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The Dutch East India Company and the Straits of  
Malacca, 1700 - 1784; Trade and Politics in  
the Eighteenth Century.

Dianne Lewis

1970.

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in the Australian National University,  
Canberra.



This thesis was the work of the candidate  
alone.

*Dianne Lewis*

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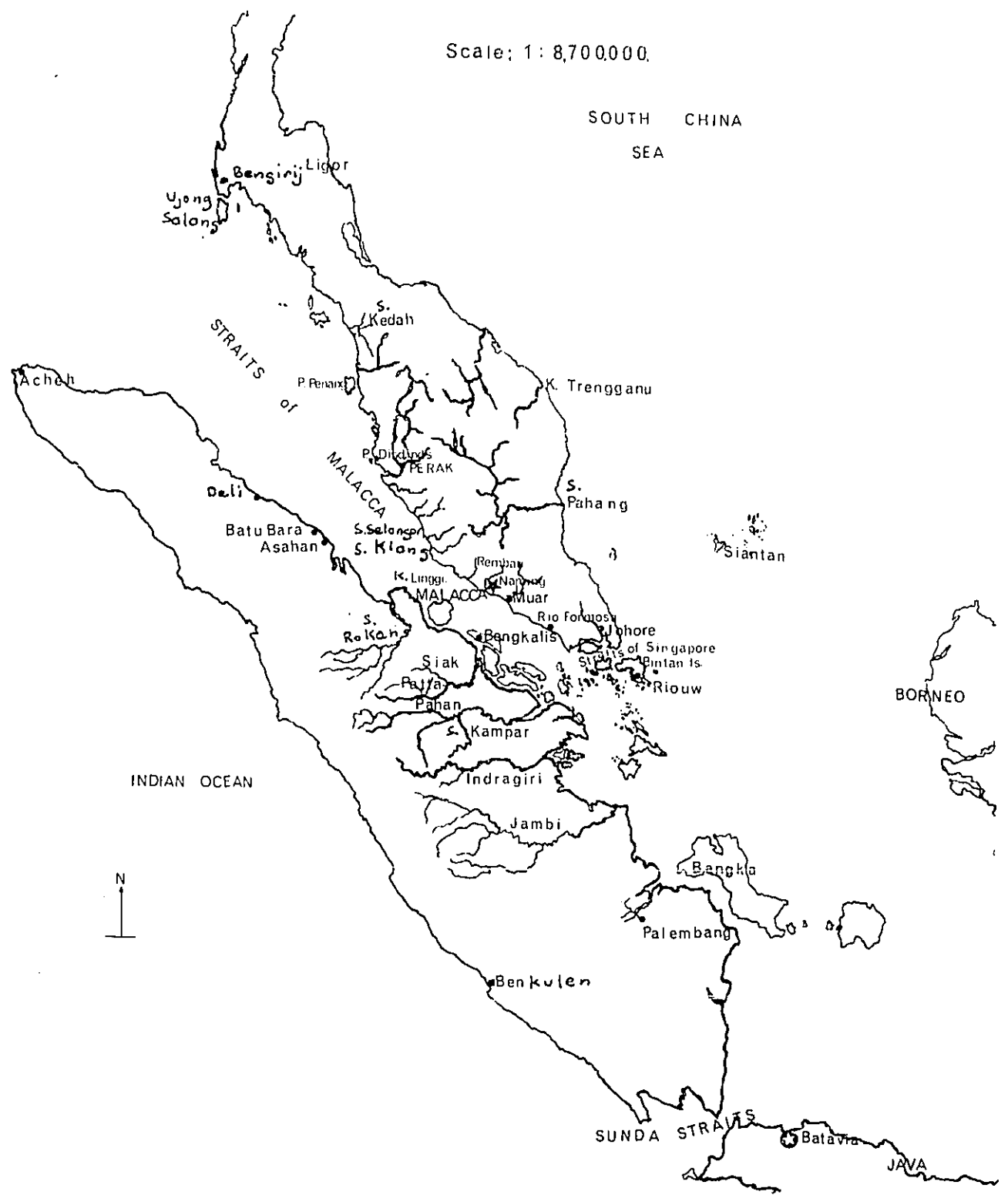
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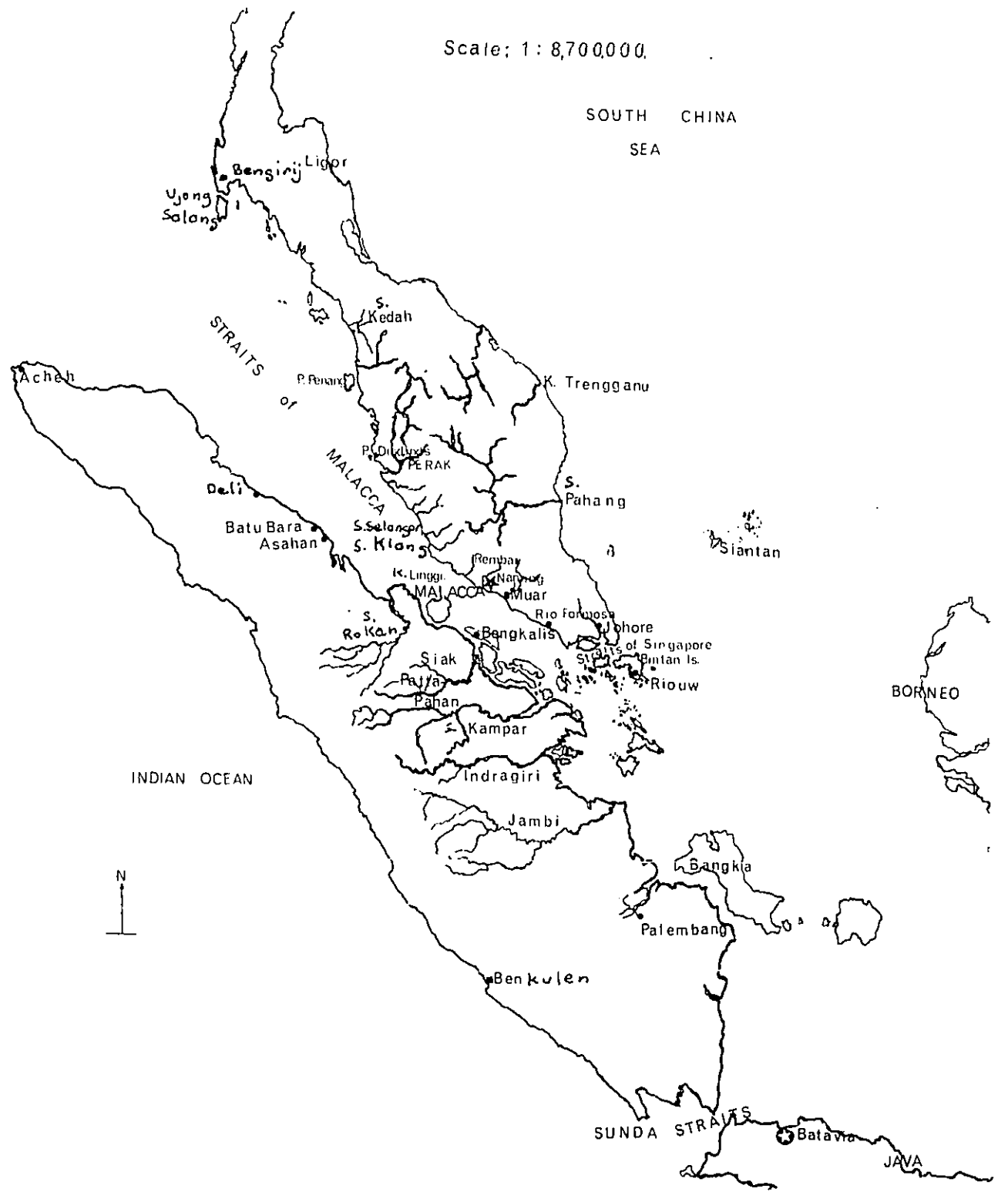
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The STRAITS of MALACCA in the 18th Century.



The STRAITS of MALACCA in the 18th Century.





### A Note on Spelling

In the following text place and proper names have been spelt according to the accented modern English usage, in so far as the author has been able to ascertain this; except for the port of Riouw, where the Dutch form has been preferred. In certain cases the name of the locality in question appears to have changed with time, and in such cases the older version has been used. Variations in the spelling of place and proper names also occurs in the quotations. This has resulted in a somewhat mixed orthography, so, for the convenience of the reader, the most frequently used forms have been listed below, together with any variations which may occur. The first form in each line is the form given in D. G. E. Hall's Atlas of South-East Asia; the form used by the author in the text is underlined and the modern alternative to an eighteenth-century placename is underlined. Hall's spelling has not been used where the English version differs.

Achah; Atchin, Achin, Aatchin, Atjeh.

Bangka; Banca, Benka.

Banten; Bantam.

Bengkalis; Benkalis, Bencalis.

- ; Bengirij, Bangeri.

Bintan; Bintang.

- ; Batu Bara, Battu Bara.

Deli

Johor; Johore, Djohor, Johoor.

Djambi; Jambi, Jambij.

Inderagiri; Indragiri, Indragirij, Andragirij.

Kampar

Kedah; Queda, Quedah, Quedda.

Kelang; Klang, Calang.

Linggi; Linggij.

- Naning.

Mampawa; Manpauwa.

Manila; (The) Manilhas.

Muar; Moar.

Rembau; Rembouw; Rembouw.

Riau; Riouw, Rhio.

Pahang; Pahan.

Perak; Pera, Perah.

Rokan; Rakkan.

[ Pangkor ] ; The Dindings.  
Siantan.  
Selangor; Slangcor; Selangore.  
Surat; Suratta.  
Terengganu; Tringgau.  
[ Phuket ] ; Ujong Salang; Oujong Salang; Oedjong Salang;  
Junk Ceylon.  
Siak; Siac, Siacca.  
" ; Waju, Wadjo.

Abbreviations used in the Text or Notes

B.K.I. Bijdragen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsche-Indie

Batavia to Malacca. Letters from the Governor General and Council at Batavia to the Governor and Council at Malacca. (Inkomend Brief Boek Batavia)

Corpus Diplomaticum: Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum, 1596-1799. (Collection of Political Contracts and other Treaties Concluded by the Dutch in the Orient and of Letters of Privilege Granted them.) Edited by J. E. Heeres and F. W. Stapel, The Hague, 1907

Encyclopaedie Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch Indie: 2nd Edition, 4 vols plus 4 supplementary vols. The Hague and Leiden, 1917-1939.

G. M. Generale Missiven, or Letters written to the Netherlands by the Governor General and Council.

JMBRAS Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

JSBRAS Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

JSEH Journal of South East Asian History

Kol. Arch. Koloniale Archieven Oost-Indie en de Kaap: Archieven van de Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie. Held at the Algemeen Rijks-Archief, The Hague

Malacca to Batavia Letters from the Governor and Council at Malacca to the Governor General and Council at Batavia (Overgekomen brieven uit Batavia.)

Plakaatboek Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek 1602-1811,  
(Collection of Edicts of the Netherlands East Indies)  
Edited by J. A. van der Chijs, 17 vols, Batavia and The Hague,  
1885-1900

Realia Register op de generale resolutien van het Kasteel Batavia  
(Index of the Resolutions of Governor General and Council  
in the Batavia Castle) 3 vols, The Hague and Batavia, 1882-1885

RDS Rix Dollars -- worth about 3/8 Sterling, or about four-fifths  
of a Spanish Dollar.

SSR Straits Settlement Records held at the Commonwealth Relations  
Office, London.

SP. D Spanish Dollar, or Reaal of Eight, worth about 4/6d Sterling

TGB Tijdschrift van het Bataviaasch Genootschap

V.K.I. Verlandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal -,  
Land-, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie

V.O.C. Vereenigd Oost Indisch Compagnie. (United East India Company.  
of the Netherlands.)

Vol Volume

W.H.S. Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society

Glossary

- Bendahara; High official in a Malay Court, sometimes compared to a prime minister.
- Baloo; Small native vessel.
- Laxamana; The official in command of the fleet of a Malay state.
- Nachoda; A captain of a trading vessel.
- Panglima; A general or military leader.
- Shahbandar; The official responsible for care of the port and collection of customs duties and other port dues. This term was adopted by the European administrations at Malacca.

Note on Currency; Weights and Measures

The main unit of weight referred to below is the Bahar (Bhaar, Bahara, Bhara) which in this area was equal to 375 Dutch lbs. A picul (picol, pikul) equalled a third of this, 125 lbs. (Dutch). It was equal to 133 English lbs.

The main unit of currency in use was the silver Spanish Dollar, or Reaal of Eight, which was valued at between four and six and five shillings sterling. This is the unit referred to when only Dollar is specified. Rixdollars (Rijksdaalders) were used by the Dutch in much of their reckoning, and these were worth roughly four-fifths of a Spanish Dollar, and two and a half florins or guilders which were also used in Dutch accounting. A tael was a Chinese unit of currency worth approximately six and eightpence sterling (contemporary values).



### Introduction

Since merchants first sailed eastwards from the ports of the Indian Ocean, the Malay Archipelago has been one of the world's busiest commercial highways. As the volume of shipping from both East and West increased, many foreigners passed through the area, leaving a more or less permanent mark, according to the length and purpose of their stay. The coastal areas of the Malay Peninsula and the east coast of Sumatra were particularly subjected to foreign influence, for they lie on either side of the straits which form the shortest route between the Bay of Bengal and the China Sea. Indian, Chinese, Siamese and Europeans have at some time all played an active part in the development of this area. This thesis will examine events in these straits during the eighteenth century, when the Dutch East India Company controlled the fortress of Malacca.

The background to Dutch interests in this area lies in the history of the development of trade. After shipping had begun to move between the civilisations to the East and West, the Archipelago did not long remain a passive highway. The local countries produced items of considerable value, including gold, tin and spices. Foreign traders were eager to obtain these, and the local people soon developed a taste for goods from overseas, in particular for Indian cloth. Ports appeared, especially in the sheltered waters of the Malay Straits, for in this calm stretch of water several opposing wind systems met, and passing vessels were

forced to wait for the next favourable wind before they could continue with their journey. Here the Malay peoples who up till then had occupied themselves mainly with fishing, came into contact with the foreign merchants. This contact stimulated them to take part in coastal and deep sea navigation and thus to share in the wealth which was being generated by the passing trade.

This commercial awakening led the way for political developments. If a family or group were able to establish their control of one of the coastal ports, they were then able to dominate the people of the hinterland, for trade necessarily passed along the river systems and the ports were situated at their mouths. In this way a number of small, very loosely organised states grew up.

In the seventh century a much more complicated organisation, the empire of Srivijaya, began to dominate the affairs of the Malay Straits. From its capital in southern Sumatra, on the site of latter-day Palembang, Srivijaya exercised authority over a large part of the east coast of Sumatra and also over part of the Malay Peninsula. Thus it had control over the Malay Straits. West Java was also <sup>for a time</sup> a vassal state, so it is possible that the Sunda Straits came under the authority of Srivijaya also. The port of Srivijaya became the centre of trade in the Archipelago, and sent out shipping on its own account as far as China and the coastal districts of East Africa.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>  
M. A. P. Meilink-Roelofs; Asian Trade and European Influence, (The Hague, 1962), pp.14-16. In the following account of the trade of Malacca under the Sultanate I have drawn very heavily on Mrs. Meilink-Roelofs' excellent description.

Srivijaya remained a powerful centre of trade for nearly six centuries. When at last it began to disintegrate no single new centre emerged in its place, and as a result a power vacuum developed in the area. Piracy became rife in the Straits, and some of the passing ships began to use the more circuitous route via the west of Sumatra and the Sunda Straits, so as to avoid the marauders. This was very beneficial to the towns of northern Java, where foreign trade now congregated. No one central entrepot emerged, however, and late in the fourteenth century a new port on the Malay Straits began to attract trade back to the more northerly route. Within a hundred years this town of Malacca had outstripped all its rivals to become the focal point of commerce in the Archipelago and of shipping from East and West, a place where virtually all types of marketable seaborne product from these areas were available for exchange. With the growth of Malacca, trade returned to the Straits which now began to bear its name.

At the end of the fifteenth century hundreds of merchants from Arabia, Persia, India, Further India and China, as well as the regions of the Archipelago, converged on Malacca every year. An influx of foreigners had transformed the Malay village into a cosmopolitan city. Many foreign merchants set up businesses in the town. They were sometimes of a temporary nature, but numbers settled permanently. The ships regularly brought both seamen and merchants from many lands, Chinese, Javanese, Klings,



Bengali, Arabs and Gujarati, to name only the most important.<sup>2</sup> Malacca's swift rise to a position of wealth and power was largely made possible because it possessed a naturally advantageous position, and because of the astute policy of its rulers, who sought to enhance the natural convenience of the port for foreign traders in every possible way.

Lying as it did in the narrowest part of the Straits, Malacca could not have been more conveniently placed for shipping from every direction. The harbour was sheltered and free from the storms which beset the ports of north Sumatra (Pasé and Pidie), which lay open to the Northeast Trade Winds. It was accessible in any monsoon. No dangerous shallows lay near as they did off Singapore, for the bay was deep and does not seem to have suffered then from the silting process which began in later years.<sup>3</sup>

This port 'at the end of the monsoons' was a natural meetingplace for shipping because it lay at the conjunction

2

Meilink-Roelofs; Asian Trade, p.36. Klings were Indians from the Coromandel Coast.

3

Mrs. Meilink-Roelofs notes that when the Portuguese captured Malacca, the harbour had deep water and a fine, sandy bay. Asian Trade, p.339, note 5

of several wind systems.<sup>4</sup> Asian vessels were designed at that time to utilise the conveniently regular winds. Thus, ships set sail to the East from the coast of India with the favourable wind from January until March. They had to execute their business at Malacca swiftly, and return to their home ports before the Indian coast was sealed off by the Southwest Monsoon. The complimentary Southeast Monsoon helped the Chinese on their homeward voyage. They arrived in Malacca sometimes as early as December, and had until the end of June to secure their return passage. The Southeast Monsoon also brought shipping from Java, which then had to remain in the Straits until northerly winds began to blow in December or January. During their stay in Malacca, Javanese merchants exchanged their goods for those bought from India, China and elsewhere. Thus the sequence of the winds dictated the movement of trade, and one result of this was that Malacca became a staple port. Merchandise had always to be

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4

There were two monsoons by which to sail from India to Malacca, the Moluccas or China. The first began in April. Ships went then from Goa to Malacca and the East, along with the ships to Bengal and St. Thomé. In May winter begins on the Malabar Coast, and continues till halfway through September. After that ships return from Bengal and St. Thomé to Goa and other places (on the West Coast?) but the ships of the Moluccas and China remain at Malacca until January, and then return to Goa. The second monsoon from India to Malacca begins early in September. Ships sailing at that time generally arrive at Malacca between the 10th and 20th of November and remain until January, when they return to Goa with the China ships. At that time, the Galleon comes to Malacca from the Moluccas.

P. van Dam; Beschiyvinge van de Oost Indische Compagnie.  
Vol. 2 Pt 1. (The Hague, 1927-1954) pp. 27-8.

stored for a part of the year, kept for re-sale to others arriving later in the year. This situation also explains why trade on a considerable scale came into being among the merchants permanently established in Malacca.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from its convenient position the port had little enough claim to commercial importance. Its economic base was narrow, for it had few domestic products suitable for export and no industry developed in the town. Tin and gold were brought in as tribute from the surrounding states of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. Fish products were contributed by the Malay population. Malacca was also agriculturally poor, and the amount of land given over to cultivation was all in the immediate vicinity of the town and was totally inadequate to meet the needs of the steadily expanding population. Under these circumstances the port's prosperity, indeed its very survival, was founded entirely on trade. Every possible step was taken to facilitate the business of the foreign merchants, so that Malacca would continue its economic expansion. To this end a special governing body and a good judicial system, which managed to guarantee foreign merchants a fairly large degree of legal security, were evolved. All the port regulations seem to have been drawn up with a view to speeding up the business of trade as far as possible, so that return freights could be sent the following season and long voyages, to China for example, could be completed within one year. More practical steps were also taken to accommodate foreign trade. Warehouses were

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5

Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p. 38.

built for the use of foreign merchants, and the main channel near the Malay shore was well policed to prevent piracy. The channel was also serviced by strongly manned rowboats capable of towing becalmed vessels into port.<sup>6</sup> Fixed customs duties, and fixed weights and measures and coinage were adopted.

According to the account of the Portuguese observer Tomé Pires, the early Malaccan rulers did not employ forcible methods to channel trade to their port, as the rulers of Srivijaya had. On the contrary, they tried to encourage trade with the nearby countries by peaceable means. Thus they endeavoured to remain on friendly terms with the North Sumatran pepper-exporting states, as well as with the old Hindu kingdom of Majanahit, which still retained some control over Javanese trade in the early fourteenth century.

The Malaccan merchants also contributed to the number of the vessels engaged in inter-Asian trade, though not as extensively as their predecessors at Srivijaya had. The Sultan himself carried on a rich, if periodic junk trade,<sup>7</sup> which added to the wealth he derived from the customs duties and other charges of the port. The rulers of Pahang, Kampar and Indragiri took some part in the trade of Malacca but did not play a large part in overseas shipping. Their main wealth came from the tolls collected at the mouths of the river systems under their rule. Apart from

<sup>6</sup> J. Cady, Southeast Asia, (New York, 1964) p. 161.

<sup>7</sup> Meilink-Boelofs, Asian Trade, p.52.

some vessels belonging to the Sultans, and the high officials of their court, Malacca-owned shipping was controlled by a number of the wealthy merchants who had set up business in the port. Most of them were of foreign origin: even the high officials of the court were largely drawn from the many foreign merchants residing in the city. This group included some very rich and powerful individuals, in particular the Javanese merchants, who played a major role in the valuable spice trade, and Hindu merchants from southern India. They could easily afford to fit out their own ships, some equipping as many as two or three.

Malay trading activity at this time must have been chiefly limited to the part played by the Sultan, whose role was mainly passive. Active participation in commercial enterprise by the lower class Malays must have been very slight, for while seamen of their calibre probably engaged in some peddling, the crews of ships were only allowed to take an extremely small part in trade.<sup>8</sup> On the whole, the Malay aristocracy do not seem to have played any great part in Malacca's trade.<sup>9</sup>

In comparison with the intensive traffic from abroad, Malacca's own shipping, even that portion which was in foreign hands, was insignificant. The port's wealth and prosperity depended on the trade carried by merchants from India, China and the Archipelago who were brought to the Straits by foreign ships. Indian shipping

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8

Ibid., p. 58

9

Ibid., p.53



came mainly from the Gujarat and Coromandel coasts, Bengal and Pegu. Gujarati shipping provided a link between Malacca and the Mediterranean countries, besides carrying many merchants and their goods from the west coast of India. These vessels carried a very international company, from countries as distant as Abyssinia and Armenia. Around March each year four ships sailed from Gujarat to Malacca.<sup>10</sup> The port of Cambay also sent one large ship on its own account each year, with a cargo worth roughly twice to three times those of the smaller ships. The cargoes were largely made up of Gujarati cloths and other goods which had been imported from further west.<sup>11</sup> Only very small quantities of these luxury goods from Europe and the Near East can have reached Malacca via the many intermediate ports of call, though in all an assortment of forty types of goods, including rosewater, opium and incense, typical products of the Near East, were sent via the Gujarati ships. Carpets and agrarian products like seeds and grains were also sent to Malacca, though the large bulk of the exports was made up of Gujarati textiles.

In Malacca the merchants from Gujarat and further West bought large quantities of spices from the East of the Archipelago, gold

<sup>10</sup>

Ibid., p.64. Each ship carried a cargo valued at between 15,000 and 30,000 cruzados. A cruzado was an old Portuguese coin made of gold, which in modern currency equals roughly £2.17. 0.

<sup>11</sup>

Ibid., p.61.

from Sumatra, camphor from Borneo and Sumatra, and tin from the Malay Peninsula. Porcelaine, musk, silk and other typical products of the Far East were also popular with these merchants, especially white damask. Plumes from the gaudy birds of the eastern half of the Archipelago were bought for export to Turkey and Arabia. The cargoes collected at Malacca and shipped back to Gujarat were probably worth in the vicinity of £60,000 each.<sup>12</sup>

The Coromandel Coast also carried on direct trade with Malacca. In view of the great importance to the Malay Archipelago of textile exports from this area, traffic must have been very heavy, for printed cotton cloth manufactured in the Coromandel in cheap and more expensive varieties was highly popular among the inhabitants of the Archipelago and the surrounding countries.

Some merchants from the Malabar Coast also travelled to Malacca via Coromandel shipping. They brought pepper, and sometimes supplied large quantities of rice and coconuts when these were scarce in Malacca. They bartered these goods for slaves.<sup>13</sup> Altogether three or four ships came from the Coromandel coast annually, carrying cargoes slightly less valuable than those of the Gujarati. Besides these, one or two larger vessels sailed from

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12

Ibid., p.65. Mrs. Meilink-Roelsfsz cites a figure of 21,000 cruzados, which I have converted at the rate cited above. This calculation is obviously very rough but does provide some indication of the value of this trade.

13.

Ibid., p.67. The cargo of each Coromandel ship was worth between 12,000 and 15,000 cruzados.

the port of Pulicat with cargoes made up entirely of cloth, thought to have been worth about 80,000 or 90,000 cruzados each.

The Coromandel merchants bought white sandalwood, camphor, alum, pearls, pepper, nutmeg, mace and cloves in Malacca. They were not very eager to buy spices, as there was no great market for them in the interior of India at that time. They also bought gold, large quantities of copper, a little tin, and some Chinese merchandise such as raw white silk, damask and brocade and probably also more ordinary materials for everyday use.<sup>14</sup>

Every year four or five vessels came from Bengal to Malacca and the Sumatran port of Pasé. Some of these were light sailing ships built on the Arabian pattern, but at least one or two would have been substantially larger vessels, fashioned more like Chinese junks. Bengal was an important source of Malacca's foodstuffs, supplying rice, sugar, dried and salted meat and fish, preserved vegetables and candied fruits. Bengal also had a highly developed textile industry. The local white fabrics were in great demand throughout the East.

Return freights to Bengal were made up of large quantities of camphor from Borneo, and of pepper: also cloves, mace, nutmegs, sandalwood, pearls, silk and white porcelain, the latter probably from China. Copper was also exported and tin, lead, quicksilver, some opium which had come from Aden and had evidently reached Malacca via Gujarat, white and green damask, carpets, Javanese krisses and swords, and much more.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 67.



The state of Pegu, situated at the head of the Bay of Bengal, was noted for shipbuilding and sent a number of vessels to Malacca each year. Fifteen or sixteen large Peguan three or four-masted junks set out each February, together with some twenty to thirty ships with long hulls but shallow draft, and therefore little cargo space. Many of these were sold to foreign traders at Malacca. They carried luxury goods and foodstuffs: silver, musk, lac, benzoin and precious stones, rice, cane sugar, butter, oil, salt, onions and garlic. Rice and cane sugar were the most important of these foodstuffs. In exchange they took mostly Chinese goods: earthenware, textiles, seed pearls, quicksilver, copper and vermillion. Small quantities of spices were also taken to Pegu, along with some gold and tin, which might or might not be in the form of coinage. The Peguans left Malacca for the Sumatran port of Pasé in July, to buy pepper. They returned home with the vessels they had not sold in August.<sup>16</sup>

To the East, Malacca's main contacts were with China, though shipping also came from Siam and Indo-China, Japan and the Philippine Islands. Trade with Siam was spasmodic, for it was broken off when that country was at war with Malacca. In peacetime Siamese ships supplied the peninsular port with large quantities of foodstuffs, and smaller amounts of luxury items

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<sup>16</sup>

Ibid., p.70.

and lesser goods. These included lac, benzoin, saipan wood,<sup>17</sup> lead, tin, silver, gold, ivory, cassia fistula,<sup>18</sup> dishes cast from copper, and gold rings, set with rubies and diamonds, and lastly, a large quantity of cheap, coarse Siamese cloth. The goods exported to Siam were similar to those already named as exports to the Indian ports.<sup>19</sup>

An irregular amount of shipping came from Cambodia, Champa and Cochin China. Their main trade was with China. When vessels from these regions appeared in Malacca they brought also wood from Champa, their own food products, gold, silver and some Chinese goods. Raw woven silks were sent from Cochin China. Exports from Malacca to this area included Minangkabau gold and sulphur from Solor.<sup>20</sup>

Shipping from China was far more important to Malacca's trade. While Malacca was developing as a port in the early fifteenth century it was visited several times by the official Chinese fleets on their missions to the countries of the Indian Ocean. When this first happened, in 1403, the ruler of Malacca made his addresses to the Chinese Emperor. He sent envoys to China.

17

Saipan wood is a type of dye wood 'common in the Malay countries. The heart being cut into chips, steeped for a considerable time in water, and then boiled, it is used for dyeing here, as in other countries'. W. Marsden; The History of Sumatra, (London, 1811) p. 95

18

Cassia fistula is a cinnamon-type plant. Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p. 346, note 86.

19

Ibid., p. 72.

20

Ibid., p. 73.

'The envoys said that their king was aware of his duty and wished his country to be a district of the Empire, bringing tribute every year, and that he therefore requested that his mountains might be made guardians of the country'.<sup>21</sup> This request was granted, and the Malaccan rulers from that time considered themselves sovereigns of an independent state.

Malacca benefited greatly by becoming a tributary of China. Previously the port had had to acknowledge the overlordship of Siam, whose power was at that time extending southwards. Siam extracted tribute in gold, and gave nothing in return. Tribute to China was reciprocated in gifts and marks of honour. Chinese protection kept the threat of Siamese power at bay for the first quarter of the fifteenth century when Malacca was most vulnerable.

Equally important to Malacca were the commercial benefits to be won by friendship with the Chinese government. Chinese rulers became more and more averse to foreign trade in the fifteenth century, and finally severely restricted all navigation by their subjects. They also restricted the trade of foreign merchants to Chinese ports. In spite of these prohibitions, the Chinese government allowed a very large trade to develop with Malacca, which became a valuable commercial partner and the terminus of most Chinese voyages to the West. The attempts of the Malaccan rulers to eradicate piracy in the waters around their harbour undoubtedly helped create a good impression with the Imperial government.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup>

W. P. Groeneveldt, Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca compiled from Chinese sources, (Djakarta, 1960) p.129. (From the History of the Ming dynasty, Book 325.)

<sup>22</sup>

Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p.75.

The tribute sent by Malacca to China at regular intervals represented a sort of trade in itself. It included pepper, valuable kinds of wood, jewels, and precious stones, and the highly coloured ornaments made from the plumage of the exotic birds of the Moluccas. But the unofficial trade of ordinary merchants played a much larger part in the Malaccan-China traffic. Chinese junks brought a large assortment of the most varied merchandise to the Straits every year. This included musk, rhubarb, camphor, pearls, a small amount of gold and silver, (though the Chinese government tended to hinder the export of precious metals), large quantities of raw and woven silks, expensive fabrics such as damask, satin and brocade, and cotton materials. Many less valuable goods were also brought, including alum, saltpetre, sulphur, copper, iron, large quantities of copper utensils, cast iron kettles and other items of Chinese manufacture. Large quantities of porcelain and pottery were brought by the junks. China was also an important exporter of salt to Malacca.<sup>23</sup>

The most important item taken back to China was pepper. Cargoes were also fetched from Pasé and Pidie in Sumatra, and from Patani. Pepper was sold in China at approximately four times the price paid for it at Malacca. It has been estimated that

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<sup>23</sup>

Ibid., p.74.

up to ten junkloads of pepper could be sold to the Chinese annually at Malacca, though this many junks did not always make the journey south.<sup>24</sup> Eight to ten vessels usually came, though the number sometimes fell to four. As well as pepper these junks took other spices, drugs, ivory, incense, tin, valuable woods like sandalwood, cornelian from Cambay, and woollen materials. In comparison to pepper, these goods were not very important in the trade to China.

Japanese goods also appeared in Malacca, though the sources do not make it clear whether they were brought by Japanese ships or by a more indirect route. All the typically Japanese products were represented, silks, costly materials, porcelain, copper, gold dust and silver dust, swords and other types of weapons, coffers and boxes inlaid with gold leaf, fans, and paper, together with less exotic items such as rice, onions and other dried vegetables.<sup>25</sup>

Two or three junks also came from the Philippine Islands, bringing poor quality gold, forest products and foodstuffs, some of which had been collected en route in Borneo.<sup>26</sup>

Some of the Malaccan merchants carried on a valuable trade with China in their own ships. Malacca-owned vessels were also sent to the Coromandel Coast and Pegu. They visited Ceylon and

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.76.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.79.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.85.



collected cargoes of elephants, cinnamon and precious stones. But they do not appear to have ventured any farther west, and most of the vessels owned by Malacca merchants were probably employed in the trade to the countries of the Archipelago.

Malacca stood in very close economic relations with her dependencies in Sumatra, which sent gold and pepper as tribute. Indragiri was the principal port for the inland Minangkabau region, through which the gold and pepper produce of the interior were channelled, and Indian cloth was sent in return. Trade was more developed here than in the other states, though Kampar and Siak also supplied some gold and pepper, as well as forest products such as honey, wax, lignum aloes and foodstuffs. The latter came in particular from Siak, which was almost exclusively agrarian. The inhabitants of the coastal states sold their domestic products in Malacca, carrying on their trade in small coastal proas. In the Malaccan market they bought Coromandel and Gujarati cloth for resale in the Sumatran interior.<sup>27</sup> This supply of gold from Minangkabau helped to make Malacca the biggest gold emporium in Asia. Salted fish roes also came to Malacca from East Sumatra. They were a much coveted delicacy.

Javanese influence was paramount in the more southerly states of Sumatra, though they still carried on some trade at Malacca. Palembang sent foodstuffs and in return took cloth of the coarser sort, which had been brought to the Straits by Indian merchants.

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Ibid., pp. 80-1.

