) maintains argument that 'armed conflict' covers inter-ethnic and inter-faith clashes in addition to political violence. 'Armed conflict' typifies a mixture of political, economic and religious factors. It cannot be used interchangeably with political violence without taking into account the context.

Furthermore, one needs to not overlook the possibilities of violence arising from a mixture of political violence, armed conflict, and ethnic clashes. The violent political conflict of Aceh, for example, which began as a political conflict, has developed in the direction of ethnic clashes between the Acehnese and Javanese, with hundreds of Javanese settlers being forced to leave the region in the late 1990s.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned discussion, in this research I use the term 'violent political conflict' to describe the incidence of violence, which
ranges from non physical to physical (that can be armed and non-armed) conflicts, resulting from political disputes or conflicts which are motivated by a desire to obtain or maintain political-economic power. As shown by some studies in the late 1990s on the causal mechanism of civil war, much of the chaos of civil wars was created by ‘excluded elites’ and the marginalisation of a segment of the population for economic and political exploitation (Keen, 1998 in Ohlsson, 2000, p.6). This also characterises the Aceh violent political conflict, in which political marginalisation began in the 1950s and 1960s with at least two important policies issued by the central government: firstly, the abolition of Divisi Gajah Putih, the army division of the Acehnese guerrilla fighters who fought against the Dutch; secondly, the incorporation of Aceh Province into the North Sumatra province with Medan as the capital city.\(^\text{17}\) The latter entailed an economic marginalisation, with development funds invested more in Medan than in Banda Aceh, regardless of the fact that Banda Aceh played a more significant role during the independence struggle of Indonesia.\(^\text{18}\) Further economic issues were the extraction of local natural resources in the 1970s with little benefit enjoyed by local people.\(^\text{19}\) Economic alienation also took place at the micro level, with the isolation and strict control of the ‘hot spot’ villages that led to the local economic deprivation (I: penghancuran ekonomi lokal).

The term ‘violent political conflict’ thus refers to ‘violent conflict’ or the set of violent practices, from threats to physical and armed violence, as well as the economic alienation, due to political disagreements between the conflicting political parties for political-economic purposes. Violent political conflict manifests in several forms, such as guerrilla conflict, paramilitary conflict, political assassination, armed conflict between political parties, genocide, ethnic cleansing, rape and sexual abuse. In the case of Aceh it also involves political and economic alienation.

\(^\text{17}\) See Chapter 5, Section 1.2, for details.
\(^\text{18}\) Aceh was referred to as the source of capital (I: aceh daerah modal) by Sukarno, one of the prominent figures of Indonesia during and after the Independence struggle period. See Chapter 5, Section 1 for details.
\(^\text{19}\) See Chapter 5, Section 1.3, for details.
The source of violent political conflict may vary and involves a ‘multitude of causal factors’ (Moser, 2001, p.39).²⁰ Conway and Kishi (2002, p.6) suggest that three variables contribute to conflict escalation, namely ‘structural factors’, ‘accelerators’, and ‘triggers’. ‘Structural factors’, also referred to as ‘root causes’, form the pre-conditions of crisis situations and include systemic political exclusion, shifts in demographic balance, deep-rooted economic inequalities, economic decline and ecological decline. Some qualitative studies have shown that horizontal economic inequality, i.e. inequality across regions or groups, is one of the major factors accelerating violent conflict (Humphreys, 2002).

‘Accelerators’, also referred to as ‘precipitators’, are factors that work upon root causes in order to increase their levels of significance. The existence of natural resources, such as the case of Aceh, for example, may be used as an incentive for third parties (states or corporations) to promote violent conflicts (Humphreys, 2002). ‘Triggers’ are sudden events that act as catalysts generating a crisis of conflict, such as the assassination of a leader, election fraud, or a political scandal. Conway and Kishi (2002) also argue that to analyse the emergence of conflict, it is important to understand how crisis develops to a conflict.

According to Davis (2000, p.4), there are three factors that generate violent conflict. Firstly, the reasons stimulating a collective group action include the loss of political autonomy and active political, economic, and cultural discrimination. Secondly, the group capacity for collective actions encompasses identity vigour and militant mobilization. Thirdly, the opportunity for collective action to occur must be present, such as recent regime transition and the backing of kindred groups, also contributes in the likelihood of violent conflict.

### 2.4 Violent Political Conflict and Its Impact on Livelihood

Whatever factors cause a violent political conflict, the effects will be more devastating than other conflicts as such conflicts are also characterised by the deliberate destruction of political, economic, social and environmental systems.

²⁰ See also the work of Date-Bah (2001)
Such conflicts are often characterised by weakened or absent public institutions, contested state legitimacy and statehood crises, an evident informal or illegal economy, wide arrays of violence, life threatening situations, involuntary displacement, deliberate destruction of livelihoods, and political marginalisation of certain groups (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, pp.1-3). Evidence from Sierra Leone, South Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Kosovo and East Timor clearly show that conflict imperils the foundation of local economies, exemplified in the followings: deterioration of employment and income sources; high inflation; eroded productive assets; obliterated informal and formal work places; weakened labour market; and increased number of female headed households (Date-Bah, 2001, pp.2-14). Consequently, violent political conflict threatens the livelihoods of the affected communities and leads to the ‘loss of livelihood’, as seen in the case of the local economic deprivation (I: penghacuran ekonomi lokal) of Aceh, which unfortunately is frequently neglected in discussions of conflict and its impact (Ohlsson, 2000, p.1).

The destruction of livelihood often serves as a tool of destruction for the targeted communities. The impact on livelihood can be experienced at both macro and micro levels as shown in Table 1 (p.70), and can lead to a rapid descent into poverty from stable conditions.

Table 3-1 The Macro and micro economic consequences of violent political conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-economic consequences</th>
<th>Micro-economic consequences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Scarcity of basic goods</td>
<td>• Insecurity may result in restricted mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collapse of economic regulation and rules of exchange</td>
<td>• Reduction in land cultivation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced investment</td>
<td>• Restricted grazing mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Falling incomes, food production, exports and imports</td>
<td>• Fluctuation in market prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Declining tax revenues, rising budget deficits</td>
<td>• Asset depletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Geographical and economic fragmentation</td>
<td>• Increasing levels of debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Biased price structures and exchange rates in favour of politico-military forces</td>
<td>• Blocked access to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hyperinflation</td>
<td>• Abandonment of traditional livelihood strategies to become involved in war economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Displacement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jaspars & Shoham, 2002, p.6

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21 See Chapter 5, Section 2.2 and Chapter 6, for details.
In Aceh and other conflict areas, such as several African countries and Kosovo, the impact of war on economic livelihoods is significant and has left a highly depressed economy, with a particularly serious effect on women (Ochieng, 2001; Ohlsson, 2000; Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). These effects include a decline in household property; disruption of economic activities such as farming, trade and farm-based marketing activities; severe loss of livestock and household ability to sell cattle and other livestock to meet basic family needs of health, shelter, and education.22

...loss of livelihood marks a rapid transition from a previous stable condition of relative welfare into a condition of poverty or destitution. It is the rapid process of change resulting in a sudden fall into poverty, more than the endemic condition of poverty... (Ohlsson, 2000, p.1)

These severe impacts result from the adoption of conventional military strategies in violent political conflict situations, including the destruction of the adversary’s supply lines such as agricultural, electricity and transportation systems. These strategies are often used by the conflicting parties to deter movement and reduce the stability of their enemies, but these strategies also affect the people’s well-being especially when they involve destruction of the social systems and network, by killings, kidnappings, or displacing the population (Lautze, 1997). In the province of Aceh, route checking, electricity cuts, and bridge destruction are examples of these conventional army strategies. Adding to these are burning down villages; kidnappings; killings; threats and terror to civil society; as well as forced displacements. These strategies were not only employed by the Indonesian army but also by the GAM fighters.

The nature of violent political conflict also determines the extent of exploitation of certain groups, which includes extracting the assets of marginalised groups through looting, forced labour, and illegal taxation (Le Billon, 2000 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). In such circumstances, historically marginalised and oppressed groups perceived as supporting the opposition become the most vulnerable. This was also the case of Aceh at the time of research, where villages classified as ‘black areas’ or villages with a strong

22 See Chapter 5 for details.
presence of GAM fighters, such as Village S of Aceh Besar District (the Great Aceh District), were isolated with restricted movement for the people. Moreover, the more protracted the violent political conflict, the more likely people will find ways of obtaining benefit from it. Examples of this are taxation and diversion of relief assistance by rebel movements (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.7).

In the case of the conflict in Aceh, the vulnerable included: the poor; the Acehnese villagers in the hot spots, especially local businessmen who became important targets for illegal taxation; the Javanese settlers who were alleged to represent the central government and to be the ‘new colonisers’; and the NGO activists who were targeted for illegal taxation since they were believed to be obtaining foreign funds. As Jaspars and Shoham (2002, p.7) point out, power, representation, and inclusion in violent political conflict situation are often determined by ethnic as well as political affiliation. This also demonstrates the way ethnicity is politicised, with traditional minorities and historically marginalised groups subjugated by state and non-state violent actors.

The destructive effects of violent conflicts on the overall political, economic, social and environmental systems also weaken the economic autonomy of local communities (Lautze, 1997). The destruction of public facilities such as schools, roads, and health centres, for example, cuts people’s access to these supporting facilities. At the same time, the fracture of the social system also exacerbates people’s vulnerability. As a consequence, people have to strategise their livelihood and find ways of coping. In such circumstances, ‘self-sufficiency’ becomes a critical survival strategy for many people (Lautze, 1997, p.6).

It is evident in many conflict areas that local informal structures are crucial in the coping strategies of the affected communities. Included in these structures are civic, religious, and ethnic institutions (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). These institutions often become sources of support and sometimes assume tasks that are usually government responsibilities, such as providing public services. This is especially true when government structures have been weakened by the conflict, with their authority questioned by the rebel groups. Local institutions
can play constructive roles in maintaining public order, such as the case of Somalia with its customary law and shari'a court (UNDP, 2001 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002).

The important role of local informal institutions was also evident in the province of Aceh at the time of research. The people turned to the alternative public service providers, the NGOs and self help groups, for assistance. However, this was not only due to a lack of trust in the government, but also because of the rivalry between the government’s structure and GAM’s structure which sandwiched the Acehnese people in between the two competing institutions. In addition, the government system was often paralysed due to the violent political conflict activities.

Nevertheless, although it was apparent that people tended to become ‘self-reliant’ for their livelihood sustenance and rely more on their own local informal structures, the government still had a role as public service provider and protector. In this case, reciprocal ties between the local government and NGOs were automatically established, especially when the government needed them to deliver their public supplies (such as medicine, rice for the poor, small credit scheme). The lack of access to target beneficiaries was met by NGOs who had good access to, and well-established relations with, the target beneficiaries, but were themselves short of supplies. It was not uncommon for the local government paramedics in Aceh province to request help from NGO activists, mostly women, to deliver assistance to villagers, who were mostly women and children.

The above discussion clearly demonstrates how violent political conflict should not be isolated from its overall impact on political, economic, social and environmental systems, and that it should be viewed as a ‘gendered continuum’, in order to have a holistic view and analysis. This is in line with what has been found by Moser and McIlwaine (2001) in the Colombian and Guatemalan societies, where they perceived violence as ‘highly complex’, ‘context-specific’, and ‘interrelated’ with many other factors, and viewed the severe economic and
social impacts as more problematic than the political violence that perpetrates them.

3 Coping with Violent Political Conflict: Women, Coping Strategies, and Household Livelihoods

Violent political conflict often carries tensions, terror, trauma, and intimidation perpetrated by parties involved in the conflict which may destroy quality of life. The devastating impacts are experienced by society at the level of community, household, and individuals, encompassing all aspects of life. The conflict, especially an armed one, may cause the breakdown of the fabric of daily life, its interlaced economies, its material systems of care and support, and its social networks (Cockburn, 2001, p.21; Date-Bah, 2001). The physical quality of life may be devastated as, in such circumstances, women and children find themselves in vicious, dangerous, and confusing situations. Such situations necessitate women and their household to establish their coping strategies as described in the following sections.

3.1 The Affected Women: From 'Passive Victims' to 'Active Survivors'

Impacts of violent political conflict differ between societies, regions, and contexts. However, in most cases, women experience a more shattering impact than their male counterparts. Women in Aceh experienced the grief of having lost their husbands, and being subjected to and witnessing terror and torture. Some studies (such as Ochieng, 2001; Date-Bah, 2001) suggest that women have to shoulder major burdens, such as the case of children and elderly, that prevent them from improving their status even in post conflict situations. The findings of this research support other studies (e.g. Berger, 2002; Meerten, 2001; Ohlsson, 2000; Sharoni, 1995, p.63; and Ochieng, 2001) in that women typically experience the economic problems of being the 'main source of
income’ in the absence of their husbands, or in situations where their male counterparts have lost their source of income and are still trying to find suitable men’s jobs. The ravaging impact of conflict affects women’s capacity to perform their daily economic activities.

In this context, women often become ‘active’ by assuming the responsibilities for sustaining their household and, if possible, striving for a better situation for their household members. Parallel with findings of other studies (e.g. Meerten, 2001; Ochieng, 2001), this study also found that women survivors have reconstructed their social and economic initiatives by quickly adapting themselves to the situation. This proactive approach to finding and establishing informal support networks, and in meeting their families’ daily needs is exemplified by women organising themselves into groups and starting income-generation ventures, as well as forming associations for substituting the ruptured family system and social supports. Meerten (2001) stresses that women tended to be swifter than men in adapting to changed situations and assuming the responsibilities of meeting their family’s needs. This differs from the portrayal of men, who often end up being ‘institutionally dependent’—relying on ‘working women’ and quite often turning to alcohol (Meerten, 2001; Ochieng, 2001). In Aceh, where alcohol is banned, men tended to spend their time in small shops (1: warung) or coffee shops (Ac.: keudè kopi) with their male counterparts. A man from North Aceh argued that spending time in coffee shops does not necessarily equate to leisure time as business deals often conducted in here. A young man from village I of Aceh Besar, however, said bitterly “Yes, we farm, plant, and have a good yield...at the coffee shop...” (1:“Ya, kami bertani, menanam, dan panennya bagus..di warung kopi..”). Nevertheless, this does not merely illustrate the ‘run away’ strategy of coping for the men, but also the insecure circumstances that limited men’s mobility more than that of women’s, for men were more often suspected of involvement in the GAM than women. Nonetheless, it supports the thesis than women were the backbone of the household and were more active than their male counterparts in their household coping strategies.
The term 'active' therefore implies that the women actively make decisions to undertake certain courses of action to develop and exercise their personal coping strategies which are essential to sustain their households. Women are therefore not viewed as 'passive victims' but as 'active survivors' with their overall roles in social, economic and political spheres.

Meertens (2001) similarly found, in the case of the displaced people in Colombia, that women show great resilience in unfavourable conditions, challenging their picture as vulnerable, passive victims, and becoming actors of their survival. Meertens (2001) states that, in contrast to their male counterparts, Colombian women immediately started to seek and develop available support for the displaced people, whilst men tended to concentrate on formal supports only.

3.2 Coping Strategies: The Contextual Model

The study of coping originates in psychology was only formally operationalised in the late 1960s by psychologists such as Lazarus, Moos and Pearlin (Zeidner and Norman, 1996; Parker and Endler, 1996; Stone et al, 1992).23 There have been two broad approaches to studying coping, namely the ‘trait’ (or style) approach and the ‘process’-oriented approach (Porter and Stone, 1996). The first approach examines coping styles from the perspective of personality dispositions that surpass the influence of the current state of affairs or time. This approach suggests coping is a static phenomenon (Porter and Stone, 1996, p.133). In contrast, the process approach defines coping as “...specific thoughts and behaviours that are performed in response to stressful situations and that change over time and situations.” (Porter and Stone, 1996, p.133)

The two approaches exemplify the ongoing discussion on whether coping is an adaptive strategy or an unchanging strategy. While some scholars argue that

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23 The concept has been in the psychological literature for decades. The study of coping began with the study of the role of stress in illness. In the 1970s, a number of books and articles proposed that coping can be studied separately, rather than as part of psychology (Folkman, 1992, p.31).
situational factors are important in determining adaptive responses, more recent
evidence proposes 'considerable stability' in coping styles (Kohn, 1996, p.185).
Regardless of the debates between the two approaches, both suggest that coping
carries certain positive outcomes (Ursin and Hytten, 1992, p.174; Lazarus, 1996;
Cohen, 1987 in Carpenter 1992, p.175). In this regard, coping can be viewed in
terms of coping responses and resources (Lepore and Evans, 1996). Coping
responses refers to behaviours and cognitions, including skills that are obtained
from past experiences, used to adjust to a stressor in order to manage and resolve
the stressor. Coping resources\(^\text{24}\) are defined as the overall assets that can be
accessed by individuals to enable them to respond to stressors. These assets can
be individual (e.g. skills and educational background), material (e.g. land and
other capital such as money), environment (e.g. social support), and/or physical.

Coping, therefore, may be defined as the collection of positive strategies
to face stressors, the sources of pressures (either from threats or challenges), with
positive outcome expectancies, using available resources (individual, material,
social and physical environment). This definition indicates three interrelated core
concepts of coping: stressors, actions, and expectations.

The term stressor refers to the physical and social environmental
conditions which are perceived as potentially threatening, damaging, harmful or
depriving (Lepore and Evans, 1996, pp.350-351). There are five general
categories of stressors: cataclysmic events, major life events, daily stressors,
ambient stressors and role stressors. Each of these stressors is interrelated and
comprises a wide range of combinations. Cataclysms, for example, often bring
some major life changes that people have to cope with. The combination of both
cataclysms and major life events stressors, in turn, may act as daily stressors in

\(^{24}\) In their Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), Hobfoll et al (1996, p.324) suggest four
general resources: (a) object resources which include physical objects such as house, jewels, cars,
and clothing; (b) condition resources, which refer to conditions that are valued by people or that
facilitate attainment or protection of valued resources such as seniority, stable jobs, and a good
married life; (c) personal resources, which include the overall characteristics and skills possessed
by individuals such as job skills, social prowess, and sense of personal efficacy; and (d) energy
resources, which are defined as resources that facilitate or allow access to other resources, such as
money, credit, owed favours, and knowledge.
people’s lives. Stressors, therefore, usually take multiple forms through a ‘cascade effect’ (Lepore and Evans, 1996).

Table 3-2 Five general categories of stressors and their characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Typical Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cataclysms</td>
<td>Sudden, tumultuous, irrevocable events that impose great adaptive demands on many people. Cataclysms tend to be severe stressors to the average person.</td>
<td>Natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, and earth-quakes; technological or human-made catastrophes, such as nuclear accidents, war, plane wrecks, collapsing bridges or buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major life events</td>
<td>Episodic and often irrevocable events that tend to impose great adaptive demands on one or a few individuals. Major life events tend to be severe stressors to the average person.</td>
<td>Social losses through divorce, death, relocation, or other life transitions; job loss; criminal victimization; serious illness or disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily stressors</td>
<td>Constellations of related and ongoing stressors experienced in day-to-day life. Daily stressors can range from being relatively minor to severe to the average person.</td>
<td>Financial problems, such as inability to buy basic necessities; bureaucratic inefficiencies; trouble getting work done because of interruptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambient stressors</td>
<td>Often intractable environmental conditions that impose ongoing demands on people. Ambient stressors can range from relatively minor and unnoticed to severe to the average person.</td>
<td>Noise, crowding, pollution, traffic congestion, extreme temperatures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role stressors</td>
<td>Ongoing difficulties related to fulfilling role obligations. Role stressors are typically severe to the average person, especially when they occur in personally important roles (e.g. marital or work roles).</td>
<td>Competing role expectations and demands, excessive workload, role ambiguity, too many responsibilities for people or objects, lack of social support or cohesion, lack of control of appropriate decision latitude.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lepore and Evans (1996, pp.352-353)

Violent political conflict is considered to be a ‘severe stressor’ (Hobfoll, et al, 1996, p.323; Lepore and Evans, 1996, p.353; Mikulincer and Florian, 1996, p.556) and falls under the category of ‘cataclysm’ (Hobfoll, et al 1996, p.323) which may become a ‘focal stressor’. Focal stressors produce a cascade effect by triggering other stressors, such as ‘major life event stressors’ which often occur in violent political conflict situations. In such extremely stressful situations, the
coping abilities of individuals, families, and communities, are greatly challenged\(^\text{25}\) (Hobfoll, et al, 1996).

The focal stressor and its cascade effect may result in the depletion of social coping resources. When people rely too much on their social network for support, for example, they may exhaust the network members and lead to the possible withdrawal of support. This may also create tension between support seekers and providers that leads to even greater social support depletion. Several studies have shown that increased social tensions in crowded households commonly result in a diminished level of social support between household members and the depletion of material and financial resources, causing greater vulnerability (Coates, Wortman and Abbey, 1979 in Lepore and Evans, 1996, p.366).

It is worth noting that embedded in the stressor-action-expectation relationship are two underlying assumptions. The first is that coping is an active choice and the decision-making process is consciously performed by individuals, households, and communities, with certain expectations of positive results (Carpenter, 1992, p.17; Holahan, Moos and Schaefer, 1996, p.25; Frieze and Bookwala, 1996, p.314). The second is that coping is exercised within a certain social context\(^\text{26}\) and is part of a social process dynamic (Folkman, 1992, pp. 33-34).

The theoretical framework of coping employed in this research takes an economic, rather than psychological approach, as this research attempts to concentrate on women’s coping strategies for maintaining household livelihood in violent political conflict situations. The core of the analysis is at the household level with particular attention to women in relation to other household members and the overall socio-cultural context. This approach is used to capture the interrelated coping behaviours of women as individuals, members of the

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\(^\text{25}\) Hobfoll et al (1996) note that most research on ‘extreme stressors’ tends to look at resources that underlie the coping behaviour and not the coping itself. Therefore, as an interesting area of study, not much has been done in this area.

\(^\text{26}\) Pearling (1985a in Carpenter and Scott, 1992) suggest that certain demographic or socio-economic characteristics may also determine coping strategies of the people and therefore may be considered as the particular context of coping.
household, as their most immediate socio-cultural context, and members of the community at another layer of socio-cultural context. In this light, I use the contextual model of coping that takes account of the particular context of household and society during violent political conflict situations. This follows the argument of Hobfoll et al (1996), on the important role of the community or social context in disaster situations. I thus consider the extent of community disruption, regional centrality (i.e. core areas of violent political conflict), the setting of the community (e.g. rural or urban), and the community’s arrangement of disaster responses (e.g. the immediate social networks) as “…an important mediator of individual outcomes following exposure to extreme stress…” (Hobfoll et al., 1996, p.340).

The contextual model is also used to capture the ‘multiple realities’ that affect the way women cope. As argued by Parpart and Marchand (1995 in Moser and Clark, 2001, p.5), the experience of armed conflict is not built upon a single discourse and is experienced differently by different people in different contexts. The ‘multiple realities’ encompass the overall diversity of geographical, religious, and social contexts, which certainly play major roles in women’s coping strategies.

Based on this and the three important core concepts of ‘stressors-actions-expectations’ in coping mentioned earlier, I use a ‘contextual triangular analysis of stressors, actions, and expectancies’ to examine the research problem (Figure 3-2). Furthermore, this contextual analysis also serves as a tool for understanding the gender differentiation and local construction of gender roles in the asymmetrical power relations between men and women in violent political conflict situations in Aceh. As noted earlier in section 3.1, women encounter gender specific experiences in violent political conflict situations that illustrates the need to investigates their particular problems, needs and interests.
The findings of this research suggest that in the violent political conflict situations in Aceh, women and other affected community members cope adequately with repeated shocks and incidents of threats, terror, and armed clashes. Together with their children and elderly household members, women flee to safer ground and return only when the dangers have subsided. Parents may send their children to extended families or trusted friends in safer areas. Traders postpone their trading activities, but still provide ‘tax money’ to the conflicting parties to sustain their trading activities. Farmers reduce production and the diversity of storage techniques. People of working age may choose to migrate to work outside Aceh and send back remittances to help the household cope economically. Households may use more inter-household remittances and loans, sell properties or increase their petty commodity production.

Coping strategies vary from one household to another and from one period to another. However, when repeated hazards become common, the coping may also become systematic and adapted to the situation (Lautze, 1997, p.13).
This argument suggests some similarities of household coping strategies in particular contexts or societies. This is parallel to the case of violent political conflict in the province. With the conflict lasting for over 30 years, systemic coping strategies have emerged among the Acehnese.

4 Household Livelihoods And Coping Strategies

4.1 On the Concept of Household

The household has been an important concept for analysis of local economies since the 1970s (Wolf, 2000, p.85). Beginning from 1960s, anthropologists have contended that the idea of the nuclear family was a product of European history resulting from the Industrial Revolution and not a cultural universal (Saptari, 2000, p.10). Feminist scholars, in particular, questioned the role of family as the means of ‘social solidarity and support,’ arguing rather that it is a machinery for female subordination. There is, however, a close link between both the concept of family and household, with domestic units regulated by different combinations of kinship and residential patterns (Saptari, 2000, p.11). Nevertheless, feminists argue that the close link of the concept of household and family does not necessarily mean that both concepts are identical.

Family, defined by biological and kin relations, is primarily characterised by its procreative and reproductive functions, whilst household is a social unit consisting of a set of individuals living together in one house and carrying out a set of ‘domestic’ activities (Saptari, 2000, p.11). A household is also sometimes characterised by a common pot, a unit in which household members pool resources and share domestic tasks (Rapp, 1981). Thus, the concept of household is commonly adopted as the fundamental unit of analysis on the economy of society and understood as a ‘basic, communal, multi-purpose, social-economic unit’ (White, 1980, p.9). The household is an important site of ‘subsistence, social reproduction and daily practices’ (Wolf, 2000, p.97).
Within households, gender relations and women’s agency are mediated (Saptari, 2000). Households become the first scene where women exercise their ‘agency’, their capabilities to respond to and alter their circumstances. In many cases, challenges to household economic survival allow more room for women to exercise their ‘agency’, especially in maintaining the livelihood of their households. As discussed in section 3 above, in the difficult circumstances of violent political conflict, women are the backbone of the households’ coping strategies and often become the main providers of income.

Investigating household, however, require a ‘beyond-household’ analysis (Tiwon, 2000; Wolf, 2000). Understanding state ideology and hegemony over women and their households becomes essential. This is especially true in Indonesia where households have been a tool of state control for generations, and womanhood has been part of the national construction in both colonial and post colonial eras (Tiwon, 2000). In the case of Aceh, not only the state needs to be taken into account, but also the GAM authority. Unlike households in other relatively ‘normal’ areas in Indonesia, Acehnese households had to face a ‘double hegemony.’ In addition, Islam and customary law (I: adat) are other institutions that shape intra and inter-household relations.

4.2 Livelihoods, Coping, and Crisis Strategies

Approaches to studying livelihood have been developed within the context of stable and non conflict situations, but have also been recently applied in chronic emergencies (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.1). The approaches were originally developed from Sen’s entitlement theory, which states that ‘famines occur as a result of people not having food rather than there not being enough food’ (Sen, 1981 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.15). Livelihood is defined as the following:

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social assets) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base. (Chambers and Conway, 1992 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.12)
The framework for investigating livelihoods contains five general components (Carney et al., 1999 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002):

- **Vulnerability context**: resources, infrastructure, economic, political, environment, shocks and stresses.
- **Resources or assets**: financial, human, natural, physical, social and political assets.
- **Transforming structures and processes** (policies, institutions, and processes) – government, non-government, private sector organisations, and laws, policies, culture and institutions.
- **Livelihood strategies**: assets, production and income, processing, exchange, marketing, and consumption activities.
- **Livelihood outcomes or goals**.

Strategies for gaining and/or maintaining a livelihood are usually analysed in terms of livelihood capabilities (human capital), social capital, economic capital (stores and resources), and political capital (determined by connection to power). In violent political conflict situations, these strategies become limited and their goals may be reduced from meeting basic needs to safeguarding livelihoods (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). In drought, households tend to adopt coping strategies to protect their livelihoods, i.e. the food and economic security of households. This coping strategy refers to temporary responses to diminishing food entitlements, which are characteristic of structurally secure livelihood (Davies, 1993 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002) and comprises insurance and crisis strategies (Corbett, 1988 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002).

An insurance strategy anticipates uncertainty and insecurity. It includes building up resources and diversifying sources of income, which can be done through, for example, migrating, collecting available natural resources, and modifying the structure of household expenses. These strategies are performed in three different stages, i.e. accumulation, adaptation, and coping strategies (Devereux, 1999 in Jaspars and Shoham 2002, p.9).
Crisis strategies, also termed 'survival strategies' (Devereux, 1999 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.9), respond to a prolonged crisis involving the depletion of essential assets and impoverishment (Corbett, 1988 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). Such strategies, therefore, carry the possible consequence of damaging the household economy because households use their productive assets to survive. This suggests a differentiation between coping strategies and crisis or survival strategies. Coping strategies aim at preventing destitution and therefore do not damage household economy and livelihoods, whilst surviving strategies aim at subsistence and often lead to household resources depletion.

In this thesis, however, I do not differentiate between the two strategies because, in reality, the distinction between coping strategies and surviving strategies is thin and shifts between the two often occur. Households interchangeably use the two types of strategies and frequently move from one to the other. Furthermore, under repeated shocks, coping strategies may transform into survival strategies and therefore lead to depletion of resources. Added to this is the fact that in a violent political conflict situation, households often have to cope with a lack of state services, the destruction of public services and access to them, the growth of an illegal/informal economy, and the destruction of assets that may have arisen over a longer period of time.

The coping strategies employed in a violent political conflict can be grouped into four types: return to a subsistence economy; engagement in a parallel or informal economy; violent or illegal activities; and cultural-morally degrading activities (Jaspars and Shoham 2002, p.9). The following Table 3 lists various strategies commonly adopted in armed conflict situations. Some people have to face a limited choice of marginal activities. Often they have to revert to a subsistence mode of life. Petty trade often becomes an important component of livelihood strategies such as the case of Somalia, which experienced a boom in trading activities after the 1990s (UNDP, 2001 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.9).
Table 3-3 Strategies generally adopted in response to violent political conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Falling back on subsistence farming</th>
<th>Engaging in informal economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revival of old crafts</td>
<td>Theft and looting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty trade</td>
<td>Joining local militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking relief</td>
<td>Overcoming social taboos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing indebtedness/borrowing</td>
<td>Prostitution (including child prostitution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High reliance on remittance from relatives abroad</td>
<td>Child labour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The economic activities can also be grouped in accordance to scale (macro, meso, and micro) and the degree of illegality or criminality (Le Billon, 2000 in Jaspars and Shoham, 2002). There are four categories suggested: ‘legal’ (manufacturing, trade, subsistence farming), a ‘grey area’ (large-scale extraction, informal trade, small-scale smuggling), ‘illegal’ (government corruption, asset transfer, taxation by armed groups), and criminal (capital flight, forced labour, robbery). In general, approaches which assess livelihoods do not incorporate a macro-level analysis of the processes that cause risks to livelihoods and political vulnerability, such as war, political economy, governance environment, and the power dynamics in violent political conflict situations (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.14). These approaches also neglect the illegal and criminal economic activities due to access and security issues.

4.3 The Assets Base

Lautze (1997) and Moser (2001, p.41) suggest that asset bases are fundamental to exploring household livelihood coping strategies. A basic understanding of the composition of assets held by households will help to analyse coping strategies. Moser also proposes taking into consideration the links between exclusion, vulnerability, and assets ownership. The more assets that an individual, household and communities acquire and the better they manage their
assets, the less vulnerable they will be. In contrast, the fewer assets (which can also mean the more assets eroded) and the more difficulties in managing them, the greater the insecurity will be. Assets can be classified into four types: physical; human; social; and natural.

Physical assets refer to man-made assets and consist of equipment, capital and other valuable goods. Some studies show that women and men tend to hold and accumulate different types of assets. Women tend to hold more liquid assets such as jewellery, whilst men have more control over non-liquid assets such as land, houses, and vehicles. When violent attacks occur, they often erode physical assets or obstruct access to these physical assets. This was the case in Aceh where Acehnese households often had to flee and become displaced in safer areas out of their villages. They often also had to release their non-liquid assets, which were either taken by GAM soldiers to substitute for the ‘war tax’ (Ac.: pajak nanggroe) that the Acehnese had failed to pay by the due date, or by the Indonesian soldiers who asked for ‘small presents’ to take home upon completion of their duties in a village. This, in turn, limited the people’s economic activities and influenced their coping strategies.

Human assets include education, health, and the nutritional status of individuals. It was common for the state’s teachers and health providers to be targeted by GAM soldiers (as part of their protest against the government) and, therefore, the former could not perform their tasks. Such actions affect the overall education, health, and nutritional status of individuals, mostly women and children, as it reduces their access to health and education services (Moser, 2001, p.42). Bad health and nutritional status limit women’s capacity to work, which leads to lower income and decreased nutritional status of their children and other household members. This drags women into the vicious cycle of poverty, which demonstrates the linkage of conflict and poverty.

27 I myself experienced this several times during my stay in Aceh when soldiers called me on my mobile phone, the number having been revealed when I passed through some of their ‘check points.’ These soldiers, arguing that their period of duties in Aceh would soon end, asked me for ‘oleh-oleh’ (I) to bring home. I usually answered that I could not give anything since I would also be leaving soon and needed ‘oleh-oleh.’ The term ‘oleh-oleh’ literally means small presents, but it is often used to refer to a small ‘bribe.’
Natural assets comprise stocks of environmentally provided assets that people can access for their household, like land, water, and forest.28 In rural settings, land is an important productive asset. The destruction of natural capital influences women and men differently depending on their original division of labour as well as their roles and responsibilities in their households. The different impacts are also determined by place of origin, i.e. urban or rural areas. Amongst rural communities, where land is a critical asset for economic activities, the loss of and limited access to land certainly affects households more than in urban communities.

Social assets include all social structures, arrangements and institutions that support the household livelihood coping strategies, such as social support, coalition building, social joining (and disjoining), and social protection. These assets encompass of the overall rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust entrenched in social relations (Moser, 2001, p.43). Both the ‘size and density’ of social institutions and the ‘nature of interpersonal interactions’ of social networks significantly influence the efficiency and sustainability of development processes (Moser, 2001, p.43; see also North, 1990; Putnam, 1993; and Olson, 1982). Social assets are, therefore, important in both identifying women’s coping strategies and providing some insights into the practical relevance of this research for development projects.

In this research, I used the four types of assets – physical, human, social, and natural assets - to analyse the women’s coping strategies at the household level in Aceh. I do not only focus on household level, but also consider both the formal and informal structural and institutional systems at community levels, including government-implemented structural and institutional systems and the social practices and arrangements of the traditions (I: adat kebiasaan) of the Acehnese community.

In this study, gender relations are at the core of analysis at the household level, where gender and age structures play major and significant roles. Gender

28 Although natural capital may be important for household livelihood sustenance, it also plays an important role as one of the rebel group’s funding sources (Humphreys, 2002).
power relations, for example, determine control over household resources, the division of labour, and decision making processes – especially who has the final say. This, in turn, influences household coping strategies, where women play the major role. In a violent conflict setting, women are often responsible for the collection of resources essential for self-sufficiency (Lautze, 1997).

5 Conclusion

Violent political conflicts and coping strategies are both multi-faceted phenomena. Studying violent political conflict requires, a combination of rational choice and social learning theories that recognises the reciprocal ties between individuals and their social milieu, taking into account the role of gender construction in a violent political conflict and its effects on women and their household livelihood. Studies of violent political conflict therefore need to cover the following crucial issues, at both pragmatic and symbolic levels: the need for localising or contextualising the violent political conflict into the pertinent conflicting social groups; the different societal layers (structural, institutional, inter-personal, and individual), bearing in mind the three factors that escalate conflict, i.e. 'structural factors', 'accelerators', and 'triggers'; gender inequality, taking into account the underlying assumption of unequal 'power-relations' over resources at both community and household levels as suggested by scholars such as Cockburn (cited in Moser and Clark, 2001, p.6), Moser and Clark (2001), and Nordhold (2000); and the devastating socio-economic effects of violent political conflict.

As noted in this chapter, violent political conflict is considered to be a 'severe stressor' and falls under the category of 'cataclysm' (Hobfoll, et al 1996, p.323; Lepore and Evans, 1996, p.353; Mikulincer and Florian, 1996, p.556), which may become a 'focal stressor.' This focal stressor has a cascade effect that triggers other stressors, such as 'major life event stressors' which often happen in a violent political conflict situation.
In such situations, women need to be perceived not merely as ‘passive victims’ of violence but as ‘active survivors’, who assume the responsibilities of sustaining their households, including children and the elderly. This study found that women survivors have rebuilt their social and economic initiatives by quickly adapting themselves to the situation and becoming pro-active in finding and establishing informal support networks, especially in meeting their families’ daily needs (see Meerten in Moser and Clark, 2001; Ochieng, 2001). For example, women have organised themselves into groups, have started income generation activities, and formed associations as substitutes for the ruptured family system and social supports. In this sense, the term ‘active’ also implies that the women actively make decisions to undertake certain actions in the development and exercise of their household coping strategies.

In scrutinizing household livelihood coping strategies, examining asset bases is fundamental (Lautze, 1997; Moser, 2001, p.41). In this regard, a basic understanding of the composition of assets (physical, human, social, and natural assets) held by households is crucial. The links between exclusion, vulnerability, and assets ownership are also essential: the more assets acquired by individuals, households and communities, the better these assets are managed and the less vulnerable households will be. In contrast, the more assets are eroded and the more difficult assets are to manage, the greater household insecurity will be.

The effects of violent political conflict are especially devastating for the civilian population since this often include the deliberate destruction of political, economic, social and environmental systems. With its eminent features of wide ranging violence, life threatening situations, involuntary displacement, intentional destructions of livelihoods, and political marginalisation of certain groups, violent political conflict threatens the livelihoods of affected communities and often leads to a ‘loss of livelihood’ (Ohlsson, 2000, p.1). However, adequate consideration of this aspects are frequently absent from discussions of conflict and its impact.
Chapter 4 Women and Acehnese Society: A Historical Review

This chapter describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the region, its demography, society and culture, to provide the societal context of the research. It grounds analysis of contemporary Acehnese society and culture in historical context, and gives particular consideration to gender relations. The historical account is employed by considering the earlier era of the Acehnese Sultanate as the starting point of analysis. The golden history of the Sultanate has often been used as a point of reference for Acehnese pride, and in particular put forward by GAM as the basis of not only independence but also of Acehnese identity.

1 In the contemporary acehnese citation ‘resam’ was written as ‘reusam’; ‘kanun’ as ‘qanun’; and instead of bentara it uses the term laksamana. Kanun was added in this saying only after Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) married Putri Kamalliah (Putroé Phang) from Pahang, Malay kingdom (Zainuddin, 1961, p.313). Reusam or resam in Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings (2004, p.827) is translated as ‘customary usage, natural habit, mode, constitution.

2 Sjiah Kuala refers the famous Acehnese ulama Abdul Rauf Al Fansuri (1593 – 1695), who was also called Sjiah Kuala. He was one of the students of the previous well-known ulama Nuruddin al-Raniri, who originated from the province of Gujarat in India, who wrote ‘Bustan al-Salatin’ (The Garden of Kings), the famous book on Islamic guiding principles on state and statecraft in the 16th century (Harun, 2004, p.28).

3 See chapter 5 section 1.3 for details.
In this chapter, I argue that four important factors need to be taken into consideration in analysing contemporary Acehnese society. Firstly, Acehnese society is heterogenous, being composed of several cultural linguistic groups with each group possessing a distinctive identity. The heterogeneity has become more sharply delineated in the context of violent political conflict. Secondly, the heterogeneity of the Acehnese corresponds to the diversity of Acehnese identity that has also developed due to changes brought about by Islam (Ac.: Eseulam), a market economy, and violent political conflict.

Thirdly, experiencing a long period of violent political conflict has resulted in certain dynamics in the Acehnese society that might not have occurred in other part of Indonesia. The longstanding conflict has infiltrated many different dimensions of the people’s day-to-day lives. Indonesia state supremacy, freedom fighters, military operations, Shari’a law implementation, civil society movements, and the presence of international relief organisations and their workers, including the United Nations, have all had an impact on the contemporary situation in Aceh. Fourthly, the old Acehnese saying ‘the law and tradition, is like a substance and its innate qualities’ (Ac.: ‘Adat ngon huköm, lagee zat ngon sifeut’) which depicts the close link between traditions and Islam as described in section 2.2.2, needs to be critically taken into account when considering the overall changes in contemporary Acehnese society, while still bearing in mind the differences between norms and reality.

This chapter comprises four sections. The first section describes the geographical characteristics of the region. The second section provides a description of Acehnese society and culture, using an historical account of Acehnese identity, to look at the sources of basic principles in the society as well as some contemporary changes that have occurred. The third section examines the socio-demographic characteristics and economy of the region.

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4 See Daud and Durie (1999, p.128)  
5 See Chapter 1
and pays special attention to poverty and its relation to the current conflict situation. The fourth section draws together some concluding remarks.

1 The Geographic Characteristics

Geographically, Aceh province is located on the tip of the northwestern part of Sumatra, with an area of approximately 57,365.57 km² or about 2.89% of land area of Indonesia. It is surrounded by the Malacca Strait in the north, North Sumatra province in the east, and the Indian Ocean to both the south and west. The capital city is Banda Aceh, which means the capital or trading mart of Aceh (Hurgronje, 1906, p.24). Banda Aceh was also known as Kutara or Bandar Aceh Dar-es-Salaam and (its 'soubriquet' banda) implies town-bred or civilised (Hurgronje, 1906, p.24). The term still existed at the time of my research. I was often asked whether or not I was from Banda (Ac.: ureueng banda; l.: orang banda).

At the time of the field work (July 2003 – August 2004), the province was divided into 16 districts (I: kabupaten) and 4 municipalities (I: kotamadya), which was an increase over the eleven districts and municipalities which existed in 2000. Each district and municipality was composed of several sub districts (I: Kecamatan). The sixteen districts were Simeulue, Aceh Singkil, South Aceh (Aceh Selatan), Southeast Aceh (Aceh Tenggara), East Aceh (Aceh Timur), Central Aceh (Aceh Tengah), West Aceh (Aceh Barat), Great Aceh (Aceh Besar), Pidie, Biruen, North Aceh (Aceh Utara), Southwest Aceh (Aceh Barat Daya), Gayo Lues, Aceh Tamiang, Nagan Raya, and Aceh Jaya. The four municipalities were Banda Aceh, Sabang, Langsa, and Lhokseumawe.

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6 See Chapter 5 that provide a thorough description and analysis of the conflict situation of Aceh using an historical approach.
8 Some sources, using the old spellings (l.: Ejaan Lama) of Bahasa Indonesia write this as ‘Atjeh’ instead of ‘Aceh’. The meaning is identical.
9 See Table 4-1, p.103 for details.
The region is culturally diverse. It is occupied by several ethnic and language groups. The major ethnic group is the Acehnese who are distributed throughout Aceh. Apart from the Acehnese, the indigenous groups are Gayo (in the central and eastern parts), Alas (in the south-east), Tamiang (in Aceh Tamiang), Aneuk Jamee (concentrated in the south and south-west), Kluet, Singkil, and Simeulue (on Simeulue Island). In addition, there is also some Chinese population, especially the Hakka, who came to the region mainly in the 1870s and 1880s, either as traders or as cheap labour for the Dutch plantation (Reid, 2006, p.6; Reid, 2005, p.194).10

From the Population census in 2000, in which respondents were asked to self-identify their ethnic background, however, Aceh Tamiang and Aneuek Jamee were not mentioned (Figure 4-1). This is regardless of the fact that some Acehnese that I met clearly identify themselves as Tamiang and Aneuek Jamee with their distinct dialects that are close to the Malay language. The exclusion of Tamiang and Aneuek Jamee may be due to their insignificant numbers and hence they may be included in ‘others’. Figure 4-1 shows Acehnese (50 %) was the major ethnic group. Apart from the Acehnese, other indigenous groups specified in the census were Gayo Lues (5 %), Gayo Lut (7 %), Alas (4 %), Singkil (3 %), and Simeulue (2%). There were also quite a significant number of Javanese (16 %) and Batak Tapanuli (2%).

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10 The Chinese population is usually located in certain areas in cities and is noted as influential in business and financial activities.
The total population of Aceh in 2000 was around 4 million, hence the region comprised around 2 percent of the total population of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{11} Table 4-1 clearly indicates that North Aceh was the most populated area in the province in the period 1999 to 2000, and was estimated to remain the most populated area in 2001-2004. This is well explained by the industrial growth in the region, especially since the discovery of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in East Aceh was followed by its exploitation that led to the development of North Aceh as a new industrial area in the 1970s (Ross, 2003, p.11).

\textsuperscript{11} The year 2000 was the latest data available. However, there are different figures for the population of Aceh province. According to the central office of Statistics Indonesia the population in 2000 was 3,930,905 people, whilst the regional office claimed 4,010,860 people.
Table 4-1 Population by Regency/City in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province, 1999-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regency/City</th>
<th>Number of Population in Each Year (000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Simeulue</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aceh Singkil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aceh Selatan</td>
<td>390.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Aceh Tenggara</td>
<td>197.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Aceh Timur</td>
<td>729.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Aceh Tengah</td>
<td>234.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Aceh Barat</td>
<td>449.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Aceh Besar</td>
<td>302.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Pidie</td>
<td>468.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Bireuen</td>
<td>349.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Aceh Utara</td>
<td>1,036.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Aceh Barat Daya</td>
<td>112.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Gayo Lues</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Aceh Tamiang</td>
<td>219.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Nagan Raya</td>
<td>140.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Aceh Jaya</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Banda Aceh</td>
<td>245.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Sabang</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Langsa</td>
<td>119.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Lhokseumawe</td>
<td>163.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,144.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*) Estimated number
Note: This is a corrected table from the original data, which miscalculated the total number of population for 2000 (4,073.0)

The population has tended to increase each year in every region except in 1999 to 2001, when there was little increase in any region, and sharp declines in population in Langsa and North Aceh (Figure 4-2). The most likely explanation of the decline is the intensified violent political conflict in the region, followed by the resumed military operation conducted by the Indonesian military and the expulsion of Javanese migrants by GAM soldiers, in around 2000.
At the time of my research, many former Javanese migrants still resided out of the region. As an example, in village S, near P.T. Arun (the LNG plant), many houses were still empty, left by their owners, the Javanese workers on the plantation who had been forced to flee in the late 1990s to early 2000s. A former (Acehnese) worker on the plantation told me that GAM soldiers sometimes checked the compound to ensure that the Javanese migrants had not returned. The total population of North Aceh, however, remained the highest in the province, which may be explained by the presence of internal Acehnese migrant workers from other districts in the province.

In terms of population density, Banda Aceh was the most densely populated area, with a density above three thousand per km² in 1996–2000 (Table 4-2). This far exceeded any other area in the province in this period, and most likely continued to be the case during the next four years after 2000. This is possibly because Banda Aceh is the capital city as well as centre of economic activities and education. Apart from that, the conflict influenced some people to migrate from the hot spots to Banda Aceh for security.
Table 4-2 Population Density per Km2 of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province, 1996 to 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/City</th>
<th>Population Density (person/km²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. South Aceh (Aceh Selatan)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. South East Aceh (Aceh Tenggara)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. East Aceh (Aceh Timur)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Central Aceh (Aceh Tengah)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. West Aceh (Aceh Barat)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Great Aceh (Aceh Besar)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pidie</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Simeuleu</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Banda Aceh</td>
<td>3,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sabang</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Badan Pusat Statistik, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province
Note: In early 2000, there were only 11 districts and municipalities in the province.

2 The Society and Its Dynamics: Origins, Basic Principles, Kinship System, and Gender Relations

In order to understand the contemporary Acehnese society, one needs to take into account the diversity and complexity of the society, as well as the effects of the conflict on the society. This section discusses the apparent homogeneity of the Acehnese people that belies the underlying heterogeneity by using an historical account. This section also describes the sources of basic principles and moral values of the Acehnese, their kinship system and gender relation dynamics.

2.1 The origins

Scholarly debates on the Acehnese heritage indicate lack of agreement about the origin of the Acehnese speaking people. These scholars, following different theories, are divided. Some historians such as Zainuddin (1961, p.15)
and Jamil (1968 in Hasjmy, 1983, p.141)\textsuperscript{12} referred to the Mante people. Mante is the Acehnese term for Mantra (Mantir), a group of Mon Khmer from Mon Khmer (Burma) who can also be found in Thailand and Vietnam (Zainuddin, 1961; Hasjmy, 1983; see also Bakker, 1993). In Aceh, the Mante resided in Seumilek (Ac.), which literally means broad land, which was also well known as the twelve houses (Ac.: Rumoh Dua Blaih), located between Jantoe, Aceh Besar District and Tangse, Pidie District. The Mante people migrated from one place to another within Aceh Besar and finally spread across the whole region. In Central Aceh, the Mante mixed with the Gayo people, who originated from Batak, while in Southern Aceh, they mixed with the Minangkabau. In line with this, Jayawardena (1977) argues that the riverine plains of Aceh Besar and Aceh Pidi were the original homeland of the Acehnese, who then mixed with other societies in different parts of the region. However, Hurgronje (1906, pp.18-19) argued that there was little evidence for a distinct group called the Mante, but supported the idea of shared foreign elements (in Acehnese society), including Arab, Persian, Turkish, Egyptian, and Javanese.

At the time of my research, popular knowledge among the people maintained that the origins of the Acehnese could be traced from the word ‘ACEH’, which was understood as an acronym for Arab, Cina (the Chinese), Eropa (the European), and Hindu (the Hindu Indians).\textsuperscript{13} This popular knowledge may be the best explanation for the origin of the Acehnese society as it corresponded to the four \textit{kawom}-based classifications of society made during the era of Sultan Alaidin Rajat Sjah Alqahar (1537-1568), as further

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{12} There were various small states in the coastal area of Aceh which were unified as a single entity under the Sultan Ali Moeghajat Sjah (1514-1528), who is known as the initiator of the Islamic Kingdom. The kingdom was then expanded and reached the climax of its power under Sultan Iskandar Moeda (1607-1636).

\textsuperscript{13} At the end of the 11th century, due to a war which coincided with the expansion of Islam in India, there were massive movements of Indians to Aceh (and other parts of Sumatra Island) (Zainuddin, 1961, p.19), whilst in around 1075, the Arabs and Farsi arrived in the region, especially in Peureulak, Pasei, and Pidie (Zainuddin, 1961, p.19). The influence of India in Aceh can been seen from the use of several Sanskrit words in kinship, literature, art and songs, animals’ names, agriculture, metal and jewellery, household equipment. (Said, 1981)
\end{flushright}
described in section 3.1. The Acehnese word kawóm¹⁴ (I: Kaum), also named aneuk sukeē (I: anak suku), can refer to their race, tribe, clan or ethnic group, and is sometimes used to refer to politically associated groups or classes (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.456). In combination with kerabat,¹⁵ it is used to refer to a group of people with close affinity, family ties, and kinship. The kawóm-based classification not only referred to their (ethnic) background but also kinship ties, which allowed people in mixed marriages to be classified in one of the four kawóm (Zainuddin, 1961; Hurgronje, 1906). The four different kawóm were: the Three Hundred Community (Ac.: kawóm Lhee Reutoih); the Four Imam (Ac.: kawóm Imeum Peuet), also called the Four Hundred (Ac.: kawóm Peuet Reutoih); the ‘Forefather-stone’ or ‘Enough-stone’ (Ac.: kawóm Tok Batee); and the ‘Sandang-Forefather’ (Ac.: kawóm Dja Sandang).

Traditional Acehnese live in gampông, a territorial community that is tied to a village mosque (Ac.: meunasah), which is also used as a meeting house, and, in previous times, as a rest-house for visitors and sometimes as sleeping-place for men (Zainuddin, 1961; Hurgronje, 1906). The gampông is led by head of gampông (Ac. keusyik),¹⁶ accompanied by an advisory body consisting of four senior (Ac.: tuha) community members or community informal leaders (Ac.: ureueung tuha gampông). The advisory board is called the ‘four-elderly’ (Ac.: tuha peuet), to denote the number and types of seniority of each members. The seniority depends not on the age, but on the following four qualities (Somadisastra, 1977, p.84): a sound understanding of religion and traditions (Ac.: tuha-tuho, which literally means ‘those who

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¹⁴ Kawóm is derived from the Arabic kawm, people (Bakker, 1993, p.16). It also refers to an ‘Islamic official who advises on religious matters and looks after the mosque’ (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.456). In Indonesian language, ‘Kaum’ (Ac. Kawóm) is used by Indonesian Chinese to refer to the pribumi (the indigenous) (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings 2004, p.456), particularly in Java. The term ‘wong kauman’ (the kawm people) not only refers to the indigenous (I.: pribumi) Javanese but also depicts the lower social status of the Javanese who, under the Dutch government, was grouped as the lowest rank in society after the Chinese, Arabs, and Indians, at the second rank, and the Dutch and other Europeans, at the first rank.