In the fourteenth century the ports of northern Java had been the centre of much of the Archipelago's trade, and of the trade from the East and West. As Malacca grew, shipping from China and the Gujarat Coast mostly withdrew from Java, and the towns there lost their independent international trade, and became intermediaries for the traffic that was concentrated increasingly in the northern port. Javanese trade with Malacca was based on spices, food products, and valuable kinds of wood, all items of great value in inter-Asian trade. Malacca's contacts with Grise, for instance, were highly important, for the latter port controlled the import of spices from Banda and the Moluccas. The spice trade seems to have been conducted jointly by the merchants of Malacca, the Javanese ports, and the Moluccas. A joint fleet of eight junks set out annually from Malacca and Grisé to Banda and the Moluccas. Large scale trade was controlled by the ruler of Grise and a Hindu merchant from Malacca. A small scale trade which was carried on at the same time was probably older in origin than the wholesale trade, and was still in operation when the Dutch arrived in the East. Merchants from Malacca, sailing as passengers or members of the crews of the Molucca-bound junks, embarked with their merchandise, which was mostly made up of cloth, for Java. They exchanged the cloth in Java for Chinese copper 'cash' or other trivia. Then they went on to Sumbawa, where they bought cheap cotton cloth which, together with the cash, was exchanged yet again when they reached the Spice Islands for nutmegs, mace

and cloves. Large profits were to be made in this trade, for the price at which spices sold in Malacca was sometimes as much as ten times their actual cost price in the Moluccas.<sup>28</sup>

Malaccan shipping also visited Borneo and the Lesser Sunda Islands, but this trade was far less important than the traffic to the Spice Islands. Borneo sent about three junks to Malacca annually, and these carried foodstuffs such as meat, fish, rice and sago, cowries and two or three bahars of valuable camphor. Poor quality gold was also sent. Borneo merchants bought Coromandel and Bengali cloths, along with quantities of coloured glass and cornelian beads from Cambay, and Chinese copper bracelets, to trade with the natives of the interior for gold-dust. Malacca merchants visited the Sunda Islands to collect valuable sandalwood from Timor.

Thus the cycles of inter-Asian trade revolved around Malacca, and merchants from many lands travelled to the port to exchange their merchandise. A Portuguese visitor to Malacca at the beginning of the sixteenth century, wrote in admiration:

All these people bring so much wealth, both from East and West, that Malacca seems a centre at which are assembled all the natural products of the earth, and the artificial ones of man. On this account, although situated in a barren land, it is, through an interchange of commodities, more amply supplied with everything than the countries themselves from which they come.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup>

ibid., pp. 83-4.

<sup>29</sup>

J. Crawford, A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries. (London, 1856) p. 245. Crawford is quoting Joao de Barros, Decadas, Vol. 2 book VI, Chapter 1.



Many details of this picture of Malacca's trade are drawn from the glowing accounts of this and other Portuguese adventurers. They belonged to forces sent to the East to take over the valuable spice trade. They planned to divert the flow of spices into Europe to Portugal via the Cape of Good Hope, thus entirely eliminating the merchants of Asia and the Mediterranean from the trade. It was planned to gain control of the Indian Ocean, and thus of its shipping, by the use of naval power, and by occupying a number of strategic points which, once fortified, could easily be defended from the sea by armed men-of-war.

To this end the Portuguese attacked and captured some of the main points on the Asian trade routes, and the port of Malacca, which because of its position and prosperity had excited such admiration, was numbered among their conquests. The Malay port seemed the ideal place from which to dominate the spice trade. The Sultan of Malacca was driven out of his capital and retired with his court to the island of Bintan. Though he retained authority over his territories on either side of the Straits the loss of Malacca was a great blow to his prosperity. He was unable to dislodge the Europeans despite his repeated efforts, and even an appeal to his Chinese overlord brought no relief.

China had been losing interest and influence in the southern seas for nearly a century, and the rulers of Malacca had not sent

tribute to the Imperial court at Peking for many years.<sup>30</sup> In response to Malacca's appeal, however, the Emperor issued a decree upbraiding the Franks, told them to go back to their own country and ordered the kings of Siam and other countries to assist their neighbour in his need; none of these obeyed however and so the kingdom of Malacca was destroyed.<sup>31</sup> The Chinese had no material power to prop up their authority in the area any longer, and in the face of the challenge of the Europeans, who had the advantage of superior military and naval technique, their official influence was withdrawn from the Archipelago and surrounding countries. At the same time the Siamese, who had been Malacca's most powerful rival for control of the Malay Peninsula, became involved in a long series of wars with the neighbouring Burmese peoples, which engrossed most of their attention until the late eighteenth century.<sup>32</sup> These factors created power vacuum so that the Portuguese, and later the Dutch, were faced with no powerful established force to combat their ambitions in the area.

Malacca continued to be an important centre of inter-Asian trade after it had been captured by the Portuguese, but after 1511 there was an unmistakable dispersion of the trade and shipping

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Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p. 31.

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Groeneveldt, Notes, p. 133, (From the History of the Ming dynasty, Book 325.)

32

D. G. E. Hall, A History of Southeast Asia, (London, 1964) p. 172 and Chapter 13.

which had congregated at this port. One circumstance which undermined Portuguese Malacca's entrepot trade was the continuing hostility of the exiled Sultan, who was known as the Sultan of Johore. He strove to oppose the Portuguese with all his power, and to divert trade from Malacca whenever possible. A new port was established on the island of Bintan which succeeded in attracting a proportion of the passing trade. Because of its continuing overlordship of the nearby smaller Malay states, Johore at first retained some control over supplies of the local export products such as pepper, tin and gold.<sup>33</sup> Johore never developed a port to equal Malacca, as the Portuguese were able to cut it off from the trade of western Asia. Nevertheless, Portuguese Malacca suffered from the obstacles which Johore laid in the way of its trade to and from China, and from the Sultan's policy of attracting Javanese junks loaded with provisions away from Malacca to his port.<sup>34</sup>

Another formidable local adversary soon emerged at the northern end of the Straits. The disturbed conditions which prevailed after the fall of Malacca aided the growth of the new state of Aceh. In 1524 Aceh captured the pepper exporting ports of Pasé and Pidie, and soon gained control of most of the pepper and tin exporting states in the Straits. The trade of the north Sumatran ports was transferred to the new port of Bandar Aceh, which swiftly grew in

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<sup>33</sup>Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p.139.<sup>34</sup>

Ibid., p.140.

importance as a centre of trade, especially that coming from India. It was also an important junction for the sale of spices to western Asia, for some shipping had once again shifted away from the route through the Straits of Malacca to the Straits of Sunda and the west of Sumatra.<sup>35</sup> This was very damaging to Portuguese authority and to Portuguese trade, for it was by this route that spices continued to reach the Mediterranean.

So the traders from East and West had alternative places in which to exchange their goods, after the Portuguese captured Malacca. Many preferred to continue to trade at the old port; but some, perhaps for religious reasons favouring the new Muslim centre of Aceh, or anxious to avoid the strife which was now almost constant in the vicinity of Malacca, took their trade elsewhere. The Portuguese drove some away by their own monopolistic policies. Chinese trade, for instance, was at first encouraged in every way by the new authorities at Malacca. But as Portuguese trade in Asia grew and they began to sail to China themselves, it was felt that Chinese trade at Malacca was detrimental to their own business at Macao. Chinese merchants at Malacca were treated more and more unfavourably, and went instead to various places in Java, Sumatra or the Malay Peninsula, where both Indian and Moluccan products could be obtained, together with the local tin and pepper.<sup>36</sup>

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35  
Ibid, p.144

36  
Ibid, p.169

The "pass system" which the Portuguese introduced in an attempt to channel trade was also unpopular. Their cruisers would examine passing Asian vessels to discover if they carried permission from the Portuguese authorities for their voyage. If no pass could be produced, the cargoes and sometimes even the ships of the Asian merchants were confiscated.<sup>37</sup> All of these things contributed to the breaking down of Malacca's position as the central port of inter-Asian trade during the sixteenth century, though it retained its position as a very important commercial centre till the end of that century.

By that time, Portuguese hopes of monopolising the spice trade, which had faded considerably after a century of competition with the shrewd Asian traders, was finally banished by the arrival of English and Dutch ships in Asia. In a very short time these newcomers gained a dominant position in the trade of the Archipelago. By 1605 Dutch forces had captured the Portuguese strongholds in the Moluccas, and in the following year the Dutch allied themselves to Johore, and made an unsuccessful attempt on Malacca. Dutch ventures were soon combined under the banner of the United East India Company,<sup>38</sup> whose headquarters were first set up in the Moluccas, but in 1619

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37

Ibid., p.120

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United East India Company of the Netherlands, or the Vereenigd Oost-Indische Compagnie, generally referred to as the VOC.



were moved to a more central position, in West Java, where the small kingdom of Jacatra had fallen into Dutch hands. Here the town of Batavia was set up, and from this vantage point the Dutch were able to extend their influence over the Sunda Straits, and use their naval power to suppress the rival trade of the Javanese ports. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more and more Javanese territory became subject to the VOC, and by 1700 the administration at Batavia already controlled a widespread network of trading establishments from Mocha on the Persian Gulf to Deshima in Japan.

The VOC was a child of the struggle waged by the people of the Netherland states to be rid of the tyrannous rule of Spain. Dutchmen travelled to Asia at the end of the sixteenth century not only to gain wealth for themselves, but to strike a blow at Spain through the trade of her ally Portugal. At first Dutch trade in Asia was carried on by a number of small companies, each fitted out by one of the Dutch towns. As these companies all competed for trade, it was felt that this state of affairs was squandering the young Republic's resources, and in 1602 the various companies amalgamated and the VOC was formed in their stead.

The VOC was intended as a weapon and was, therefore, strongly constructed. The States General granted the Company letters patent which empowered it to act on behalf of that body east of the Cape of Good Hope, waging wars and concluding treaties with the countries of those regions as a sovereign power. The charter granted to the

Company conferred upon it monopoly rights to the trade of these countries, to the exclusion of other persons or groups in the Republic. A large capital was provided, almost ten times that of the contemporary English company.<sup>39</sup> The States General did not reserve any rights to regulate or control the Company's commercial activities, which were left in charge of an authoritarian board of directors known as Heeren Zeventien.<sup>40</sup>

The organisation of the VOC reflected its origin. Sixty directors were at the head of the administration. Their numbers were made up from the chambers of the old companies of Amsterdam, Hoom, Enkhuizen, Rotterdam, Delft and Middelburg, which had joined to form the VOC. Each chamber was represented in proportion to its importance; Amsterdam contributed the largest number of directors. Each chamber equipped and dispatched ships to the East according to its own ability, but profit or loss were shared by all alike. This unwieldy-sounding structure was ruled by seventeen 'managing directors' who were drawn from the larger body to act as an inner cabinet. They were called the 'Seventeen Gentlemen (Heeren Zeventien)', and they shaped the policy of the VOC, holding the machinery together.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup>

The VOC was established with a permanent capital of 6½ million guilders, while the English East India Company was started on £68,000

<sup>40</sup>

Heeren Zeventien - Seventeen Gentlemen, the governing body of the VOC.

<sup>41</sup>

K. Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade, (Copenhagen, 1958) pp.4/5

The distance between Holland and Batavia made it necessary to maintain a separate permanent administration in Asia, to superintend the day-to-day business of the Company in the East. The same distance ensured that this Eastern government enjoyed a large degree of freedom of action. It was an autocratic body, for a centralised administration was soon found necessary if the Dutch were to be able to compete with the Asian traders. In 1609 the first Governor-General was appointed, and charged to select a council of his colleagues to assist him with the management of affairs in Asia. In a short time a fixed hierarchy had arisen among the Company's servants at Batavia, to be duplicated as far as possible in the outlying factories, the 'buitencomptoiren'.<sup>42</sup>

The Governor-General became virtually all powerful, though in theory he was to be assisted by his council in his decisions. His position gave him 'power and authority to place, renew and alter in all forts all such commanders, captains and soldiers as he in his opinion shall find to be of service to the Company ....'<sup>43</sup>

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See for example the detailed order of precedence to be followed at official funerals held at Malacca in Malacca's Church Archives, p. 1448, dated 17 June 1766. The Governor has first place, followed by the members of the Council and other servants of the Company. Then come the chief among the Burgers, etc. The last places fall to the "Captains" of the Malay, Indian and Chinese settlers.

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van Dam, Beschryvinge., Vol. 2, pt.1, pp.30-1

He was the executor of the Heeren Zeventien's policies in Asia. Commanders of the buitencomptoir, such as the Governor of Malacca, stood in a similarly dictatorial position to their own posts. The Governor of Malacca was also assisted by a council, over which he presided, and all decisions were at least nominally those of 'The Governor and Council'. This council consisted of servants of the VOC of high standing, who occupied the chief offices at Malacca. The Governor and his council were authorised 'to settle and carry into effect all matters pertaining to the political and military affairs, both criminal and civil' of the town.<sup>44</sup>

The Governors of the buitencomptoir were naturally concerned primarily with the affairs of their own vicinity, and therefore sometimes questioned the policy laid down by the Governor-General. The latter had to consider the interests of the Company as a whole in the treatment of any one situation. These interests remained predominantly commercial throughout the life of the VOC, though it grew to be a considerable territorial power. The Company's servants were expected to do a profitable trade rather than accumulate an empire. The success of each venture was read from the balance sheet.

Commercial considerations had led the VOC to venture into inter-Asian trade quite extensively, when the conditions of this trade became clear. They soon found that it was difficult to obtain

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C. O. Blagden, 'Report of Governor Balthasar Bort on Malacca', JMBRAS, V, i, (1927), p.88

the cargoes of spices which were so profitable in Europe, because they had nothing which could be taken to Asia in exchange for these goods, except bullion. However, European governments were reluctant to allow the export of gold and silver, since contemporary economic theory held such export to be detrimental to a nation's prosperity. The Europeans found that it was possible to make profits by trading inside Asia, which helped eke out their meagre supply of specie, and made the collection of cargoes for the European bound vessels easier. The VOC was drawn in this way into the trade with India, to obtain cloth to exchange for spices in the Moluccas, and from there into trade with many other places, to supply goods suitable for sale in their Indian factories.<sup>45</sup> Soon the invoices of the cargoes to Europe included not just the valuable spices but other goods such as cotton piece goods, sugar, copper, tin, coffee, saltpetre, indigo, various perfumed woods and other jungle products.<sup>46</sup>

In much of this trade the VOC came into competition with Asian and other merchants. Recent studies have emphasised the fact that 'competition and changeableness rather than monopoly and constancy were what characterised the Dutch company'.<sup>47</sup> The area in which the VOC enjoyed a monopoly was relatively insignificant compared to the whole volume of its business. This fact should not obscure

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T. Raychaudhuri, Jan Compagnie in the Coromandel, 1605 to 1690. (The Hague, 1962) p. 132

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Glamann, Trade, pp. 18-19

47

Ibid., p. 265



the many very real attempts which the rulers of the VOC made to secure a monopoly trade in the more valuable items of Asian trade. They felt as strongly as the Portuguese had that the most profitable way to conduct the trade in spices, pepper and even tin, was to control the whole trade in these products. The Dutch adopted many of the Portuguese methods in pursuing this wished-for result, including the system of issuing passes and capturing strategic strongholds. Once Batavia had been established in a position to dominate the Sunda Straits and the Dutch had established themselves as the strongest power in the Moluccas;<sup>48</sup> their attention turned once more to Malacca.

In 1640 Governor-General Van Dieman wrote that

We have from time to time seriously considered the capture of Malacca from the Portuguese, our hereditary enemies, not only for the expansion of trade, but to strengthen our influence and prestige over the neighbouring Indian monarchs and princes... We, however, consider that the opportune moment has arrived for the realisation of our object ...<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup>

By 1623 the English had withdrawn all their bases from the Moluccas, the Banda Islands and Amboyna. They only retained factories at Japara (until 1648), Aceh, Jambi, Macassar, Batavia and Bantam (the latter until 1682). B. Harrison, South-East Asia, (London, 1963), p.102

<sup>49</sup>

P. A. Leupe, "The Siege and Capture of Malacca from the Portuguese", JMBRAS, XIV, i, (1936), p.12

Malacca was besieged and taken by the forces of the VOC in alliance with Johore on the 14 January 1641.

Once in possession of this stronghold, the Dutch set out to dominate the Straits of Malacca and their trade. They induced many of the Malay princes to sign contracts allowing the VOC very favourable terms of trade at their ports and promising to exclude other traders. When it was found that these princes took every opportunity to evade the terms of these treaties, the Dutch sent 'guardships' from Malacca to disrupt the trade of the local ports, diverting shipping to Malacca wherever possible.<sup>50</sup> The English captain, William Dampier, described this process after a visit to the Malacca Straits in the 1680's

For where there is any Trade to be had, yet not sufficient to maintain a Factory; for where there may not be a convenient Place to build a fort, so as to secure the whole trade to themselves, they send their Guardships which, lying at the Mouth of the Rivers, deter Strangers from coming thither, and keep the petty Princes in awe of them. They commonly make a Shew as if they did this out of Kindness to the people; yet most of them know otherwise, but dare not openly resent it.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Blagden, *JMBRAS*, V, i, p.157. In discussing the blockade of the Kedah River, Bort wrote that 'The chief object of this blockade is the prevention of most of the trade and traffic of foreigners in Queda by refusing them access to the river ... so as to cut them (i.e. King of Kedah and nobles) off from a large part of the prosperity and revenue which they could enjoy from said traffic ....'

<sup>51</sup> W. Dampier, *Voyages and Discoveries*, (London, 1931), p.113

The rulers of the VOC were somewhat ambiguous about the role of Malacca. 'On the one hand there was the desire to preserve and even develop the emporium character of Malacca ....',<sup>52</sup> This would have called for the continuance and expansion of existing lines of commerce. But this desire clashed with one of the basic commercial policies of the Company, the policy which aimed to control the main articles of import and export so as to be able to dictate prices in the interests of Dutch trade elsewhere. This latter policy generally prevailed in the Dutch government of Malacca, though not without some backward-looking to the profits that might have been made if the city had remained a free port. In fact, restrictions were placed on the export of the most important local and imported goods, pepper, spices, sandalwood, tin, the principal varieties of cloth, and opium. Foreign traders were no longer able to make up a valuable cargo easily at Malacca, and goods which were available were generally sold by the VOC at fairly high prices. Malacca's proximity to Batavia may have helped to decide the High Government on these restrictionist policies, in the hopes that trade would be diverted to the Javanese port. Some shipping may have gone to Batavia instead of Malacca, but the

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S. Arasaratnam. Some Notes on the Dutch in Malacca and the Indo-Malayan Trade. Unpublished paper to the International Conference on Asian History, read in Kuala Lumpur, 1968, p.3.

majority of Indian and other independent merchants who visited the Straits to trade after 1641 seem to have preferred to do business in local Asian ports if they wished to avoid the restrictions of Malacca.

The states of the Archipelago had on the whole welcomed the arrival of the second wave of Europeans, who were avowedly enemies of the Portuguese. They increased competition for local goods, which led to higher prices and a general boost to trade. In some quarters the newcomers, who had demonstrated their naval skill against the Portuguese, were viewed as possible allies. Johore had suffered from the hostility of both Aceh and the Portuguese became allied to the Dutch at an early date.<sup>53</sup> Aceh was at the beginning of the seventeenth century the dominant power in the Malacca Straits, and had no need to court the favour of the VOC. Indeed, the situation was rather the reverse.<sup>54</sup> Aceh continued to launch its own attacks against Portuguese Malacca. The Governor-General was anxious to engage Aceh's co-operation in the renewed attack on Malacca in 1640, but the ruler of Aceh again declined to become attached to the Dutch. Van Dieman was forced to make do with the support of Johore.

This fact had a lasting effect on the relative power of Aceh and Johore. The Dutch capture of Malacca coincided with internal developments in Aceh which weakened that state to the extent that

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E. Netscher, De Nederlanders in Djohor en Siak, (Batavia, 1870), p. 13

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D. Lombard, Le Sultanate d'Atjeh au temps d'Iskander Muda, (Paris, 1967), p.179

it no longer posed any serious threat to the European rulers of Malacca. A long period of centralised rule by strong kings, which had made Aceh the dominant local power, came to an end with the death of Iskander Thani, and control was seized by the provincial chiefs. These ruled throughout the seventeenth century, placing on the throne a series of queens to prevent the revival of strong centralised rule. Even when a king succeeded in seizing the throne again at the end of the century this group of local chiefs remained a powerful and unsettling force in the kingdom.<sup>55</sup> Before that time, however, the pepper and tin states of the peninsula and Sumatra had been won away from Aceh by the VOC or Johore, or had become independent like Perak.<sup>56</sup>

Bandar Aceh remained an important port of entry for trade from the West into the Archipelago, especially for the import of Indian cloth, but after the loss of the tin and pepper states Aceh no longer figured largely in the commerce or the conflicts within the Straits of Malacca during the eighteenth century.

Johore, on the contrary, had flourished after 1641. The state received very favourable treatment from the Dutch for a number of years after the capture of Malacca, because of the assistance given to the VOC on that occasion.<sup>57</sup> The Dutch did not even attempt to secure a monopolistic contract for the

<sup>55</sup>

W. Marsden, The History of Sumatra, (London, 1811), p.459

<sup>56</sup>

W.J. Leeuw, Het Painansch Contract, (Amsterdam, 1926)

<sup>57</sup>

Leupe, JMBRAS, XIV, i, p.32



delivery of pepper and tin from the territories of Johore to Malacca until 1685.<sup>58</sup> The king and notables of Johore were allowed to trade to Malacca on very favourable terms. By the middle of the seventeenth century it was apparent that Johore's trade was flourishing, and that the Johorese had no scruples about undermining Dutch 'rights' to trade in goods such as tin and cloth whenever possible.<sup>59</sup>

A war with Jambi put an end to Johore's reviving prosperity, however, and the Dutch at Malacca were for a time at least indisputably the dominant power in the Straits; in 1678 Governor Bort wrote that 'there is now no power (in the Straits) that we need respect or fear, since the power of Johore is much reduced, Acheh is impotent and has no appearance of once more attaining any considerable power, and the kings of Perak and Kedah are of small account ...',<sup>60</sup> Even in these favourable circumstances the VOC found it difficult to direct the trade in the Straits entirely in their own interests; there was 'little or no demand for the Company's cloths and piece goods'.<sup>61</sup>

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Netscher, *Johor*, pp.33-6. See also D.K. Bassett, *Changes in the Pattern of Malay Politics, 1629-c.1655.*, unpublished paper read to the International Conference on Asian History in Kuala Lumpur, 1968, p. 22

59

Winstedt, 'A History of Johor', *JMBRAS*, X,iii, 1932, p.41

60

Blagden, *JMBRAS*, V,i,p. 26

61

*Ibid.*, p.126

The preceding remarks are intended to briefly summarise the history of the Straits of Malacca up to 1700, and provide a background to the following discussion of the competition between the VOC and the local states for the trade of the area in the eighteenth century. It has been necessary to give a detailed account of the early trade of Malacca to explain the basis of the conflict between the VOC and the local rulers during the later period, for though the actual trade of Malacca had declined, a large proportion of the traffic which had formerly concentrated on this port continued to frequent the Straits. In the eighteenth century, both the VOC and the Malay rulers hoped to reap the benefit of this passing trade.

### Chapter I. The Trade of Malacca in the Eighteenth Century

At the beginning of the eighteenth century an English merchant Charles Lockyer, described Malacca as 'a healthful place, but of no great trade'.<sup>1</sup> The port had lost all claim to be the centre of trade in the Archipelago, and had become significant mainly because it was an outpost of the VOC. Malacca's strategic value alone, lying as it did in the narrowest part of the straits, ensured a continuing Dutch interest in the town.<sup>2</sup> The policy-makers of the VOC had undoubtedly hoped, when they set out to capture the Portuguese stronghold, to win also a substantial portion of the busy trade which still passed through the Straits. An examination of the affairs of the Dutch Government of Malacca in the eighteenth century reveals the disappointment of these hopes, for the Company was rarely able to compete successfully for the

1

Charles Lockyer; An Account of the Trade in India.  
(London 1711), p.66

2.

G. W. Van Imhoff; 'Consideration over den tegenwoordige staat van de Nederlandsche Ooste-Indische Maatschappij'. B.K.I., Vol.66 (1912), p.513. Van Imhoff wrote that 'Malacca belongs to the category of frontier places, which cannot be abandoned, rather than to that of trading post or colony.' (i.e. Malacca behoort veel meer onder de frontieren, die men niet abandonneeren kan, dan onder de handel plaatsen of colonien'. The translation is my own, unless otherwise stated.)

local trade with the many Asian and other foreign merchants who visited the Straits.

For most of this century the pattern of inter-Asian trade remained substantially as it had in the time of the Malacca Sultanate, though the increasing importance of tea in the cargoes sent from Asia to Europe led to a greater volume of trade to China in this period. The changes brought about by the growing importance of the tea and coffee trade came slowly, however, and did not greatly affect traffic in the Straits until the latter part of the century. Indian cloth remained the most important article brought in to the Archipelago, while spices, pepper, gold and tin were its most sought-after products. The history of the tin trade clearly illustrates the failure of the VOC to enforce its own pattern of trade on the Straits countries, and has been examined in some detail in the following chapter. Other less valuable goods also figured in Malacca's trade, the most important of which were resin, rice and paddy, fish products and other foodstuffs, slaves, some precious stones, items which can be classed as drugs, such as the bezoar

stone and pedro de porco,<sup>3</sup> valuable woods,<sup>4</sup> ivory, sago, rattans [ Malacca canes ] , beeswax and other products of the jungle.<sup>5</sup>

The VOC sought to monopolise the most valuable of these. In 1678 Governor Bort wrote that 'the merchandise and goods dealt in here [ at Malacca ] by the Honourable Company alone are tin, pepper, opium, cloves, mace, nutmegs and resin'.<sup>6</sup>

As in the time of the Malacca Sultanate, gold ranked high among the products of the Straits. The rulers of the VOC were anxious to obtain as much as possible of this precious metal, and urged the Malaccan government to make every effort in this direction. Gold from the Archipelago formed a large proportion of the VOC's total imports to the Coromandel Coast of India, where much of the Company's

3

Bezoar Stones were obtained from intestines of various animals, among others the porcupine or Malacca hedgehog. They were favoured for medicinal purposes in the early eighteenth century. The pedro de porco was a special kind of bezoar found in an animal known as the hog-deer, in Siak. See footnote 45 below. Lockyer, Account, pp.49/50, and P. Reebie, The Malay Peninsula (Madras, 1834), p.516

4

The valuable saupan wood and agila (or 'eagle' wood) were obtained from the local jungle. On Agila wood Marsden writes that 'The Agallochim, agila wood or lignum aloes, called by the natives kalambak and kayu gahru, is highly prized in all parts of the East, for the fragrant scent it emits in burning'. Marsden, Sunatra, p.160

5

Blagden, JMBRAS, V,i, p.109 et al.

6

Ibid, p.125



cloth was purchased.<sup>7</sup> Specie for these purchases was generally in short supply, for contemporary European economic theories deprecated the export of bullion.<sup>8</sup> No opportunity to buy gold cheaply in Asia could be neglected.

The gold was produced in the Minangkabau territories of inland Sumatra and exported via the river systems to the east.<sup>9</sup> By the eighteenth century the Siak River had become the major centre of this trade. The small state of Patapahan, which was accessible to boats of ten to twenty tons, was the centre of this trade. 'This is a great mart of trade with the Menangkabau country, whither its merchants resort with their gold'.<sup>11</sup>

7.

S. Arasaratnam, 'The Dutch East India Company and its Coromandel Trade, 1700-1740', *EKI*, 123, (1967) p.342. See also Raychaudhuri, *Jan Compagnie*, p.212.

8

Raychaudhuri, *Jan Compagnie*, p.131

9

A Dutchman who sailed through the Straits in 1722 wrote that 'The principal places where gold is found are Triou and Manincabo [Minangkabau], and the way in which they procure the gold is as follows: They dig trenches at the bottom of the hills, so as to intercept the torrents which roll rapidly down the sides in the winter months: and having drained off the water from the ditches in summer, they find considerable quantities of gold dust in the mud which remains. It is generally believed that this island furnishes annually 5,000 lb. weight of gold dust, yet very little of this quantity is ever brought to Europe, being mostly employed by the servants of the [Dutch] East India Company in making purchases of commodities in places where gold bears a high price.' Roggewein, 'Voyage Around the World', *Kerr's Voyages*, (Edinburgh 1824), p.168. See also Marsden, *Sumatra*, p.165

10

Netscher, *Djohor*, p.39. Contrast with the importance of Indragini as the chief market for Sumatran gold in the sixteenth century. Introduction p.

11

Marsden, *Sumatra*, p.356

Smaller amounts of the metal were also obtained from Indragiri and Jambi.<sup>12</sup> Gold was exchanged for cloth and opium from India.

The VOC attempted to gain a predominant place in this trade in its usual fashion, by contracting with the Sultan of Johore, Siak's overlord, for a free and unhindered trade on the River of Siak, and a monopoly of the trade in gold.<sup>13</sup> In 1678 Governor Bort noted that the Company obtained gold in exchange for cloth at Indragiri. Gold collected before July was to be sent to Batavia, thence to the Coromandel. After that month, supplies of the metal were to be kept until the Company's ships arrived from Japan in December, and sent on direct to India.<sup>14</sup> This procedure remained unaltered until 1740, when the Malacca government was ordered to send all gold straight to the Coromandel Coast.<sup>15</sup>

In this, as in other branches of local trade, the Malacca government faced strong competition from the many other merchants, both Asian and European, who frequented the Malacca Straits, especially from Indian and private English merchants. They purchased gold freely in Aceh, which had remained outside Dutch influence.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup>

Missions were sent from Malacca at various times to purchase gold at these places, with fluctuating success, e.g. GM 30th November 1729, p.2751; GM 31st December 1751, p.381; GM 30th December 1754, p.553, et al.

<sup>13</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, p.35

<sup>14</sup>

Blagden, JMBRAS, V,i,p.172.

<sup>15</sup>

GM 31st December, 1740, p.246

<sup>16</sup>

Marsden, Sumatra, p.399

Merchants from the Coromandel also obtained gold in Siak and the nearby Sumatran ports, despite Dutch efforts to exclude them.<sup>17</sup> The Indian merchants brought cloth and opium, which they were able to sell at prices below those asked by the VOC for similar products.<sup>18</sup> The heavy overheads of the VOC made it necessary for them to set a fairly high price on their goods. The VOC was, therefore, only successful in the gold trade when competition could be excluded for political reasons, and relations with Siak always played a highly important part in the formulation of policy by the Government of Malacca.

In the early years of the century, Dutch influence in Siak was not great, and the trade between Malacca and Siak was threatened by the activities of the ruler of Johore.<sup>19</sup> Every effort was made by the Dutch to protect this valuable trade. Gold figured little in the correspondence of the Malaccan authorities, however, until 1725, when they were instructed to obtain an 'unlimited quantity of bar gold, at 16 or at the highest 17 Rix dollars (Rds) the reaal of fine (24 carat) gold'.<sup>20</sup> These prices were lower than those offered by rival merchants, and

<sup>17</sup>

Ibid., p.356

<sup>18</sup>

Raychaudhuri, *Jan Compagnie*, p.168

<sup>19</sup>

See Chapter III below p. 120.

<sup>20</sup>

Kol.Arch 1966, p.39. Governor Van Suchtelen's Report on Malacca, 1727

no great amount of the metal was collected.<sup>21</sup> However, in the 1740's the Malaccan government was allowed to offer a higher price and for a time the gold trade flourished. This increase in price coincided with a period of increased Dutch political influence in Siak. The territory was ceded to the VOC by the Sultan of Johore in 1746, though it was only nine years later that the Company took an active part in Siak's affairs, sending an expedition to instal a ruler more amenable, so they hoped, to the VOC's interests.<sup>22</sup> From then until 1765 a small fortress was maintained on Pulau Gonting in the mouth of the river.

In 1749 a quantity of gold dust to the value of 53,640.7 guilders was obtained from Patapahan and Inragiri, 'and for that reason the Honourable High Government of the Indies has strongly recommended that the trade in that article should be maintained without interruption'.<sup>23</sup> In 1759 Governor Dekker felt that the

<sup>21</sup>

In November 1728 the Malaccan Government wrote that there had in that year been no opportunity to purchase gold as yet, 'since the price is markedly higher than it was last year, because of a smaller amount being brought in to Patapahan, Acheh and Indragiri, and an increased export to the Comandel by the 'Alhier ge Weest zynde' Moorish (Indian) merchants'. Malacca to Batavia, 11th November 1728, p.36

<sup>22</sup>

Chapter V below

<sup>23</sup>

B. Harrison, 'Malacca in the Eighteenth Century'. (A translation of Governor Albinus' Report on Malacca, 1750). JMERAS, XXVII, 1, (1954), p.29

warehouse on Pulau Gonting and the two vessels stationed in the Siak River were not adequate to cope with the trade, 'which is of the greatest importance to the Company', and suggested that a third vessel should be allocated to help in this matter. One vessel, he argued, must stay in the Siak River as a 'magazijn', a second must go back and forth to Malacca, and a third was needed to patrol the Kampar River, which joined the Siak River inland, and opened the way for smugglers.<sup>24</sup> This success was not lasting. Though a new attempt was made in 1761 to secure a government which would promote Dutch interests in Siak, the Malaccan Government could not prevent the ruler from admitting foreign trade.<sup>25</sup> The price of gold climbed once again, and the amounts shipped off from Malacca yearly declined. In 1767 the Batavian authorities were informed of the impossibility of obtaining much gold at the set price, 'let alone at a lesser price'.<sup>26</sup> By 1777 the gold trade had completely collapsed. The Company had not altered the authorised buying price for gold in a decade and, as Governor Crans wrote, 'we must suppose that this mineral shall increase in price rather than otherwise ... (we) have not (therefore) been able to transport anything to the West ....'<sup>27</sup>

24

Kol.Arch. 2858. n.190. Governor Dekker's Report on Malacca, 1759.

25

Marsden, Sumatra, 356

26.

Kol.Arch. 3166; Malacca to Batavia, 13th March 1767, p.10

27

Governor Crans' Report on Malacca. (1777)



Next to gold and tin, the most important product of the area was pepper. For much of the seventeenth century, pepper had been the most important single item of the VOC's trade, and though it lost ground a little to cloth and coffee in the following century, it remained an item of very great importance.<sup>28</sup> The VOC made a determined effort to monopolise the pepper output of the Archipelago, and after the subjection of the West Javanese State of Bantam in 1680, and the earlier conclusion of the Painansch Contracts with the chiefs of the pepper-producing states of West Sumatra,<sup>29</sup> seemed in a fair way to doing so. But foreign merchants still had footholds in the pepper trade; the English Company maintained a factory at Bencoolen on the South-West coast of Sumatra, and private English, Chinese, Indian and other foreign merchants were usually able to obtain a cargo of pepper from the Asian ports of the Malacca Straits or Borneo.<sup>30</sup>

The pepper produced in these areas was held to be inferior to the fruit of Bantam or the Minangkabau uplands,<sup>31</sup> but pepper continued to be highly in demand in China, and foreign merchants were eager to obtain cargoes of it. Palembang, Jambi and Infragiri

28

Glamann, Trade, p.73 et al.

29

Leeuw, Painansch Contract, discusses this at length.

30

A. Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies, (1930) Vol.II, p. 64.