¹⁵ Kerabat in Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings (2004, p.484) is translated as (a) ‘close relationship, affinity’ and (b) ‘member of the family, relative, (nearest) relatives; kinship, consanguinity’.

¹⁶ There are several ways of writing this word. Alternative spellings are keucik or geusyik. In this thesis I use keusyik for consistency.
know the directions’); psychological maturity (Ac.: tuha turidroe); a capacity as peace makers (Ac.: tuha peproe), and the love of one’s religion and country (Ac.: tuha gasèh keu agama ngon keu nanggroè) (Somadisastra, 1977, p.84). It is, therefore, possible to find a young member such as the one that I met in Banda Aceh. He was only around 20 years old when he was appointed as a member of the advisory body of his gampông in 2002. According to him, it was his university background that resulted in him being appointed.

Several gampông composed a mukim (parish), originally an Arabic word moqim for ‘resident of a Friday prayer area’ (Bakker, 1993, p.16), which was led by the head of mukim (Ac. imeum mukim). Several mukim formed a mukim federation, led by a chieftain (Ac.: ulèèbalang). Under Sultan Nurul Alam Nakiattudin Sjah (1675-1677), three mukim federations were formed in Great Aceh (I.: Aceh Besar; Ac.: Aceh Rayeuek) and named sagöè, which literally means corner. These federations were later known as the three sagöè (Ac.: lhèè sagöè), which were led by ulèèbalang, the administrative chief, and panglima sagöè, the Sultan’s ‘watch-dog’ on the ulèèbalang’s performance (Zainuddin, 1961, p.316; Hurgronje, 1906, p.3). According to the Sarakata (the sultan’s formal letter), in war time, panglima sagöè would assume both civil and military commands of their region on behalf of the sultan (Zainuddin, 1961, p.316). Mukim in areas outside of Great Aceh had the same arrangement – led by ulèèbalang under the direct authority of the sultan – and were named ‘nanggruè bibeueh’ (Zainuddin, 1961, p.316). Apart from the sagöè and mukim arrangements, there was also a traditional body for agricultural matters (Ac.: seunobok), led by a chief (Ac.: peutua). It is not clear when this societal arrangement began, especially the gampông and mukim. However, letters issued by several different sultans (Ac.: sarakata) clearly indicate that the arrangement was formally adopted and maintained in

17 There were at least three different ways of writing this word: ulèèbalang or oelèèbalang (using Ejaan Lama or the Old Spelling of Bahasa Indonesia), ulèè balang, and ulebalang. In this thesis, I have used ulèèbalang, following Hurgronje. The word was derived from hulubalang (an Army commander) and was adopted since before the Sultanate era (Hurgronje, 1906, v.1).
the sultanate era. It is also worth noting the authenticity of this arrangement. Hurgronje (1906, v.1., p.3) stated “...these institutions in Aceh are in a large measure genuinely indigenous and of very great antiquity”.

During the sultanate era, the arrangement was revised at least three times (Zainuddin, 1961, pp. 314-317): in 1641-1675 under sultan Tadjul Alam Sjafiatuddin Sjah; in 1675-1677 under sultan Nurul Alam Nakiatuddin Sjah; and in 1841 – 1904. The changes exemplified further the power dynamics between the sultan and the conquered ulêêbalang, as the changes always involved limiting the authority of the ulêêbalang. In the Dutch period, this dynamic was fostered and utilised to defeat the sultanate of Aceh. Under the New Order (1965/1966 – 1997/1998), however, this territorial community arrangement was abolished and replaced by the standardized government structure of hamlet (I.: dusun), rural village (I.: desa) and urban village (I.: kelurahan), sub-district (I.: kecamatan), district (I.: kabupaten), province (I.: propinsi), and central government (I.: pemerintahan pusat). The advisory board (Ac. tuha peuet) was replaced by the village council for development matters (Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa –LKMD).

Nevertheless, gampông remained an important notion for Acehnese identity. As exemplified in section 4, gampông were always an important point of reference among the Acehnese to signify their identity as Acehnese (Ac.: Ureueng Aceh; I.: Orang Aceh). In 2001, responding to the recent political dispute between the government and GAM, the traditional arrangement was reinstated with the adoption of Law no 18 of 2001 on Special Autonomy for the NAD province (Annex 1).

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18 Hurgronje (1906, p.2) stated that the Acehnese, at the time of his assignment in Aceh, liked to compare the Acehnese area with the form of a winnowing basket (Ac.: jéê 3êê). The mouth of the basket illustrates the debouchment of the Aceh river (kreung Aceh) and the downstream points to the three confederations of mukims (Ac.: lhêê sagôê) with the three sagôê commanders (Ac. panglima sagôê who stood as the head of the three sagôê. Most likely this was what was referred to as ‘the men of the 3 sagi’ in Drewes and Voorhoeve (1958, p.8)
19 The last change was made during the era of sultan Alaidin Ibrahim Mansjur Sjah (1841-1870) and was maintained until the end of the sultanate era in 1904, with the capture of sultan Alaidin Muhammad Daud Sjah by the Dutch (Zainuddin, 1961, pp.417-422).
20 This was a nation-wide feature. For security purposes, Suharto adopted a standardised local government, especially at village level, in the late 1970s. This consequently abolished the traditional arrangements, including the Javanese notion of ‘desa’, which were actually quite democratic.
2.2 Sources of the Basic Principles and Their Dynamics: From Islamic to Market Values

The culture and tradition (I.: *adat istiadat*) of the contemporary Acehnese is the result of acculturation between several cultures, in which Islam has had a strong influence. Along with Islam and tradition, the basic principles of the society have also been heavily influenced by the longstanding history of violent political conflict. Societal principles were determined by the power relations of elite politicians, those involved in the political decision makings and negotiations, at both the central and local, and perhaps also international, levels.

2.2.1 Islam, Traditions, and *Hikayat*

Islam entered the region in the 11th century through the Arab traders and became a fundamental part of political organization with the establishment of several port kingdoms (Reid, 1969, p. 1). Having been in the region ever since, Islam has provided an important source of basic principles for Acehnese society. Since childhood, the Acehnese learn about Islam and tradition. I often heard neighbours ask their children to behave by politely reminding them what they had learnt from Islamic scholars, also considered as leaders, (Ac.: *teungku*). This usually manifested itself in their simple question of “what did the *teungku* say?” (Ac.: “*peue peugah teungku*?”). Children would usually behave as a result of this reminder.

21 See Chapter 5 for details of the history of violent political conflict in Aceh.
22 Some Acehnese historians, based on their analysis on the *Sarakâla* (sultan’s official letter), the news of epoch (*hikayat*), and other historical evidence in the region such as the graves of some *ulama* and the oldest Islamic boarding school, Dayah Cot Kali in Aceh, argue that Islam entered the region in the 7th century (see Hasjmy, 1983, p.45; Zainuddin, 1961). In this thesis, I follow Reid (1969, 2005, and 2006) because this is what is currently accepted among international scholars.
23 The greatest one was Samudra-Pasai, developed in the fourteenth century in Lhokseumawe (Reid, 1969, p.1).
24 *Teungku* (Ac.) is the Acehnese title for an Islamic scholar or leader.
25 In the city, however, some parents asked “what do teachers say?” (“*peue peugah guru*?”).
The importance of Islam began to be significant during the time of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). The presumed basic principles in this era were illustrated in the following old Acehnese saying espoused by Sultan Iskandar Muda, which is often proudly cited by the contemporary Acehnese, even among the youth:

Adat bak Po Teumeureuhom;
Hukom bak Sjiah Kuala;
Meudfeuliin karan bak Putroë Phang;
Resam bak Bentaran

Custom and Tradition from the sultan
Judicial law from Sjiah Kuala
Civil Rules and politeness in marriage (Muslim Administrative Law) from the Queen
Customary habit and practice [at local level] from the Commander (taksamana, or panglima or bentara) of each kaum or region (negeri)

(Zainuddin, 1961, p.313)

The saying depicts the role of prominent figures in that era. The custom and traditions (Ac., I.: adat) were composed of three themes: the law of Allah (Ac.: Adatullah); the law of the Sultan (Ac.: Adat Mahkamah) and the local traditions applied in each kawom (Ac.: Adat Tunah), which should be in line with the law of the Sultan (Ac.: Adat Mahkamah) (Zainuddin, 1961, pp.313-399). The custom and traditions (adat) were noted as coming from Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). This is in line with the tradition of the sultanates of Aceh, where the Sultan possessed the distinct position of the supreme guardian of the customary law, which was put into practice in conjunction with Islamic law sourced from Ulama, who were also the sultan’s
advisors (Zainuddin, 1961). Civil rules originated from Putro Phang, a Malay princess who married Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) of Aceh. Customary habits and practices (reusam) at local level were in the hands of the commander of each kawom.

During the sultanate era, Islam’s role as the basic principle was also well illustrated in the hikayat, also called news of the epoch (Ac.: haba jameuen), from which the (Islamic) moral values of the society and even changes (development) in those values were documented and passed from one generation to another (Hurgronje, 1906, p.68). As news of the epoch, hikayat can be considered as documented histories written in lyrical prose, with events added as they occurred, including wars (Siegel, 1979, p.231). The hikayat, therefore, portrayed the overall changes in the society, that may be traced as far back as the Hindu and Buddhist times to the later influence of Islam in the society (Hamidy, 1977, p.22). They were chanted anywhere possible: at home, meunasah (village meeting house), even at forts among soldiers. The hikayat recorded the power relations and the political discourses in the society, as well as the overall moral values, religion, tradition, ways of thinking, social relations, including relations between men and women, art and history.

The hikayat not only represented the existing traditions of the society but were also an important means of social control through which moral sanctions and rewards were learnt. From the hikayat, the notions of heroism, nationalism and, unfortunately, fanaticism, were also learnt. The latter characteristic was exemplified by the following Hikayat Prang Sabili (Holy

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28 Putro Phang or Putro Phang was a well-known among the Acehnese, even the current (2004) younger generations, as a cultural heroine. A youth group established by a local NGO to promote reproductive health named the group after the Princess.
29 From the Arabic word ‘rasam’ which means habits, ways, and traditions (Poera, 1977, p.105)
30 Following the Indonesian Old Spelling (L.: Ejaan Lama), some literature writes this as ‘hikajat.’ Following the Indonesian New and Comprehensive Spelling (L.: Ejaan Baru dan Yang Disempurnakan), I use ‘hikayat’ instead of ‘hikajat.’
31 The composers of some hikayat, such as hikayat Malém Dangg, remain anonymous, while the authors of other hikayat are clear, such as hikayat prang Gómpeni by Abdul Karim of Glumpang Dua (Hugronje, 1906, p.100).
32 Hurgronje (1906, p.66) argued that the hikayat were oral compositions. This, however, referred more to the nature of story telling. Most stories derived from hikayat but some can be purely anonymously composed and spread from mouth to mouth like dongeng in Java.
War) written by ulama, which was usually chanted before the Acehnese went to wage war against the Dutch infidels (Kaphé) (Zentgraaff, transl.version, 1983, p.399; Daud and Durie, 1999, p.138; Siegel, 1979, pp.236-262).

...Njang meubahgia seudjahtera sjahid dalam prang Allah/pulang
deuwddjang bendiaadari/Ho ka siwa sirawa/sjahid dalam prang dan
senang/Geu peurab ridjang peutamong sjuruga tinggi ...

...Happy are those who become martyrs in the holy war/ back [to God]
accompanied by angels/to be armed with dagger/ Be a martyr in the [war]
and be happy/Be graced a place in the high of heaven

The hikayat, however, are now declining as more new-fashioned media, such as television, newspapers, magazines, and movies influence society. Nevertheless, some Acehnese artists try to revitalise the hikayat through contemporary Acehnese popular songs. An example of this is Rafly, the famous Acehnese pop singer, in his song entitled ‘Aina[u]l Mardhiah’, on his second solo album of ‘Syiar dan Syair’ that was released in 2000. The song illustrates the re-enactment of the spirit of holy war in contemporary Aceh. Heaven is perceived as embodied within ‘Aina[u]l Mardhiah’, the beautiful bride of the martyr as described in hikayat Prang Sabi! (see Siegel, 1979, pp.237-250), composed by Teungku Panté Koeloe, a follower of the ulama of Tiro (Damsté, ed., 1928 in Siegel, 1979, p.19). Unlike the original hikayat, the spirit of holy war is not directly stated in the pop song. However, it is well represented by ‘Aina[u]l Mardhiah’, the beautiful princess of heaven, in conjunction with the illustration of the delightful feeling of those who witness heaven (see Table 4-3).

34 I cannot find the word ‘syiar’ and ‘syair’ in the Acehnese-Indonesian-English Thesaurus of Daud and Durie (1999). However, both words possibly relate to the word ‘siar’ and ‘syair’ in Indonesian language. ‘Siar’ has several meanings: to disseminate, broadcast, announce, made known, spread, propagate, publish, radiate, and send forth (Seven and Schmidgall-Tellings; 2004, p.933). ‘Syair’ means a quatrain consisting of four rhyming lines, a poem (Seven and Schmidgall-Tellings; 2004, p.979).
Table 4-3. Ainul Mardiah: The modern vs traditional versions of *Hikayat Prang Sabil*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ainu[ulu] Mardiah</th>
<th>Ainoel Mardijah [Ainul Mardiah], excerpted from the <em>Hikayat Prang Sabil</em> (source: Siegel, 1979, pp.242-248)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyrics: Dike Aceh &amp; Selawat Nabi Tgk. Bustami Mahmud; Song: Pak Rep</td>
<td>“...‘Salamu alaiikum ja chariulnisa [the chosen lady], is my spouse here?’...” “‘Alaikum salam ja waijullah [the Love of God]. Come here. Come here to Ainoel Mardijah [Ainul Mardiah], to the reward of God for the holy war. You are indeed fortunate, oh, prince, to come to paradise and see the price of the holy war. Oh, fortunate teungkoe [teungku] come a bit closer. Step before us into our palace. We are all ladies of the court, servant of your fiancée...”... “...the court ladies were lovely; their bodies, slender and lither, were draped with diamond necklaces and sparkling toe rings...”... “I went on, approaching a row of lamps. I looked at everything along the way. The riches of God are more than can be described...There were more palaces, glowing with rays like those of the sun...and staged with glittering diamonds...”... “I went toward the couch decorated with diamond dust. Coming to the inlaid door, I was amazed...Ainoel Mardijah [Ainul Mardiah], the lovely princess, awaited me. Seeing me, the fairy star said, ‘Alhamdulillah [Praise the Lord], our wish has been granted...come here, sit with me on the couch.’...” “Ainoel Mardijah [Ainul Mardiah], the lovely one, has no equal...She looked at me and laughed and smiled with her red lips like the Southern Cross. The power of the creator of the world is beyond my comprehension...”... “Teungkoe [teungku], my lord, the Lord has granted me my desire. Later we will sleep together, as I greatly desire my husband...” “So the fair and delicate one spoke, her voice sweeter than any flute...I was rushing to embrace her when the lovely one said, ‘Oh, teungkoe [teungku],”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Ainul Mardiah, the beautiful slim/Ainul Mardiah, nyang cidah-cidah lintek the incomparable in the world/Hana ngoen bandeng di dalam donya Fair complexion, slightly rouge/Kuletjih puteh, meujampu-jampu kuneng flower of silimeng, red is its colour /Bungong silimeng, mirah wareuna | Refrain: In heaven, so unbelievably beautiful/Dalam syuruga indah bukoen le In the air, its adornment /Megantung kande ban-ban saunlingka Hanging adornment, with no rope/Kande megantung bukoen ngoen taloe In the air, God’s blessing/Megantung keudroe Tuhan karonya They glisten /Ji bedeoh-bedeoh cahya moving around/Meu puseng-puseng starring at it endlessly, my heart is exceptionally delighted/ Taka loen plang-pleng hate that suka eyes like diamond, body is so slim/Mata sang intan badan jih rambeng the flower is proposed by those in heaven/Si bungong bungong sunteng asoe syuraga Note: *Silimeng* is a kind of star fruit usually used as one of the main ingredients of an Acehnese traditional dish. |
The revitalisation of this hikayat with its Islamic values illustrates the continuity of Acehnese moral values. It further exemplifies the fact that Islamic law and tradition have long been part of the society, especially since the period of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), and that both Islamic law and tradition are indivisible as described in the following section.

### 2.2.2 The Inseparability of Islam and Traditions

The inseparability of Islam and Acehnese traditions is well articulated in the old Acehnese saying ‘tradition and law are like substance and its innate qualities’ (Ac.: adat ngön hukôm lagée zat ngön sifeut). This saying describes the link between (Islamic) law and adat kebiasaan (I), which is as close as a substance, and its innate characters. The illustration strongly suggests the indispensable and, at the same time, inseparable characters of the (Islamic) law and adat kebiasaan. Both Islamic law and tradition are like two sides of the same coin.

Scholars such as Siegel (1969) and Hurgronje (1906) have debated the roles and interlinked characters of adat and Islam. Both maintained that the role of Islam in society should not be taken at face value as there were diverse concepts and understanding of Islamic tradition. Acehnese society cannot be simply viewed as Islamic society. Different groups perceived ‘Acehnese’ and ‘Islam’ differently. Siegel and Hurgronje may be correct, but they tend to understate the general values of Islam shared by the entire society that are deeply embedded within their traditions.

Until today, Acehnese tend to turn to tradition and customary law (adat kebiasaan) in which Islam is well-established, and traditional leaders
(such as ulama) for guidance on their personal or even development problems. This is due to their perception of the powerlessness of the local government, as clearly illustrated in the following Acehnese saying:

Calling for help from the head of village is like a round pumpkin / Tajak bak keusyik, lagee boh pik hana sagoe
Calling for help from the head of sub-district is like a small bell with no rope / Tajak bak camat, lagee munumat hana taloe
Calling for help from the head of district is like a rice pestle with no pounder / Tajak bak bupati, lagee jingki hana bajoe

There are two different types of pumpkin based on their shapes—the round and the angled one. The round pumpkin, due to its shape, has no firm stand, and shifts easily. It symbolises the unstable situation one will face in calling for help from a keusyik (head of village). It also symbolises an unreliable keusyik whose words cannot be trusted; especially when s/he tends to please her/his superior rather than her/his own society. Similarly, the small bell with no rope represents uselessness since it does not produce any sound. It also represents an untrustworthy camat whose authority is given by the central government and who does not have a strong attachment to the society. The worst is calling for help from bupati, which is pictured as a pestle with no pounder. With rice as staple food for the Acehnese, a pestle is therefore important. However, without a pounder (that may also represent the connection of bupati with the people), a pestle becomes a completely useless tool.

The saying clearly denotes the longing of the Acehnese for a clean and reliable government. The Acehnese distrust of unreliable governments parallels their distrust of the national legal system, resulting in the Acehenese preference to rely on their tradition and customary law rather than on national law in resolving their legal disputes. This preference however, may also be explained by the inseparability of Islamic law and adat in Acehnese society, as described above.

Nevertheless, it is important to take into account the discrepancy and power relations between the Islam imposed by the government, using Shari’ a law, and Islam as practiced by the people in their day-to-day life. Unlike the government, which is interested more in the physical appearance of Islam, the
people have a different understanding of Islam, placing more importance on relations with God (*Hablun min-Allah*) and with others (*Hablun min-Annas*) than on physical expressions of their faith. Tolerance and respect, at the time of research, could be easily observed from not only the existence of religious buildings of other faiths such as churches, but also from the fact that during the most recent conflict between GAM and the government of Indonesia, none of these buildings were disturbed. This, however, may also be explained by the fact that Moslems are the majority in the region. Based on the Population Census in 2000, Moslems comprised 97.3% of the total population of Aceh (Figure 4-3).

![Figure 4-3 Proportion of the Population of Aceh by Religious Background, in 2000](image)

The proportion of the population of Aceh by religious background in 2000 is shown in Figure 4-3. Moslems comprise 97.3% of the total population, followed by Buddhists (0.37%), Catholics (0.36%), Protestants (1.94%), Hindus (0.01%), and Others (0.02%).

Data source: Population of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Results of the 2000 Population Census, BPS, Statistics Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

Note: Pie Chart is made by Author

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35 This is different from the provinces of Maluku, North Maluku, and Central Sulawesi, which suffered from religious-based conflicts between the Moslems and Christians. These three provinces have almost an equal number of Moslems and Christians who hold relatively equal power in local politics and the economy.
2.2.3 Shari’a Law: Between Norms and Reality

The implementation of Shari’a law, through the adoption of Law no 18 on the special autonomy of Aceh signed by President Megawati on 9 August 2001 (Annex 1), was a product of a long history of political disputes between Jakarta and Aceh (Ishak, 2002). This has led to the enforcement of superficial issues of Shari’a, such as ‘sweeping hijab’, rather than the more fundamental issue of having a just and prosperous Islamic society. At the time of my research, many Acehnese viewed the adoption of Shari’a law as merely political since it was conducted as part of the government efforts to calm down the strong demand of the people for independence (see also Munir, 2003; Amir, 2002).

Shari’a basically means the law of Allah, as specified in the Qur’an and Sunnah (the life examples of Prophet Muhammad), and covers all aspects of human life, in both the relation with God and others (Hooker and Hooker, 2006, p.137). With its basic premise that ‘the fundamental duties of human beings is to obey God in all things’, it is the ‘heart of Islam’ and ‘theology in legal form’ (Hooker and Hooker, 2006, p.137). Al-Ghazali (cited in Hooker and Hooker, 2006, p.137) listed the five purposes of Shari’a as ‘protection of religion, protection of life, protection of intellect, protection of generations, and protection of property.’ There are three ‘defined penalties ([Ar.] hudud’ in classical Shari’a law: physical; compensation (Ar.: ‘qisas’); and other penalties from a judge (Ar.: ta’zir) (Hooker and Hooker, 2006, p.137-138).

Shari’a comprises two main principles: the art of worship (Ar.: al-ibadat) and human interactions (Ar.: al-mu’amalat). The art of worship covers the five pillars of Islam, also known as ‘arkaan addiin’ or ‘arkaamud-diini’ (Ar.), which are set out in the Qur’an (Hooker, 2006, p.93-94): ‘the declaration of faith (Ar.: shahaadah), the five daily prayers (Ar: salawaat), the obligation to pay a wealth tax (Ar.: zakaah), fasting during the month of Ramadan (Ar.: sawmum) and undertaking a pilgrimage to Mecca (Ar.:...}

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36 See Chapter 2, Section 3.1.
The human interactions cover: financial and social transactions; endowments; laws of inheritance; marriage, divorce, and childcare; food and drink (ritual slaughtering and hunting); penal punishments; warfare and peace; and judicial matters (such as rules governing the ability to give witness testimony and other forms of evidence).

However, in the case of Aceh, at least when initially implemented in 2001, Shari’a law seemed to be understood more from the art of worship (I.: al-ibadat) dimension with less attention paid to human interactions (I.: al-mu’amalat). It was understood as the following: forcing women to adopt the Moslem dress code, enforcing the obligatory Friday prayer (especially for men), and harsh punishment for criminals. It was also understood as imposing more tangible Islamic (Arab) symbols in the region through, for instance: adding Arabic letters on the names of streets, shops, and government offices; displaying posters of women in proper Islamic dress and displaying verses of Al Qur’an along the main streets. Such enforcements were perceived as imposing Arab-Islamic culture (Munir, 2003, p.131).

It was therefore apparent that more importance was placed on the physical rituals of the art of worship (I: al-ibadat) than the more favourable results/outcomes offered to society through the human interactions (I: al-mu’amalat), such as the more human-faced Shari’a economy at micro and household levels. An example of a Shari’a inspired initiative was baitul qiradh, which were sporadically introduced by some local NGOs. Baitul qiradh is typically an Islamic self-help group in which, ideally, the rich donate resources to be initial running capital for the productive activities of the poorer members of the self-help group. In Aceh, however, some baitul qiradh were rather different, more resembling local savings and loan cooperatives (BMT – Bait Maal Wat Tamwil) with the additional role of collecting the Moslems’ wealth tax (I.: zakat; Ar.: zakaah) and charitable gifts (I: sadakah or sedekah; Ac.: seudeukah), such as endowments or property donated for a

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37 Moslems refer to examples from the Prophet Muhammad’s life for further guidance on the conduct of these five pillars of Islam (Hooker, 2006, p.14)
religious purpose (Ac.: wakueh; I.: wakaf or waqf; Ar.: waqfun), 38. The Shari’a economy itself covers banking, interest, debt arrangements, tax, and welfare. Underlying these is the Shari’a economy’s concept of, among other things, money as a tool for exchange not as a commodity; and lawful and legitimate actions according to Islam (Ac.: haleue; 39 I.: halal; Ar. halaalun). 40

The Shari’a economy was seen as essential to counter the violent political conflict that infiltrated the day to day life of Aceh, as well as the market economy that came along with its inherent inequality between the haves (the rich) and the have nots (the poor). During the 20th century, the market economy penetrated the local economy in Aceh and opened up channels with the outer world. Under Indonesia’s New Order government, the oil economy in the 1970s boosted the market economy even more. As its benefits went to the central government more than to locals, impoverishment unavoidably occurred. This impoverishment was then worsened by the violent political conflict through its cascade effect on local economy deprivation (I.: penghancuran ekonomi lokal).

2.2.4 The ‘Madonna Factor’: The Penetration of Western Market Values

Following the neo-Marxist critique of capitalism as Western civilisation (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1979), I argue that the market economy has inevitably exposed Acehnese society to western values, which is locally termed the ‘Madonna factor’ (I: ‘faktor Madonna’). I firstly heard about this term when I was in Banda Aceh (from my local NGO friends), and I heard it again when I travelled to Lhokseumawe during my field work. The ‘Madonna

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38 Fealy and Hooker (2006, p.1) listed different meanings of wakaf: ‘confinement’, ‘prohibition’; ‘perpetual charitable trust for religious purposes; endowment or property donated for a religious purpose’. In Islamic law, wakaf is a charitable endowment dedicated for Allah through donating it for some public benefit, specified by the donor. Wakaf and cannot be ‘given away, sold, mortgaged, inherited or otherwise disposed of’ (Nasution, 2002, p.299). If the specified purposes of wakaf cannot be achieved, the endowment should be allocated for the relief of the poor, the ultimate purpose of every wakaf (Nasution, 2002, p.299).

39 The Acehnese also used the word kheueh to refer to a ‘halal attitude’, a genuine and non-corrupt attitude.

40 ‘released’ (from prohibition); ‘denoting what is permitted or lawful in Islam’ (Fealy and Hooker, 2006, pp. xxxvii).
factor’ exemplifies the perceived symbols of western culture embodied within Madonna, an American singer of popular songs, who was quite controversial with regards to her performances, the lyrics of her songs, her dress, and personal life story. Madonna contentiously explores the political, sexual, and religious imagery, not only in her art works but also in her personal life. This local simple idea of Madonna is sexy clothes, make up, and semi-pornographic performances. The term signifies the negative influence of western values on the society. Although I did not hear the term from the women from villages that I met in different parts of the province, these women also held the same idea of ‘unusual’ western culture in comparison to Acehnese Moslem culture. The ‘Madonna factor’ also illustrates urban (the locals use the term ‘modern’) life styles, boosted by the oil economy of the region.

The infiltration of Western values occurred not only through the market economy, but also in different periods. In the Dutch period it appeared through the close link with the uléébalang, the families who controlled the market. Under Indonesia, the oil economy has advanced the more urban style of life of the society.41 Examples of this urban life style were the establishment of Kentucky Fried Chicken and California Fried Chicken in Banda Aceh in the 1990s. Following the most recent violent political conflict between GAM and the government, the international presence during the Cessation on Hostility Agreement (CoHA) period in late 2002 to early 2003 inadvertently caused a penetration of western values. The international presence also created a new market. Hamburger stalls and cafes with western menus, for example, suddenly mushroomed, especially in big cities such as Banda Aceh and Lhoksemawe. The cinema in Banda Aceh, that had not been seen in the region for sometime because the building was set on fire in the conflict in the 1990s, 42 was re-established in a different part of the city with a more urban style of a ‘resto-cinema’, a mixture of restaurant and cinema. The

41 This was one of the grievances raised by GAM. See Chapter 5 section 2.3 for details.
42 At the time of research there were two cinemas in Banda Aceh: cinema ‘Gajah’ in Kutha Alam sub-district and ‘Merpati’ in Peunayong sub-district, both in Banda Aceh municipality. Neither were operating.
new international/Western inspired ‘resto-cinema’ was a novelty in Aceh, and became one of the favourite places to hang out, especially for wealthy locals and the international community. The non-indigenous sport of surfing has also become one of the favourite sports of young Acehnese.

The ‘Madonna factor’, therefore, needs not be merely perceived as the western values of sexy clothes, porn and semi-porn songs and movies, but also the ugly aspects of the capitalistic approach in a society without the political stability assumed necessary for a market economy. Under conditions of violent political conflict, it was apparent that a just and fair market could not operate. Furthermore, the ‘violent political conflict economy’ often resulted in economic inflation.

What I mean by the ‘violent political conflict economy’ is a market economy created and boosted by violent activities. Its components range from the security services to provision of support facilities for those coming to the region for conflict related reasons, such as humanitarian workers, peace negotiators, peace keepers, and even combatants. The ‘violent political conflict economy’ is also influenced by strategies employed by both conflicting parties to win the battle through violent actions, such as cutting off supplies, destroying infrastructure, adopting illegal taxation, and limiting people’s mobility. This, in turn, affects the local economy and triggers economic inflation (often hyperinflation).

Figure 4-4 shows that in the years 2000 – 2004, the inflation rate of Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe tend to be higher than the national rate. Both Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe reached their highest inflation in 2001. The most likely explanation is the escalation of conflict in 1999/2000, which not only occurred in Aceh, but also in many other provinces in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the inflation rate of Lhokseumawe was lower than the national rate in 2000 and 2001, which may relate to the low population and limited activities of the LNG plant due to the conflict.

43 This is a modified term for the ‘war economy’ as discussed in many scholarly works on conflict studies.
44 The year 2003 is an exception with the inflation rates of both Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe being slightly lower than the national rate. This possibly happened because of the implementation of martial law in 2003 to 2004, which has weakened the local economies.
Both Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe reached their highest inflation in 2001. The most likely explanation is the escalation of conflict in 1999/2000, which not only occurred in Aceh, but also in many other provinces in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the inflation rate of Lhokseumawe was lower than the national rate in 2000 and 2001, which may relate to the low population and limited activities of the LNG plant due to the conflict.

The influx of outsiders and their violent political conflict related activities that ranged from purely humanitarian work to warfare has inevitably increased the price of houses and cars due to the high demand from the international community. After the Tsunami in December 2004, the region suffered from hyperinflation due to the imbalance of supply and demand. The scarcity of economic resources resulting from the Tsunami has been worsened by the influx of international agencies. The cost of renting a house went up to approximately 20 million rupiah (around US$2,222 with 1$=Rp9,000) per month, which was more than ten times higher than the average/typical pre-tsunami price.

The above discussion further illustrates the state of ambiguity in contemporary Acehnese society resulting from divergent influences. Apart from Islam and tradition, which both went hand in hand and are the fundamental sources of life principles and an essential element of Acehnese identity, the violent political conflict and resulting economic effect together
with the ‘Madonna factor,’ have affected local life. On the one hand, under the Islamic (Arab) tradition in Acehnese society, women were obliged to be responsible for the domestic rather than the public sphere, which was considered the men’s domain. On the other hand, the history of Sultanate and Acehnese heroines were strongly imposed by society in general, creating the image of the receptive traditions for female presence in public spheres.

To the Acehnese, household activities can be grouped into two: seeking rice (Ac.: *mita breueh*) and seeking money (Ac.: *mita pêng*), with responsibilities allocated to wife and husband respectively (Jayawardena, 1977, p.29). Seeking rice represents the domestic domain, with traditional Acehnese women usually working in their family’s paddy field for their household subsistence. Seeking money represents the public domain with Acehnese men perceived as the income earner who is required to bring money home. This is illustrated in the Acehnese saying ‘no money no woman’ (Ac.: ‘hana pêng hana inong’).

This domestic versus public dichotomy may explain the phenomenon of male dominance in market places, where male traders were more evident than female traders at the time of my research. The small stalls, especially coffee shops (Ac.: *warung kopi*) and burger stalls, were also more occupied by men than women. Peddlers were generally men, and it would be very rare for a woman to be a peddler (Ac.: *mugee*). If women did participate in the market economy, it would be more as additional rather than main income earners. This was the case of women in coastal areas where a living was made by searching for oysters along the rivers. Whilst men went to the sea to fish and were exposed to more danger, women stayed upstream on the river, not far from their domestic domain, to earn some ‘extra money’ for their households.

The dichotomy has further strengthened the male’s dominance in the public sphere, with men entitled to top positions and vital roles as leaders, and even negotiators in peace deals. As opposed to their female counterparts, men occupied the special position of leaders, from household to community levels, and consequently benefited from the overall privileges afforded to leaders. At the household level, male members should be prioritised in anything as a gesture of respect. I remember an occasion in my adopted family when the
grandfather (Ac.: abu chiek) came from gampông to visit and stayed several days in Banda Aceh. Mother (Ac.: mamak), made bubur kanji (a traditional Acehnese porridge of rice, chicken, coconut milk and some traditional herbs). All of us, the women family members, were busy in the kitchen preparing the bubur. Once it was ready, we did not eat it until abu chiek and abang (who was the only son in the family) finished their porridge and left the dining table. This apparently was a common feature of Acehnese households, regardless of their social status, as I observed similar actions of women from village U who put aside the meals for their husbands before they allowed their children to have their breakfast.

In contrast to this female-domestic versus male-public dichotomy, the society in general strongly emphasized the history of the Acehnese Sultanate and heroines. The accentuation of the history of Acehnese female leaders has created an image of a tradition receptive to female presence in public spheres. Interestingly, this public domain is not just a public domain, but in the political sphere and war zones, as demonstrated by the famous Acehnese heroines Admiral Malahayati, Cut Nya Dien, Cut Meutia, and Pocut Baren. Amir described this as an ‘over-representation’ of women (2002, p.46), suggesting that women entered public affairs in extreme circumstances, including the forefront of conflict zones. At the time of my fieldwork, this pattern re-appeared in the case of widows (Ac.: inông bele) who had survived the military operation during the second phase of the GAM emergence. Women assumed men’s responsibilities during their absence, either permanently or casually. This suggests that the public roles were only

45 Historically, Acehnese women also had the advantage of playing a role in political spheres as women heads of state or members of the Sultanate parliament in the era of Ratu Syafiatuddin (1641 – 1676). There were several women Sultans: Ratu Tadjul Alam Syafiatuddin Syah or Seri Ratu Tjadul Alam Syafiatuddin Johan Berdaulat (1641 – 1676), Ratu Niihasiyah Rawa Khadiyyu, Seri Ratu Nurul Alam Nakaathuddin Syah (1676-1678), Seri Ratu Zafiathuddin Inayat Syah (1678-1688), and Seri Ratu Kamarat Diahuddin Syah (1688-1699) (Zainuddin, 1961, pp.392-429; Hasjmy, 1983, pp.141-142). At the time of Ratu Syafiatuddin, women composed around 25 % of the members of the Sultanate parliament (Balai Majelis Mutekamah Rakyat) with 18 out of 73 members of being women (Hasjmy, 1983, p.141).

46 The term is also used for GAM’s women soldiers, mainly composed of women survivors of the Indonesian military operation in the 1980s to late 1990s.
available for women as an extension of their domestic domain, and when no other options were available.

Unlike men, to obtain leading roles in the public sphere, women are required to meet certain criteria as illustrated in the following citation:

...Acehnese women must fulfill several requirements in order to attain leadership roles. First, they must have an elite, socio-economic, and religious background. Second, they must follow the lead of a male figure (be it husband or father)... For women the rule remains... that kinship and marriage are important in establishing authority for a woman as well as to gain political alliances. Being related or married to a male leader is always important for a woman is staking a claim for leadership. (Amir, 2002, p.58).

### 2.3 The Kinship System: The Mix of Patrilineality and Matrilineality

Scholarly works suggest that the kinship system of the Acehnese embraces both matrilineal and patrilineal elements (see Siapno, 2002; Jayawardena, 1977; Hugronje, 1906; Siegel, 1969). Some other scholars, such as Bowen (1993) and Azra (1992), identified the elements of both matrifocal and patrifocal systems. Interestingly, the Acehnese have no family name, which in many other cultures in Indonesia indicates a patrilineal system, such as the Batak and Manadonese whose surnames followed their father’s surname. These facts suggest that the Acehnese kinship system contains different formal categories (see Jayawardena, 1977, p.223).

The matrilineal emphasis is illustrated in the uxorilocality and the ownership of resources by women, who are locally termed ‘owner of the house’ (Ac.: *peu rumoh* or *po rumoh*), with the consequence that men work in rice fields owned by their wives (Reid, 2006; Amir, 2002; Jayawardena, 1977; Siegel, 1969). This situation usually exists in Aceh Besar and Pidie, where a father is obliged to provide a house (Ac.: *rumoh peumulang*) and other

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47 Siegel (1969) stated that women’s position in the Acehnese society owed a lot to Islamic law.

48 There are different ways of writing this word. Jayawardena (1977) writes it as ‘njang *peu rumoh*’. Daud and Durie (1999, p.12 & p.159) writes it ‘*peurumoh*’.
necessary economic resources (paddy field, gold, and coconut trees)\textsuperscript{49} to a
daughter upon her marriage through a ‘separation ceremony’ (Ac.: 
pumeukleh)\textsuperscript{50} witnessed by the head of gampōng (Ac.: keusyik), the head of
the village mosque (Ac.: imeum meunasah), senior members of the society,
and relatives.

Acehnese uxorilocality, however, is a ‘flexible uxorilocality’ in order to
accommodate the practical situations of the society, which is apparently also
commonly practiced in many other societies (Schultz and Lavenda, 1995,
p.578). What I mean by ‘loose uxorilocality’ is that unlike with the basic
anthropological concept of uxorilocality in which ‘husband takes up residence
in the parental home of his wife’ (Jayawardena, 1977, p.31), the Acehnese
allow the wife to move to the husband’s home with approval from the wife’s
family and authorities of the wife’s gampōng. Such cases may happen for
political or practical reasons. An example of a political reason is the need for a
keusyik to remain in his gampōng to secure his position, which means he has
to require his wife to follow him (Hurgronje, 1906, p.65-66). An example of a
practical reason is the case of a father’s inherited house being located in a
different village. In such a case, the father is allowed to provide a house
outside the wife’s village of origin.

At the time of my research, the practice of uxorilocality was becoming
even looser than before, with fathers allowed to buy a piece of land or house
in other villages at the behest of their daughters. This may happen due to the
livelihood changes resulting from the armed conflicts that often took place in
rural areas. People tend to move to safer places, in either cities or their
peripheries, and consequently become engaged in the informal employment
sector. The flexible practice of Acehnese uxorilocality is also due to daughters
who, understanding the poverty level of their parents, do not demand a house
upon their marriage. This was the case of Yan’s family in Aceh Besar, whose
father’s inherited house was in West Aceh and was passed on to the first
daughter of this family. The first daughter and her husband, moved to West

\textsuperscript{49} The poor families usually only provide a room and several coconut trees, if anything.
\textsuperscript{50} This can be done not immediately after marriage but usually when the new couple has their
first baby, the parents will do their best to conduct the ‘separation ceremony.’
Aceh after their marriage. They run a small shop (Ac.: waróng; I.: warung) in their new house. The second daughter stated that she would not demand a house upon her marriage since she understood that her parents could not afford to provide her with one.

Patrilineality can be identified from the kawóm clan system (Hurgronje, 1906). In addition to kawóm, the Acehnese also use waréh and syèdara to refer to relatives in a broad sense (Daud and Durie, 1999, p.12). The three terms, especially syèdara, possibly relate to the Islamic concept of ummah (Ar. ʻumma), ‘the Islamic community in the broadest sense of ‘all Muslims’’ (Fealy and Hooker, 2006, p.1). The existence of patrilineality can be recognized also from the Islamic regulations of descent and inheritance. According to Jayawardena, descent is considered to be bilateral and generational. Houses are provided by fathers and not mothers to daughters. Another indication of the patrilineality is the Acehnese proverb ‘like coconut like its oil, like father like child’ (Ac.: pakriban u meunan minyeuk, pakriban du meunan aneuk). This proverb illustrates the inherited characters of male children from their father. However, when I discussed this in relation to a mixed marriage of an Acehnese and non-Acehnese with two of my key informants from Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar, they understood it as indicating that children from a mixed marriage of an Acehnese father and a non-Acehnese mother acquired Acehnese identity.

The above discussion suggests that the Acehnese might have adopted matrilineality before the arrival of Islam. When Islam arrived with its patrilineality, some cultural negotiations and adjustments possibly took place, resulting in different facets of kinship embraced by the Acehnese at the same time. What remains interesting is how these cultural negotiations have enabled different systems to exist together. In my opinion, this strongly suggests that the Acehnese have found an accommodation of patrilineal and matrilineal systems.
Amir (2002, pp.76-77) maintained that social mobility and inter-marriage (either inter-regional or inter-cultural) may have brought about the heterogeneity in the kinship system, including gender relations. However, the long history of contact with the outer world through trading as well as interactions among the kawom in Aceh, whose origins were diverse (Malay, Chinese, Indian, and even Turks), might have also contributed to this heterogeneity. Consequently, gender relationships also vary, existing differently in different parts of the region. For example, there are two terms for the female owner of a house/ a wife: the Acehnese term po rumoh and 'binoe' (I: bini). This may be explained by the fact that uxorilocality was mainly adopted in the areas of Aceh Besar and Pidi, but not in North Aceh, where men brought the house to the marriage, and post-marital residence was virilocal. Hence, in the latter case, the wife is more likely to be called ‘binoe’ (I: bini).

Negotiations about who would bring the house to the marriage usually took place in mixed marriages between two persons from different regions that adopted different kinship practices in Aceh. An example is the case of a woman from Aceh Besar who married to a man from North Aceh. In many cases, however, both husband and wife would contribute to bringing the house to the marriage. Families from Aceh Besar who had good economic status usually insisted on providing the house for their daughters. The main reason given was ‘supayajanga disia-siakan’ (I) (to protect the daughter from being ignored or exploited by her husband).

However, in terms of cultural identity, children from a mixed marriage of an Acehnese father to a wife from another ethnic group (I: suku) would automatically be considered as Acehnese. Nevertheless, those with a non-Acehnese father are not automatically classified as a non-Acehnese. A self-defined identity is permissible, especially when the person speaks the Acehnese local dialect and resides in an Acehnese gampông. In such a case, both the local dialect proficiency and gampông of origin would be the point of

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51 Amir (2002, p.75) noted the increasing incidence of successful Acehnese men opting to marry non-Acehnese women. He takes, as an example, Abdullah Puteh, the former governor of Aceh, who married a Javanese woman.
reference for regarding them as an Acehnese. These arrangements may suggest the practice of bilateral descent (Schultz and Lavenda, 1995, p.560), which accepts an equally mixed-practice of patrilineality and matrilineality of the kinship system that treats both male and female lines at the same level of importance. Nevertheless, since the ‘keacehan’ (Acehneseesness) refers more to the language proficiency and gampōng of origin rather than the blood shared from their parents, this suggests the practice of the ‘beyond blood-ties’ kinship.

The ‘beyond blood-ties’ kinship was also well illustrated in local kin terms. The local term for close kin or family is ‘wali karōng’ (from mother’s side) and ‘wali adat’ (from father’s side). The word ‘wali’ is an Arabic word meaning protector, supporter, guardian, supporter, helper or friend (The Noble Qur’an, p.889). Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings (2004, p.1089) translated it as “the one near (-by), to be near/close to God, (a trusted) friend, benefactor, nearest relative.”

Apart from ‘wali karōng’, Acehnese also use kawōm, warēh, and ‘syēdara’, which all refer to a broader sense of relatives. Kawōm, as further elaborated in section 3.1 is, locally understood as the widest kinship system that is based on similar ancestors (Ac.: éndatu) (Mahmud et al., 1983, p.37). Warēh refers to affinity based on similarities in socio-economic status, domicile, interests, and fate (such as the most recent violent political conflict situation), that create close social ties (Mahmud et al., 1983, p.37). Although warēh is not based on blood-ties, due to the social-intimacy, it is considered to be at the same level of importance in Acehnese society and will always be referred to for generations. Syēdara is used to refer to kin and non-kin ties (Durie and Daud, 1999, p.169). It is clear therefore that the three kin terms – kawōm, warēh, and ‘syēdara’ – are used to refer to those considered as having close affinity whether or not they have blood ties. The usage of the kin terms ‘kak’ (sister), ‘cutkak’ (big sister, also meaning beloved sister), ‘bang’ (brother), ‘cutbang’ (big brother, which can also mean beloved brother), ‘sinya’ (child) also go beyond the kindred, as they can be used to also refer to
those with no kin-ties but who are nevertheless felt to be as close as one’s own blood-kin.\textsuperscript{52}

Anthropologists consider a classification that goes beyond literal kinship ties to be ‘metaphoric kinship’ or ‘fictive kinship’ (Schultz and Lavenda, 1995, p.584). To the Acehnese, ‘metaphoric kinship’ also embraces the notion of ‘shared sufferings,’ solidarity, and the Islamic basic concept of brotherhood. These emotional bonds bring a deep meaning to the social ties and cannot be fully accommodated within the proposed concept of fictive kinship, but do go beyond ego-centred kindred. In times of difficulties, for example, the Acehnese may turn to their entrusted close circle, which is not necessarily their blood-kin but can be close friends or both. An example of this is the case of the Tausug\textsuperscript{53} in the Philippines, as discussed by Kiefer (1972, p.28).\textsuperscript{54} Such a situation, however, requires a deep mutual trust between the persons involved.

\subsection*{2.4 The Gender Relations Dynamics}

With regards to male-female roles and positions in the public sphere, gender-based segregation was evident at the time of my research. I observed that in public ceremonies such as weddings, for example, women and children would tend to sit together and discuss family (domestic) and women-related matters (such as beauty, fashion, especially techniques in wearing fashionable \textit{hijab} or cake baking). Discussions about politics, however, sometimes emerged, especially when those gathered knew each other pretty well and felt safe showing their political colours.

\textsuperscript{52} ‘\textit{Cut}’ means younger and used after kin terms such as ‘\textit{yahcut}’ (younger uncle from either father or mother sides) and ‘\textit{nekcucut}’ (younger great uncle or aunt). But when it is used before the kin term such as ‘\textit{cutbang}’ and ‘\textit{cutkak}’ as mentioned above, it means older (see Daud and Durie 1999, pp.12-13)

\textsuperscript{53} The Tausug, like the Acehnese, suffered from violent political conflict between rebel fighters and the central government of the Philippines.

\textsuperscript{54} A close friend who lost her house during the tsunami in 2004 once told me about her uneasy feelings due to the subtle ‘rejection’ of her kin whom she and her sister depended on for some months. She mentioned that good friends can often be more reliable than close relatives.
Plate 4-1 illustrates the gender segregation in an Acehnese Nikâh that took place in a local mosque in 2003. Nikâh is a ‘marriage (wedlock) according to Islamic law’ (The Noble Qur’an, p.878). Women and men, including the bride and groom, sit separately. Men sit at the foreground and women sit at the back. Not until the akad nikâh (the marriage ceremony in which both the bride and groom were announced to be husband and wife after stating their vows) was about to be conducted was the bride asked to approach the foreground where all the men, including the kadi55 and the groom were sitting. During the nikâh ceremony, the bride remained sitting at the back with her female friends and family members.

As suggested by Siapno (2002, p.173), it is important to consider the differences arising from urban and rural backgrounds as well as variations in socio-economic status in analysing the situation of Acehnese women. In line with Siapno’s findings, it was apparent from my fieldwork that rural women tend to have stronger agency compared to urban women, who tend to be more submissive to their husbands. However, the violent political conflict situation possibly also contributed to the strong agency of rural women, which was

55 Kadi (I.) is a civil judge dealing with a Moslems affair (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.435). A kadi is usually a Moslem scholar from, or authorised by, the Office for Religious Affairs (I.: Kantor Pengadilan Agama).

Facing violence on a day to day basis, many rural Acehnese women managed to develop a coping strategy in which agency played an important role. It certainly required particular skills for them to survive in their position sandwiched between the two conflicting parties. A woman from Aceh Besar who worked at a local factory and who was responsible for managing it after the owner went to live in North Sumatra for security reasons, told me about her experience of facing an intricate situation. She was caught between the threat of a wounded GAM soldier who had hidden himself in the factory, and army soldiers who were searching for him. In such a situation, good communication skills, self-reliance, and psychological strength were crucial. Once she managed to send the army soldiers away, she demanded that the GAM soldier leave her alone in return for her ‘protection’.

The well-established families in urban areas present a different picture of gendered power-relation dynamics resulting in weaker women’s agency. As shown in the case of Abu Chik’s family in section 2.2 above. Compared to rural women, the urban women appeared to be more reliant on, and submissive to, men. However, they seemed to be ambivalent about this subordinate position as, once I became involved in conversations on Acehnese women’s roles and great intimacy developed, the golden history of Acehnese heroines would often be cited. Women seemed to long for a stronger agency but had to face the Islamic (Arab) tradition of women’s submission to men.

3 Social Groups: From the Traditional to Contemporary

The social groupings of the Acehnese have differed from time to time, and the classifications do not represent rigidly defined groups, but are fluid and represent a heterogeneous society. As elaborated in the following sections, the kawêm 56 based classification was adopted in the pre-Sultanate era and fostered during the Sultanate era. Although the kawêm-based social

56 See footnote no14 for a detailed explanation of the word kawêm.
classification was maintained, other types of social group based on political roles in the society emerged, especially after the arrival of Islam. An example of this is the Moslem scholars’ group (Ac. & I.: ulama). In addition, economic activities and geographical location (domicile) are also important bases for social groupings. Following McLean (1999), a broader context of ‘self-identified’ and ‘culturally’ identified social group, as further elaborated in section 4 below, is worth considering as well. At the time of research, I found that contemporary Acehnese society can also be classified in accordance with people’s cultural-linguistic groups, the notion of identity, and political affiliation.

3.1 The Kawôm

In the era of Sultan Alaiddin Rajat Sjah Alqahar (1537-1568), the Acehnese community was classified into four groups of kawôm or sukeê, from which it was normally declared that every Acehnese must be descended (Zainuddin, 1961, p.20; Hurgronje, 1906, p.47). Each kawôm was headed by kawôm chief or commander (Ac.: panglima kawôm). The kawôm (or kawôm) is an ancient and patriarchal system. As Hurgronje (1906, p.45) described “...a kawôm include all whose pedigrees followed up in the male line coincide in a single ancestor. Even when the line cannot be clearly traced...they still hail one another as fellow-tribesmen...” Considering its long history, kawôm was most likely used as the basis for the territorial arrangements of gampông, mukim, and sagôe in the Sultanate era as explained in section 2.1 of this chapter.

As noted previously, the four kawôm are the Three Hundred-community (Ac.: kawôm Lheê Reutoih; I.: kaum Tiga Ratus); the Four Imams (Ac.: kawôm imeum Peuët); the ‘Forefather-stone’ or ‘Enough-stone’ (Ac.: kawôm)

57 There are several ways of writing it: kawôm (Daud and Durie, 1999), kawôm (Hurgronje, 1906), or kaum (Zainuddin, 1961). I use kawôm, except in direct citations, for consistency purposes. As with other Acehnese words in my thesis, I take this spelling from the Acehnese-Indonesian-English Thesaurus of Daud and Durie (1999).
and the ‘Sandang-Forefather’\textsuperscript{59} (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Dja Sandang).\textsuperscript{60} The Three Hundred-community (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Lhee Reutoih) basically referred to the Mante, who are said to be the possible origin of the Acehnese (Zainuddin, 1961), and the Batak Kareè/Karo. The Four Imams (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Imeum Peuet), also called the Four Hundred (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Peuet Reutoih), referred to those who belonged to the Hindu (Indian) Kling (Ac.: \textit{Klèng})\textsuperscript{61} or the Hindu (Indian) Traders (Ac. \textit{ureueng dagang}).\textsuperscript{62} The ‘Forefather-stone’ (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Tok Batee) was the compilation of Arab, Persian, Turk, and other foreigners, including the Bugis, from Sulawesi. The ‘Sandang-Forefather’ (Ac.: \textit{kawom} Dja Sandang) were those who came from mixed marriages between the Batak Kareè and the first arrivals of the Hindu (Indians). In an Acehnese poem, these four groups were described as follows:

\begin{quote}
The Lhee Reutoih is like a drang\textsuperscript{63} seed / \textit{Kaum Lhee Reutoih ban aneuq drang}

The Dja Sandang is like turmeric seed / \textit{Kaum Dja Sandang djeura haleba}

The Tok Batee is only a few in numbers / \textit{Kaum Tok Batee na bajut-bajut}

The Imeum Peuet is the one who shakes the world / \textit{Kaum Imeum Peuet njang gok-gok donja}
\end{quote}

(Source: Zainuddin, 1961, p.20)

\textsuperscript{58} Hurgronje (1906, p.51) argued that \textit{Tok} has a similar meaning to \textit{Dja} or \textit{Ja}: forefathers. He then translated ‘Tok Batee’ as the Forefather or Grandfather Stone. \textit{Batee} (also written as \textit{batee}) means stone (Daud and Durie, 1999, p.120). Zainuddin (1961, p.21) translated "Tok Batee" as Enough Stone. This is based on the argument that the term "Tok Batee" was given to this \textit{kawom}’s because of its vigorous participation, that resulted in them being acknowledged as the hardest workers among the four \textit{kawom}, in collecting stones for the development of the Sultan’s palace (Zainuddin, 1961, p.21). In Daud and Durie (1999, p.173) there are words with similar pronunciation: \textit{tok} (arrive) and \textit{tok} (Adam’s apple), which may relate to ancestor (Forefather). I use both translations since both have strong arguments that are not conflicting. \textsuperscript{59}\textit{Dja} or \textit{Ja} is an Acehnese term for ancestor (Daud and Durie, 1999, p.137) or forefather (Hurgronje, 1906, p.49). As for \textit{sandang}, I cannot find this word in Daud and Durie (1999). Hurgronje, however, translates it “to carry something under the arm suspended to a rope or strap passing over the shoulder” (Hurgronje, 1906, p.49). This is similar to the Indonesian translation for \textit{sandang}, which in Acehnese is \textit{sawat}. In order not to pre-judge the diverse understandings, I use the term as it is.