31

Ibid., p.64

were the main areas of pepper production in the Straits, and some was also grown in Kedah<sup>32</sup> and probably in Johore. Trengganu was known to produce a sizable crop by the middle of the eighteenth century. The VOC had contracted for the crop of Palembang, where a residency was established. The purpose of these outposts was to act in conjunction with the authorities of Malacca to monopolise the major portion of the pepper produced in the area, and so deny supplies to rival merchants. Malacca was thus not regarded as a primary source of supply of pepper, but rather as a watch-dog for the trade - though shipments were received at Malacca occasionally from Palembang, Jambi or elsewhere.<sup>33</sup> These were often shipped off for sale in India. William Dampier described the attempts of the VOC to control the pepper trade of the Straits at the end of the seventeenth century; '...the Dutch wish to have all the Products of Java and Sumatra at their disposal, but they fall short in this, and may still be more disappointed of the Pepper trade, if Others would seek for it'.<sup>34</sup> Despite Dutch efforts, pepper remained available to Asian and country traders; Kedah disposed annually of about 40 pikuls<sup>35</sup> and cargoes could usually be got from Johore

<sup>32</sup> Zahara, Change in a Malay Sultanate, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1966) p.38

<sup>33</sup> Later in the century, pepper was sometimes brought to Malacca in Achinese vessels, and sold there at a low price to the VOC. See Batavia to Malacca, 30 May 1767, p.248

<sup>34</sup> Dampier, Voyages, p.8

<sup>35</sup> Zahara, Change, p.37

and later Riouw.<sup>36</sup> Palembang was also a source of pepper for the foreign merchants, in spite of, or more often because of, the efforts of the Dutch residents stationed there.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1750's, because of growing difficulties in the collection of pepper at the important Indian centre of Malabar,<sup>38</sup> and the growing importance of the trade to China, an attempt was made by the VOC to secure the pepper output of Trengganu, and so deny another source of supply to the China-bound English country traders.<sup>39</sup> The ruler of this state, Mansur Shah, was the son-in-law of Sultan Suleiman of Johore and a bitter rival of the Bugis, who were a powerful force in Johore at that time. He had sought Malacca's support in this feud, but still he would not commit himself to a monopoly trade with the Company, claiming that he had no control over the pepper trade within his state.<sup>40</sup> Attempts to buy pepper from Trengganu were eventually abandoned by the Malacca government as the price rose beyond the limits which they were authorised to pay.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Governor Rooselaar's Report on Malacca, 1709. Kol.Arch.1668, p.13.  
Also B.Harrison, 'Trade in the Straits of Malacca in 1785'.  
JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.57

<sup>37</sup> Both Hamilton and Dampier's accounts of Malacca and Palembang tell of smuggling by Dutch officials. See Hamilton A New Account, p.64, and Dampier, Voyages, p.113

<sup>38</sup> A.R.Das Gupta; Malabar in Asian Trade, (London 1967) p.25

<sup>39</sup> Kol.Arch.2783 GM 31 December 1757, p.646. This alludes to an attempt to obtain a contract for the whole pepper crop of Trengganu

<sup>40</sup> Kol.Arch.2776, p.33, Malacca to Batavia, 9 April 1756; and GM 31 December 1758, pp.364/5

<sup>41</sup> Kol.Arch.3017, p.9. GM 29 October 1765

By the end of the 1770's, despite all the efforts of the Malaccan government, pepper was still quite easily available to the passing country traders in the Straits. It was estimated that about five thousand pikuls were imported annually to Riouw for sale to the English, from 'Palembang, Jambi, Indragiri and other places in Sumatra, but mostly from Borneo. The Riouw people paid nine or ten Spanish Dollars per picul and sold it for twelve or thirteen to foreign Europeans and Chinese merchants....'<sup>42</sup>

The Company did not on the whole interfere with the more humble trade in foodstuffs and local jungle products, which nevertheless appears to have supported a thriving and profitable business. The private burghers of Malacca were chiefly engaged in this trade, and the VOC profited from it mainly via Malacca's customs and anchorage tolls. Nevertheless, the Malacca government was eager to buy supplies of the more valuable jungle products whenever they could be had cheaply, to make up the cargo of Company's ships en route to India, or other Asian factories.

Governor Albinus wrote in 1750 that his successor

should purchase on the latter market [Patapahan] sapanwood, harpius [probably resin] and whatever else you may think of, to the amount considered necessary after careful calculation without waiting for Batavia's requirements, and you should then load such goods on passing [Company] ships according to their destinations.'<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, pp.57, 60

<sup>43</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.29

Sapanwood and resin, along with ivory, sago, rattans and wax, were regularly sent to Batavia to be included in cargoes for Europe.<sup>44</sup> Only one of this group of products caused the Malacca government any problems, and this was pedro de porco, or Bezoar stones, which the directors in Holland were particularly anxious to obtain in the early part of the century. According to Lockyer, a superior type of bezoar stone, called pedro de porco de Siacca, was found in the 'hog-deer' of Sumatra, which was 'valued at ten times its weight in gold; they are oftener found about Bencalis than anywhere else, whence the Dutch of Malacca get them in their tra<sup>ns</sup> thither.'<sup>45</sup>

The Malacca government had orders to ship 100 to 150 ozs. of this stone yearly to Batavia, to be sent to Europe, but they do not ever seem to have been able to collect this amount. The stones were not often available and when they were 'the price is so high that there is no chance to buy them for the Company.'<sup>46</sup> Raja Kechil, the ruler of Siak who attacked Johore in 1718, often used these pedro de porco as ceremonial gifts to accompany his letters to the Company. When he captured Riouw, this prince endeavoured to

44

e.g. Kol.Arch 2804, p.348 GM 30 December 1758; and Kol.Arch.3082, p.2206; GM 31 December 1767

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Lockyer, Account, p.49 He continues with a description of its appearance and uses: 'They are of a dark brownish colour, smooth on the outside; but the first coat being broken, they appear darker and stringy underneath, they swim on the water, and by infusion only make it extreme bitter; to it are attributed the Vertues of cleansing the stomach, creating an appetite and sweetening the blood.'

The author does not know what animal was intended by the phrase 'hog-deer'

46

Malacca to Batavia, 29 November 1721, p.183



safeguard his own supply of the stones and establish a monopoly by reviving an earlier prohibition of their sale, with a penalty of death for anyone who ignored his edict.<sup>47</sup> This prohibition, together with the prevalent struggles of warring factions in the Straits during the 1720's, which by making trade hazardous, prevented the import of stones from Borneo, made it even more difficult for the Malacca government to obtain the required amount of bezoar stones. During the 1730's, the reputation of this product appears to have declined, and the Directors no longer urged the Malacca government in this matter.<sup>48</sup>

Timber was another valuable product of Siak. From there 'the Dutch Company procured annually ... for the use of Batavia, several rafts of spars for masts.'<sup>49</sup> The 1713 treaty with Johore contained a clause stipulating that the VOC and the burghers of Malacca 'as it has been practised of old, are free to cut unhindered, in the woods of the River of Siaca or other territories belonging to the King of Johoor, or to buy from the natives and export from there, such mast timber and fire-wood as is deemed necessary, without being subject to any toll or recognition.'<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup>

Ibid

<sup>48</sup>

Though the instructions sent from Batavia in the first thirty years of the century contained many references to the necessity to obtain as many of these stones as possible, they are barely mentioned in the later period. In 1783, Marsden wrote that these stones had 'lost much of their reputation'. Marsden, Sumatra (1st edition, 1783) p.129

<sup>49</sup>

Milburn and Thornton; Commerce, Vol. II, p.349

<sup>50</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, p.xxi

The early rulers of the VOC nursed ambitions of monopolising the extremely important cloth trade to the Archipelago. So much has been written about the importance of cloth in inter-Asian trade that the following discussion shall refer only to its place in the trade of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula.

A large proportion of the Indian cloth imported to the Archipelago came via the Straits of Malacca. In the early seventeenth century Indian merchants disposed of a large quantity of cloth in the Asian ports of the Straits, especially at Aceh. The VOC determined to capture this trade. 'Already by the 'thirties, Batavia's avowed policy was to reduce Asian competition in the Coromandel trade by exploiting the Company's control over the sea routes.'<sup>51</sup>

Passes were no longer issued free to Indian shipping, and after the capture of Malacca, ships sailing there from the Coromandel coast and elsewhere were made to pay to the VOC tolls previously paid to the Portuguese. Passes were often only granted for Malacca, so that ships sailing to the Malay peninsula were forced to call there.

In 1647 the Batavian government decided to use force to prevent the Indian merchants from carrying cloth to the Straits.

The factories in the Coromandel and other places in India were forbidden to give passes to any Indian ships for Achin, Malacca, the 'tin quarters' of Perak, Queda, Oujang-Salang (Junk Ceylon) etc. and any other places thereabouts or further east. All ships sailing to these prohibited regions would be seized as legitimate booty <sup>52</sup>

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51

Raychaudhuri, Jan Compagnie, p.122

52

Ibid, p.123

But it soon appeared that the Company was quite unable to police this regulation, and little notice was accorded it by the larger Indian merchants. This move also caused such hostility to the VOC on the Coromandel Coast that by 1651 the Council decided to withdraw the prohibition on trade to Aceh 'because of the great hatred they had provoked and their general ineffectiveness',<sup>53</sup> and soon the other restrictions were also relaxed.

The rulers of the VOC had not, however, given up the war, they had only lost a battle. Instead of attempting to restrict the trade from India, they now tried to control it at the point of entry into the Archipelago. The policy adopted next, of trying to force the Malay rulers to submit to the Company's wishes and ban Indian (or other) merchants from their ports, was to become very important in the dealings of the VOC with the Malayan rulers. In 1657 a blockade of Aceh and its dependency, Perak, was mounted, nominally to force retribution for the massacre of the Company's agents at Perak in 1651, but actually 'to compel Aatchin, by depriving it of the extensive importation of Moorish Cloth, to buy from the Honourable Company.'<sup>54</sup> But though Aceh was forced to submit to the treaty of 1659, the Company's main aims were not achieved, for the blockade only caused the Indian merchants to move to other ports, and brought increased trade by the English. After 1660 the VOC no longer obstructed the trade of Indian merchants to Aceh.<sup>55</sup>

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53

Ibid, p.124

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Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i, p.132

55

Ibid, p.132

By 1678 hopes of monopolising the cloth trade of the Malacca Straits had been more or less abandoned. There was little demand for the Company's cloths and piece goods.<sup>56</sup> But though direct importation had not proved a success, the Company still hoped to profit indirectly from the cloth trade which formed a major part of the trade in the Straits. The VOC's policy towards the cloth trade of the Straits in the following century may be characterised as an attempt to reap as much indirect profit as possible from a trade in which it could never take a principal part. Again, the idea existed that this profit could be increased by gaining control over the Malay States into which cloth was imported and this largely influenced the VOC's policies.

The sales of cloth at Malacca did not increase substantially during the eighteenth century. In 1707 the retiring Governor of Malacca, Carol Bolnar, wrote that though one might hope for an increase in the cloth trade

it is certain that the Honourable Company is greatly injured in this by the frequent trade of the English, Danes, Moors [Indians] etc., who traffic at Johor and bring a great quantity of cloth there, where they (so I hear) pay little toll for import and exporting goods, and only gifts ...<sup>57</sup>

His comment was echoed by many of his successors.

56

Ibid, p.126

57

Kol.Arch. 1636, p.110. Governor Bolnar's Report on Malacca 1707

Since the Company could not compete in the import of cloth, it was hoped to attract the cloth merchants away from the Malay ports to Malacca and thus profit at least from the duties and servicing fees connected with the trade. In Governor Bort's time cloth traders from the Coromandel had had to leave one tenth of their merchandise as duty with the Malaccan Shabandar. This was sold at public auction on behalf of the Company.<sup>58</sup> The toll had increased to twenty per cent by the end of the century, but in 1700 an attempt was made to attract more business to Malacca by lowering the tolls from twenty to thirteen per cent. This did not succeed in attracting many Indian merchants, who preferred to take their cloth to the Malay ports of Acheh, Ujong Salang, Kedah, Perak and especially Johore, where tin, gold, ivory, pepper, sappan and agila wood, as well as Japanese bar copper, were available.<sup>59</sup> Most of these were goods which the VOC attempted to monopolise, and were thus not available at Malacca for export.

The Malaccan government was expected to use cloth supplied from the Company's stock as a medium of exchange to purchase the local products. Attempts to apply this in the collection of tin were not found very successful and were finally abandoned in the 1730's. This method of trading was much more successful when applied to the gold

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Blagden, JMBPAS, V, i, p.110

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Roselaar, Report, Kol.Arch.1668, p.4



trade to Patapahan, which flourished in the middle of the century. In 1750 '...the sale of the Company's cloth and other commodities forms the basis of the gold trade...'<sup>60</sup> and much stress was placed on the need to supply Siak with the right types of cloth, to suit the tastes of the local people.<sup>61</sup>

But as Malacca's gold trade declined so did the sale of cloth, and by 1777 little or no trade in cloth had been done there for the Company 'for a long time'.<sup>62</sup> Governor De Bruijn summed up the history of the Company's trade in cloth in his 'Memorandum of the Trade of Malacca', written in 1785. He wrote that 'former experience has taught the Company cannot profitably maintain the cloth trade on this coast.... It is...the private traders alone who can prosper by the cloth trade.' He proposed therefore that

your Honours allow the residents of Malacca to buy and sell all sorts and varieties of cloth without exception (including the kinds which the Company reserved to itself alone according to Your Honour's decree of 13 May 1774) on the condition that no goods shall be exported to Batavia, the East Coast of Java, or Cheribon,.... Then, I do not doubt, a good 300,000 Rix dollars worth would come in, and consequently the yield of the customs farm, which draws ten per cent on imports alone, would amount to 30,000 Rds; besides, the greater part would be drawn into the Company's coffers through payments of duty on import and export.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.28

<sup>61</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2858, p.189. Dekker, Report.

<sup>62</sup>

Orgns, Report (1777), p.548

<sup>63</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.60

This plan, which seems to have been a reasonable rationalisation of Malacca's position was not tried, as it conflicted with the VOC's aim of limiting Malacca's trade and centralising commerce at Batavia.<sup>64</sup>

The article next in demand to cloth in the Straits was opium. In the eighteenth century quantities of this drug were imported annually from India. Profits from this trade must have been great, for many merchants carried the drug to the Malay ports and even to Malacca itself, despite constant efforts by the Dutch to prevent its import to the Archipelago except in their own vessels. Marsden recorded that the opium was imported in chests of 140 lbs. each. The chests were purchased on the West Coast of Sumatra for about 300 dollars each, and sold again for five or six hundred. On 'occasions of extraordinary scarcity' opium would sell for its weight in silver, upwards of 3,000 dollars a chest.<sup>65</sup> The naturalist, Jean Koenig, who visited Malacca in 1779, was told that the people of Sumatra would sometimes pay for opium with equal weight of gold.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup>

De Bruijn was not the first member of the Malaccan government to suggest an easing of the restrictions on the cloth trade of the Malacca burgers; previous suggestions had been rejected by the Batavian authorities on the grounds of the harm it would do to the VOC's trade in Java. Batavia to Malacca, 13 June 1765, p.154, and Batavia to Malacca, 1 May 1781, p.541

<sup>65</sup>

Marsden, Sumatra, p.277. The dollars were probably Spanish dollars

<sup>66</sup>

J. Koenig, 'Journal of a Voyage from India to Siam and Malacca in 1779'. JSEBRAS, 26, (1894) p.78

This may have been an exaggeration, but it does illustrate the scale of profits that the trade was thought to yield. The VOC carried on a long and mainly unsuccessful battle to control the import of opium. Dutch guardships patrolling the Malacca Straits were ordered to search any ships or vessels suspected of carrying this drug.<sup>67</sup> If opium was found, the cargo, and sometimes the ship which carried it, was confiscated and sold. The proceeds went to the VOC. Various cases of such confiscation are recorded; in 1712 a vessel belonging to Alexander Hamilton was taken attempting to carry opium to Malacca.<sup>68</sup> The irate Scotsman was unable to gain any recompense for his loss.<sup>69</sup> Judging from the continuing urgency of the orders to suppress this trade, however, the risk of confiscation was not great enough to reduce the amount of opium brought to the Straits by Indian and country traders. In the previous century Dampier had sold opium clandestinely to a 'free-man' in Malacca itself, 'with connivance of the Shabandar.'<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup>

Plakaatboek; See the Index, Vol.XVII, pp.436-9, for a list of the regulations against opium smuggling.

<sup>68</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1706, p.130. GM 25 November 1712

<sup>69</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1723, p.177. GM 26 November 1713. Hamilton's ship was taken at Malacca; it was far more usual for the Dutch to confiscate Asian vessels

<sup>70</sup>

Dampier, Voyages, p.114

Lockyer named a certain Minheir Broenken, a Malacca merchant, as a safe person to whom opium could be sold at Malacca. He recommended caution in the sale of the drug,

for that being a commodity under a particular Prohibition from Governor General and Council of Batavia, it may be seized in their hands, and so bring a Clamour and Noise about one's ears, not easily quieted. The Burger [who received the goods] is fined at the discretion of the Governor in Council, but they will not punish an English merchant otherwise than by embarrassing his affairs, and denying him the privilege of the Port for some time to come<sup>71</sup>

The Company made little profit out of the opium trade in the Straits, and were not even able to prevent traffic between the foreign traders who brought the drug there and small traders from Java, where the VOC was particularly anxious to maintain a monopoly of this trade. In 1745 Governor General Van Imhoff founded the Opium Society, with sole rights of trading in that article in the territories subject to the VOC.<sup>72</sup> This had no effect on the importation of opium to the Straits. In the second half of the century especially, opium was brought in large quantities by English country traders to Riouw, where it was sold to Bugis merchants for tin, pepper, etc. They, in turn, obtained these articles from the local people in exchange for opium and cloth.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup>  
Lockyer, Account, p.68

<sup>72</sup>  
Hall, Southeast Asia, p.312

<sup>73</sup>  
T. Forrest, A Voyage from Calcutta to the Mergui Archipelago, (London, 1792), p.32.  
Also Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.57



Quite early in the seventeenth century the Dutch had established firm control of the Molucca and Banda islands, where nutmegs, mace and cloves were grown. They had also established their authority on the cinnamon-producing island of Ceylon. The Malaccan officials, therefore, faced little competition in their sale of these spices. This trade could not, perhaps, be strictly termed part of the traffic of the Straits, for the spices were not primarily intended for the local market. They were sold to traders en route further east, especially to Manila. In 1678 the Council of the Indies permitted the sale of cloves at Malacca, if they were to be exported to Macao, Manila or China, for 150 rds the picul, 'but they must not be taken to the coast of India, even if the buyer is willing to pay 180 rds...'<sup>74</sup> By the eighteenth century this trade provided a large proportion of Malacca's immediate income. This was largely due to the increase of private trade to the Philippines, the "Manilha Trade", as it was called.

Before 1789, Spanish policies in the Philippines were aimed at the exclusion of all other European merchants, though merchants of Asian origin were freely admitted. This state of affairs was obnoxious to the European merchants, especially the English, for Manila not only offered a profitable market for Indian goods and spices, it was also involved in a thriving trade with China and

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<sup>74</sup>Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i, p.125



and would be a source of Chinese products. More importantly, Mexican silver was annually brought across the Pacific on the famous Manila Galleon.<sup>75</sup> This source of bullion was a great attraction, and it was not left long untouched by European traders in Asia. In the late seventeenth century the English East India Company's servants captured a sizeable share of this traffic by employing Asians, especially Armenians and Portuguese, to captain their ships and act as their agents. In the early eighteenth century English country traders embarked on the trade to Manila, employing the same methods.<sup>76</sup> Cargoes intended for Manila were mainly made up of cloth, but this was supplemented with the purchase of cinnamon, cloves and nutmegs at Malacca. In this way, the VOC was also able to reap some of the profits of the traffic. The free burghers of Malacca were permitted to carry spices to Manila, for which, after 1765 at least, they were expected to pay in silver Spanish dollars.<sup>77</sup>

The traffic with the "Manilha traders" was of great importance in the eyes of the VOC's directors and thus also in those of the Malaccan authorities. Good or bad sales of cinnamon could occasion

<sup>75</sup>

For a description of the Manila Galleon see Richard Walter, Anson's Voyage Round the World, Chapter X. Glamann, Trade, p.58, notes Manila as 'another source of precious metals.,,'

<sup>76</sup>

S.D. Mason, The East India Company's Trade to the Philippines, 1708-62. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Pennsylvania, 1961, p.54

<sup>77</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 25 January 1765

a significant increase or decrease of Malacca's annual income, and the Heeren Zeventien constantly urged that this trade be encouraged in every way possible. In 1733 it was decided to charge Manila traders no anchorage fees.<sup>78</sup> This eagerness to encourage the Manila traders to Malacca could also appear in a desire to maintain peaceful conditions in the Straits, or to prevent the establishment of a rival entrepot where they could obtain similar or alternative goods to the spices bought at Malacca.

Even in the spice trade Malacca was at times faced with competition. Acheh continued to receive supplies, and spices were available to foreign merchants at Riouw for a period around 1713, and after 1760 at Riouw and Selangor quite regularly.<sup>79</sup> These supplies were smuggled from the Moluccas. The quantities were never large enough to adversely affect Malacca's trade, but the very existence of supplies available to English and other foreign merchants was a source of irritation to the Dutch.

Despite the sometimes spectacular profits obtained from the sale of spices (often over 1000 per cent profit on an investment), Malacca was not on the whole a profitable establishment for the Company during the great part of the eighteenth century. It was

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<sup>78</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2157, GM. 7 March 1734, p.4271

<sup>79</sup>

D. Bassett, 'British Trade and Policy in Indonesia, 1760-1772' *BKI*, Vol.120 (1964) pp.198, 205. See also Chapters III and VI below

viewed by the Directors as a last-post<sup>80</sup> for the costs of maintaining the establishment were not covered by the income received there. Nevertheless there was never a suggestion that the post should be abandoned, because of the strategic importance of the Straits to inter-Asian trade.<sup>81</sup> Also, the VOC's system of keeping accounts makes it difficult to see just how Malacca stood in relation to posts in India or even to Batavia. Yearly figures for income and costs between 1700-68, show a continuing loss of between 90,000 and 5,000 guilders, with the exception of a couple of years in the early 1750's. From 1768 on there appears to have been a regular profit.<sup>82</sup> But these figures do not, for instance, take into account the value of tin and gold bought at Malacca but sold elsewhere.

In the 1750's the Malaccan governors disputed the characterisation of Malacca as a last post.<sup>83</sup> The figures sent from Malacca to Holland for the year 1748/9 show a loss of 37324/12 guilders, and a somewhat smaller loss for the preceding

<sup>80</sup>

A lastpost was a "burdomson" or costly, unprofitable establishment - one which did not pay its way

<sup>81</sup>

GM 25 October 1744, p.1435

<sup>82</sup>

See Appendix 1

<sup>83</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 7 November 1751, p.718

three years, but Governor Albinus wrote in his report (1750) that

Malacca can thus be a source of profit to the Company if one concentrates on maintaining it as a well regulated establishment with as little expense as possible. This I have always tried to do, and have so far succeeded that the actual accounts show credit balances of 90.8 guilders for the Fiscal year 1746/7, 2149.18 guilders for 1747/8, and 9,188.12 guilders for 1748/9 from our sales and from the Company's imports (especially the farm of the import and export duties, which has again been rented as from the last day of December). The above figures have been arrived at after deducting incidental expenses connected with passing ships which were no concern of this place, and without considering the cinnamon trade, or those profits which goods shipped from here must certainly have yielded at other ports.<sup>84</sup>

By whatever means Governor Albinus and his successors arrived at the decision that Malacca was making a profit under their government, their superiors would not accept this finding. 'Although Your Excellency believes Malacca makes a profit from the tin and gold and is therefore not a last post, we can by no means accept this until the real profits make good the costs'.<sup>85</sup> Malacca remained a last-post on the books of the Company and in the eyes of the Directors until the end of the 1760's, through almost the whole of the period in the 1750's when there was a thriving trade in gold and tin.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.29

<sup>85</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 7 January, 1751, p.717

<sup>86</sup>

See Appendix 1



On this basis it can be stated that Malacca never made a profit from the sale of goods or from trade. When an improvement did occur it was a result of the great growth in the volume of trade in the Straits, rather than in any improvement of the VOC's traffic at Malacca. There was little expansion in the Company's most profitable trade, the spice trade, during the period, for 300-400 bales of 80 lb. of cinnamon seem to have been the maximum amount sold yearly, and the other goods sold at Malacca were of fairly small consequence; some small amount of Company cloth and so called 'toll-cloth' from the Coromandel merchants, a few European goods, and some foodstuffs. Competition for the important products of the area grew rather than slackened off in the second half of the century as trade to China expanded, and the VOC had little opportunity to increase its own trade in the area. But for the first time Malacca began to realise a profit. As Governor Thomas Schippers remarked,

This seems at first to be a paradox, but the apparent contradiction disappears...when one considers that the sale of goods is at present reduced to nothing, with no indication that any improvement may fairly be anticipated in this respect, whereas trade in these Straits is very busy and will surely continue to be so. Moreover the Company has long abandoned its sales, on which it never made<sup>87</sup> any profit, and only persists with the collection of duties

It persisted to some effect, and that year Malacca showed a profit of 66135/13/8 guilders.

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87

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.31



Since so much of Malacca's income came from tolls paid by ships and vessels using the port, it was a matter of the utmost importance to the Company, as well as to the burghers of Malacca, that private trade should be encouraged by all possible means.<sup>88</sup> The large majority of vessels which visited Malacca belonged to Asian merchants, mostly Chinese, Javanese and Malay, and the 'free-men' or burghers of the VOC's settlements.

The Malacca burghers did not form a particularly large group. In the 1720's they owned 27 small vessels between them.<sup>89</sup> This number fell to ten in a later period. Private merchants never played such a large part in Dutch trade in Asia as they had in Portuguese.<sup>90</sup> But this group were useful as 'retail traders' of the Company's goods in the Straits, and the Malacca government was quick to defend them against the impositions of local princes. The burghers were subjects of the VOC, and their trade was thus severely limited. Lockyer commented that the trade of the burghers and Chinese inhabitants of Malacca 'is under several Restrictions: Particularly, that it be not thought by the Governor and Council to be prejudicial

<sup>88</sup>

Cran's, Report, p.548

<sup>89</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 11 November 1728, p.39; Malacca to Batavia, 9 November 1731, p.27. In 1723 the number fell to 15 (MB 6 November 1732, p.29) In 1737 it had fallen to 12

<sup>90</sup>

Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p.151 and p.179

to the Company's authority'.<sup>91</sup> Their trade was largely restricted to items of little or no interest to the Company, the collection of jungle goods and fish productions, and the distribution of foodstuffs such as rice, salt and sugar, brought from Java or Siam. Cloth bought from the Company or at the public auctions (for the sale of toll - and Company-cloth) at Malacca also figured largely in their cargoes. They went especially to Bengkalis in the Siak River. They were allowed to purchase tin and gold only if it was delivered to the Company at a fixed price, and their traffic in cloth was officially restricted to supplies bought at Malacca. In 1678 the boundaries of their trade had been fixed at Batavia, Johore, Pahang, Asahan, Kampar, Siak, Riouw, Rio Formosa, Muar, Klang, Kedah, Perak, Ujong Salang, and Bengirij.<sup>92</sup>

These restrictions were somewhat relaxed later in the eighteenth century, especially after the changes in Company policy which Governor General Gustave Van Imhoff initiated. His rule from

<sup>91</sup>

Lockyer, *Account*, p.67. The burgers circumvented these restrictions whenever possible, as noted in the above discussion of the opium trade. Dampier describes the free-man who had clandestinely bought his opium, who had two sloops, and either employed them in trading among the Malays for pepper, carrying them such commodities as they wanted, especially opium, or by hiring himself and his sloop to the Dutch Company to go whither they would send him. Burger vessels were often used to reinforce the Company's official guardships. This man had recently been to the Spice Islands for Rice, but preferred to trade on his own behalf with the Malays, 'For though he and other Free men are not suffered to trade for themselves to any places where the Company have factories... yet they could find trade enough nearer home, and by this...pick up a good livelihood.' Dampier, *Voyages*, p.114

<sup>92</sup>

Plakaatboek, Vol.III, (1678), p.10

1743 to 1750 was a period of reform of the VOC's affairs. He believed that if the Company was to recover its prosperity, it must withdraw from the smaller sectors of Asian trade, where it could not compete with independent dealers. He persuaded the Heeren Zeventien to open the inland and sea trade between the Archipelago and India to free burghers and Asian traders resident in the Company's ports. He believed the VOC would benefit from the tolls and duties of this increased trade. However, the trade was still to be restricted; each voyage must begin and end at Batavia, and inter-commerce between other ports was forbidden.<sup>93</sup> The Malacca burghers, therefore, were not greatly benefited, and as Batavian merchants had previously been free to visit Malacca, this trade did not increase greatly as a result.

The merchants who came from Java to trade at Malacca and in the Straits also contributed valuably to Malacca's income. They were also subjects of the VOC, Chinese and Javanese mostly, and subject to controls similar to those placed on Malaccan burghers. They were required to call at Malacca after their trade to the Malayan ports, so that goods which the Company regarded as its own preserve, especially cloth, opium and tin, could not be smuggled back to Java. This aim was not always attained; the Java merchants seem always to have been able to smuggle illicit goods back from the Straits ports.

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93

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.312

A large number of vessels of native merchants, Malay and Chinese or Indian, also called annually at Malacca.<sup>94</sup> These were small vessels, engaged in coastal trading within the Straits, sometimes only manned by one or two men from the rivers of the Malay peninsula. The notables of Johore owned a number of these small trading vessels and were exempted from Malaccan port fees as a courtesy measure.<sup>95</sup> They brought goods gathered from the jungle or the sea, and sometimes tin, and took in exchange cloth or foodstuffs. Mostly they came not from the larger native entrepôts of Riouw, Kedah or Ujung Salang, but from the smaller villages of Bata Baru, Rokan, Muar, Bengkalis, Asahan, etc. Larger non-Company shipping carrying on trade from outside the Straits-Java area was designated 'foreign shipping'. This category included English, Portuguese, Indian (Moorish or Gentu), Armenian and French vessels. Some Danish, Greek and Jewish ships also came to the port from time to time. Very few sizable Chinese junks came to Malacca from Chinese ports (as opposed to the large number of Chinese owned vessels which came from ports within the Archipelago). In the first three or four decades Malacca remained a terminus for some shipping from India. Lockyer wrote that 'they have two or three country ships a year from the

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94

This and the following material on foreign shipping is drawn from the Malacca Customs Books (Boomboeken) which provide an interesting record of the ships and vessels which visited Malacca annually. They include details of destination, home port, cargo size, manpower and armaments of each vessel.

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Blagden, JMBRAS, V, I, p.110



English settlements...<sup>96</sup> and a number of Indian ships still made Malacca the terminus of their yearly voyages. Increasingly, though, Malacca became a stop-over port for longer voyages to China or Manila, and foreign ships did little trade in the port, except in spices and, in the 1760's and 1770's, in tin. Some clandestine trade, and <sup>also</sup> trade in jungle goods and foodstuffs was probably done. This change in Malacca's role underlines the growing importance of European country traders in inter-Asian traffic. These foreign ships were profitable to the Company in terms of the dues they paid, rather than the trade they brought. Apart from ordinary duties and harbour dues, the Malaccan government collected a special anchorage toll from the Portuguese, for passage of the Straits.<sup>97</sup> Cases of Portuguese ships bypassing Malacca without showing their flag in an attempt to avoid this toll were frequent in the first two decades of the century, but the VOC won its point in the 'twenties,<sup>98</sup> and after that time an average 300 rds were received annually from the Portuguese in anchorage dues.

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96

Lockyer, Account, p.66

97

Ibid., 'If one passes by without paying, the next is fined for two, which makes them always liable to, and patient under, a Burthen of their own contriving.'

98

Kol.Arch. 1966, pp.44-5. Van Suchtelen's Report, 1727



At the beginning of this period and for much of the first five decades an average number of 30 'foreign' ships called annually at Malacca. English vessels generally constituted about a third of this number, with Portuguese and Indian vessels next in importance. By the 1760's the number had more than doubled. A large portion of this increased traffic was made up of English vessels both private and Company owned. In 1769 28 English ships called at Malacca. In the following year 38 out of a total 'foreign tally of 53 (198 native vessels arrived in the same year) and in 1776 out of a grand total of 110 'foreign' 87 were English owned.<sup>99</sup>

This great dependence on harbour dues for revenue, which was a permanent feature of Malacca's financial position (though it is more obvious in the later years of the century, when the duties grew sufficiently large to outweigh expenses), must at times have made for a dichotomy of interest between the government at Malacca and their superiors at Batavia. Malacca's prosperity depended, as it always had, on peace and prosperity in the Straits; the Batavian governments aimed at diverting the flow of inter-Asian trade through their own port. One example of this dichotomy appeared in the Batavian authorities' attempts to cut off Chinese trade to Malacca. This trade seems only to have developed in the second half of the century

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<sup>99</sup>

GM 31 December 1769, p.814; GM 31 December 1770, p.1059;  
GM 31 December 1777, p.1408

and never to have been very great.<sup>100</sup> But in 1778 the Governor-General prohibited all Chinese trade to Malacca, and vice versa.<sup>101</sup> Official policy was to concentrate all Chinese trade on the Archipelago at Batavia. Further stipulations against Chinese trade at Malacca brought forth a heated protest from the Malacca burghers, who claimed that if the regulation was enforced it would damage Malacca's prosperity without benefiting Batavia, 'because junks prohibited the Straits will go to Trengganu'.<sup>102</sup>

For the policy of restricting trade at Malacca had probably not benefited Batavia as much as the local Malay and Sumatran ports, the chief of which were Acheh, Riouw, Kedah, Ujang Salang, Selangor and Trengganu. Foreign merchants came in increasing numbers to these places to sell opium and cloth, and obtain cargoes of pepper, spices and tin, which were more often than not, not available at Malacca. The Dutch made spasmodic efforts to curtail this traffic by enforcing monopolistic treaties on local rulers, and patrolling with guardships, but as this discussion of general trade, and the following discussion of the tin trade show, these efforts met with little success.