\textsuperscript{60} Apart from these four \textit{kawom}, there is also the slaves group, composed of the Niasese, Batak, and Abeusi (Africans). Mixed marriages of Acehnese and the slaves occurred, whose children were well respected addressing them as ‘children of gold’ (Ac.: \textit{aneuk meueh}), and after two or three generations they would be considered as Acehnese (Hurgronje, 1906, pp.22-23).

\textsuperscript{61} Hurgronje (1906, p.17) noted that apart from the Hindu Kling, there were also people from Madras and Malabat, and the Chetties (the money lending caste of Southern India).

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Ureueng dagang} was usually used to indicate the Kling and strangers (Hurgronje, 1906, pp.18-19). It was later used for only the Kling, some of whom engaged in agriculture and were considered as part of the Acehnese (Hurgronje, 1906, p.19).

\textsuperscript{63} Wild grasses that usually grow in paddy fields after harvesting time.
The Three Hundred-community (Ac.: kawom Lhee Reutoih) was viewed as wild grass seeds (Ac.: drang) to illustrate the large number of this kawom, which was noted as the second strongest group after the Four Imams (Ac.: kawom Imeum Peut) or the Four Hundred (Ac.: kawom Peuet Reutoih; I.: kaum Empat Ratus). These names, the Three Hundred and the Four Hundred, were based on the story of a dispute over an adultery case between 300 people from the Lhee Reutoih and 400 people from the Imeum Peuet. This dispute almost led them to armed clashes but was able to be resolved peacefully (Zainuddin, 1961, p.21). The two groups were afterward often referred to as the Three Hundred and the Four Hundred.

Apart from its large population, however, drang also denotes the uselessness of the Lhee Reutoih, since the wild grasses (Ac.: drang) usually grow rapidly after harvesting time and cannot be used for anything, but cause trouble. This is in contrast to the Dja Sandang, which was symbolised as turmeric seeds. Since turmeric is one of the main ingredients in the Acehnese traditional cuisine, the term represents a more positive image of the people. The Tok Bateē were called batjut-batjut (Ac.), which literally means a few in number, due to their small population. Although they were batjut-batjut, the Tok Bateē played an important role in the society, exemplified by the fact that the Sultan was from kawom Tok Bateē (Zainuddin, 1961, p.20). The Imeum Peuet was referred to as gok-gok donja (Ac.), which means the one who shakes the world. This expression was given not only because this kawom was the largest group, but also due to their strong influence on the government and trading activities. Their favourable economic position as traders may explain their significant influence in political decision-making.

Each kawom was strongly unified by their own customs, which differed from each other. Rivalry between each kawom often occurred, as illustrated in the first verse of the Acehnese poem on kawom:

The Lhee Reutoih are uléebalang / Sukē Lhee Reutoih uléebalang
The Dja Sandang may become rajas⁶⁴ / Sukē Dja Sandang juwēi keuroja

(Source: Hurgronje, 1906, p.58)

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⁶⁴ The word raja is identical to uléebalang, who are said to be the rajas of Aceh (Hurgronje, 1906, p.58)
This verse demonstrates how the power of Imeum Peuët, the strongest kawóm, with other kawóm could be balanced through the united efforts of the rest of the kawóm, especially the Lhee Reutoih and Dja Sandang (Zainuddin, 1961, p.21; Hurgronje, 1906, p.58), even though custom differences between the other three (Dja Sandang, Lhee Reutoih, and Tok Bateë) kawóm often created disputes between them. Although Islam was adopted as the foundation of the Sultanate of Aceh at the time of Sultan Ali Moeghâjat Sjah (1514-1528), Islamic law could not be implemented at kaum level due to the diversity of the culture and tradition of each kaum.

In the period of Sultan Alaaddin Riajat Sjah Al Qahhar (1537-1568), a non-unified custom (Ac.: ‘adat plakplewêng’) was adopted to accommodate this diversity. After Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), however, Islam was strongly imposed as the main source of custom and traditions. Iskandar Muda employed the four state regulations of: custom and tradition (Ac.: adat) from the sultan; judicial law (Ac.: huköm) from Moslem scholars (Ac.: ulama); civil rules and politeness (Ac.: kanun/qanun) from the queen; and customary habit and practices (Ac.: reusam) from kawóm commanders. This is illustrated in the old Acehnese saying cited at the beginning of this chapter. In this era the strong link between the Sultan and ulama was clearly exemplified in the Sultan’s regulation (Ac.: Qanun Meukuta Alam, often referred to as Adat Meukuta Alam), in which it was stated that ulama and sultan should not be separated as otherwise the kingdom would come to an end (Hasjmi, 1983, p.190).

The four kawóm wielded quiet influential power in the Sultanate palace, as shown from their success in cancelling the proposed marriage of the Sultan of Johor to Sultane Tadjul Alam Syafiathuddin Sjah of Aceh, the daughter of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) who succeeded in 1641-1676

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65 The Qanun was initiated by Sultan Alaiddin Riayat Syah Al Khahhar (1539-1579), completed by Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), modified, especially for women’s position in the legislation, by Sultananah Seri Ratu Tajul Alam Safiatuddin Johan Berdaulat (1641-1676), and revised further, adding the genealogy of other Islamic kings in Aceh, by Sultan Alaiddin Ibrahim Mansur Syah (1857-1870) (Hasjmi, 1983, p.345).
66 The first women sultan in Aceh (Zainuddin, 1961, p.38)
after the sudden death of her husband Sultan Iskandar Sani\(^6\) (1636-1641).

These four *kawôm* considered the marriage to be a trick by the Dutch to gain power over the Sultanate of Aceh, given the close link of the Sultan of Johor and the Dutch. It was apparent that under a common threat, which a Dutch or Portuguese invasion would pose, all *kawôm* put aside their internal clashes and united to fight against the colonial powers. This clearly demonstrates the balance of power in which each *kawôm* had their voice in the sultanate’s policy decision making through their representatives in the sultanate parliament (Hasjmi, 1983). The voice of the people (*kawôm*) remained vital in the policy decision making process. This was true until the beginning of last century, when Hurgronje (1906, p.45) wrote that the *kawôm* “...have by no means lost all significance” even after the territorial distribution had been adopted for centuries during the Sultanate era.

The above example of the social unity and disunity of the four *kawôm* illustrates the ability of the Acehnese society to be receptive to outsiders and resistant to outside domination at the same time. A welcome gesture to outsiders could quickly change to a strong condemnation of them when common interests were perceived to be at risk. Taking into account the tradition of a balanced power, receptive nature, and confrontational nature of the Acehnese society, it is therefore understandable that the region experienced a long period of violent political conflict and has had no peace for over nine years, as described in chapter 5.

It is not clear until which period the *kawôm* based classification of the Acehnese society retained its importance. Siegel (1969) argued that it may have vanished and the groups successfully amalgamated. Nevertheless, from my field work it was apparent that the *kawôm* based classification had not totally disappeared, but may have been greatly weakened. It was sometimes mentioned by individuals merely as additional information rather than an immediate point of reference for their identity. The *gampông* or place of origin would usually be mentioned before any other characteristics. This was

\(^6\) Sultan Iskandar Sani Ala Addin Mughayat Syah (1636-1641) is the son of Raja Ahmad Syah, the king of Pahang. He married Sultan Iskandar Muda’s daughter, Puteri Seri Alam, who later became Ratu Tajul Alam Syafiathuddin Syah. (Zainuddin, 1961)
the case with my foster family in Banda Aceh, whose *abu chik* (grandfather from the mother’s side) was from Sigli but had mixed Hindu Kling and Arab origins. When they described his identity, he listed his *gampōng* of origin in Sigli before his *kawōm* based descent of the Hindu Kling and Arab. Similarly, when I asked the place of origin of a friend from a local NGO, he mentioned his *kawōm* based descent from the Hindu Kling in addition to his *gampōng* of origin in North Aceh.

The historical *kawōm* based society of the Acehnese might explain the argument of Siegel (1969) and Suyatno (1977) that the Acehnese society in the 19th century was not a hierarchical-vertically integrated society but a unit composed of four groups living side by side that did not integrate but cooperated across boundaries for their own needs. Suyatno (1977) further argued that in this period, the social system of the Acehnese depended on the family and territorial ties that operated in the common interests of social relations, economy, and religion. His argument suggests a horizontal integration of the society through marriage, which may be one of the factors explaining the weakened *kawōm* based society suggested by Siegel (1969). Siegel (1969) classified the society based on ethnic backgrounds, places of origin, livelihood activities, and socio-political roles and status (which also indicated religious role).

The adoption of Islam as the main principal of the State, especially in the time of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607 - 1636), has led to a vertical integration of the society that later has made the region become known as the ‘veranda of Mecca’ (*I: Serambi Mekkah; Ac.: Seuramo Mekkah*),68 denoting its strong Islamic nature. As a result, Acehnese society can be seen to have been integrated both horizontally and vertically. This has occurred at two different levels: the political and the practical. At the political level, the society experiences a vertical integration, with Islam providing the key element for a single identity for the society. This began from the 14th century under Sultan Ali Moeghājat Sjah (1514 - 1530), who was noted as the first

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68 The term can be traced as far back as 1641 in *Bustan al-Salatin* written by Nur al-Din al-Raniri (Riddel, 2006, p.38)
Sultan to establish an Islamic Kingdom in Aceh, and reached its peak in the 16th century under Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), who was able to unite a number of Acehnese small kingdoms into one Islamic Kingdom. Social integration deriving from Islam was further strengthened in the 19th century during the war against the Dutch and at the current time has re-emerged with the implementation of Shari'a law. While undergoing this vertical integration, the society has been horizontally integrated at the practical level, where economic activities plays and geographic location have played an important role, as discussed below.

3.2 Economic Activities and Geographic Location (domicile)

At the time of research, the three traditional occupational classifications were still used: farmer (Ac.: ureueng meutani), trader (Ac.: ureueng meukat), and artisan (Ac.: ureueng ut6h). The ureueng meutani were composed of several groups: the paddy field farmer (Ac.: ureueng meugoe), the highland farmer (Ac.: ureueng meulampoh), and landless farmer (Ac.: ureueng ceumatok). Farmers who had both paddy fields and upland fields were considered to be the rich (Ac.: ureueng kaya); those who were either the paddy field farmers (Ac.: ureueng meugoe) or highland farmers (Ac.: ureueng meulampoh) were considered the middle class (Ac.: ureueng sep pajoh); and the landless farmers (Ac.: ureueng ceumatok) were considered the lowest class or the poor (Ac.: ureueng gasien).

The traders (Ac.: ureueng meukat) were classified into three large groups of large, middle, and small traders. The large traders usually dominated big business in the cities, such as the owner of Pantee Perak (the only supermarket in the province at the time of my fieldwork) or the owner of Kuala Tripa Hotel (the fanciest hotel in the province at the time of my fieldwork) in Banda Aceh. The Kuala Tripa was the hotel where the international staff usually stayed during the Cessation on Hostility Agreement period, when the region experienced an influx of international workers. The middle traders were those who possessed small businesses such as toko (small shops), household companies, small hotels, and internet cafés. The small
traders were those who usually engaged in petty trading such as mugee (the peddlers) who travelled around by motorcycle carrying two big baskets at the back filled with merchandise, usually agricultural products.

The artisans (Ac.: ureueng utôh) were composed of three main groups: the gold artisans (Ac.: utôh meuh), iron artisans (Ac.: utôh beusoe) and metal artisans (Ac.: utôh chik), with specialities in different kinds of metals. Combinations of the three groups were possible, and were usually considered to have a higher status due to their possessing different expertise or, sometimes, for possessing magical powers like the utôh chik beusoe. The artisans (Ac.: ureueng utôh), unlike the farmers (Ac.: ureueng meutani) and traders (Ac.: ureueng meukat), have disappeared over time. This has particularly happened to the iron artisan (Ac.: utôh beusoe) and metal artisan (Ac.: utôh chik), due to the decreased demand for their products as a consequence of the availability of new mass produced metal goods. The agricultural tools, for example, that used to be produced by the iron and metal artisans have been gradually replaced by products from factories. Carriages, which once were produced and maintained by these two utôh, have been replaced by cars manufactured by multi national corporations with maintenance provided by auto repair shops. At the time of research, while I rarely encountered shops of these artisans, I still could find gold artisans. It is worth noting also that these artisans were predominantly men. Women were not represented among artisans as these occupations were considered to be men's skills, requiring physical strength, and also men's income earning occupations (Ac.: 'mita breueh').

Based on geographical location, there were two groups: the uphill people or villagers (Ac.: ureueng tunong) and downhill or coastal people, including the people from town or city (Ac.: ureueng barôh). This classification was often highlighted by the villagers. These largely horizontal classifications therefore encompass not only places of origin but also economic activities such as farming and trading.
3.3 Political Roles

The final type of grouping was that based on political roles in the society. Apart from the Sultane/Sultanate, there were special classes of *ulama* and *ulêêbalang*, who were predominantly men. The traditional title for *ulama* is *Teungku* and for *ulêêbalang* is *Teuku*. The *ulama* started to obtain an important position in the society after the coming of Islam in the region and gained more power after the establishment of the Islamic Sultanate. Whilst the Sultan was the main figure in the government, the *ulama* and *ulêêbalang* were the major players in politics, and the political and economic status of the latter was exploited by the Dutch to conquer the Sultanate and *ulama*. Unlike the *ulama* and *ulêêbalang*, being in a relatively distant position from the people and lacking access to the people, the Sultan became merely a symbol of power that faded away under a new system of government, especially after the Independence of Indonesia in which the *ulama*, claiming to represent the people, vowed to join Indonesia.

The *ulama* were stratified into highest, middle and lowest *ulama*, identified through their titles of *teungku chik*, *teungku di bale*, and *teungku* (Somadisastra, 1977). The *ulama* led *dayah*, traditional Islamic boarding schools, through which they obtained political power and legitimacy from society. As well as being a respected class—probably the most respected—the *ulama* often became important leaders in many aspects of life in Aceh. People often came to the *ulama* to seek refuge, ask for advice to settle disputes, or even to complain about the local government’s development policies. With their unique mixture of political and religious powers, the *ulama* have always been a strong informal authority, with their power rooted in civil society and acting as a countervailing force (Fachry, 2003, p.54; Suyatno, 1977) against the government. During the Dutch colonial era, the *ulama* became a ‘peripheral-aristocracy’. What I mean by this is that the *ulama* obtained a noble status not from their bloodline but from a society that highly valued

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69 These two social classes were later involved in the dispute between the pro and anti Republic of Indonesia led by *ulama* and *ulêêbalang* respectively during the initial stage of the independence of Indonesia. See chapter 5 for details.
their religious teachings. The people found psychological comfort from this, and the *ulama* became central to the resistance against the Dutch.

The *ulêebalang* gained and maintained their status through hereditary office and modes of exercising power. They used their economic networks obtained through their position as tax collectors for the Sultan to maintain their power and position in the society (Siegel, 1969). However, as stated by Suyatno (1977), the strong economic power of the *ulêebalang* depended on the economic position of the region, especially in regard to trading activity. *Ulêebalang* in coastal areas, where trade played an important role in economic activities, had more economic power than in the upland areas. 70 This suggests the economic ties between the *ulêebalang* and *ureueng meukat* (traders) In recent times, *ulêebalang* families have maintained their favourable economic status from their property and other valuable possessions, such as land and gold, inherited from their ancestors. Although they are much weaker now than in the Sultanate and Dutch colonial era, the *ulêebalang* families still occupy a distinct social-economic status in the society, especially those who were able to sustain the land inherited from their ancestors.

The limited observations that I made suggest that those who live in coastal areas continued to have a higher economic status than those in the uphill areas. 71 An *ulêebalang* descendant family that I met in village A of Aceh Besar, which was located in the coastal areas along the Malacca strait, for example inherited more than 2 hectares of land on which they established their very prosperous prawn farming business. Their big house, which was made of solid bricks and built in the centre of their land with fences around it, was quite distinct among neighbouring houses owned by poor fisherman, which were approximately twenty four (four times six) m² and made of wood, and in some cases, did not have tiles but roofs thatched with palm leaves. The wife of the *ulêebalang* family was an important contact used by local NGOs.

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70 An example is Teuku Muda Nyak Malim, *ulêebalang* of Simpang Ulim, who was well known as a pepper-king due to his successful trading direct to Penang, overriding the Chinese middlemen (Reid, 1969, p.80).

71 It is possible, however, that the December 2004 Tsunami has changed this feature. With coastal areas harshly affected by this catastrophic Tsunami, the economic gap between *ulêebalang* descendants in coastal and uphill areas may have become smaller.
to gain access to other women villagers. Her noble status, and probably also her favourable economic position, enabled her to gain respect and become a leader whose words were listened to and whose orders were followed by other women.

Unfortunately, I was not able to observe the relationship between the descendants of ulêëbalang and ulama. However, according to historical accounts, after the Cumbok War (1945-1946), the war between ulama and ulêëbalang ended with glory on the side of the ulama, and the power of the ulêëbalang was weakened and became almost invisible. Nevertheless, some families of ulêëbalang descent were still able to maintain their economic power through their positions as head of gampông (geusyiek). I noted that some of the current (2004) geusyiek had ulêëbalang background, either from their father or grandfather.

The ulama have also experienced a decline in their role and position in society. This particularly occurred after Suharto coopted the ulama into allowing his ruling party, the Functional Groups Party (Golongan Karya), to win in Aceh. In the recent violent political conflict between GAM and the government, the ulama did not appear to play any vital role in addressing the needs of the people. The people I interviewed signalled their disappointment towards current ulama, who were perceived as being ignorant of the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Indonesian Armed Forces during their military operations.\(^2\)

### 3.4 Contemporary Acehnese Society

Along with the aforementioned groupings, contemporary Acehnese society may also be classified in accordance with its cultural-linguistic, self-defined identity and political affiliation. The cultural-linguistic identity refers to the dialect and culture adopted by Acehnese. The self-defined identity relates to the use of domicile in Aceh to denote one’s identity. In the context of the recent violent political conflict between the GAM and the government, political affiliation has also become a basis of social differences.

\(^2\) See Chapter 4 Section 1.3. for details of the Military Operation.
The ‘self-identified’ society especially occurred among those who fled from their *gampông* of origin to reside in particular areas in Aceh for security reasons. An example is village U of Banda Aceh. This community has only existed since the 1970s when most of the inhabitants fled there from troubled areas during the previous violent political conflict in the 1970s (DI/TII – see Chapter 5). The village, which was swept away by the Tsunami that hit the region in December 2004, was mainly composed of modest wooden houses that were built above the high sea water level along the coast facing the Malacca strait. At the time of my fieldwork (up to August 2004), people were still fleeing to this area to escape from the armed conflict of GAM.

Most of the people who lived in this area tended to immediately identify themselves in reference to the name of this area and considered themselves to be the Acehnese from U. Thus, U was considered their ‘current’ *gampông* of origins. Their ‘self-defined’ identity drew on their current place of residence, their language, and religion. However, once the conversation developed further on their origins, the common response would be “*Asli saya memang dari ‘X’ tapi saya orang U sekarang. Orang Aceh U, karena saya di sini [U]*” (I)”It is true that I originated from ‘X’ but I am currently in U. I am a U Acehnese, because I am here”. It is apparent from that although they also remembered their *gampông* of origins, this was not an immediate point of reference. It only appeared at a later stage of a conversation.

Other forms of identification emanate from the long period of violent political conflict between GAM and the government of Indonesia. As a result, Acehnese society can also be divided into three conflict related groups: GAM fighters and partisans (Ac.: *urueung GAM*), TNI spies and allies (Ac.: *Cuak*), and civilians (Ac.: *rakyat*). Due to the high degree of tense military activity of both conflicting parties, these divisions have infiltrated social relations in Aceh, and to a certain extent ruptured the fine fabric of social ties, even kinship ties. A girl from East Aceh admitted to having her extended families divided into pro- and anti-GAM groups. Her father was a *keusiyik* or village

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73 The Tsunami completely destroyed the village, and the people are currently living either in camps or relative’s and friends’ houses.
head, but her uncle on her father’s side was a GAM soldier who came to their house from time to time to ask for material support, such as rice, money, and other necessities. The regular visits of her uncle certainly endangered the family, and generated a family-political dispute, which would not have happened during the non-violent political conflict times. She said that whenever her uncle paid them a visit, there were always quarrels between her father, who asked her uncle to leave them alone, and her uncle, who threatened to report them to a GAM commander. Another example was the case of a woman from North Aceh whose husband was a GAM soldier killed by the Army. She confessed to having trouble ‘distributing’ her children. None of her extended families were willing to adopt her children and take on the wali responsibilities since they were too afraid to be seen as being affiliated with GAM.

4 On Identity: From ‘Acèh Bit’ to ‘Aceh Swasta’

At the time of my research, there were three aspects usually used by Acehnese as points of reference for defining their identity. These are geographical origin (gampông of origin), mother tongue, and Islam. The presence of these three factors is fundamental in delineating the trueness of one’s identity as an Acehnese. This has led to a dichotomy of the true Acehnese as opposed to the ‘not so true’ Acehnese. During my field work, three individuals, two from different areas of Banda Aceh and one from North Aceh, whom I met on different occasions, propped me up with their term ‘Aceh swasta’ to illustrate the ‘not so true Acehenese’ identity. This section describes these two types of identity of the contemporary Acehnese.

4.1 The ‘Acèh Bit’: Between ‘Gampông’ of Origin, Local Dialect and Islam.

At the time of my research, it was obvious to me that gampông was always used in daily conversations, not only to refer to the place of origin but also to express identity as an Acehnese. The polite question of ‘Which
‘gampông are you originally from?’ (Ac.: Pat gampông gatha?) or the simple and less formal question of ‘Where are you from’ (Ac: Pat gampông?) always appeared at the initial stage of conversations between strangers to determine whether the person was orang Aceh Asli (I) or not. The geographic location of the gampông determines the degree of ‘keaslian’. Those who come from Aceh Besar, Pidie, Bireun and North Aceh, would be considered as authentic Aceh (Ac.: Acèh bit or I.: Aceh asli).

Another aspect that signifies Acehnese identity is the local language, bahasa aceh (I) (Acehnese language), which is a member of the Malayo-Polynesian family (Schmidt in Zainuddin, 1961, p.30; Siegel, 1979, p.8; Reid, 2006, p.7). Its lexical and grammatical distinctiveness, however, is closer to the Cham (currently central Vietnam) language than the Sumatran sub-set of Austronesian (Reid, 2006, p.7). Zainuddin notes that bahasa aceh was used officially until the era of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) who, after the expansion of his kingdom to current day Malaysia (the kingdoms of Kedah, Pahang on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, Perak, Malaka, Djoehor, Batak and Nias), 74 announced that Malay language (which in their old manuscripts was referred to as bahasa Djawoe or bahasa Djawi) would be used as the official language. In this era, all Sarakata (the Sultan’s formal letters) were written in Malay (bahasa Djawoe) with introductions in Arabic (Zainuddin, 1961). The Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) also asked someone named Sjech Abdul Rauf Al Fansuri (1593 – 1695), well-known as Sjiah Kuala, with the assistance of two Malays, to compose two books of reference for the Sultan’s officers: Maratul Thalab and Tafsir Baidhawi. The Malay language was also used in schools, where students were taught to master the language before learning other subjects, 75 in literature, as well as in court (Zainuddin, 1961, p.39; Siegel, 1979, p.12).

Before the conflict between GAM and the Indonesian military, the Acehnese tended to avoid using their local dialect to avoid being considered as people from a hamlet (I.: orang kampung) or villagers (I.: orang desa).

74 Apart from these regions Zainuddin (1961, p.38) also mentioned Java and Celebes (Bugis) but it was not clear whether or not these two regions were under Sultan’s empire.
75 Other subjects that were learnt are Masa Ital, Bigajah, and Sirai (Zainuddin, 1961, p.39)
This was because association with ‘kampungan’ (I) denoted the ‘kampung’ characteristics of uneducated, unsophisticated, poor and backward. The term evokes the contrast between urban people (I.: orang kota), or the well educated and well mannered, and people from a hamlet (I.: orang kampung), or villagers (I.: orang desa), the hicks, or country bumpkins who are non-educated and ill mannered. Consequently, people, especially in cities, preferred to speak in Bahasa Indonesia, which is the national language of Indonesia that symbolizes closeness to Jakarta, the capital city and is a symbol of pride. The general opinion was that only those who came from villages and the uneducated spoke in dialects. Villagers who moved to cities for study or work also tended to avoid using the local dialect and relied on Bahasa Indonesia.

During the period of the GAM-TNI conflict, however, the local dialect started to be widely used. Unlike in previous times, people tended to show that they could speak the language, or at least understand the conversation as passive speakers, particularly those for whom bahasa Aceh was not their mother tongue. There was also a shift in mentality among the younger generation from feeling shameful and ‘kampungan’ to being proud of speaking their bahasa Aceh and showing their Acehnese identity. I remember a conversation with three friends from an NGO in Banda Aceh in March 2003, in which they raised their concerns about whether it was shameful that some Acehnese spoke in their bahasa Aceh, and asked whether or not bahasa Aceh sounded as ‘kampungan’ to me as it was generally perceived by local society. The conversation revealed the aforementioned shift in mentality towards bahasa Aceh.

This trend might be related to the enforcement of the use of bahasa Aceh by GAM around the year 2000 as one important way—apart from place of origin—of demonstrating Acehnese identity. General information from key informants whom I talked to indicates that as Acehnese sympathy towards GAM increased, the use of bahasa Aceh became more widespread and the

76 It is important to note, however, that this did not solely happen in Aceh but was a common picture in many other areas in Indonesia, especially areas where local dialects are different from Bahasa Melayu - the root of Bahasa Indonesia.
general view of bahasa Aceh as kampungan declined. The use of bahasa Aceh was not shameful anymore, but rather a source of pride.

Another possible explanation of this change is security. At GAM security checks, proficiency in the local dialect was often used as an important way to distinguish Acehnese from non Acehnese. The security check usually started with the Islamic greeting of ‘May peace be with you together with God’s Mercy and Blessings in this life and the life to come’ (Assalamu’alaikum warahmatullahi wa barakatuh)\(^{77}\) or its short version of ‘May peace be with you’ (assalamualaikum). The greeting would then be followed by some simple questions in Acehnese dialect, such as How are you (Ac.: Peu haba)\(^{78}\); Where are you heading to (Ac.: Jak wo)\(^{78}\); Which gampong are you originally from (Ac.: Pat gampong dröen or more polite, Pat gampong gata)\(^{78}\), which as previously mentioned, is also used to denote the Acehnese identity.

Responding to these questions in a language other than Acehnese would lead to suspicion. This was experienced by a friend of mine who originated from Tamiang, one of the districts in Aceh, and was a passive speaker of Acehnese language, i.e. s/he could not speak it but understood the conversation.\(^{78}\) S/he admitted that knowing that s/he was an Acehnese who could not respond in the Acehnese dialect, the GAM soldier became annoyed and raised his voice asking whether s/he was not an Acehnese or an Acehnese who was too proud and felt too ashamed to speak in their own local dialect.

On the other hand, answering questions in Acehnese language during the Indonesian military sweeps could also lead to suspicions of being a partisan of GAM. Having limited, or sometimes no knowledge of the local dialect, Indonesian soldiers were usually annoyed at not understanding what the conversation was about and often became suspicious that it might be about GAM related issues. In addition, not using bahasa Indonesia (the national language) was perceived as announcing one’s political standpoint as being

\(^{77}\) The reply to this greeting would be ‘Wa alaikum assalam wa rahmatu Allah wa barakatuh.’ (And to you too be peace together with God’s Mercy and Blessings in this life and the life to come)
\(^{78}\) Aceh Tamiang have a different local dialect, Bahasa Tamiang.
against Indonesia. Consequently, during Indonesian military security checks, the use of local dialect was prohibited by the Indonesian military.

These examples clearly show the importance of local dialect as an expression of identity, as well as the significant influence of the Acehnese upon other cultural-linguistic groups in Aceh, such as Tamiang, Gayo, Aneuk Jamee and Alas. Moreover, in the context of violent political conflict, Bahasa Aceh was used as part of the battle on an ideological level about the notion of ‘national identity’ between the ethno-national identity (national identity based on the ethnic affiliation) of GAM versus the state-national identity (identity imposed by the state) of the Indonesian government.

As well as gampöng of origin and local dialect (Bahasa Aceh) proficiency, another important facet of Acehnese identity is Islam. Aceh and Islam are intertwined and inseparable, as exemplified by the following conversation that I had with an eight year old girl who has Acehnese and Minang parents but was born and grew up in Banda Aceh:

Me: ‘Ninda, If you were asked who you are [in terms of ethnic background], what would be your answer?’ / ‘Ninda, Kalau ditanya Ninda orang mana, Ninda jawab apa?’
Ninda: ‘Acehnese’ / ‘Orang Aceh’
Me: ‘Why would you say Acehnese?’ / ‘Pakeun Ninda bilang orang Aceh?’
Ninda: ‘Because I am a Moslem’ / ‘Kareuna Ninda Islam’
Me: ‘So a Moslem would be an Acehnese?’ / ‘Jadi kalau orang Islam orang Aceh?’
Ninda: ‘No, An Acehnese would be a Moslem’ / ‘Bukan, kalau orang Aceh itu Islam’

Islam, as part of Acehnese tradition, can be observed on both material and ideological levels. At the material level, the presence of Islam is evident from the presence of many mosques that can be found everywhere in Aceh. At gampöng level, the mosques are usually small and called meunasah, from the Arabic word madrasah (school). The meunasah, led by an imuem meunasah, does not only function as a mosque, but also a madrasah where children learn to recite Al Qur’an (the Moslems’ holy book) and as a meeting house for villagers’ social activities. The meunasah was originally also used for guests of families with no male family members who needed to stay over night. At higher level, from mukim to nanggroel level, mosques are usually bigger and are called masjid, led by imeum masjid. Since the implementation of Shari’a law, the physical presence of Islam is also evident in the use of the Islamic
dress code, which is normatively applied to both men and women, but in practice is enforced more often in relation to women. For men, it was their presence in the mosque or *meunasah* during Friday prayers that was enforced. Every Friday, between 11.30 am and 2 pm the streets were usually empty, with shops closed and public transportation ceasing operation. In the cities, the *Shari'a* police usually moved around to ensure that no men were seen on the street or in public places during these times.

At the non-material level, the presence of Islam as part of Acehnese identity could be observed from the use of Islamic rules and regulations in the conduct of day to day life and events, such as weddings, funerals, and in settling disputes, both in domestic and public spheres. The presence of Islam is also reflected in people’s proficiency in reciting the Al Qur’an. Every Acehnese ought to know how to recite the Al Qur’an. Lacking this skill means being an incomplete Acehnese.

During times of violent political conflict, the conduct of Islam in daily life could become problematic, especially with regards to Islamic funeral rituals. According to Islam, it is obligatory for all Moslems in the area to perform an Islamic funeral for neighbouring Moslems who have passed away, and not conducting it would be considered sinful. There are at least three basic actions required here, i.e. the eyes should be closed; the corpse should be cleaned and well wrapped (Ac.: *pumanoe manyêt*); and a special prayer for the person who passed away (I.: *sholat jenazah*; Ac.: *seumayang manyêt*) should be conducted. Only through this proper Islamic funeral can the spirit of the dead person be guaranteed forgiveness from God. This needs to be followed by several ritual feasts (Ac.: *khanduri*, I.: *kenduri*) to commemorate the deceased, during which people recite *sûrâh Yâ-Sîn*, one of the verses in Al Qur’an. At least four *khanduri* need to be conducted: the funeral feast (Ac.: *khanduri buka uruek*), on the funeral day; the seventh day feast (Ac.: *khanduri*...)

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79 The *khanduri* is also conducted for other activities, such as farming and fishing or on the birth of a baby. Apart from *khanduri*, the Acehnese also perform *peusijek*, a special ceremony to signify the special occasions of a peace deal after serious disputes, a return of family members from war, and the recovery of family members from a serious disease.

80 This is the thirty sixth chapter of the Qur’an. It is believed that only Allah knows the meaning of ‘Yâ-Sîn’ and it is considered as one of the miracles of the Qur’an.
tujôh also named seuneujôh), on the seventh day after the death; the fortieth day feast (Ac.: khanduri peuet plôh), on the fortieth day after the death; and the hundredth day feast (Ac.: khanduri sireutôh), on the a hundredth day after the death.

Unfortunately, under the circumstances of violent political conflict, one or more of these religious ceremonies often could not be performed due to security reasons. The corpse often could not be found and khanduri could not be conducted, or when khanduri took place neighbours might not attend due to either security concerns or the fear of being seen as affiliated to GAM. An example of this is the case of an old woman from Aceh Besar, described in Chapter 5 section 2, whose son, a GAM soldier, was killed during an armed clash between the Indonesian Army and GAM. The woman was informed of the death of her son. Hence, she was obliged to conduct the proper funeral and khanduri for her deceased son. However, due to security reasons, she failed to find the whereabouts of the corpse and consequently, she could not conduct khanduri until the proper funeral was performed, once the corpse was discovered. This exemplifies the effect of conflict on the spiritual life, apart from other aspects of life, of the Acehnese.

4.2 The ‘Acêh Swasta’: The Un-authentic Aceh

The above discussions clearly show the importance of Bahasa Aceh proficiency, gampông of origin, and Islam as fundamental points of reference for Acehnese identity. However, this situation is intricate considering the fact that the people who lived in ‘tanah Aceh’ (the land of the Acehnese) are not only the Acehnese but also other cultural-linguistic groups such as Gayo, Alas, Tamiang, and Aneuk Jamee. These groups have resided there for a similar length of time as the Acehnese. In addition, mixed marriages often

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81 Some societies, such as those in some villages in North Aceh, have it on the forty-fourth day after the death (Ac.: kandhuri peuet plôh peuet) and continue to do it every year. The biggest feast is the seventh day khanduri.

82 This was a common phenomenon especially in the late 1990s, but was often undermined. Erni, et al. (1999) extensively describes such cases in ‘Nyala Ponyôt Tak Terpadamkan’ (The un-extinguishable lamp), a compilation of short stories that are based on real life stories of Acehnese women, written by the field staff (mostly volunteers) of Flower Aceh, a well-known Banda Aceh based NGO.
occur, such as in the case of Ninda’s mother who had a mixed background of Acehnese (father) and Minang (mother). In such cases, people often tend to have ‘self-defined’ identity. In Ninda’s family, for example, unlike Ninda who firmly identified herself as an Acehnese, Ninda’s mother considered herself to be ‘Aceh swasta.’ This term signifies the unauthenticity of her ‘keacehan’ (Acehneseess) because she is not entirely but partly an Acehnese. However, the word ‘swasta’, which literally means private or non governmental (Steven and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.987), also indicates self governance and independence. Implied in the meaning of this word, therefore, is the notion of one’s freedom and liberty to determine one’s own identity.

Contrasting this notion of one’s freedom to self-identify with the notion of Acehnese ethno-national identity imposed by GAM, suggests two important things. Firstly, the ‘undesirable supremacy’ of one particular culture-linguistic group over ones’ identity, was actually one of the main rationales for the GAM’s movement against the government of Indonesia, which was perceived as representing Javanese ethnic identity and forcing their ethno-national identity on the Acehnese. Nevertheless, the very same tactic that was criticised by GAM was used by the latter to impose their own idea of Acehnese ethno-national identity.

Secondly, the ‘self-identified’ or ‘self defined’ identity of, for example, the people at the former U village of Banda Aceh, was ‘orang Aceh from U’. They felt they needed, to specify ‘from U’ to avoid mentioning their real place of origin for security reasons. This was especially true for those coming from what the TNI considered to be ‘black zones’ or the predominant GAM areas, some people from these areas were automatically considered to be GAM members or partisans. The stigmatisation was quite widespread, and as a result, those coming from such regions tended to keep it secret.

These ‘displaced-migrants’83 and those from mixed marriages who tended to have a ‘self-defined’ identity are therefore vital to understanding the

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83 I deliberately use this term to refer to the mixed features of migration and displacement. The word ‘displaced’ refers to those who fled from their places of origins due to natural and/or man-made disasters. ‘Migration’ is commonly used to refer to movement of
heterogeneity of the contemporary Acehnese society. They underline the fact that, in order to understand the contemporary Acehnese society one must not ignore its diversity, complexity, and the effects of the violent political conflict in the area.

5 The Socio-Economy of Aceh

The traditional socio-economic structure of Aceh was mainly anchored in agriculture and trading, which under Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607 – 1636) made the region become a ‘powerful trading empire’ (Boediono and Hasan, 1974, p.35). Although agriculture and trading remain important in the contemporary economy of Aceh, the discovery of oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the 1970s has brought some significant changes. However, the new industrial activities failed to fully utilise local human resources, leading to some grievances that a later stage developed to a violent political conflict. This has in turn deterred development of the region and led to poverty. This section aims to describe the socio-economy of the region, with particular attention on the impact of the violent political conflict on poverty in Aceh, at macro-regional and household level.

5.1 The regional economic profile

At the time of research, the economy of Aceh was primarily based on agriculture (rice cultivation, livestock farming, and other agricultural products) which was predominant in Aceh Besar and Pidie. Trade was also one of the major economic activities of the people. Historically, both areas of Aceh Besar and Pidie, were well known as the major producers of pepper, cloves, nutmeg, patchouli and rubber (Siegel, 1979, p.8). Reid (1969, p.79) stated:

individuals from one place to another, mostly for economic purposes. Both features were embedded in the society of village U, Banda Aceh.

83 Aceh has a long history of trading activities that can be traced back as early as 1007 to 722 BC, which intensified after the 11th century (Zainuddin, 1961, p.27-28).
...the region between Diamond Head and Tamiang profited from its virgin soil and proximity to Penang to surpass the west coast in pepper production in the 1860's. This became the new Atjehnese 'boom district' where fortunes were quickly made... (Reid, 1969, p.79).

Aceh was also known as one of the major producers of coconut (some of which were further processed to brown sugar), tobacco and especially coffee, all of which were grown mostly by smallholders for export consumption (Boediono and Hasan, 1974, p.40). From the late 1960s to early 1970s, Aceh was one of the main sources of rice in Indonesia, with its per capita production being higher than any other province (Hasan, 1976, p.77). In this period, the region contributed over 100,000 tons annually to the paddy surplus of Indonesia, most of which went to the paddy deficit areas of North Sumatra (Boediono and Hasan, 1974, p.39). These agricultural products were the sources of trading activities, again mainly conducted by smallholders in informal arrangements between traders in and from Aceh and their customers from Penang and Singapore (Boediono and Hasan, 1974, p.43).

Since their discovery in the late 1970s, oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) resources in North Aceh have become an important source of regional income (The World Bank, 2006) and have boosted the economy through the development of industrial complexes. At the time of discovery, the resource held an estimated amount of 20-21 trillion cubic feet of gas that would be able to generate two to three billion US dollars a year for over a twenty to thirty year period (Ross, 2003). The resources were first found in North Aceh in 1971, and started to be extracted in 1977 by Mobil Oil Co together with Pertamina (The Indonesia State Oil Company) and Jilco (a Japanese conglomerate). The oil boom has also benefited the region through the new roads, schools, medical facilities, and approximately 4,000 to 5,000 new houses built by the Mobil Company, as well as some new downstream industries, such as ASEAN fertilizer and P.T. Kertas Kraft (paper company), which have been established in the region.

85 A factory was planned to be built in North Sumatra, but a strong protest from the people successfully led the government to construct an industrial complex in Aceh (Sjamsuddin 1984 in Ross 2003, p.12). Some grievances later emerged with regards to the resources exploration. See Chapter 5 Section 1.3 on The Aceh Independence Movement (GAM-the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka) for details.
The oil economy, however, has caused economic inequality and poverty in the region. In the 1990s, Aceh had a high poverty rate, as measured by the number of villages receiving IDT — *Impres Desa Tertinggal* (The Presidential Instruction on Underdeveloped Villages) (Siapno, 2002, p.45) and poverty level of the region. The World Bank report (2006, p. 27) argues that the revenue extracted from the oil and LNG was far from optimal. The ‘trickle down’\(^{86}\) effect apparently occurred in big cities only, and did not affect villages. The World Bank Poverty Survey of Aceh (2002, pp.7-8) reported that although the oil and gas sector comprised 48 percent of the total regional income in 2000, agriculture, including plantation crops, estate crops, and forestry, was the most important sector for livelihood, especially for the poor, (see Table 4-4 below).

**Table 4-4. The Economic Structure of Aceh**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Percentage of non poor and poor involved in each sector</th>
<th>Percentage of Contribution of Each Sector in Aceh RGDP (Non Oil and Gas), 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>60.28</td>
<td>75.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>5.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>15.20</td>
<td>8.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Other Services</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>12.99</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The government’s National Social Economy Survey (I.: *Survei Sosial Ekonomi Nasional* — Susenas)\(^{87}\) in 1999 indicates that compared to other

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\(^{86}\) This is a concept in a market economy in which vital economic activities are believed to accelerate other economic activities. In this conception, the development of LNG factories provides indirect benefit to the people through its indirect impact on the local economy.

\(^{87}\) Susenas is the annual household socio-economic survey conducted by BPS (The Central Statistical Bureau of Indonesia). The Poverty line is measured by consumption of 26 varieties of food and non food commodities for rural areas, and of 27 varieties of food and non food commodities for urban areas. In a poverty alleviation program, BPS used 14 indicators to determine levels of poverty of households. These are: (1) The per capita size of the house is 8 m² per person; (2) Floors made of soil, bamboo, or cheap wood; (3) Walls
provinces, Aceh had the fourth highest rural poverty rate and the fifth highest urban poverty rate. Despite a slight improvement in the years 2002 to 2004, the poverty rate of Aceh can be said to have remained relatively high. Figure 4-5 indicates that Aceh had the eighth highest percentage of urban and rural poor of all the provinces in Indonesia in 2002 to 2004 after East Java (I.: Jawa Timur), Central Java (I.: Jawa Tengah), West Java (I.: Jawa Barat), North Sumatra (I.: Sumatra Utara), Lampung, South Sumatera (I.: Sumatera Selatan), and Sulawesi Selatan (South Sulawesi). It is worth noting that the December 2004 tsunami has further worsened the poverty situation of Aceh (The World Bank, 2006, p.32).

made of bamboo, sago palm, low quality of wood, unpaved bricks; (4) No private toilets (has to use public toilet); (5) No electricity; (6) Clean water sourced from well, unprotected spring water, river, and rains; (7) Fuel sourced from wood, charcoal, and kerosene; (8) Once a week consumption of meat, milk, chicken, at maximum; (9) Once a year of buying new clothes, at maximum; (10) Meals only twice a day, at maximum; (11) Cannot afford health expenses in public health services at district and village levels; (12) The main sources of income of head of households are farming with less than 0.5 ha, farm labour, fisherman, labourer in public buildings, or labourer in forestry; (13) The highest educational attainment of head of household: no education, uncompleted elementary school, or completed elementary school; (14) No savings or goods valued at Rp 500,000 or around US$ 55.56 (with 1 US$=Rp 9,000).
Figure 4-5. Percentage of Urban and Rural Poor Population in Each Province Relative To the Total Poor in Indonesia in 2002 - 2004

Source: BPS, Jakarta, 2004; Chart is made by Author.
In line with this, The World Bank's Poverty Survey (2002, p.7) discovered that poverty was widespread, in Aceh, especially in areas affected by conflict and particularly in female-headed households. As indicated in Table 4-5, the proportion of female-headed households in poverty was much higher than the national rate in both Susenas 1999 and the World Bank Poverty Survey 2002. The World Bank’s Poverty Survey (2002, p.5) furthermore stated that 64 out of 75 female-headed households in their samples fell within the category of the poor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4-5. The Poverty Situation of Aceh in Comparison to Indonesia (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Poverty Indicators</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of education (aged 18-65 in 1999, 68&lt;- in 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction of Female-Headed Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House has earth, wood, or bamboo floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to safe (pipe, pump, bottled, covered well) drinking water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to health services (the percent ill and [who] sought care in the past month)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The World Bank 2002 (Summarised Table 1 and 2 of the World Bank Report, 2002, pp.4-5)

Note: The different figures presented by the Susenas and World Bank Poverty Survey may be due to different poverty line concept. As argued by Booth (1993, p.53) different studies on poverty in Indonesia use different concept of poverty line, and therefore derive different results of analysis.

The poverty situation might also be due to the number of internally displaced persons. The armed clashes often forced rural people to flee to secure places for some period of time, ranging from 2 weeks to more than a year. This situation worsened and became a widespread phenomenon in the province during the initial implementation of martial law in 2003 (Map 3).

Aceh poverty correlated with the conflict situation, with the hot spots suffering more than the non hot spots. The limited access to health services, for example, was not only due to lack of services (both health infrastructure and providers) but also due to the security situation, which hindered health personnel freely, providing their services. Education was similarly affected.
The high rate of educational attainment of the poor of Aceh compared to the national rate cannot be taken at face value, but needs to be viewed in conjunction with poor attendance rates. It was a common phenomenon that students and teachers had to skip classes due to armed clashes.

The Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) – the sub district development project of the World Bank in Indonesia – conducted a survey of 13 primary schools in Aceh, and found that the attendance rate was well below national level (The World Bank, 2002, pp. 6-7). The attendance rates of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary school levels were 85 percent, 82 percent, and 86 percent respectively. These were certainly below the national rate of 95 to 96 percent at all levels. The survey also revealed that the attendance rate of permanent teachers was also lower, with the Aceh rate of 78 percent being lower than the national rate of 89 percent (The World Bank, 2002, p.7). These were not surprising findings, given the conflict (VPC) in the region for years and the resultant disruption of both the quality and coverage of public services.

The need for a peaceful and secure environment to conduct their livelihood became the main concern of the Acehnese people. Farming could not be done normally, forcing people to plant and harvest at inappropriate times, which resulted in low prices or market delivery failures of agricultural products. Poor security on the main road between Medan and Banda Aceh also added to inflation by driving up the prices of goods that could not be transported easily or on a regular basis. Adding to the high cost economy was the practice of ‘security money’ extorted by both conflicting parties. Trucking firms, for example, reported spending approximately 60 percent of their cargo revenues at formal and informal check points along the Medan-Banda Aceh main road, which involved around Rp 50,000 to Rp 2 million, depending on the value of the transported goods (The World Bank, 2002, p.8).

Transportation is indeed vital to the Acehnese economy, especially after the closing down of the Port of Sabang and the appointment of Medan, with its Belawan Port, as the centre of trade at the northern tip of Sumatra in the early 1980s.

Furthermore, due to repeated armed clashes, ambushes, and attacks, working capital (money or other goods that are used for keeping businesses
running) became a critical issue. Citing the Provincial and District Chambers of Commerce, the World Bank (2002, p.8) reported that the business environment of Aceh was ‘an environment of stuck credit’. Small businessmen whose business properties were attacked (set on fire) faced difficulties in returning their outstanding loans to the bank and in accruing fresh credit from the bank (World Bank 2002, p.8).

...New or revolving credit lines are reportedly impossible to obtain except for the very best, most secure businesses, and as a result many borrowers are not repaying even when they are able since this will represent a loss of working capital. (The World Bank 2002, p.8)

Adding to the difficult situation were the difficulties and limits of development assistance from either the government or the Donor community. An ADB loan of US$122 million to the Sumatra Urban Development Project, for example, was suspended for over a year due to difficulties in performing on-site technical supervision and monitoring (The World Bank, 2002, p.15). Approximately US$8 – 10 million of the total US$122 million was designed to cover seven districts in Aceh. Nevertheless, some development assistance such as the World Bank funded Kecamatan Development Project (KDP), in which assistance for economic activities was given to poor households in particular poor sub districts, was able to be delivered to eight out of 20 districts in Aceh and reached 2700 villages through the respective mechanisms of main grants and local government matching grants. NGOs and the government admitted, however, that coverage was quite limited and mainly restricted to areas that were accessible, meaning that areas, which were not in conflict zones and therefore not severely affected by the conflict were the only ones covered.

The deterioration of the regional economy of Aceh may also be partly due to the general decline of economic growth in the region during 1997 to 2002, as illustrated in the following Figure 4-6. Although the national economic crisis may well have impacted on Aceh, the sharp decline in 1998 and 1999 clearly illustrates the unfavourable economic atmosphere in Aceh, which might have been due to the intensification of armed clashes between the Indonesian military and GAM soldiers. A possibly similar situation might have occurred during the implementation of martial law.
5.2 The Day to Day Economy

As noted above agriculture is historically dominant in Aceh. In the villages of Aceh Besar and Pidie, especially, parents with favourable economic status usually provide their daughters with not only a house but also paddy fields upon their daughters’ marriages. Those with unfavourable economic status would provide their daughters with at least a room in the parents’ house and several coconut trees from which the new family can start making money. Some families give gold to their daughters as a form of ‘savings’ to be used in case of emergency, such as a long drought or sickness of family members.

Apart from agriculture, animal husbandry (cattle) may also be considered as an important source of income. Raising cattle was part of the Islamic tradition of the Acehnese. During the feast days before the fasting month (Ac.: meugang or makmeugang), Acehnese households usually slaughtered cows to celebrate the coming fasting month (Ramadhan). Ramadhan is the obligatory month for the Moslems to cleanse themselves.
from sins over the year. It is therefore considered to be the most important month during the year for the Acehnese.

In the old times, the Acehnese tended to spend time praying and contemplating during Ramadhan, and consequently did not pay much attention to their livelihood. They used their savings to cover their expenses during the fasting month. This is well illustrated in the old Acehnese saying ‘one year saving for one month spending’ (Ac.: ‘si thôn mita, sibuleuen pajôh’, which literally means ‘one year of working, one month for eating’). Currently, however, the saying is interpreted to mean spending as much as one can to celebrate Ramadhan, which can be perceived as the biggest fiesta in Aceh during which people spend their one-year saving. One of the big celebrations is the aforementioned meugang or makmeugang, in which thousands of cows are slaughtered in the entire region, as married men are obliged to bring the ‘meugang’ meat to their parents-in-laws. Another picture of the contemporary fasting month is petty traders selling traditional food along the main road of the city, especially near the time for breaking the fast at the end of the day (I.: buka puasa). A wide variety of traditional food and cookies can be found at these small stalls, such as chicken rice porridge (Ac.: bubur kanji), hot/spicy rice porridge (Ac.: bubur pedaih), hot/spicy vegetables sauce (Ac.: sambai on peugaga), and the traditional sweets made of rice powder, sugar, and coconut milk (Ac.: thimpan asoe kaya). The fasting month (Ramadhan) is therefore a special month in which money circulates fast in trading activities.

Trading was another important source of income for the Acehnese. Traders performed their activities in market places, peddling around from one place to another with a motorbike, opening temporary small stalls along the main road, opening small shops in their houses, or simply putting their products on somebody else’s stalls in the neighbourhood area. It is worth noting, however, that during my research I observed that market places and impermanent small stalls on the main road were usually dominated by male traders. The few female traders in market and other public places, usually sold vegetables, herbs, and traditional meals. The peddlers (Ac.: mugê) were also mostly men. Women peddlers were the exception. Women, however, could be easily found in small shops attached to houses.
Markets, as trading places, can be grouped into two: the daily market and the weekly market (Ac.: uroe gantoe). The former, which opened on a daily basis, was usually located in cities. The weekly markets, opened on a certain day every week, were usually located in villages. The weekly markets can be grouped into two types as well; the main weekly markets (Ac.: uroe gantoe rayeuk), usually in sub-districts, and the small weekly market (Ac.: uroe gantoe cut) in villages. Whilst the main weekly markets were usually situated in permanent constructions (permanent stalls), the small weekly markets took place in an open area where traders used plastic tents and small tables, or simply displayed their merchandises on mats and in baskets.

The weekly market was not only a place for trading, but also a social place for meeting others, exchanging information, and leisure (Hasybullah, 1977). It is interesting to observe that during the violent political conflict, the weekly market could also be an office place for a head of village (Ac.: keusyik). On one of my trips to Aceh Besar, for example, the weekly market was used as the meeting point of a keusyik from village S, one of the hot spots in Aceh Besar, and people of his village. The keusyik could not stay in his village (Ac.: gampông) due to security concerns. He designated the market place as his alternative office, where he performed his administrative tasks, including preparing paper work for villagers who need to travel. The weekly market was also used for people to exchange information on the armed clashes and casualties. It became one of the important sources of information about the fate of disappeared family members. People could pass on information to each other relatively easily in such a busy market. Following this local pattern, I also used the weekly market as one of my meeting points with my research subjects from the hot spots. The weekly market was usually an easy excuse to leave the village. The army and police would easily give their permission for people to go to the market.

6 Conclusion

Aceh is rich not only in terms of land and natural resources, but also culture and traditions. Its long history as an independent polity, the mixture of ethnic groups, and the fierce resistance against Dutch colonial rule clearly
signify the richness, heterogeneity, strength and uniqueness of Aceh and the Acehnese. This has consequently made Aceh a diverse society in many different ways.

As the point of entry of Islam into the archipelago that can be traced back as early as the 11th century, Islam and local traditions amalgamated over the centuries. This is well exemplified in the old saying ‘the law and tradition, is like a substance and its innate qualities’ (Ac.: ‘Adat ngon hukôm, lagee zat ngon sifeut’). The mixture of Islam and tradition has penetrated the Acehnese society to the extent that it has become part of the identity. Apart from Islam, however, there are two other vital components of the Acehnese identity; gampông or origin, and mother tongue. Among these three, gampông seemed to be the immediate point of reference for identity. However, the strong belief in independence and Islam, which has intermingled and resulted in the strong resistance against invasion by outsiders, is also evident. The notion of ‘Aceh as Islam and Islam as Aceh’ is clearly illustrated in the aforementioned old saying.

The contemporary identity of Aceh, however, has been significantly influenced by the dynamics of the local ‘oil-economy’ and recent violent political conflict with their consequences on the day to day life of the people. The establishment of the Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) plant and several other industries in East Aceh has penetrated the society with what is locally termed ‘Madonna factor’ (I: ‘faktor Madonna’). This factor symbolises the negative influence on the society of western values, and the urban, or locally defined as ‘modern’, life styles that have resulted from the oil economy of the region and the influx of international humanitarian workers. Adding to this ‘Madonna factor’ is the ‘violent political conflict economy’,88 a market economy created and boosted by violent political conflict related activities that have often resulted in high economic-inflation (often a hyperinflation) as shown in Graph 4.

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88 This is a modified term for the ‘war economy’, which is discussed in many scholarly works on conflict studies.
Over and above this, the contemporary challenges of Acehnese identity have been the policies and operations of GAM, which have strengthened the idea of Acehnese identity as opposed to the national Indonesian identity. With local dialect proficiency, gampōng (Ac.) of origin and Islam as fundamental points in defining identity, discussion about Acehnese identity becomes intricate. This is especially true considering the fact that the people who live in the land of the Acehnese (I: tanah Aceh) are not only the Acehnese but also other cultural-linguistic groups, such as Gayo and Alas, who have resided in the region for about the same length of time as the Acehnese. Adding to this is the mixed marriage phenomena, such as the case of Ninda’s mother who had a mixed background of Acehnese (father) and Minang (mother).

In line with identity transformation, the social classification has apparently also been transformed from kawōm based to occupational and domicile based. The kawōm of origin, however, was still sometimes mentioned in discussions on identity as an item of additional information.

The dynamics of conflict have also brought some changes to the impoverishment of the economy of Aceh, evidence of which can be seen from the relatively high level of poverty among female-headed households that especially can be found in conflict zones, compared to other provinces in Indonesia. Adding to this is the limitations on delivery of development assistance from either the government or other parties concerned with development issues. The World Bank funded KDP project, which was obliged to limit assistance to the neediest areas, and the ADB funded Sumatra Urban Development project that was suspended for over a year, were examples of how the conflict hindered the delivery of development assistance.
Chapter 5 The Long-Lasting ‘Battle’ of Aceh (A Violent Political Conflict Context)

Jika kau berikan aku keagungan puisi
Biarkan ia menjelma manisra dan jumpi
Mengubah kebencian menjadi cinta kasih
Tak menyala lagi sesajata dan dendam pergi

Tapi satu jiwa merengut jiwa yang lainnya
Tangan siapakah yang menggerakkannya?
Tapi duka telah leih merangkak arasyimu yang mulia
Tangan siapakah yang akan menghentikkannya?

Katakanlah saatnya telah tiba
Dan kau akan bicara; keberaran telah datang!

If you give me the greatness of poetry
Let it be a spell and enchantment
To transform hatred to love and care
Guns shout no more and revenge disappears

... But souls have destroyed one another
Whose hand is directing it?
But sorrow has been too tired crawling down on your Divine Altar
Whose hand will bring it to an end?

Tell me that it is about the time
And you’ll say; truth has arrived!


Violent political conflict in Aceh is a longstanding phenomenon that has given the region a reputation for rebelliousness and Islamic militancy\(^1\) which has become a ‘legend’\(^2\) for young generations to learn. The reputation has been well documented from the Dutch colonial period with the Aceh War (Perang Aceh) (1873 to 1903), Holland’s longest and costliest war in Aceh,\(^3\) to the most recent conflict between the Government and the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – GAM). Aceh has been one of the most conflict-prone provinces in Indonesia, with a typical violent political conflict,

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\(^1\) See for examples the work of Siapno (2002), Robinson (2001), and Siegel (1979).
\(^3\) The Aceh War (1873-1903) opposed the Dutch ‘pacification’ policy in the East Indies costed 10,000 Dutch lives and about one-eighth of the Acehnese population died or were displaced (Robinson, 2001; Siegel, 1979)

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a conflict between the state and civil society in the form of freedom fighters employing guerrilla tactics.

The Aceh conflict, however, was not only related to the conflict between the state and civil society (or those who claimed to represent civil society), or the centre and periphery. It was also about a complex phenomenon involving different layers of people’s daily lives, the consequences of which encompassed most segments of life, covering all levels from personal to social, and has been carried out over generations. Islam is well-established within the society and has always been part of the conflict, either as a spiritual validation or a source of resentment.4

This chapter explores the political context of the conflict in Aceh, its nature, causes, and consequences, using historical accounts with a particular attention on to people’s livelihoods. This follows Blok’s argument on violence as a historical cultural construction,5 and Glazebrook’s proposition on the need to elaborate the political historical context in her work on the Papuan refugees on the border of Indonesia and New Guinea (Glazebrook, 2001, p.2). An historical account encompasses economics, politics, and anthropology and thus provides a comprehensive picture of the evolution of the conflict. Together with chapter three on the ethnographic and Islamic contexts of Acehnese society,6 this chapter sets out the fundamental milieu in which the coping strategies of women and their households’ livelihoods, described in the next chapter, are situated.

Arguing that Aceh’s violent political conflict mainly related to the disaffiliation of the region with Indonesia, our analysis starts from the independence struggle of Indonesia in order to gain a more holistic picture of the evolution of the conflict. However, considering that this research was conducted in the period of GAM conflict, more attention is given to the recent conflict of GAM and its economic, political, and cultural effects at both macro and micro levels. I adopt and slightly modify the periodisation of the GAM

4 This well explains the region’s legendary rebelliousness and Islamic militancy.
5 Blok (2000, p.24)’s defines violence as “...a changing form of interaction and communication ...a historically developed cultural form of meaningful action.”
6 See Chapter 1 for the definition of society and Chapter 4 for details of the Acehnese society,
movement proposed by Ross\(^7\) (2003): 1976 to 1979; 1989 to 1991; and 1999\(^8\) to 2003.\(^9\) I modified the latter to 1999 to 2004, the period of my research. Such periodization is essential for understanding the historical process.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Aceh violent political conflict is analysed in terms of ‘severe stressor’ (Hobfoll, et al 1996, p.323; Lepore and Evans, 1996, p.353; Mikulincer and Florian, 1996, p.556) and ‘cataclysm’ (Hobfoll, et al 1996, p.323). It is argued here that the conflict has moved from being a ‘severe stressor’ and ‘cataclysm’, to being a ‘focal stressor’ and has brought about a cascade effect triggering other stressors, such as ‘major life event stressors’ – e.g. the ‘social losses’ due to major life transitions, such as divorce and separation, death, job loss, victimisation, and relocation - either forced or voluntarily. In this connection, the violent political conflict has sternly challenged women’s coping strategies.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first elaborates the history of violent political conflict in Aceh, since the independence era of Indonesia. Particular attention is paid to the conflict between the government and GAM that lasted for over 20 years and cost thousands of lives (Schulze, 2004, p.5, Robinson, 2001, p.214). The second outlines the general consequences of violent political conflict on society at both the macro and micro levels, encompassing both tangible and intangible consequences, and its cascade effect on the day-to-day lives of the people.

In this chapter, I have three main arguments. First, the history of violent conflicts in Aceh has always related to a political power struggle and therefore falls under the category of violent political conflict. Second, the longstanding history of such conflicts in Aceh has provided, to use Juris’s

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\(^7\) Sukma (2004), Schulze (2004), and Robinson (2001) suggested this periodisation. However, it was Ross (2003) who made a clear periodisation, which is quite useful in analysing the GAM dynamics. 

\(^8\) Sukma (2004, p.vii) argued that November 1998 was the beginning of the third GAM re-emergence, with a series of actions and attacks against Indonesia and her military and police personnel. Examples of these are the burning of Indonesia’s flag and torture of two Indonesian soldiers on November 2 in North Aceh, the burning of Indonesia Radio Station on November 15, and the abduction and execution of seven Indonesian military personnel (Sukma, 2004, pp.12-13).

\(^9\) The years between these periods: 1979 to 1989; 1991 to 1999; and 2004 to date; were the time when GAM was inactive or declined due to either the successful actions of the Indonesian Military, GAM’s change of strategies, or a peace deal between GAM and the government.
term (2005, p.415), a ‘cultural template’ of violence for spanning generations that, together with the existing trauma, may have fostered and regenerated the conflict. Third, the consequences of prolonged violent political conflict was quite devastating for the civilians, especially the grassroots women and children. I propose three important consequences of the prolonged violent conflict that have, unfortunately, been overlooked by scholarly works on Aceh, namely ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’, the awkward ‘sandwiched position’ of Acehnese civilians, and the deprivation of the local economy (I: penghancuran ekonomi lokal).

It is worth remembering that in addition to the importance of understanding the socio-cultural and socio-political background of the conflict, the geography of the region itself has been noted as being conducive to a high risk of conflict. The strategic position of the region enables a relatively easy channel of mobility to and from Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Due to this, the region had a long history of gun smuggling during Indonesia’s independence struggle. It has been a ‘well-trodden path’ for smuggling and the transfer of people, goods (including marijuana and arms), and money back and forth from Aceh-Batam-Singapore and Aceh-Medan-Riau-Malaysia (ICG, 2002b, p.5). Comparatively easy and affordable transportation along the strait has helped the activists and partisans in several violent political conflicts of Aceh, such as the Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia/Negara Islam Indonesia (DI/TII/NII) and Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – GAM), to abscond to foreign countries. The nearby Batam islands located next to Singapore has also been used by the Acehnese as a place for selling marijuana in exchange for, among other things, arms (ICG, 2002b, p.6).
1 Tracing History: The Nature and Causes of Violent Political Conflict in Aceh

From historical accounts, it appears that the fluidity of Acehnese history juxtaposed with the romanticism of the golden history of the Islamic independent Sultanate in the Dutch colonial era, contrasts with the imbalance in political-economic power between the central government (I.: pusat) and the regional government (I.: daerah). This has certainly led to tremendous dissatisfaction among the Acehnese, which has materialised in the conflict. This section aims at providing a historical account of the major violent political conflicts of the region since the independence of Indonesia. These major violent political conflicts are the Cumbok War (1945-1946), the Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia/Negara Islam Indonesia (DI/TII/NII) (1948/1949 – 1961/1962), and the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – GAM) conflict (1976-2004). I focus on the period of 1976 – 2004, since this is the period of my research.

1.1 The Cumbok War (1945-1946), Aceh’s Stance in Indonesia’s Independence Struggle.

In the period of Indonesia’s independence struggle, there were four elite groups in Aceh, each with different interests and stances regarding the new state of Indonesia (Alfian, 1982). These four elites were the ulêêbalang (Ac.), ulama (I., Ac.),¹⁰ youth (divided into those with Japanese military background and those with modern religious educational background), and, the smallest and least important, the minority (intellectuals and non-Acehnese leaders). The Cumbok War (I.: Perang Cumbok) (1945-1946) was the culmination of armed clashes between the ulêêbalang and ulama. The ulêêbalang group was led by Teuku Muhammad Daud Cumbok

¹⁰ See chapter 3 for details.
(1910-1945), a son of the ulèèbalang from Cumbok village,\textsuperscript{11} the name of which was adopted to describe the war. This group named the area under their control the ‘ulèèbalang’s site’ (I.: Markas Ulèèbalang) and established their armed personnel, who they called the Security Guard Line (I.: Barisan Penjaga Keamanan). The ulama group was initiated by the Moslem youth (especially the modern religious group). They named their area of control, the General Aceh Regional Site (I.: Markas Umum Daerah Aceh), and their armed personnel, the Indonesia Struggle Body (I.: Badan Perjuangan Indonesia). The conflict soon became a war (I.: perang) between the pro Indonesia lobby, which was led by a group of Moslem scholars (Ac., I.: ulama) known as the All Acehnese Ulama Unity (Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh –PUSA),\textsuperscript{12} and the anti-Indonesia ulèèbalang (Ac.) group. The war was therefore an internal dispute within Acehnese society on the issue of affiliation versus disaffiliation with Indonesia during the independence movement against the Dutch colonial power.

The conflict started in December 1945 with attacks on villages dominated by the youth group by the security guard line of the ulèèbalang, and concluded in 1946 with the victory of the ulama led group (Alfian, 1982). This was partly due to the fact that the ulama-led group was backed by Aceh civilians and the Indonesian Armed Forces (I.: Angkatan Perang Indonesia - API). The defeat of the ulèèbalang, did not immediately end the anger of the populace, which escalated into a mass riot, and included setting fire to the houses and other property of ulèèbalang as well as an attempt to massacre their families, including women and children. The approximate number of casualties during Cumbok War was 1500 people (Tempo, 2003, p.30; Alfian, 1982).

The Cumbok War (1945-1946) actually signified the culmination of an internal conflict in Acehnese society between the ulama and ulèèbalang, which had existed since the Sultanate era and been fostered by the Dutch and,

\textsuperscript{11} It is important to note that not all ulèèbalang in Aceh share the ideas of Teuku Daud Cumbok, for example Teuku Muhammad Daud Syah, Teuku Panglima Polem Muhammad Ali, and Teuku Nyak Arief (Alfian, 1982, p.73), who were pro-Indonesian independence.

\textsuperscript{12} PUSA was established as the result of an Ulama Congress in Peusangan on 5 May 1939 and first led by Teungku Daud Beureuh (Saleh, 1992, p.17).
Japanese. As described in Chapter 3, the pre-colonial social structure of Aceh was characterised by three fairly balanced power centres: the sultan, the ulêêbalang, and the ulama, who always sought balance and harmony to maintain social stability (Siegel 1979, 1969; Hurgronje, 1906). This picture, however, simplifies the political tension among these three centres, which was indicated by, among other things, the exclusion of ulêêbalang from the development and exercise of laws, traditions, and customary practices during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) described in Chapter 3, section 2.3. This may reflect the political rivalry between ulêêbalang and the sultan, with the ulama at the sultan’s side, or at least the political concern of the sultan towards the possible dissident ulêêbalang.

The ulêêbalang possessed the oldest form of power in Aceh society, predating that of the sultan and ulama. Siegel (1979, p.10) argued that ulêêbalang were important political figures in the lives of most people, and obtained authority based on their capacity to mobilise kinsmen. As described in Chapter 3, they were originally kawôm chiefs or commanders (Ac.: panglima kawôm), some of whom (presumably the strongest ones) were designated as ulêêbalang, the heads of mukim federation\(^\text{13}\) adopted under sultan Nurul Alam Nakiattudin Sjah (1675-1677) (Zainuddin, 1961, p.316). As leaders with legitimate authority given by the society of several mukims, ulêêbalang were also considered kings (I., Ac.: raja),\(^\text{14}\) war/military commanders (I.: panglima perang), and, on occasion, judges (I., Ac.: hakim) (Hugronje, 1906, v.1, p.92). I refer to them here as ‘societal-based’ ulêêbalang because they established their power within, and lived among, their society.

In the Sultanate era, the position and autonomy of the ‘societal-based’ ulêêbalang was at first acknowledged and maintained. They were also allowed to establish a new body for agricultural matters (Ac.: seunobok). This autonomy, however, was gradually limited, as they became in effect tax collectors for the Sultan. This especially happened after the period of Sultan Tadjul Alam Sjafiatuddin Sjah, the first female Sultan (1641-1675), with the

\(^{13}\) See Chapter 4 section 2.1 for details on mukim
\(^{14}\) Some ulêêbalang descendants may have retained this idea. One of my key informants called his first son raja signifying his position as the heir of the family.
appointment of a civil judge for Muslim’s affairs (Ac.: Kadhi Malikul Adil), who took over some of the uléebalang’s authority. In addition, their ‘societal-based’ powers were contested by the appointment of some ulama and ‘palace-based’ uléebalang as the Sultanate’s advisors, as well as commanders of the three sagoe, the three mukim federations specifically established in Great Aceh (I. Aceh Besar; Ac. Aceh Rayeuk) under Sjafiatuddin Sjah (1641-1675) and continued by her predecessors. The three sagoe commanders (Ac.: panglima lhee sagoe) had special autonomy from the sultan and, in times of emergency, would assume the position as war commanders for their own regions (see Chapter 3 for details).

These new policies unavoidably created tensions and jealousy among the ‘societal-based’ uléebalang. It is possible that the appointment of these new positions had been deliberately undertaken to undermine and perhaps also control the ‘society-based’ uléebalang through creating rival positions both in the Palace and in their mukim federation. Based on this, I argue that the absence of uléebalang in traditional Acehnese sources about adat and traditions adopted by Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) as described in Chapter 3, was actually part of the power struggle between the sultan (and ulama) and the ‘society-based’ uléebalang.

These tensions were maintained and exploited by the Dutch with their divide and conquer politics, or the ‘divide et impera’ (I.: politik belah bambu or politics of splitting bamboo) to counter the strong resistance of the Acehnese. The uléebalang, who possessed both economic and political power, were provided with more privileges by the Dutch to undermine the Sultan’s authority. These privileges, in turn, resulted in strong local capitalists and new local bourgeoisie that adopted the Dutch lifestyle and possessed great supremacy over their region. With less concern for society’s welfare than their own business interests, the socio-economic gap between uléebalang and their communities became wider. This situation was so well manipulated by the Dutch that in some cases, the uléebalang became the Sultan’s rivals and developed their own political legitimacy over regions under their authority for their own political-economic benefits (Siegel, 1969).

This was in contrast with the ulama, who concentrated more on spiritual richness. These ulama grew together with, and lived among, the
grass-roots community, who felt exhausted from the ulêêbalang’s economic exploitation. With their dayah (Ac.), the traditional Islamic boarding school, the ulama obtained their power and legitimacy from the oppressed society that longed for spiritual consolation for their hard life. The ulama became the strong informal authority in the colonial periphery, rooting their pre-eminence in civil society and becoming countervailing forces\(^\text{15}\) to the colonial aristocracy of both the Dutch and ulêêbalang.

The Cumbok War also exemplified Aceh’s stand on its affiliation to Indonesia. With a long history and fierce resistance to the Dutch colonial presence, the region was instrumental in supporting Indonesia’s independence struggle against the Dutch. Compared to other areas in Indonesia, Aceh was indeed one of the strongest sources of support, since it was able to secure foreign trade conducted by Acehnese, which the new Republic of Indonesia considered an important asset. In a mass meeting in Aceh on June 17, 1948, Sukarno called Aceh the ‘resources region’ (I.: daerah modal), referring to the commitment of the Acehnese to provide two aircraft, gold, and an amount of money for the new republic (Al-Chaidar, 1999, p.115; Saleh, 1992, p.116).\(^\text{16}\) On 15 October 1945, two months after the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia, the ulama of Aceh reaffirmed the holy war against the Dutch. As described in chapter 3, the Acehnese had always considered the war against the Dutch a holy war. The hikajat Prang Sabi (the hikajat on holy war)\(^\text{17}\) was always chanted before sending guerilla fighters to fight against the Dutch. The revitalization of the holy war was clearly stated in the All Acehnese Ulama Declaration (I.: Maklumat Ulama Seluruh Aceh), which called upon the Acehnese to be behind Sukarno, whom they named the mega leader (I.: pemimpin besar) (Al-Chaidar, 1999; Saleh, 1992).

\(^{15}\) See Ali, Fachry (2003, p.54).

\(^{16}\) Little information is available on the amount of money donated to Indonesia as how the Acehnese were able to provide it in a short period. One possible source is rampasan perang (goods and properties collected from the defeated enemy) of the defeated ulêêbalang who at the time possessed a favourable economic status. My interview with one of my key informants in Aceh Besar indicates this as one of the reasons behind the GAM struggle. According to him/her, a team has been established in Jakarta to conduct research on this. The desire for the return of the donation by some GAM members might be true once we compare these pieces of information with the current peace-deal between GAM and the Indonesian government. This further supports my argument for the economically driven movement of GAM as elaborated in section 1.3.

\(^{17}\) See Chapter 3 for details on the hikajat.
The Cumbok war, however, also signified the internal conflict of interests and power struggles among ulëèbalang themselves, who were divided into pro and anti-Indonesia parties. The pro-Indonesia ulëèbalang, led by Teuku Nyak Arif (later appointed as the head of East Sumatra), pledged their support to Indonesia on 24 August 1945 (Al-Chaidar, 1999).

The Cumbok war remains a dark period of history that has left deep sorrow in Acehnese hearts. It was apparent during my fieldwork, for example, that most of the people that I met preferred to talk about the golden history of the Acehnese Sultanate rather than the painful history of the Cumbok war. The Cumbok war was clearly something the Acehnese were not proud of.


After its strong support for the independence of Indonesia, in the period 1953-1961/62, Aceh joined the Darul Islam/Indonesia Moslem Army/Indonesia Islamic Republic (I.: Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia/ Negara Islam Indonesia – DI/TII/NII) movement in West Java that sought to establish an Indonesian Islamic State in 1948/49 – 1961/62.18 Darul Islam literally means the ‘house’ or ‘home’ of Islam, referring to the ‘world or territory of Islam’, an Islamic nation in which the Islamic faith and the implementation of Islamic law and regulations are compulsory (van Dijk, 1981, p.10). It is usually used in place of Darul Harb, the land of war and the world of the infidels, which is contrasted with Darul Salam, the world of peace (van Dijk, 1981, p.10). The two, however, can become a single entity as Darul Harb is gradually incorporated in Darul Islam.

18 The date of the establishment of DI/TII/NII remains contested, but the general opinion maintains 7 August 1949 (Fealy, 2005, p.16). The movement was initially named the Tgk. Daud Beureuh Struggle (Pemberontakan Tgk Daud Beureuh), then changed to DI/TII after Aceh chose to be part of the NII (Saleh, 1992, p.233).
The DI/TII/NII movement consisted of regional rebellions in West Java, Central Java, South Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, and Aceh (van Dijk, 1981, p.269). It was the most severe Islamic movement in Indonesia, causing the massive destruction of infrastructure and assets, an enormous loss of lives, and innumerable injuries (Fealy, 2005). The casualties numbered between 15,000 and 20,000 deaths; tens of thousands more injured; an estimated one million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 400,000 premises destroyed (Fealy, 2005, p.18).

Aceh was the last region to join the movement (van Dijk, 1981, p.269), proclaiming an official branch of DI/TII/NII, led by Teungku Daud Beureueh (1898-1987), on 7 August 1953, and announcing their support for NII on 21 September 1953 (Tempo, 2003, p.42). Teungku Beureueh was one of the most notable Ulama in Cumbok, the founding father of PUSA, and a supporter of Indonesia. His strong support for Indonesia was due to his unwavering commitment to Islamic values, which he understood would be accommodated in the monotheism spirit embedded in the first principle of the national ideology (Pancasila) (Al-Chaidar, 1999, p.121; Saleh, 1992, p.148). Teungku Beuereueh has also recently been noted as central to both GAM and JI (Jemaah Islamiyah) since both organisations perceived him as an important

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19 Some recent western scholars use Darul Islam to refer to the movement. I deliberately use DI/TII/NII to make it consistent with its history and to avoid misunderstanding and confusion with the Darul Islam organisation that has been established since Dutch colonial times and together with other organisations sought the independence of Indonesia. The organisation was later split in two groups, especially after the unsuccessful attempt to include the Jakarta charter into the constitution, those who opted for a militant approach, and those who preferred a peaceful way.

20 West Java Province was the most important region for DI/TII/NII for three main reasons: it was the base of Kartosoewirjo; the origin of the Negara Islam Indonesia – Indonesian Islamic State; and 'the most severe security challenge to the central government and its military forces' (Fealy, 2005, p.17). See Annex 8, for details about the province, leadership and key events of the DI/TII/NII movement.

21 Firstly mentioned on 1 June 1945 by Soekarno, the first president of Indonesia. See Chapter 2, footnote 8 for the Five Principles.

22 JI, established by Abdullah Sungkar on 1 January 1993, has a long history as the covert organisation of DI/TII/NII in Indonesia. This is based on the following reasons: First, the DI/TII/NII’s leader, SM Kartosoewirjo, was the important inspirer for JI’s leader, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and his associates (Jones, 2005, p.5); second, the two prominent JI leaders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, were important DI/TII members (Fealy, 2005, p.25); third, the marriage ties among leaders of DI/TII/NII, JI and GAM (Jones, 2002; Fealy, 2005). The possible link between DI/TII/NII-JI-GAM, however, needs further investigation, which unfortunately is not the focus of this thesis.
pioneer figure for the independence movement and the establishment of an Islamic state (ICG, 2002, p.7).

The DI/TII/NII movement drew upon multifaceted causes, and encompassed a mixture of regionalist and religious sentiments as well as internal political power struggles (Aspinal, 2006, p.152). The causes related to five incidents that occurred in Aceh in the early 1950s, which mostly related to considerations of Acehnese pride and historical identity as an independent entity that had long enjoyed sovereignty over their own region under their sultans. These five events were: the abolition of the Indonesian military Division X (I.: Divisi X) of Aceh, widely known as the White Elephant Division (I.: Divisi Gadjah Putih); the abolition of Aceh provincial status on 23 January 1951 and its merger under North Sumatra on 25 January 1951; the unfulfilled promise of the first President of Indonesia, Sukarno, on special autonomy for the region, the provision of which would have allowed Aceh to have its own governmental system based on Islamic principles; rumours about a black list (I.: ‘daftar hitam’ or ‘les hitam’)\(^{23}\) containing names of 300 leaders of Aceh who Jakarta planned to assassinate by means of a secret operation (Tempo, 2003; Saleh, 1992, p.149; van Dijk, 1981); and the centralised government system that neglected local needs and wishes (Robinson, 2001, p.216).

The first two factors reflect Acehnese disappointment towards the central government. Division X or the White Elephant division, originated from Acehnese guerrilla fighters during the Dutch occupation and had become one of the greatest sources of Acehnese pride. Its name was derived from the elephant forces (I.: pasukan gajah) of Sultan Iskandar Muda, and therefore denotes a historical sentiment and the identity of the Acehnese. The abolition

\(^{23}\) Some scholars, such as Cornelis van Dijk (1981), believe the list was indeed real. Others, such as B.J. Boland, argue that it was merely a political rumour created by the left wing politicians in Jakarta to scare the Islamic leaders in Aceh (Tempo, 2003). Then-Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo, in a final meeting with the House of Representative on 2 November 1953, however, stated that his Cabinet had never issued the list (Tempo, 2003). Nur el-İbrahimıny (as cited in Tempo, 2003, p.28), Beureueh’s son in law, argued: “The Black List is a proof that raised our suspicions that the impetus for the bloody incidents was the games of political rivals of Teungku Daud Beureueh to destroy him and his fellows” (I:‘Les hitam adalah bukti yang menimbulkan kecurigaan kita bahwa pencetus peristiwa berdarah itu adalah permainan lawan-lawan politik Teungku Daud Beureueh untuk menghancurkan beliau dan kawan-kawan”) (Tempo, 2003, p.28).
was seen as a ‘forced-circumcision’ of Acehnese identity, which hurt and disappointed general Acehnese society. Exacerbating the existing discontent was the abolition of provincial status and incorporation under North Sumatra, locally perceived as representing the ‘Batak’, an ethnic group that the Acehnese traditionally considered as a seed of wild grass (Ac.: drang seed), to signify their uselessness. The never-fulfilled promise of special autonomy to develop their own Islamic governmental system, and the killings of ulama on the presumed black list, further accentuated Acehnese disappointment.

This disappointment was accompanied by the anger of the ulama toward the ulêèbalang descendants of Cumbok War survivors, their old rivals whom the ulama believed had manoeuvred their arrest (Saleh, 1992, pp.137-142). The ulama’s anger was openly demonstrated in their yells ‘move forward, finish the ulêèbalang; one two, cut the throat of the aristocrats; left right, kill them all’ (I and Ac.: ‘Maju jalan, ka peuhabeh uleebalang; satu dua, ka koh takue kaum raja; kiri kanan, kapoh mandum si ureung nyam’) (Saleh, 1992, p.151).

The above-mentioned grievances coincidentally arose during the time of the DI/TII/NII movement of Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo (1905-1962) from West Java, the main aim of which was to establish an Islamic State under wholly Shari’a Law. The movement saw its action as a holy war in the way of God (Ar.: ‘jihad fi sabillllah’) (Fealy, 2005, p.21). Kartosoewirjo described TII personnel as holy war fighters (Ar.: Mujahid) and the Republic of Indonesia’s armed forces as infidels (I.: kafir), ‘apostates’, and ‘communists’. Consequently, Indonesian Moslems were forced to make a stand. Anyone not joining the movement would be automatically considered the enemy of Allah, could be justifiably attacked and killed for residing in the ‘abode of war’ (Ar.: darul harbi) (Fealy, 2005, p.21). This may help explain...

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24 See chapter 3 section 3.1
25 The movement itself was put founded in place by Kyai Jusuf Tauziri, who withdrew his support soon after DI fought against the Republic, and formed the Darul Salam (the world of peace) movement aimed at establishing an Islamic state through peaceful way (van Dijk 1981, pp.13-14).
26 Interestingly, this is similar to GAM’s description of the Indonesian military as ‘si pai’- Pasukan AntP Islam (The Anti Islam Forces).
27 The rhetoric used by the DI/TII/NII is analogous to that used by George W. Bush in drawing support for the War on Terror: ‘either you are with us or you are our enemy.’
the action of Daud Beureuh’s DI/TII/NII led movement in Aceh.\textsuperscript{28} The movement’s struggle cost more than 4,000\textsuperscript{29} lives and lasted for nine years. The villagers experienced terror from the DI/TII/NII actions, especially with the frequently fierce assaults and the occasional massacres of villagers conducted by DI/TII/NII personnel (Horisoki, 1975 cited in Fealy, 2005, p.20).\textsuperscript{30}

Responding to the situation, the Government commenced a military operation against the region. Not until 1956 did the Government begin to use a more conciliatory, persuasive approach, as exemplified in the Principals of Wise Concepts (I: Konsepsi Prinsip Bijaksana),\textsuperscript{31} which later resulted in the Lamteh Vow (I: Ikmar Lamteh) on 7 April 1957. In this context, some negotiations for a peaceful conflict resolution were made. Leaders of DI/TII/NII in Aceh split into those against (led by Daud Beureueh) and those in favour (led by Hasan Saleh)\textsuperscript{32} of a peaceful resolution. Following the arrest and execution of Kartosoewirjo, the national DI/TII/NII leader in 1962, Daud Beureuh rejoined the Republic of Indonesia on 22 December 1962 through the Blangpadang Vow (I.: Ikmar Blangpadang),\textsuperscript{33} a peace agreement\textsuperscript{34} with the central government, on the condition that a Shari’ a law would be

\textsuperscript{28} At a later stage, Beureueh was credited with developing the thirteen basic principles of NII and TII, the NH Military.

\textsuperscript{29} See Yusuf (2002, p.50)

\textsuperscript{30} Scholars have long debated whether Darul Islam can be rightfully characterised as a terrorist organisation. Referring to the atrocities, Horisoki (1975 in Fealy, 2005, p.20) classified the actions as terrorist. This is in line with the term ‘diteror’ (I) used by villagers. Referring to the attacks on public facilities and Government officials, including the 1957 Cikini incident (I: Peristiwa Cikini), an attempt to assassinate Soekarno in Cikini (Central Jakarta), Fealy (2005, p.21) argued that DI/TII was obviously attempting to terrorise the Government and the people.

\textsuperscript{31} The Concept was drafted by Kolonel Sjamaun Gaharu, the Military Regional Commander of Aceh.

\textsuperscript{32} Hasan Saleh was the Aceh region DI/TII commander. In 1959, he met Prime Minister Djanda and signed a cease fire agreement without prior consultation with Daud Beureueh. Following this, Hasan Saleh made a secret deal with General A.H. Nasution, the Head of Army Staff, to control Daud Beureueh. For this purpose, on 26 May 1959, Hasan Saleh and Teungku Husin al-Nujahid manoeuvred the organisation by forming the Aceh Federal State Revolutionary Council-Indonesia Islamic State (I: Dewan Revolusi Negara Bagian Aceh-Negara Islam Indonesia).

\textsuperscript{33} Blangpadang is the name of a place on the border of Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh.

\textsuperscript{34} The peaceful situation did not last long. In the period from 1965 to1966, in the context of a war against communism, approximately 3,000 people, of the approximate total number of 1 million people in Indonesia, were massacred because of the presumed Communist coup (Ross, 2003, p.6). In 1968, following this massacre, Aceh’s special autonomy was withdrawn by the Suharto regime (Ross, 2003). Shari’ a Law was re-instated in the year 2001 after Suharto stepped down.
granted for the Special Province of Aceh. The peace deal illustrates that the DI/TII leaders never sought a separate country from Indonesia (Robinson, 2001, p.216; Saleh, 1992). The non-violent approach of Colonel Yasin (the regional military commander at the time), however, was much more influential than any other political arguments in favour of the peace deal (Saad, 1999, p.166).

Understanding the Acehnese culture and the character of the notable Acehnese ulama and his important role in Acehnese society, Colonel Yasin persistently approached Daud Beureueh by sending letters addressing him as father (I., Ac.: ayahanda) (Tempo, 2003, p. 36). This special Achenese respectful form of address for an elder man carries the notion of full respect and care, as if the person was his own father, as well as the cultural gesture of positioning oneself as a humble younger person who fully respected the great ulama. More importantly, the form of address also signified that Daud Beureueh was not considered as rebel and traitor to the nation but, on the contrary, as someone who was deeply concerned on the nation and the people, but possessed a different approach that needed to be discussed instead of disputed. This approach might ‘have instilled pleasure’ (I.: berkenan di hati) in Daud Beureueh’s heart as he replied to the letters using a similarly polite tone, addressing Yasin as son (I.: anakanda), a respectful term of address for a younger man which conveys a notion of care and acceptance, as if the person is considered as close as one’s own son. This opened up a channel of communication between the two leaders about the underlying reasons for the movement. The cultural approach was continued by having a welcoming reception for Daud Beureueh and his fighters when they came down from the mountain to end the fighting on 9 May 1962, which further signified the cultural gesture of respect to Daud Beureueh as a well respected ulama.

The reasons why Teungku Beuerueh ‘surrendered’ are not clear. From a cultural point of view, however, there are two possible factors. The first was that it was a genuine gesture by the Acehnese. It represents their openness to negotiate as long as their feelings are respected. This character is well

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35 In his last days in the mountains, Beureueh was accompanied by eight loyal followers namely Teungku Ilyas Leube, Hasballah, Amin Negara, Amin Basyah, and Baihaqi (Tempo, 2003, p.34).
depicted in the following old Acehnese saying that clearly challenged the Dutch picture of them as stubborn and difficult to communicate with. It also illustrates that the Acehnese can offer loyal (fanatical) support to their leaders.\textsuperscript{36}

\begin{quote}
If hearts are not being insulted / Meunyo hana teupeh até
Even the next season seeds of rice will be given / Padé bijeh pih teubi
But once hearts are offended / Meunyo ka teupeh ate
Not even the bad leftover of steamed rice would be offered\textsuperscript{37} / Bu Leubèh pih han ta pentaba
\end{quote}

The second view is that it was a political trick to allow time to rebuild the organisation which had been nationally weakened after the leader, Kartosuwirjo, was captured by the government. Supporting this is the fact that in 1962, the same year as Beureueh’s surrender, before his execution, Kartosuwirjo reportedly designated Daud Beureuh to be the next leader and ultimately appointed him the second Imam of NII (ICG, 2002). Not long after, Daud Beureueh named Abu Hasbi Geudong,\textsuperscript{38} a fellow Acehnese, as his successor (ICG, 2002). This can be viewed as a political tactic to avoid DI/TII/NII being defeated by the Indonesian Military. The appointment of NII Imam further suggests that the organisation and its goal of establishing an Islamic Republic have never entirely faded away. Citing ICG, Fealy (2005, p.24) stated “…DI remains active to the present and still has probably several thousand members, though it has no central leader or unified executive.”

The cultural perspective suggests two contradictory facets of concordance and resistance as part of the ‘\textit{muslihat}’ (I, Ac.) and ‘\textit{bermain cantik}’ (I) of these political actors. Siapno (2002, pp.10-19) elaborates the concept of ‘\textit{muslihat}’ in relation to the concept of ‘political performativity’. \textit{Muslihat} is an old Acehnese conception (derived from Malayan culture) of attaining triumph through indirect means such as hiding, disguising, using

\textsuperscript{36} The history of the struggles (and how they stopped once the leaders surrendered) of Acehnese heroes and leaders, such as Teuku Umar, Cut Nya Dien, Teungku Cik di Tiro (1867-1942), and Daud Beureueh (1898-1987) well document the loyalties of the Acehnese to their leaders.
\textsuperscript{37} Husin, 2003, p.24
\textsuperscript{38} The son of Geudong, Teungku Fauzi Hasbi and his family were formerly involved with GAM. He was later considered a GAM traitor after surrendering to The Indonesian Army Special Forces (Komando Pasukan Khusus - Kopassus) in 1979.
indirect movement and languages. Siapno (2002) views this as part of indigenous resistance against the ruling Dutch, and later, the Indonesian government. *Muslihat* is closely linked into the old Acehnese saying of ‘*lheuk jago meuluet*’ (Ac.), which has no precise English translation but can be described by using five qualifications proposed by Siapno (2002, p.17).

Firstly, the ability to be ‘invisible, self-effacing, not fully defined, not easily categorizable.’ Secondly, the capability to perform well and convincingly in ‘contradictory roles’ in accordance to circumstantial demands. Thirdly, the proficiency to ‘*merayu*’ (I), which Siapno translates it as ‘to coax, seduce, flatter, soften the heart of one’s adversaries in order to get what one wants.’ Fourthly, the intelligence to have a perspective on events, and to sensibly judge their degree of importance. Fifthly, the patience to wait, accompanied by the intelligence to judge the right time for the right move.

1.3 The Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (1976 - 2004): The Economically-Driven Violent Political Conflict?

This section describes the nature and causes of the Free Aceh Movement (I: Gerakan Aceh Merdeka – GAM). It is divided into four sections: the primary rationale for the movement and its validity challenges, the first period of GAM, and the second period of GAM, and the third period of GAM. It attempts to provide an objective picture of the movement, viewing it from different relevant angles, including the macro economic and political situation of Indonesia.

1.3.1 The Primary Rationale & Its Validity Challenges

There is debate about the history of the establishment of GAM. Most western scholars (such as Schulze, 2004; Ross, 2003; and Robinson, 2001), believed that GAM was established by Hasan Muhammad di Tiro. Some (Yusuf, 2002; Saleh, 1992; Al-Chaidar, 1999; Robinson, 2001) support this. Some others (for example Jihad, 2001, pp.11-17) argue that he has no link with Tiro’s family. He was the second child of Leubee Muhammad and Fatimah binti Mahyidin binti Tgk. Syekh Samalanga, from Tanjong Bungon village, Kuta Bakti Subdistrict, district of Pidie. This is in line with

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39 There are some controversies about the history of Hasan Muhammad di Tiro, who often presents himself as the heir of Tiro’s family as the only grandson of Teungku Chik di Tiro. Some (Yusuf, 2002; Saleh, 1992; Al-Chaidar, 1999; Robinson, 2001) support this. Some others (for example Jihad, 2001, pp.11-17) argue that he has no link with Tiro’s family. He was the second child of Leubee Muhammad and Fatimah binti Mahyidin binti Tgk. Syekh Samalanga, from Tanjong Bungon village, Kuta Bakti Subdistrict, district of Pidie. This is in line with
Acehnese scholars (such as Jihad, 2001; Al-Chaidar, 1999; Saleh, 1992), however, clearly contest this argument and link the initial idea of GAM with the previous DI/TII movement for an Islamic Republic of Aceh (I: Republik Islam Aceh - RIA). They argued that Hasan di Tiro’s involvement was more as an international link for GAM to obtain guns and international support, as promised by di Tiro himself. These never materialised, resulting in some of his Acehnese colleagues (such as Abu Hasbi Geudong and Abu Jihad) calling him a liar (Jihad, 2001; Al-Chaidar, 1999).

Hasan di Tiro apparently further developed the initial concept of GAM into a different direction that did not please most of his colleagues. However, trusting him as possessing better knowledge of the international world, his colleagues finally allowed Hasan di Tiro to make the proclamation of the establishment of GAM on 20 May 1977, internationally understood as 4 December 1976 (Schulze, 2004, p.4; Robinson, 2001, p.216). There were several fundamental disagreements about the date of proclamation, text, area of sovereignty, type of state, flag, national language, and the historical foundation of the state (Al-Chaidar, 1999, pp.141-149). The absence of Islamic greetings before and after the text of the proclamation was one of the disagreements between Hasan di Tiro and the rest of the leaders. This possibly led to the existence of two types of GAM in the region, which I name the original and the derivative GAM. The original GAM carries the aspirations of the DI/TII movement for an Indonesian Islamic State (I: Negara Islam Indonesia - NII), composed of two main elements: those who aimed at establishing NII, an Islamic state at national level, such as Abu Hasbi Geudong, and those who supported RIA, an Islamic state in Aceh. This


40 This is according to Teungku Fauzi Hashi Geudong, a previous member of GAM, who stated that Hasan di Tiro was not in Aceh in 1976 (Al-Chaidar, 1999, p.149).

41 See ICG, 2002, p.7
GAM therefore is a ‘metamorphosis’ of the DI/TII/NII movement. The derivative GAM of Di Tiro aspired to an Acehnese Sultanate.\textsuperscript{42}

Regardless of these disagreements, di Tiro managed to establish his version of GAM and build an international image and acceptance that his Acheh-Sumatra National Liberation Front (ASNLF) and the ‘Declaration of Independence of Acheh-Sumatra’\textsuperscript{43} on 4 December 1976 represented the true wishes and needs of the Acehnese. Several statements made in the Declaration (Annex 5) served to denounce Indonesia and provide the rationale for Di Tiro’s movement. The statements includes the romanticism of the golden era of Aceh history as an Independent sultanate; the condemnation of the illegitimate transfer of supremacy from the Dutch to the Javanese colonialists; the exploitation by the Javanese of Aceh’s natural resources; and the impoverishment of Aceh due to the extraction of the natural gas revenue for Javanese benefit.

On careful enquiry, however, these statements in the ASNLF are contradicted by the following facts. Historical records indicate that Aceh was not part of the Anglo-Dutch treaty\textsuperscript{44} dealing with the transfer of the Dutch East Indies, later known as Indonesia. The integration of Aceh with Indonesia was due to an Acehnese decision, illustrated by the oath of the ulama and some ulêébalang who were pro-Indonesia,\textsuperscript{45} and the Cumbok war (I: Perang Cumbok), in which the pro-Indonesia ulama led group successfully defeated the anti-Indonesia ulêébalang led group. The statement also contradicts the 1928 Youth Vow (Sumpah Pemuda 1928) made by youth organisations in the

\textsuperscript{42} The derivative GAM is the focus of this chapter as this is the one that is internationally understood as the only GAM, which has made a peace agreement with the government of Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{43} GAM used Acheh instead of Aceh (Ac.: Acêh). Some believed that this was intentionally used to articulate their standpoint against the government of Indonesia that is used ‘Aceh’. Taking the history of the ejaan lama (the old style of spelling) and ejaan baru (the new style of spelling) of the Indonesia language, however, a simple technical reason might need to be considered as explaining the use of Acheh vs Aceh. The declaration of Independence of Acheh-Sumatra was developed in 1970s when Bahasa Indonesia used the ejaan lama. To be consistent, and in line with the current spelling of Bahasa Indonesia, I use ‘Aceh’.

\textsuperscript{44} In both Anglo-Dutch Treaty (1824) and the treaty in between the Sultan of Aceh and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (1819), Aceh was treated as an independent Sultanate (Schulze, 2004, p.6; Reid, 1969, pp.60-78).

East Indies, including the youth organisation from Aceh, on 28 October 1928, which declared the wish to be united as one country, one nation, and one language, and named the state Indonesia as opposed to the Dutch’s East Indies.

Di Tiro’s claims were further weakened by a lack of evidence for his claims of decreased wellbeing in Aceh and the loss of revenue from Aceh’s natural gas (Ross, 2003). Di Tiro alleged that the life expectancy of the Acehnese was 34 years and decreasing, which conflicted with empirical data indicating an increased life expectancy from 48.5 years in 1969 to 55.5 in 1977 (Hill and Wideman 1989, p.40). The infant mortality rate for males and females respectively appeared to have dropped from 141 and 120 per 1000 in 1969, to 99 and 82 per 1000 in 1977, which was better than the national male and female infant mortality rates, which dropped from 152 and 129 per 1000 in 1969 to 117 and 98 per 1000 in 1977 (Hill and Weidemann, 1989, p.40). The regional economic indicators also demonstrated relatively good economic performance and suggested little risk of conflict. Aceh’s GDP (gross domestic product) per capita, including oil and gas, sharply increased from Rp 28,000 in 1971 to Rp 1,220,700 in 1983, making it the third highest in the country (Robinson, 2001, p.221; Hill and Weidemann, 1989, p.8). The real annual average growth rate of Aceh increased from 5.2 percent in 1971-1975 to 18.9 percent in 1976-1982, making it the highest in Indonesia (Hill and Weidemann, 1989, p.10).

The claim that US$ 15 billion has been extracted from the revenue earned from natural gas for the benefit of the Javanese was also not supported by empirical data. Aceh had not yet produced this amount of revenue, which was an extrapolation of Aceh’s mineral wealth calculated by GAM (Ross, 2003, p.10). Colombijn (2003, p.342) stated that in 1983, approximately 84 per cent of Indonesia’s oil exports were actually predominantly sourced from Dumai in Riau Province. It is, however, true that most of the economic

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46 GDP is one of several measures for the size of economy of a country or region (within a country). It calculated the overall goods and services produced within a country or a region (in a country) in a particular period, including the export and import activities. ‘Gross’ indicates that depreciation of investment is not weighed in the calculation.

47 The importance of Riau in Indonesia’s economy was boosted further with the establishment of the Three Growth Triangle of Singapore-Johor-Riau in 1989.
resources benefited the central government. This can be illustrated by contrasting the GDP with the development expenditure and subsidies (including presidential instruction grants), which mainly flowed to Java and some provinces in North Sumatra, but not Aceh (see Hill and Weidemann, 1989, pp.30-32). This may have led the region to fall into the 'high growth - low income' category, especially in 1975 - 1983 (Hill and Weidemann, 1989, p.12)

It is also interesting to note that the strong notion of Islam in the region was largely hidden in the ASNLF declaration (Ross, 2003, Schulze, 2004). Opposition to the authoritarian rule of Suharto and the greater autonomy of Aceh, which di Tiro (as cited by Ross, 2003, p.11) claimed to advocate, were also left unarticulated in the Declaration. Some have argued that di Tiro deliberately avoided addressing such issues because they were not useful for gaining international support (Ross, 2003; Jihad, 2001). Although Islam was always at the core of Aceh's political movement, mentioning it in the declaration would only militate against international support. A movement for a greater autonomy within the Indonesian federation would not be favourable either, as it would be considered a domestic affair and therefore support would not be attained.48

Di Tiro's proposal for the movement, however, was in line with the general feeling of disappointment across Aceh, which may have resulted from the centrally planned development model in Indonesia. This development model left the region with little benefit from the exploitation of regional economic resources and caused the externalities49 or the 'undesirable side-effects'50 of industrial growth: the unequal employment of the Acehnese vs

48 Later, the movement used the issue of human rights to mobilise international support. Foreign States, starting with the US, and later followed by the Japanese Government, UK, and Australia, openly supported the Unity of Indonesia. The human rights issue, however, still gained wide support from the International Communities. During the Martial Law, for example, several Human Rights Activists were funded by different countries to visit and brief the leaders of these countries on human rights issues in Aceh. Some of these activists were interested in the independence movement, others were mainly concerned with human rights abuses (observations and interviews with several activists on several occasions in 2004). Although the Martial Law Authority tried to seize these activists and limit their mobility, they were able to continue their activities in a low key.

49 Externality is an economic concept used to refer to the social and environmental cost, such as prostitution and pollution, resulting from economic (profit oriented) activities.

50 Robinson, 2001, p.222
non Achenese (especially Javanese); inadequate compensation to local farmers for seizure of their land; and the environmental and moral degradation, for example the night life and sex workers, particularly in Lhokseumawe in North Aceh, especially where the plants were located (Basuki, 2003, p.15; Ross, 2003, p.17; Robinson, 2001).

The disappointment was clearly demonstrated in the failure of the Functional Group Party (Golongan Karya – Golkar), the ruling party under the Suharto regime, in the general elections of 1971 and 1977. In these elections, Golkar won only 49.7 percent and 41 percent of the vote, respectively, in comparison to the 48.9 and 57.5 percent gained by the Islamic party, the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan – PPP) (Ross, 2003, p.9; Abdullah, 2003). These figures clearly suggest that the United Development Party was the major rival for the Functional Group Party in Aceh. Considering the fact that it was the only Moslem-oriented party in Indonesia at the time, it is possible to argue that the political grievances went hand in hand with the religious based discontent of the predominantly Moslem area and were exacerbated by the romanticism of the Islamic independent Sultanate of Aceh.  

This may explain the success of di Tiro, who was the DI/TII/NII representative abroad in 1956-1962 (Jihad, 2001, p.13), in gaining support from some of the Acehnese, despite the lack of evidence, absence of prominent facts, and the under rated economic achievements of Aceh in di Tiro’s proposal. GAM reportedly gaining sympathy of many ex DI/TII/NII fighters and their families, including Teungku Ilyah Leube and Teungku Fauzi Hasbi, the son of Abu Hasbi Geudong, the third Imam of NII. Nevertheless, Daud Beureuh, the second Imam of NII, who was a former ally of di Tiro, declined to support him, due largely to the absence of reference of Islam, the basis of Beureuh’s movement, in the declaration. For Beureuh, the

51 In the 1970s, the central government sent a special mission to Aceh to find out why Aceh was against Golkar, but this resulted a weak analysis that overlooked the root causes of Aceh’s grievances (Tempo, 2003). In addition, the mass arrests of villagers in Pidie, religious leaders, ex DI/TII fighters, and student activists fuelled to discontent (Siapno, 2002, p.44)

52 He is one of Beureueh’s seven loyal followers who accompanied him until the last day of his movement.
stronghold of Islam motivated him to desire nothing but a state that accommodated the monotheism of an Islamic State.

In line with the claims in the declaration, the movement focused on the new status of Aceh as a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)\(^{53}\) exporter and made the grievances not only to Indonesia but also to the US, which was perceived as not only supporting the Indonesian Government but also exploiting their resources.\(^{54}\) Since its establishment, GAM’s pre-eminence has ebbed and flowed as is described in the following sections.

1.3.2 The First Period (1976 to 1979)

In this first period, GAM was a small organisation that was poorly equipped and easily defeated by the Indonesian military. GAM reportedly had no more than two hundred fighters, some of whom had involuntarily joined the movement, and a few old weapons, some of which were residues of World War II. They were engaged more with ‘social buy in’, producing and distributing pamphlets and raising an Acehnese flag to gain sympathy from the people, than with military attacks. Financial support was quite limited, and mostly obtained from the town folk (Schulze, 2004; Ross, 2003). Around 1977, however, GAM stole the LNG facility’s payroll, shot two Americans workers, and killed one of them (Ross, 2003).\(^{55}\) This was the first instance of GAM’s efforts to extort money from the plant (Ross, 2003, p.13).