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The Malacca authorities do not list any Chinese junks among the foreign shipping calling at Malacca in the first half of the century, although Indian shipping is noted. Probably if any junks did come they were of the smaller variety. There is some evidence that small junks came to Malacca early in the century - one from Amoy was intercepted by a Johorese fleet in 1716. Malacca to Batavia, 20 April 1716

101

See Kol.Arch. 3396, 1 May 1778. Blakaathoek, Vol.VIII (1765) p.28. This was strengthened in 1778

102

Kol.Arch. 3446, p.122-6. Malacca to Batavia, 12 February, 1779

## Chapter II - The Tin Trade 1700-1784<sup>1</sup>

When the great expansion of the tin market in the nineteenth century brought a flood of immigration from China to the Malay states, the rich tinfields of the peninsula already had a long history of influence on the development of that area. Prior to the technical advances of recent times the great proportion of tin produced in the peninsula came from the extensive alluvial deposits of the West Coast. This field

begins in Kedah in the North and stretches southwards through the Taiping and Kinta valleys, and then across the Bidor fields in the centre of Perak, and further south again through Ulu Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and western Negri Sembilan, terminating near Port Dickson near Negri Sembilan, and Kuala Linggi on the Malacca coast.<sup>2</sup>

The states of the peninsula were the chief tin producers in the Archipelago until the discovery of the rich deposits at Bangka in 1710. Early in the eighteenth century the west coast state of Perak is reputed to have produced 'more than anywhere else in India'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A version of the chapter has been published under the title "The Tin Trade of the Malay Peninsula during the Eighteenth Century," in The New Zealand Journal of History, Vol. 3, no.1, (1969)

<sup>2</sup> Wong Lin Ken, The Malay Tin Industry to 1914, Tucson, 1962, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton, A New Account p.40

Sixty years later the output of Perak does not seem to have declined, though the mines at Bangka were by then producing great quantities of tin annually. On the contrary, the output of the mainland states seems to have increased as the century progressed, and the market for tin, especially in China, expanded.

At this time the Malays and the immigrant Bugis controlled the production of tin. There is no indication that the Chinese played any large part in tin mining on the Peninsula before the late 1770's, though the Sultan of Palembang invited Chinese miners to the mines on Bangka in 1724.<sup>4</sup> In 1777 the Malacca authorities noted that Chinese miners were working a newly-discovered mine on the mainland of Johore,<sup>5</sup> and in the same year the Dutch representative at Perak persuaded the Sultan to allow Chinese miners to work tin near the Perak River.<sup>6</sup> So for most of the period to be dealt with the mineral was collected by the local people, and most of the profits from its sale were reaped by the chiefs or rulers who controlled the ports and river systems, the highroads of commerce.

The methods employed by the Malays in the production of tin must have been simple. The most common practice would have been

<sup>4</sup> H.R.C. Wright, East Indian Economic Problems, London, 1961, p.298

5

Kol. Arch. 3391, Malacca to Batavia 10/2/1777

6

Kol. Arch. 3387, Malacca to Batavia 20/12/1777



that of washing the deposits from areas around the many streams.<sup>7</sup> There are also many references to the practice of 'digging' for tin, implying that some form of mining existed. These mines may have been similar to those which Crawford saw being worked by the Malays on Bangka in the following century. He describes these as small open cut mines, from which the mineral was obtained by clearing away the shallow layers of topsoil covering the deposit. But perhaps this method was copied from the much more efficient open-cut mining of the Chinese. The latter employed machinery to clear water from the pits, and were thus able to work much larger mines than the Malays, who did not use this water-clearing device. A more correct idea of the type of mining carried out in eighteenth century Malaya is perhaps to be found in Crawford's description of the primitive efforts of the aboriginals of the interior of Bangka, who

mine in the form of a narrow cylindrical shaft, capable of admitting one person only, and, if the bed of ore be found productive, follow it at the risk of their lives under the alluvial strata, which often falls in upon them. They have no water-wheel, no aqueduct. To avoid the accumulation of water, they must always mine on the

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<sup>7</sup> One observer notes the collection of alluvial tin in the mountainous areas after heavy rain had fallen, washing it clear of the soil  
Koenig, JSBRAS, 26, p.80



acclivities of elevated tracts, and, for washing the mineral, it must be conveyed, as it is extracted, to the nearest rivulet. In smelting they use small furnaces...and the common Malay bellows...<sup>8</sup>

Tin mining would appear to have been an unprofitable business, on the most part, for the common people. It was the practice of Malay rulers often to grant the privilege of trading in a certain article to one man, generally an important chief or court favourite, to whom all produce of this article had to be delivered at his own price.<sup>9</sup> Alexander Hamilton believed that the people of Ujong Salang produced less tin than was possible, because they received a very poor return for their labours.<sup>10</sup> Half a century later Thomas Forrest reported that the tin miners of Ujong Salang were still being exploited, now by Chinese smelters who had 'farmed' their privileges from the government.<sup>11</sup>

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John Crawford, History of the Indian Archipelago, Edinburgh, 1820, Vol. III, pp.458-9. See also P. Begbie, The Malay Peninsula, Madras 1834, p.431 for a description of mining at Ujong Salang in the early nineteenth century

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P. N. Tarling, Piracy and Politics in the Malay World, Melbourne, 1963, p.39

10

Hamilton, New Account, p.85

11

Forrest, Mergui, p.39. Dalrymple noted in about 1790 that the annual produce of Kedah was about 1000 piculs (125,000 lbs) but that "this small quantity is not however owing to the scarcity of ore, but to the want of hands and to the few people employed, being badly paid. A. Dalrymple, Oriental Repertory, London, 1793, p.402. Vol. I.

The tin produced in the Malay states had for centuries found a ready market in India and China, as well as in the Archipelago. It was exported to India as early as the fifth century,<sup>12</sup> and twelve centuries later, William Dampier noted that it was 'a very important article in the trade of the Bay of Bengal'.<sup>13</sup> Even before the VOC captured Malacca in 1641 it had become deeply involved in this trade. For tin was always in demand in India; it could be had much cheaper in the Straits 'than anywhere to the Westward of the Nicobar Islands...'<sup>14</sup> The Company was in urgent need of cargoes which could be sold in India, to help obtain much needed specie for the important cloth trade of the Coromandel Coast.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, though tin was not in such great demand in India as spices or bullion, the fact that it enjoyed a steady market there made the Dutch anxious to obtain sizeable amounts of the mineral.<sup>16</sup>

Exports of tin to China appeared to be expanding during this century. By the end of the period it was calculated that some 1,800 tons of the mineral annually arrived at Canton.<sup>17</sup> It was widely used

<sup>12</sup>Wong Lin Ken, 'The Malayan Tin Industry', in K. Tregonning, Papers on Malay History, Singapore, 1962, p.10.

<sup>13</sup>Dampier, Voyages p.118

<sup>14</sup>Lockyer, Account, p.72

<sup>15</sup>Raychaudhuri, Jan Compagnie p.194

<sup>16</sup>S. Arasaratnam, 'The Dutch East India Company and its Coromandel Trade, 1700-1740', B.K.I. Vol.123, (1967), p.342

<sup>17</sup>Milburn and Thornton; Commerce, Vol.II p.314

there in religious ceremonies in which sacred papers attached to thinly beaten tinfoil were burnt. But the increase in Chinese tin consumption was probably due rather to the growing practice of lining tea-chests with tinfoil, than to a sudden resurgence of religious zeal.<sup>18</sup> As tea drinking grew fashionable in Europe, more of the plant was exported from China, and an increasing number of European traders ventured to Canton. They encountered a problem similar to that which the Dutch and other European merchants had already met with in India, namely, how to find alternative goods to bullion which could be readily and profitably sold in China. Once again tin was found to be an acceptable item, more especially as it could be obtained en route from India to China in the Straits of Malacca. The trade between the Straits of Malacca and China consequently grew in importance during the eighteenth century; indeed in the 1770s a French naval captain was so struck by the value of this tin trade to the VOC that he remarked that this was the only traffic that still brought the Dutch Company any profit.<sup>19</sup>

Malayan tin had also found markets outside Asia by this time. During the seventeenth century the Dutch had begun to export the mineral to Europe. A large amount was used in the production of

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18

E. S. Hedges, Tin in Social and Economic History, London, 1964, p.93-4.

19

P. Sonnerat, Voyages aux Indes Oriental et à la Chine, Calcutta, 1788, p.23

alloyed metals, brass and pewter, from which a variety of goods, not least household items, were manufactured. The VOC's directors found tin a very suitable ballast for their homeward-bound vessels, many of which carried light cargoes of spices and cloth, and the mineral could be sold profitably in Europe. Malaccan tin first appeared on the list of sales at the VOC's auctions in Amsterdam in 1667-8,<sup>20</sup> and regularly thereafter. The directors of the English East India Company complained that the Dutch were trying to glut Europe with tin,<sup>21</sup> and in 1637 the London Pewterers' Guild expressed their fear that the Dutch would capture the important export trade in pewter entirely, with the aid of cheap tin from the Indies.<sup>22</sup> Though such fears proved groundless, the directors of the VOC continued to sell large quantities of Malaccan tin in Europe, and their agents at Malacca were especially charged to collect between 100,000 and 400,000 lbs of tin annually for the European market.

Changes were also taking place in the makeup of the body of merchants employed in the tin trade in Asia during this period. Formerly the bulk of these had been natives of China or India. Now the proportion of Europeans taking part in this trade grew as the century progressed. They were not only servants in the employ of one

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Glamann, Trade, p.19

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Thomas Bowrey, A Geographical Account of the Countries around the Bay of Bengal, Cambridge, 1903, p.280, see footnote no.1

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Hedges, Tin, p.85

of the great trading companies; many were drawn from the ranks of the 'country traders', engaged in piecemeal inter-Asian trade, and increasingly plying the route between India and China. The rulers of the VOC had hoped to monopolise the output of tin in the peninsula to the exclusion of other purchasers from their stronghold at Malacca. In pursuit of this aim the authorities at Malacca were instructed to secure treaties with the rulers of the neighbouring states, which were to grant to the VOC, among other commercial advantages, exclusive rights to all the tin produced in the area. Even at the height of the Dutch Company's power in the late seventeenth century, this policy did not meet with much success. Half of the produce of Perak was sent to Aceh, where it was bought by foreign merchants, and many Chinese junks still visited Johore. In 1678 Perak and Kedah had merely contracted to deliver a half of their tin to the Company, and only Bengirij, a small dependency of Siam in the north-west of the peninsula, had promised its entire output.<sup>23</sup>

Malaccan officials soon learnt, moreover, that though they regarded such treaties as binding indefinitely, the Malay rulers seldom looked on them as more than a temporary expedient.<sup>24</sup>

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Blagden, *JMBRAS*, V, i, p.134

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*Ibid.* p.134. 'The contracts made by kings, regents and princes of the places named here have seldom been carried out by them...'



Contracts for the delivery of a season's produce at an agreed price were commonly drawn up between the prince of a port, who was often also the chief merchant, and visiting traders, but the annual delivery of their tin at a fixed price,<sup>25</sup> to the exclusion of all other purchasers, was another matter. The Malaccan authorities attempted to enforce these contracts by sending 'guardships' to patrol the Straits, and cruise about the ports of offending rulers.<sup>26</sup> These ships confiscated 'contraband' tin from the outcoming vessels and interfered with trade to a varying degree. In 1647 the VOC tried to prevent Indian merchants from visiting the 'tin places', by refusing them any passes for the journey. (The Dutch had taken over from the Portugese a system of trying to control the flow of trade by issuing safeguards or 'passes' to vessels whose journeys they approved, which removed these vessels from the hazard of being molested by Dutch ships.)<sup>27</sup> Efforts were also made to stop Chinese junks from visiting the area.<sup>28</sup> Denial of European ships was often a more delicate operation, as the Company had to tailor its policies at any given time to affairs in Europe. It was hoped that these

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D. Beckman, 'A voyage to and From the Island of Borneo in the East Indies,' in Pinkerton's Voyages, London, 1808, Vol.XI, p.117

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Dampier, Voyages, p.113

27

Raychaudhuri, Jan Compagnie, p.123

28

Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i, p.187

difficulties could be overcome by binding native rulers not to allow any foreign merchants to enter their ports.<sup>29</sup> None of these attempts had met with any notable success at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

By 1700, on the contrary, the VOC had perforce altered its ambitions with respect to the tin trade, and Malaccan governments were struggling to collect the amounts of tin required for Batavia, the Coromandel Coast and Europe. When in 1678 Governor Balthasar Bort had written from Malacca that the Dutch had 'no one to fear in the Straits', among the native principalities, the amount of tin received from Perak alone had annually totalled 450,000 lbs.<sup>30</sup> By 1700 the total annual collection was scarcely a ninth of this. In the three years and two months during which Bernard Phoonsen governed Malacca only 190,899½ lbs were received in all.<sup>31</sup> His successors did little better. Governor Bolnar received only 282,716 lbs between January 1704 and March 1707,<sup>32</sup> Governor Pieter Rooselaar only 221,134½ lbs from then until October 1709.<sup>33</sup> At this time Malacca was practically

<sup>29</sup>

Ibid, p.149

<sup>30</sup>

Ibid, p.134

<sup>31</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1569, p.3. Governor Phoonsen's Report on Malacca, 1704

<sup>32</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1636, p.112. Governor Bolnar's Report on Malacca, 1707

<sup>33</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1668, p.6. Governor Rooselaar's Report on Malacca, 1709

the only source of tin available to the VOC.<sup>34</sup> The tin discovered on Bangka was not made available to the Dutch Company until 1722, when a treaty was concluded with the Sultan of Palembang.<sup>35</sup> The increased amount of tin brought to Malacca in the years 1710 and 1711, a total of 353,566½ lbs, may have reflected increased quantities of the mineral available after the mines on Bangka had opened.<sup>36</sup> But after a sojourn of six years as Governor of Malacca, William Moerman wrote in 1717 that although

the collection of a great quantity of tin was yearly charged by the High Government, 100,000 to 150,000 lbs of that mineral being required by the Fatherland (Holland) alone, still to my regret it has never been possible to satisfy that demand...much less to be able to obtain any amount over for the Indian trade...<sup>37</sup>

despite an increase in the price paid for tin after 1714. A new price of 38 rds instead of the previous 36 rds was now paid for each bahar of 375 Dutch lbs of tin delivered to the Company.

<sup>34</sup>

Some tin was available from Siam at this time.

<sup>35</sup>

Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. 4, p.539

<sup>36</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1702, p.157, Governor Six's Report on Malacca, 1711

<sup>37</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1787, p.69, Governor Moerman's Report on Malacca, 1717

Thus throughout the first two decades of the century the Malaccan officials found it impossible to compete successfully with their Asian and European rivals for Malayan tin though they required it for several branches of their trade. When there were Chinese junks in the native ports the Dutch could get no tin.<sup>38</sup> In 1711 Chinese merchants, who paid 50 to 55 rds for a bahar of tin, bought between three and nine thousand bahar, 'and shipped it to their homeland'.<sup>39</sup> The VOC had already learnt in the previous century the difficulty, if not impossibility, of competing with Indian merchants,<sup>40</sup> who brought with them cloth which they sold at a price far below that charged by the Dutch. Some of the larger Indian traders even set up agents to buy tin on their behalf in Kedah and Perak, leaving little to anyone else but the Johorese.<sup>41</sup>

The Johorese Sultanate was at that time the most influential Malay power in the area. Heir to the conquered Malaccan Empire, its territories stretched from the Selangor and Linggi river basins north of Malacca, to the southern tip of the peninsula, excluding about nine miles of coast surrounding the Dutch stronghold. Pahang <sup>and Trengganu</sup> k

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Kol. Arch. 1635, p.114, Eolnar, Report

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Kol. Arch. 1702, p.159, Six, Report

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W. Ph. Coolhaas, Generale Missiven van Gouvernor-Generale en Raaden aan Heeren XVII der VOC, The Hague, 1964. Vol.II, p.314

41

Kol. Arch. 1668, p.7, Rooselaar, Report



on the eastern coast, the many islands of the Riouw Linga archipelago, and the basin of the Siak River in Sumatra, were also included in the Kingdom of Johore.

These territories covered most of the important tin places, and the notables of Johore were very much involved in the trade, to the dissatisfaction of the Dutch. In 1678 the shahbandar of that state had attempted to divert into his own hands deliveries of tin from the Siak River, which had been destined for Malacca.<sup>42</sup> The Malaccan government thought the solution to this competition had been found when Johore, weakened by wars with Jambi and suffering from internal troubles, finally concluded a commercial treaty with the VOC in 1689. Among other trading privileges in the territories of Johore, the Dutch gained a 'duty free monopoly trade in cloth, cash, tin and gold on the River of Siak.'<sup>43</sup> But on the eve of the next century a new sultan came to power, and repudiated the treaty. By 1700 the Johorese were again very active in the tin trade, and their competition was irksome to the Malaccan government. For

the tin places of Siac, Benkalis, Slangoor and Calang are all the territories of Johoor, so that the subjects hold that mineral to deliver it to their overlords, especially the Dato Bendahara, the Laxamana, and the Raja Indra Dongsu, who are the greatest

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42

Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i., p.133

43

Netscher, Djohor, p.38



participants in this (trade), who dispose of it with good profit to the Chinese merchants who come yearly to Johoor, and to the English.<sup>44</sup>

Strong competition was also provided by the English, Portuguese and Danish merchants.<sup>45</sup> The Dutch were unable to contend with this competition. In 1704 the governor of Malacca advocated that the price of tin be increased, and that the town be supplied with more well-equipped guardships, to patrol the Straits 'as of old'.<sup>46</sup> These proposals were both rejected. A price rise did not occur until 1714; an attempt to outbid other purchasers for tin was not considered a feasible policy by the government of the VOC. More ships could not be sent to Malacca at this time as the Company was at war in Java and India.<sup>47</sup> No other measures were undertaken to increase the amount of tin brought to Malacca. In 1713, however, Johore was forced into a new treaty with the VOC, and though the Dutch had not sought this primarily because of the harm that was being done to their tin trade, still they stipulated in the new agreement that 'Djohor shall not prevent the sale of tin to Malacca for 36 rds the bahar'.<sup>48</sup> This was an attempt to stop the ruler of

<sup>44</sup> Kol. Arch. 1636, p.112. Bolnar, Report.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Kol. Arch. 1569, p.3. Phoonsen, Report and Kol. Arch. 1787 Hoernan, Report, 1717.

<sup>47</sup>

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.307

<sup>48</sup>

G. M. 26th November 1713, and Netscher, Djohor, p.46

Johore forcing his subjects to bring the tin they mined to his capital for sale, rather than to Malacca. The latter, however, avoided ratifying this treaty until 1715, and in effect never complied with it. In 1716 the notables of Johore were buying tin for between 47 and 49 rds per bahar and re-selling it to the Chinese for 60 - 65 rds the bahar.<sup>49</sup> The Dutch considered using force to put an end to this defiance, but Malacca was not strong enough to move against Johore on its own, and again the central government could not spare the necessary forces.<sup>50</sup>

However, Johore was torn by internal rebellions in 1718 and the resulting disruption of that state's trade greatly benefited the VOC. For over a decade the annual tin collection of Malacca had not risen much above the total of 53,210 lbs received in 1716.<sup>51</sup> But the next year the amount almost tripled, totalling in all 149,086 lbs.<sup>52</sup> In 1719 this figure had risen to 383,300 lbs,<sup>53</sup> and during the next five years Malacca commonly sent between 300,000 and 400,000 lbs of tin to Batavia annually.<sup>54</sup> It was the first time that century that Malacca had received even enough tin to satisfy the requirements of the European market.

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Malacca to Batavia, 20th January 1716, p.64

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Malacca to Batavia, 12th August, 1714, pp.146-9

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Malacca to Batavia, 5th August, 1716, p.96

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G.M. 30th November 1717, p.179

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G.M. 5th January, 1720, p.1134

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Kol.Arch. 1966, p.36. Governor Van Suchleten's Report on Malacca, 1727

The Batavian government recognised that this improvement was not due to any effort on their part. Though they had authorised another increase in the price to be paid for tin in 1718, they felt that 'the disturbances in Johore account for most contributions'.<sup>55</sup> The Raja Muda of Johore, who had ruled since 1709, had been overthrown by a rebellious group of Minangkabau from Siak and enemies from his own court.<sup>56</sup> Even before this rebel uprising, the Raja Muda had been confronted with a hostile group of immigrants who had seized the territories of Linggi and Selangor. They were Bugis from the kingdom of Boni in Celebes, an enterprising and very warlike group who sought to win a place in the profitable tin trade.<sup>57</sup>

Soon after the Bugis had arrived in the Straits they had begun carrying tin to Malacca in the hope of exchanging it for powder and shot.<sup>58</sup> They were interlopers in the established cycle of the tin trade, with no sure access to ports and markets. Having defied the power which controlled a large proportion of the traffic, Johore, they had to fight both physically and commercially to establish themselves. The Dutch represented both a ready and convenient market,

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Batavia to Malacca, 22nd July 1718

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See Chapter III below

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See Chapter IV below

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G. M. 30th November 1716

and a prospective ally. In 1718 the Bugis brought a total of 143,338 lbs of tin to Malacca.<sup>59</sup> Their leader Daing Marewa promised to deliver all the tin of Selangor to the VOC.<sup>60</sup> The Malaccan governor believed that although Daing Marewa

at present delivers most of Selangor's tin to the Company, as he has no better market... (he) will fulfill his promise ...only until he can get a better profit somewhere else...<sup>61</sup>

His opinion was soon borne out by events. Taking advantage of the continuing disruption of Johore the Bugis seized power in the state and placed their own 'puppet king', the young son of the previous Sultan, on the throne there. In return, they gained a predominant role in the government of Johore. Daing Marewa became Raja Muda, and other important offices went to Bugis captains.<sup>62</sup> The Bugis were now absorbed into the old order, and their deliveries of tin to the VOC rapidly dwindled. During the whole year 1726-7, the Malacca customs books have no record of any tin delivered by Bugis.<sup>63</sup> Certainly the latter had no need to rely on the Malaccan

<sup>59</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 30th January 1718

<sup>60</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 28th September 1718, pp.7-8

<sup>61</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 28th September 1718

<sup>62</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, p.59

<sup>63</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 31st January 1727, and 10th November 1727

market in the following decade, for trade at Riouw flourished once more.<sup>64</sup> The Malacca government renewed their complaints that the frequent visits of foreign European merchants, especially English, to Riouw, damaged their efforts to collect tin.<sup>65</sup>

Largely as a result of these developments the authorities of the VOC at Malacca were again finding it difficult to collect the amounts of tin required for the Netherlands and markets in India by 1727.<sup>66</sup> An additional handicap to the efforts of the Malaccan government lay in the orders issued by the Governor-General in 1723 that in future no more than 36 rds the bahar was to be given for tin.<sup>67</sup> The deliveries, which had amounted to 300,000 and 400,000 lbs a year in the early 'twenties, soon fell off. The decision of the central government of the VOC to reduce the price of tin in the midst of such success would be difficult to explain, if Malacca's trade alone was involved. But that town was a mere link in the complicated chain of the VOC's trade, and its interests must be subordinated to what was felt to be the good of the whole. In 1722 the Company had concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Palembang which gave it a

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H. Overbeck, 'Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis'. JMBRAS, Vol. IV, iii, (1926) p.366

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Kol. Arch. 2238, p.97. Governor De Chavonnes' Report on Malacca, 1736

66

G.M. 5th April 1739

67

Kol. Arch. 1966, p.36 Van Suchtelen, Report, 1727.



monopoly of the tin produced on Bangka. This was to be delivered at a cheaper rate than Malaccan tin.<sup>68</sup> This new arrangement, coinciding as it did with the large annual deliveries at Malacca, must have tempted the Batavian government to try lessening costs at Malacca.

It was soon apparent that Malacca was not able to attract adequate supplies of tin at this reduced price, and attempts to cut costs were abandoned. By 1733 the Malaccan price had returned to 40 rds the bahar, and in the following years it climbed steadily higher. By 1745 the VOC was paying up to 48 rds the bahar for Malayan tin. The China market was expanding, and the central government was more anxious than ever to obtain large supplies of tin, which was 'a highly regarded ballast for all Europeans to Europe and China... and gives a profit of 30-35% despite the heightening of prices'.<sup>69</sup> New attempts were made to stimulate deliveries. The old policy of paying for tin with cloth (which the Malays could obtain more cheaply from Indian and country merchants) was completely abandoned, and instead the Malaccan officials were authorized to pay in the currency requested by the seller, rather than in that which was most advantageous to the Company. The most popular coin in the Straits at that time was the silver Spanish Dollar or Reaal of Eight, worth about 4/6d sterling. It was used

<sup>68</sup>

As footnote 35. See Wright, Economic Problems, pp.298-9

<sup>69</sup>

G. M. 31st December 1745, p.3060

throughout Asia, and supplies were needed for all branches of the VOC's trade. For this reason the Company's rulers had been unwilling to allow payment in this coin, if it could be avoided.<sup>70</sup> They had attempted to use a form of copper 'paijment' for this purpose, but the Asian traders were not eager to accept this. But these concessions failed to attract more tin to Malacca, and supplies there declined steadily during the 1730s and early 1740s.

When Gustave Van Imhoff became Governor-General in 1743 he brought new vigour to the government of Batavia. Either directly or indirectly his rule stimulated the efforts of the Malaccan government to capture a larger role in the tin trade for the VOC. The Malaccan authorities proposed 'to get a contract with Linggi, which has often been plundered by pirates...to deliver all their tin to the Company at a fixed price...',<sup>71</sup> presumably in return for protection from the pirates. The people of Linggi appear to have considered the cure worse than the disease, and turned down the offer. The new governor, W. B. Albinus, was more successful in his efforts, however, and in 1746 he concluded a treaty with the Malay state of Perak. The Raja of Perak agreed that all the country's tin was to be delivered to the Dutch at the fixed price of 34 Spanish Reals (about 42 rds per bahar).<sup>72</sup> The

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Glamann, Trade, p.50

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G.M. 31st December 1743

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Corpus Diplomaticum. Vol.5, p.430

Governor-General ordered the reoccupation of the old VOC fort on the Dindings islands, near the mouth of the Perak River, but soon re-directed the garrison up-stream to a position on the river, where a stone fort was built.<sup>73</sup>

The conclusion of this treaty marked a turning point in the VOC's attempts to secure a significant proportion of the tin produced in Malaya. Its results were soon visible in the greatly increased amounts of tin which Malacca received. Governor Albinus described this improvement as he prepared to leave Malacca in 1750.

As a result of these arrangements I had the satisfaction last year of not only completely fulfilling the requirements of the home country and the Indies to the amount of 420,250 lbs (that is, 200,250 lbs for the Netherlands, 200,000 lbs for China and 20,000 lbs for Surat) but also of being able to send 100,125 lbs to Batavia, thus making a total of 520,375 lbs. Furthermore, out of the residue at present available in the go-downs here and in Perak, together with that which has been contracted for in the hinterlands, it will be easy to find the required amount for China, which has been fixed at an amount equal to the annual shipment to Batavia.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 18th August 1746, p.418

<sup>74</sup>

Harrison, JMRAS, VII, i, (1954) p.26-7

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<sup>73</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 18th August 1746, p.418

<sup>74</sup>

Harrison, JMERAS, VII, i, (1954) p.26-7

The governor believed that Malacca's tin trade now depended mainly upon Perak, and that success or failure in this sphere hung on the Company's continued good relations with that state.

The VOC had had earlier treaties with Perak, and had learnt to be wary in their dealings with that state. In the seventeenth century the state had been the major supplier of tin to Malacca, but the arrangement had been forced on the people of Perak, and they complied with it reluctantly. Twice in forty years, in 1651 and again in 1690, Dutch garrisons stationed near the mouth of the Perak River had been massacred by the Malays of Perak.<sup>75</sup> The post had been abandoned after the second of these onslaughts, and Malacca had made no effort to renew contact with this troublesome state until the 1746 treaty was negotiated.<sup>76</sup> The willingness of the Raja of Perak at this time, not only to renew the old commercial privileges of the VOC, but even to allow the Dutch to build and occupy a stone fort within his territory, reflect the desire to win an ally against a more feared enemy. The growing power of the Bugis in the Straits area was cause

<sup>75</sup>

Dampier, *Voyages*, p.117. W. E. Maxwell, 'The Dutch in Perak', *JSBRAS*, No.8, (1882) pp.245-268

<sup>76</sup>

The ruler of Perak made overtures to the Company through the Malacca government in 1710 to renew trade with his state, but in view of the treacheries of the past, and the failure of the Perak ruler to pay his debt to the VOC, this led to nothing. *Malacca to Batavia*, 11th July 1710, p.734-5.



enough for the Perak ruler to feel insecure. The immigrants now appeared to be firmly in control of Riouw, Selangor and Linggi, and were as eager as the Dutch to control the tin mining areas on the peninsula. Soon after their triumph in Johore they had interfered in the affairs of Kedah, and in 1743 they had attacked Perak.<sup>77</sup> The Malay factions of the peninsula were beginning to regard the Malacca government as an ally in the struggle against Bugis domination, and it was in this spirit that the Raja of Perak promised that the tin of his country should be delivered to the Dutch.<sup>78</sup> Even so, Dutch relations with Perak in the four decades after the 1746 treaty were not always easy. On several occasions it appeared that the influence of the Bugis or the neighbouring ruler of Kedah would prevail against the supporters of the alliance with the VOC in Perak.<sup>79</sup> But these factions did not succeed in estranging the Company and the rulers of Perak; the Dutch retained their advantage, and renewed their treaty with Perak in 1753, 1759, 1765 and again in 1773.<sup>80</sup> On the last occasion they even induced the Raja to accept a reduction of 2 Spanish Reaals per bahar on the price

<sup>77</sup>

G. M. 5th April 1743, p.1745 Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu, p.28

<sup>78</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, p.62 et alia

<sup>79</sup>

See Chapters V and VI below pp.199, 223.

<sup>80</sup>

Corpus Diplomaticum Vol.6, pp.1-2; (1753) 182-3 (1759); 255-8 (1765); 377-9 (1773).

of tin.<sup>81</sup> The factory on the Perak river was maintained, despite the complaints of the Batavian government about the heavy costs it incurred,<sup>82</sup> until it was sacked by the English during the fourth Anglo-Dutch war in 1781<sup>83</sup>. It was re-established after the peace.

Still the Malacca officers had not been content to rely on Perak for their tin supplies, promising as this arrangement appeared to be. Governor Albinus had also spoken of the importance of obtaining supplies from the Malaccan hinterland, from the Malays of Naning and Rembau, judging this source to be second only to Perak.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, in 1759 a Malaccan governor argued that the tin of those areas was finer and less mixed with dirt and other impurities than that of Perak. Trade with these states, he maintained, was much more convenient and advantageous to Malacca than the trade with Perak, as the inhabitants of these neighbouring places could bring their tin down river to the fortress, and this new traffic would also be profitable to the small traders of Malacca. This trade could be secured if permission was granted to pay the people of Naning and Rembau an extra 4 rds per bahar for their tin. Then they would no longer smuggle it to Selangor for sale to the

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Governor Crans' Report on Malacca, 1777 p.546

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Batavia to Malacca, 30th April 1771, p.23

83

Kol. Arch. 3517, Report on the capture of the post at Perak by the English, written at Malacca, 25th February 1782

84

Harrison, JMBRAS, VII, i, p.27

English.<sup>85</sup> A new treaty was made with Rembau in 1764, but tin continued to be smuggled from there to Selangor.<sup>86</sup> Relations between the chiefs of Rembau and the Bugis ruler of Selangor must have deteriorated by the end of the 1770's, for a further treaty was drawn up between the VOC and Rembau in 1779, and at that time the Company was receiving steady, if small, supplies of tin from Malacca's hinterland.<sup>87</sup>

Tin was also brought from the southern states of Siam, especially Ujong Salang,<sup>88</sup> where it was often available at a low price. In 1752 the Company was presented with the opportunity of establishing a monopoly trade with the small state of Tavoy, just north of Ujong Salang. The ruler of this state wrote to the Malaccan government that his lands, which had been a dependency of the court of Ava, had become independent during the recent wars in that State, and wanted to maintain its freedom. Tavoy offered the VOC a monopoly of its trade in return for protection. The state 'would

<sup>85</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2858, p.189. Dekker, Report; Also Malacca to Batavia, 13th June, 1765

<sup>86</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3387; Malacca Government to the Penghulu of Rembau, 30/11/1777

<sup>87</sup>

Corpus Diplomaticum Vol. VI, pp.424-8 (1779). See Kol. Arch. 3474 pp. 32 and 34, Malacca to Batavia 14th February 1780

<sup>88</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 31st May 1773, p.25

deliver yearly 3,000 bahars of tin, together with cardamon and rice, and a good profit could be made on the following; Chinese and Bengal silks, iron, anna tanagrova, porcelain, Chinese paper and various cloths.<sup>89</sup> The Batavian government was tempted to accept this offer, and a commission was sent to Tavoy in 1753, but they found that the king of Tavoy had already entered into an agreement with the English.<sup>90</sup>

In contrast to the situation in the first half of the century, after 1746 large supplies of tin were collected annually by the Malacca government. There is no immediately obvious reason for this boom in the tin trade. Officials at Malacca could find no explanation for the sudden ease with which they were able to satisfy the Batavian government's requirements.<sup>91</sup> It was possibly a result of the first appearance of Chinese miners on the peninsula. More deposits of the mineral may have been opened, or a new method of extraction put into practice. Unfortunately no mention of any such

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Kol. Arch. 2629, pp.4-5. Malacca to Batavia, 5th April 1752

90

C. N. 30th December 1753, p.448. The Tavoy treaty was probably with a private English trader

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The Malacca government apparently only suggested that the increase might be due to a decrease in the English demand for tin. The central government assured them that 'English sales of tin in China leave little doubt of their success in the tin trade.'  
Batavia to Malacca, 13th June 1765, p.157

developments has been recorded either by the Malay chroniclers, whose interests lay in the courts and doings of the royal families; or by the Malaccan authorities, who were interested in the finished product, not the methods of production. But the output of the tin mines had unquestionably increased. The Malaccan authorities found themselves almost embarrassed by the amounts they were able to collect during the 1760s. In 1762 the amount collected leapt to 831,420 lbs, after a higher price had been offered for tin to the merchants of Linggi and Rembau.<sup>92</sup> In 1767-8 the deliveries temporarily decreased, dropping to 339,926½ lbs but this was caused by the smuggling activities of one Penghulu Boton of Perak, who was exporting quantities of the mineral to Kedah. A commissioner was sent to the King of Perak and the matter was soon put to rights.<sup>93</sup> The collection was so good that the Batavian government regretted their contract to purchase Perak's tin, when it could be got cheaper from Ujong Salang and Bangka.<sup>94</sup> Orders were sent at this time to limit the purchase of tin at Malacca. In 1763 1,138,134½ lbs had been sent to Batavia. This drew the reply that, although the contract stated that the Company must accept all Perak's tin, the Malaccan officers were not to receive more, and rather less, than 500,000 lbs. A considerable amount of the mineral was being

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92

G. M. 18th October 1762, p.26

93

G. M. 20th October 1771, p.514

94

G. M. 20th October 1772, p.44



collected in Palembang, and 'most must be got rid of in China'; little profit was to be had from its sales to India or Europe.<sup>95</sup> However, the market in China was undoubtedly good; in 1766 a picul of tin was fetching 15 taels, compared with 11 taels in 1747-8.<sup>96</sup> Tin had superseded pepper in the trade to China, and by the 1790's was next only to opium in that trade.<sup>97</sup> The Malaccan government soon found that what was not acceptable at Batavia could be sold very profitably to the foreign merchants who called at Malacca en route to China to provision and refit their vessels. Any attempt to prevent the purchase of tin by foreign merchants was obviously useless when it was freely available at Ujong Salang, Kedah, Riouw and the other Malay ports.