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\(^{53}\) The resource was first found in North Aceh in 1971 and started to be extracted in 1977 by Mobil Oil Co together with Pertamina (The Indonesia State Oil Company) and Jilco (a Japanese conglomerate). The exploration reached its peak of production in 1988 (Schulze, 2004, p.9; Dawood and Sjafrizal, 1989 in Ross, 2003, pp.11-12; Ross, 2003, pp. 11 & 41). An unfair neglect of local firms, however, was quite prominent. This situation was experienced by di Tiro himself, whose own company was once defeated by the U.S.-owned Bechtel for a pipeline building project of Mobil Oil (Ross, 2003, p.12). The oil boom also benefited the region in the new roads, schools, medical facilities, and approximately 4,000 to 5,000 new houses built by the Company, as well as some new downstream industries, such as ASEAN fertilizer, established in the region. The factory compound was initially planned to be built in North Sumatra but moved to Aceh due to the strong protest from the people (Sjamsuddin, 1984 in Ross, 2003, p.12).

\(^{54}\) This was documented in Di Tiro’s diary in May 1978, in which he criticised the US for not only supporting Indonesia but also exploiting Aceh’s resources through Mobil Oil (Schulze, 2004, p.9).

\(^{55}\) Di Tiro argued that the shooting happened when GAM tried to arrange a secret meeting with an Acehnese manager to discuss the ‘ways and means’ to protect the plant from possible damage due to guerrilla fighting (Ross, 2003, p.13). Teungku Fauzi Hasbi Geudong confessed that the shooting was on Di Tiro’s instruction to attract international attention (Al-Chaidar, 1999, p.152).
The government responded to the initial period of GAM activities with both coercive and persuasive approaches. The coercive approach resulted in forced disappearances and the torture of not only GAM fighters but also their family members. Women and children were often taken as hostages by the government in the event that their husbands managed to evade arrest. From August 1977 to August 1980 approximately thirty men were shot dead in public with no proper trial (Ross, 2003, p. 14). Coercion continued until 1982, and trials of suspected GAM partisans lasted until 1984 (Ross, 2003, p. 14). By the early 1980s, these government efforts had successfully weakened GAM. 56

The persuasion approach consisted of building new public facilities such as roads and television relay stations in remote areas to dissuade civil leaders from supporting GAM. Added to this was the development of new public facilities and downstream industries, which certainly provided more employment opportunities. With the LNG power plant, the region enjoyed outstanding economic figures: a 7.6 percent average annual rate of GDP and 13.7 percent average annual growth rate in the manufacturing sector from the period 1975 to 1984, and a rapid increase of the oil and gas contribution to GDP from less than 17 percent in 1976 to 69.5 percent in 1989 (Ross, 2003, p. 14).

The fine economic performance of Aceh, unfortunately, was not widely enjoyed by the region, as most of the benefits from the LNG

56 Some GAM members, including Teungku Fauzi Hasbi, surrendered and became informants for the Indonesian Army. Interestingly, Teungku Hasbi was connected to Jemaah Islamiyah and the Army Special Forces Command (I: Komando Pasukan Khusus - Kopassus) at the same time and reportedly regularly traveled to Medan and Jakarta from Kuala Lumpur (ICG, 2002b, p. 7). Both Jemaah Islamiyah and the Kopassus possessed common interests of fighting GAM. The link between Hasbi’s family and Jemaah Islamiyah leaders can be traced to 1976, when his family hosted Haji Ismail Pranoto, the East Javanese Darul Islam leader, who came to seek Beureuh’s permission to revive DI/TII/NII and to join Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and Abdullah Sungkar in the organisation (ICG, 2002, p. 7). Fauzi Hasbi’s father, Abu Hasbi Geudong, was imprisoned from late 1979 to around 1982. Upon his release, he started contacting the former DI/TII/NII members to discuss strategies to fight against Suharto’s repression of Islam (ICG, 2002, p. 7). In Singapore, he shared a house with Malik Mahmud, and was invited to be an advisor for GAM in Sweden. Abu Hasbi Geudong, who supported the original idea of Darul Islam for NII and rather than a separate state of RIA, decided to move out in 1984 (ICG, 2002b, p. 7).
exploration went to the central government. In addition, the new economy caused social disruptions that were overlooked by the government and led to the re-emergence of GAM in 1989 to 1991. With a sharp increase in population from 490,000 in 1974 to 755,000 in 1987, North Aceh suffered from overstretched social facilities and infrastructure, not to mention other social costs, such as pollution; social problems of corruption, gambling, and prostitution; as well as problems of non-Acehnese migration with its overall consequences of ‘land seizures’ and stiff job competition (Ross, 2003, pp.15-17; Basuki, 2003, p.15; Robinson, 2001; Kell, 1995). Amnesty International (1993 in Ross, 2003, p.17) reported the following protests conducted by locals over this issue: (a) May 1988, the setting on fire of the local police station by villagers from Idi Cut, East Aceh; (b) August 1988, the bombing of a hotel in Lhokseumawe, North Aceh, that was used as a prostitution centre; (c) March 1989, a riot of an estimated 8,000 people who destroyed a building owned by the military to protest a circus show which, according to the local Moslem leaders, was not compatible with Islamic teachings. These riots signalled the re-emergence of GAM in the second period from 1989 to 1991.

1.3.3 The Second Period (1989 to 1991)

In the second period, GAM emerged as a bigger, better equipped, and better-trained organisation compared to the first period. Although it lacked territorial control, GAM reportedly possessed the necessary command structure to perform ‘hit and run’ guerrilla operations to attack military installations and personnel. This resulted from the training provided by Libya in the 1980s, which was largely due to the hard work of Hasan di Tiro and his ‘Acehnese government-in-exile.’ Another factor that may also explain this

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57 This was a common situation in provinces in Indonesia that only obtained a greater authority after the issuance of Law 22/1999 and 25/1999 on regional autonomy and the central and regional government financial balances.

58 In 1986, di Tiro’s government established contact with Libya and received non-financial support. In the 1980s, around 250 to 2000 Acehnese, mainly from Malaysia, were trained in Libya (Schulze, 2004; Ross, 2003; Robinson, 2001, p.217), of which approximately 150 to 800 slipped into Aceh via Malaysia and Singapore (Vatikiotis, 1991 in Ross, 2003, p16). Other sources records different numbers of GAM fighters trained in Libya in 1986-1989. According to Schulze (2004), Di Tiro (Wali Nanggroo, Defence Minister, and Supreme Commander), claimed there were 5,000; Malik Mahmud (GAM’s Minister of State), 1,500; ICG, 700 -800; and Indonesia Army intelligence, 583. Di Trio and Malik Mahmud disagreed
was the estimated 47 ex-Indonesian military and police officers who joined GAM in 1989. In this phase, GAM was concentrated in the north-eastern coastal areas of Pidie, North Aceh, and East Aceh. As for financial support, GAM admitted to obtaining it from, among others, Acehnese settlers in Malaysia. However, the organisation also extorted some funds from their claim to revenues from the Mobil Oil company (Schulze, 2004; Ross, 2003; Robinson, 2001). Undoubtedly, this claim related to their dissatisfaction over the limited benefit received by the locals, as indicated by the small number of Acehnese hired by the company in comparison to outsiders, especially the Javanese – a practice the company attributed to the locals’ comparative lack of skills.

GAM became more confident to pursue more aggressive courses of action (Sukma, 2004; Schulze, 2004; Ross, 2003). It started to attack police and military units, public facilities; civil authorities; commercial buildings; suspected ‘cuak’ (Ac.), the local term for the Indonesian military’s informers and spies, mostly recruited as operational support resources for the Indonesian military (I.: Tenaga Pembantu Operasi - TPO); and non Acehnese settlers, mainly the Javanese, in the region. The attacks that began on a small scale and in limited areas in 1989 quickly became more extensive and serious in the 1990s (Sukma, 2004, p.6).

The question of whether to respond with an intense military counter-action was still being debated by the central government, especially armed forces officials. Their public statements, however, did not necessarily match their actions. On the one hand, the Military Headquarters issued a press release and made public statements that identified GAM as weak and easily overcome by the Indonesian military, and that it was purely criminal and not a

about the opportunities for training in Libya. ICG (2002, p.7) reported ‘...Husaini made contact with Libya and learned that military training was being offered there for would-be Muslim separatists. There was a choice of six-month, eight-month, or twelve-month training, and each trainee received a cash payment of U.S.$5,000 on completion of the course. Husaini and the people around him wanted to send more educated people, but Hasan di Tiro was worried that if educated people were sent, they might think for themselves and challenge di Tiro’s rule.’

Examples of these attacks are: May 1989, GAM attacked and killed army officers in di Tiro subdistrict and took their arms; Similar attacks appeared in September 1989 and early 1990 in different districts of North Aceh, Pidie, and East Aceh (Sukma, 2004, p.6). These attacks were due to GAM’s shortage of arms (Sukma, 2004, p.6).
in this was a serious concern towards the situation in general. This argument is actually in line with Sukma’s suggestion of a ‘hidden military agenda’ (Sukma, 2004, p.8), which he did not clearly describe but rather implied in his proposed four reasons for the government’s counter insurgency against GAM - namely, the rapid growth of GAM supporters from civil society, fear of the possibility of Acehnese intellectuals’ supporting GAM; the imposed threat towards the security of vital industrial projects in the region, and fear of the possible external (international?) support obtained by GAM, especially the former DI/TII/NII Acehnese fighters exiled in Malaysia.

The movement’s potential impact on national stability, particularly economic stability, may have alarmed the government. In the 1970s and 1990s, Indonesia was enjoying her best economic performance, benefiting from, among other things, the oil boom of the 1970s (see Manning, 1998). Such a favourable economic situation could not afford any political disturbances, especially with the national economic master plan aiming to achieve the ‘take off’ (I: lepas landas) stage in 2000. The Indonesian military’s denial of the seriousness of the problem was essential to assure public, especially market, opinion. The military portrayed the disturbance as small and apolitical, and that everything was stable and under control in order to ensure both national and regional economic stability. Such statements were necessary to maintain the market, protect the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and prevent the weak currency from becoming weaker (as experienced by Indonesia on previous several occasions). However, statements of ‘denial’, ‘criminalisation’, and ‘de-politicisation’ from the Indonesian military were insufficient by themselves, and needed to be followed by serious action to prove what had been stated. The sending of ‘non organic troops’ was, therefore, indispensable to reassure the public that the domestic situation was secure and stable.

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63 Citing Kell, Sukma (2004, p.6) stated that “…in a relatively short period GAM had succeeded in drawing the support of village officials, serving members of the armed forces, veterans of the Darul Islam movement of the 1950s, civil servants, small traders, and schoolteachers.”

64 This is one of the Rostow’s five-stage developments (the growth-led development) which The National Development Plan of Indonesia aimed to achieve.
The serious politicisation of the situation became more evident with a issuance of the Military Operation (MO)^65 order, which was supported by the elite Acehnese (Ishak, 1999, p.32). The operation was popularly known as DOM, an abbreviation for the Indonesian term ‘Daerah Operasi Militer’, the Military Operation Areas, in 1989 – 1998 covering the three districts of North Aceh, Pidie, and East Aceh.66 Under the code name the ‘Red Net Operation’ (I: Operasi Jaring Merah), the military aimed to squeeze GAM in six months (Sukma, 2004, p.9). This operation is remembered by the people as the most frightening, with so much violence, including torture, executions, arbitrary arrests, rape, and forced disappearances. It was pretty obvious during my field trip that almost everyone in Aceh knew what the red net (I: jaring merah) was, and always mentioned it with the look of fear and horror in their eyes.

The MO had two main characteristics: the ‘institutionalisation of terror’ and the ‘systematic and forced mobilisation of civilians’, especially with its ‘shock therapy’ (Robinson, 2001, p.226; Sukma, 2004, p.10; Schulze, 2004; and the Human Rights Watch, 2001). Regardless of its breaches of international law prohibiting direct involvement of civilians in a war situation, the ‘red net’ operation was accompanied by the ‘Fence of Legs’ strategy (I: Pagar Betis)^67 in which civilians were used for sweeping, finding, and protecting the area from, GAM fighters. Under this operation civilians were

^65 The MO for Aceh was under the North Sumatra Kodam Bukit Barisan, with a Field Operation Command (Komando Pelaksana Operasi –Kolakops) established under the Liliwangsa Sub Regional Military Command (I: Komando Resort Militer – Korem), North Aceh District (Sukma, 2004, p.8). At district level, the operation comprised Special Task Forces (Satuan Tugas Khusus –Sagaus), Tactical Task Forces (I: Satuan Taktis –Sattis), and the Operational Support Resources (I: Tenaga Pembantu Operasi –TPO), consisting of civilians and GAM detainees who had, both voluntarily or involuntarily, joined the military operation and served as military spies and informers (Ac.: cuak).

^66 There have been debates on the existence of DOM. Some scholars (such as Sukma, 2004), pointing to the nature of the operations and number of “non organic troops” deployed to the region, argued that DOM was applied. Some others (such as Widjayanto and Kammen, 1999), maintained that DOM never legally existed in any troubled provinces of Indonesia and posit that a distinction ought to be made between DOM and areas with military action characterised by a combat command (Kolakops), such as the Kolakops Timor Timur for the former East Timor province and Jaring Merah for Aceh. To accommodate both arguments, I use the term Military Operation (MO).

^67 The Fence of Legs strategy has been applied in other troubled provinces: the former East Timor province (see Kammen, 2001) and West Papua province (see Davis, 2001). In the case of Aceh, the Fence of Legs strategy was inevitable due to the Military’s lack of knowledge of the region’s geographic characteristics and difficulties in identifying GAM fighters.
forced to become involved in military formed militias and vigilante units that consequently put their life even more at risk. The Indonesian military argued that the ‘Fence of Legs’ strategy was in line with Hankamrata, known in Indonesia as ‘Pertahanan Keamanan Rakyat Merata’, one of the prominent government policies for the involvement of civil society in national security defence.

‘Red Net’ was not a stand alone operation but accompanied by a territorial operation (I: operasi territorial) which aimed at gaining the hearts and minds of the Acehnese, especially in areas with a strong GAM presence (Sukma, 2004, p.11), through rural development and infrastructure programs. The overall operation package, however, developed into one of the blackest sagas in the history of the Indonesian Military’s counter insurgency actions due to its viciousness, particularly its ‘shock therapy’ strategy, i.e. a terror campaign designed to create fear and deter people from supporting GAM (Schulze, 2004; Sukma, 200, p.10; the Human Right Watch, 2001). As Sukma notes (2004, p.10): “…what was initially claimed to be a normal counterinsurgency operation turned to be a brutal violation of human rights by Indonesia’s military apparatus.” The operation were noted as “…the heaviest counterinsurgency campaigns seen since the 1960s.”

Given the size and length of the operation, it was hardly surprising that it effectively weakened GAM, with many commanders being captured or killed. In its first three years of implementation, more than one thousand civilians were also killed (The Human Rights Watch, 2001). From 1990 to 1992 alone, the estimated death toll ranged from 2,000 to 10,000, mainly caused by the Indonesian military, particularly the Military (Amnesty International, 1993; ICG, 2001). In 1991 to 1998, many believed that GAM no longer existed and normalcy seemed to be ‘restored’. The MO lasted until

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68 Galasi (from the names of the three districts of Gayo, Alas and Singkil, in Aceh) was the first Military formed militia. Many believed that members of Galasi were mostly criminals and gangsters (I: preman) from Medan in North Sumatra. The usage of militia, however, is not restricted to the military. Some political parties and religious organisations in Indonesia were noted as using militia or some sort of organisation close to militia, to protect their political interests, such as the Nation Guard (I: Garda Bangsa) of PKB, Versatile Guard (Banser) of NU, and Sympathetic Line (Barisan Simpatik) of the National Message Party (Darwin, 2003, p.112)

69 The Human Right Watch, 2001. For the 1960s incidents see Cribb (1990)

1.3.4 The Third Period (1999 to 2004)

In the third phase, 1999 to 2004, GAM resumed its activities as a much larger and better-funded organisation which was able to mobilise more international attention on Aceh, particularly during 1999 to 2003. Their activities were then curtailed by the Indonesian military with the adoption of martial law in the region in 2003 to 2004. The contexts of a national transition to democracy and civil society provided GAM with favourable conditions to gain its objectives. Five interrelated factors are generally cited as the major reasons for the rise of GAM in this period: the Indonesian MOs (especially the 1989-91 killings), the economic crisis, political transformation, the success of the East Timor referendum, and weakened government credibility (Ross, 2003, p.18; Sukma, 2004; Schulze, 2004).

The counter insurgency military operations (especially the 1989-91 killings), against the second phase of the emergence of GAM fostered deep trauma among civilians against the Indonesian military. GAM effectively utilised this situation and propagated a vision of the importance of Aceh having self-government to ensure the wellbeing of the people. These two factors resulted in wide-spread civilian support for GAM in early 2000. Illustrating this argument, a local argued that a complete clamping down on GAM would not be possible, for it was ‘under everybody’s tongues’, meaning that GAM had been integrated into Acehnese society not only physically but

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70 Some, such as Sukma (2004), the Human Rights Watch (2001), and Robinson (2001) maintained that 1998 was the starting point of GAM’s re-emergence when over a hundred Libyan-trained GAM fighters returned to Aceh. This is based on a series of violent attacks in late 1998, such as the Lhok Nibong incident in which a crowd stopped a military bus full of soldiers about to go back to their place of origins (mainly Java) for annual leave and beat to death seven soldiers (Saad, 1999, p.27). However, given that the violence reached its peak in early 1999 with the commencement of The Authority Operation (I: Operasi Wibawa) that “...ostensibly aimed at capturing those responsible for the killings, and restoring government authority, resulted in scores of arrests and the killing of at least eleven people in the vicinity of Lhokseumawe...” (Robinson, 2001, p.216). I have chosen 1999 as the starting date.
also philosophically. The killing of GAM members would therefore mean the killing of the civilians.\textsuperscript{71}

The economic crisis in Indonesia, which was an after-effect of the 1997 financial crisis in Southeast Asian countries, also helped GAM to gain public support. Indonesia’s economy suffered severely, especially from mid-1998 onwards. This can be seen from a number of indicators, including the followings. As of December 1998, Indonesia’s total foreign debt amounted to 150 billion US$, placing Indonesia number five after China, Mexico, Russia, and Brazil.\textsuperscript{72} The weakened currency saw Indonesia’s exchange rate sharply decline from US$1 to Rp2,000 in 1997 to Rp 16,000 in June 1998. In addition, an increased proportion of Indonesians were living below poverty line, from 11 percent in 1996 to 24.2 percent in December 1998, which equates to an estimated 50 million people (Baswir, 2003, pp.61-82; Ananta, 2003, p.10; Basri, 2003, p.54). The negative effects of this crisis were nationwide. In Aceh this translated into a deterioration in food security, education, and health, which were all relatively unfavourable compared to other provinces in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{73}

For food security, education, and health, Aceh was ranked the 17\textsuperscript{th}, 18\textsuperscript{th}, and 15\textsuperscript{th} rank respectively among 25 provinces studied (not including West Papua and East Timor) (Ananta, 2003, p.249).\textsuperscript{74} The relatively unfavourable ranking of Aceh, however, illustrates not only the consequence of the crisis but also the impact of the conflict on Acehnese households.

The national economic crisis was accompanied by widespread social unrest and political turmoil in 1998.\textsuperscript{75} The social unrest encompassed three

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{71} Interview on April 2003
\item \textsuperscript{72} China, Mexico, Russia, and Brazil had total debts amounting to 254, 159, 183, and 232 billion US$ respectively. The crisis was in its worst stage in 1998 (Ananta, 2003, p.17).
\item \textsuperscript{73} The situation was actually worsened with the implementation of IMF’s package for economic recovery in which a neo liberal economy was the core theoretical framework, characterised by the three important concepts of free trade, free market (which is mainly about cutting subsidies), and privatisation of state owned companies. Evidence from many developing countries show that the first two concepts, especially the free market, led to impoverishment.
\item \textsuperscript{74} Ananta (2003) studied the impact of the economic crisis on regional food security, using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of Indonesia from 1998-2000. The CPI measures the price changes of goods and services for household consumption in order to build a picture of households’ consumer behaviour. The prices examined do not include dwelling, life insurance, social security contribution, and direct taxes.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Darwin (2003, p.106) argued that the late 1990s were years of violence for Indonesia.
\end{itemize}
types of conflict: inter-religious conflict (Central Sulawesi, North Maluku and Maluku), inter-ethnic conflict (Central and West Kalimantan), and state-civil society conflict (Papua, East Timor, and Aceh). The crisis was at its worst in 1998 (Ananta, 2003, p.17). The political turmoil of 1998 resulted in a countrywide people’s power demonstration for democratic elections and an end to the New Order under Suharto. The crisis signalled the end of an authoritarian government, military domination, and prevalent corruption (ICG, 1999, pp.1-2). Indonesia was further politically transformed into a more democratic state on 7 June 1999, when the first democratic general election after almost 44 years of democratic silence took place. The political transformation, however, was a two-sided coin, with two contradictory effects. On the one hand, it led to a new freedom of expression being enjoyed by civil society, including Aceh and the former East Timor province. On the other hand, it resulted in ‘political euphoria’, which left the country anxious and indecisive about its future, frail, fragmented, and chaotic.

In this context, some rapid political decisions regarding the two troubled areas of Aceh and East Timor were issued. Both provinces were experiencing vertical conflicts between Indonesia’s Armed Forces and Freedom Fighters. Two important decisions on both provinces were made by President Habibie, Suharto’s successor. On 8 August 1998, Habibie officially acknowledged that the MO had never been lifted from Aceh and vowed to withdraw the military forces. This promise was fulfilled with the withdrawal of ‘the non-organic’ troops (I: pasukan non organis) from the region (The

Indonesia’s political situation can be grouped into three orders or era: (1) the Old Order (I: Orde Lama-Orla) under the first president of Sukarno (1945-1965); (2) the New Order (I: Orde Baru-Orba) under the second president of Suharto, who was repeatedly re-elected for the next 25 years (1966-1999); and the Reformation Order (I: Orde Reformasi) (2000-present), the post-Suharto era, mainly characterised by a major shift from an authoritarian to a more democratic government.

Another factor, but not the most important one, was a change in the dual socio-political role of the Indonesian Armed Forces (I:Dwi Fungsi ABRI) under which the Indonesian Armed Forces enjoyed a bloc of seats in the Parliament and key administrative posts such as Governor and Head of Districts. Due to the strong demand of the civil society for the military to go back to barracks (I:kembali ke barak), this dual role came to an end. This, however, has left a blank spot on what unites the country. The military, given its origin from the Indonesia guerrilla freedom fighters in the Dutch colonial era, possesses a historical legitimation as the guardians for the uniting of Indonesia. In its absence, the big question of what is ‘Indonesia’ that led to a further deeper question ‘Quo Vadis Indonesia,’ unavoidably emerged. In my opinion, this has also, to a certain extent, contributed to the frail, fragmented, chaotic, and indecisive situation in Indonesia.
Human Rights Watch 2001). This followed a public apology and declaration of guilt by the Armed Forces’ Commander, General Wiranto, on 7 August 1998 for the implementation of the military policy in Aceh (Sukma, 2004, p.12). Closely following these actions, on January 27, 1999, Habibie officially promulgated East Timor’s right to self-determination. The Acehnese student activists instantly took up the issue with an all-Aceh student congress in early February 1999. The congress called for a referendum for the peaceful resolution to the conflict in Aceh and established an information centre for the Aceh referendum (Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh –SIRA).78

Meanwhile, by January 199979 the security situation in Aceh had deteriorated with intensified armed clashes. The Indonesian military argued the necessity of a harsh military approach, pointing to the increased violence conducted by GAM. In their efforts to accrue funds, for example, GAM was taking a harsh stance toward civilians. As noted by Ross (2003, p.25), in its third period of emergence, GAM mobilised funds from several sources such as “…voluntary donations, taxes, extortion, kidnapping, and sale of timber and cannabis”. Involuntary donations were acquired through violence and threats to individuals and businesses or companies. From 1999 to March 2001, Exxon Mobil experienced increased attacks. There were fifty hijackings of Mobil Oil vans and pickups, two incidents of ground-fire at Company airplanes, repeated attacks on Company facilities with both gunfire and grenades, an ambush of Company buses used to take employers to work, four officers killed while off duty, and some threats to employers. Most of these attacks aimed to extort funds from Exxon Mobil. These actions led Mobil Oil

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78 As SIRA was more about a referendum than the independence of Aceh, it arguably had no link with GAM and practically opposed GAM’s philosophy of offering no options but the independence of Aceh (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, p.19). Most of SIRA’s members, however, were noted as pro-independence. The civil society based campaign of SIRA was in GAM’s interests, and without GAM’s support the massive attendance at SIRA’s rallies would not have been possible (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, p.19). Examples of these rallies are the rally calling for a referendum and for UN intervention on 16 August 2000, symbolised by the raising of the UN flag on the following day, which happened to be the independence day of Indonesia.

79 This actually started in late 1998, only a few months after the withdrawal of the ‘non-organic’ troops. A mass-riot attacked a local police office in Bayu, North Aceh, on 20 December 1998 after hearing rumours on sexual harassment of a local woman by a police sergeant (Robinson, 2001, p.217). Following this, was a riot in Lhok Nibong resulted in the death of seven soldiers dragged from a passing bus (See also footnote 70)
to pay a ‘double tax’ to both the Government and GAM. The latter was able to collect 1.1 billion rupiah, or US$130,000 through the GAM’s taxation (Ac.: pajak nanggroe) (Ross, 2003, p.25).

Responding to this deterioration, Habibie’s successor, Abdurahman Wahid, a key Islamic leader, issued Presidential Instruction (I: Instruksi Presiden – Inpres) no 4/2001 aimed at a comprehensive resolution, combining security and negotiation. Following this presidential instruction, the Operation for Security Restoration and Law Enforcement (I: Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Penegakan Hukum – OPKPH) commenced. Although it said to be part of the comprehensive solution, the operation exemplified a military approach rather than a negotiated approach for two reasons. Firstly, members of the operation comprised four coercive elements, namely the police (consisting of the regular and paramilitary police); the Indonesian military territorial forces based in Aceh under Korem Teuku Umar of Banda Aceh, and Korem Lilawangsa of Lhok Seumawe, North Aceh; the Navy; and the Air Force. Second, the Inpres that was aimed at, providing a legal basis for the police to take over the responsibility of the security in Aceh, failed to do so. Legally, operational command was given under the national mobile police brigade (I: Brigade Mobil – Brimob). In practice, however, the power lay with the Indonesian military, particularly the Army, e.g. Korem Lilawangsa simply because the police were not ready; they lacked capacity, skills, and equipment.

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80 Moreover, the Company also had to accommodate GAM’s demand for the employment of their personnel, which became an economic inefficiency for the Company due to the lack of skills and education of these employees.
81 GAM local taxation applied to all personal income, business income, schools in the province.
82 According to the National General Election, the PDI-P party of Megawati Sukarnoputri was the winner. However, Amien Rais with his ‘Central Axis’ (I: Poros Tengah) was able to stop her from becoming president. With so many manoeuvres in the Parliaments, Abdurrahman Wahid (commonly known as Gus Dur) was finally elected as the Fourth President of Indonesia.
83 Sukma (2004, p.17) maintained that while the Military – that is the Rajawali Force – was able to identify combatants and non combatants and took special care in this, Brimob persistently marred this hard work with its lack of professionalism; “...the excessive use of force, summary executions, regular intimidation and torture of civilians accused of having links with GAM, extortion, and the burning of schools and houses”.

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The heavy dependence of the Police on the Indonesian military was further accentuated by the next president, Megawati Sukarnoputri, who approved the establishment of Kodam Iskandar Muda in Aceh province in February 2002. Many argued that the establishment of a Kodam in Aceh would not really help the government address the basic issues, but would only sustain the presence of the Indonesian military. The government maintained that such a presence was needed since GAM had intensified its operations. The establishment of Kodam Iskandar Muda, however, may also have added to the grievances of some of the Acehnese on the merging of their Kodam with the North Sumatra Kodam and the abolition of the white elephant division (I: Divisi Gajah Putih), which was a great source of Acehnese pride, under Suharto. These two contributed to the feeling of being treated unfairly, like a step child (I: dianaktirikan), and being betrayed by Jakarta.

Responding to the people’s demands, not only from Aceh province but also other provinces that were concerned about the situation of Aceh, post-Suharto governments have taken several steps. These are: sending a parliamentary fact-finding team to assess human rights violations in 1999; apologising in 1998 for the human rights abuses committed by the Indonesian military; withdrawing combat forces and ending the MO in 1998; pledging special aid to the regional economy and widows and orphans in areas of MO in 1999; adopting Law no 22 on regional autonomy and Law no 25 on central-regional fiscal balance in 1999, which provided a legal framework for more

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84 Megawati was the daughter of the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, and the leader of PDI-P (I: Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan) – The Struggle Democratic Political Party, which had a nationwide support society. At the time, many people referred to this party as the people’s party (I: partainya rakyat). Many argued that Megawati profited from her father’s popularity as one of the national heroes who ensured the foundation of the unity of Indonesia. Following his lead, Megawati was a strong nationalist and would contemplate an idea but the unity of Indonesia. When she stepped into power, many argue that she would ally more with the Indonesian military, which was well proven with the establishment of Kodam Iskandar Muda in Aceh. This created more grievances among the Acehnese given one of her political promises was to let no more blood be spilled in Aceh.

85 The withdrawal, however, was marked by violence in Lhokseumawe resulting in the setting on fire of shops, a cottage, and the regional parliament building (Sukma, 2004, p.12). This was followed by massive killings of Indonesian military spies and informers (Ac.: cuak). No parties claimed responsible to this incident. Both Indonesian military and GAM blamed each other. Such accusations and denials from and were common in the conflicts of Aceh. Both parties actually made use of individuals in civilian clothes to run amok and carry out atrocities in order to avoid responsibility and put the blame on the other side (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, p.5).
autonomy at district level and a more equitable extraction of income from natural resources between the central and district governments; and enacting Law no 18/2001 on special autonomy for Aceh province to govern and have control over its own cultural, religious, and educational affairs, in 2001.\textsuperscript{86}

Unfortunately, little can be said about the success of these efforts. Apart from the consequences of ‘partial democratic rule’, a factor that may shed light on these poor results was the government’s lack of credibility\textsuperscript{87} that resulted in Acehnese lack of trust of the government and widespread support for GAM that prolonged the conflict (Sukma, 2004; Robinson, 2001). Compounding the situation was the government’s lack of a comprehensive political solution for Aceh, which necessitated the use of military force as exemplified in Wahid’s Presidential Instruction (I: Instruksi Presiden – Inpres) no 4/2001 that was further strengthened with the establishment of Kodam Iskandar Muda by Megawati Sukarnoputri, Wahid’s successor.

It is important to note that the third period of GAM was also characterised by the heightening of disputes among GAM leaders in Sweden, especially the leadership rivalry between Hasan di Tiro and Dr. Husaini Hasan. The establishment of the Government Council of GAM (I: Majelis Pemerintahan, well-known by its abbreviation: MP-GAM) by Husaini Hasan clearly illustrates these internal frictions. Attacking Husaini Hasan’s faction, Di Tiro’s introduced the notion of the ‘real’ as opposed to the ‘non real’ GAM. This dichotomy was used by the Indonesian government to undermine the ‘real’ GAM (ICG, 2002, p.8) by dealing with MP-GAM rather than Hasan di Tiro in negotiations. In this way, the government was able to maintain, and even sharpen, the internal conflict within GAM.

The nature of the violent political conflict in the third period of GAM’s resurrection differs significantly from previous periods. Firstly, there

\textsuperscript{86} This law was issued by Megawati’s government on 9 August 2001, but was drafted under Abdurahman Wahid.

\textsuperscript{87} Citing Crouch, Ross (2003, p.22) noted that the central government’s credibility was close to zero given the history of broken promises since the 1950s. Adding to this was the extensive counter insurgency carried out by the Military during the 1990s, in which violence and human rights abuses were quite prominent. Including the killings of some ‘40 peaceful demonstrators’ near Lhokseumawe in North Aceh, and the military attack on an Islamic Boarding School in Beutong Ateuh, West Aceh, that caused 57 to 70 casualties (Ross, 2003, p.22; ICG, 1999, p.5).
was a decreased involvement of civilians in the Indonesian military’s security operations. With a better understanding of human rights and the international laws of war, and lessons drawn from previous military operations, the Indonesian military was relatively more careful about the extensive use of civilians. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there was a total absence of this practice, as noted below by Sukma (2004, p.17):

...This, however, does not mean that such practices were entirely absent. During Operation Cinta Meunasah, for example, military sources acknowledged that militias had been formed in Central Aceh to fight GAM forces in the area... These militias were reportedly made up of Javanese migrants in the area who had become frequent targets of attack by unidentified groups... (Sukma, 2004, p.17)

Second was the increased willingness of both the Indonesian military and GAM to put more effort into a diplomatic, dialogic, and non-violent approach. Facilitated by the Swiss-based NGO, Henry Dunant Centre, both parties had several meetings for peace building and conflict resolution. They finally agreed to sign the Cessation on Hostility Agreement (CoHA) on 6 December 2002, which created so much hope for the Acehnese.

Unfortunately, the situation deteriorated in early 2003, and the CoHA was finally ended with the implementation of martial law on 19 May 2003, which lasted for around 1 year. During this period, GAM was practically neutralised by the Indonesian military, with most of their peace negotiators and some of their fighters imprisoned or being killed. On 15 August 2004, a peace agreement between the government of Indonesia and GAM was signed, following the Tsunami that occurred on 26 December 2004.

2 On Bitter Ground: The Acehnese in the Midst of Conflict

In this section, I attempt to describe the effects of the violent political conflict between GAM and the government on the people of Aceh at both macro and micro levels. I elaborate the consequences of the most recent conflicts of GAM and the government by considering the history of violent political conflict in Aceh in the previous era.
2.1 The Neglect of Human Rights: From Threat to Economic Resources Extortions.

In early 2000, both the military and the GAM forces were accused of human rights abuses, including arrests, ‘disappearances’, tortures, murders, and rapes (Human Rights Watch, 2001), with the military accused of more sins than GAM forces. As a consequence, it is understandable that the people were gradually becoming less sympathetic to both government of Indonesia’s armed forces and GAM fighters.  

There were five types of violations conducted by Indonesian Armed Forces: extrajudicial executions; torture; disappearances; collective punishment; and restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association (Human Rights Watch, 2001, pp.14-19). The extrajudicial executions mostly took place during the MO in which Indonesian military conducted their ‘sweeping’ (I: penyisiran), which essentially involved the search for GAM fighters and partisans. The excuse often used by the Indonesian military for the incidents was armed clashes (I: kontak senjata), and unavoidable shootings due to GAM fighters and partisans attempting to escape. Civilians were often inadvertently caught in the cross fire. Torture was frequently reported during interrogations. One civilian’s house in Glumpang Minyiek village in Pidie District was used for such interrogations. The house was well-known as the brick house (Ac.: rumoh geudông), and became a ‘monument of terror’ for the people. People told me that anyone taken to the brick house would either die or become insane. Stories of torture techniques such as pulling out finger nails were passed from mouth to mouth and became a nightmare for the people from the entire province. Disappearances were considered part of ‘normal daily life’ for the people of Aceh in the 1990s. Collective punishment was not uncommon, especially for villagers from the

88 As explained in Chapter 2, I use the term GAM fighter purposively, following the argument of my key informant on the importance of differentiating the ‘on the ground’ (I: orang bawah) and the ‘on top’ (I: orang atas) GAM supporters since there were often some missing links of command between the two. What was conducted on the ground did not always represent what had been decided from the top.
‘black areas’ where GAM was identified as having a strong presence.\textsuperscript{89} The burning of Gamp\'ong Jawa in Idies Rayeuk Sub-District in 2001, and the burning of more than 115 shops, kiosks and homes in Samalanga were examples of this collective punishment\textsuperscript{90} (The Human Rights Watch, 2001, p.18). Such punishment had a dramatic negative impact on the people’s lives and their livelihoods.\textsuperscript{91}

The Indonesian military not only targeted suspected GAM members, but also medical, personal, journalists, and local NGOs delivering services and assistance for human rights protection and other support, such as socio-economic supports, to survivors of human rights abuses (Sukma, 2004, p.14; Human Rights Watch, 2001).\textsuperscript{92} Explaining the situation, a local NGO activist referred to the early 2000s as the period of lying prone (I: masa-masa tiarap). The word tiarap\textsuperscript{93} refers to the action of lying flat on one’s stomach with face down to avoid being noticed or to avoid danger. ‘Masa-masa tiarap’ therefore implied on a period during which activities were conducted in a very low key manner or not at all in order to avoid danger, i.e. to avoid being noticed by the Indonesian military.

It was apparent, however, that the ‘lying prone’ period also applied to local civilians, especially villagers in the hot spots classified as black areas (I: daerah hitam). These people often suffered from military blockades, armed clashes, and tight security checks that limited their daily activities. The

\textsuperscript{89} Reports on the human rights violation by the Indonesia Military during the military operation period can be found in several ICG and the Human Rights Watch reports.
\textsuperscript{90} Responding to this, GAM usually set on fire government buildings such as offices and schools. This not only symbolised their reaction to the Military’s mass punishment but also their political stand against the government of Indonesia.
\textsuperscript{91} See section 2.2.2. and Chapter 5 for details
\textsuperscript{92} Restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association were also evident and mainly aimed at political activists based in Aceh and Jakarta. The accusation of ‘spreading hatred’, which during the Suharto era was a favourite used by the Police and Military to capture activists for political activities. Referring to these incidents, some argued that the MO has never really been lifted.
\textsuperscript{93} Tiarap (I) in Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings (2004, p.1028) is translated as a (1) lying prone, (2) to lie low, try to avoid being noticed. The word has a similar meaning to telungkup (I) which in Stevens and Schmidgall-Telling (2004, p.1012) is translated as ‘lying facedown’ or tengkurap which is translated as ‘lying prostrate, on one’s stomach’; to fall flat on the ground. The three words describe an action of lying prone on one’s stomach with facedown. However, embedded in tiarap is the notion of avoiding notice or avoiding danger and, therefore, it is conducted purposely. In contrast, ‘telungkup and tengkurap’, the action can be done either purposely or accidentally, for example ‘jatuh tertelungkup’ or ‘jatuh tengkurap’ which can be translated as ‘to fall flat on one’s stomach on the ground with facedown’. 

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people’s mobility was often restricted by the Indonesian military to whom people had to report anytime they left the village, even if just to practice their livelihood. They could not carry out their farming activities, especially if their fields were located close to the mountains where armed clashes usually took place. They also could not go to the forest to collect wood and rattan, one of their main sources of cash income. They often had to survive using whatever was left, because the mobile traders (Ac.: mugeè), from whom villagers bought basic necessities (vegetable oil, salt, and sugar), often did not come to their villages because of the conflict. Thus the villagers experienced both a decrease of income and difficulties in meeting their households’ daily needs.

The GAM forces faced accusations of three types of human rights violations: the execution of alleged informers and relatives of Indonesian police and military personnel, expulsion of Javanese, and restrictions of freedom of expression. Two more was revealed in my fieldwork, which showed that, just like Indonesian military, GAM also engaged in unlawful detention. In addition, GAM was also accused of imposing war taxation to the people, who paid either voluntarily or by force.

The executions were mainly aimed at ‘si pai’ (Ac.), the local pejorative term for Indonesia armed soldiers, and ‘cuak’ (Ac.), the Indonesian military’s spies and informers. Locals called this execution as ‘koh iako’ or ‘kena tak’ (slaughter) which is a traditional Acehnese way of cutting somebody’s throat. The forced displacement of the Javanese settlers, some of whom were, in fact, not Javanese, was part of GAM’s ‘anti Javanese

94 The mobile traders usually arrived on motorcycles with two big baskets behind, and came to the village to the agricultural product and/or sell goods needed by villagers.
95 The Javanese settlers can be traced back as far as Dutch colonial time when many were transferred to Sumatra Island to work in the plantations. During the Suharto era, more Javanese were transmigrated to Aceh (and many other provinces in Indonesia), and can be classified as either spontaneous (voluntary) or non-spontaneous (involuntary) transmigrants. The involuntary transmigrants were those from the target areas of the transmigration program. The camps for the Javanese IDPs located in the neighbouring provinces, such as North Sumatra. Some of these IDPs settled in the national park after paying around 300,000 Rp (US$ 33, with 1 US$=Rp9000) per family to an anonymous party that helped them to escape. Responding to my question on whether they would like to go back to Aceh province, most of them said ‘no’. A few, however, indicated they might return if the government provided a security guarantee. As happened to their Acehnese fellows, these Javanese were also traumatised by the conflict. This is well illustrated by their reluctance to talk about their escape. A woman even politely asked me not to ask such a question as it was too bitter to talk about and better to simply forget it.
colonisers’ campaign and the effort to establish a separate ethno-national identity for Aceh. The forced displacement, however, also applied to Acehnese villagers in order to attract international attention (Peace Brigades International, 2001).

Restrictions of freedom of expression were mainly aimed at prohibiting local people from engaging in the Indonesian Government’s programmes through persuasion and abduction. This happened particularly around the year 2000, when GAM fighters violently forced the people not to support any of these programmes and policies, including family planning and immunisation. A midwife from North Aceh complained of facing threats for performing immunisation and family planning services. A local health officer testified to the kidnapping of midwives, using the term of ‘taken to the mountain’ (I: dibawa ke gunung), usually for about one week, as punishment for delivering such services, and their families had to pay money to release them. No physical abuse was reported, as long as instructions from the kidnappers were followed.

Interestingly, women, especially in the predominantly GAM rural areas, persistently sought family planning injections and immunization for their babies. This was done secretly without their husbands’ consent. Whilst men tended to prevent women from using contraceptives, women simply ignored their wishes. According to these women, getting pregnant in conflict situation was something to be avoided, unless they did not yet have any children.

GAM also gradually took over government functions at the district and subdistrict levels, such as reorganising the village administrative apparatus and replacing it with a traditional administrative system, by either persuasion or abduction. Based on this alternative administrative system, GAM claimed to be a legal government entity in the region and therefore entitled to collect taxes from civilians. Based on this, GAM imposed their State Tax (I: Pajak Nanggroe) on the people, which basically was a ‘war tax’ (Human Rights Watch, 2001, p.10). The tax was not only a means of collecting money but

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96 See Chapter 3 for details on the issue of identity.
also an important symbol of GAM’s authority. The tax was compulsory and used to denote one’s political affiliation. Refusing to pay it would be perceived as a political stand against GAM, which would lead to serious repercussion, for example threats, kidnapping, paying more tax, or even death. A local woman from a conflict zone whose husband ran a shop complained of the pajak nanggroe as not only an extra economic burden but also a psychological one due to the threats that they received whenever they could not pay the mandatory amount for their household.

Unlawful detention was often carried out through kidnappings, as involved those who did not follow GAM’s policies (such as declining to pay the pajak nanggroe or participating in government programmes), those who were considered cuak (Ac.), Indonesian military’s spies and informers, and si pai (Ac.), Indonesian soldiers, or simply against those whose families could afford to pay money for their release.

Kidnappings, however, could happen randomly to anyone at anytime for any reason, sometimes even for no particular reason. A local informant used the term ‘nasib-nasiban’ (I) or one’s faith or luck, to indicate the random nature of kidnapping. This was especially true when the kidnapping was not merely to obtain funds but also for media or propaganda. Several people who were kidnapped for different reasons admitted to me that they have been subject to briefings (I: diberi pengarahan) during their kidnappings, which varied from several hours to a week or so. In the briefings they were lectured on the importance of having independence, called on to support GAM, and advised to perceive tax or donations as noble acts for supporting a righteous vision.

GAM also conducted some security checks and ‘sweeping’, by stopping cars along the main roads that connected Aceh and North Sumatra province and asking passengers to show their identity documentation. Their main targets were government officials and the Javanese. Ethnic background

98 This is a prominent term used during the Suharto era to refer to special speeches given by the Authorities, usually during special ceremonies, that aimed at raising community’s awareness. These briefings were basically used as part of government propaganda. The term also denotes a negative aspect of community’s improper behaviour that needs to be straightened up through a special counsel.
was usually determined through names, regardless of the fact that many Acehnese had taken Javanese names in the belief that this would help advance their careers in government. However, GAM usually did not injure passengers that were found to be Acehnese Government officers, but they would be fined approximately Rp 50,000 - Rp. 100,000. I know little, however, of the fate of the Javanese captured in GAM security checks.

Apart from the two conflicting parties of GAM and government of Indonesia, there was also a ‘shadow’ group that took advantage of the conflict for their own benefit. Robinson (2001, p.221 & p.224) referred this as the ‘semi-official mafia’ or ‘military-linked mafia’ that possessed close ties with the military, particularly the Indonesia Army Special Forces (Kopassus). Some members of this special unit enriched themselves through “…serving as enforcers, debt-collectors, security guards, and extortionists…” (Robinson, 2001, p.221). There were also some indications that these ‘mafia’ were involved in illegal logging in the province. The illegal logging was often done by locals who were in debt and had to pay their debt through working for this ‘mafia’. A woman that I met in Aceh Besar told me she worked as a labourer for a businessperson from Medan who ran an illegal logging business with the backing up of someone in the local military unit. According to her, it was common for villagers to engage in illegal logging in order to repay their debts.

2.2 The out of sight: What has been overlooked in the Existing Conflict Analysis and Interventions

There has been ample analyses of the violent political conflict between GAM and the government of Indonesia. However, most of this analysis focuses on the political nature of the conflict and the human rights violations perpetrated by both conflicting parties. Consequently, these analyses tend to disregard the socio-psychological and socio-economic impacts of the conflicts upon society. In this section, I attempt to incorporate these two latter aspects into the analysis of the conflict provided in this chapter.
2.2.1 The ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’

The violence, especially the Indonesian military’s shock therapy of the 1990s, affected not only GAM members and partisans but also the general society. This was especially true for women, who often had to face the Indonesian military on their ‘sweeping’ operations in villages, as husbands and other male family members ran and hid. Women, especially those whose husbands and/or sons were suspected of being GAM members, ‘had to face Indonesian military’s punishment, ranging from an obligation to report regularly to the local military authority (I: wajib lapor) to more severe punishment. The casualties of the military operation (MO) policy therefore included not only GAM members but also civilians, especially women and children. The Care Human Rights Forum, for example, reported that there were approximately 16,375 orphans, some of whom had witnesses of torture and killing of their parents. Consequently, this caused deep trauma within society, which did not stop with the end of the MO and the collapse of GAM, but was in fact regenerated.

The regenerated trauma was manifested by through telling stories, cultivating certain attitudes and behaviour, as well as labelling and stigmatising Indonesian soldiers and their allies. Stories of the horrible military operations were passed on so that children who had not witnessed the violence internalised the trauma.99 Certain attitudes, behaviours, and stigmatization, as further explained later in this section, were also cultivated through day-to-day direct and indirect social learning. This is in line with findings of the study by Dickson-Gómes (2002) on the ‘transgenerational transmission’100 of the trauma in Salvadorian families in the post war period101 in which stories of infirmity as well as responses to and explanations of, day

99 See the work of Siapno (2002) who documented these stories and analysed their paradox of power, co-optation, and resistance. See also Emi et al. (2000) that documented the true stories of women victims of the MO in 1998 in a short stories version.

100 This is also in line with the arguments of Siapno (2002, p.25) on the capability of the independence movement in Aceh to regenerate itself. Embedded here is the presumption that violence can regenerate through the social-learning process of the generations in Aceh due to their longstanding history of violence.

to day events transmit trauma to their children who did not have any direct experience of the trauma (Dickson-Gómes, 2002, pp.415-416).

The regenerated trauma has consequently led to a ‘collective trauma’, i.e. trauma experienced by a society due to repeated shocks and terrors occurring over a relatively long period of time. Hence, the collectiveness implies not only on the repetitiveness of shocks and terrors but also those who suffered from them. This supports the arguments of Suárez-Orozco and Robben (2000, p.1) and Dickson-Gómes (2002, p.415) that collective trauma encompasses not only the physiology and psychology of individuals but also the socio-cultural order since the target of collective violence is more than the body and psyche of the people. It also targets the ‘social bonds and cultural practices’ (Suárez-Orozco and Robben, 2000, p.11) and is orchestrated in the rhythms of daily life (Margold, 1999, p.64). In Aceh province, for example, fears and suspicions were cultivated due to the longstanding harsh violent political conflict, and resulted in shattered social bonds of the society where trust cannot be easily found. This has resulted in the fear of people, even when simply engaged in their daily livelihood, as will be further described in chapter 6.

The collective trauma not only regenerated but also ‘extended’ from the Indonesian military and its allies to ethnic Javanese. This was due to at least two main reasons. Firstly, the nature of the MO with its ‘fence of legs’ operation (I: Operasi Pagar Betis), support resources operation (I: Tenaga Pembantu Operasi – TPO), and heavy use of civilians, especially from the Javanese settlers, in militias. Secondly, the central government was locally perceived as embodied within the Javanese ethnic group.102

I use the term ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’, to mean a collective trauma that is not only regenerated but also extended from one particular organisation or party (the Indonesian military) to a particular ethnic

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102 There was a general perception that the ‘bureaucrats were Javanese and vice versa’. There was also a general belief that having Javanese sounding names would make easier to get a better education in Java and boost their career as government bureaucrats. I observed that the use of Javanese names were a common phenomena not only among the Acehnese but also other ethnic groups in Indonesia, such as Sumbanese. I have friends from both areas who argued that their parents gave a ‘Javanese sounding name’ such as Sri, Dewi, and Dharma, to make it easier them to get a better education in Java and have a career with the Government.
group (the Javanese). This process could be seen in the use of language. Children, for example, learned consciously to refuse to use the national language (Bahasa Indonesia) and chose to use the local dialect instead (Bahasa Aceh), manifesting their identity and political attitude towards the government. One Saturday afternoon in 2004 at a coastal area in Great Aceh (I: Aceh Besar, Ac.: Aceh Rayeuek) I met some children who shouted and threw small stones at me to drive me away when I was talking and videotaping some women who were collecting oysters from a river near the sea. While throwing stones at me, they repeatedly said “Go away! Go away! Why are you taking our pictures?” (Ac.: “Jak wo! Jak wo! Pakeun cok-cok gambar kamo?!”), with hatred. This happened after they learned that I was not an Acehnese but a Javanese, the most hated ethnic group in the region.

The adoption of the ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’ could be observed also from the labelling of both Indonesian military and their spies with the labels ‘si pai’ and ‘cuak’. I remember meeting a family with a son who was approximately 2-3 years old one Sunday morning in 2004 in a coastal area of Banda Aceh. It happened that at the time, there was a joint army and navy training exercise in the area, and many soldiers were hanging around with their military equipment, such as guns, compasses, and trucks. One of the soldiers greeted this family’s son with a kind and friendly salutation of ”Hi kid...hi kid...” (I: “halo dik...hallo dik.”). The mother asked her son to reply to the greeting in a similar way and to address the soldier as ‘uncle soldier’ (I: Oom tentara). However, the little boy, having never learned the word ‘tentara’ (I), used the local pejorative term of address ‘pai’ (Ac.), and responded with ‘Oom Pai...Oom Pai’ with his fun loving cute innocent baby face. The soldier, not understanding local terms and slang, returned this little boy’s greeting in an even more friendly and enthusiastic manner.

103 Dik is a polite informal and kind way to address younger siblings or younger people (either a man or woman) and is often used to address little children. If it was spoken in a kind way, it would sounds nice to people.
104 This derives from a Dutch word, meaning uncle. As with ‘dik’, the term was used as a polite informal address term, especially from a little kid to a male adult.
The grammar of violence, terror and fear could also be observed from general comments about the security situation. It was pretty common to hear 'There is no such word as peace in Aceh' (I: 'mana ada aman di Aceh?') or 'Aceh has never been at peace' (I:'Aceh itu tidak pernah aman'). Another example is the term ‘OTK’, an abbreviation of the Indonesian phrase ‘orang or organisasi tak dikenal’, unidentified persons or organisation. This illustrates the grammar of violence, fear and terror. ‘OTK’ was widely used to identify the person or organisation responsible for certain violent actions occurred in the region. To explain who was possibly responsible for setting certain buildings on fire or destroying bridges, for example, the people, even children, would immediately say ‘OTK’. This was also the immediate answer I received when I asked about the party who could have been responsible for the body found in the gampong where I lived in Aceh Besar, in April 2004. It was around 8.30 am, when I heard that a body had been found at the T junction of the road of the house where I was staying. I was about to go to the city as planned with my Acehnese sister, but our mother (Ac.: mamak) asked us to stay until lunch time or if possible even cancel our plan. We discussed the body for a while, especially the type of wound that had caused his death and his possible gampong of origin. When I asked about the possible killers, the answer was ‘OTK’ and that was the end of our discussion as mamak asked us not to talk about it any longer. ‘OTK’ not only illustrates an evasion but also a fear of the consequences (punishment) of pointing at a particular party. Although it was common knowledge that GAM was often responsible for setting fire to public buildings while the Indonesian military for frequently burned houses and villages, this was a ‘public secret’ and people simply avoided talking about it.