For one result of this great improvement was that after 1760 permission was granted to sell tin at Malacca.<sup>98</sup> Previously all supplies had been reserved for shipment to Batavia, China or India. Merchants passing the Straits who sought a cargo of tin to take to

<sup>95</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 3rd August 1764, p.581

<sup>96</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3542, p.19. C. F. Noble ; Voyage to the East Indies in 1747 and 1748, London, 1762, p.318; and R. Stevens, The Complete Guide to the East Indian Trade, London 1766, p.112. By 1783 tin was fetching between 20 and 25 taels per picul on the Chinese market.

<sup>97</sup>

C. N. Parkinson, Trade in the Eastern Seas, London, 1937, p.355

<sup>98</sup>

Realia, Vol.II, p.187

China had had to obtain it at one of the Malay ports, or detour to Batavia.<sup>99</sup> As the trade with China grew in the second half of the century, these became much more numerous, and provided a large market for Malaccan tin. This traffic proved to be very lucrative, and Malaccan revenues benefited not only from the actual profits of the sale of tin, but also from the increase in customs and harbour dues which occurred. The central government encouraged this profitable traffic. In 1773 they sent instructions to Malacca to 'continue to sell tin at a profit of 26 per cent to the private traders.'<sup>100</sup>

However, Malacca was not the only port to benefit from the increased trade, and large quantities of tin were being shipped from the native states, despite the improved supplies of the Dutch. Though the VOC had monopolistic treaties with Selangor and Linggi, the trade of the English and other foreign merchants, who brought opium and Indian cloth to these ports in exchange for tin, continually increased. Kedah and Riouw were also flourishing. It was certainly not a decrease in the amount of tin being carried away from the Straits by the English, that made it possible to collect large supplies of tin at this time. The Batavian government pointed out that the amount of tin sold by the English in China was evidence that they continued to buy large quantities of the

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Noble, *Voyage*, p.318

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*Realia*, Vol.II, p.187

mineral.<sup>101</sup> In 1777 English traders exported an estimated 501,250 lbs from Riouw alone, and in the following year carried another 237,500 lbs from that port.<sup>102</sup> English merchants paid around 40 Spanish Reaals, or 55 rds, for a bahar of tin, and were by 1780 loading more tin, so the Malaccan authorities believed, than the Chinese junks;<sup>103</sup> though the latter and the Indians continued to carry large amounts of tin from the Straits each year.

The Bugis had greatly enlarged their own role in this trade. During the last four decades of the century they became the major collectors and distributors of tin in the Archipelago. They controlled the tin places of Linggi and Selangor, and their influence extended to many other areas. Before Ujong Salang became involved in the wars of Siam and Burma, and its trade consequently dwindled, the Bugis had carried on a very important trade on the island. They exchanged opium and cloth, brought to Riouw by English and Indian traders, for tin, often waiting many weeks to receive a full cargo, and giving payment on credit while the mineral was collected. Then they returned to Riouw with their cargo of tin, and sold it to the English for yet more cloth and opium.<sup>104</sup> By the 1770's most of the tin exported from Riouw came from Bangka rather

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101

Batavia to Malacca, 13th June 1765, p.157

102

G. M. 31st December 1779

103

Batavia to Malacca, 30th June 1780, p.650

104

Milbury and Thornton; Commerce, p.292. Forrest, Merqui, pp.32-3

than from the states of the peninsula, for Selangor was now a port in its own right.<sup>105</sup> Tin was smuggled to the Bugis port despite Dutch treaties with both Palembang and Johore. It was bought for 36 Spanish reals from Bangka and sold at Riouw for 40 or more Spanish reals.<sup>106</sup>

By 1777 it was becoming apparent that the favourable conditions of the 1760's might not last long, as far as Malacca was concerned. In 1776/7 the amount of tin collected at Malacca fell to 422,605½ lbs,<sup>107</sup> nearly 80,000 lbs less than the stipulated limit of 500,000 lbs. At first the Malacca government blamed the declining trade on 'the exceptional and overlong drought in Pera.' This had brought about a scarcity of grain there, and caused the labourers in the tin mines 'to seek their sustenance elsewhere.'<sup>108</sup> The Batavian authorities were more inclined to believe that the fall off in trade was connected with the ever-increasing English trade at Riouw and Selangor.<sup>109</sup> In 1778 a further decline (the collection amounted to only 394,511 lbs), forced the Malacca government to agree that the cause of this reverse must lie in the large

<sup>105</sup>

G. M. 31st December, 1779, p.1098

<sup>106</sup>

G. M. 31st December, 1779, p.1098

<sup>107</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 11th June 1778, p.296

<sup>108</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3387, Malacca to Batavia, 20th December 1777

<sup>109</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 30th June 1779, p.665



export by the English.<sup>110</sup> The central government withdrew their permission to sell tin at Malacca as supplies threatened to become scarce again.<sup>111</sup> In 1779 the Sultan of Perak began to agitate for an increase in the price paid by the Company for tin. A price increase was granted for tin from Rembau, at least, and in 1780 the collection increased slightly, to 437,153<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> lbs.<sup>112</sup> In 1781, however, Malacca's tin trade was dealt a hard blow when their post in the Perak River was sacked by an English force during the fourth Anglo-Dutch War. Only 117,568<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> lbs tin were received in 1781/2.<sup>113</sup>

In this situation the Dutch were finally moved to make another attempt to curtail the trade of the Bugis, who were the chief suppliers of tin to the English. The VOC had tried in 1756 to combat the growing power of this group, with no success. Now once more Bugis activities were injuring Dutch trade. The VOC's treaties with both Palembang and Johore were being disregarded. First it was hoped that, with the co-operation of the Sultan of Palembang, Riouw's supplies of tin from Bangka could be cut off.<sup>114</sup> But this tactic failed, and in 1783, while the English were

<sup>110</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3446, p.50. Malacca to Batavia, 12th February 1779

<sup>111</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 24th June 1777, p.405

<sup>112</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3474, p.32

<sup>113</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3542, Malacca to Batavia, 31st March 1783

<sup>114</sup>

G. M. 31st December 1782, p.1171. See Chapter VII



occupied fighting the French in India, Malacca sent a force to blockade the Bugis headquarters. This course also seems likely to have failed, with perhaps severe results for Malacca, but for the opportune arrival of reinforcements. A state naval force, sent to the Indies to aid the weakened forces of the Company, was diverted to Malacca. Riouw and Selangor were captured, and a Bugis force besieging Malacca was defeated and scattered. A Dutch residency was established at Riouw and the Bugis left the port.<sup>115</sup> The Dutch appeared to have destroyed their greatest rival in the tin trade. In effect, they only hastened the establishment of an English settlement in the Straits. The trade to China had become far too important to the English to allow themselves to be dependent on Malacca for tin and the other products of the area, even if they had not felt the strategic necessity to have a port of call in the Straits. In 1786 such a port was set up at Pulau Penang opposite Kedah, and soon developed into a very important market for the tin of the peninsula.

This drew from the government of Malacca one more effort, an attempt to break with the old policy of striving to monopolize, if not all, then sections of the tin output. Governor Pieter de Bruijn urged after the capture of Riouw that Malacca be allowed to adopt freer trading practices. If tin, cloth and opium were available to all comers at Malacca as they had been at Riouw, the latter port's

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115

Netscher gives a detailed description of the siege and capture of Riouw, Djohor, pp.180-196

trade would be attracted to the Dutch town; if not, another Riouw would soon spring up somewhere outside the VOC's jurisdiction.<sup>116</sup> But the weight of the Company's trading practices were against such a change in Malacca's role, and within a year Penang was established. Even in the face of this new competition it was believed that Malacca had many advantages. If only the prices were made competitive, and other unpopular features of Dutch policy (such as the occasional refusal to accept the full quota of tin delivered from Palembang, despite the fact that the entire output of that state had been contracted for and all possible means had been taken by the Dutch to discourage other buyers)<sup>117</sup> were discontinued, Malacca could still outstrip Penang as a market for tin.<sup>118</sup> But these reforms were not carried out, and by 1795 Malacca's complement of men had been reduced, a sure sign of its declining commercial importance.

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116

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.57

117

J. de Hullu, "De Engelsen op Pulu Pinang", B.K.I. 77, (1921), pp. 605-614

118

Ibid

Chapter III. The Dutch East India Company and  
Johore, 1700 - 1718

Throughout the seventeenth century there is not a single armed conflict between the [Dutch] Company and Johore, but there is a diplomatic struggle for commercial privileges....At one time the Company thinks she has obtained the coveted trade monopoly and freedom of all tolls by her contracts of 1685 and 1689, but these are repudiated by Johore...

(Quoted in R. Winstedt,  
A History of Johore, 1935, p.48)

The Dutch government of Malacca was not obliged to wage constant war against the local Asian powers to retain control of the port, as the Portuguese had been. Aceh had ceased to be in a position to threaten Malacca at almost the same time as the VOC captured it from the Portuguese, and the rulers of the other major Malay power, Johore, appear to have become reconciled by this time to the European occupation of Malacca.

No Johore force was ever sent against the fortress with the intention of winning the port back from the foreigners.<sup>1</sup> Thus

<sup>1</sup>  
The rulers of Johore probably remained wary of the possible revival of strong central government in Aceh and felt that the presence of the Dutch in Malacca acted as a safeguard against the renewal of Aceh's dominance of affairs in the area. The desire to win back territory lost in 1511 as an end in itself had presumably dulled by the seventeenth century, and the Malays never seem to have been motivated to attempt to drive out the Europeans for religious reasons. The available sources imply that there was no crusading zeal in the Islam of the Johore leaders, who were, on the contrary, eager to receive persons of any religion if they came to trade.

the Dutch government of Malacca was accepted into the local political framework of the Straits as a power with strong military and commercial interest in the area, though as one to be treated with respect because it could if necessary call up powerful reinforcements from Batavia.

Dutch relations with the local Asian states were not always harmonious, nevertheless. Disputes arose when the Company tried to consolidate its commercial interests by pressing the local rulers to grant valuable trading concessions and curtail their traffic with private foreign merchants.<sup>2</sup> Johore was the largest and most influential of the local powers, claiming overlordship of large territories on the Malay Peninsula and in Sumatra, and presenting a continual challenge to the Company's hopes of monopolising trade in these territories, so relations between the Company and Johore must figure largely in an history of Dutch activities in the Malacca Straits.

In Chapters one and Two it has been noted how during the first two decades of the century, Dutch governors of Malacca complained continually that the activities of the ruler and notables of Johore, who engrossed all the tin produced in the Johorese territories and sold it to the Chinese, and who encouraged English and Indian

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2

For instance the VOC's disputes with Aceh and Perak, and with Kedah, over the tin trade in the previous century. Hall, Southeast Asia, p.325, Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i, pp.138-158



merchants to bring cloth and opium to the port of Johore to exchange for tin, pepper and other local goods, were very damaging to the Company's interests.<sup>3</sup> These frustrated comments of the Malaccan government tend to contradict the picture of Dutch relations with Johore at this time given by the historian E. Netscher, whose work is the only detailed study which has been made of this field to date.<sup>4</sup> Netscher believed that Dutch influence in Johore was increasing at the beginning of the eighteenth century, because the Malay state was seriously weakened by a succession dispute. He wrote that the Sultan A'bdul Jalil, who had been installed in 1699, though he 'originally did not appear to be much inclined to seek the friendship of the V.O.C.'<sup>5</sup> was by 1712 so hardpressed by his enemies among the local powers that he was forced to beg the help of the Company, and in return granted them a number of valuable trading privileges. Netscher saw this as a successful conclusion

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See Chapters I, p. 53, and II, p. 84

4

E. Netscher: 'De Nederlanders in Djohor and Siak 1602-1865' Batavia, 1870. Netscher concentrated more on the later period, spending 46 pages on the period 1603 to 1713, 101 pages on the period 1713-1811 and 180 pages on the nineteenth century. This loading is only to be expected when one takes into account the mass of material he was confronted with, for when he was writing the original papers of Malacca, now lost, were still available. It is apparent that he merely scanned the material available for the early period of the Dutch occupation of Malacca

5

Ibid., p.43 'Aanvankelijk schijnt...'



to earlier Dutch efforts to obtain these concessions from Johore, and thus his work gives the impression that the Malay state was in decline at this time, unable to protect its own interests, and that it only reappeared as a rival to Dutch power after the Bugis princes seized power in 1722.<sup>6</sup> Modern appraisals of Malay history have tended to accept this interpretation,<sup>7</sup> but the records of Malacca reveal a different picture. The Company, on the contrary, was gravely troubled by the activities of Johore in the first two decades of the century, and far from conceding all the important issues to the Dutch in 1713, that state followed a course of commercial expansion up till 1718, and Dutch attempts to restrict local trade were defied just as vigorously as they had been in the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>8</sup>

Johore had aided the Dutch forces in their siege of Portuguese Malacca, and in return had benefited in several ways. In direct terms the Johore government gained a certain degree of immunity to Dutch interference, and indirectly the state benefited even more from the withdrawal of Aceh from affairs in the Straits, and the restrictions which the Dutch placed on trade at Malacca. Trade

<sup>6</sup> Netscher's account of the signing of the 1713 treaty is incorporated in a chapter which covers the period 1611-1713. Djohor, pp. 43-46

<sup>7</sup> Harrison, South-East Asia, p.119. Nicholas Tarling, Southeast Asia Past and Present, (Melbourne 1966) p.63. Hall, South-East Asia, p.328 relies mainly on the account given by Alexander Hamilton.

<sup>8</sup> R. Winstedt 'A History of Johore'; JMBRAS, X, iii (1932), p.42

flourished at Johore and by 1663, in defiance of all Dutch injunctions, the leaders of the Malay state were boldly engaged in the tin trade, transporting the metal from the outlying territories of the peninsula and Sumatra to the central part of Johore for sale to the Chinese and others.<sup>9</sup> The Dutch government sent guardships to patrol the Straits of Singapore and divert any Chinese junks that were en route to Johore. The destruction of the capital of Johore by the forces of Jambi in 1673 ruined this trade for a time, but in 1678 the Governor of Malacca, Balthasar Bort, wrote that since the town had been rebuilt, the Chinese traffic would probably revive. He proposed that, in this event, two or three light yachts were to be stationed in the Straits of Singapore once more, with instructions to seize any vessels belonging to the Koxinga Chinese (they were at war with the VOC). 'All other junks from China, Japan and the Manilhas must be kept away from Johor and brought to Malacca to trade there and deprive Johor of that traffic'.<sup>10</sup> In 1685 and again in 1689 treaties were negotiated between Johore and the VOC which appeared to guarantee valuable monopoly rights to the Dutch in their trade to the Johore territories, but both were repudiated on some excuse by Johore. The 1689 treaty was concluded with the regent during the minority of the young Sultan Mahmud.<sup>11</sup>

9

Ibid., p.41

10

Biagden, JMERAS, V, i, p.187

11

Netscher, Djohor, p.38-9

When this prince took over the government of his realm he refused to ratify the agreement on the advice of the chief nobles, who felt their own trade threatened.<sup>12</sup> This young Sultan was an unstable character and his brief reign ended with his assassination in 1699.<sup>13</sup> The Bendahara Sri Maharaja was installed as Sultan with the title Abdul Jalil Rahmat Shah, with his brothers filling other high offices of the state.<sup>14</sup> Abdul Jalil was no more inclined to be subservient to the VOC than his predecessor had been; the chief nobles of Johore were enjoying a prosperous trade, buying tin and other local products to sell to the Chinese and the foreign merchants who came every year. In 1706 'the very strong trade of the English and other Europeans, Armenians and Indians to places lying around Malacca, and principally to Johor...' was regarded by

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12

GM 26 January 1701, p.1344

13

Hamilton, New Account, p.52. Mahmud's "madness" is also noted in the Tuhfat al-Nafis - see Winstedt, "A Malay History of Riau and Johore", JMBRAS, X, ii, p.319

14

His elder brother became Bendahara, his younger the Raja Indera Bongsu. From the Dutch correspondence it appears that the Bendahara was a very powerful figure in Johore up to 1707. e.g. Malacca to Batavia 19 January 1701, p.15 - envoys and letters were sent to Malacca from the new king and from the Dato Bendahara, a practice of duplication which seems to have been followed when the real power lay with the lesser official.

the Malaccan government as very detrimental to their own traffic.<sup>15</sup>  
Eight to ten Chinese junks came to Johore to trade every year.<sup>16</sup>

This situation was a source of considerable annoyance and frustration to the Dutch, for it not only prevented them profiting from the valuable tin and cloth trades, it also diverted from Malacca a considerable amount of revenue from customs and harbour dues. But none of the three governors of Malacca during this period could see any way of redeeming the situation, for the Batavian Government would not alter their price structure to compete with the native traders, and the possible profits were not considered worth the expenditure necessary in any effort to force the native states to abandon their trade. Blockading their ports and patrolling the Straits had been tried and found relatively ineffective.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile Malacca was not being molested in any active way, and no efforts were being made to damage the VOC's trade, if one discounts the refusal to allow the Company a monopoly trade in tin and cloth.

This situation was changed when Johore embarked on a more positive policy of expansion. To a Malay state at this time expansion meant for the most part drawing in more trade and thus

<sup>15</sup>

GM 26 January 1706, p.139

<sup>16</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 28 February 1707, p.33

<sup>17</sup>

Blagden, JMBRAS, V, i, p.158 et al. The Company was not able to maintain the number of vessels in the Straits at this time that it had thirty years before - Governor Phocnsen felt that nothing could be done to prevent foreign trade unless a fit number of vessels was supplied 'as of old'.  
Kol.Arch. 1569, p.3, Phocnson's Report 1704



extending the influence of the Sultanate to more river valley districts and ports. Any activity of this sort was bound to affect Malacca, for this port was connected by trade either officially for the Company or through its numerous citizens with most parts of the Straits. In 1708 a shift in the internal political structure of Johore brought to power Tun Mahmud, a younger brother of the Sultan, who had been known to the Malaccans for the previous eight years as the Raja Indera Bongsu.<sup>18</sup> In 1708 he assumed the title of Raja Muda, thereafter styling himself sole ruler of Johore and all its surrounding territories.<sup>19</sup> Sultan Abdul Jalil became a mere figurehead, absorbed in religious studies according to one account. The real power in Johore now lay with the Raja Muda until his death in 1718.<sup>20</sup>

It is hard to gather any concrete picture of the type of power he wielded, or whether his rule affected a majority of the population of Johore. His power extended at least to the court circles and to matters concerning trade. He was described by a retiring Governor of Malacca, Pieter Rooselaar, as a man 'full of spirit and courage in the native fashion', one who was willing 'to undertake a great deal for the sake of his country'.<sup>21</sup>

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18

Kol.Arch.1668, p.27 - Rooselaar's Report, 1709

19

Ibid.

20

Hamilton, New Account, Vol.II, p.52

21

Kol.Arch.1668, p.27 - Rooselaar's Report, 1709



A Portuguese who met him at Johore in 1717 described him as 'a clever and intelligent man',<sup>22</sup> Few other clues remain about his personality, except the bold policies he shaped while he held power in Johore.

In 1709 the Malacca government learnt that Mahmud proposed to move the Johore court from the mainland to the port of Riouw on the island of Bintan. The move was allegedly motivated by fear of a possible Siamese attack on Johore.<sup>23</sup> It was also, as the Dutch governor noted, in a very advantageous position to attract trade, close to the routes of the Chinese junks in their annual voyages, and also of ships coming to and from Siam and Cambodia.<sup>24</sup>

The Raja Muda perhaps also looked for more personal safety in this new environment. He left ahead of the rest of the court to prepare the residence of the Sultan, and after his departure the other Johorese notables showed little eagerness to follow. The move was

<sup>22</sup>

T. D. Hughes; 'A Portuguese Account of Johore' JMERAS, XIII, ii, (1935) p.121. The writer adds that this Raja Muda 'possessed good sense and prudence'. (p.126)

<sup>23</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1668, p.29. Rooselaar's Report, 1709

<sup>24</sup>

Ibid, p.30. The court of Johore had been located at Riouw for a time during the previous century. Netscher, Djohor, p.35

finally accomplished, however, and by 1710 the court was settled at Riouw.<sup>25</sup>

The Raja Muda had in the meantime set out with a fleet for Trengganu, for news had arrived of a Siamese invasion. This was a false report, however, and the northbound fleet was met by an envoy with the information that the Siamese and Patani fleets had merely gone to Trengganu to track down some pirates. The fleet returned to the Straits of Malacca, where the Laxamana was sent with a fleet of twenty vessels to Linggi and with the remaining force the Raja Muda attacked Bata Baru, Deli and Indragiri.<sup>26</sup>

In 1708 the Raja Muda had led a similar attack on the town of Bengkalis, where much of the trade of Malacca's burghers to Sumatra was concentrated.<sup>27</sup>

The aim of these manoeuvres was almost certainly to bring the outer territories firmly under the control of the Raja Muda.

<sup>25</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 20 November 1710, p.547. Johorese domestic politics were obviously extremely involved throughout this period as several factions struggled for control of the state. A student of internal Johorese politics believes that the Raja Muda's voyages to Trengganu and the territories in the Straits at this time (see below) were an attempt to establish a personal locus of power separate from the Court, and that his return to Riouw marked his failure to do this. Private communication, L. Andaya, 1970

<sup>26</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 20 November 1710, p.553

<sup>27</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1668, p.31. Rooselaar's Report, 1709

A strong fleet had been built up to enforce this control. By 1717 'according to definite information' this 'consisted of more than 100 river galleys not to speak of the type of boats called 'Cacapus' [Kakap - a river craft with lofty prow and stern but low waist] and 'Paroas' [perahu] which were also armed, exceeding a total of 1,000 boats'.<sup>28</sup> As early as 1709 this force was also being used to channel as much trade as possible to Riouw.<sup>29</sup> This was not an unprecedented course for a Malay ruler wishing to expand his influence; there is reason to believe that the rulers of Sriwyaya increased their business in a similarly forceful manner. The VOC itself had long since adopted the policy of reinforcing its monopoly 'rights' by setting 'guardships' before ports whose trade they wished to engross. Earlier in the century a governor of Malacca had bewailed the fact that he lacked sufficient ships to divert the trade in cloth and tin from Johore.<sup>30</sup> His successors, however, labelled the Raja Muda's efforts to divert trade to Riouw as 'piratical'!

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28

Hughes, JMBRAS, XIII, ii, p.120. A list of the strength of the Johore fleet in 1714 is cited in Malacca to Batavia 12 August 1714, pp. 146-9

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Kol.Arch. 1706, p.136 GM 15 November 1712. et al.

30

Kol.Arch. 1569, p. 3 Phoonson's Report 1704

Two sections of the trade entering the Straits particularly attracted the attention of the Johorese. Chinese junks attempting to sail to Malacca or the other native ports within the Straits were liable to be accosted and brought to Riouw. A number of these already called annually at the Johorese capital, but now the Raja Muda seemed anxious to capture the whole of this trade.<sup>31</sup> Vessels coming from the ports of northern Java were also a target for the Johorese. This trade largely involved the cartage of foodstuffs, principally rice, salt, some sugar and tobacco, to Malacca and other places in the Straits, for the area did not produce many of its own supplies.<sup>32</sup> In 1712 the Raja Muda had become 'so assured, as to proclaim in the name of the King of Johoor that no Javanese vessels were to go to Malacca, but were to come instead to Johoor'.<sup>33</sup>

The Raja Muda was at the same time engaged in overseas shipping on his own behalf. He had attempted to send a ship on a trading voyage to Bengal in 1701,<sup>34</sup> and in 1708 sent a further vessel to Negapatnam.<sup>35</sup> This voyage involved a capital of 8,000 dollars (probably Spanish dollars).<sup>36</sup> He also sent a ship to Macassar

<sup>31</sup> Malacca to Batavia 20 April 1716 p.73-6

<sup>32</sup> See above Chapter I, p. 66

<sup>33</sup> GM 13 January 1713. Kol.Arch.1708, p.1298.

<sup>34</sup> Malacca to Batavia, 19 February 1701, p.27

<sup>35</sup> Malacca to Batavia, 10 April 1708, p.201

<sup>36</sup> Malacca to Batavia, 19 November 1711, p.43. Copy of a letter from the Raja Muda



to buy spices which he sold at Riouw.<sup>37</sup> There is a possibility that this enterprising man also sent shipping to China.<sup>38</sup> In 1712 he was involved with the country trader, Alexander Hamilton, in an attempt to sell a cargo of opium clandestinely at Malacca. This particular venture failed, for the Dutch captured the contraband cargo and confiscated it.<sup>39</sup>

This incident may have been the cause of the grudge which Hamilton appears to have borne against the Raja Muda, for in his rather muddled account of Johore at this time he has little good to say of that prince. In Hamilton's view the Raja Muda 'engrossed all Trade in his own Hands, buying and selling at his own Prices, and punishing those who dared to speak against his arbitrary Dealings',<sup>40</sup> It is unlikely, however, that the Raja Muda had embarked on the course outlined above purely with a view to personal gain; his policies seem more in keeping with an attempt to capture for Johore the central position in the trade and politics of the Straits held previously by the Malacca Sultanate.

37

Malacca to Batavia 20 January 1716, p.62. (Van Aldorp's Report on his mission to Riouw)

38

In 1714 the Malacca government notes among the ships known to have come to Riouw recently one vessel from Riouw itself 'which arrived there from Eijmuy (Amoy)'. Malacca to Batavia, 12 August 1714, p.133

39

Malacca to Batavia 27 January 1712

40

Hamilton, New Account, Vol. II, p.53



Such an attempt was obviously in direct opposition to the VOC's interests in the Straits, and liable to be far more damaging to them than mere competition in the tin and cloth trade had been. So long as the kingdoms of the Straits remained relatively small and fragmented, it did not greatly matter if the trade of Malacca was injured by their separate inroads into the traffic of cloth or tin. The profit to be made even if these trades were in the absolute control of the Company would not compensate the effort and expense necessary to conquer and retain control of such an area to the required degree. But when Johore set out on an expansionist course the position changed. Not only did the Raja Muda's activities interfere immediately with the interests of Malacca's trade, more importantly they raised the possibility of a unified power gaining control of the Straits' trade, and all this would mean to the VOC. A strong Johore could, for instance, represent a threat to the Company's traffic between Java and India, or could act as a centre in the way Macassar had, where foreign traders could acquire the goods of the Archipelago which the Dutch continued to try to keep to themselves.

By 1712 the authorities of the Company had become disturbed by the activities of the Raja Muda of Johore, and referred to him in distinctly hostile terms. The prince 'despite all our civilities in his regard has given the Honourable Company much cause of resentment over his conduct, and for a long time has tried to draw off trade from Malacca to Riouw'. A more direct conflict had arisen

between the VOC and the Raja Muda at that time, and the Dutch feared that the latter was 'now trying to ruin the burghers and inhabitants' of Malacca.<sup>41</sup>

In 1710 envoys had come to Malacca from Riouw with the 'sharp and unreasonable request' that no more ships belonging to either the Company or to the burghers and inhabitants of Malacca should be sent to trade at Bengkalis, or in the Siak River.<sup>42</sup> As was noted in Chapter I, this trade brought the Malacca government a large proportion of its revenue, for the Siak river gave access to the inland Minangkabau kingdom, and the gold-producing state of Patapahan, and was at this time one of the most important trading centres in Sumatra.

The Malacca government was highly incensed at this request, for they claimed that the Malacca inhabitants had 'always' gone to the Siak river 'tollfree' and without any restrictions.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1706, p.136. GM 15 November 1712

<sup>42</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1673, p.132. GM 29 November 1710

<sup>43</sup>

The trade between Malacca and Bengkalis seems in fact to date from the conclusion of the 1685 treaty with Johore. Bort describes the trade of Bengkalis in the second half of the seventeenth century, but as a rival to Malacca rather than as an important partner in the Malacca inhabitants' trade. He took steps to 'greatly reduce' the traffic. Blagden, JMBRAS, v, i, p.178. Hamilton describes the flourishing Dutch trade there some fifty years later. 'The Company vend's a great deal of Cloth and Ophium there, and brings Gold-dust in return. That beneficial Trade was not known to the Dutch before 1685'. New Account, Vol. II, p.66

the

The Supreme Government advised/Malaccan authorities to ignore this direction from Johore and to continue granting passes for the trade to Siak as before.<sup>44</sup> But the Raja Muda did not let the matter drop there. Malaccan merchants who continued to trade to Bengkalis and up the Siak River were charged ten per cent duty on their cargoes by Johorese officials, and some were even seized and had their ships and cargoes confiscated by the Johorese.<sup>45</sup> This alarmed the Malaccan government, which in turn accused the Raja Muda of trying to ruin the burghers and inhabitants of Malacca. Malaccan officials feared that a great number of these merchants would leave the town if their trade continued to be interfered with in this way. This would have meant a great financial loss to Malacca.<sup>46</sup>

The Raja Muda met the protests of the Malacca government with the declaration that he had no wish to destroy the longstanding friendship between Johore and the Company or to go against the contract of 1689. But, he argued, the arrangements made about the Company's trade to the Siak River had never included the trade of the private citizens of Malacca, and now the Company had not conducted any trade there on its own account for several years. He had therefore decided to place restrictions on the traffic, to prevent the interloping trade of the Malacca inhabitants.

<sup>44</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 25 October 1710, p.1354

<sup>45</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1691, p.144. GM. 30 November 1711

<sup>46</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1706, p.137. GM. 15 November 1712

"His Majesty, (Abdul Jalil), I and my council, have...resolved and approved that the trade of Siacca from the time that the Company abandoned that place reverted solely to us..."<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile Johore forces continued to hinder trade to Siak.<sup>48</sup>

The Dutch decided that they must obtain a new treaty guaranteeing their commercial interests in Johore, and especially on the Siak River. Two envoys were sent to Riouw in 1712 with instructions to negotiate such a treaty.<sup>49</sup> The Malaccan government drew up a draft agreement aimed especially at securing concessions for the Company and the Malaccan burghers in the trade at Siak.

The draft commenced with a renewal of the old alliance and friendship between the VOC and Johore. This was followed by a clause granting the Company the right freely to enter all lands of the King of Johore 'which are at present <sup>[may be]</sup> or in the future ruled by him', and to trade there under fair conditions and tolls. The king and notables of Johore and their subjects would in return be entitled to trade under similar conditions at Malacca, with the

<sup>47</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 19 November 1711, pp.42-3. Letter from Raja Muda to Governor Moerman.

<sup>48</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1691, p.144. GM. 30 November 1711. And Kol.Arch. 1706, p. 136. GM. 15 November 1712

<sup>49</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 8 January 1713, p.27-39. Instructions for the Ondercoopleden Jan Lispenzier and Thimonus Molenanus, Commissioners to Johore



proviso that they must not import any opium.<sup>50</sup> A special clause stipulated that the Malacca inhabitants would enjoy similar privileges, especially in the Siak River, and that within the territory of Johore they need not pay any tolls or be impeded in their business in any way. The Company and the Malacca inhabitants were to be free to obtain without any let or hindrance masts and other timber from the Siak River. The draft also stipulated that no acts of aggression were in future to be committed by the people of Johore against the people of Malacca, and that if any such outrages did occur, the responsible parties would be punished appropriately. These were the main issues which the envoys were to press.<sup>51</sup>

Governor Moerman and his colleagues at Malacca felt that the Raja Muda might be brought to concede these points if he saw that the Company was prepared to bring pressure to bear on his affairs. The Dutch were in a position to do this in several ways. The ship sent by the Raja Muda to trade in India had been seized by the Dutch government at Negapatnam.<sup>52</sup> The Company would be prepared to

<sup>50</sup>

The Malacca government had only a year before seized Alexander Hamilton's ships at Malacca for attempting to smuggle opium into the Dutch port in partnership with the Raja Muda.

Malacca to Batavia, 27 January 1712

<sup>51</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 8 January 1713, p.40

<sup>52</sup>

Ibid, p.32



compensate the Johore prince for this loss if he in turn would make concessions. Another ship in which the Raja Muda had an interest had recently been seized with its cargo of opium at Malacca, and the Dutch believed that the prince would also raise this case.<sup>53</sup> The envoys were also instructed to tell the Johore government that in future, unless new arrangements were made, their vessels trading to Malacca would be expected to pay the usual tolls and duties, from which they had been exempt up to that time.<sup>54</sup>

This last matter had been a source of complaint to the Malacca government for several years. In 1709 Governor Rooselaar had complained of the large numbers of vessels which came annually to Malacca in the name of the Bendahara, Raja Muda, Laxamana or other notables of Johore, and suggested that a limit be placed on the number which were allowed free entry each year.<sup>55</sup> In 1712 it was remarked by the Batavian government that Johore had 'for some time past' sought to defraud the Company's tolls and duties by pretending certain goods were toll-free, - 'which [practice] on our side wishing to oblige and show friendship we allowed. ...But their haughtiness is so far advanced that they have openly favoured and patronised a smuggling trade with the English at Malacca.'<sup>56</sup> It was hoped that the prospect of the loss which would

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Ibid, p.33

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Kol.Arch. 1706, p.139, GM. 15 November 1712

55

Kol.Arch. 1668, p.27, Rooselaar's Report, 1709

56

Kol.Arch. 1706, p.132, GM.15 November 1712

be entailed if the Company enforced this decision to extract tolls from Johore trade at Malacca, together with the possibility of the complete loss of the capital sunk in the ventures to India and Malacca, would force the Raja Muda to give in to the Company's demands.

The Malaccan envoys met with no success, however. The Raja Muda did not allude to the confiscation of his own goods, and the negotiations mainly revolved around the matter of the trade at Siak. On this subject the Johore ruler was adamant, adding to his former arguments the new claim that Patapahan was a subject territory of Johore. The envoys protested that Patapahan had always been an independent state. But they were unable to budge the Raja Muda, who further declared that Malacca merchants would not be allowed to trade at Patapahan even if they were able to find an alternative route into the area and avoided the Siak River.<sup>57</sup>

The rulers of the VOC were also determined not to give in on this matter, however, and as all other methods of persuasion had failed, they sanctioned a more forceful course. Two Dutch guardships, the De Jordoon and the galiot De Combarden were sent to cruise in the vicinity of Riouw. This argument had the desired effect, and 'gave the Johorese some second thoughts and frightened them a little.'<sup>58</sup> An embassy was sent from Batavia to underline

<sup>57</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 3 March 1713. Report of Commissioners to Johore.

<sup>58</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1722, p.179. GM. 26 November 1712

the serious view the central government took of this affair. As a result the unsuccessful Malacca envoys had scarcely returned home when a mission arrived in Batavia to negotiate a treaty with the supreme government.<sup>59</sup> They carried letters from the Johore leaders which expressed the hope that the Company would continue to be Johore's friend and ally, as it had always been in the past.<sup>60</sup> These letters contain no reference to the recent mission from Malacca. The negotiations this time appeared to be successful for the Dutch, for by the 19 August a treaty had been drawn up which essentially covered all the points contained in the treaty drafted by the Malacca government, which had been so recently rejected at Riouw.<sup>61</sup>

The treaty of 1713 obviously resulted not from any initiative on the part of Johore, but from pressure exerted by the Dutch in an effort to secure their own trading interests against the growing power of the Malay state. The Raja Muda had defied the Malacca government with no compunction, but when it became obvious that they were strongly supported by the government at Batavia in this matter, he had undoubtedly been unwilling to force a direct conflict with the power of the VOC.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 19 October 1713, p.1082

<sup>60</sup>

Netscher reproduces the letter from the Raja Muda. Djohor, pp.44-5. The letter contains a request for an amount of gunpowder which may have misled Netscher as to the motives of this mission.

<sup>61</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, pp.XX - XXIII.

<sup>62</sup>

The Johore rulers were well aware that the real power lay with Batavia and that without the help of the central government Malacca had relatively little power. They treated missions from Batavia with much more respect than those from Malacca.

He preferred to take the more discreet course of apparently submitting to the demands of the Dutch. It soon became clear that the Company had gained no real victory with the conclusion of this treaty, for the Raja Muda continued to pursue his objectionable policies wholeheartedly, and to find excuses for delaying the ratification of this treaty.

In 1714 the trade of Malacca's burghers to Siak was still being obstructed by Johore.<sup>63</sup> In the same year the Raja Muda was at Bengkalis with a 'considerable number' of vessels, with which he attacked Patapahan, and then continued with them to make war on Indragiri.<sup>64</sup> He wrote to Malacca that he had been too much occupied with the Indragiri war to attend to the matter of the ratification of the treaty. He even added a protest that he, 'the sole ruler of Johoor, Pahang, and their further subject territories', was not anywhere specifically mentioned in the treaty.<sup>65</sup> Governor Moerman felt that this was merely a 'frivolous' excuse to delay ratifying the agreement.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup>  
Kol.Arch. 1724, p.2229. GM. 11 January 1714

<sup>64</sup>  
Kol.Arch. 1737, p.73. GM. 26 November 1714

<sup>65</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia 12 March 1714, p.117

<sup>66</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia 8 August 1714, p.144



Nor had there been any slackening in the attempts to draw trade to Riouw. A Johore fleet patrolled the Straits and diverted any vessels bound for Malacca from Java's east coast or other places. The Dutch complained that 'this piratical people, with their plundering and murdering', made the seas around Malacca unsafe, 'to the damage of the small native traders and the disrespect of the Company'.<sup>67</sup> These tactics brought about a shortage of rice at Malacca in 1714, for the supplies of that grain usually brought from Java had gone to Riouw. Malacca's burghers were forced to buy rice from the Johore port.<sup>68</sup>

In 1713 another of Tun Mahmud's enterprises attracted Dutch attention, but this time it was the central government at Batavia, rather than the Malaccan officials who felt their interests immediately jeopardised. Spices smuggled from the Moluccas, nutmegs and cloves, were being made available to foreign merchants at Riouw, and at prices below those fixed by the Dutch authorities. This was the one item above all others that the VOC aimed to keep off the open market. The sale of spices at Riouw was first reported to Malacca in 1713.<sup>69</sup> Observers were sent to Riouw to gather information about the source of supply of these spices, amounts sold, etc.<sup>70</sup> The quantities involved were not large enough to call for immediate

<sup>67</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1737, p.173 GM. 26 November 1714

<sup>68</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 5 September 1714, p.172

<sup>69</sup>

Kol.Arch. 1722, p.178 GM. 26 November 1713

<sup>70</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 4 October 1715. Instructions given to Anthony van Aldorp for his mission to Johore



action. By 1715 it was known that the spices were brought in ships bearing VOC passes from Ujong Pandang at Macassar, where they had been purchased from Dutch and Chinese traders who came from Ambon and Banda. At least one of these ships belonged to the Raja Muda, others were captained by Bugis.<sup>71</sup>

The trade at Riouw with Chinese and other foreign merchants in tin and pepper (the latter product was imported from Palembang in defiance of the Dutch monopoly there) also flourished. In 1714 the Chinese junks alone took off 500,000 lbs. of tin and 2,500 piculs of pepper.<sup>72</sup> In 1714 an alliance was being negotiated between Johore and Palembang, which was to be sealed by the marriage of the Raja Muda's daughter to the son of the Raja of Palembang.<sup>73</sup> Such an alliance would have ensured Palembang's cooperation in the pepper trade at Riouw, to the detriment of Dutch imports of pepper.

It is apparent that the VOC had many reasons to be dissatisfied with the activities of Johore by 1714, and it is therefore not surprising that the Batavian Government contemplated taking military action to curtail Johore at that time. The central government asked the ministers of Malacca 'for some opinion on how to constrain Johore', whether it would be wise to push the matter to an open rupture or not, and if so, how the matter should best be undertaken.

71

Malacca to Batavia 20 January 1716, pp.57-70

72

Malacca to Batavia 12 August 1714, p.134

73

Ibid, p.139

An account of the power of Johore shipping was sent for, and 'principally', whether any other European nation would be likely openly or secretly to involve itself in the affair.<sup>74</sup>

The Malacca government responded with a description of the Raja Muda's forces,<sup>75</sup> and of the vessels and manpower they had at their own disposal. They made it clear that Malacca was not in a position to attack Riouw without substantial aid from the central government, and agreed that it was possible that the French, English or Portuguese might seek to profit from such a conflict to obtain trading privileges in the area.<sup>76</sup>

Reluctantly, the Batavian government replied that 'our intention this year is not to undertake any action against Johore', for after considering the power of Johore and the small number of forces available to send against it, it had been decided 'not to engage in a war of uncertain success'.<sup>77</sup> The VOC's resources were somewhat strained at the time, for war had broken out again on Java, and the Company was also involved in a campaign on the Malabar coast in India.<sup>78</sup> The Governor-General assured the Malacca officers that he only intended to put off the punishment of Johore for a time, but

<sup>74</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 26 June 1714, pp.533-6

<sup>75</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 12 August 1714, pp.146-9

<sup>76</sup>

Ibid, p.150. The war with France had only just ended and the French were regarded as the major European enemy.

<sup>77</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, Secret Letter to Governor Moerman, 7 June 1715, p.623

<sup>78</sup>

Hall, South-East Asia, p.307

counselled that in the meanwhile the Malacca officers must not give the Raja Muda any cause to take offence.<sup>79</sup>

Unable to expect any help from Batavia, in 1715 the Malacca government was faced with the prospect of having to conciliate Johore to safeguard its trading interests in the Straits. Things had gone well for the Raja Muda up till that time; trade at Riouw had prospered and the wars with Patapahan and Indragiri had been concluded successfully.<sup>80</sup> This successful progress met with a check when a group of Bugis warriors seized the important tin-producing territory of Linggi in 1715.<sup>81</sup> A Johore fleet went immediately to dislodge the invaders, for the loss of this area meant a considerable decrease in the state's income, much of which came from the sale of tin. But the Johorese 'though more numerous were less warlike' than the Bugis, who in a short space of time also overthrew the Johore representative on the Selangor River.<sup>82</sup> The Raja Muda's negotiations with Palembang had also ended in a reversal as a result of a struggle for power within that country.

79

Batavia to Malacca, Secret Letter to Governor Moerman,  
7 June 1715, p.626

80

Kol.Arch. 1751, GM. 28 November 1715

81

Malacca to Batavia, 25 September 1715

82

Malacca to Batavia, 12 June 1716

One of the contestants attacked Riouw in 1715.<sup>83</sup> Rumours were also spreading of a possible attack on Johore by Acheh.<sup>84</sup>

Probably as a result of these events, the Raja Muda ratified the treaty with the VOC in September 1715.<sup>85</sup> This was not a sign that Johore was prepared to bow to Dutch interests. In the following year the Raja Muda's fleets 'continued to prey on Asian vessels in the seas around Malacca, not even respecting vessels of the inhabitants of Malacca which are supplied with official [ Company ] passes'.<sup>86</sup> The Raja Muda continued to ignore representations from the government of Malacca demanding reparations for the goods and cargo captured from the burgher Pieter Domingos Jans. Dutch hostility towards and suspicion of Johore did not abate, Anthony Van Aldorp was sent to Riouw in late 1715 to watch for any revival of the spice trade there, and to report on Johore's

83

Malacca to Batavia, 20 January 1716, p.65. Van Aldorp's Report. Van Aldorp found the exiled Pangeren di Patti of Palembang at Riouw with 14 vessels, seeking the Raja Muda's help to overthrow his opponent. The latter apparently applied to Batavia to support his cause, with some success. As a result, the Company was on very good terms with Palembang in 1718. Malacca to Batavia, 28 September 1718, p. 7

84

G.M. 30 November 1716, p. 211. The Malacca government believed that these rumours were in fact spread by Johore, as part of a plot to gain the Company's help to dislodge the Bugis. Ambassadors had been sent to Acheh from Johore in 1714, at which time the Dutch feared that the Malay powers 'may have made an undertaking about Malacca'. Malacca to Batavia, 5 September 1714

85

Malacca to Batavia, 25 September 1715

86

G.M. 30 November 1716



relations with the neighbouring states. In 1716 the Batavian government repeated that they had 'for a long time wished to bring this prince to reason', but that lack of sufficient supplies of men and equipment made this impossible at the present time. They continued to urge the Malacca officers to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality in local affairs, so that the Company would not become involved in 'another untimely war'.<sup>87</sup>

As it happened, the VOC did not have cause to be wary of Johore for very much longer. The Raja Muda's downfall was not brought about by any action on the part of the Dutch or, except indirectly, of the Bugis or Aceh. The death blow to his attempt to recapture for Johore the dominant role in the Straits came, characteristically, from a rebellion in the outer territories and treachery in his own court. For some years there had been unrest in Siak and Bengkalis where the population was largely Minangkabau.<sup>88</sup> The situation was not improved by the Raja Muda's efforts to cut off the profitable local trade with the burghers of Malacca,<sup>89</sup> and at last the

87

GM. 30 November 1711

88

Note punitive voyage of the Raja Muda in 1708.  
Kol.Arch.1668, p.31, Rooselaar's Report, 1709

89

This is surmise, as I have seen no sources presenting the attitude of the people of Siak. I feel it is reasonable to suppose that the local people resented the Raja Muda's attempts to centralise trade at Riouw, and Hamilton was perhaps half-right in attributing the rebellion to the Raja Muda's 'arbitrary Dealings'.  
New Account, Vol. II, p.53



discontented factions united behind the leadership of Raja Kechil. This prince was most probably of Minangkabau origin, though a rumour was circulated that he was the posthumous son of the murdered Sultan Mahmud.<sup>90</sup> By the end of 1717 Raja Kechil controlled Bengkalis and was preparing to attack the Johore capital.<sup>91</sup>

The court had recently moved from Riouw back to the mainland, to a site on the Johore River,<sup>92</sup> and it was this latter town that Raja Kechil attacked and captured in March 1718.<sup>93</sup> His success against the Raja Muda's forces, which it was said 'exceeded those of any other King on the Malayan Coast',<sup>94</sup> was due to the treachery of the Bendahara, who sabotaged the defence of the town.<sup>95</sup>

90

Netscher, *Djohor*, pp.47-9, discusses the possible origins of Raja Kechil. Contemporary Dutch records refer to the rumour that he was the son of the murdered King of Johore (GM. 20 March 1718), but give no indication that they believed this story

91

GM. 20 March 1718

92

Reputedly because an attack by Aceh was feared.

GM. 15 January 1717

93

*Malacca to Batavia*, 4 July 1718, p.25 (Contains an account of the capture of Johore given by the Bendahara, who arrived at Malacca from Rembau on 26 April 1718)

94

Hughes, *JMBRAS*, XIII, ii, p.120

95

*Ibid.*, pp.129-131. Malay sources also indicate the split between the Raja Muda and Bendahara, though not so clearly as this Portuguese account; see Winstedt, 'Outline of a Malay History of Riau', *JMBRAS*, XI, ii, p.157. (Summary of *Sadjarah Raja-Radja Riouw I*)

The Raja Muda, who appears to have been unprepared for this defeat, did not succeed in escaping and was killed.<sup>96</sup> Sultan Abdul Jalil and the Bendahara escaped to Trengganu and Malacca respectively.<sup>97</sup> Raja Kechil had captured the royal regalia and declared himself Sultan of Johore. He destroyed the former capital and set up his headquarters at Riouw. His rule was disputed, however, by Abdul Jalil, who still had support in Trengganu and Pahang, and the Bendahara, who enlisted the aid of the Linggi Bugis.<sup>98</sup> For several years, the empire built up by Raja Muda was torn by this struggle. It ceased to offer any threat, commercial or strategic to the Company's interests in the Straits.

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96

Hughes, JMBRAS, XIII, ii, p.129. 'The King Rajamuda was very pleased with this reply, considering himself to be safe from that quarter. He now sent the Fleet to overthrow the enemy which would have been very easy if the Datubandar (Bendahara) had been faithful'.

97

Hamilton, New Account, Vol.II, p.81; and Malacca to Batavia, 4 July 1718, p.25

98

Malacca to Batavia, 29 August 1718, p.41

Chapter IV : The Establishment of Bugis Power, 1715-1740

In 1715 a group of Bugis vessels sailed past Malacca and landed on the Linggi River. This was a territory of Johore, a valuable tin producing area, and the Bugis invasion was countered immediately by the despatch of a force from Riouw, led by the Raja Indera Muda. The Raja Muda of Johore also took the precaution of formally requesting the support of his "allies" at Malacca in this operation, together with their assurance that the Bugis at Linggi would not be assisted by their countrymen who were settled on the Company's territory at Tangga Batu.<sup>1</sup> But even though the Johore force was superior in numbers it failed to dislodge the new group of settlers. Subsequent attempts also failed; on the contrary the Bugis invaded the neighbouring territory of Selangor, another valuable tin province, in April 1716, killing the Johore chief of that province.<sup>2</sup> For the next two years the Bugis maintained control of these two places in spite of the repeated efforts of the Raja Muda to drive them out. His death, and the ensuing disruption within Johore, offered them an opportunity to take part in the internal intrigues of that state. This they did so efficiently that by 1722 a Bugis had become the effective ruler of Johore. By the 1740s the Bugis exercised a powerful influence on the affairs of the Straits of Malacca.

<sup>1</sup> Malacca to Batavia, 11 April 1715 (Raja Muda to Malacca), p.116

<sup>2</sup> Malacca to Batavia, 12 June, 1716

The Bugis, or "men of Woegi", came from the south western part of Celebes. By the seventeenth century several independent Bugis kingdoms were in existence, the chief of which were Waju and Boni.<sup>3</sup> They were a seafaring people who developed a reputation for aggression and hardiness.<sup>4</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Bugis, together with the neighbouring Macassarese who closely resembled them, migrated in considerable numbers to other parts of the Archipelago.<sup>5</sup> Numbers of Bugis sought their fortune in the armies of the European trading companies, or the Asian princes.<sup>6</sup>

3

Encyclopaedia, Vol. I, p. 324. ('Bougineezen .)

4

They were described in the nineteenth century as "superior to all other natives of the Archipelago in their spirit of adventure. They are a brave, active, haughty, fierce and vigorous race." H. St. John, The Indian Archipelago, Vol. I, p.352.

5

The reasons for this exodus have not as yet been clearly explained; perhaps they lay in the relative lack of opportunity which existed in the Bugis homelands, in comparison to other areas of the Archipelago, at a time when the disruption of the old patterns of internal trade by the Europeans (i.e. the growing constriction of Javanese trade) had left no one group in strong control of the situation.

6

Hughes, JMBRAS, XIII, ii, p.127, notes Bugis in the service of the Raja Muda in 1717. On page 135 he also notes Bugis in the service of Raja Kechil.



'Bugis' in the Archipelago was in the eighteenth century almost as common a name for 'soldier' as 'sepoy' in India.<sup>7</sup>

Others preferred to fight on their own behalf, and to make a livelihood from the rich trade which passed through the Archipelago. Groups of Bugis settled on the coast of the Malay peninsula and the coast of Borneo, on Flores and other islands to the east of Lombok.<sup>8</sup> These groups were independent of their parent state, though certain links remained. In the early 1720s the Bugis in Linggi received annual reinforcements from their homeland, Boni. The Raja of Boni received in return part of the spoil from marauding voyages in the Straits of Malacca.<sup>9</sup> The connection was still evident in 1766, when the Bugis ruler of Riouw married one of his daughters to a prince of Boni.<sup>10</sup> Thomas Forrest likened Bugis colonies to the Greek pattern, where a link remained between the mother city and the colony, but the latter was completely politically free.<sup>11</sup>

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Forrest, Mergui, p.78

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Encyclopaedië, Vol. I, p.324

9

Malacca to Batavia, 11 March 1721, p.46

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Batavia to Malacca, 14 June 1766, p.61

11

Forrest, Mergui, p.75



Links also existed between colonies in different parts of the Archipelago.<sup>12</sup> This pattern of colonies helped the Bugis to develop a strong trading network in the Archipelago. Bugis vessels had possibly visited Malacca in the time of the Sultanate, but their trade had been insignificant compared to that of the Javanese, who controlled much of the trade to the Spice islands.<sup>13</sup> The intervention of first the Portuguese, then the Dutch, in the trade between Malacca and the Moluccas destroyed much Javanese trade. The virtual closure of the Moluccas to foreign traders by the Dutch encouraged the growth of Macassar as an entrepot. Here English, Portuguese, French, Indian, Chinese and other merchants obtained spices and other local products which the Dutch hoped to monopolise.<sup>14</sup> The development of Macassar may have given the Bugis a more important place in inter-island trade. After this port was forcibly closed by the Dutch in 1667, Bugis traders became almost the only avenue by which spices and other valuable items from the east of the

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In the 'Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis dan Sakalian Raja-raja-nya', for instance, the Bugis heroes moved readily between the settlements on the Malay peninsula and at Riouw and the ones in Borneo. Daing Marawa's brother Daing Manumbun was the Raja of Mempawah in Borneo. See Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.352 et al.

<sup>13</sup>

Meilink-Roelofs, Asian Trade, p.85. It is possible, however, that the people encountered at Malacca by Pires were Bajaus, another seafaring people of the archipelago, rather than Bugis.

<sup>14</sup>

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.295

Archipelago reached the ports in the west which were still open to foreign merchants.<sup>15</sup> Thus, as the Javanese became more and more restricted by the growing power of the VOC, Bugis increased their commercial control over the areas of the Archipelago, such as the Straits of Malacca, where the VOC was unable to control local affairs. In the early nineteenth century when Bugis commercial, and sometimes political, control had been established in numerous places throughout the Archipelago, John Crawford wrote that :

The people of Celebes are now the most considerable and enterprising of the navigators of the Indian islands, and among them the Bugis of Wadjo are the most distinguished.... There is no country of the Archipelago possessed of any advantages for trade, in which the Bugis of Wadjo are not found settled, and, in some situations, they have even colonized as a body and founded independent states.... The voyage from the shores of the lake (area in Wadjo where merchants come from) is commenced in the beginning of the Eastern Monsoon. The adventurers carry out a trading voyage as they proceed westwards, until at

<sup>15</sup>

For instance the spices sold at Riouw in 1713 and 1715 were brought by Bugis. See Chapter III, p. 128 and T. C. P. Edgell, English Trade and Policy in Borneo and the Adjacent Islands, 1667-1786. (M.A. thesis, University of London, 1935), p.201

Rhio, Malacca, Penang and Achin they reach the limits of the Archipelago, and are prepared to return with the change of season.<sup>16</sup>

The groups of Bugis who settled at Linggi in 1715 were led by Daing Marewa, a prince who claimed connection with the ruler of Boni. He and his four brothers had come from Boni via 'Java, Santang (Siantan) and other places.'<sup>17</sup> They came with 400 fighting men, plus their women and children.<sup>18</sup> At first they were continually occupied with the need to defend themselves against the attacks by Johore. They were supported by Bugis settlers who had previously come to the area and were now settled in the Company's territory at Tangga Batu, despite the protests of the Raja Muda.<sup>19</sup> Bugis settlers had come to the west coast of the peninsula as early as 1681, but the Bugis do not appear to have caused any serious problem for the

<sup>16</sup>

Crawford, History, Vol. III, p. 149-50.

<sup>17</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 17 August 1715, p.167

<sup>18</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 16 March 1716

<sup>19</sup>

Despite the Raja Muda's letter of April 1715 requesting the Malacca government to prevent the Bugis settlers on their territory from aiding the Linggi Bugis, the Raja Indera muda complained in September 1715 that Bugis from Tanjong Keling, Tangga Batta etc. were helping the Linggi group. The Dutch investigated and found that this was true. They took some steps to prevent this co-operation, administering a 'sharp rebuke' to those of their subjects involved in the affair.  
Malacca to Batavia 25 September 1715

rulers of Johore until Daing Marewa seized Linggi.<sup>20</sup> Though Daing Marewa withstood the Raja Muda's attacks on several occasions, however, his position was far from being secure, and it is not surprising that he attempted to make an ally of the Dutch government at Malacca.

In March 1716 a deputation came to Malacca from Daing Marewa, with news that the Raja Muda was about to send another force against Linggi. They requested the permission of the Malacca government to move to territory under the jurisdiction of Malacca at Tangga Batu, Tanjong Keling or elsewhere, so that they would come under the protection of the Company.<sup>21</sup> These requests were "flatly refused". A new deputation led by Daing Marewa, which came shortly after, was not even granted an audience by the Governor, Willem Moerman.<sup>22</sup> They were refused supplies of gunpowder and ammunition, but were able to buy provisions and to sell readily the tin they had brought.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup>

R. O. Winstedt, History of Malaya. (Revised edition 1962) p.144. There had been fighting between Johore forces and some Bugis at Linggi in 1702, but no further trouble had come of this matter and the Bugis had either been ejected or absorbed into the framework of Johore. G. M. 30 November 1702, p.109.

<sup>21</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 16 March 1716, p.5

<sup>22</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 20 April 1716, p.75.

<sup>23</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1787, p.69, Governor Moerman's Report, 1717



Despite these discouragements, the Bugis leader continued to court the Malacca government. Daing Marawa promised that the Company would have all the tin of Linggi and Selangor.<sup>24</sup> In 1717, after another attack on Selangor by the war-fleet of Johore, he asked once more that his people be accepted as subjects of the Company and receive its protection.<sup>25</sup> This was refused as before, but the Bugis were allowed to purchase rice from the Company's stocks.

Although the Dutch offered no military assistance or alliance to the Bugis, the existence of Malacca was a material aid to them in their fight to defy the power of the Raja Muda. Malacca was the only convenient market at which they were able to exchange tin for provisions. Riouw, the major market for tin in the area, which attracted a large proportion of the trade in foodstuffs from Java and Siam, was of course closed to them. Selangor was at that time not a port of any significance,<sup>26</sup> and vessels from Java would have had to pass the patrols of both the Johore fleet and Malacca to come there. The voyage to Kedah would have taken several days and was probably

<sup>24</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 20 August 1717, p.56

<sup>25</sup>

Ibid, p.56

<sup>26</sup>

Hamilton notes that Selangor at that time was 'little frequented by Europeans, because they have too many of the Perah Qualities, (i.e. are treacherous, faithless and bloody) to be trusted with honest Men's Lives and Money.' New Account, Vol. II, p.141



also hazardous because of the Johore fleet.<sup>27</sup> Though unwilling to become involved in the struggle between Johore and the Bugis, the Malacca government could not afford to refuse tin brought by the Bugis, their own collection of the metal was so poor. The increased amounts of tin received during this period seem to indicate that Malacca was the main outlet for the tin supplies controlled by the Bugis.<sup>28</sup> Possibly the Bugis were able to obtain supplies of munitions in return for their tin, despite the official refusal of the government to meet their needs in this matter. In 1721 in a letter to the Malacca government, Daing Marewa stated that his people regarded Malacca as their main source of provisions and materials of war.<sup>29</sup>

Though the Dutch in both Batavia and Malacca had good cause to hope that the Raja Muda's powerful position in the Straits would somehow be undermined, they did not consider the Bugis a desirable tool for this purpose. The reputation of the Bugis as pirates and troublemakers made the Central government regard them as 'dangerous neighbours' for Malacca.<sup>30</sup> A group of Bugis had recently plundered

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There was in addition civil strife in Kedah at the time and may not have been much traffic there. Malacca to Batavia, 11 April 1715 p.117

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See Chapter II, p.87

29

Malacca to Batavia, 11 March 1721, p.69. (Daing Marewa to the Malacca Government).

30

G. M. 28 November 1715, p.430

an English ship in the roads of Ujong Salang,<sup>31</sup> and others had been involved in troubles in Kedah.<sup>32</sup> The Batavian government wished that this 'scum -- mostly runaway Bugis (soldiers of the Company?) and other pirates...' could be driven not only from Linggi, but from the whole coast near Malacca.<sup>33</sup> The government of Malacca also expressed distrust of this group. Explaining their decision not to allow Daing Marewa to settle his people on the VOC's territory, they declared that "this folk are made up of so many sea robbers (schuijmers) and other riff-raff, and if they were once established on the Honourable Company's territory, the danger would be that they could not be driven out again other than with great difficulty and great cost."<sup>34</sup>

The Central government did not believe that the quarrel between Johore and the Bugis could be of any advantage to the Company, and instructed the Malacca government to maintain a strict neutrality in the affair and not to give any cause of offence to either party.<sup>35</sup> In 1716 the necessity to pursue a neutral policy was voiced even more insistently: the Bugis had already 'become too strong in the Straits',

<sup>31</sup>  
G. M. 18 February 1715.

<sup>32</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 11 April 1715, p.117

<sup>33</sup>  
G. M. 28 November 1715, p.430

<sup>34</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 16 March 1716, p.6.

<sup>35</sup>  
Batavia to Malacca, 7 June 1716, pp.606-10 and 7 June 1716 (secret) p.626

and it was feared that the defeat of either one of these protagonists would leave the other far too strong for the safety of the VOC's interests.<sup>36</sup> Still the Central government regarded it more important not to fall out with the Raja Muda. In 1718, before the news of the overthrow of Johore reached Batavia, the latter government wrote to Malacca reproving the officers there for supplying Daing Marewa with rice, as this might have given Johore some cause to distrust the VOC.<sup>37</sup>

Daing Marewa had continued to seek an ally against the Raja Muda. In Siak Raja Kechil was gathering forces in preparation for an attack on the Johore ruler's headquarters. A Bugis expedition led by Daing Monompo, who was noted in 1715 as one of the leaders of the Bugis, went to Bengkalis in 1716.<sup>38</sup> If any alliance was agreed on, however, it came to nothing, for Raja Kechil captured Johore without any help from the Bugis; indeed the Dutch reported that the Minangkabau fleet was hindered by the Bugis, 'perhaps out of jealousy, with a large

<sup>36</sup> Batavia to Malacca 10 November 1716, p.1232 ( ... en het met de belangen van de E. Comp. niet overeenkomen zoude, dat een van die strijdende partijen den andere te veel quam te verdruken...")

<sup>37</sup> Batavia to Malacca, 22 July 1718, p.668

<sup>38</sup> G. M. 30 November 1716 Daing Monompo later became the first Bugis Raja Tua of Johore. Metscher Djohor, p.60

fleet of vessels.'<sup>39</sup> From that time on Raja Kechil became the chief opponent of the extension of Bugis power in the Straits of Malacca.

The position of the Bugis had been greatly improved by the events of 1718. Raja Kechil was a far less formidable enemy than the Raja Muda.<sup>40</sup> He controlled only a part of the empire the latter had ruled. Trengganu and Pahang supported Abdul Jalil,<sup>41</sup> and the Bendahara, who had been disappointed in his hopes of ruling Riouw after Raja Kechil defeated the Raja Muda, threw in his lot with the Bugis.<sup>42</sup> It was probably through his influence that Daing Marewa

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G. M. 6 December 1718. In a letter to Malacca in 1718 Raja Kechil referred to an agreement he had made with the Bugis, by which they were to help him against the King of Johore. Instead of which, they had attacked some places near (his own territory of) Bengkalis.

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In December 1718 the Batavian government speculated in a letter to Holland whether Raja Kechil would be able to retain control of Johore. They reported that Malacca ministers did not believe that he would be able to do so. It seemed to them likely that the Bugis would re-instate the former king 'or rather hold this known pirate and smugglers rest for him.' G. M. 6 December 1718

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Hamilton, A New Account, Vol. II, p.81

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Malacca to Batavia 28 September 1718. A Malay chronicler writes 'Now the Bendahara wanted to be made Raja of Riau, as Raja Kechi' was to return to Siak, but his wish was not granted, so he conspired with Raja Sulaiman and sent a letter to the Bugis princes asking their assistance to take away the crown of Johore from the Menangkabau prince.' Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.350



gained 'many guns and men' from Johore.<sup>43</sup> The Bendahara joined with the Bugis soon after he had fled to Malacca in April 1718, and their combined fleets raided several places around Bengkalis.<sup>44</sup> Raja Kechil complained to the Malacca government of this behaviour, believing that the Bugis were subjects of the Company. The Dutch denied this, declaring that they had no means with which to constrain this group.<sup>45</sup>

For the Bugis allowed their relations with Malacca to deteriorate almost immediately, although they continued to bring tin to the town for a time. In 1718 Governor Van Suchtelen wrote bitterly to Daing Marewa that the trade of the burghers of Malacca had been brought to a standstill by the 'faithless and piratical' behaviour of the Bugis. The seas before Malacca itself had been made unsafe, and Javanese vessels carrying rice had been 'lured away' from the Dutch port. Van Suchtelen ended his letter with the demand that Daing Marewa 'return to his homeland'.<sup>46</sup> The Bugis leader did not reply to this letter, and the Malacca government wrote to their superiors in January 1719 that he apparently no longer feared the resentment of the Company, as he had increased his forces after the fall of

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Malacca to Batavia, 22 January 1719, p.14

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Malacca to Batavia, 28 September 1718, p.20

45

Ibid, p.24

46

Malacca to Batavia, 28 September 1718, p.112. (Malacca to Daing Marewa).



Johore.<sup>47</sup> The Batavian government on the other hand felt that the need to be wary in dealings with the Bugis, and not to give them cause for offence, had increased. They 'wished that the Governor in Council (of Malacca) had used more prudent language in their letter to Daing Marewa'. The growing Bugis power was a menace even to the Company, but the Central government did not believe that the Bugis would act directly against Malacca, as long as the government there was careful not to become involved in the local disputes.<sup>48</sup>

To maintain a strict neutrality in local affairs the Company kept aloof from the enemies of the Bugis. Raja Kechil appealed for support from Malacca before and after his attack on Johore. In 1717 he wrote to Malacca in the hope of obtaining gunpowder to aid him 'drive out the usurping king' of Johore. He threatened that he would obstruct the trade of the Malacca burghers to Bengkalis if his requirements were not met. The threat does not appear to have been carried out - it is never mentioned again - but the Malacca government obviously refused to send the supplies he required, for this appeal was closely followed by another. The second came ostensibly from the ruler of the inland Minangkabau kingdom, and requested in the name of the alliance between the VOC and his people that the Company support 'his nephew', Raja Kechil, in his attack on Johore. The Malacca government believed this letter to be a fraud,

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<sup>47</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 22 January 1719, p.14

<sup>48</sup>

G. M. 19 August 1719, p.835

sent by Raja Kechil himself, and refused it as they had the previous one.<sup>49</sup> In 1718 Raja Kechil wrote to Malacca several times, complaining of the hostile activities of the Bugis and seeking an alliance with the Company; but the Malacca government replied that they would hold the old alliance with the Minangkabaus unbroken, and avoided discussing a new agreement.<sup>50</sup> The Governor-General instructed them not to enter into any such treaty with Raja Kechil, but to refer the matter to them if it was raised again.<sup>51</sup> In 1720 Van Suchtelen claimed to have strictly obeyed these oft-repeated instructions to maintain a policy of neutrality, and, as a result, to be at peace with all the neighbouring princes.<sup>52</sup>

Abdul Jalil had also appealed to the VOC for support in the name of the treaty of alliance between the Company and Johore.<sup>53</sup> The Malacca government refused his request, pointing out that the Johore government had shown little inclination to abide by this treaty during the past decade.<sup>54</sup> His was by far the weakest of the three

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Malacca to Batavia, 23 October 1720, p.5

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Malacca to Batavia, 28 September 1718, p.26

51

Batavia to Malacca, 19 August 1719, p.838

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Malacca to Batavia, 23 October 1720, p.5. See also Malacca to Batavia 27 August 1721, p.80

53

Malacca to Batavia, 22 January 1719, p.15. (Abdul Jalil to Malacca).

54

Malacca to Batavia, 17 August 1719, p.14

parties now wrangling to control Johore. In 1719 he confided to Alexander Hamilton, who had come to Trengganu from Siam, that he went in fear of his life, and asked if Hamilton thought that the English Company would be willing to aid him. The merchant did not think it would, and advised Abdul Jalil to appeal once more to the Dutch. The king also appealed to the French company through a merchant of that nation who was at Trengganu; but again he met with no help.<sup>55</sup> The Malacca government commented in 1721 that even his adherents did not spend much effort on his behalf.<sup>56</sup> In 1719 the news came to Malacca that Abdul Jalil had at last been killed by Raja Kechil's orders.<sup>57</sup>

Raja Kechil had moved his headquarters from Pulau Gontang in the Siak River, to Riouw, 'strengthening it so that he shall not lightly be driven out', the Dutch said.<sup>58</sup> However, Daing Marewa's forces

<sup>55</sup>

Hamilton, A New Account, Vol. II, p.83. Though the Dutch had expressed a fear that other European companies might come and 'fish in the troubled waters of the Straits' (G. M. 6 December 1718) during a war there, it is thus apparent that in the opinion of Hamilton, an experienced East Indian merchant, the English were not at that time eager to gain a foothold in the area.