These pieces of evidence contain three important features. Firstly, the power of language and role of ‘the chain of telling’ in forming an alternative history of violence and trauma that transcends time and space. This is in line with Fieldman’s argument, on the significant role of language in the

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105 This is adopted from Siegel (1979, p.263) who, in Shadow and Sound: The Historical Thought of A Sumatran People, thoroughly analysed the literature of the holy war and argued for the crucial role of ‘the chain of telling’ as “...an exaggeration, a dream of the effective power of the Koranic injunction across time and cultures.”
verbal reiteration of the incidents of violence by deforming the fragmented, tortured, and confined body into ‘a new body’ (Siapno, 2002, pp.8-9).

Secondly, the ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’ that might very well lead to other grievances in the future, as described above. As argued by some scholars, such as Ross (2003), cultivated trauma was a major factor in the widespread support of civil society which contributed to the second re-emergence of GAM. The Jakarta Post reported that in 2000 most GAM fighters were child survivors from the MO areas (in Ross, 2003, p.24).

Thirdly, the extensive view of conflict and its actors resulted from the extended-regenerated trauma processes, which are more just the ‘infectiousness of psychological symptoms’ but also a socialisation of the general view of, and responses to, violence such as hatred, fear, and pessimism (Dickson-Gomes, 2002, p.416). Those who indirectly experienced the trauma, such as the above little boy, consciously and unconsciously formed this view in accordance with the world-view learnt from parents, other family members, as well as the society on what, who, why, and how to respond to the violence and its perpetrators.

The phenomenon of ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’, however, has been overlooked in both scholarly works and interventions for peace building and conflict resolution. The ‘sustained’ feature of the conflict seems to have been taken for granted and attributed primarily to political and economic grievances. Consequently, only two superficial facets of the conflict are usually identified, while its deeper roots remain unaddressed. This has, in turn, leads to a symptomatic and ‘superficial’ analysis that glosses over the core issues of the psycho-social state of the people who have suffered violent political crises for generations. It is, therefore, critical to give more serious attention to this issue in conflict analysis, especially with regard to its root causes, impacts, and possible resolutions.

With no attempt to discount the role of the MO of the 1990’s, with its massive shocks and terror, it is important to note that the ‘extended-regenerated trauma’ may have been present in society even before the operation itself was implemented. The strong oral traditions of story telling in
Aceh, provides a vehicle on the regeneration of trauma and the ‘cultural template’ (Juris, 2005, p.415) of violence may have been available for generations. For example, the post-colonial period saw a series of violent political conflicts (see Annex 7). The Cumbok War (1945-1946) discussed in section 1.1 ought to be taken as the starting point of analysis for the post-colonial cultivation of the ‘cultural template’, following by the DI/TII/NII (1953 – 1961/1962) movement led by Daud Beureuh, the well-known Acehnese ulama. Acehnese children who witnessed or were involved in the Cumbok War in 1945 and/or other violent political conflicts after 1945, would certainly carry the trauma with them and could regenerate it. A fifteen-year old child in 1945 for example, would be in her/his thirties in the 1960s when the DI/TII/NII clashes erupted, and would be in her/his forties when the MO was launched, at which time she/he might already have grandchildren.

The ‘cultural template’ is also indicated by Siapno (2002) and Siegel (1979) on their thorough analysis of the use of stories, songs, and recitations to express a ‘traditional’ and ‘religious’ calling for joining a war. The following Acehnese traditional lullaby (Ac.: dododaidi) further exemplifies the existence of the ‘cultural template’ of violence. Through such dododaidi, children are called to join the war to defend the nation and religion since their infancy.

Dododaidi (Lullaby)

Singing a lullaby while praising God / Allah hai dododaidi
The big ‘Gadong’ fruit is from the forest / Boh ‘gadong’ bé boh kayée
wëven
getting bigger my child / Rayék sí nyak
there is nothing that mother can give / hana peue ma bri
It is a shameful punishment, people know why / 'azeen ngón keji, wëwen
dénya kò

Singing a lullaby while praising God / Allah hai dododaidang
Kite had its string cut-off / geulayang blang ka puich taloe
Getting big soon, big enough / Men rijang rayék, muda seundang
you go help the war, you defend the country / Ta jak bantu prang, ta bela
manggroev

106 See for examples, the works Siapno (2001) and Siegel (1979).
107 It is worth noted, however, that this ‘cultural template’ is not solely true of Aceh but almost the entire nation. The history of Indonesia is full of violence, with mass riots (I: amok masa) and the use of ‘vigilante civilians gangs’ (Cribb, 1990, p.3) by the military common in troubled regions such as Aceh, as can be seen from the G30S/PKI incidents in 1965/1966, the most recent social unrest in several provinces in the early 2000s, and the recent violent political conflicts in the troubled provinces of Aceh, West Papua, and former East Timor.
Sit down no more child / Wahe aneuk bêk ta duêk lee
Rising up together we defend the nation / bedoh saree ta bela bangsa
Don’t be afraid to shed blood / Bêk ta takot keu darah ilee
your mother allows you to die / adak pih matee poma ka rela

Walk in small steps, walk in small steps / Jak loen (lôn) teêth, mejak loen teêth
Get up child, go to Aceh / Beudoh hai aneuk tak jak u Aceh
The fragrant [banana] leaf, the fragrant Timpham / Meu bei bak on ka meu bei thimpan
The fragrant body of an Acehnese child / Meu bei badan bak sinyak Aceh

Dear God / Allah hai po illa hon ha
How far is my village until I return home / gampông jarak hantrok loen woe
If only I had wings I would fly / Adak na bulei uloen teureubang
So that I could soon reach my country / mungat rjiang trok u nanggrooe

Allah, I swing my ‘rice’ (referring to the baby) / Allah hai jak loen timang breueh
Beloved waves splashing on the beach / Sayang riyeuk di sipreuk pantee
They [the waves] are so white, when they are big / Oh rayeuk sinyak yang putêh meu preuk
Child, just like you my fruit of heart / Têh sinaluek gata boh hatee

(Source: Nyawong hit, 2002)

The song clearly illustrates how war and death are perceived in a positive manner, as something not to be feared but to be proud of, and not only anticipated, but to be welcomed due to their holiness. Through the song, Acehnese children learn about the long period of war that has prevented their mother from offering a good life to them. However, they also learn that their lives can be made useful if they join the holy war to defend their land, as shown in the second and third verses. The parallel of the fragrance of the banana leaf, the fragrance of the traditional sweet cake (Ac.: thimpan) and the fragrance of the body of an Acehnese child, symbolises how Acehnese mothers perceive the deaths of their sons in the (holy) war, as ‘pleasant’ as the mixed fragrance of thimpan and the banana leaves which wrap it.108

This song was said to be widely sung during the Aceh war, which was considered a holy war, in the Dutch colonial period. During the recent violent political conflict between GAM and the Indonesian military, the song was revitalised by Nyawong, an Acehnese popular band group, in early 2000. The album was popular amongst the Acehnese and quickly sold out in the

108 Thimpan is an Acehnese traditional sweet cake wrapped in banana leaf. In an emergency, banana leaves may also be used for wrapping a dead body before it is buried.
The reiteration of dododaidi during the conflict between GAM and government of Indonesia demonstrate the reinvigoration of the ‘cultural template’.

This ‘cultural template’, however, was indeed reinforced by the brutality of the recent violent political conflict of GAM versus the government of Indonesia, especially by the harsh military counter insurgency approach of the government in the second phase the GAM emergence. As maintained by Siapno (2002, p. xviii):

...In the ongoing government of Indonesian violence in Aceh, it is not ‘Islamic Fundamentalism’ nor extremism which is held responsible by ordinary people for armed conflict and increasingly patriarchal practices, but the ultimately violent and criminal nature of the Indonesian state in its behaviour towards poor Acehnese. For many ordinary Achenese [Acehnese], the Indonesian police and military has become a main source of “insecurity” in their lives. (Siapno 2002:xviii)

During the period of martial law in 2003 to 2004, the development of the ‘cultural template’ continued through the display of corpses and heavy military presence in the region.

2.2.2 Just Like ‘Pli’u’: the ‘Sandwiched Position’

The ‘sandwiched position’ refers to the difficult situation of Acehnese civilians who are being trapped between the two conflicting parties, which has limited most aspects of their day-to-day lives. An Acehnese woman from Aceh Besar District excellently illustrated this, using the metaphor of ‘pli’u’ (Ac.), a traditional Acehnese ingredient made of sun dried old (rotten) coconut used as a main ingredient of the traditional Acehnese vegetable curry (Ac.: sayur pli’). Together with other ingredients, this is usually ground between two grindstones until soft and mixed to add to the pli’ curry.

Referring to the nature and the process of making it, she said “We are just like pli’u in between the grindstones” (Ac.: “Kamo ni, lage pli’ u bak batee seuneupeih”). The pli’u metaphor clearly illustrates the difficult violent political conflict circumstances that have positioned these civilians in between two powers, like pli’u between grindstones, which do nothing good, but rather

109 An interview with two traders in Aceh market (I: Pasar Aceh) in March 2003.
crush, smash, and run over them. The *pli’u* was forced to survive and cope with these two grindstones. The moist form of *pli’u* represents the fact that although it was difficult and painful, they managed to cope. The fluid analogy is apt in that their Acehnese substance remained, but was transformed to adjust to the violent political conflict situation. This was especially true for women from ‘widow-villages’ (*I: desa janda*), who had lost their husbands from forced disappearances, abduction, killings, or migration to other areas for security purposes. The ‘sandwiched position’ was not only about being between two conflicting parties. It was also about negotiating between the ‘stigma’ of being the widows of freedom fighters and the need of the women and other family members to get on with their own life.

The situation burdened the people not only psychologically but also economically. The risk of being seen as affiliated to certain parties required women to be extra cautious in performing their livelihood activities. This did not only apply to those considered to be Acehnese but also non Acehnese. A Batak woman, a traditional masseur married to an Acehnese man, stated that she often had to refuse some customers who lived in the Indonesian military or police compound to avoid being seen as too close to the government of Indonesia. At the same time, she had to also be selective in receiving other customers to avoid being seen as a partisan.

The ‘sandwiched’ position was also experienced by workers of Mobil Oil. As part of their claim to share in the revenue earned by the oil company, GAM demanded that their people be hired in the company. The presence of GAM personnel put the ‘non partisan’ workers, especially the locals, in an awkward ‘sandwiched position’ between GAM and Indonesian military personnel. The LNG complex was considered a vital industry, and so its security was paramount for the government. For this purpose, some Indonesian military personnel were assigned to guard the complex, especially after some attacks from GAM fighters (see also Siapno, 2002, p.44). The ‘non-partisan’ workers were therefore squeezed in between the two conflicting parties. A vigilant situation that required an extra consciousness

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110 This is a term designating to villages in which widows were the predominant feature.
111 See footnote 80
112 Personal interview with a former Mobil oil staff member in August 2003.
from these lay people, for a wrong statement or action might put them at risk from either side.

Acehnese tradition, however, possesses vital coping strategies that have been in the society for generations. These old coping strategies are exemplified in the Acehnese terms ‘muslihat’ and ‘lheuk jago meuleul’, with both exemplify the ability to play beautifully (I: bermain cantik). This strategy of conducting oneself in a way that does not give the impression of opposing another’s conduct enables one to survive and continue to live a ‘normal’ life. As described in section 1.2, these traditional coping strategies were used by DI/TII/NII leaders as a political tactic to avoid being defeated by the Indonesian Military. During the recent conflict between GAM and the government of Indonesia, this traditional strategy of coping was quite pivotal for the Acehnese women. This was especially true in dealing with their ‘sandwiched position’ between two conflicting parties. Women have to use carefully chosen words and phrases to avoid danger, such as telling the military posted in their village that they need to go to the market in the city for shopping or buying groceries whilst in fact they also use the time to meet with local NGO staff. Therefore, both concepts of ‘muslihat’ and ‘lheuk jago meuleul’ were applied in the political struggle, as portrayed by Siapno (2002), and also the day to day struggle of women in managing their household livelihood in the violent political conflict situation of Aceh. The latter will be described in the next Chapter.

2.2.3 The Deprivation of the Local Economy (Penghancuran Ekonomi Lokal)

In general, however, it is true that the long standing violent political conflict situation – with its social, cultural, economical, and psychological consequences – has made people, especially women, suffer directly and indirectly. One of the most tangible consequences identified quickly by my research subjects was the impact on their livelihoods. In conflict affected areas, armed clashes resulted in the disruption of people’s daily and livelihood

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113 See also Chapter 2, Section 3.3.
114 See chapter 6 for details.
activities. The fighting was described as leading to the deprivation of the local economy (I: penghancuran ekonomi lokal).

The collective punishment of setting fire to shops, kiosks, houses, and boats resulted in not only forced displacement but also to the disruption of livelihoods of the people, who lost of sources of income and capital at the same time. The implementation of ‘pajak nanggroe’ (GAM tax) is another example of the effect of the violent political conflict that had serious consequences to the household economies. During my field work, it was pretty common to hear bitter statements about how difficult it was to pay taxes to both ‘authorities’. Not paying to either side would certainly bring more problems and the risk of being seen as traitors by both sides. As further exemplified in the next chapter, some small businesses had to close down because they were unable to cope with the double taxation.

All this occurred on top of the hard life for the internally displaced persons (IDPs). There were allegation that some camps were used by GAM to attract international attention and these camps were not accessible for humanitarian assistance. This was the case at the camp at L in North Aceh (see Figure 5-1). The camp was identified as controlled by GAM and therefore the government limited humanitarian assistance. These IDPs were in a true ‘sandwiched position’, caught between the government, who asked them to go back to their village of origin but could not guarantee their security, and GAM who required them to stay.
Moreover, when the armed clashes targeted basic services such as electricity, water, health, and education, livelihood became a true problem for people, inside and outside these camps.

Adding to this was the forced involvement of civilians in military operations. Recruited by the military as trackers to find the whereabouts of GAM fighters, husbands or/and other male family members could not work for days, sometimes weeks. This caused a cascade effect on the household economy as they had to rely on one source of income, that of the women. Further economic depletion occurred since women also had to spend time taking meals to their husbands in the forests. In some cases, they also had to feed the military soldiers as well. Villagers reported that the military gave no economic compensation to either the men or the women.

Another difficulty faced by villagers was the isolation of villages by the military, especially villages located in the hot spot areas, to limit the movement of GAM fighters. However, this also resulted in an uneasy life for villagers and the obstruction of their livelihood. In Y village in Pidie District, for example, there was a time when no public or private transport was allowed by the military in order to limit the movement of GAM fighters. Every single
vehicle had to be kept (I: *dititipkan*)\(^{115}\) in the military’s custody. In return, the military provided a vehicle for the villagers. Nevertheless, most of the people preferred to walk rather than take this regardless of the fact that the distance to the nearest city was as far as 5 km. One of the reasons was the fear of being perceived as supporting the Indonesian military. As happened to IDPs situation, taking assistance from the government or following the government’s request might put them at risk of being perceived as ‘*cuak*’ and worse than this, of not being Acehnese.

Such circumstances led to impoverishment. The case of Nur’s family described in the next chapter clearly exemplifies the grass roots level impact of the violent political conflict. To cope with such complexities, the people had to develop their own strategies. Given the longstanding phenomena of violent political conflict, some of these coping strategies may have become internalised and an integral part of day-to-day life in Aceh.

The ability to ‘*muslihat*’, ‘*lheuk jago meuleut*’, and ‘*bermain cantik*’, noted above, became an essential part of their coping strategies. Economic-migration (I: *rantau*) discussed in the next chapter, was another one of their coping strategies. Although *rantau* was part of the old tradition of the Acehnese for economic advancement, it was taking a new form as an important way of coping with the violent political conflict circumstances. Some people opted to migrate (I: *merantau*) for security purposes, escaping from the armed clashes.

### 3 Conclusion

The GAM-violent political conflict was both a multi faceted phenomenon, which needs a multi sectoral analysis, and a sequential event, that requires a historical account. It is indeed true that different violent political conflicts in Aceh emerged in different socio-political contexts as argued by Ishak (2003, p.46; 2000). Based on this argument, some scholars

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\(^{115}\)The root word ‘*titip*’ means:(1) to ask someone to do a favour, run an errand, etc.;(2) to entrust something to someone for safekeeping;(3) to give something to someone for safekeeping (Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings, 2004, p.1035)
(such as Sukma, 2004 and Schulze, 2004), tend to discount the link between the recent GAM-violent political conflict and previous conflicts. Sukma (2004, p.3), for example, stated that:

The outbreak of GAM rebellion in 1998 was the result of a complex set of root causes that had accumulated in Aceh province since the end of the first rebellion in the mid-1970s... (Sukma, 2004, p.3).

The statement clearly suggests that the accumulation of causes started from the first phase of GAM activities and disregards the pre 1970s conflicts such as the one under Daud Beureuh. Such analysis suffers from a narrow reading of the causes of the Acehnese violent political conflict.

Recent studies suggest several vital connections among the violent political conflicts; especially DI/TII/NII and GAM (see Robinson, 2001; ICG Reports, 1999, 2002, 2003; Fealy, 2005), although the two movements involved different morals and dynamics. The current GAM conflict correlates to the previous DI/TII/NII-violent political conflict from the involvement of the personnel and connections maintained by GAM leaders and ex-DI/TII/NII fighters. For example, Hasan di Tiro, the prominent GAM leaders, was engaged in Daud Beureuh’s movement and therefore connected to the ex-DI/TII/NII fighters. The previous history of violent political conflict in Aceh; its casualties, impact, and possible links to the current conflict, thus warrants ample analysis. The main issues put forward by the conflict actors may differ, but the material conditions might be the same. The post 1970 conflict took place in the very same region of Aceh and the very same society of the Acehnese as the series of previous conflicts.

This chapter has argued that this legacy was and is enduring. Focusing on the existence and enactment of ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’ we have further suggested the existence of, not only, a cultivated ‘culture of

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116 Under different leaderships and driven by different motives, DI/TII/NII and GAM possessed different dynamics. The periodic analysis of GAM clearly demonstrates that, from its initial time, GAM was always a political movement that favoured violent political conflict more than a diplomatic approach, with independence as the main spirit and driving force. The Aceh DI/TII/NII, in comparison, harboured a federalist spirit in which an independent state was out of the question and possessed more room for a diplomatic approach and peaceful negotiation.
fear’ but also ‘grammar of terror’ and ‘culture of violence’ perpetrated by conflicting parties. These have provided the ‘cultural template’ (Juris, 2005, p.415) of violence that made the regeneration of the violent political conflict possible. Robinson (2001) suggests this in the following citation:

So legendary is Aceh’s reputation for rebelliousness and Islamic militancy, that it is tempting to view the recent Aceh Merdeka uprisings as new manifestation of an Acehnese tradition or, as some would have it, an expression of a primordial Acehnese urge to independence. There is an element of truth in these views, as the patterns of historical continuity among the different rebellions attest. (Robinson, 2001, p.218)

Robinson (2001, p.218) argues further that ‘historical continuity’, ‘shared memory’, and personal connections between the actors in the conflict, all play a part in the wider context of political and economic changes in Indonesia in explaining the emergence of GAM. We have also seen how stories, songs, and recitations have a role in transmitting ‘traditional’ and ‘religious’ reasons for joining a war. Even lullabies can teach children to fight and die to defend the nation.

The ‘cultural template’ of violence alone, however, is not enough to explain the violent political conflict of Aceh, especially the after-1990s conflict. The harsh approach of the Indonesian military played a pivotal role in escalating and prolonging the violence (Siapno, 2002; Robinson, 2001). The conflict involved a ‘reciprocal violence’ in which the intensity of violence of the military was closely related to the intensity of violence of GAM, to the degree that it became an integral part of three important facets: the development of violence on both sides; the material conditions that encourages violence to reoccur; and the volatility which reproduced it. Both parties learnt from each other’s strengths and weaknesses and used this in

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117 For the culture of fear, terror, and violence, see the works of Siapno (2002) on women’s agency in the competing and contradictory characters of Islamic identity, nationalism and gender relations in Aceh, Ballard (2002) on the Amungme, the traditional landowners of the highland mining area of West Papua, Dickson-Gomes (2002) on El Salvadorian families in the post war situation, Robinson (2001) on the relation between the toughness of Central State to the emergence of GAM, Sáurez-Orozco and Robben (2000) on the second-generation of Holocaust survivors from Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Turkey, the United States, India, and Argentina, and Margold (1999) on the ethnographic works on culture and fear in rural areas in the Philippines.

118 Robinson (2001, p.218) illustrated the personal link of actors in the Aceh conflict by noting the kin relationship between Hasan Di Tiro, the current GAM leader, and Teungku Cik Di Tiro, The Indonesian National Hero from Aceh, and from the close association between Hasan Di Tiro and Daud Beureueh.
their strategy to win the war. Increased awareness of the rights of civilians was an example of this. It was apparent that when GAM started to neglect civilian rights and exhibited a lack of empathy for civilian vulnerabilities from the late 1990s, the Indonesian military started to pay more attention to the rights of civilians and carefully minimised civilian casualties in early 2000.

The GAM violent political conflict was not only political, but also cultural and economic. As exemplified in this chapter, and as has been argued by some other scholars (such as Sukma, 2004; Ross, 2003; Siapno, 2002; and Robinson, 2001, p.214), the conflict was multi-dimensional. Neither a security nor a political approach alone was enough to address the situation. A comprehensive peace package has been lacking in previous attempt to end the violence, including the Cessation on Hostility Agreement. This was partly due to the focus of conflict actors, while the peripheral and indirect participants of civil society remained untouched.

The lack of a comprehensive solution for ending the violent political conflict in the late 1990s to early 2000 may have occurred due to the national political context of Indonesia. This context was characterised by: a focus on national stability (I: stabilitas nasional); unclear policies that were remnants of the reformation era; a back and forth shifting of command for domestic security between the Indonesian military to the Police; and, most importantly, a lack of understanding of the multi-dimensional nature and causes of the Aceh conflict.

Siegel (1979) argues that historically the Acehnese situation provides the best picture of 19th century politics in Indonesian society, in which an autocratic government had to face strong civilian resistance. The grievances, however, like grievances in other places in Indonesia, tended to be economic ones, spanning the unfair use of local resources for the benefit of central government, development polarisation and its unequal distribution of advantages, and unfair job market competition. Adding to this were the human rights issues that were neglected by, the Indonesian government, especially under Suharto. As Human Rights Watch (2001, p.7) stated:

> When GAM was formed in 1976, its architects stressed the plundering of Aceh's wealth and resources by “Javanese-Indonesian” colonialists in the name of development and the need to recapture Aceh's past glory. Economic grievances were and continue to be important, but the more immediate spur
to the independence movement has been the failure of the post-Soeharto governments to address human rights abuses of the past, particularly those committed between 1990 and 1998.

This is not to say that the Indonesian government did not try a non-violent approach. The government attempted diplomatic approaches during both the DI/TII/NIll and GAM conflicts. Unfortunately, these approaches were not divorced from the militaristic approach, and suffered from the lack of supporting factors such as economic empowerment for the affected communities.

The nature and impact of the recent GAM violent political conflict on the civilian population became not only a ‘severe stressor’ and ‘cataclysm’ but also a ‘focal stressor’ which brought about a cascade effect that triggered other stressors. The stern military operations of both conflicting parties resulted in social and economic consequences, such as divorce and separation, death, job loss, victimisation, and relocation - either forced or voluntarily. The ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’ and the local economy deprivation (penghancuran ekonomi lokal) are results of such losses. As discussed in the next chapter, these losses were especially suffered by women through the absence of their husbands due to forced disappearances, forced displacement, or the husbands’ decision to join the freedom fighters. In this regard, the current GAM- violent political conflict may be perceived as a major challenge to women and their household livelihood coping strategies.

In addition, this chapter has highlighted the difficult ‘sandwiched position’ between the two conflicting parties experienced by civilians and the ways the have coped with the resultant problems. This will be discussed in detail, particularly in relation to women, in the next chapter.
Chapter 6 Beneath The Battle: Women and Household Livelihood’s Sustenance

As in many other conflict areas, the important issue of women’s coping strategies in sustaining their household livelihood has been overlooked in Aceh and has not been addressed adequately by scholars working in the area. Based on data collected from field work conducted from June 2002 to August 2003, this chapter attempts to examine this issue. The data used here were collected through in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), limited participant observations, and a survey of the households of my research subjects, covering 32 households from Great Aceh, North Aceh, Bireun, Pidie, and Banda Aceh. Households in the first four areas mostly came from rural areas, which were characterised by agriculture activities and limited access to public facilities. Some of these areas were isolated by the Indonesian military as part of their effort to seize GAM fighters so I had to meet the women in a nearby town or city or in market places, as described in Chapter 2. This was especially true for hot spots, where public facilities were often targeted and road blocks hindered access into and out of their villages. Households from Banda Aceh were from urban areas, and were predominantly engaged in informal sector activities.

Women and their households were chosen based on snowball sampling, for which I relied primarily on the information and suggestions from local contacts and research subjects. I found this type of sampling especially suitable in the violent political conflict context of Aceh as it enabled me not only to be accepted by these women, but also to gain their trust, as I was seen an acquaintance through someone they knew. In this context, no other research approach was possible due to the fear and suspicions as exemplified in Chapter 2. Most of these women were target beneficiaries of my local NGO contacts, and for security reasons I use pseudonyms for all of those I interviewed.

I met these research subjects and key informants at times and places suitable for them. Women in the ‘hot spots’ preferred to meet me in the city, both
for my security and their own safety. According to them, my presence in their villages might be seen as suspicious by the two conflicting parties, and might get the women into trouble. Nevertheless, after meetings, they usually began to accept me even more, and invited me to come to their villages. Their invitation, however, seemed to be part of their courtesy only, since when I indicated serious interest in visiting, they usually showed signs of anxiety and discussed among themselves how I could get there and how the arrangements could be made to ensure my safety, which, as noted above, I believe was just as much about their safety as well. I usually simply observed their discussions and ‘helped’ them out by saying that I was happy enough to meet them in the city and perhaps some other time I could visit them at their villages and stay overnight. A woman from village A, however, was very insistent about me going to her village, and I did pay her a visit – the security for which took almost two weeks to arrange.

It was apparent to me that women have become the backbone of their families in times of crisis. Women had to deal and cope with not only household livelihoods but also the consequences of the violent political conflict in the area that created a situation that required women to ‘play beautifully’ (I: *bermain cantik*), meaning maintaining good relations with both conflicting parties, for their household sustenance. This has, in a way, put women at risk considering that they were in a difficult position, sandwiched between the two conflicting parties. The ‘sandwiched position’ strongly suggests that women experienced not only stress and suppression from being primarily responsible for household livelihood under different conditions but also stress from the negative effect of the violent political conflict on the most mundane of their daily activities. Hence, the women’s coping strategies went beyond direct livelihood issues and affected all aspects of their lives.

This chapter has six sections. The first section presents the general data collected from my household surveys focusing on the description of household demographic characteristics. The second section outlines the consequences of the violent political conflict on household livelihood as well as the coping strategies

1 See Chapter 5 section 2.2.2.
women and their households employed to deal with these. The third section links the impact of coping strategies to household impoverishment. The fourth section examines the availability of social assets or capital and the choices made by women in using or abandoning these assets to cope with their household situation. The fifth amplifies the study findings by discussing the case study of Nur and her family, who escaped from the violent political conflict situation and its negative effect on livelihood in their village of origins, to the capital city of Banda Aceh, where they were trapped within another form of poverty in the slum area of the city. Finally, the last section provides some conclusion drawn from the overall analysis of the research results.

1 Households Demographic Characteristics

Thirty-two women and their households were covered in the survey. They came from the following regions - 9 from Aceh Besar, 6 from Aceh Utara, 4 from Biruen, 7 from Pidie, and 6 from Banda Aceh (Figure 6-1).

The first four regions were considered to be hot spots, areas within which armed clashes often took place. The last one was a relatively secure area, for it is the capital city. Even here, however, the effects of the violent political conflict could
not be ignored. The area may look quiet and people may seem to perform their daily activities in a manner similar to many other areas in the rest of Indonesia, but the tension of the violent conflict was still prevalent.

Of the total 32 households, 14 were reported to be female-headed and 18 were male-headed households (Figure 6-2). The female-headed households were originated from Aceh Besar, North Aceh, and Pidie, areas where armed clashes between GAM and the Indonesian army usually occurred. Whilst female-headed households were from the three areas with extensive violent clashes, the male-headed households were from the overall areas covered in the study.

**Figure 6-2. Types of Household by District**
(Source: Survey Data, 2004)

![Diagram showing types of households by district](image)

Among these households surveyed, the largest number of reported female-headed households was from Great Aceh (Aceh Besar), followed by North Aceh (Aceh Utara) (Figure 6-3), and the largest number of male-headed households was found in Banda Aceh (Figure 6-4).
This distribution reflects the fact that both Aceh Besar and Aceh Utara were regions with relatively intensive armed clashes and women interviewed were survivors of the military operation (MO) who had lost their spouses during the subsequent violence. Banda Aceh, in contrast, was a relatively safe area and became one of the areas of destination for those fleeing the ‘hot spots’. However, it is not possible to generalise beyond the sample due to its small size and the nature of the sampling procedure discussed above.
Table 6-1 The Demographic Characteristics of the Household Heads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total HH</th>
<th>Type of Households (H)</th>
<th>Average Age (AVG)</th>
<th>AVG Number of Dependents</th>
<th>AVG Age of Dependents</th>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F Headed H</td>
<td>M Headed H</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>Husb and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh Besar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh Utara</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bireun</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pidi</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: primary data; Note: NS=No School, ES=Elementary School, PS=Primary School, HS=High School

As shown in Table 6-1 average ages of the adults in these households were 40 and 35 for wives and husbands respectively. With an age range from 34 to 44 for wives and 24 to 54 for husbands, they were all of an economically productive age. These households had approximately 4 dependants, with an average age of 17, with a range of 12 to 22. These dependants were not only children but also sisters and brothers. One family even had a close friend from their village of origin as their dependant for he no longer had any close relatives.

The highest educational level of household heads was high school graduates (5 out of 32) and the lowest was primary school graduates, which made up the majority of household heads (21 out of 32). This is in line with the gross enrolment rates of primary schools in Aceh in 2000 – 2004, which was higher than secondary and tertiary schools (The World Bank, 2006, p. 91). Only 2 out of the 32 heads of households fell under the category of NS (No School), meaning they never attended school, reflecting the incidence of illiteracy in the region. No head of household possessed a university education background. Poverty, insecurity, and a perception about the unimportance of secular education might explain this. Some people explained that it was common among the older generation of Acehnese, especially from rural areas, to consider secular education
to be less important than religious education. Being able to recite the holy Qur'an was paramount, so the older generation tended to send their children to the traditional Islamic boarding school (I: pondok pesantren) rather than ordinary state schools.

There were three types of houses i.e. permanent (solid brick), semi permanent (combination of solid brick and wooden), and non permanent (wooden) houses. Plate 6-2 and Plate 6-2 illustrate the contrast between two extreme types. The wooden houses exemplify the situation of poverty, and the residents of such houses could usually be classified as poor. The permanent houses demonstrate the wealth of the residents.

Plate 6-2. The non permanent (wooden) house

Plate 6-2. The permanent (solid brick) house

(Source: Local NGO's Private with permission, 2003)

Table 6-2 shows that 16 out of the 32 households had non-permanent houses. This was especially true for those residing in Banda Aceh, whose houses were made of wood and built above the sea shore, which was vulnerable to natural disasters. These houses were completely swept away by the Tsunami 2004 and nothing was left (Plate 6-3). The people built their houses in this area because of their poverty. They had insufficient money to buy land or rent a more substantial house in a safer area.

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These people in Banda Aceh were not only vulnerable to natural disasters but also to government policy. At the time of my research, there was a plan by the provincial government to clear the area and develop it as one of the tourist spots in the province. Some households had been moved already, while the rest were waiting for their turn. The people who lived in this area were mostly from outside of Banda Aceh and fled to the city from the conflict. They began to settle in the area in the late 1970s, when GAM had just formed and clashes were not as intense as in the 1990s.

Table 6-2 The Basic Situation of Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total HH</th>
<th>Brick House</th>
<th>Semi Brick House</th>
<th>Wooden House</th>
<th>No House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aceh Besar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh Utara</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bireun</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pidi</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2004
Four out of the thirty two households admitted to no longer having a house after their houses were set on fire during the conflict in 1999. These households were from North Aceh (Aceh Utara) and Pidie, the two regions which were considered 'hot spots'. At the time of research, at the time of research these families were living with their relatives or parents.

Both female and male-headed households were predominantly poor, with the majority owning wooden houses (Figure 6-5). From the number of households with brick houses and semi brick houses, it is apparent that female-headed households were worse off than male-headed households. There were one and three female-headed households with brick and semi brick houses respectively compared to four and five for male-headed households.

**Figure 6-5 Types of Female and Male-headed Households**

Source: Survey Data, 2004

A similar pattern seen in the types of furniture owned by households (Figure 6-6). Five female-headed households had no basic furniture compared to none of male-headed households. This further signified the female-headed household’s economic vulnerability.
It is apparent from these data that female-headed households were in a less favourable state than male-headed households. The most probable reason to explain this is the fact that female-headed households also usually represented a single source of income for the household.

2 On Household Livelihood: The Consequences of the Violent Political Conflict.

The violent political conflict in Aceh had brought devastating effects on the daily lives of the people, especially villagers. The effects on the livelihood situation, however, hit men first then women. As discussed in Chapter 4, traditionally Acehenese men are required to bring money home or ‘seeking money’ (Ac.: ‘mita pêng’), whilst women stay at home and take care of the basic necessities of their households or ‘seeking rice’ (Ac.: ‘mita breueh’). However, due to the violent conflict, men could not perform their ‘mita pêng’ (Ac.) role any longer due to their permanent absence (death), temporary absence due to migration or flight to a safer area, or limited mobility. Consequently, women had
to extend their ‘mita breueh’ (Ac.) role in their households. This section aims to examine how the conflict affected livelihood and other areas of household life.

2.1 The General Effect on Household Livelihoods

The violent political conflict in Aceh had both direct and indirect effects on households. The direct effects were suffered immediately by households because of the permanent and temporary absence of husbands or other males family members. The males were often asked, or some used the word ‘forced’ (I: paksan), to flee from their villages of origin for their own safety. Wives or other female family members testified that they had deliberately ‘forced’ their husbands and sons to flee. The men thus left either voluntarily or involuntarily. The indirect effects of the conflict were experienced through the counter insurgency strategy of the army in response to the guerrilla tactics of GAM, as described in chapters 4 and 5. The actions of both sides consequently limited civilians’ mobility and hindered them from their livelihood activities, such as farming and trading, as well as other normal daily activities, such as going to the market for daily necessities. This was especially true for those who resided or farmed in or nearby mountain areas where the clashes usually took place. They also could not go to forest to collect wood and rattan, which was one of their main sources of cash income. They had to survive using whatever resources they had left.

Some villagers from other areas were still able to work in small local mining industries which, during the martial law period, were run by the Indonesian military or Indonesian military personnel (my informants were not clear about this). Some banana traders complained of not being allowed to carry the sharp knives needed for their occupation. Some mobile traders (Ac.: mugee) complained of a significant decrease in their incomes because they were not able to trade freely or collect goods to sell due to security reasons. Women and their male counterparts also complained about the difficulties of finding jobs due to the implementation of martial law.

2 See Chapter 4 for ‘mita pêng’ and ‘mita breueh’ roles of Acehnese men and women.
These claims are supported by revealing increased in less stable employment among heads of household in the period after 1999/2000. This reinforces the information on personal cases interviews. This was especially true during the initial stage of martial law, with its tight security checks, part of the Martial Authority’s effort to identify and isolate GAM members and partisans. The security check often led to restricted mobility for people, which, in turn, resulted in limitations in performing their livelihoods.

Villagers, especially from the ‘hot spots’ were obliged to report to and seek the consent of both conflicting parties, especially the local military post, anytime they needed to leave their village. In such situations, villagers were required to present reasonable reasons for their travel or otherwise they would not be permitted to leave their village. Unessential travel was often avoided as this might lead to suspicion and consent might then never have been granted in any circumstances. My research subjects from these villages said that, people in their villages tried to limit their travel and ‘save’ their times of travel (I: berjaga-jaga) just in case they needed to travel out of the village for serious family matters.

There were several acceptable excuses for leaving the village: buying groceries at the weekly market (usually at subdistrict level); attending weddings, funerals and circumcision ceremonies; visiting family; and shopping in the city. The first reason was the easiest to use. As described in chapter 3, to the Acehnese, going to the weekly market is more than an economic necessity. The weekly market traditionally has been an important occasion for pleasure (I: hiburan) and meeting others from different neighbouring villages, sometimes even from a far distant village. This was especially true when weekly markets at certain places specialised in particular products. Villagers from faraway villages often came to find this product or simply to observe the price. During the period of martial law, the weekly market became an important point for villagers to obtain and exchange pertinent information, especially about the fate of family’s members who had to flee from their villages of origin because of threats from both sides, or who had decided to join GAM.
Whilst the weekly market could be the safest excuse, the last two (visiting families and shopping down town) could not be used too often or it would appear suspicious, and permission might be declined by the doubtful and distrustful Indonesian military. Three of my research subjects who came from one of the ‘hot spots’ of Aceh Besar told me of being asked suspiciously by the Indonesian military at the guard post when they sought consent to leave the village to attend the FGD that I organised in Banda Aceh. That was simply because it was the second time for them to leave the village within a week. In this situation they had to smartly answer in a relaxed way, with smiles and simple jokes to avoid raising suspicions. Their gender also helped. It was common knowledge that women and children were less likely to be suspected than men. Consequently they were more mobile than men.

Figure 6-7 Problems Faced by Households at the Time of Research (During the Martial Law Period)

Figure 6-7 illustrates this situation. Male households’ heads reported transportation hindrance as the main problem they faced at the time of research, which was the martial law period. Female households’ heads, on the contrary,
having less impediments to mobility, were more concerned with difficulties in establishing new businesses. These difficulties, however, were also related to the general situations, such as lack of household capital because of loss of household resources due to the conflict and double illegal taxation.

2.2 From ‘Mita Breueh’ to ‘Mita Peng’: A Change in Gender Relations in the Households.

The different impact according to gender extended to household livelihoods. The impact of the conflict on livelihood was more likely to occur for men first then women. This is illustrated in Figure 6-8, which shows an increase in the number of unemployed husband and a decrease in the numbers of men in each type of occupation after 1999/2000.

Figure 6-8 Husband’s Main Occupation Before and After 1999/2000
Source: Primary Data, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Main Occupation</th>
<th>Before 99/00</th>
<th>After 99/00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobless</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowner farmer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage-Labour</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal mining</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Service</td>
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<td>Huller</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It also appears that the varieties of main occupations of husbands expanded after 1999/2000. This, however, does not necessarily equate to wider job opportunities, but more to an expansion from predominantly landowner
farmer and wage labour occupations to include more trading and illegal mining. One man who had never been involved in illegal mining, had taken this up to repay his household’s debt to the person who ran the business. Another husband became a fisherman, which may have been related to the security situation. Joining a fishing boat or a ship that has a ‘well qualified’ captain who possesses the skill for a smooth talk with the sea patrol would make the ship a ‘safe-haven’ for those escaping from the conflict. This is especially true for partisans, who could easily hide among the ship crews, especially a big boat that can accommodate more than 20 crew members. Interviews with two households in 2004 revealed that between the change in husbands’ occupations, there had been a period of unemployment when they could not assume their role as income earner, locally termed ‘mita pêng’ (Ac.) or seeking money as revealed in my interviews with two households (2004). It is also worth noting that regular income could not always be expected (I: tidak bisa diharapkan), especially if the men were engaged in fishing, which was very much dependent on the season. As we will see later in Nur’s family (Section 5), there were times (around three months in each year) when husbands could not get any money due to the west wind season (I: musim angin barat).

In these periods of unemployment, households usually depended on women. This may explain the sharp decrease in the number of housewives after 1999/2000, accompanied by the decreased number of unemployed wives (Figure 6-9). With limited skills, women tended to use their domestic skills of cooking. This explains the sharp increase in the number of women involved in trading, mostly in cookies and other types of traditional foods. Another factor that might explain this is the decreased number of landowner farmers. Like their male counterparts, the number of the landowner farmers declined due to the armed clashes that made them abandon their land in combat zones, usually the mountain areas.

The data not only indicate a change in women’s jobs, but also the extension of their role in household production, termed ‘seeking rice’ (Ac: mita breueh), which is contrasted with men’s role in the extra-household economy,
described as ‘seeking money’ (Ac.: *mita peng*), replacing their husbands’ roles that could not be performed for various reasons. Household production (Ac.: *mita breueh*) which traditionally ensured that a household’s basic needs were met had to be extended to seeking money (Ac.: *mita peng*) outside the domestic economy. The transformation, however, did not substitute but rather extended the household production (Ac.: *mita breueh*) of women, as they were still required, and felt obliged, to perform maintain household subsistence. Consequently, women had to perform both ‘seeking rice’ (Ac: *mita breueh*) and ‘seeking money’ (Ac.: *mita peng*) roles at the same time. This indicates the double burden of women. If one then add their agency in dealing with the two conflicting parties this becomes a triple burden.

**Figure 6-9 Wives’ Main Occupation Before and After 1999/2000**

Source: Survey Data, 2004

![Graph showing wives' main occupation before and after 1999/2000](image)

The transformation might explain the reasons for changing jobs. Figure 6-10 shows the reason women gave for changing their jobs. Most of these were income-related. The women said that jobs offered more income or were perceived
as more advantageous because they promised more income. The options of only being a housewife was no longer feasible, further exemplifying women’s increasing public role (Ac.: mita pèng).

Figure 6-10 Reasons for Wives to Change Their Types of Work
Source: Survey Data, 2004
The change in role coincided with the absence of the women's husbands or other household members, because they were away or deceased.

**Figure 6-11 Number and Types of Absented Households' Members by Types of Households**

*Source: Survey Data, 2004*

Note to table: This includes households with husbands are present but confined to the house and hence economically inactive.

Information gathered in my survey indicated that female-headed households had more absent household members, especially husbands, than male-headed households (see Figure 6-11). This signifies the greater burden for women in these female-headed households, since they had to work harder to bring more money home. A further elaboration on the need for rice (Ac.: *breueh*) to feed family in comparison to the need for money (Ac.: *peng*) provides more evidence of this transformation of women’s role.

Figure 6-12 shows that female-headed households perceived both as being of equal need, whilst the male-headed household still followed the traditional pattern. This was the case of Khadijah, whose husband had fled for his own...
safety, which meant she had to assume both the ‘mita pèng’ (Ac.) and ‘mita breueh’ (Ac.) roles at the same time.

Figure 6-12 The Needs for Rice (Ac. Breueh) in Comparison to the Need for Money (Ac. Peng)
Source: Survey Data, 2004

Without attempting to make generalisations based on the limited number of households surveyed in my research, it is worth noting that the results are indicative of a possible transformation of the Acehnese society with regard to gender relations due to the long history of violent political conflict in the region. As in many other societies, armed conflict and war often bring significant changes to gender relations. The shift of ‘mita pèng’ (Ac.) and ‘mita breueh’ (Ac.) has not only occurred in Aceh but in many other societies in the world suffering from such conflicts.
2.3 Household impoverishment

The majority of women complained about the worsening economic situation of their households in after 1999/2000, when the conflict reached its peak. Their income fluctuated due to the unpredictable nature of their livelihood activities because the insecure situation. Nurbayani, a woman from village L, said that she had to forget her dreams of selling clothes instead of cookies due to increased costs and hence the greater start-up capital required. Wardah, another woman from the same village, reported that she ran out of capital due to the insecure and uncertain conditions that affected the market. For the same reasons, her husband had to change from cattle trading before 1999/2000 to coconut trading, which brought in a much lower income. Similar circumstances happened to Wahidah who used to have a tricycle taxi (I: becak) but had to sell it to cover the family’s daily expenses.

Murni moved from farming to selling coconut steamed rice (I: nasi gurih), usually sold with some meat and vegetable curry, due to the danger that prevented her from farming. She and other villagers often were obliged to harvest before the crops were ready, resulting in low prices for their agricultural products. Often they could not harvest at all. Similarly, women from villages P and A complained of not being able to harvest their crops, or even before the crops were ready due to the security situation. This especially happened when villagers were informed in advance of a planned attack near to their farms. Both GAM and the Indonesian military usually warned villagers of planned attacks, especially if there were near harvest time. In such situations, farmers usually moved their plans forward before the attacks took place, which in turn led to low prices in the market, and therefore decreased income.

In addition, there were periods when the Indonesian military did not allow villagers to go to the forest fields, especially in mountain areas, because Indonesian military suspected that they might provide logistical support to GAM
The following are examples of statements made by the women I interviewed in Aceh.

"The condition is terribly unsafe, I also have to sell flowers at home otherwise there won’t be enough money to pay the day-to-day living cost and the children’s school fee"/”Kondisi keamanan susah, loen payah keurija siet pueblo bungong di rumoh, meuhan han sèp peng keu belanja ngon sikula aneuk” (Wardah)

"Livelihood activities cannot be performed safely. Before going to the paddy field or other fields one should observe the situation first, is it safe or not, so [we] have to wait until 10 am, if the situation is safe, there are no armed clashes or patrols; then [we] can go. There are also some restrictions to go to the paddy field, fields, or gardens near the forest because [armed] clashes often happened … Livelihood activities can be performed only during day time in between 10 am to 4 pm’’/”Mencari náfkah tidak bisa dilakukan dengan aman. Pergi ke sawah atau ke ladang harus melihat situasi dulu, aman atau tidak, jadi harus menunggu jam 10 siang, kalau aman tidak ada kontak senjata atau patroli, maka boleh pergi. Ada juga larangan pergi ke sawah, ladang, atau kebun yang dekat hutan karena sering kontak… Mencari náfkah hanya bisa dilakukan siang hari antara jam 10.00 – 16.00” (Murni)

“Everything is difficult, cannot say anything anymore, how to find money for buying rice, fish, salt, and so on, do not know what to do anymore, the situation never changes, always like this”/”Duem pue susoh. Hana meuupu peugah pieh. Kiban mita pèng keu bloe breweh. engkot, sira ngoen laen-laen. Padahai mita pèng paleng suleut. Han meuaoch penget sapue pieh lhee. Keadaan hara meu ubah2 lagee nyoe sabe-sabe” (Wina)

The women did not specify the intensity and the degree of difficulties created by the armed clashes, but their words clearly illustrate their frustration with their situation. These statements clearly demonstrate their feelings that the situation was so difficult that it affected their entire life, to the point that they could not see any solution, especially when the situation has remained the same for a long period of time.

The unsafe circumstances did not only affect farming activities, but also handicrafts, which was also one of the main sources of income for villagers. Some women who made woven floor mats as their main source of income, complained of not being able to collect pandanus leaves, the main material for pandanus mats (l: tikar pandan). Wild pandanus leaves (l: daun pandan) were usually collected from the forest, where GAM and Indonesian military clashes
often took place. Rania, a woman from B, for example, reported a sharp income decrease from 80,000 IDR per month before 99/00 to 20,000 IDR per month after 99/00 because of the difficulties in finding the raw material for the mats.

The regular armed clashes and security operations, therefore further impoverished women and their households. Facing limitations in their day-to-day activities, they suffered decreased income. The prolonged conflict might well have incarcerated these households in what Gunnar Myrdal (1968) termed a ‘vicious circle of poverty’, that led to nothing more than degenerated poverty. The following statement of Trisna illustrates this:

"No money for daily living cost, no permanent job, do not always have job every day...no house"/"Peng belanja hana, buet hana meupat, hana buet tiep uroe...rumoh gohlor na..." (Trisna)

In her limited words, the woman tried to explain that the prolonged armed conflict was leading her into a poverty trap. Her current situation (2004) of ‘no money’ further deteriorated with no job opportunities, which might lead to her ending up with no house to replace the one that was set on fire. This would lead to further consequences of not being able to provide good education for her children, which consequently prevented them from getting a good job, and, in turn, promised nothing but poverty. The ‘poverty trap’ situation can also be seen in the case of Marlinda, a former employee of Exxon Mobil. In 2003, together with many other workers, she was fired due to the company’s down-sizing operation, which Mobil claimed resulted from its difficulties in covering the high costs of security. Consequently, she had to struggle with her household daily economy and could not send her son to school any longer.

In contrast, Nurmala admitted to not having any problem:

"At that time [1999/2000 and after] our family was okay, no problem, ..."/"Watee nyan keadaan keluarga kanoe get-get mantoeng. Hana masalah, ..." (Nurmala)

However, this was not a common picture, and can be understood given that she resided in Banda Aceh, the capital city of the province, which was relatively peaceful compared to other regions. In addition, she had a good
business that enabled her to have a relatively better economic status than others. She started her business in the 1980s, selling household necessities and clothes. Slowly expanding the business to household furniture, she obtained more profit, which she smartly invested in building wooden houses in U of Banda Aceh, which she rented out for Rp 300,000 (for one bedroom) to Rp 650,000 (for three bed rooms) rupiah per year. As U was a settlement for those who fled from the conflicts in their villages, she was in fact able to profit from the conflict. She admitted to having one three-bedroom house that she rented out, but her close friend, who was also her tenant, told me that she had 3 or 4 houses and named her the ‘local conglomerate’. This title may not be exaggerated considering that she also owned a fishing boat which she rented out if her husband could not go fishing because he felt sick or simply too tired to go to sea.

2.4 Double Illegal Taxation

It was not only armed clashes and security operations that caused these women and their households to suffer depletion of resources. The illegal taxes extorted by both conflicting parties was often mentioned as significant burdens for their household economies. Both the Indonesian army and GAM personnel often asked for supports from locals. While, the ‘taxation’ of the army was totally illegal since it was not an institutional policy, the GAM’s tax (Ac.: pajak nanggroe) was part of the GAM’s official policy decided by their central office in Sweden. This was based on the argument that as a formal entity, the GAM apparatus was entitled to obtain taxes from the people. However, neither party secured the prior consent of these taxes, which is surely the ultimate source of legitimacy.

Initially, the women I interviewed admitted to being happy to pay the GAM tax, viewing it as their support for a ‘noble goal’. After 1999/2000, however, as GAM started to employ similar fierce methods of collection to those use by the Indonesian military, GAM’s good reputation declined. This was especially true for people who failed to pay the tax on the due date, in which case GAM’s personnel would snatch the household’s valuable property to force them.
to pay on a new due date, together with penalties should the new due date payment not be met. These women generally said that villagers started to view GAM’s tax, *pajak nanggroe* (Ac.), as a burden, and felt it was too often and too much.

The *pajak nanggroe* became one of the main sources of household resource depletion. As explained by Mala from L, who used to run her own kiosk selling cloth in the market, *Pajak Nanggroe* was blamed for the demise of her business. In responding to the question why she closed down her business, she said:

“Because I was often asked for *Pajak Nanggroe’*/’Karena sering diminta pajak nanggroe’”

A similar situation was experienced by Alawiyah, who also had to close down her business due to the double illegal taxation.

Alawiyah: “It is difficult for people like us to run a business. Just imagine, in a week those people could come to ask for money two or three times”/”Sulit bagi orang macam kita ni untuk bikin bisnis. Bayangkan saja dalam satu minggu bisa dua tiga kali orang-orang tu datang minta uang”

Me: “Who are they?”/”Orang-orang mana maksud kakak?”

Alawiyah: “Well, those people...”/”Ya orang-orang tu.”

Me: “The army?”/”TNI?”

Alawiyah: “Well, both...it’s not only that, they also ask not in small amounts... it can be two hundred [thousand], three hundred [thousand]... how can we have such amounts of money... cell phones cannot be sold quickly. It looks good from the outside but we really struggle inside... but they will not understand it... everything seems so wrong for us, either giving them money or not, it is just not right. In the end, we went bankrupt...”/”Ya dua-duanya lah.. baru gitu khan, mereka minta tuh tidak tanggung-tanggung. yang dua ratus, yang tiga ratus.. mana ada kita uang segitu.. bisnis hp itu kan tidak cepat laku. kelihatannya saja bagus dari luar tapi kita di dalam tuh mati-matian.. tapi mana mau orang tuh tahu... serba salah kita, mau kita kasih salah tidak kita kasih juga salah.. ya sudah, bangkrutlah kita.”

Another person who ran a similar shop admitted a similar experience with a Police officer who offered his ‘security protection’.

“Sometime ago that person came. He said that he wanted to help take care of the shop. I said, this is not my shop, my brother’s shop, then I simply...”
mentioned somebody's name, a policeman that I know... that person went away without saying anything anymore..." /"Ada kemarin orang tuh datang, kak. Orang tuh bilang mau bantu juga-jaga toko. Sinyak [acehnese calling for a kid] bilang khan, ini bukan toko Sinyak, toko abang, ternus Sinyak sebut saja nama polisi kenalan Sinyak. ...pergi orang tuh tidak bilang-bilang lagi..."