<sup>56</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 27 March 1721, p.79

<sup>57</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 29 November 1721, p.183; See also Overbeck, JMRRAS, IV, iii, p.349 for an account of Abdul Jalil's death as given by a Bugis chronicler. The contemporary Dutch records and the Malay chronicles written in the following century agree that Abdul Jalil was killed by Raja Kechil's orders. According to Hamilton, however, he was killed by Bugis, who plundered the town, except for those houses which belonged to the Bendahara. One is tempted to speculate whether the Dutch might not have been misinformed on this occasion. Hamilton is, however, frequently unreliable in reporting such details, and the occasion he refers to was probably not the one on which Abdul Jalil was actually murdered. See Hamilton, A New Account, Vol. II, p.84

<sup>58</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 23 October 1720, p.5

captured this town soon after the death of the exiled Sultan. They also won back the royal regalia from the Siak prince, and installed a new Sultan of Johore to succeed Abdul Jalil.<sup>59</sup> This was not the Bendahara who had intrigued against the Raja Muda and fought, together with the Eugis, against Raja Kechil.<sup>60</sup> Instead they supported the young son of the late Sultan, Raja Suleiman. But the Malacca government reported that, according to local rumour, Daing Marewa was now to rule Johore, and the new monarch was to have only titular power.<sup>61</sup>

Daing Marewa had taken this opportunity, which the weakness of the Royal family provided, to win a place inside the Johore 'establishment' for

<sup>59</sup>

Overbeck, JMERAS, IV, iii, p.355

<sup>60</sup>

The Bendahara's family finally set out to join Abdul Jalil at Trengganu in 1721, and he does not figure in the Malacca records again. A new Bendahara was installed with Sultan Sulaimen (Malacca to Batavia 4 March 1722, p.76), one Inche Abbas. The author of the Sadjarah Radja-Radja Riouw I wrote that "The attack (on Riouw) succeeded but the Eugis too refused to crown the Bendahara." "A coconut-palm must succeed a coconut-palm and a betel-palm a betel-palm." R. O. Winstedt, "Outline of a Malay History of Riau", JMERAS, XI, ii, 1933, p.157. The Eugis no doubt felt it would be easier to control the young Suleiman than this seasoned conspirator.

<sup>61</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 4 March 1722, p.72

himself and his people. Before giving Suleiman their support, the Bugis leaders had stipulated 'that if they go to Siak and make Raja Sulaiman Yamtuan Besar, and the kingdom (of Johore) hereditary in his family, one of the five brothers shall be made Yamtuan Muda (Raja Muda), which office shall also be hereditary in his family...'<sup>62</sup> Daing Marewa clearly intended to succeed to the power of the last Raja Muda, Tun Mahmud, and to institutionalize it so that the Bugis Raja Muda would be paramount ruler of Johore. One chronicler attributes to the Bugis prince the following words :

Look, Raja Sulaiman, it is I who am now Raja Muda, in whose hands lies the management of the government of Raja Sulaiman, and who have the power to put lengthwise what is athwart, and to put athwart what is lengthwise, and where there are bushes and thorns, to clear the place with all my might. <sup>63</sup>

A Bugis leader was also appointed Raja Tua, other Bugis of lesser rank were appointed to minor offices in the Johore court. Many married into noble Johore families. A treaty of alliance was drawn up between the Bugis and the Johore Sultan, and sworn to on the Koran by both parties. It stated, among other things, that

The Bugis princes and the Sultan of Johore shall regard each other as brothers, and regard the interests of their respective lands as those of the same state... In all lands

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62

Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.353

63

Ibid, p.356



and ports of Johore, without exception, the Bugis shall have freedom of entry. Since we shall live as brothers, the Bugis and their descendants shall also be free at all times to leave the lands of Johore. <sup>64</sup>

The Dutch authorities were alarmed by this new evidence of the increased strength of the Bugis. Relations between them and Malacca had continued to deteriorate. In 1721 the Malacca government complained of the 'outrageous piracy of the Bugis, which is carried on without fear by land and sea quite near this fortress.'<sup>65</sup> Several soldiers and a burgher had been seized by Bugis marauders on the outskirts of Malacca, to be sold as slaves. The Malays of Malacca had become so apprehensive of the Bugis that they would not put out sea to fish, or go to tend their gardens outside the city, with the result that Malacca began to suffer from a shortage of some fresh foods. To remedy the situation the Malacca government sent the Company's sloop the Goram to patrol the foreshores near the town with instructions 'to board all vessels not provided with Dutch passes and search them.' The guardship met with three of Daing Marewa's vessels which did not have Dutch passes. The Bugis would not submit to a search, but were overpowered and sunk. Daing Marewa wrote in protest of this treatment of his men, but the Malacca Governor, Van Suchtelen,

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Netscher, Djohor, p.59

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Malacca to Batavia, 11 March 1722, p.42

rejected his arguments. He believed that only violence and brutality could be expected from the Bugis; he feared that they would make themselves so feared by the local folk that no one would dare stand up to them. The Goram was sent out again to patrol the coast for forty miles around Malacca, and was reinforced by a vessel belonging to a burgher.<sup>66</sup>

The news that Daing Marewa had captured Riouw and set Suleiman up as a puppet-king of Johore was very unwelcome to the Malaccan government. Van Suchtelen wrote that the Bugis leader would surely become more bold and arrogant in his success, 'which can bring nothing but misfortune to the Malaccan merchants; for it does not appear that the piracies of this Bugis scum shall cease.'<sup>67</sup> Previously the Malaccan government had maintained the policy of neutrality despite their hostility to the Bugis; they had 'held within the limits of strict neutrality, without showing the least partiality, but on the contrary seeking to be fair to both sides...'.<sup>68</sup> Now they began to

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Ibid, p.43-6

67

Malacca to Batavia, 4 March 1722, p.73

68

Malacca to Batavia, 27 August 1721, p.80

regard the Bugis as a threat to Malacca itself; and considered whether it might not be necessary to take action against them. In 1722 Batavia sent a further one hundred European soldiers to re-inforce the garrison of four hundred and thirtynine at Malacca.<sup>69</sup> Governor Van Suchtelen sent estimates of the Bugis power and the forces necessary to drive them out of the Straits.<sup>70</sup> The forces at Malacca itself were only sufficient to defend the fortress, and could not undertake an offensive operation. This operation would have been expensive and 'cost much blood'.<sup>71</sup> The Governor General decided therefore it would not be worthwhile, despite the urgings of Van Suchtelen, and no attack was launched. Indeed, the Malaccan authorities were reprimanded for their zeal in the matter. In May 1723 the Batavian government passed a resolution rebuking these officers for requesting advice 'about choosing a king for the Johorese lands, where the Company had no property or settlement.'<sup>72</sup> The Batavian government had decided that the Bugis posed no immediate

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Batavia to Malacca, 18 October 1722, p.606

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Malacca to Batavia, 27 January 1720, p.9

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G. M. 19 March 1722

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Realia, Vol. II, p.180. The Governor General and Council had noted the request in their letter to the Netherlands of 19 March 1723.

threat to Malacca, and therefore that it was best not to involve the Company in another unprofitable war.

For although the Bugis had gained control of Riouw and effectively ruled much of Johore, they probably enjoyed relatively less power in the Straits than the previous Raja Muda had. The Bugis leaders had in the 1720s continually to ward off the attacks of Raja Kechil on Riouw and the other territories of Sultan Suleiman. After installing Suleiman the Bugis forces went for a time to Kedah, where two factions were fighting for control of the country. One of these factions offered <sup>the Bugis leaders</sup> the Bugis leaders 15 bahar of dollars for their support.<sup>73</sup> Raja Kechil intervened on the opposing side. He went to Kedah with a fleet of 110 vessels, but the Bugis defeated him there under Daing Moncompo, who in Queda River spoilt and ransacked a sloop belonging to a burgher of Malacca, though it had a Company pass and a seal from Daing Marewa.<sup>74</sup> Raja Kechil had not been severely defeated, however, for Daing Marewa felt it necessary to follow his lieutenant to Kedah 'with a good war power of 100 ships ... to end the war with the flight of Raja Kechil ...'<sup>75</sup>

But after a brief peace Raja Kechil returned to the attack. A Bugis defeat in 1725<sup>76</sup> led the Batavian government to hope that

<sup>73</sup>  
Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.357

<sup>74</sup>  
G. M. 19 March 1723

<sup>75</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 29 March 1723, p.3

<sup>76</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 12 March 1725, p.5

'Raja Kechil with the help of the Salettes (Celates), Jambij and Palembang, will drive out the Bugis from the forewaters of Malacca.'<sup>77</sup> The war continued throughout the 1720s and early 1730s as a series of skirmishes interspersed with brief periods of peace,<sup>78</sup> which provided breathing spaces for both parties. Neither side was consistently victorious, but Raja Kechil never succeeded in driving the Bugis out of Riouw.

Meanwhile both Bugis and Minangkabau marauding parties constantly roamed the Straits, 'detaining, attacking and robbing the local vessels, murdering the crews'.<sup>79</sup> These activities may have had more effect on the final outcome of the struggle than the actual battles fought. For they were part of the effort of both the Bugis and Raja Kechil to attract trade to their respective headquarters and destroy that of their rival. Unfortunately Dutch observers,

<sup>77</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 5 July 1725

<sup>78</sup>

For instance a peace treaty was signed between Raja Kechil and the Bugis in August 1723 but it was soon broken again. G. M. 30 November 1724, p.854. See also Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.358. et al for a Bugis account of these wars. This chronicle, the Silsilah dan Bugis, is decidedly biased and claims for the Bugis a more triumphant record than the Dutch sources indicate.

<sup>79</sup>

G. M. 30 November 1725, p.646



interested only in the extent to which their own trade was affected, make no comment on this rivalry except to complain of the prevalence of piracy. These 'piratical' fleets were often abroad with the intention of redirecting trading vessels to Riouw to Selangor, just as the fleets of Johore had been in the previous decade.

In 1723 the Malaccan government reported the story of a Chinese merchant who, while en route to Malacca, had been stopped by Daing Marewa near the Klang point. The merchant had been given a Bugis 'pass' and told that if he went straight to Selangor he would not be molested again. Instead, he sailed to Malacca.<sup>80</sup> Others may not have cared to brave the Bugis wrath. A Malay account notes that during one of Raja Kechil's attacks 'Food becomes very dear in Riouw, as no rice from Java or Bali is brought in by the merchants. The Yam Tuan Muda (Daing Marewa) represents to Sultan Sulaiman that Raja Kechil's purpose to ruin Riouw and its trade is sure to be accomplished ere long.'<sup>81</sup> This contest illustrates the close alliance of political and commercial power in the Malay states.

The weakening effect of this constant struggle perhaps appears in the inability of Daing Marewa to retain control over Selangor and Linggi for very long, once they were settled at Riouw. The Boni princes were not the only immigrants to come to Johore at this time. A Macassarese from Goa, known to the Dutch as Toepasserai, had

<sup>80</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 29 March 1723, p.5

<sup>81</sup>  
Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, 'iii, p.363

established himself as ruler of Linggi by the end of the 1720s.<sup>82</sup>  
 He dealt with the Malacca government as an independent prince,  
 promising to deliver to them the tin output of Linggi.<sup>83</sup> By 1732 he  
 had assumed the title Sultan Ibriham Tamine of Linggi.<sup>84</sup> Newbold,  
 the early nineteenth century historian of the Malay peninsula,  
 probably refers to this ruler when he mentions that the first  
 recorded Sultan of Selangor was one 'Aron Passerai, a chief from Goa  
 in the Celebes.'<sup>85</sup> It does not appear that Toepasserai was subordinate  
 to the Bugis Raja Muda of Johore, though he did share the Riouw  
 Bugis' feud with Raja Kechil.<sup>86</sup>

Another independent Bugis ruler, Daing Mateka, had one the  
 contrary joined forces with Siak. He was ruling in Selangor in 1731  
 when he was attacked and driven out by Toepasserai.<sup>87</sup> He withdrew  
 to Siak and joined forces with Raja Kechil, marrying his daughter to

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82

Malacca to Batavia, 13 October 1729, p.18

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Malacca to Batavia, 28 January 1732, p.8

84

Malacca to Batavia 12 January 1734, p.56

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T. J. Newbold, Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca. London 1839, Vol.II, p.31

86

In 1728 the Dutch believed he would be elected as the next Raja Muda of Riouw. Malacca to Batavia, 11 November 1728, p.36

87

Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1742, p.11

Raja Mahomet, the son of Raja Kechil. Together they attacked Linggi and Selangor on several occasions, and Riouw in 1735. Daing Matoka was regarded by the Dutch as a 'confirmed pirate.'<sup>88</sup> In 1742 he made a further attack on Selangor and Linggi, aided by his son-in-law Raja Mahomet of Siak.<sup>89</sup>

Gradually, however, the Riouw Bugis improved their position. Daing Marewa died in 1728, and was succeeded as Raja Muda of Johore by his brother, Daing Chela. The authorities at Malacca were hopeful that there would be less piracy in the Straits under this new ruler.<sup>90</sup> The area did become more peaceful,<sup>91</sup> but whether this was a result of a different policy on the part of the new ruler, or of the slow exhaustion of opposition to the Bugis, it is impossible to say. Raja Kechil only attempted a direct attack on Riouw once more, in 1735,<sup>92</sup> and this was unsuccessful. Riouw's trade began to revive.

'While Upu Daing Chela was Raja of Riouw, (1728-1745) for about eleven (Moslem) years it was peaceful and flourishing.

<sup>88</sup>

Ibid, p.13

<sup>89</sup>

Ibid, p.11

<sup>90</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 11 November 1728, p.36

<sup>91</sup>

Ibid, p.19

<sup>92</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 20 January 1735, p.50

Hundreds of vessels came from Bengal, from Java, from the further East, from China, from Siam. The people of Riouw became rich, especially the Bugis, as many of them were exempted by the Yamtuan Muda from paying customs duties and harbour dues. Thousands of Chinese came to work as coolies in the gambier plantations....The revenues amounted to hundreds of thousands in every season, and a large fleet of big vessels; heavily armed, was kept, partly ready, partly laid up.<sup>93</sup>

By the end of the 1730s Dutch records also indicate that Riouw was once again a busy place of trade, and numerous complaints occur that trade was being directed to the rival port.<sup>94</sup> In 1741 Riouw benefited quite fortuitously from the large exodus of Chinese from Java, which had followed the massacre of people of that nation in Batavia and the ensuing war between the Company and the Chinese on Java.<sup>95</sup> Many settled at Riouw 'from which occasion the reigning prince Raja Soeleimen has been able to profit himself very well...'.<sup>96</sup>

93

Overbeck, JMERAS, IV, iii, p.366

94

Malacca to Batavia, 1 February 1741, p.426

95

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.311

96

Malacca to Batavia, 21 August 1741, p.50



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Overbeck, JMERAS, IV, iii, p.366

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Malacca to Batavia, 1 February 1741, p.426

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Hall, Southeast Asia, p.311

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Malacca to Batavia, 21 August 1741, p.50



Towards the end of the 1730s the Malacca government began to complain once more that trading vessels, especially those carrying foodstuffs from Java, were being diverted to the local ports.<sup>97</sup> At this time Daing Chela set out to gain control of Linggi and Selangor once more. Toepasserai had left the peninsula in 1734, going first to Riouw, then to Banjarmasin.<sup>98</sup> He did not return. In 1740 Daing Chela sailed north 'with a goodly number of vessels' to Perak and Selangor, and the Dutch mention that he took a cargo of tin back to Riouw.<sup>99</sup> Three years later he was forced to bring his fleet north once more,<sup>100</sup> for in 1742 Daing Mateka and his ally Raja Mahomet of Siak raided Linggi and Selangor.<sup>101</sup> After Daing Chela had secured Selangor once more his son ruled the state as Sultan, with the title Sultan Sal'uddin. Later he was formally installed in this rank by the ruler of Perak, a scion of the oldest and most venerable

<sup>97</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 26 August 1737, p.41; Malacca to Batavia, 30 December 1739, p.38; Malacca to Batavia 12 February 1743

<sup>98</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 20 January 1735, p.52. His departure followed a further attack on Selangor by Daing Mateka. Malacca to Batavia 12 January 1734

<sup>99</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 21 December 1740, p.47. Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu Kuala Lumpur, 1966, pp.27-28

<sup>100</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2499 pp.75-6; Governor De Laver's Report on Malacca, 1743

<sup>101</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 10 March 1742, p.11.

royal family ruling a Malay state at that time.<sup>102</sup>

Throughout this period the Dutch had continued in a policy of strict neutrality in the wars between the Bugis and the Minangkabaus, 'with the aim that the Company would not be involved in their quarrels'.<sup>103</sup> As the Batavian government had decided that it would be unprofitable to make any move against the Bugis, their servants at Malacca refused a request from Raja Kechil and Raja Suleiman that the VOC join in alliance with them against the Bugis.<sup>104</sup> Further requests for support from Raja Kechil were also refused.<sup>105</sup> The Malacca government restricted their activities to those spheres which were aimed equally at the Bugis and the Minangkabaus. Where possible, guardships were sent to protect the trade of Malacca from the marauding fleets.<sup>106</sup> In 1721 it was decided to send a vessel annually from Malacca to inspect the Company's property on the Dindings islands.<sup>107</sup> The Company had maintained an outpost here in

<sup>102</sup>

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.329. Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu, pp.186-8

<sup>103</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2275, p.112. Governor de Chavonnes' Report on Malacca, 1736

<sup>104</sup>

G. M. 30 November 1724. This is the only indication in the Dutch records that Suleiman may have tried to rid himself of his Bugis allies at this time. Netscher mentions that Suleiman left Riouw for Kampar in Sumatra when the Bugis fleet went to Kedah, probably to escape Bugis influence, but was taken back to Riouw when they returned. Djohor, pp. 60-1

<sup>105</sup>

Batavia to Malacca 11 August 1726, p.532

<sup>106</sup>

G. M. 26 March 1725, p.2566; Malacca to Batavia 13 October 1729, p.11

<sup>107</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 27 August 1721, p.78.

the previous century, and fortifications and weapons had been left after the post was abandoned. There were two motives for these visits. The first was a desire to maintain the Company's legal rights to the post, for it was feared that the interest of other European Companies in this area was growing, and that one of these might seize the chance to occupy this outpost.<sup>108</sup> More important, however, was the need to keep the place out of the hands of the local rulers, especially the Bugis, and to prevent the theft of the Company's weapons. On several occasions the patrolling vessel destroyed settlements in the area, and in 1724 the sloop Pattena met with a hostile group of Bugis at the Dindings islands.<sup>109</sup>

The Malacca government remained very hostile towards the Bugis, though they had been forbidden to act against them. Though they refused to help Raja Kechil, they supplied him with gunpowder and other munitions on several occasions, with the approval of the Governor-General<sup>110</sup>. Their attitude to the Bugis became less hostile after the death of Daing Marewa. The increasingly piratical activities of the Minangkabaus at this time also caused them to harden in their attitude to Raja Kechil.<sup>111</sup> In their dealings with the new leaders of the Bugis at Linggi and Selangor the Malacca officials were still cautious, but less hostile. Both Toepasserai and Daing Mateka

<sup>108</sup>  
Kol. Arch. 1966, p. 59, van Suchtelen's Report 1727

<sup>109</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia, 30 January, 1725, p.14

<sup>110</sup>  
G. M. 30 November 1725, p.642; Kol. Arch. 1966, p. 41, van Suchtelen's Report, 1727

<sup>111</sup>  
Malacca to Batavia 28 January 1729, p.11; Malacca to Batavia 25 January 1730, p.4

made some effort to conciliate the government of Malacca. Toepasserai earned the gratitude of this body by his prompt return of a party of deserters from Malacca in 1729.<sup>112</sup> Both he and Daing Mateka made promises that all the tin produce of their state would be delivered to the Dutch.<sup>113</sup> The Malacca government accepted tin from both parties, favouring neither, and made no move to prevent Daing Chela from renewing his hold on the provinces of Linggi and Selangor in 1743.

There were several reasons for the determination of the Batavian government to stand aloof from the local wars of the Straits at this time. One was the fear of intervention by other European powers, if the Dutch became involved in the affairs of the Malay states. It was little more than forty years since the VOC had deprived its European competitors of access to the trade of the Archipelago at Bantam and Macassar. Fear that the English or French might try to set up a new base in the Straits of Malacca still occurred. The Governor General wrote in 1718 that 'it also merits speculation, whether or not some European nation might try to serve its own ends by fishing in these troubled waters, to set up a smuggling trade there, or thereabouts, or to make an advantageous treaty with a new prince (in Johore).'<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 13 October 1729, p.18

<sup>113</sup>

Malacca to Batavia 28 January 1732, p.8; and 12 January 1734, p.17

<sup>114</sup>

G. M. 6 December 1718. These fears probably had no good grounds, for Abdul Jalil's appeals to both the English and French Companies, accompanied as they undoubtedly were by the offer of commercial privileges, brought forth no response. See above p. 151.



Moreover, the whole trend of the VOC's development at this period was decidedly against any activities which might incur new expenses and responsibilities outside or on the periphery of the Archipelago. The recurrence of wars with Mataram in Java left the Company short of men and equipment to use in other struggles. The VOC had begun its metamorphosis from an Asia-wide trading organisation into a territorial power based on Java - already at the beginning of the century Governor-General Van Hoorn had been experimenting with the cultivation of coffee on Java. By 1720 the foundations of the 'forced delivery' system had been laid in that island. Interest in new adventures and responsibilities in the outer factories declined in proportion.<sup>115</sup>

Against this background of unwillingness to take any positive action lay the fact that the policy of neutrality served the immediate interests of the VOC in the Straits of Malacca very well, in the circumstances of the 1720s and early 1730s. The difficulties which had arisen from the competition of Johore under the rule of the Raja Muda Mahmud had been removed without any interference by the Company. The arrival of the Bugis, unwelcome as it was to the Dutch, had materially contributed to the Raja Muda's downfall. Their continued presence was a divisive force which, for the moment at least, had prevented the emergence of any similar unified Malay power. Though the ensuing unrest may have damaged trade at Malacca, it also prevented the development of any prosperous local Malay entrepot.

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<sup>115</sup>Hall, Southeast Asia, p. 308-310



This was a desirable state of affairs in the eyes of the central government, who preferred that trade should be attracted to Batavia rather than Malacca, even if it was not <sup>wholly</sup> satisfactory to the latter government; and, on the whole the trade of Malacca was not immediately damaged, but benefited in some ways from the Bugis intervention in the Straits. For a time the tin trade at Malacca profited considerably from the capture of Linggi and Selangor by the Bugis. Even in the 1730s when the Bugis had control of Riouw, Malacca received tin at times from the rival princes of Selangor and Linggi.<sup>116</sup> The trade to Siak benefited because Raja Kechil tried to maintain good relations with Malacca, where he was able to obtain supplies of munitions if no more positive support.<sup>117</sup> The spice trade to Manila flourished, because an increasing number of the passing vessels put in to Malacca, after the disruption of trade at Riouw.<sup>118</sup>

Thus Malacca's profits did not diminish during this period,<sup>119</sup> despite the constant skirmishing and marauding of the Bugis and

<sup>116</sup>

See Chapter II, p. 88 and p. 166 above.

<sup>117</sup>

Governor Van Suchtelen remarked that timber supplies from Siak had been plentiful during his term of office. Kol. Arch. 1966, p. 38 (1717-1727) and the Dutch have no complaints about the trade to Siak at this time. In the previous period this trade had been shown to be very important to Malacca, so I take this negative result as an indication that all was well.

<sup>118</sup>

Kol. Arch. 1966 pp. 33-4. Van Suchtelen's Report, 1727.

<sup>119</sup>

See Appendix I

Minangkabau fleets. The annual number of foreign ships calling at the port of Malacca increased after 1718, as did the number of vessels belonging to Malay or other merchants of the Archipelago.<sup>120</sup> Malacca offered a safe harbour and a stable government, and was a more reliable port of call for ships passing the Straits than any of the Asian towns in this period of warfare. The only positively adverse feature shown by Malacca's trade books during this period was a larger than usual expenditure in 1722, when the fear of a Bugis invasion pushed the government into repairing their defences, and other costly public works.<sup>121</sup>

So, rather than embark on an intervention which would be costly and of no positive immediate gain, the Dutch adhered closely to their decision to take no part in local affairs, and made no effort to limit the growing power of the Bugis in the Malay peninsula in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

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120.

This material is drawn from the Malacca Boomboeken for the years 1710 - 1736

121

Malacca to Batavia 30 January 1724, p.8. See Appendix 1.

Chapter V - The Period of Dutch-Malay Alliance, 1745-1759

From the mid-1740's to the end of the 1750's the Dutch East India Company played an unaccustomedly active role in the affairs of the Straits of Malacca. This was a very turbulent period, for the Malays, hostile and jealous of the growing power of the Bugis, tried once again to drive their rivals out of Johore and its territories. They found an ally in the Dutch officials at Malacca, who were dissatisfied with their share in the local trade, and alarmed at the growing power and prosperity of the Bugis faction. The Company was drawn into the confrontation between Malays and Bugis, and finally found itself openly at war, fighting to preserve their very position in the fortress of Malacca.

It is doubtful if the Dutch ever intended such an open trial of strength. They were drawn into it by their attempts to improve their own trade with the Malays and encourage the Malay chiefs' opposition to the Bugis, rather than by any direct plan of action of their own against the Bugis. As on previous occasions, their actions were shaped by the course of local events in the Straits; they were unable to force the shape of these events themselves. Once they began to take any part in the local quarrels and had broken away from the strict policy of neutrality which they had adhered to for the previous twenty years, they became deeply involved in the struggle between the Bugis and the Malays. The latter obviously hoped to use Dutch forces, or the threat of them, as a lever against their rivals.

The Malaccan governors found themselves taking an active part in this struggle as a result of events which involved the Company's interests as a whole, and far outweighed that portion affected by events in the Straits of Malacca. With the beginning of the eighteenth century, the VOC had entered a period of declining prosperity, despite its outward appearance of immense power and wealth. After 1725 its business had ceased to show an overall profit, and thereafter went deeper and deeper into debt.<sup>1</sup> Modern students of the period point out that this decline had far more complex causes than the corruption and incompetence of the Company's servants: the Directors believed this to be an important, if not the sole, cause of their troubles.<sup>2</sup>

1

Glamann, Trade, pp.248-9

2

Glamann, in his searching study of the VOC's trade up to 1740, concludes that 'The reason why the Company's traffic decreased was less a lack of knowledge [of the real state of financial affairs] than of the actual changes in the structure of trade'. Glamann, Trade, p.251. The Heeren XVII showed by their actions their belief that many of the Company's problems were caused by the old complaints of smuggling and private trade carried on among the Company's servants in Asia. These faults, and possible remedies in the way of stronger restrictions, were discussed at length by Van Dam in his description of the VOC. (Beschrijvinge Vol.III p.370). In 1722 the Governor General had 'no less than twenty-six Company's servants beheaded in one day for theft and smuggling. And nine years later Governor-General Durven, Director-General Hasselaar and two members of the Council of India were dismissed for failing to deal adequately with the prevailing corruption'. Hall, Southeast Asia, p.308. As the Dutch records are official correspondence, they reveal the misdeeds of the members of the Malacca government only when they have been discovered or reported officially; as in the discussion of the crimes of Governor De Laver.

Malacca shared the problems which beset the Company as a whole, and here also the Directors applied their accustomed remedy. During the 1730's the amount of tin and gold collected each year was unsatisfactory, and other branches of trade also declined. The policy of strict neutrality imposed by the Governor General degenerated into an excuse for complete inactivity and lack of initiative in matters concerning the Company's welfare. The unsatisfactory returns were blamed on the corruption of the Company's servants at Malacca. In 1743 a move was made to combat this by ordering the arrest of the retiring Governor, Rogier de Laver

and the despatch of two Commissioners to look into the conduct of the Company's business at Malacca.<sup>3</sup> De Laver and some of his colleagues had shown a greater interest in the growing trade of the Malacca Straits in their own rather than on the Company's behalf. The Commissioners stayed at Malacca for over a year, and sent the Governor General and Council a lengthy report on the instances of corruption they had unearthed. They reported that 'at Malacca, smuggling in tin had been practised grossly and greatly'

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Malacca to Batavia, 30 April 1744, p.627. De Laver was relieved of the Governorship of Malacca in August 1743, after making the usual report of his term of office there. After the Commissioners sent to report on affairs at Malacca had made their report he was removed from the employ of the VOC. However, he was re-instated in January 1749 and once more admitted as an ex-Governor of Malacca. He died at Batavia in 1755. W. Wijnaedts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers der Oost Indische Compagnie* (Amsterdam 1944) p.219. See also *ibid.* 31 December 1744, p.299, for the comments of the Batavian Government to the Heeren XVII.



by the Company's servants. De Laver and others had also traded illicitly in opium and pepper, and made unauthorised use of the Company's property (vessels, etc.) for their own profit.<sup>4</sup> The tolls and other dues belonging to the Company had been defrauded. In these ways the Malaccan officials had made themselves one with the many competitors who, they had complained, were ruining Malacca's trade.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the 1730's it was becoming apparent that more positive action had to be taken if the Company was to regain its early prosperity. The Directors hoped to remedy the situation by placing a strong man in control of their government in the Indies, who would stamp out corruption and not hesitate to innovate to improve the Company's business. In 1743, therefore, they appointed Gustave Van Imhoff Governor-General, in the hope that he would fulfil this role.<sup>6</sup> Van Imhoff had just previously to his appointment presented the Directors with a memorial which outlined his ideas of the causes of the decline in the Company's affairs, and also suggested a number of ways to improve matters, the most important of which were his suggestions to open sections of the Company's inter-Asian trade to free burghers and Asian traders.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See the Commissioners' Report on Malacca; Malacca to Batavia, 22 October 1745, pp.1426-1531

<sup>5</sup> As Governor De Laver had written in his Report on Malacca, Kol.Arch. 2522, p.752

<sup>6</sup> E. S. de Klerck, History of the Netherlands East Indies, Vol.I, p. 363

<sup>7</sup> See Chapter I, p.67; and G.W. Van Imhoff, 'Consideratien over den tegenwoordige staat van de Nederlandsche Oost Indische Maat-Schappij', E.K.I., 66, (1912)

Having thus uncovered and, it was hoped, put a stop to the corruption in the Malaccan government, the new Governor-General turned his attention to possible ways of improving the establishment's economic position. The Directors had been complaining that Malacca was an unprofitable last post for several years. It was, however, too strategically valuable to abandon.<sup>8</sup> The new governor, Albinus, was urged to take positive steps to improve the Company's trade at Malacca. He was encouraged not to engage in smuggling, by a new rule allowing Malaccan officials a fourth of the profit from the customs duties, divided according to rank.<sup>9</sup> It was also ruled that in future Malaccan governors were to enjoy 2 rds per bahar for all the tin brought in from outside Malaccan territory.<sup>10</sup> No really new suggestions were made as to how trade was to be improved, however. The central government authorised an increase in the price paid for gold,<sup>11</sup> and their suggestions for the improvement of the tin trade echoed the usual pattern of attempting to reduce the amount of tin taken by other merchants; in 1745 they noted that it was important to 'take care that all the tin of Maning...and the Malaccan hinterlands falls to the Company'.<sup>12</sup> They no longer stressed the

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In 1744 the Governor General wrote to the Directors the 'Malacca is and remains a last post for the Company, and as long as men cannot extract a profit from (local) products or domestic trade to other places which does not prejudice the Company's trade, which would make the necessary upkeep of such an important fortresse as this rather tolerable for the Company...' GM 26 October 1744, p.121

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Batavia to Malacca, 12 November 1745, p.714

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Realia, Vol. II, p.182

11

Ibid, p.181

12

GM. 31 December 1745, p.520

importance of remaining neutral in the local affairs of the Straits, and Albinus obviously felt that he was able to take a more positive course of action, especially in the tin trade, than had been open to his immediate predecessors.

In order to obtain the necessary amounts of tin and gold, the Governor began to send out expeditions to the Malay and Sumatran ports to buy the required goods at as favourable a price as possible. The Malaccan burghers were also allowed to trade in tin if they sold it to the Company.<sup>13</sup> The Batavian Government passed a resolution in 1744 stating that 'The tin trade should not be abandoned' and that to this end Ondercoornman de Wind was to be sent to the tin quarters.<sup>14</sup> De Wind had already made a successful voyage to Kedah, which yielded 23,000lb. of tin and some rice.<sup>15</sup>

The Dutch were, however, seeking a more permanent solution to the problem of increasing the value of the Company's business at Malacca. To this end they began to approach the rulers of various neighbouring states, seeking possible trading concessions, while indicating that the Company no longer necessarily intended to remain aloof from local affairs.