Implied in the 'security protection' was the illegal extortion of money from this local businessperson by the police officer. Apart from this, the shop owner had to face GAM fighters who came to collect his pajak nanggroe, although he admitted he did not have to pay as often as those who had shops in GAM areas.

Several people I talked to said they used to eagerly pay the pajak nanggroe. However, from being initially voluntary supportive, the pajak nanggroe gradually became an additional economic burden due to the extraction of household resources for the rebel fighters. Shafira commented:

"...The most difficult one is when GAM personnel come to the house, early in the morning asking for money, threatens to beat [us] to death..."/"Nyang paléng sósah meunyô awak GAM tôk keu rumoh, beungêh-beungêh lakée peng, kacak meutumbôk ngön meu poh matee..." (a single mother from Pidie – whose husband fled to another province for security reasons)

As a consequence of these situations, households had difficulties in meeting their daily needs, adding to their already vulnerable situations.

2.5 Beyond Livelihood: Spiritual and Psychological Sufferings

It was apparent that people suffered not only from economic deprivation, but also in other spheres of life. The effects of the violent political conflict between GAM and the Indonesian military also affected the very core of their personhood, their spirituality and psychological well being. As explicated extensively in Chapter 4, the combatants in the conflict often employed "psychological warfare", which created an atmosphere of constant fear and terror. This practice ranged from displaying corpses in public places to propagating policies for rewards and punishments for those who supported and acted against either conflicting parties, including stigmatising each other and the followers of
the other party. Through these actions, ‘fear and terror’ were cultivated among the people, regardless of their age and gender.

The obligation to report one’s movements to both conflicting parties might also have added to the fear and terror among the people. Often, however, villagers tended to avoid speaking about this to me, which further exemplified the existence of apprehensive feelings. I often encountered statements made by my research subjects that cannot be understood at face value, but need further elaboration. Rina, for example, said that there was no intimidation from the army soldiers at her village. This may indicate relative security and easy mobility. However in a further elaboration, she contradicted her statement by noting that men in her village only went out if they had to, otherwise they stayed in the village. Considering that she was from a ‘hot spot,’ the conflicting statements signify her ‘fear’ of telling the truth and hindered her from talking about it.

Nevertheless, not everyone was subjugated by the ‘fear.’ In some cases, women could be outspoken, and directly confronted the fear and those who perpetrated it. I remember meeting an old woman at one of the sub-district offices in Aceh Besar who came to the office to ask her head of gampōng (Ac. keusyik) to assist her to find out from the military the location of the body of her son, who had joined the fighters some years before and had been recently killed in an incident. According to Islam, dead bodies have to be buried properly. If they are not, it is considered a sin by the kin deceased or other Moslems who knew about it. Through her crying, this old woman kept on saying that she had to find and bury her son or otherwise her prayer (I: sholat) would not be accepted by God. “Just tell me where the location is and I will collect it myself. It’s been 15 days!” she said impatiently when the keuchik answered that it was not possible for them (men from the village) to collect it due to the conflict. The keuchik said no more as he knew that this old woman would certainly go and put her life at risk to collect the body if he did give a clue as to where the body might be. Women from his village knew the forests very well, even better than their male counterparts, since they were the ones collecting wood and rattan.
This story exemplifies the deeper impact of violent political conflict on the spirituality of people dealing with the after life as well as their mundane existence. It also illustrates the women’s central caring roles in household coping strategies as well as their own lives. This strengthens my argument that women were not only passive victims but ‘active survivors’ at both personal and household levels.

3 Coping with the Effects of the Violent Political Conflict on Livelihoods

From several interviews and the household survey, it was apparent that a variety of strategies were used by different households to cope with the livelihood consequences of the violent political conflict in Aceh. I found at least three coping strategies, which each brought different consequences to the households. This is in line with the study of Jaspar and Shoham (2002) on household coping strategies in violent political conflict situations described in Chapter 3, where petty trade was predominant among the livelihood strategies employed.

Nevertheless, out of four strategies identified by Jaspar and Shoham (2002), I was only able to find three. The ‘returning back to subsistence economy’ was unlikely to occur in Aceh in the short term considering that the armed clashes often took place in farming areas. The following section describes the three main coping strategies I identified and their effect on the households’ impoverishment.

3.1 The Three Coping Strategies

The way of coping depends on three major factors, namely the escalation of the conflict, the extent of the impact of the conflict on the household’s livelihood, and the level of threat experienced by household members. Based on this, I identify three coping strategies. The first is to escape by evacuating the whole household out of the village to safer areas, usually big cities such as Banda
Aceh, to continue their life and livelihood. The second strategy is for only part of the household to migrate to big cities or even a foreign country such as Malaysia. The third way of coping is to stay in the village as the family has nowhere to run, and struggle to survive in different circumstances.

In the first strategy, households usually did not move together in one-step but in stages to avoid suspicion from both conflicting parties. Husbands or other adult male household members would go first, followed by the rest of the household once these male members had been able to settle down. This strategy was especially employed by households from ‘black areas’ or ‘hot spots’. During the period of martial law or even the military operation preceding this, people from these villages needed to seek consent from the military and civil authority anytime they wanted to leave the village. Non-formal consent was also needed from GAM. In this case, the usual excuse was visiting relatives. This was considered to be the safest and most appropriate reason for an extended absence that was well accepted by both the Indonesian military and GAM fighters. If the villagers failed to return, people would usually start to ask about their whereabouts, in which case the reply would be migrating (economic migration) (I: *merantau*) or seeking life in the city (I: *mencari rejeki di kota*).

This is similar to the second way people coped, but in this case only part of the household migrated to big cities or even to a foreign country. This second approach only involved those members directly affected by the conflict. These people typically faced some difficulties because they were perceived to be closely affiliated to either GAM or the Indonesian military and the Police. Commonly, this included husbands or sons who had received death threats, or women who had lost their husbands due to forced disappearances or killings. The husbands and sons in these cases were perceived as, supporting GAM, not supporting GAM, or strongly affiliated to the Indonesian military and the Police, and, in late 2000, to the Javanese. An example is Nina, a research subject from B village whose husband, a Minangkabau, left her and their children to flee to Padang in the neighbouring province of North Sumatra around 2002 after he had received a life threat from GAM fighters:
“That was the GAM soldier, they said that if there was no money amounting to 1 million, my husband had to go...but, even though there was 1 million provided, my husband had to go out of the village still, or otherwise ‘Koh tako’.” /"Ye keu awak GAM, goet nyan peugah menyeo hana peng 1 juta lako lon l poh...tapee, lage nyan na 1 juta, lako lon teutap weh kareuna kalo hun weh, ‘koh tako’..."” (A Women from B)

‘Koh tako’ (Ac.) is a term used for cutting someone’s throat to kill them. It is part of the old traditional practice of the Acehnese to protect one’s pride. However, during the conflict, it was used to punish those who were considered as endangering, betraying, or disrespecting the Aceh independence movement. Nevertheless, it was not usually done lightly. Depending on the seriousness of the villager’s mistake, some warnings were usually given beforehand. In most cases, the villagers were asked to leave the village and never to return. Later, however, in around 1999/2000, the practice of ‘koh tako’ was copied by the Indonesia military and it became difficult to differentiate the two parties. Apart from this, some people used ‘koh tako’ for their own private revenge or dendam pribadi (I). This may explain why people tended to not discuss ‘koh tako’ if such a case happened. They simply said it was conducted by OTK (I: Orang/Organisas; Tak Dikenal), an unidentified person or party. Their fear of talking about ‘koh tako’ incidents was evident. Three reasons might explain this fear. First, the indistinguishable nature of the ‘koh tako,’ since it might have been conducted by either conflicting party or simply by civilians for private reasons. Second, the risk of being seen to be in opposition to one or other of the conflicting parties. Third, discussing and speculating about the ‘koh tako’ did not help to make their situation better.

Interestingly, the story of how GAM fighters, including the Inong Balee (Ac., literally widows), the female fighters of GAM, were highly skilled at ‘koh tako’ and could make a quiet, clear cut and disappear before others realised what had happened, moved around from one region to another. Sometimes I had the

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3 Traditional killing to protect one’s pride is not restricted to the Acehnese society in Indonesia. An example of a traditional honour fight is the carok (I) among the Madurese. Many other societies in different parts of the world, however, have such practices, in especially former times. In the 16th century in Western society, for example, a ‘duel’ was a gun or sword fight between two persons to defend their honour.
impression that people were quite proud of this skill, their eyes were sparkling when they told me about the story.

The women who used this second strategy were typically widows of GAM fighters. These women, usually left their children, if any, with their mother or another close relative who was willing to take care of them. Finding someone who would take the responsibility for children from such families, however, was not easy. Not everyone, even close relatives, would take the risk of having trouble with the Indonesian military or the Police for helping GAM-identified children or families. In such cases, local NGOs usually played a crucial role in finding foster families for these children, and assisted the poor mother to get a job. Ayu, a woman that I met in North Aceh, for example, had just lost her husband, a GAM soldier, who was shot to death by the Indonesian military. With four children aged from around 1 to 13 years old, it was difficult for her to make a living, not to mention the stigma she had to carry of being the wife of a GAM soldier. Neighbours and close relatives turned down her pleas for assistance, until she was met by a local NGO that helped to find foster families for these children. At the time I met her, she was still with two remaining children, aged 1 and 8 years old, and the NGO was still trying to find foster families for them.

Communication could be problematic for husbands or sons who escaped from home because of threats to their lives. Nina, the above mentioned woman from village B whose husband had fled due to the threat from GAM, for example, had not communicated with her husband since the day he fled from their village. Nevertheless, Vanda, another research subject, was luckier since her husband visited her once in a while and brought some money for the family, although he never slept at home and always left the same day as his arrival.

Communication was thus sometimes possible, especially for those who fled to far away places, particularly to foreign countries such as Malaysia, since they were able to communicate with their family by phone. In this case, a mobile phone became an essential tool of communication. This does not mean that villagers had to have a mobile, which is very much a luxury for villagers, but they usually borrowed one from their trusted neighbours or friends. They usually did
not have to pay for this, but simply did some small things for balas budi (I) or returning their kindness or help. This is usually done through offering their labour to these people whenever it is needed.

In contrast to communication, remittances were often problematic. Migrants could often not sent money home. One of the reasons was that the money was usually used to settle their debts to the labour recruiting agency or their work place to cover their initial expenses to migrate and reside in the cities. This was especially true for those who immigrated to another country. As admitted by Kumala, a mother of a son who left for Malaysia to escape from the conflict:

"...[I] haven't sent any, because it still needs to be used to pay the debt for covering the cost of passport, transport, and the permit to stay in Malaysia..."...gohlo m ji kirem, kareuna mantoeng ji hayeu penggooh yang dipinjam keu biaya passport, ongkos kapal dan urus ijin tinggal di Malaysia..." (Kumala)

Migration for economic reason, merantau (I), however, was not only a phenomenon of people from the hot spots and areas close to the hot spots, but also people from big cities like Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe. This especially happened due to the lack of job opportunities in the region. Some factories that used to be the main source of employment, such as Exxon Mobil and ASEAN fertiliser, as well as NGOs (both national and international) had to scale down their operations because of the heightened state of the conflict. Some small businesses went bankrupt for the same reason, such Alawiyah's family discussed above, who ran a mobile phone shop but could not cope with the double illegal taxation in the region.

The destinations of merantau (I) varied. They included cities in the same district, cities in another district but still in same province, cities out of province but still in the country, and lastly foreign countries. In most cases, the main country of destination was Malaysia, which was closer for three main reasons, namely the success the previous Acehnese migrants (I: Aceh perantauan) in Malaysia; the ease of making a living there, and the absence of a language barrier.
My data indicated four major reasons why members of households migrated from their villages of origin. First, to escape (especially male family members) from being recruited as track-finders (I: pencari jejak) and militia, or for being suspected of being partisans by the Indonesian military. This especially happened in areas that were considered as ‘hot spots’, like the mountain areas where Indonesian soldiers were not familiar with the local situation and, therefore, needed local assistants to find the whereabouts of GAM. An example of this was the case of Kumala, who asked her son to leave the country since he was suspected of being a GAM partisan, which according to her was absolutely not true. With some financial support from her family, she sent her son to join the Indonesian labour migration to Malaysia.

Second, households’ resources were depleted. The prolonged conflict resulted in difficulties in earning their living and depletion of their resources. In such situations, households usually decided to flee from their villages of origin. Third, threats from GAM fighters due to accusations of being an Indonesian military spy and informer (Ac. cuak). Those who were alleged to be ‘cuak’ would certainly have to leave their villages or otherwise they would be killed. Fourth, weariness of the conflict with its frequent sweeps and armed clashes and the overall consequences of these on day-to-day life. These four reasons were interrelated and clearly indicate that people were basically not interested in the conflict. In fact, these lay people were tired of being ‘sandwiched’ in between the two conflicting parties and being innocent victims of the conflict.

The third way of coping was to stay in the village and adapt to the situation in some way. This was option was chosen, or forced on, by those who usually had nowhere to go, nowhere to run, and no choice, except to face things and somehow, cope! One reason to opt to stay in the village was the strong connection with their land. Leaving the village would mean abandoning their land, which was culturally undesirable, especially when the land has been inherited from their parents. Although there were some limitations on farm activities, they could continue.
Those who were in a more favourable position of having contacts in other regions or having a better economic situation, could send their sons out of the village once they were grown up. This was out of fear that they would be persuaded by GAM’s propaganda (I: termakan) and join the freedom movement, or be suspected of being partisans by the Indonesian military. When they sought consent for these sons to leave the village the parents usually told both the army and GAM, that they wanted them to go to cities for a better education. No one would oppose this. The Indonesian military or GAM usually simply asked ‘where do they go for school?’ (I: ‘sekolah dimana?’) and never asked more detailed questions. The strategy of staying but sending their male family members out of villages can be considered as a strategy for minimizing threat in which distancing or detachment is made to avoid threat. The strategy of staying but sending male family members out of villages can be considered as a threat minimization strategy, in which distancing or detachment is made to avoid or diminish a threat.

Considering that violent political conflict has been in the region for over twenty years, the women I interviewed tend to perceive the conflict situation as part of their normality. My question on how they sustain themselves in such situations usually received the very definite answer of “this is our lives, this is what we have been facing for years, and this is our normal life”. On the face of it, this conflicts with their statements about the difficulties of living under violent political conflict circumstances. However, the perceived ‘normality’ needs to be viewed from the coping strategy perspective. The violent political conflict milieu was ‘daily life’ in the region, and after some time it was felt to be ‘normal life’. I personally experienced this attitudes during the conduct of the research. I was someone from a ‘relatively’ non violent political conflict situation who had to live the conflict situation in Aceh and put up with it. After some time, I also regarded it as part of the routine daily life. This led me to unconsciously perceive the situation as ‘normal’ which I did not realise as abnormal until I returned to Canberra.

The strategies that these women applied in their households always involved the first three dimensions of a coping strategy: identification of problem
focus, support seeking, and positive appraisal (Zeidner and Norman, 1996). In identifying problem focus, women tended to admit the difficulties of sustaining their household day-to-day living under the violent political conflict circumstances. However, they did not simply passively sit and wait for their livelihood situations to change. Instead, they were actively seeking information and mobilising support. They were also actively seeking the meaning of their situation and using it as a source of internal strength and courage to move on. These efforts can be seen as support seeking and positive appraisal. It is apparent that the very tangible and practical problems of their day-to-day living and the way they coped with these problems represented their personal strength. Thus, these women and their households did not apply a single coping strategy, but rather a combination of different strategies.

It was common for a strong faith in God to become the main source of the women’s inner strength. As further elaborated in section 4, the FGD results clearly indicated that religious-based institutions, such as Takziah (I), Pengajian (I) and Wirid (I) were always mentioned as one source of help in difficult situations. This was especially true for those in rural villages, where religion tended to play a central role.

Takziah, literally means condolence, mourning, and consolation (Stevens and Schimdgal-Tellings, 2004, p.988), and is a Moslem prayer gathering for not only mourning and consolation for bereaved families but also for asking forgiveness from God for the spirit of the deceased. This is a common phenomenon among Muslims in Indonesia. In some places, such as in Aceh, takziah (I) has become institutionalised and refers to a group (of Moslems) established to mainly assist bereaved families. The group can be as small as around 20 people and as large as 100 people or more. It usually collects and accumulates funds during the takziah prayers, which is then used as ‘uang duka’ (I), money donated to the bereaved families to cover the expenses for the funeral, the amount usually being decided collectively in a meeting. During the takziah (I) prayer session, the bereaved families provide coffee, tea, biscuits, traditional cookies and sweets, and sometimes also meals. Members of the group usually
bring *boh jaroe* (Ac.), a gift of sugar, biscuits, tea, coffee, and similar things for the bereaved families.

Combining these meetings with the traditions for commemorating the deceased on certain days, the *Takziah* prayers were usually conducted at least five times: on the day of bereavement, three days after, seven days after, forty-four days (some villages are forty days) after, and a hundred days after the bereavement. The traditional commemoration ceremony itself used to be held up to a thousand days after the bereavement and afterwards every year. This, however, was usually conducted by those with favourable economic status. As the conflict has deprived households of their income, fewer and fewer households conduct the *takziah* for the thousand day commemoration ceremony. There is a general tendency for households to commemorate the bereavement up to forty-four days only.

*Pengajian* (I) is an activity in which a group of Moslems learn to recite the *Qur’an*, usually led by an *ustadz*, a Moslem scholar, usually a man. At village level, the *pengajian* is usually conducted at the *meunasah* (Ac.), the village meeting house, within which people sit in accordance to their gender. In most cases, separate *pengajian* are conducted for men and women. Similar to the *takziah*, the *pengajian* group has become an important social asset, especially in times of difficulties. In this respect, members of the group attend *pengajian* not only for religious purposes, but also social purposes of maintaining social ties.

*Wirid* (I) basically has two meanings, i.e. division of the *Qur’an* (to be read, studied, etc.) and extra, personal prayers said after the ritual prayers. *Wirid* entails reciting a certain division of the *Qur’an* either by a group or an individual. *Wirid* in Aceh refers to a *Qur’an* Reading Group which usually recites the *Qur’an* on a regular basis such as weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or bi-monthly. Unlike *pengajian*, in which people learn how to recite the *Qur’an* and sometimes listen to a lecture by the *ustadz* to understand the meaning, in *Wirid*, people are assumed to know how to read the particular division of *Qur’an* to be read and there is no lecture or discussion of the meaning.
The role of these three types of religious groups in the lives of women in Aceh will be discussed below.

3.2 From Farming to Engaging In the Informal Sector

The households that opted to flee from their villages of origin to safer areas usually ended up in the cities such as Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe, which seemed to provide work opportunities through their engagement in the informal sector. However, their movement from farming to the urban informal sector often resulted in a move from one type of poverty to another. In some cases, this even increased the households’ impoverishment for, as one woman described it, in their villages of origin at least they had a piece of land and a house to live in, compared to their vulnerable situations in urban areas. Having to stay in a rented poor house in urban slum areas with no farm land or a proper job that could bring a regular income to the household was another form of ‘insecurity’ that they had to face in the cities.

Households often had to flee with insufficient money or possessions. They were usually helped by their friends or relatives who had gone to the cities before them. But soon this help would come to an end and they had to cope on their own. Having insufficient skills to enter the formal job market, engaging in the informal sector was unavoidable for these households, and became the most common way of coping with the new situation of urban life.

Men became cheap labour, such as fishing hands (I: buruh kapal pencari ikan), rickshaw drivers (I: penarik becak), or public motorcycle driver (Ac., I: penarik erbete; I: penarik ojek). Those who were lucky enough to have savings after some time in the city would buy a motorcycle or make a small boat for fishing. Fishing income, however, depended very much on the season. There were times, especially during the west wind season (I: musim angin barat) when

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4 Ojek (I) locally known as erbete (Ac.), is motorcycle (sometimes a bicycle) used to carry passengers who sit behind the driver for some fee. It is a common means of public transportation in Indonesia, especially in remote areas which lack public transport.
they did not have any income for around two to three months since they could not go out to sea.

In such situations, women, who usually immediately set up as petty traders, became the backbone of the family. Petty trading (I: jualan kecil-kecilan) was the most prevalent economic activity for women that I interviewed in urban areas. Their activities varied from making cookies, selling steamed rice with coconut milk (I: nasi gurih), to small-scale catering for university students in the neighbouring gampông. Two women became domestic helpers, which was quite new for the Acehnese. According to them, these various activities significantly helped (I: sangat membantu) household cash flows.

Their insecurity thus underwent a transformation, from armed clashes to informal sector insecurity. In addition, they lacked social capital, compared to when they were still in their villages of origin (see next section). Their situation can also be seen as a transformation of one type of 'sandwiched position' to another. In their villages of origin, they were trapped in between two conflicting parties. In cities, they were trapped between gaining a relatively secure location and the urban poverty they found there. Whilst living in the city was vulnerable, returning to village of origins was not feasible.

4 Social Assets

One of the important sources of resilience for women, and their households, from a conflict affected situation is their social assets, which include general social support, coalition building, social joining (and parting), and social protection, as well as the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust entrenched in social relations (Moser, 2001, p.43). Social assets encompass both micro institutions, such as communities and households, and macro institutions, such as the rules and regulations of formal institutions, especially in economic structures and arrangements.

Part of my research concern was to investigate the availability of social assets, see how women perceived them, and how these assets were deployed in
women’s coping strategies. The following section aims at elaborating these issues.

4.1 The Focus Group Discussions on Social Assets

The results from the two Focus Group Discussions presented here illustrate the role of social assets in women household coping strategies. The two FGD were conducted with women from two extremes: the rural and urban settings in the region, which also exemplify the ‘hot spot’ and ‘non hot spot’ situation. The first FGD was conducted with women from village G in a mountain rural area in North Aceh, which was well-known as one of the hot spots in Aceh and characterised by frequent armed clashes and the heavy presence of GAM fighters. The second was carried out with women from village U, in an urban slum coastal area in Banda Aceh, the capital city, which had much fewer armed clashes.

In each FGD I used a Venn diagram to illustrate the types of social assets, their level degree of importance, and their intersections. What to discuss, why, and how the discussion was to be carried out, as well as why and how the Venn diagram was to be used in the discussion were explained prior to the discussion. The final decision on the conduct of each FGD was determined through discussion and negotiations between myself and the participants. The negotiations were especially concerned with how to exemplify types of social assets, measure their importance, and demonstrate the intersections of these social assets in terms of their importance. This further explained the different forms of Venn diagrams. Women from G village preferred to employ the term ‘connection’, with arrows illustrating them, instead of intersection, see Figure 6-13. The connections referred to participants involved in each institution. The two way arrows illustrated that participants involved in one institution could be found in the other related institution. The one-way arrows represented that participants involved in one institution could be found in the related institutions but not vice versa. In contrast to women from G village, women from U village
easily grasped what I meant by intersection and utilised the Venn diagram in the expected manner.

Types of social assets were presented in as oval shapes, with their size showing their relative importance. There were, however, some discussions on how this could be measured considering that their importance could vary considerably between individuals due to their diverse experiences. The groups came up with the conclusion that the degree of importance could be best explained by the benefits obtained from the social asset being considered. The women then discussed on how to measure benefits, and both groups apparently came up with the same logic that the number of participants involved exemplified the degree of benefit received. The rationale was that the more benefits offered, the more women were attracted to join. The size of the oval shapes therefore represents the number of participants involved, assuming that the bigger the number of participants the more benefits that could be obtained. The intersections illustrate the overlapping importance of these assets, meaning that these assets have similar levels of significance for the participants involved.

The position of the ovals in the Venn diagrams was apparently also a matter of debate. I observed that during the discussions, women negotiated where to put them in the diagram, whether in the centre or in the periphery. A central position illustrates that the oval shape representing a particular social asset is considered the most important in their society. A peripheral position indicates it is less important. The negotiations clearly illustrated the power relations of these women. The women's group from G village was clearly dominated by the group leader, who possessed a better educational background and higher socio economic status. The women from U village demonstrated more balanced power relations, with everyone contributing to the discussion. It was interesting to observe the interaction of these women in determining the location of certain oval shapes to best represented their importance. Several hands held the shapes at the same time and moved them in different directions. Some tried to pull an oval in a certain direction and position it in the location that they preferred, whilst some others pulled it in different directions. Once they realised that they were pulling
in different directions, they would look at each other and start to discuss where they should locate the oval that could best represent its importance for them.

4.2 Social Assets in Different Settings: Julo-Julo, Posyandu, and Takziah

Figure 6-13 shows the types of formal and informal assets and their interrelationships according to women from village G. Five institutions were considered to play an important role, in the sense that women could obtain some benefits from their existence. These institutions were PKK or the Family Welfare Empowerment Programme, which was basically formed during the New Era under Suharto to mobilise women’s votes for his party and inculcate state ideology; Julo-Julo (Ac.) – a local term for arisan (I) or rotating credit association; Posyandu – the integrated service post which provides basic health services for pregnant mothers, and lactating mothers and babies, and is run by PKK; Takziah – the Moslem association for social support, especially in times of crises such as death; Hude Besare (Ac.) (light of life) – the women’s group formed and assisted by a local NGO for income generating activities; Pengajian, the study group to recite Qur’an (Ar.); and Wirid (I), the Qur’an Reading group which in village G was conducted on a weekly basis.
Figure 6-13 Institutions and their relationships according to women from village G, North Aceh

From Figure 6-13, it is apparent that Pengajian (I) and Wirid (I) were not only seen as the main source of social support, but also as the core of the women's social organisation. The women said that Pengajian was a matter of life and death to them.

"Pengajian adalah pokok, adalah hidup dan mati. Ustadz memberikan pengarahan tentang cara hidup dan membantu menyelesaikan masalah"/"Pengajian is the main thing, is life and death. Ustadz [the Moslem scholar] gives [us] direction in life and helps in solving problems".

The women had regular Pengajian and Wirid meetings at which, the Ustadz (the Moslem scholar leader) gave guidance on good ways of living and how to solve life problems in an Islamic way. During the Pengajian, the women
collected some Rp 1000 per member as a donation, and give it to members who had suffered a death in the family. This Pengajian, therefore, was not only a benefit to the women spiritually, but also economically.

Interestingly, in contrast to village G, women from village U did not perceive the pengajian as the core of their daily life. The following Figure 6-14 clearly indicates that the UBE - Usaha Bersama Ekonomi (I), i.e. an income generating activity group, was the most important element in their day-to-day coping strategies. A woman from the group, who was much more vocal compared to other members, stated clearly that pengajian was certainly important, but it did not really help to fill their empty stomachs.

**Figure 6-14 Institutions and its relations according to women from village U, Banda Aceh**

![Diagram](image)

Source: FGD on 8 July 2003

This view has to be seen in the context of the village, which was in a slum area of Banda Aceh. It was newly established village, with residents mainly from
outside Banda Aceh. According to a senior resident that has lived in the area since the 1970s, the village was established in that decade. However, other senior residents maintained that the village has been established before the 1970s, during the DI/TII/NII clash. In either period, most of these people had fled from their places of origin due to the conflict.

Living in the urban context of Banda Aceh, the women explained that it was harder to cope than in a rural area because nothing was freely provided by nature. To have clean water, for example, they had to buy it for around Rp 200 per 5 to 10 litres. Some women who had arrived in the 1990s due to insecurity in their villages, said that their lives had become more and more difficult economically compared to when they were still in their villages.

In both village G and village U, the PKK or the Family Welfare Empowerment Programme formed by the government was seen as providing the smallest benefit. This was because only those closely linked to the government system in the villages were involved in PKK. The rest of the society tended to 'stay away' from PKK and its activities. There were at least two main possible reasons for this. The first was the distrust of the people towards this institution. The PKK was established as part of central government policy, and those involved were volunteers, e.g. they were free labour, and not government public servants. Despite this, PKK was put under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Thus, it clearly represented the government desire to exercise control over civil society. In other words, it was the embodiment of the central government at local level, especially for women. The second reason, the women were reluctant to mobilise this institution as part of their social capital was a fear of being seen to be affiliated too much with the government.

*Posyandu*, however perceived to have relatively similar of importance in both villages a relatively similar degree of importance. This is despite of the fact that *Posyandu* is run by PKK. The possible reason for this is that *Posyandu* benefited pregnant mother, lactating mothers, and children, including providing immunisation.
The local rotating credit association, sometimes also run by PKK. Similar with PKK, Julio-Julio also not seen as a central institution. However, since it is not a formal organisation, any group of women can initiate Julio-Julio without establishing a formal group.

4.3 Bantuan (Voluntary Help)

In addition to the social assets identifying in the two FGD, there were several other sources of support available to Acehnese civilians, especially for those survivors of the Military Operation. This support came from government, national and international NGOs, relatives or family members, and non family members. The government, through its ministry of social welfare, provided compensation to the survivors (I: Uang Diyat), as well as Rice for the poor (I: Beras Untuk Si Miskin – Raskin), and assistances under the Presidential Decree on Underdeveloped Villages (I: Impres Desa Tertinggal – IDT). In addition, the provincial government had launched an excellent program called Gema Assalam, which basically aimed at providing support for economic empowerment.

However, it was common knowledge among the people of Aceh that many, especially from the ‘hot spots’, could not receive this help. One of my key informants from the regional development planning bureau (I: Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah – BAPPEDA) said that the Gema Assalam program was beautiful and well planned, but the problem would always be in the implementation (I: pelaksanaan). The armed clashes were the main obstacles these programs had to face, along with not being able to deliver them survivors from the ‘hot spots’ who had been severely affected by the conflict. A desire to isolate this program, which involved a lot of money, from the GAM fighters, might also be a reason why it did not reach the most vulnerable groups. Another factor was the efforts of GAM fighters to prevent people taking government assistance.

Nevertheless, due to their immediate needs, households tended to take the risk to obtain government support, as shown in the following Figure 6-15.
This is regardless of the risk of being questioned by GAM fighters. Some women admitted that they were often questioned on where and what types of assistance they were receiving, and there were times when they were advised not to take any support from the government. Responding to my question of how they would explain receiving government money when asked about it by the anti-government parties, they said that:

"Ini khan bukan salah kita. Kita dikasih, kita terima. Apalagi kita butuh. Ya khan?.. kita bilang aja bahwa kita dikasih, kita tidak minta."/"This is not our fault. We were given [the money], we accepted [the money]. We were in need anyway, right?.. we would simply said that we were given [the money], we did not ask for [the money]."
One woman told me that whenever she was asked, she always replied that taking government money did not necessarily mean supporting the government. This clearly exemplifies women's rational economic choices and their efforts to be 'active survivors' by 'playing beautifully' (I: bermain cantik), to maintain their distance from both conflicting parties to protect their household security.

As well as the government, Indonesian and international NGOs (usually through local NGOs), provided a wide range of support from economic to human rights protection. Unlike the government, who could not reach the 'hot spots', the NGOs had more flexibility to move around. A government officer admitted that often they had to ask their assistance to deliver government support to the people in 'hot spots'. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, with the implementation of martial law, the NGOs had to significantly reduce their activities.

Family members, especially children who had successfully migrated to other cities sent remittances to families back home. There is a tradition of male siblings helping their female sibling’s households, support for which is usually delivered through their wives. Murni, for example, received money every 6 months from the wife of her brother who worked at Exxon Mobile. Kumala was also given financial support from her brother’s wife every month.

Non family members - neighbours, friends, the workplace, or businesspersons (Ac., I: tauké)⁵ – were also part of the supporting system provided help that ranged from money, goods, and labour. Some neighbours in villages, for example, helped each other by donating agricultural products to the struggling households, for example, Aisyiah from village B who received charity from her neighbours in the form of agricultural products. The support, however, was usually secretly given to women with close kin involved in GAM due to the stigma of ‘rebels’ and ‘disobedience’ carried by these women. Helping them could be perceived by the armed forces as helping GAM fighters, which could lead harsh punishment.

⁵ There are different ways of writing the term. These include tauké, taoké, and taokéh. Steven and Scmidgall-Tellings (2004, p.998) translate this term as boss, foreman. In Aceh it refers to a local businessperson.
4.4 Loans: an Inappropriate, But Necessary, Source

Apart from using voluntary help (I: bantuan), loans (I: hutang) were also called upon. Azizah, a woman from village B, said that she received a loan (I: hutang) from a local businessperson (Ac., I: tauki) for her farm activities. Interestingly, in most cases, loans (I: hutang) would not be perceived as such but as voluntary help (I: bantuan), even when interest applied. Lending money was generally perceived as a sin because charging interest is not allowed according to Islam. Consequently, when interest was applied it would not be called, or considered as, usury but as simply returning a kindness (I: balas budi). This may be the reason why there was a tendency to perceive hutang as bantuan. Atikah from village U, however, preferred to simply admit to the payment of interest. She said:

"Bunga itu riba. Dan itu sebenarnya tidak boleh. Tapi karena butuh tetap pinjam" / "Interest is riba [usury]. And actually this is not allowed. But because of need, I still borrow".

Rizkiah, from village P, which was 4 to 5 hours away from Atikah’s village also preferred to perceive debts or loans for what they were, and to differentiate them from voluntary help (I: bantuan):

"Na yang bantu, tapee loen meutang ba syedara-syedara di lingka rumoeh. Meuse utang breueh bayee ngoen breueh, mensee utang peng bayee ngoen tenaga. Menurut kamo hana brat, kareuna mantoeng ek meubayee ngoen tenaga. Keurija bak gobnyan" / "There is some help, but I borrowed from neighbours. Rice debt will be paid with rice, labour debts will be paid with labour. For me, it is not heavy, because it can be paid with labour. Working for them."

The terms for the return of the loan varied from one debtor to another. However the usual practice was to return it after an agreed period, usually one or two days. Tolerance, however, would apply in the case of failure to return the loan by the agreed date.

"...kalo meminjam pada tetangga maka pengembaliannya setelah satu hari peminjaman, kalo ada wang. Tapi kalo tidak ada meminda sampai tiga hari..." (A woman from U)
…if borrowing from a neighbour, it should be returned the next day, if you have money. If not, it can be postponed to three days…”

No formal written contract was applied and legal sanctions were rare. Mutual trust was the only foundation for these relationships, which under the conflict circumstances of Aceh was not easy to gain and maintain. Consequently, some women admitted that obtaining credit was not easy. Adding to this is the reluctance of many people to obtain credit. There was a general principle among these women not to get into debt because of the fear of not being able to repay it (I: tidak mau terjerat hutang). Therefore, in most cases, women were careful in taking loans. This may explain why households tended to take government support when it was available.

5 Fleeing from Insecurity to Poverty: A Case Study of Nur’s Family

Nur, a mother of three children, was one of the income generating activity group (UBE), group in the village of U, Banda Aceh that I met through my local NGO contact. In her late 30s, she looked much older than this, which is understandable given the hard life that she had had to go through, especially for the previous ten years, because of the conflict. She and her family originated from G, in the district of Pidie, a village which was classified as one of the ‘black areas’ i.e. areas with heavy presence of GAM. Consequently, security checks by the Indonesian military, which often ended up in physically violent and armed clashes, were not new phenomena for her, especially after the 1990s when the Military Operation was in force in the region.

She married in 1989 when she was 18 years old, and delivered her first born daughter two years later in 1991. With her small family, she lived happily in her village until 1993 when the situation became, in her words, ‘gawat sekali’ (I) or very critical due to the military operation conducted by the Indonesian forces. The whole family decided to flee to L in South Aceh.
At the beginning, I thought it was purely the poor security situation of the entire village that she and her family had fled from. However, after getting to know each other better, she started telling me the secret of her family, which even her close neighbours in U, where they currently resided, did not know, and she asked me to keep it confidential. It was, apparently, not only due to the security situation, but also the threats that they received against her husband when he was recruited as a tracker (I: pencari jejak) for Indonesian military to find GAM fighters in the mountain area nearby their village. For this purpose, the husband had received special training from the Indonesian military. It did not matter whether the husband had voluntarily or involuntarily joined the Indonesian military; the fact that he had joined was a strong enough reason to put his and his family’s lives at risk.

It was not easy for Nur to remember when exactly her husband was recruited by the military, but it was not difficult to recall her struggle to keep her household running before 1993. Although there was only one child to feed, the cost of living was not low because she also had to send meals to her husband. Together with many other women from her village, they usually sent meals to the forest where their husbands were assisting the Indonesian military to find the GAM fighters. Her eyes looked deeply sad and her face suddenly looked tired when she told me the story of how they had to support these husbands for months. “Not to mention the fear that we felt inside,” she said.

They stayed in L until around 1998 when the situation improved and she decided to go back to G with her two children. To her, it was better to live in her own village for she had a piece of land where she could make a living. In addition, she had her extended family that would be able to help her in time of need. Her husband, however, did not join her but went to Banda Aceh instead where he tried to make a living by joining a fishing boat. At that time, she was thinking of simply settling down in G, her village of origin, and letting her husband stay in Banda Aceh. She said that she could always visit her husband in Banda Aceh since it was not possible for her husband to go back to G.
In mid 1998, however, not long after she arrived in the village, her first daughter got very sick, with paratyphoid, and it took more than two days for her to see a doctor. The medical doctor was from Banda Aceh, and only came to the village when security permitted. According to her, this made her realise that it was better for her to join the husband in Banda Aceh.

As a result, in 1999 she moved to Banda Aceh. Her struggle, however, did not end. Living in U, a slum coastal area of Banda Aceh, was totally different from living as a simple farmer in G. She felt that she had to start from scratch. Adding to this was the fact that her husband’s income was very seasonal. There were times when she had enough money, but there were frequently times when she got nothing and had to borrow from the neighbour’s small stall for their daily food. After some time of being in such an unpredictable income situation, she decided to make traditional cookies and sold them in small stalls nearby. Assisted by a local NGO, she started a small ‘home industry’.

To make these cookies, Nur had to wake up at 3 am every morning. She prepared five types of cookies, and while preparing these, she also prepared breakfast for her family. At around 6 am, the cookies were usually ready and she sent them to the small stalls around the neighbourhood. Sometimes, some neighbours knocked at her door in early morning to buy some cookies for a take away breakfast and lunch for their husbands who were going to sea.

Nur and her family, as with many others in U, lived in a wooden house that was built above the sea shore. The house was a very basic with one living room, which at night time was usually turned into a bedroom for her children, one bed-room for her and her husband, a kitchen, and a bathroom(1: kamar mandi). The house was in very poor condition, with no proper furniture, only two simple tables in the kitchen, and a carpet in the living room. The only thing which might look ‘fancy’ and helped a little bit in beautifying her house was her 17 inch coloured television. The bathroom was not a real bathroom but a simple extension at the back of the house with a wooden partition as high as an adult’s shoulders. In the bathroom, was a medium sized water container and a ‘toilet’, which did not look like a toilet at all as it was a simple hole of 5 x 5 cm in the
wooden floor. Luckily, she had access to water and electricity from the government, for which she paid a reasonable price every month. Although the electricity was often cut off, it was still good for her to have it for it was important for her children for studying and watching television.

The house was not her house. She rented it from a neighbour for around 500 thousand IDR a year, or around 62.5 US$ (with 1$ = 8,000 IDR). She complained a lot about the rent. She kept on saying that the rent always increased every year, regardless of the fact that she was a longstanding tenant. It was only around 250 thousand IDR when she first rented it, and steadily increased every year. She said that she was tired of these increases and wanted to have her own house. She had bought some wood for the construction already, and was, at the time of the interview, seeking permission from the head of village to build the house.

Made of wood and built above the sea, the house could be very cold at night time. This was especially true because these types of houses, in order to reduce building costs, were usually built with some small gaps in between the wood. One could clearly see the water below the house through the wooden floor. No doubt the wind could enter from every single corner, including from below the house. I still remember how chilly it was at night time whenever I slept over in her house.

This hard life in the urban slum made Nur always want to go back to her village. “But the village is not a secure place for us to live”, she said. Many youngsters disappeared for no good reasons, either being kidnapped, or killed, or simply joining the GAM fighters. She kept on saying, “it’s such a same” (Ac.: sayang that). While telling me the stories she repeatedly said that she did not want to go through the awful experiences she used to have in the village again, for the burden would be too heavy for her both economically and psychologically. She also kept on saying, almost wondering to herself, about her hope for peace in the region so that she could make a living and raise her children as normally as many other families in many other areas.
6 Conclusion

The aforementioned analysis clearly suggests that the consequences of the violent political conflict encompass both the economic and non-economic state of affairs of women and their households. In the economic sphere, the conflict has resulted in not only livelihood difficulties, but also household impoverishment. The warfare strategies employed have ranged from psychological to physical attacks, and these have hindered the economic and other daily activities of these households, especially in rural areas. Both conflicting parties have brought nothing but poverty to these people. The double illegal taxation, for example, has depleted household resources. Furthermore, it has hindered households from establishing small businesses which was an important coping strategy, especially of female-headed households. The Indonesian military counter insurgency strategy, which included cutting GAM logistics channels, was found to be another problem the Acehnese faced in maintaining household economy. It was not only GAM fighters that suffered from this strategy but also locals in general. This has led to local economic deprivation (I: 'penghancuran ekonomi local').

My data shows that women and men, however, experienced the consequences of the violent political conflict differently. Whilst the major complaint of men was the limited mobility that hindered them from performing livelihood activities, women were more concerned about the limited job opportunities. Under martial law, civilian mobility was restricted as part of the effort to seize GAM fighters. Since men were more suspect than women, this policy affected men more because they traditionally sought money further from home. However, the fewer limitations on women’s mobility did not necessarily mean more opportunities for gaining income. When they attempted to establish petty trading business to cope with their economic problems, they not only lacked capital but also a secure and healthy environment.

In response to the conflict situation, different households had different ways of coping. There were found to be: moving out of the villages to safer areas;
migrating to big cities or even a foreign country such as Malaysia; and staying in the village and facing the situation.

For those who opted to migrate, the whole household or selected household members usually moved to big cities such as Banda Aceh. Even if the whole household decided to migrate, members often left in stages to avoid arousing the suspicion of the two conflicting parties. The husbands or other adult male household members usually left first, followed by the rest of the household once the former had settled in the new location.

Migration, which has been prominent in Acehnese history, has thus apparently become an important coping strategy during the conflict. Nevertheless, my findings indicated that fleeing to big cities does not guarantee a successful escape from insecurity and economic difficulties. Instead, households frequently become in the urban slum areas. Their shift from farming to the urban informal sector often entailed movement from one type of poverty to another. Sending household members overseas as migrant labour also found to break the poverty cycle since it involved quite a significant amount of money to cover the initial expenses such as ticket, passport, service fee for the migrant labour agency, and funds to settle down before any remittances could be sent home.

As I have shown, women have often become the backbone of the household, not only in the absence of their husbands, but also in male-headed households, because of the unpredictable nature of the occupations men were forced to pursue because of the conflict. Women became active agents in seeking support and mobilising resources around them, especially social capital.

The increasingly important role of women in the public sphere led to changes in gender relations within Acehnese households. In the violent conflict, women extended their ‘seeking rice’ (Ac.:mita breueh) role in their household due to the absence of their menfolk or their inability to provide for their household in the traditional way.

The various social institutions (social assets) which helped women cope were also explored. My findings indicate that in the conflict ridden mountain areas, religious institutions were seen as more important than in the urban slum
area of U in Banda Aceh, where local economic institution, were perceived as playing a more important role in supporting women.

The social supports available were considered in terms of self-help groups, both government supported (posyandu) or religious supported (takziah), assistance or aid (bantuan), and loans. Of these three, government grants were the most frequently obtained by the households. Despite the risk that this could be seen by GAM as an anti-GAM stance. Women thus had to be pragmatic since their households could not survive without this assistance. At the same time they had to play beautiful (I: bernain cantik) and to employ their skill of 'lheuk jago meuluet' (Ac.) so as not to antagonise either of the conflicting parties. This clearly exemplifies the rational economic choices of Acehnese women, effort to be ‘active survivors’, as well as their agency in household coping strategies.
Chapter 7 Moving Ahead: Challenging the Totality of Violent Political Conflict

How women cope with their household daily livelihood struggle in situations of violent political conflict area is a neglected story. The literature on armed conflict situations is predominantly concerned with the political basis of conflicts. Neither academic nor non-academic works on conflict pay sufficient attention to the most vulnerable victims—women and their children—in their daily livelihood struggles. At a practical level, the voices of women survivors are not heard in the busy sounds of humanitarian and post-humanitarian activities. If the faint echoes of their voices penetrate one or two ears, to grip the listener’s hearts, the problem of limited frameworks to engage their perspective emerges. This thesis has given space to these voices and the implications of attending to them.

1 The Importance Of A Multi-Faceted Approach On The Study Of Aceh Conflict

Aceh is rich from a number of perspectives. It is affluent in not only land and natural resources, but also culture and traditions. Its long history as an independent polity, the mixture of different ethnic groups, and the fierce resistance against Dutch colonial and Indonesian political rule are the basis of the richness, heterogeneity, and uniqueness of Aceh and the Acehnese. The heterogeneity of society in Aceh implies that in understanding violent political conflict in Aceh we cannot simply assume that the Acehnese are unified. Aceh is diverse in many different ways and necessitates an approach that accommodates both its diversity and its unique identity.

Islam first reached Indonesian archipelago through Aceh during the 11th century, hence it has been bequeathed a long Islamic tradition which finely compounds Islam and Acehnese traditions, as well illustrated in the
saying of 'the law and tradition are like a substance and its innate characters' (Ac.: adat ngon hukom, lagee zat ngon sifeut). The saying denotes the notion of 'Aceh as Islam and Islam is Aceh', illustrating the mixture of Islam and tradition as an integral part of contemporary Acehnese identity. Accompanying this notion of identity are the two vital components of gampöng, or village of origin, and mother tongue. Intermingling this cultural identity with the long tradition of Acehnese sovereignty, especially the golden history of the Islamic sultanate of Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), has resulted in strong resistance against the outsiders' invasion. Adding to this complexity, the contemporary violent political conflict has created condition that have brought the ominous 'Madonna factor' (I: faktor Madonna) into conflict with existing 'Islamic' values.

Studies of the effect of conflict to the contemporary Acehnese society must address this complexity, sourced from its diversity, as well as the multi-faceted phenomenon of violent political conflict, which entails numerous players, with differing aspirations and internal power struggles. Its multi-layered effects range from the political to the personal life of the people. Studies of conflict need to also recognise the important issue of women as 'active survivors', a perspective lacking in scholarly works on the Aceh conflict.

A multi-disciplinary approach is necessary in such circumstances, grounded in a historical account. This especially important considering the 'historical continuity' and 'shared memory' (Robinson 2001, p.218) of a number of violent political conflicts in Aceh which have given rise to what Juris (2005, p.415) termed a 'cultural template'.

In this regards, I have used a triangulation of conflict studies, women's studies, and development studies to address the nature, causes and impact of the current conflict in the lives of Acehnese. The triangulation has been used in addressing the contemporary contexts of the Islamic rhetoric of rebellion, violent political conflict, and ethno-nationalism in construction of Acehnese identity. The historical approach has allowed for a deeper analysis of its 'generational' effects on the society.

This broad-based approach to understanding shows the way for approaches to intervention where neither a security or conflict nor political
approach alone is enough to address the issue. A comprehensive package that encompasses overall sectors is needed. This has been lacking from previous solutions, including the recent peace agreement of GAM and the Indonesian government signed in August 2005, in which heavy attention was focused on the conflict actors, while the peripheral and indirect participants of civil society remained outside its terms.

2 The Significance Of Four Effects Of The Conflict

The multifaceted analysis of this thesis, grounded in fieldwork engaging with the lives of the ordinary non-combatant Acehnese has revealed four important effects of the longstanding history of political violence in Aceh. First, is the ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma,’ the regeneration and expansion of the collective trauma and hatred that might very well lead to other grievances in the future. The second effect of the conflict is the awkward ‘sandwiched position’ of Acehnese civilians. The Achenese use the analogy of being caught between ‘pli’iu’ (Ac.) or grinding stones, to express their suffering. Related to the first effect, several generations have experienced the feeling of being trapped in between two powers that both victimise civilians. Being trapped in between two conflicting parties places limitations on their overall lives—politically, economically, and personally—but it also affects their psychological well-beings.

The third effect is the destruction of the local economy (I: penghancuran ekonomi lokal), consequent on the disruption of people’s daily livelihood activities due to the harsh military approach, especially from the Indonesian military: the armed clashes, collective punishment, double illegal taxation, security checks and clearance, isolation, and the use of ‘fence of legs’ tactics. This leads to the fourth effect, the ‘conflict poverty entrapment’, whereby the conflict leads to household impoverishment. This was exemplified in the case study of Nur’s family, who escaped from one type of poverty only to be trapped within another, due to the conflict. The warfare strategies applied by both conflicting parties have brought nothing but devastation for households, especially the increasing number of female-
headed households. These ordinary people do not benefit for a ‘war economy’.

In this context of suffering, the Acehnese people have also suffered from limited development and humanitarian assistance provided by the government, NGOs, and other concerned parties, such as the international donor communities. The conflict has hindered the delivery of development and humanitarian aid. Moreover, the Acehnese households have to also suffered from isolation and stigmatisation, particularly those who were seen as being affiliated to GAM fighters. Hence, the Acehnese households were exposed to, what Chambers (1995, p.188) termed the ‘multi-dimensionality’ of deprivation, encompassing poverty, social inferiority, and isolation.

Acehnese households have multiple ways of coping with their difficult circumstances. As described in Chapter 6, women were the backbone of the principal household coping strategies, either with or without the absence of the husbands. The three principal strategies are: temporarily evacuating the household out of the village to safer areas; migrating to big cities or even a foreign country such as Malaysia; or remaining in the village and adjusting everyday practices to the situation. The last strategy was especially applied by those who for economic or social reasons have no option but to stay and face the situation. Migration, which has been identified as a key cultural strategy in Aceh (Siegel, 1969), has become an important coping strategy in the current context of violence. Nevertheless, this coping strategy has not in general led to an improved economic situation, but rather household economic insolvency. Fleeing to big cities or to other countries does not guarantee a successful escape from insecurity and economic difficulties. Instead, migrants often found themselves trapped within new poverty situations in the urban slum areas, as their livelihoods shifted from farming to the informal sector. This further exemplifies the ‘conflict poverty entrapment’.

In the exercise of households coping strategies, social assets have played an important role as important sources of resilience. My study has identified three different kinds of institutional supports available: the self-help groups, including government-supported groups (I: posyandu) or religious groups (I: takziah); assistance or aid (I: bantuan); and loans. These support institutions, however, have varying levels of importance for households in
different areas. In a mountain area, where armed clashes often occur, religious institutions were most significant, whereas in an urban slum area, economic institutions, such as income-generating groups, played a more important role than religious institutions.

Of the three sources, the government aid was most commonly obtained by households. In the case of Aceh, the economic recovery package (such as Gema Assalam) and small schemes credit package were important measures. As in many other conflict areas, people's welfare and protection depend on the accountability of government authorities, rule of law and functioning judiciary system, as well as a functioning public service (Jaspars and Shoham, 2002, p.7) to deliver assistances. In addition, obtaining government assistance entailed the risk of being seen as supporting the government and not GAM. However, while these programs of government assistance had weaknesses including some instances of corruption, several key informant admitted that such direct delivery of assistance is fundamentally a good approach that needs to be improved.

In the complex politics of the violent conflict situation, the people have further developed traditional coping skills: to play beautifully (I: bermain cantik); to 'push the boat when the tide is high' (Ac.: Tulak jalo watée ie paseung) or to sensibly judge the place, time, and types of resources received; and to appropriately respond to and convincingly perform 'contradictory roles' in accordance with the circumstances (Ac.: lheuk jago meuluet). All these strategies necessitate two important proficiencies: a diplomatic manner – the ability to be engaged in a conversation without revealing one's own political stance; and intelligence to sensibly assess the degree of importance of an event. The way the Acehnese, especially women, exercise these skills expresses cultural values and norms and exemplifies the rational choices and efforts to be an 'active survivor' in household coping strategies.

Women and men experienced the consequences of violent political conflict differently. The different effects have brought further changes in the gender relations within household. This is well demonstrated in the shift of the traditional roles of Acehnese women and men in regard to 'seeking money' (Ac.: mita pêng) and 'seeking rice' (Ac.: mita breueh). The violent political
conflict has hindered men from performing their role ‘seeking money’ (Ac.: mita peng) and has consequently necessitated women extending their ‘seeking rice’ (Ac.: mita breueh) role to also assume the men’s ‘seeking money’ (Ac.: mita peng) role. This might represent a fundamental transformation in Acehnese gender relations due to the long history of violent political conflict in the region. It has been observed in many other societies, that armed conflict and war often bring significant changes on gender relations.

3 Aceh Beudôh: Reconstructing A Society ‘Free From Violence’

As the effects of violent political conflict are deep and encompass several generations, these issues need to be addressed in development assistance to build peace. Because of the ‘extended-regenerated collective trauma’ that has been carried by the society for generations, there is need for a psycho-social approach that will create conditions whereby the people can heal themselves from their trauma in order to develop a constructive way to respond to the ‘cultural template of violence’. However, such approaches will have no utility if the current peace deal cannot be maintained. Therefore, it is crucial for all parties concerned with peace building in Aceh, to have a strong political will to prevent the re-emergence of violent conflict; only by addressing potential conflicts can a sustainable peace be reached. In this regard, the impacts of the compensation package associated with the peace contract between the Indonesian government and GAM on potential internal conflicts among the Acehnese will be crucial.

‘Aceh Beudôh’ (raise up) may best explain what to do next to achieve a society ‘free from violence’ in Aceh. However, rebuilding the new society, after suffering from a longstanding conflict and the devastating 2004 tsunami, necessitates a multi-faceted approach. Considering the crucial role of women in household coping strategies, serious attention to the agency of Acehnese women is essential in the development framework.
UNDANG-UNDANG REPUBLIK INDONESIA
NOMOR 18 TAHUN 2001

TENTANG
OTONOMI Khusus
Bagi Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh
Sebagai Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam

DENGAN RAHMAT TUHAN YANG MAHA ESA
PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA,

Menumbang: a. bahwa sistem pemerintahan Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia menurut Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 mengakui dan menghormati satuan-satuan Pemerintahan Daerah yang bersifat khusus atau bersifat istimewa yang diatur dengan undang-undang;

b. bahwa salah satu karakter khas yang alami di dalam sejarah perjuangan rakyat Aceh adalah adanya ketuhanan dan daya juang yang tinggi yang bersembut pada pandangan hidup, karakter sosial dan komasyarakatan dengan budaya islam yang kuat sehingga Daerah Aceh menjadi daerah modal bagi perjuangan dalam merebut dan mempertahankan kemerdekaan Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia;

c. bahwa untuk memberi kewenangan yang luas dalam menjalankan pemerintahan bagi Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh, dipandang perlu memberikan otonomi khusus;

d. bahwa Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah serta undang-undang Nomor 25 Tahun 1999 tentang Perbendahaan Keuangan antara Pemerintah Pusat dan Daerah dipandang belum memenuhi sepenuhnya hal-asal-usul dan keistimewaan Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh;

e. bahwa pelaksanaan Undang-Undang Nomor 44 Tahun 1999 tentang Penyelenggaraan Keistimewaan Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh perlu diseleruha dalam penyelenggaraan pemerintahan di Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh sebagai Provinsi Naunggroe Aceh Darussalam;

f. bahwa seluruhnya dengan hal-hal tersebut pada huruf a, b, c, d, dan e, pemberian otonomi khusus bagi Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh, perlu dietapkan dengan undang-undang.

Mengingat: 1. Pasal 1 ayat (1), Pasal 5 ayat (1), Pasal 18 B ayat (1), dan Pasal 20 ayat (1) Undang-Undang Dasar 1945;

2. Ketetapan Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia Nomor IV/MPR/1999 tentang Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara,

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5. Undang-undang Nomor 24 Tahun 1956 tentang Pembentukan Provinsi Aceh dan Perubahan Peraturan Propinsi Sumatera Utara (Lembaran Negara Tahun 1956 Nomor 64, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 1103);
6. Undang-undang No. 14 Tahun 1970 tentang Ketentuan-ketentuan Pokok Keluasan Kehakiman (Lembaran Negara Tahun 1970 Nomor 74, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 2951);
7. Undang-undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah (Lembaran Negara Tahun 1999 Nomor 60, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 3839);
8. Undang-undang Nomor 25 Tahun 1999 tentang Perimbangan Keuangan antara Pemerintah Pusat dan Daerah (Lembaran Negara Tahun 1999 Nomor 72, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 3848);

Dengan Persetujuan Bersama
DEWAN PERWAKILAN RAKYAT REPUBLIK INDONESIA

DAN
PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA

MEMUTUSKAN

Menetapkan: UNDANG-UNDANG OTONOMI KHUSUS BAGI PROVINSI DAERAH ISTIMEWA ACEH SEBAGAI PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

BAB I
KETENTUAN UMUM

Pasal 1

Dalam Undang-undang ini yang dimaksud dengan:
1. Pemerintah Pusat, selanjutnya disebut Pemerintah, adalah perangkat Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia yang terdiri atas Presiden beserta para Menteri.
3. Wali Nanggroe dan Tuha Nanggroe adalah lembaga yang merupakan simbol bagi pelestarian penyelenggaraan kehidupan adat, budaya, dan penerus masyarakat di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam;


12. Mukim adalah kesatuan masyarakat hukum dalam Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang terdiri atas gabungan beberapa gampong yang mempunyai batas wilayah tertentu dan harta kekayaan sendiri, berkedudukan di bawah Kecamatan/Sagoe Cut atau nama lain, yang dipimpin oleh Imam Makim atau nama lain.

13. Gampong atau nama lain adalah kesatuan masyarakat hukum yang merupakan organisasi pemeliharaan terendah langsung di bawah mukim atau nama lain yang menumpu pada wilayah tertentu, yang dipimpin oleh Kecak atau nama lain dan berhak menyelenggarakan urusan rumah tangganya sendiri.


BAB II
SUSUNAN DAN KEDUDUKAN
PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 2

1) Wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dibagi dalam Kabupaten/Sagoe atau nama lain dan Kota/Banda atau nama lain sebagai daerah otonom.
(delapan puluh persen), pajak penghasilan orang pihak sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen), penerimaan sumber daya alam dari sektor kelautan sebesar 80% (delapan puluh persen), pertambangan minyak bumi sebesar 15% (lima belas persen), dan pertambangan gas alam sebesar 30% (tiga puluh persen);

b. Dana Alokasi Umum yang ditetapkan sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan; dan
c. Dana Alokasi Khusus yang ditetapkan sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan dengan memperhatikan prioritas bagi Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

4. Penerimaan dalam rangka otonomi khusus, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) butir c, berupa tambahan penerimaan bagi Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dan hasil sumber daya alam di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam setelah dikurangi pajak, yaitu sebesar 55% (lima puluh lima persen) untuk pertambangan minyak bumi dan sebesar 40% (empat puluh persen) untuk pertambangan gas alam selama delapan tahun setelah berlakunya undang-undang ini.

5. Mulai tahun ke-9 setelah berlakunya undang-undang ini pemberian tambahan penerimaan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (4) menjadi sebesar 35% (tiga puluh lima persen) untuk pertambangan minyak bumi dan sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen) untuk pertambangan gas alam.

6. Pencagian lebih lanjut penerimaan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (4) dan ayat (5) antara Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Kabupaten, Kota atau nama lain diatur secara adil dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 5

1) Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat menerima bantuan dari luar negeri setelah memberitahukannya Kepada Pemerintah.
2) Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat melakukan pinjaman dari sumber dalam negeri atau luar negeri untuk membayar sebagian anggarannya.
3) Pinjaman dari sumber dalam negeri untuk Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam harus mendapat persetujuan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
4) Pinjaman dari sumber luar negeri untuk Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam harus mendapat persetujuan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dan Pemerintah dengan berpedoman pada peraturan yang berlaku.
5) Ketentuan mengenai pelaksanaan bantuan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam pasal ini selanjutnya diatur dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 6

(1) Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat melakukan penyertaan modal pada badan usaha milik negara (BUMN) yang hanya berdomisili dan beroperasi di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang besarnya ditetapkan bersama dengan Pemerintah.
(2) Tata cara penyertaan modal Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
(3) Sebagian pendapatan Pemerintah yang berasal dari pembagian keuntungan badan usaha milik negara (BUMN) yang hanya beroperasi di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang besarnya ditetapkan bersama antara Pemerintah dan Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam digunakan untuk peringkat kesejahteraan masyarakat di daerah yang bersangkutan.
(delapan puluh persen), pajak penghasilan orang pribadi sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen), penerimaan sumber daya alam dari sektor kehutanan sebesar 80% (delapan puluh persen), pertambangan umum sebesar 80% (delapan puluh persen), penikmatan sebesar 80% (delapan puluh persen), pertambangan minyak bumi sebesar 15% (lima belas persen), dan pertambangan gas alam sebesar 30% (tiga puluh persen); 

b. Dana Alokasi Umum yang ditetapkan sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan; dan 
c. Dana Alokasi Khusus yang ditetapkan sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan dengan memberikan prioritas bagi Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

4. Penerimaan dalam rangka otonomi khusus, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) butir c, berupa tambahan penerimaan bagi Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dari hasil sumber daya alam di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam setelah dikeluarkan pajak, yaitu sebesar 55% (lima puluh lima persen) untuk pertambangan minyak bumi dan sebesar 40% (empat puluh persen) untuk pertambangan gas alam dalam delapan tahun sejak berlakunya undang-undang ini.

5. Mulai tahun keaslian setelah berlakunya undang-undang ini, penambahan penerimaan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (4) menjadi sebesar 35% (lima puluh lima persen) untuk pertambangan minyak bumi dan sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen) untuk pertambangan gas alam.

6. Pembagian lebih lanjut penerimaan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (4) dan ayat (5) autora Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Kabupaten, Kota atau nama lain diatur secara adil dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 5

1) Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat menerima bantuan dari luar negeri setelah membentuklahkannya kepada Pemerintah.
2) Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat melakukan pinjaman dari sumber dalam negeri daripada luar negeri untuk membayarkan sebagian anggarannya.
3) Pinjaman dan sumber dalam negeri untuk Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam harus mendapat persetujuan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
4) Pinjaman dari sumber luar negeri untuk Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam harus mendapat persetujuan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dan Pemerintah dengan berpedoman pada peraturan yang berlaku.
5) Keutamaan mengenai pelaksanaan bantuan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam pasal ini sebanyaknya diatur dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 6

(1) Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat melakukan penyertaan modal pada badan usaha milik negara (BUMN) yang hanya berdomisili dan beroperasi di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang biasanya ditetapkan bersama dengan Pemerintah.
(2) Tata cara penyertaan modal Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
(3) Sebagian pendapatan Pemerintah yang berasal dari pembagian keuntungan badan usaha milik negara (BUMN) yang hanya beroperasi di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang biasanya ditetapkan bersama autora Pemerintah dan Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam digunakan untuk peningkatan kesejahteraan masyarakat di daerah yang bersangkutan.
Pasal 7

1) Penambahan dan perhitungan Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh (APBDPNAD) dietupkan dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

2) Sekurang-kuranya 30% (tiga puluh persen) pendapatan sebagaimana dimaksud pada Pasal 4 ayat (3) huruf a, ayat (4), dan ayat (5) dialokasikan untuk biaya pendidikan di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

3) Tata cara penyusunan dan pelaksanaan Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (APBDPNAD), penambahan dan perhitungannya serta pertanggungjawaban dan pengawasannya ditentukan dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB V
LAMBANG TERMASUK ALAM
DI PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 8

1) Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dapat menentukan lambang Daerah, yang didalamnya termasuk alam atau pati kenegaran, yang mencerminkan kemakmuran dan kedaulatan Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

2) Lambang Daerah, yang didalamnya termasuk alam sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1), bukan merupakan simbol kedaulatan dan tidak diperlakukan sebagai bendera kedaulatan di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

3) Ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) dan ayat (2) diatur lebih lanjut dalam Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB VI
LEMBAGA LEGISLATIF
PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 9


2) Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam mempunyai fungsi legislatif, pengawasan, dan pengawasan kebijakan Daerah.


4) Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam mempunyai hak angket dan hak mengajukan pernyataan pendapat.

5) Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam mempunyai kewajiban untuk memperbaharui dan memelihara keutuhan Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia serta mewujudkan demokrasi dan kesejahteraan masyarakat.

6) Anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam mempunyai hak mengajukan pertanyaan, hak menyampaikan usul dan pendapat, serta hak inimut.
7) Jumlah anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam paling banyak 12,5% (seratus dua puluh lima persen) dari yang ditetapkan undang-undang.

8) Pelaksanaan ketentuan setagamaan dimaksud pada ayat (1), ayat (2), ayat (3), ayat (4), ayat (5), ayat (6), dan ayat (7) diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB VII
WALI NANGGROE DAN TUHA NANGGRO
SEBAGAI PENYELENGGARA ADAT, BUDAYA, DAN PEMERSATU MASYARAKAT

Pasal 10

1) Wali Nanggroe dan Tuha Nanggroe adalah Lembaga yang merupakan simbol bagi pelestarian penyelenggaraan kehidupan adat, budaya, dan pemerata masyarakat di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

2) Wali Nanggroe dan Tuha Nanggroe bukan merupakan lembaga politik dan pemerintahan dalam Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

3) Hal-hal sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) dan ayat (2) diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB VIII
BADAN EKSEKUTIF PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 11

1) Lembaga Eksekutif Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilaksanakan oleh Gubernur yang dibantu oleh seorang Wakil Gubernur dan perangkat Daerah.

2) Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam bertanggung jawab dalam penetapan kebijakan ketertiban, ketenorman, dan keamanan diur yang terlal dengan tugas teknis kepolisan.

3) Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam karena jabatannya adalah juga wakil Pemerintah.

4) Dalam menjalankan tugas dan kewenangan sebagai kepala Daerah, Gubernur bertanggung jawab kepada Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

5) Dalam kedudukan sebagai wakil Pemerintah, Gubernur berada di bawah dan bertanggung jawab kepada Presiden.

Pasal 12

1) Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dipilih secara langsung setiap 5 (lima) tahun sekali melalui pemilihan yang demokratis, bebas, rahasia serta dilaksanakan secara jujur dan adil.

2) Seseorang yang dapat ditetapkan menjadi calon Gubernur dan calon Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam adalah warga negara Republik Indonesia dengan syarat-syarat:

   a. menolak dan syariat agama;
   b. setia dan taat kepada Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia dan Pemerintah yang sah;
   c. bersyarat dalam kurang-kurangnya sekolah lulusan tingkat atas atau yang setara;
   d. berumur paling sedikit 35 (tiga puluh lima) tahun;
e. sehat jasmani dan rohani;
f. tidak pernah dihukum penjara karena melakukan tindak pidana;
g. tidak sedang dicabut hak pilihnya berdasarkan keputusan pengadilan yang telah mempunyai kekuatan hukum yang tetap, dan
h. tidak pernah menjadi warga negara asing.

Pasal 13

2) Anggota Komisi Independen Penilaihan terdiri atas anggota Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia dan anggota masyarakat.
3) Anggota Komisi Pengawas Penilaihan terdiri atas usulan anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, usulan pengawas pemilihan nasional, dan anggota masyarakat yang independen.

Pasal 14

2) Tahap pencalonan, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1), dilaksanakan melalui:
   a. pendahuluan dan seleksi administratif pasangan calon oleh Komisi Independen Penilaihan;
   b. persiapan visi dan misi pasangan bakal calon di depan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam;
   c. penetapan pasangan bakal calon oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam;
   d. konsultasi pasangan bakal calon oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam kepada Pemerintah;
   e. penetapan pasangan calon oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam; dan
   f. Penerimaan surat pelamar oleh Komisi Independen Penilaihan bersama dengan Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
3) Tahap pelaksanaan pemilihan, sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1), meliputi:
   a. pemilihan pasangan calon Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur yang dilaksanakan secara langsung oleh masyarakat pemilih serentak pada hari yang sama diseluruh wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam;
   b. penghitungan suara secara transparan dan terintegrasi yang dilaksanakan oleh Komisi Independen Pemilihan;
   c. penyertaan hasil penghitungan suara oleh Komisi Independen Pemilihan kepada Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam; dan
   d. pengesahan hasil penghitungan suara yang dilaksanakan oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.
4) Tahap pengesahan dan pelantikan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur terpilih meliputi:
   a. penyertaan hasil pemilihan oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam kepada Presiden melalui Menteri Dalam Negeri;
   b. pengesahan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur terpilih oleh Presiden, dan
pelantikan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang dilaksanakan oleh Menteri Dalam Negeri; atau nama Presiden dan pengangkatan


5) Pengawasan proses pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 12, Pasal 13, dan Pasal 14, dilakukan oleh

Komisi Pengawas Pemilihan.

6) Hak-hak lain mengenai pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang belum diatur dalam undang-undang ini dapat diatur lebih lanjut dalam

Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 15


2) Pelaksanaan ketentuan Pasal 12, Pasal 13, dan Pasal 14 disesuaikan dengan kepentingan pemilihan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) kecuali:

a. penyerahan hasil pemilihan oleh Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Kabupaten/Kota atau nama lain kepada Menteri Dalam Negeri melalui Gubernur;

b. pengesahan Bupati/Wakil Bupati dan Walikota/Wakil Walikota atau nama lain terpilih oleh Menteri Dalam Negeri; dan

c. Pelantikan Bupati/Wakil Bupati dan Walikota/Wakil Walikota atau nama lain oleh Gubernur atas nama Menteri Dalam Negeri dan pengangkatan sampai dengan

di hadapan Ketua Mahkamah Syar'iyah dalam Sidang Paripurna Dewan Perwakilan

Rakyat Daerah Kabupaten/Kota atau nama lain

3) Penyelesaian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (2) diatur dalam Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 16

1) Ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 12 dilaksanakan paling cepat 5 (lima) tahun

setelah undang-undang ini diadakan.

2) Dalam hal ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) belum dimungkinkan pelaksanannya, atas rekomendasi Komisi Independen Pemilihan dan Komisi Pengawas

Pemilihan, pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur dilakukan oleh Dewan Perwakilan

Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB IX

PEMILIH DAN HAK PEMILIH

Pasal 17

Pemilih adalah warga Negara Republik Indonesia yang berdomisili di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam yang berumur 17 (tujuh belas) tahun ke atas atau yang sudah menikah dan

hak pilihnya tidak sedang dicabut oleh pengadilan.

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Pasal 18

Perwakilan di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 17, mempunyai hak:

a. memilih Kepala Daerah dan Wakil Kepala Daerah;

b. mengawasi proses perwalian Kepala Daerah dan Wakil Kepala Daerah;

c. mengajukan perubahan kehukumann (recall) anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah;

d. mengajukan pemberhentian sebelum habis masa jabatan Kepala Daerah dan Wakil Kepala Daerah;

e. mengajukan usulan kebijakan pelaksanaan pemerintahan Daerah;

f. mengajukan usulan penyempurnaan dan perubahan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam; dan

g. mengawasi penggunaan anggaran.

Pasal 19

Hak-hak pemilih sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 18, diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 20

1) Gubernur/Wakil Gubernur, Bupati/Wakil Bupati, dan Walikota/Wakil Walikota atau nama lain dapat berhenti atau diberhentikan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam undang-undang ini dan sesuai dengan peraturan perundangan.

2) Anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi dan Kabupaten/Kota atau nama lain dapat berhenti atau diberhentikan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam undang-undang ini dan sesuai dengan peraturan perundangan.

3) Ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) dan ayat (2) diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

BAB X
KEPOLISIAN DAERAH
PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

1) Tugas kepolisian dilaksanakan oleh Kepolisian Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sebagai bagian dari Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia.

2) Kepala Kepolisian Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam melaksanakan kebijakan teknis kepolisian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) di bidang keamanan.

3) Kebijakan mengenai keamanan Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dikoordinasikan oleh Kepala Kepolisian Daerah kepada Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam

4) Hal-hal mengenai tugas fungsiional kepolisian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) di bidang ketertiban dan ketenaman masyarakat diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

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6) Pengangkatan Kepala Kepolisian Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilakukan oleh Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia dengan persetujuan Gubernur.


Pasal 22
(1) Seleksi untuk menjadi perwira, bintara, dan tambatana Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilaksanakan Kepolisian Daerah Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dengan memperhatikan sistem hukum, budaya, adat istiadat, dan kebijakan Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

(2) Pendidikan dasar dan pelatihan umum dan pelatihan umum bagi bintara dan tambatana Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam diberikan kurikulum masyarakat lokal, dan hal-halnya ditandatangani untuk peragasan di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

(3) Pendidikan dan pembinaan perwira Kepolisian Republik Indonesia yang berasal dari Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilaksanakan secara nasional oleh Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia.

(4) Penempatan perwira, bintara, dan tambatana Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia dari luar Aceh ke Kepolisian Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilaksanakan atas keputusan Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia dengan memperhatikan sistem hukum, budaya, dan adat istiadat di daerah peragasan.

Pasal 23
Hak-hak mengenai pendidikan dan pembinaan anggota Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia dilaksanakan berdasarkan keputusan Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia.

BAB XI
KEJAKSAAN
PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 24
(1) Tugas kejaksaan dilakukan oleh kejaksaan Provisi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sebagai bagian dari Kejaksaan Agung Republik Indonesia.

(2) Pengangkatan Kepala Kejaksaan Tinggi Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilakukan oleh Jaksa Agung dengan persetujuan Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

(3) Pemberhentian Kepala Kejaksaan Tinggi di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilakukan oleh Jaksa Agung.
BAB XI
MAHKAMAH SYAR'iyAH
PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

Pasal 23

(1) Peradilan Syariat Islam di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sebagai bagian dan sistem peradilan nasional dilakukan oleh Mahkamah Syar'iyyah yang bebas dari pengaruh pihak manapun.

(2) Kewenangan Mahkamah Syar'iyyah sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1), didasarkan atas syariat Islam dalam sistem hukum nasional, yang diatur lebih lanjut dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

(3) Kewenangan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (2) diberlakukan bagi pemeluk agama Islam.

Pasal 26


(2) Mahkamah Syar'iyyah untuk pengadilan tingkat kasasi dilakukan pada Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia.


BAB XIII
KETENTUAN Peralihan

Pasal 27

Sengketa-wewenang antara Mahkamah Syar'iyyah dan Pengadilan dalam lingkungan peradilan lain menjadi wewenang Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia untuk tingkat pertama dan tingkat terakhir.

Pasal 28

Susunan organisasi, perangkat Daerah, jabatan dalam pemerintahan Daerah, dan peraturan perundang-undangan yang ada tetap berlaku hingga dibentuk Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sesuai dengan undang-undang ini.
Pasal 29
Semua peraturan perundang-undangan yang ada sepanjang tidak diatur dengan undang-undang ini dinyatakan tetap berlaku di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 30
Semua Peraturan Daerah yang ada dinyatakan sebagai Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sesuai dengan yang dimaksud dalam undang-undang ini.

BAB XIV
KETENTUAN PERALIHAN

Pasal 31
(1) Ketentuan pelaksanaan undang-undang ini yang menyangkut kewenangan Pemerintah ditetapkan dengan Peraturan Pemerintah.
(2) Ketentuan pelaksanaan undang-undang ini yang menyangkut kewenangan Pemerintah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam ditetapkan dengan Qanun Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 32
Ketentuan pelaksanaan undang-undang ini secara bertahap harus telah dibentuk paling lambat dalam masa satu tahun setelah undang-undang ini diundangkan.

Pasal 33
Perubahan atas undang-undang ini dapat dilakukan dengan memperhatikan pertimbangan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 34
Undang-undang ini mulai berlaku pada tanggal diundangkan.
Agar setiap orang mengetahuinya, memerintahkan pengundangan undang-undang ini dengan penempatannya dalam Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia.

Disahkan di Jakarta
Pada tanggal 9 Agustus 2001
PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA

MEGAWATI SOEKARNOPUTRI
Diundangkan di Jakarta
Pada tanggal 9 Agustus 2001
SEKRETARIS NEGARA REPUBLIK INDONESIA

ttd
MUHAMMAD M. BASYUNI

LEMBARAN NEGARA REPUBLIK INDONESIA TAHUN 2001 NOMOR 114

Salinan sesuai dengan aslinya
SEKRETARIAT KABINET RI
Kepala Biro Peraturan Perundang-undangan II

(Edy Sudibyo)
KEPUTUSAN PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA
NOMOR 28 TAHUN 2003

TENTANG

PERNYATAAN KEADAAN BAHAYA DENGAN TINGKATAN
KEADAAN DARURAT MILITER DI PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH
DARUSSALAM

PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA,

Menimbang:

a. bahwa rangkaian upaya damai yang dilakukan pemerintah, baik melalui penetapan otonomi khusus untuk Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, pendekatan terpadu dalam rencana pembangunan yang komprehensif, maupun dialog bahkan yang dilakukan di luar negeri sekalipun, ternyata tidak menghentikan niat dan tindakan Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) untuk memisahkan diri dari Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia dan menyatakan kemerdekaannya;

b. bahwa dalam kondisi seperti itu, dan semakin meningkatnya tindak kekerasan bersenjata yang kian mengarah pada tindakan terorisme yang dilakukan Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), tidak hanya merusak ketertiban dan ketentraman masyarakat, mengganggu kelancaran roda pemerintahan, dan menghambat pelaksanaan berbagai program pembangunan, tetapi semakin memperluas dan memperberat penderitaan masyarakat Aceh dan masyarakat di Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam pada umumnya;

c. bahwa keadaan yang pada akhirnya dapat mengganggu keutuhan Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia tersebut tidak dapat diibarkan berlarut-larut, dan secepatnya harus dihentikan melalui upaya-upaya yang lebih terpadu, agar kehidupan masyarakat dan penyelenggaraan pemerintahan dapat segera dipulihkan kembali;

d. bahwa sesuai dengan amanat Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 yang harus dilaksanakan Presiden untuk melindungi segenap bangsa dan seluruh tumpah darah Indonesia, dan sesuai pula dengan kewenangan yang dimiliki Presiden berdasarkan Undang-undang tentang Keadaan Bahaya, serta setelah mendengar dan
Mengingat:


Mengingat:

1. Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 Pasal 4 ayat (1), Pasal 10 dan Pasal 12 sebagaimana telah diubah dengan Perubahan Keempat Undang-Undang Dasar 1945;
2. Undang-undang Nomor 23 Prp Tahun 1959 tentang Keadaan Bahaya (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1959 Nomor 139, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 1908) sebagaimana telah diubah dua kali, terakhir dengan Undang-undang Nomor 52 Prp Tahun 1960 (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1960 Nomor 170, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 2113);
3. Undang-undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2002 tentang Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2002 Nomor 2, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 4168);

MEMUTUSKAN:

Menetapkan KEPUTUSAN PRESIDEN TENTANG PERNYATAAN KEADAAN BAHAYA DENGAN TINGKATAN KEADAAN DARURAT MILITER DI PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM.

Pasal 1

Seluruh wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dinyatakan dalam Keadaan Bahaya dengan tingkat Keadaan Darurat Militer.

Pasal 2

(1) Penguasaan tertinggi Keadaan Bahaya dengan tingkat Keadaan Darurat Militer sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 1 dilakukan oleh Presiden selaku Penguasa Darurat Militer Pusat.
(2) Dalam melakukan penguasaan Keadaan Bahaya dengan tingkat Keadaan Darurat Militer, Presiden dibantu oleh Badan Pelaksana Harian Penguasa Darurat Militer Pusat yang terdiri dari:

2. Anggota:
   a. Menteri Koordinator Bidang Perekonomian;
   b. Menteri Koordinator Bidang Kesejahteraan Rakyat;
   c. Menteri Sosial;
d. Menteri Dalam Negeri;  
e. Menteri Luar Negeri;  
f. Menteri Pertahanan;  
g. Menteri Kehakiman dan Hak Asasi Manusia;  
h. Menteri Kesehatan;  
i. Menteri Pendidikan Nasional;  
j. Menteri Tenaga Kerja dan Transmigrasi;  
k. Menteri Permukiman dan Prasarana Wilayah;  
l. Menteri Agama;  
m. Menteri Perhubungan;  
n. Menteri Keuangan;  
o. Menteri Negara Komunikasi dan Informasi;  
p. Panglima Tentara Nasional Indonesia;  
q. Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia;  
r. Jaksa Agung;  
s. Kepala Badan Intelijen Negara;  
t. Kepala Staf Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Darat;  
u. Kepala Staf Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Laut; dan  
v. Kepala Staf Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Udara.

Pasal 3

(1) Penguasaan Keadaan Darurat Militer di wilayah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam dilakukan oleh Panglima Daerah Militer Iskandar Muda selaku Penguasa Darurat Militer Daerah.

(2) Dalam melakukan penguasaan Keadaan Darurat Militer di Daerah, Panglima Komando Daerah Militer Iskandar Muda dibantu oleh:

1. Gubernur Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam;  
2. Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam; dan  

Pasal 4

Terhadap Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 1 berlaku ketentuan-ketentuan Keadaan Darurat Militer sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Undang-undang Nomor 23 Prp Tahun 1959 tentang Keadaan Bahaya
sebagaimana telah diubah dua kali, terakhir dengan Undang-undang Nomor 52 Prp Tahun 1960.

Pasal 5
Segala biaya yang diperlukan dalam rangka pelaksanaan Keputusan Presiden ini dibebankan pada Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara dan Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah Provinsi Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam.

Pasal 6
Keputusan Presiden ini mulai berlaku pukul 00.00 WIB tanggal 19 Mei 2003 untuk jangka waktu 6 (enam) bulan, kecuali diperpanjang dengan Keputusan Presiden tersendiri.
Agar setiap orang mengetahuinya, memerintahkan pengundangan Keputusan Presiden ini dengan penempatannya dalam Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia.

Ditetapkan di Jakarta
pada tanggal 18 Mei 2003
PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA,

ttd

MEGAWATI SOEKARNOPUTRI

Diundangkan di Jakarta
pada tanggal 18 Mei 2003
SEKRETARIS NEGARA
REPUBLIK INDONESIA,

ttd

BAMBANG KESOWO

LEMBARAN NEGARA REPUBLIK INDONESIA TAHUN 2003 NOMOR 54

Salinan sesuai dengan aslinya
Deputi Sekretaris Kabinet
Bidang Hukum dan
Perundang-undangan,

Lambock V.
Nahattands

### Annex 3 Summary of the VPC in Aceh from 1945 to June 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type of Incident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1945, September 15<sup>th</sup> | Cumbok War (Perang Cumbok)  
- It was led by Teuku Muhammad Daud Cumbok (1910), a son of Ulee Lheugaw from Cumbok Village.  
- The first fight of pro vs anti Republic of Indonesia led by Ulama and Ulee Lheugaw respectively.  
- The Ulee Lheugaw group was based in Bireuen (which was later known as the core of GAM in the region, after Pidie, the previous core).  
- The approximate number of casualties was 1500 people.                                                                 |
| 1948–1949          | The Honey Moon period of the Indonesia Government and Aceh:  
- The first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, promised a special right for Aceh to govern their own region in accordance with Sumpah Pemuda.  
- A separate province of Aceh was established with Daud Beureueh as the Military Governor of Aceh (Ketentuan PDR I No 8/Des/1949, dated 17 December 1949).  
- Beureueh mobilised some 500,000 US$ to support the GOL and Sukarno named Aceh as ‘Daerah Modal’ – ‘The Capital Resources Area’.                                                                 |
| 1953               | DI/TII/NII fighting  
- 21 September 1953, Beureueh proclaimed his support on NII (Negara Islam Indonesia) and TII (Tentara Islam Indonesia) lead by Kartosoeuwirjo. This was in response to the decision of the Indonesia Government to merge the two Provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra into one, with Medan (located in the former North Sumatra province), as the Capital City (Peraturan Penggantian UU no 5/1950).  
- Beureueh developed the 13 basic principles of NII.  
- He and continued his guerrilla fighting, widely supported by the Acehnese society, in the forest.                                                                 |
| 1955               | The 19 August Operation (Operasi 19 Agustus) – A military operation for the DI/TII fighters, followed by Batee Krueng Congress (Kongres Batee Krueng) on 23 September 1955.  
- Around 64 Acehnese were shot dead in a field, leading to the frustration of Sukarno’s followers in the region.  
- A special delegation was sent from Jakarta to have a peace dialogue with Teungku Daud Beureueh.                                                                 |
| 1958               | PRRI/PERMESTA fighting:  
- In February 1958 Daud Beureueh joined the PRRI/PERMESTA.  
- In December 1958, a meeting was conducted in Geneva, which Hasan di Tiro, the current GAM leader, attended as a young sympathizer.                                                                 |
| 1959               | A special status for the province:  
- On 16 May 1959, Aceh received a status as a special province with special autonomy, in education, religion, and culture.  
- This is the result of the negotiation between Ali Hasjmy and Hasan Saleh – The Head of the Aceh Revolutionary Board (Dewan Revolusi Aceh), a who got tired of the guerrilla’s struggle.                                                                 |
| 1960               | The 17 August Operation (Operasi 17 Agustus) and The Independence Operation, (Operasi Merdeka):  
- The two operations were conducted by Soekarno to respond to the establishment of The Indonesian Unity Republic (Repulik Persataan Indonesia – RPI), on 8 February 1960 with Syafruddin Prawiranegara as President and Daud Beureueh as Vice President.                                                                 |
### Annex 3 Summary of the VPC in Aceh from 1945 to June 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type of Incident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970 - 1972</td>
<td>The establishment of The Islam Republic of Aceh (<em>Republik Islam Aceh</em>) by Beureueh and his followers, and the reformed DI/TII.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1990 - 1998        | May 1990 to August 1998: The launch of Military Operations in Aceh, popularly known as DOM (*Daerah Operasi Militer*), during which the most horrified operation, the Red Net Operation (*Operasi Jaring Merah*) was conducted:  
|                    | - The most intense period was from 1990 to 1992.  
|                    | - Some note that this is as per the request of Ibrahim Hasan, the Governor of Aceh at that period. Some argue that this was not the case.  
|                    | - The approximate number of casualties was 4-5 thousand lives.  
| 7 August 1998      | The Military Operation was lifted under Habibi’s administration (the Third President of Indonesia).                                                                                                         |
| 1999               | 5 January to 5 March: The Wibawa Operation (*Operasi Wibawa*) with the approximate number of casualties was 730 civilians and 170 soldiers and policemen.                                                      |
| 2000               | February 2000: The All Aceh Women Conference (*Duek Pakat Inong Aceh*) in Banda Aceh on, participated in by around 450 women student activists, GAM partisans, government officers, NGO’s activists.                                    |
| 2002               | May 2002: Malino approach, an economic compensation approach for GAM.  
| 2003               | January to mid-May: COHA continued, but developed to a crisis  
|                    | 18 May 2003: The COHA was finally ended:  
|                    | - GAM refused to accept the deadline for the critical meeting set by the Gol and asked for a two days delay at the very last minute (GAM has asked several delays before) and also refused to accept the conditions set by the Gol for the peace agreement, i.e. recognition of the Unitary of Republic of Indonesia, a special autonomy of Aceh, and an immediate |

1 According to other source the humanitarian pause was started in May 2000 and ended in April 2001 indicated by the deployment of security operations in Aceh (see Sukma, Rizal 2004:viii)
### Annex 3 Summary of the VPC in Aceh from 1945 to June 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type of Incident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>disarmament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☑ Around 26,000 troops were sent to Aceh (as of late April 2003, including the 2,000 who have arrived in early April 2003.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May - June 2003:</td>
<td>The Integrated Operation (Operasi Terpadu) and the Implementation of Martial Law (Darurat Militer), with its main motto ‘winning the mind and heart of the People.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2003 – to June 2005:</td>
<td>The Civil Emergency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Period of relative peace
### Annex 4. The Colonial’s War and Insurrection in the 19th and 20th Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incidents (War and Insurrection) in a chronological order*</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perang Tondano (The Tondano War)</td>
<td>1808 - 1809</td>
<td>Manado, Sulawesi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perang Thomas Matualesia (The Thomas Matualesia War)</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>Saporua, Maluku</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perang Palembang (The Palembang War)</td>
<td>1819 - 1821</td>
<td>Palembang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perang Paderi (The Paderi War)</td>
<td>1819 - 1933</td>
<td>Minangkabau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perang Diponegoro/Perang Jawa (The Diponegoro/Java War)</td>
<td>1825 - 1830</td>
<td>Yogyakarta</td>
<td>200,000 Javanese, 15,000 Dutch soldiers were killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perang Aceh (The Aceh War)</td>
<td>1873 - 1904</td>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>60,000 - 70,000 Acehnese, more than 7,000 Dutch soldiers were killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemberontakan Petani Banten (the Banten Farmers Insurgency)</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Banten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemberontakan Pajak (Belasting) (The tax insurgency)</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Sumatera Barat (West Sumatra)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemberontakan Komunis (The Communist Insurgency)</td>
<td>1926/27</td>
<td>Sumatera Barat (West Sumatra) and Banten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zed, Mestika, 2002, p.23
To The peoples Of The World:

We, the people of Acheh, Sumatra, exercising our right of self-determination, and protecting our historic right of eminent domain to our fatherland, do hereby declare ourselves free and independent from all political control of the foreign regime of Jakarta and the alien people of the island of Java.

Our fatherland, Acheh, Sumatra, had always been a free and independent sovereign State since the world begun. Holland was the first foreign power to attempt to colonize us when it declared war against the sovereign State of Acheh, on March 26, 1873, and on the same day invaded our territory, aided by Javanese mercenaries. The aftermath of this invasion was duly recorded on the front pages of contemporary newspapers all over the world. The London, TIMES, on April 22, 1873, wrote: "A remarkable incident in modern colonial history is reported from East Indian Archipelago. A considerable force of Europeans has been defeated and held in check by the army of native state...the State of Acheh. The Achehnese have gained a decisive victory. Their enemy is not only defeated, but compelled to withdraw. "THE NEW YORK TIMES, on May 6th, 1873, wrote: "A sanguinary battle has taken place in Aceh, a native Kingdom occupying the Northern portion of the island of Sumatra. The Dutch delivered a general assault and now we have details of the result. The attack was repulsed with great slaughter. The Dutch general was killed, and his army put to disastrous flight. It appears, indeed, to have been literally decimated." This event had attracted powerful world-wide attention. President Ulysses S. Grant of the United States issued his famous Proclamation of impartial Neutrality in this war between Holland and Acheh.

On Christmas day, 1873, the Dutch invaded Acheh for the second time, and thus begun what HARPER'S MAGAZINE had called "A Hundred Years War of Today", one of the bloodiest, and longest colonial war in human history, during which one-half of our people had laid down their lives defending our sovereign State. It was being fought right up to the beginning of world war II. Eight immediate forefathers of the signer of this Declaration died in the battlefields of that long war, defending our sovereign nation, all as successive rulers and supreme commanders of the forces of the sovereign and independent State of Acheh, Sumatra.

However, when, after World War II, the Dutch East Indies was supposed to have been liquidate, - an empire is not liquidated if its territorial integrity is preserved, - our fatherland, Acheh, Sumatra, was not returned to us. Instead, our fatherland was turned over by the Dutch to the Javanese – their ex-mercenaries, - by hasty flat of former colonial powers. The Javanese are alien
and foreign people to us Achehnese Sumatrans. We have no historic, political, cultural, economic or geographic relationship with them. When the fruits of Dutch conquests are preserved, intact, and then bequeathed, as it were, to the Javanese, the result is inevitable that a Javanese colonial empire would be established in place of that of the Dutch over our fatherland, Acheh, Sumatra. But, colonialism, either by white, Dutch, Europeans or by brown Javanese, Asians, is not acceptable to the people of Acheh, Sumatra.

This illegal transfer of sovereignty over our fatherland by the old, Dutch, colonialists to the new, Javanese colonialists, was done in the most appalling political fraud of the century: the Dutch colonialist was supposed to have turned over sovereignty over our fatherland to a "new nation" called "indonesia". But "indonesia" was a fraud: a cloak to cover up Javanese colonialism. Since the world begun, there never was a people, much less a nation, in our part of the world by that name. No such people existed in the Malay Archipelago by definition of ethnology, philology, cultural anthropology, sociology, or by any other scientific findings. "Indonesia" is merely a new label, in a totally foreign nomenclature, which has nothing to do with our own history, language, culture, or interests; it was a new label considered useful by the Dutch to replace the despicable "Dutch East Indies", in an attempt to unite administration of their ill-gotten, far-flung colonies; and the Javanese neo-colonialists knew its usefulness to gain fraudulent recognition from the unsuspecting world, ignorant of the history of the Malay Archipelago. If Dutch colonialism was wrong, then Javanese colonialism which was squarely based on it cannot be right. The most fundamental principle of international Law states: Ex injuria jus non oritur. Right cannot originate from wrong!

The Javanese, nevertheless, are attempting to perpetuate colonialism which all the Western colonial powers had abandoned and all the world had condemned. During these last thirty years the people of Acheh, Sumatra, have witnessed how our fatherland has been exploited and driven into ruinous conditions by the Javanese neo-colonialists: they have stolen our properties; they have robbed us from our livelihood; they have abused the education of our children; they have exiled our leaders; they have put our people in chains of tyranny, poverty, and neglect: the life-expectancy of our people is 34 years and is decreasing - compare this to the world's standard of 70 years and is increasing! While Acheh, Sumatra, has been producing a revenue of over 15 billion US dollars yearly for the Javanese neo-colonialists, which they used totally for the benefit of Java and the Javanese.

We, the people of Acheh, Sumatra, would have no quarrel with the Javanese, if they had stayed in their own country, and if they had not tried to lord it over us. From no on, we intend to be the masters in our own house: the only way life is worth living; to make our own laws: as we see fit; to become the guarantor of our own freedom and independence: for which we are capable; to become equal with all the peoples of the world: as our forefathers had always been. In short, to become sovereign in our own fatherland!

Our cause is just! Our land is endowed by the Almighty with plenty and
bounty. We covet no foreign territory. We intend to be a worthy contributor to
human welfare the world over. We extend the hands of friendship to all
peoples and to all governments from the four corners of the earth.

In the name of the sovereign people of Acheh, Sumatra.

Tengku Hasan M.di Tiro
Chairman, National Liberation Front of Acheh, Sumatra, and Head of State.

Acheh, Sumatra, December 4, 1976
Acehnese version:

SURAT PEUNJATA KEULAI ATJEH MEURDÉHKA
Atjeh, Sumatra, 4 Désèmbèr, 1976

DEUNGON NAN ALLAH

KEU BANSA-BANSA DÔNJA, SALEUÈM:

Kamoë, Bansa Atjeh, Sumatra, ateuëh neuduëk Hak bak peuteunteë nasib droë lagëë bansa-bansa laën, dan ateuëh neuduëk Hak kamoë bak peulindông tanoh pusaka èndatu, deungan njoë kamoë peunjata droë kamoë meurdéhka dan lheuëh nibak bandum ikatan keukusaan politék nibak peumeurintah asëng di Djakarta, Djawa.


Bak uroë 25 Désèmbèr, 1873 ( uroë lahé Nabi Isa ) uléh Beulanda ka djiene-êk prang njang keu dua ateuëh Atjeh, dan deungan njang mulai treuk pes njang uléh madjalah Amérika HARPER'S MAGAZINE, ka geubôh nam "PRANG SIREUTOH THÔN MASA NJOE", saboh prang peundjadjahan njang palëng trêp dalam seudjarah manusia, njang dalam prang njan siteungoh nibak bansa Atjeh ka geubrië njawong geuh nibak peutheun Neugara kamoë njang
meurdëhka dan meudëélât. Prang njan geusambông àròk’an wàtèë bitjah Prang Dôñja keu-dua. Lapan droë nibak èndatu njang têkèn Surat Peunjata njoë reubah matè sjahid dalam seuëp p r a n g njang panjang that njan, bak peuthen keumeurdëhkaan bansa dan Neugara, bandum sibagoë Wali Neugara dan Panglima Thjik Angkatan Prang Neugara Atjèh njiang meurdëhka dan meudëélât.


Meunjoë peundjadjahan Beulanda hana beutõi dan salah, maka peundjadjahan Djawa njiang trang-trang djipeudong atèueh neudûëk peundjadjahan Beulanda njan pih salah tjit. Dalam hukôm Internasional ka geukheun: ex injustia jus non oritur. Hana keu'adelan meu-asai nibak keudjahatan, hana buètbeuna djeuët meudong atèueh buèt salah!

Bahthatpih meunan, bansa Djawa njan mantong tjit tjuba-tjuba peudong
peundjadjan dhij ateueh kamoeh Atjeh, Sumatra, pada hai bandum nanggroeh peundjadjah Erupa - lagde Beulanda, Peurantjeh, Inggrleh, Spanjol, dan Portugleh -ka han ek le keumah peubuet buuet njan dalam abat njoeh. Dalam masa 30 Thou njang akheh njoeh, ka meukalon uleh kamoeh bansa Atjeh, pakriban tanoh pusaka endatu kamoeh ka djirampok, dipeurusak dan djipeureuloh uleh sipeundjadjah Djawa; harta pusaka bansa kamoeh ka dhij tjuueh; buuet hareukat bansa kamoeh ka dhij peureuloh; peundidehkan anek kamoeh ka dhij peusisat; ureued-ureued bakoeh kamoeh ka dhij leh nibak nanggroeh; bansa kamoeh ka dji-ikat deungon ranteh keuzaleman, dipeugasi'en dan hanah dijadoodoli: hudép bansa kamoeh ka rhóth rata-rata 30 thou; pakriban njoeh meunjoeh tabandéng deungon ukorán dónja njang 80 thou! Meunjanjiphih makén siuroeh makén kureued, padahai Atjeh, Sumatra, peutamong peng keudjih leubéh 15 miljar dollar Amérika djejeb-djejeb thou njang mandum djjangkót keudéh u Djawa peukaja droé-dhijh.

Kamoeh Atjeh hanah meudjak mita-mita paké deungon bansa Djawa meunjoeh awaknjah djiudéh di Nanggroeh droédhijh; meunjo awaknjah hanah djiudjak djadjah kamoeh dan djiudjak meulagak lagdeh Tuan' dalam rumoh kamoeh. Mulai uroeh njoeh, kamoeh meukeusud djejéh hubu ureued Po di rumoh droémeuh: meunjo kon meunah hudiép njoeh hanah meuguna; djejéh meupeugot hukom dan atorán droémeuilih - kon lagdeh keupeuntengan Djawa; djejéh keu ureued njang djijam keumeurdéhkaan droémeuh: njang kamoeh leubéh nibak keumah; djejéh keu sabab mulia deungon bansa-bansa laen dalam dónja: lagdeh endatu kamoeh tij sabé meunah! Paneuk dhih: mulia dan meudéelat atueuh Tanoh Pusaka Endatu droé!


Atueh nan bansa Atjeh, Sumatra, njang meurdéhka dan meudéelat.

Tengku Hasan Muhammad di Tiro

Keutuhua
Angkatan Atjeh Sumatra Meurdéhka
Wali Neugara Atjeh.

Atjeh, Sumatra, 4 Désèmbèr, 1976

Source: http://www.asnlf.net/topint.htm, accessed 27 August 2006, 2.18pm
Annex 6. Research Permit

PEMERINTAH PROVINSI NANGGROE ACEH DARUSSALAM

**PERMISI PENELITIAN**

Jln. T. Nyak Arie No. 21B Telp. 51377
BANDA ACEH 23114

**Nomor:** 071/4939
**Lampiran:** -
**Sifat:** Segera
**Hal:** Permohonan Izin Penelitian.

Banda Aceh, 13 Maret 2004
21 Muharram 1425

Yang Terhormat:
YULIA IMMAJATI
Jl. Selanga No. 20 Komplek BTN Ajun
di - BANDA ACEH

1. Sehubungan dengan surat Saudari tanggal 4 Maret 2004 tentang hal tersebut di atas, dalam rangka menyelisihkan studi S3 Saudari pada Department of Anthropology, Australian National University di Australia, pada prinsipnya kami menyambut baik dan mendukung kegiatan penelitian dimaksud serta mengharapkan kepada semua pihak untuk dapat ikut berpartisipasi/membantu sepangan tidak bertentangan dengan ketentuan yang berlaku.

2. Demikian untuk Saudara maklum dan terima kasih.

Tembusan:
1. Gubernur Prov.NAD. (sebagai laporan).
2. Pangdam Iskandar Muda.
4. Rektor Unsyiah.
5. Bupati Aceh Besar.
8. Kepala Biro Pemberdayaan Perempuan Setda Prov. NAD.
10. Kepala Biro Pemebadysaan Perempuan Setda NAD.
11. Head of Department Anthropology The Australian National University, Canberra Australia.

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A. Household Structure

1. The household structure of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household members</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>F/M</th>
<th>Educational attainment</th>
<th>Types of Jobs</th>
<th>Income per month/week/day</th>
<th>Remarks (Reasons for changing types of jobs and other necessary remarks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
2. Is there any household members that are recently moving out of (leaving) the house?
   **If so,**
   a. Who are they?
   b. Since when did they move out?
   c. Why?
   d. Where do they stay now?
   e. How do you communicate with them?
   f. What do they do?
   g. Do they send money home? How often do they send money home?

   **If not,**
   a. Are there any members of household that are planning to migrate (I: *merantau*)? Who are they and why?
   b. When do they plan to migrate (I: *merantau*)? Where to and why?

B. Socio-Economic Needs, Difficulties and Sources of Support of Households – Before 1999/2000

3. List types of household needs before 1999/2000 in accordance to their priorities.
   a. .............
   b. .............
   c. .............
   d. .............
   e. .............
   f. .............

4. What kind of economic and other difficulties that your household were facing before 1999/2000?

5. How did you respond to the difficulties mentioned above? Did you face any obstacles in responding to these difficulties? What kind of obstacles?

6. Were there any external supports to your households to encounter these difficulties?
   **If yes,**
   a. What were the types of supports that you received (aid/debt/others)?
b. Who provided or offered these supports (government, NGOs, INGOs, neighbours, close friends, family, others)?

c. Were you able to take these supports? If not, Why?

d. How did you and other household members make the decision?

e. Did you consult with non-household members? Who were they (friends, neighbours, government officers, informal leaders, others)? Why?

f. If the support that you received was:

i. a loan, what were the loan arrangements?

ii. an aid, what were the requirements for obtaining the aid?

7. Before 1999/2000, did you ever sell any properties to meet household needs? If no, go to number 8.

a. What types of properties that you sold, when did you sell it, and why?

b. Did you have any other alternatives apart from selling your properties? If so, what were these alternatives and why didn’t you take it?

c. How did you and other household members make the decision?

8. In the period of before 1999/2000, Did you managed to save?

a. If so, how did you save? (put money in the bank, gold, or other goods)

b. If not, what was the main reason of not been able to save?

9. How did you and other household members make the decision?


10. List types of household needs after 1999/2000 in accordance to their priorities.

a. ............

b. ............

c. ............

d. ............

e. ............

f. ............
11. What kind of economic and other difficulties that your household were facing after 1999/2000?

12. How did you respond to the difficulties mentioned above? Did you face any obstacles in responding to these difficulties? What kind of obstacles?

13. Were there any external supports to your households to encounter these difficulties?
   If yes,
   g. What were the types of supports that you received (aid/debt/others)?
   h. Who provided or offered these supports (government, NGOs, INGOs, neighbours, close friends, family, others)?
   i. Were you able to take these supports? If not, Why?
   j. How did you and other household members make the decision?
   k. Did you consult with non-household members? Who were they (friends, neighbours, government officers, informal leaders, others)? Why?
   l. If the support that you received was:
      i. a loan, what were the loan arrangements?
      ii. an aid, what were the requirements for obtaining the aid?

14. After 1999/2000, did you ever sell any properties to meet household needs? If no, go to number 8.
   a. What types of properties that you sold, when did you sell it, and why?
   b. Did you have any other alternatives apart from selling your properties? If so, what were these alternatives and why didn’t you take it?
   c. How did you and other household members make the decision?

15. In the period of after 1999/2000, Did you managed to save?
   c. If so, how did you save? (put money in the bank, gold, or other goods)
   d. If not, what was the main reason of not been able to save?

16. How did you and other household members make the decision?
E. Expectations (Hopes) for the future of the household: What kind of expectations (hopes) for the future of your household members? Do you have any plan on how to achieve these expectations? If not, why?

Note: This survey was translated in both languages of Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Aceh, through the help of my local contact.
Annex 8. List of Questions for Key informants on Acehnese Culture, Traditions, and Economic Activities

1. The general society’s culture and tradition:
   a. What are those main elements that characterised the culture and tradition of the Acehnese?
   b. What are changes experienced by the society today and what are main sources of these changes?
   c. What is the kin system of the Acehnese? Does this system maintained out of the region?
   d. How are women’s role and position in the nuclear family and kin system? What are the men-women relationship in the nuclear family and kin system?
   e. What are women’s role and how are their positions in society?
   f. In what kind of public activities do women have important role? What are those role?

2. What are the effect of conflict at personal, household & extended family and community levels?

3. How people cope with the situation? Where they usually seek for help? How do they obtain help?

4. The social support and safety net:
   a. The available social support and safety net in time of difficulties:
      i. What sorts of social supports available for families?
      ii. What is the arrangement of this support?
      iii. How to obtain this support?
      iv. Do people trust on this support? If not, why? Did people trust this support before? When did it change?
      v. Is there any changes of the arrangement of such supports nowadays? In what ways? Why do these arrangements change? What factors influence the changes?
      vi. Do women have equal access to this support?
      vii. What is the arrangement for such support
   b. The available social support and safety net for women:
      i. Are there any social support and safety net system specifically addressed to women?
      ii. What kind of social support and safety net system do women have?
      iii. How is the arrangement in these social support and safety net system?
      iv. Is there any changes of the arrangement of such supports nowadays? In what ways? Why do these arrangements changed? What factors influence the changes?
   c. The effect of conflict on the social support and safety net
      i. How does the conflict effect the followings: (negatively/positively
      1. the kinship system
      2. the social safety net
      3. trust and coalition building (and rupturing)
4. social joining (and abandonment of social groups/neworks)
5. social protection (and risk).

ii. What kind of effect does the conflict bring about to the followings?
1. the kinship system
2. the social safety net
3. trust and coalition building (and rupturing)
4. social joining (and abandonment of social groups/neworks)
5. social protection (and risk).
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