In July 1744 the Governor-General sent a letter to the ruler of Johore, Sultan Suleiman, complaining of the piratical habits pursued by a number of his subjects. They made the sea unsafe in many places, and traded without passes or permission from the VOC to

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<sup>13</sup>

*Realia*, Vol. II, p.178

<sup>14</sup>

*Ibid*, p.181

<sup>15</sup>

*Malacca to Batavia*, 30 April 1744, p.624

Borneo, the Celebes and other islands to which the Company prohibited trade, carrying out all sorts of smuggling activities at these places. They also 'forgot themselves' to such an extent as to come yearly to the coast of Java 'even within sight of this town [Batavia]' to raid, steal and otherwise molest passing vessels. And, the letter continued, though the Governor-General and his Council wished to believe that all this was done without the knowledge of the Sultan, whose friendship they were anxious on their part to keep, nevertheless he must put an end to this state of affairs.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to this demand notice was given of a new restriction on the trade to Java from the peninsula. All ships bound for Java must first call at Batavia, on pain of confiscation of their goods and vessel. This last section was a new attempt to stamp out the smuggling trade in opium and cloth from the Straits area, where these articles were readily available, to Java, where the Company claimed sole rights to the sale of these items.<sup>17</sup>

In reply to this, the Batavian Government received two letters, one from Daing Chela, the Bugis Raja Muda of Johore, and one from Sultan Suleiman.<sup>18</sup> These letters were almost identical, and the hostile tone of the reply stamps it as Daing Chela's composition. He denied all knowledge of the piratical activities to which the

<sup>16</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 17 July 1744, pp.594-7

<sup>17</sup>

Ibid, p.596

<sup>18</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 29 December 1744, pp.1-6 (Copies of letters sent by the Sultan and 'Young King of Johore' to Batavia)

[RAJA MUDA]



Governor-General had referred, and declared that the understanding between the Company and Johore had been 'exactly maintained'; his letter ends with a counter-complaint about the treatment of some of his subjects by the Dutch government at Samarang. No assurance was given that the pirates and other 'sea rovers' who operated in Johore's territory would be curbed.<sup>19</sup>

The complaints of the Governor General had been mainly directed against the Bugis subjects of Daing Chela, whose trade at Riouw and Selangor by the end of the 1730's was diverting large amounts of tin and pepper to foreign merchants. The number of those who annually visited the Straits of Malacca, especially the English, had already increased as the trade to China grew in importance as tea became a valuable import to Europe.<sup>20</sup> This change had brought about a revival of the European trade to the East; the French and the Danish East India Companies were re-vitalised, and new groups, the abortive Ostend and Philippines Companies and the Swedish East India Company, were set up.<sup>21</sup> Two Swedish vessels were reported to be at Riouw in 1741.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup>

Ibid, pp.2-3,

<sup>20</sup>

Glanann, Trade, pp.213

<sup>21</sup>

John Harris, A Complete collection of voyages and travails... (London 1744-1748) Vol.II, p.963, 965-975, 978 and 981

<sup>22</sup>

The ships were first reported in February 1741, and it was feared that they were French vessels which had come to set up a factory at Riouw for the French Company. Malacca to Batavia, 10 February 1741, p.426. This fear was allayed when further information arrived about the ships, which were Swedish vessels bound for China from Stockholm, forced to spend the winter at the Malay port as they had missed the monsoon to China. Malacca to Batavia, 15 March 1741, p.4



These merchants were able to trade profitably in the Malay ports, especially at Riouw and Selangor. European merchants now began regularly to frequent the latter port; the Malacca government complained of the smuggling trade in tin and pepper carried on there in exchange for opium, iron canons, saltpetre, cloth and salt.<sup>23</sup>

The Dutch also objected to the more forceful activities of the Bugis. In 1743 their 'piratical activities' were said to be 'daily increasing.'<sup>24</sup> In the previous year they had even dared to attack a French ship bound for Manila. Another outrage had been carried out upon a Chinese junk from Limbo, bound for Malacca. This vessel had been looted by a fleet led by Daing Chela. An interesting point was noted by the captain of this junk, who said Daing Chela had promised that, if the vessel went to Riouw, the cargo would be paid for in tin.<sup>25</sup> This was the position in the Straits of Malacca when Governor Van Imhoff decided that the Company's trade in that area must be improved.

As Daing Chela had refused to curb the 'piratical activities' of his subjects, the Dutch authorities at Batavia prepared to take steps themselves to protect the small trade of the Straits. An extra yacht was sent to Malacca in 1745 to help patrol against opium smuggling and piracy. The Malacca government was ordered to re-establish the outpost on the Dindings Island to help these

<sup>23</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 23 February 1746, p.59

<sup>24</sup>

GM. 5 April, 1743, pp. 1743-4

<sup>25</sup>

Ibid, p.1744

guardships protect the small traders.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile they continued attempting to come to terms with the Malay rulers.

In February 1745 Claas de Wind was sent on a new mission, to Riouw and Indragiri. He carried letters from the Malacca government to the rulers of Johore. He was optimistically instructed to persuade Sultan Suleiman to deliver up all the tin brought to Riouw to the Company, and exclude the foreign traders from that port. The messages to Johore again contained complaints about the piratical activities of the Sultan's subjects, and hopes that these would be curbed. Also, the Sultan and the Raja Muda were to be persuaded to obtain their provisions from Malacca in future, and to divert foreign merchants, especially the Chinese junks, to Batavia.<sup>27</sup> All the tin from the Johorese tin-quarters was to be delivered to Malacca. Just how this desirable state of affairs was to be attained is not clear, but de Wind was instructed that it must be done by 'mercantile' means; for it was 'wholly inconvenient to the Company to meddle unnecessarily in any native differences' at that time.<sup>28</sup>

The Malacca Governor was, however, well aware of the 'secret hostility' which existed between the Malays and Bugis at the court

26

Batavia to Malacca, 12 November 1745, p. 753. 'It has also been approved that in order to facilitate this (tin) trade, as a convenience [commoditeit] for our guardships and the relief of small traders to establish once more the post on the Dindings Island with 25 to 30 European soldiers, and ~~so~~ many Malays, but no Bugis...'

27

Malacca to Batavia, 26 February 1745, pp. 71-4

28

Ibid, p. 74

of Johore at that time.<sup>29</sup> Though the Malay ruler, Sultan Suleiman, had not openly challenged the Bugis position in Johore since his unsuccessful appeal for the VOC's help in the early 1720's,<sup>30</sup> he had attempted to strengthen his position by contracting marriages between his family and the Malay chiefs of the east coast of the peninsula. In 1729 his daughter married the son of the ruler of Trengganu,<sup>31</sup> and this prince, Mansur Shah, became a strong opponent of Bugis influence at Riouw.<sup>32</sup> The Bugis seem to have received a set back, for in 1745 the Raja Muda Daing Chela died at Riouw, and his successor, Daing Kemboja, left for Selangor, and did not return for three years.<sup>33</sup> The Malay party at Riouw seized this opportunity

<sup>29</sup>

Ibid, p.74

<sup>30</sup>

GM. 30 November 1724, p.847. See Charter IV, p. 29

<sup>31</sup>

Netscher, *Djohor*, p. 69

<sup>32</sup>

Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, XI, ii, p.158. (This chronicle states that 'The Dato Bendahara and his Trengganu friends created trouble between Bugis and Malays...' and later 'The Yamtuan Kechil of Trengganu [Mansur Shah] and the Bendahara created more trouble in Riau.'

<sup>33</sup>

Netscher notes that Daing Chela died in May 1745, and suggests that this was a direct consequence of De Wind's mission to Riouw. He refers to a rumour mentioned by Governor Albinus that Daing Chela had been poisoned. *Djohor*, p.71. This may well have been the case in view of the retreat of Daing Kemboja to Selangor. Netscher believed that this prince was at Selangor at the time of Daing Chela's death, but Winstedt's translation of the *Tufhat al-Nafis* seems to me to indicate that he was at Riouw, but left, i.e. '[Daing Chela] dies on Wednesday 17 Rabi'u'l-akhir, 1158. After going to Selangor and consulting his relatives there, Daing Kemboja accepts on Monday, 11 Rabi'u'l - Awal, 1161, the office of Y. T. Muda...'. Daing Kemboja 'returns to Riau' on Thursday 17 Dzu'l - Hijjah 1163. Winstedt, *JMBRAS* X, ii, p.317. (These are dates relating to the Muslim calendar).

to be rid of the Bugis, and Suleiman made an overture to the Company. He sent a conciliatory letter to Batavia,<sup>34</sup> and Claas de Wind was again sent to Riouw in February 1746, with the result that the Sultan 'in future would be dissuaded from all tyranny... [and] that the Malacca inhabitants would be able to use this forewater freely and without molestation'.<sup>35</sup> Suleiman had promised to prevent piracy around Malacca. He would not, however, prevent the admission of foreign traders to Riouw, for such an action would bring upon him the general hatred of the people of the place, who relied on this trade for a living. For the same reason the tin could not be promised to the Company, as the Dutch paid at a lower rate than other foreign merchants. But to prove his sincere desire for the friendship of the VOC despite his inability to comply with their <sup>Company's request</sup>, he presented the Company with the territory of Siak.<sup>36</sup>

Since 1718 Siak had been ruled by the Minangkabau prince Raja Kechil, who had continued to be a bitter enemy of the Bugis. His hostility was inherited by his son Raja Mahomet, who became ruler of Siak after Raja Kechil. Raja Mahomet was for a time driven out of Siak by his brother Raja Alam, and tried to establish himself

<sup>34</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 1 December 1745, pp. 556-7. (Copy of a letter from Sultan Suleiman to Batavia)

<sup>35</sup>

GA, 31 December 1746, p. 284. See also Batavia to Malacca, 23 February 1746, pp. 30-3

<sup>36</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 31 December 1746, p. 285. See also Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. 5, p. 425



on the Malay peninsula.<sup>37</sup> In 1746 he attacked Selangor, with his ally, Daing Mateka.<sup>38</sup> This attack failed, and he next established himself in the Muar River, where he attempted to collect the tin produce of the people of Rembau, who he claimed as subjects, since they were of Minangkabau descent.<sup>39</sup> He seems to have abandoned this attempt by the following year, however, and have returned to Siak.<sup>40</sup> He was reputedly 'embittered' by the gift of Siak to the VOC, and declared that Siak and Riouw were subject to the ruler of Pagar Ujung (the head of the Minangkabau state) and that he would not receive orders from any other power;<sup>41</sup> but the Governor of Malacca sent friendly letters to this prince, who he hoped to bring to recognise the rights of the Company in Siak, including their right to free trade, by peaceful means.<sup>42</sup>

37

Malacca to Batavia, 27 December 1743, p.74. The Bugis Chronicler describes how 'The two sons of Raja Kechil...fight for the throne of Siak.... R. Kechil dies and first R. Mahmud and then R. Alam and then R. Mahmud gets the throne of Siak. R. Mahmud and Daing Matteko [Mateka] fled once to Muar but were driven out by S. Suleiman and the Y. T. Muda [Daing Chola] ...' Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.317.

38

Malacca to Batavia, 23 February 1746, p.46

39

Malacca to Batavia, 9 January 1747, pp.16-20

40

In 1746 Suleiman had gone with a large fleet, to invade Siak, but had been dissuaded by Governor Albinus, who feared that such a war in Siak would damage Malacca's trade there. It is therefore probable that Suleiman was already the declared ally of Mahmet, and aided him to return to Siak

41

G1. 31 December 1747, p.308

42

Malacca to Batavia, 9 January 1747, p.20



Siak was meanwhile enjoying a large and varied commerce. The Company and the Malacca burghers went to Siak for supplies of gold and timber, but they found it hard to dispose of the cloth and other goods they brought in exchange, because of competition from foreign traders. Raja Mahomet encouraged the trade of Indian merchants and traded with Kedah, whose ruler had begun to fetch his own supplies of cloth from India.<sup>43</sup> Tin was sent to Kedah in exchange. As usual, these private merchants could sell their cloth at much lower rates than the Malacca burghers. English merchants were also admitted. An English Captain Munro especially spent several long periods at Siak.<sup>44</sup> These foreign merchants brought opium as well as cloth, which caused another problem for the Dutch, for the opium was smuggled into Java by Javanese merchants who visited Siak with rice, salt and foodstuffs,<sup>45</sup> despite all the efforts of the Company's authority to secure a monopoly of the sale of this drug in Java. In 1746 the Malaccan authorities felt obliged to admit a vessel from Java which came without a pass 'for fear he might go and deal with the English Captain Munro at Siak, and take opium and cloth back to Java'.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 5 March 1747, p.78. See also Harrison, JMBRAS, XVII, i, p.29

<sup>44</sup>

See Malacca to Batavia, 23 February 1746, p.37

<sup>45</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 6 March 1744, p.212

<sup>46</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 6 November 1746, p.463

In these circumstances it is apparent that Suleiman hoped to gain more than the good will of the Company by handing Siak over to it. Siak was a substantial commercial rival, and if the Johorese Sultan could not himself benefit from the trade there, it would be better for him if the Dutch were able to limit it. The foreign traders might then come to Ricuw, where he ruled in the absence of the Bugis Raja Muda. The Malacca governor also suggested that Suleiman was encouraged to make this gift to the VOC in hopes of revenging himself against Raja Kechil's family.<sup>47</sup>

The Dutch did not gratify the Johore ruler by immediately acting to suppress the trade of Siak, however. They were carrying on a reasonably satisfactory trade - the gold trade to Patapahan had especially been improving, and the Batavian Government did not want to be involved in a costly war with Siak.<sup>48</sup> Trouble had broken out once more in Java, where the old state of Mataram was breaking up and bit by bit losing its territory to the Company. Between 1749 and 1755 the Company had to fight once more for its gains there. In 1748, trouble also broke out in Bantam, the important pepper producing state in West Java, and Dutch forces were needed to quell the rebellion. No men or equipment could be spared for the moment to areas more peripheral to the VOC's interests.<sup>49</sup> But the gift of Siak was not to be left unused; it was to be wielded as a sort of political 'big stick' to bring Siak more into line with the Company's trading

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<sup>47</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 1 April 1747, p.434

<sup>48</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XVII, i, p.25

<sup>49</sup>

Hall, Southeast Asia, pp.313-4

policies, according to the following extract from a letter sent by the Governor-General in Council to Malacca:

Firstly, it will be sufficient that you hold him steadily in fear and prevent him admitting any of our competitors, even the Chinese junks, and so that the small trade of the Malaccan inhabitants remains free and open, and our own rights to cut timber [are observed] ....<sup>50</sup>

The reconciliation with the Sultan of Johore did make it easier for Governor Albinus to proceed with one active policy. In an attempt to prevent the tin produced in Rembau, Naning and the other small states in the hinterland of Malacca being carried to Selangor or Siak, Dutch patrol ships were to be set at the entrance of the Panagi and Muar Rivers, which together with the Malacca River, were the outlets for the area.<sup>51</sup> This was the old method of shoring up a contracted monopoly. It was feared, however, that the Malacca government might be out-reaching its authority in these actions, and an appeal was made to Faja Suleiman, as the legal suzerain of this area, to authorise these Dutch patrols.<sup>52</sup> The VOC negotiated a fresh contract with Naning in 1746, which among other things bound the people of Naning to deliver any tin or pepper which came on their market to Malacca.<sup>53</sup> The Batavian government ordered that the patrols on these rivers 'were not to make the use of these rivers impossible

<sup>50</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 22 October, 1746, p.690

<sup>51</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 9 January 1747, p.13

<sup>52</sup>

Ibid, p.15

<sup>53</sup>

Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. V, pp.426-30

to the hinterland people...but were only to make them bring tin down the Malacca River, and to prevent the carriage of this mineral to the English and others at Selangor.<sup>54</sup> This patrolling was not, however, very successful, and Suleiman could give them nothing beyond his verbal authority - the Bugis dominated the rivers in question, and the Malaccan garrison of 364 was not sufficient to control the flow of trade on these streams.<sup>55</sup>

Another of Governor Albinus's ventures was much more successful. This was an attempt to renew the Company's trade with the major tin-producing state of Perak. Perak had originally formed part of the Malacca Sultanate, and in the seventeenth century had become a vassal of Aceh. Hamilton described Perak in the early eighteenth century as 'properly a part of the kingdom Johore', but there is little evidence that the Perak Sultans thought of themselves as anything but independent rulers by this time. He also notes that 'The Country produces more Tin than any in India, but the Inhabitants are so treacherous, faithless and bloody, that no European Nation can keep Factories there with safety.'<sup>56</sup> The VOC first set up a post in Perak in 1650, having contracted with Aceh for a half share of all Perak's annual tin output. But this post was attacked in the following year and the Dutch officials there were massacred. A new factory was opened in 1655, but again brought

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GM. 31 December 1747, p.310

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Ibid.

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Hamilton, A New Account, Vol. II, p. 40



little satisfaction, for neither the people of Perak nor the Achinese fulfilled their promise to deliver tin. The factory was moved sometime after 1660 to the Dindings Island, where the garrison was felt to be more secure from raids by the Malays. For a time large amounts of tin were brought from Perak, but the Dutch garrison was massacred again in 1690, and the factory was abandoned.<sup>57</sup>

There was little contact between Perak and the Dutch government at Malacca during the first four decades of the eighteenth century. In 1710, perhaps out of fear of the growing power of the Raja Muda of Johore, envoys were sent to Malacca from Perak requesting that the Dutch post be re-established.<sup>58</sup> But this was not done; the Malaccan government pointed out that the Perak ruler still owed the Company 'the considerable sum of 43,430 rds', and that this must be paid, and other indications given that the proposition would satisfy the VOC's requirements, before such a venture could be started again.<sup>59</sup> No further overtures came from Perak.

In 1746 the growing search for a means to improve the tin trade led Governor Albinus to send a mission to the ruler of Perak. He later described how he 'gradually prepared the ground with Perak' (though no record of a previous mission to that country during his time exists),<sup>1</sup> and just at the time when the Buginese had worked out a division of the tin interests among the members of the court

<sup>57</sup>

W. E. Maxwell; 'The Dutch in Perak', *JSEBRAS*, No.10 (1882), pp.247-57

<sup>58</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 11 July 1710, p.734

<sup>59</sup>

*Ibid*, p.735



of that kingdom, I obtained an exclusive contract through a special envoy in the year 1746'.<sup>60</sup>

The Sultan of Perak at that time was Mudzafar Shah, but the real power lay with his son-in-law Iskander, the Raja Muda.<sup>61</sup> The Bugis had been intriguing with the nobles to secure the tin output of Perak; in 1743 they had openly attacked the state.<sup>62</sup> The Raja Muda of Perak, in whose presence the treaty was signed, probably intended to draw on Dutch support to bolster his own power.<sup>63</sup> He stipulated that the Company must build a fortification in his land, and he used the Dutch presence to rid himself of at least one powerful enemy, Raja Alim, a possible opponent for the throne on the death of the old Sultan Mudzafar Shah. Raja Alim was known to have intrigued with the Bugis, and perhaps even collaborated in their invasion in 1743. With the consent of the Sultan the Dutch officers at Perak seized Raja Alim as he came to sell some tin, and

<sup>60</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XVII, i, p.26

<sup>61</sup>

Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu, p.212

<sup>62</sup>

The Bugis attack on Perak is recorded in the chronicles of Riouw and Perak, but the sources differ about the results of the attack. The Sadjarah Radja-Radja-Riouw I, as translated by Winstedt, claims that Daing Chela 'conquered Perak from Selangor' and brought hostages back to Riouw from Perak. Winstedt JMBRAS, XI, ii, p.158. The Misa Melayu claims on the contrary that Raja Muda Iskandar of Perak drove off the Bugis forces. Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu, p.28. One of the Siak princes was also troubling Perak, Ibid, pp.27-8, Malacca to Batavia, 18 August 1746, p. 412.

<sup>63</sup>

In 1746 the Dutch wrote that Daing Kemboja hoped to capture all the tin produce of Perak for his trade to the English. There was a considerable import of tin to Madras. The agreement between the Dutch and Perak was regarded by both as an 'alliance against the Bugis of Selangor'. Malacca to Batavia, 18 August 1746, p.414

despatched him to Malacca, where he was kept for some years under house arrest.<sup>64</sup>

By the time that Governor Albinus was released from his office in 1750, the efforts made to improve Malacca's trade were proving worthwhile. The tin trade had been put on a very satisfactory footing, with the collection at Perak yielding enough and to spare to satisfy the demands of the European and China markets. Albinus emphasised in his Report that this new success was the result of the agreement with Perak, and that 'special care must be taken to remove by appropriate measures any difficulties that may arise in the kingdom of Perak'. The gold trade was also prospering, though 'in so far as the sale of the Company's cloth and other commodities forms the basis of the gold trade, that depends completely upon untiring efforts in the face of numerous competitors if we are regularly to outdo them, especially in the Siak and Indragiri Rivers'. He ended his report on the sanguine note that 'Malacca can thus be a source of profit to the Company if one concentrates on maintaining it as a well-regulated establishment with as little expense as possible.'<sup>65</sup>

Whether or not he was correct in his claim that Malacca became a profit-making post under his rule,<sup>66</sup> the policies he had followed

<sup>64</sup>

Harrison, *JMBRAS*, XVII, i, p.27; Raja Chulan, *Misa Melayu*, p.31; *Malacca to Batavia*, 15 October 1749, p.359

<sup>65</sup>

Harrison, *JMBRAS*, XVII, i, pp.27-9

<sup>66</sup>

*Ibid*, p. 29. See Chapter I, p. 63

had had one very clear result, and that was to draw the Company closely into the web of political rivalry which then existed in the Straits. Interference in Perak and Siak reinforced the reconciliation with Suleiman to put the Dutch in a position of active hostility to Bugis claims; a position they had previously gone out of their way to avoid. Albinus relates that in his first interview with Suleiman, when the latter was planning to attack Siak, 'I also asked him why he did not first drive out the Buginese (by whose permission he appeared to rule) from the Straits, and then bring the various peoples under his own authority.'<sup>67</sup> Suleiman's reply indicated that he was willing to do this, if he could be sure of Dutch support. He promised that all tin produced in the area would be delivered to Malacca if he succeeded in regaining his territories.<sup>68</sup> Only token support was given, however; the VOC's government still wished to avoid a costly entanglement in the area if possible.

This was to become increasingly difficult now that involvement with the local states had begun. In 1747, against the advice of the Dutch governor, Suleiman attacked Raja Kechil's son, Raja Alam, who had settled with his followers at Siantan.<sup>69</sup> The Malaccan government sent gunpowder and provisions to Suleiman at Riouw, but avoided any more direct contributions.<sup>70</sup> Suleiman still postponed any attack on

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<sup>67</sup>

Ibid, p. 25

<sup>68</sup>

Ibid, p. 25

<sup>69</sup>Winstedt, *JMÉRAS*, X, ii, p.317; Malacca to Batavia, 1 April 1747, p. 434<sup>70</sup>Malacca to Batavia, 24 May, 1747, p. 453

the Bugis at Selangor and Linggi. The new Raja Muda, Daing Kemboja, returned to Riouw in 1748, though Mansur Shah and the Malay notables were plotting to overthrow Bugis power there.

It was in Siak that the Company finally became actively drawn into the struggle. Driven from Siantan by a combination of Malay and Bugis forces in 1748, Raja Alam retired to Bata Baru and threw in his lot with the Bugis, marrying a sister of Daing Kemboja.<sup>71</sup> In May 1753 he invaded Siak and once more established himself as ruler there.<sup>72</sup> Mahmet fled to Riouw, where he flung himself on the mercy of Sultan Suleiman, a relative on his mother's side, and promised to regard the Johore Sultan as his overlord if the latter helped him to regain power in Siak. Suleiman must have regarded Mahmet as the lesser of the two evils for he set out to attack Siak.<sup>73</sup> The Batavian government informed the Heeren XVII in 1754 that the Company would not take part in this struggle, at least not

<sup>71</sup>

Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.316

<sup>72</sup>

Malacca to Batavia, 27 October 1753. The Governor-General wrote that there had been a 'considerable revolution' in Siak in 1753, and Raja Mahmet had been ousted by Raja Alam. GM, 30 December 1753, p.454

<sup>73</sup>

Before Raja Alam's successful attack, Suleiman had been at war with Mahmet in an attempt to force Siak to recongise Johore's authority. Kol.Arch. 2629, p. 6; Malacca to Batavia, 5 April 1752 See Netscher, Djohor, p. 77



openly, but at the same time a new treaty was drawn up between the VOC and Johore.<sup>74</sup>

However, the acute disruption of their trade which followed the change of rule in Siak soon became so disadvantageous that the Company was forced to act. A small force was sent to reinforce the Johorese,<sup>75</sup> and eventually, Raja Alam was once more forced to leave Siak. The hostility between Malay and Bugis forces in Riouw now became open, and Daing Kemboja left Riouw for Linggi, taking with him 'all the canon, a good number of vessels and many people, mostly Bugis'. He was joined by Raja Alam, who was attempting to form a coalition with the Bugis and Minangkabaus against Suleiman and the Company.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup>

The government at Malacca told the central government that they had never promised any help to Raja Suleiman. Kol.Arch. 2712, p.167. Malacca to Batavia, 17 March 1753. When Raja Suleiman declared his determination to recapture Siak, the governor of Malacca wrote that the Company 'wished to stay outside this struggle'. However, the envoy Avrij Verbrugge was sent several times to Riouw to discuss the situation. The Malacca government was anxious about the damaging effect that the constant, warring in the Straits was having on the local 'small trade'. Kol.Arch. 2753, p. 53. Malacca to Batavia 30 April 1755. Netscher described how the Malacca government sent envoys to Riouw in 1754 to draw up a new treaty which incorporated several safeguards to their trade to Siak. The treaty of 1754 was rejected by the Dutch, however, because Suleiman inserted a clause in which the Company pledged itself to help him against his rebellious subjects, whoever those might be. The Dutch authorities felt this was too binding a statement and rejected this treaty, in favour of the 1756 one presented in an abridged form in Appendix 2. See Netscher, Djohor, pp.81-5

<sup>75</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2453, p. 317. Malacca to Batavia, 31 August 1755

<sup>76</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2753, pp.327-8. Malacca to Batavia, 27 September 1755



Faced with this hostile coalition, and tempted by the advantages promised by the 1756 treaty 'if the Bugis are brought under control' and will return the tin areas to Johore,<sup>77</sup> the Government at Malacca decided to take positive action. When Suleiman visited Malacca with his forces early in 1756, the Malacca government suggested that they crush the Bugis 'once and for all' with their combined power.<sup>78</sup> Suleiman was less eager for a direct confrontation, pleading that he must return to protect his capital. The Malays promised to return as soon as possible, but though 'daily expected' since January, Mansur Shah did not appear at Malacca until June, then delayed the attack still further. In the meantime, Daing Kemboja seized the initiative and, supported by the forces of Raja Alam and Raja Hadil of Rembau, laid siege to Malacca.<sup>79</sup>

Malacca was besieged by the Bugis and Minangkabau forces from October 1756 until the middle of the following year.<sup>80</sup> The Dutch sent out skirmishing parties, but the besiegers generally withdrew before them into the jungle. The fortress itself does not seem to have been endangered, but its functions as a commercial station were greatly hampered. The surrounding country was devastated, and many

<sup>77</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2776, p.33, Malacca to Batavia, 9 April 1756

<sup>78</sup>

Ibid, p.34

<sup>79</sup>

Ibid, pp.65-70

<sup>80</sup>

The siege is described in detail in the extract from the Malacca Daghregister published by Netscher in 1864. See E. Netscher 'Twee Belegeringen van Malakka, 1756/7 en 1784', TBG, 13, (1864) pp.286-324

of the local people fled into the town. This caused 'much poverty and misery' in the town, and the increased pressure on the supplies pointed up one of Malacca's main weaknesses.<sup>81</sup> Food, especially rice, which had to be imported from Java, Kedah or Siam was always a problem to the government. On this occasion, when the ruler of Kedah 'absolutely refuses to sell his food to the Malay people who come here',<sup>82</sup> the situation became especially critical.

By February the Malaccan government were requesting reinforcements from Batavia,<sup>83</sup> and in June 80 European soldiers were sent from Bantan to Malacca.<sup>84</sup> In March an abortive truce and parley with the native leaders was held. The latter required the Dutch to remain neutral in the affairs of Siak and Johore; wanted in effect, 'to detach [the Dutch] from the Johorese ruler, destroy both Suleiman and Mahomet entirely, and thus to make their own the complete government of these Straits, which the Bugis have already desired for a long time, and which would be harmful to the Company and the Malakkan burghers'. The Dutch refused to negotiate on this basis.<sup>85</sup>

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Ibid, p.310

82

Relations with Kedah had become strained when Malacca concluded the tin agreement with Perak, for the latter state had been the main source of Kedah's tin for sale to the merchants from India. See Chapter VI, p. 217

83

Kol.Arch. 2776, p.20 Malacca to Batavia, 4 February 1757

84

Batavia to Malacca, 7 June 1757

85

Netscher, TBG, 13, p.310 ; Kol.Arch. 2801, pp.18-23

Negotiations were attempted again in April, but the Malaccan government again rejected the demand that they withdraw from the quarrels between the Bugis and Sultan Suleiman. They demanded, on the contrary, that Daing Kemboja must submit to the Johore ruler and deliver up to him the tin places.<sup>86</sup> The besieging forces appear to have lost their enthusiasm and unity after this.<sup>87</sup> Finally Daing Kemboja withdrew to Linggi, where he found the river blockaded by the Dutch.<sup>88</sup> In November he was attacked by Dutch forces. A Dutch post was set up at Linggi, and the war finally came to an end in January 1758, when Daing Kemboja and the Sultan of Selangor submitted to the Company. New treaties were drawn up between Malacca and Linggi, Rembau and Selangor, which appear to grant considerable commercial privileges to the VOC in these territories.<sup>89</sup>

In fact the VOC gained little by this war with the Bugis, which had increased the expenditure at Malacca and brought hardship to

<sup>86</sup>

Netscher, TBG, 13, p.322

<sup>87</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2801, p.29. The Malacca government reported 'unrest' among the enemy forces, as they became disappointed in their hopes of plundering Malacca.

<sup>88</sup>

The Dutch blockade of Linggi in fact preceded the siege of Malacca. It was begun, in an attempt to prevent English and French trade at Linggi, early in 1756 when the Dutch hoped to be swiftly joined by Malay forces from Ricuw or Siak. Kol.Arch. 2858, p.192, Dekker, Report, 1759. See also Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.316

<sup>89</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2827, pp.15-17., Malacca to Batavia 6 February 1758 ; Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. 6, pp.148-155

the inhabitants of the town.<sup>90</sup> The Bugis power in Selangor and Linggi was not broken, and Raja Mahomet in Siak had already shown himself unwilling to submit to the wishes of the Company.<sup>91</sup>

While this conflict with the Bugis developed, the VOC had also been encountering difficulties in Perak. A new treaty had been drawn up in 1753,<sup>92</sup> when Raja Iskandar succeeded Mudzafar Shah, but the Malacca government suspected that the new ruler would not favour the Company.<sup>93</sup> The garrison at Perak was strengthened

<sup>90</sup>

The expenditure at Malacca rose from 198486/15/- guilders in 1755/6, a figure which was already above average, to 235,984/12/- guilders in 1756/7. See Appendix 1. The Malacca government had reported that food became scarce and dear during the siege. Netcher, TEG, 13, p.310.

<sup>91</sup>

News had already come to Malacca that pirate vessels were operating from the Siak River. Kol. Arch. 2801, p.40. Malacca to Batavia, 26 August 1757. The ruler of Selangor broke the terms of his treaty with the Company almost immediately by allowing an English captain to trade opium for tin. Kol. Arch. 2827, p.18, Malacca to Batavia, 6 February 1758.

<sup>92</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2712, p.290, Malacca to Batavia, 8 September 1753

<sup>93</sup>

Kol. Arch. 2629, p.15, Malacca to Batavia, 12 October 1752. This dispatch reports the death of the old Sultan, presumably Mudzafar Shah. The Misa Melayu puts the death of Mudzafar in 1756. The Dutch records also disagree with the author of the Misa Melayu over the date of the death of Iskandar. They may have been mistaken, or misled by some ceremony to elevate Iskandar to a more lofty rank in 1752, though with a Resident actually present in Perak, this seems unlikely. The Dutch also mention that Iskandar had lately married the daughter of Mudzafar, and this is corroborated by the Misa Melayu (p.214). It seems probable that the dates in the Chronicle are unreliable, and that the 14 years' reign of Iskandar is by Moslem reckoning, so that he, in fact, reigned from 1752-1765.



in case of trouble, and the Resident was ordered to keep two vessels on hand, one for communication with Malacca, the other to 'absolutely' prevent the clandestine export of tin.<sup>94</sup> This did not prevent quantities of tin from being smuggled to Selangor and Kedah.<sup>95</sup> Meanwhile, the Bugis continued their attempts to win over the state. In 1755 a letter was brought to Perak from Selangor, addressed to the Laxamana, Shahbandar and the head of the Bugis there. It contained the news that 'the people of Riouw, Siaca, Slangoor, Queda and Battu Bara were now as one', and a threat that Perak would be harmed if it continued in its alliance with the VOC.<sup>96</sup> In 1759 the Resident at Perak wrote that a constant stream of strangers came to the Perak River from Kedah, Riouw, Selangor and elsewhere to sell their small wares for tin, which was surrendered to the VOC's post when they left the river. This trade was fraudulent, however, for dirt, stone and other worthless material were mixed with the tin.<sup>97</sup>

Though smuggling continued, and relations between the Dutch and the court of Perak were at times very strained, there is no indication that the ruler of Perak wished to be rid of the Dutch outpost and to break with the Company. He may have been personally involved in the smuggling, but he took care to make no move which was openly hostile

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<sup>94</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2629, p.18. Malacca to Batavia, 12 October 1752

<sup>95</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2712, p.290. Malacca to Batavia, 8 September 1753

<sup>96</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2753 p. 46. Malacca to Batavia, 30 April 1755

<sup>97</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2858 p. 95. Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1759



to the Dutch.<sup>98</sup> He claimed that the smuggling was as injurious to himself as to the Company, and that he was attempting to put a stop to it.<sup>99</sup> He rejected the letter from Selangor, showing no fear of the Bugis' threats, and 'showed satisfaction' when the Dutch garrison prevented an English vessel from entering the river to trade.<sup>100</sup>

His disputes with the Dutch mainly centred around the insufficient provision of specie at the Perak post to pay for the quantities of tin brought there. In 1758, for example, Iskandar came in person to the Dutch lodge with a large fleet of small vessels, all laden with tin, but because the supply of specie proved insufficient, 300 bahars of tin were taken back to the interior.<sup>101</sup>

In 1757 a more serious dispute broke out and Iskandar refused

98

Dutch suspicions of Iskandar were somewhat allayed when he had renewed the treaty in 1753. See Kol.Arch. 2712, p.290. Iskandar's wariness of falling out with Malacca may not have been entirely due to his fear of growing Bugis power. The Dutch still held his rival, Raja Alim, under house arrest at Malacca, and in 1753 it was rumoured in Perak that they intended to release him and place him on the throne of Perak, in Iskandar's place. Kol.Arch. 2712, p.273, Malacca to Batavia 14 July 1753

99

Kol.Arch. 2753, p.44. Malacca to Batavia 30 April 1755

100

Ibid, p.47

101

Kol.Arch. 2827, p.41 Malacca to Batavia 10 March 1758  
See also Kol.Arch. 2858. Dekker, Report, 1759, p.186.

to deliver tin to the Company's lodge at Tanjong Putus.<sup>102</sup> An envoy was sent to Perak to discuss the matter. Iskandar complained that he was obliged to deliver all tin to the Company, when he could obtain a higher price for the mineral from other sources.<sup>103</sup>

It is likely that the situation at Malacca caused him to doubt the value of an alliance with the Company, who seemed hard-pressed by the Bugis. The subsequent withdrawal of the Bugis from Malacca may have resolved his doubt, for in 1758 he had resumed the delivery of tin to the Dutch outpost.<sup>104</sup>

The war with the Bugis in 1756-7 was the first open conflict in which the Company had been involved in the Straits for over a century, and the first occasion on which a Dutch government at Malacca had had to face an attack by a local power. The Bugis siege was not, however, an attempt to drive the Dutch from the Straits and establish a new hegemony in the area. The Bugis leaders had travelled widely in the Archipelago; they had relations in Batavia, and were likely to be well aware of the strength of the Dutch Company.<sup>105</sup> Bugis power and prosperity had not suffered greatly from the presence of a Dutch fortress at Malacca. It was the alliance

<sup>102</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2801, p.47. Malacca to Batavia 26 August 1757. Iskandar had previously argued that the Dutch factor must come up the river to collect the tin, whereas the Company argued that it had to be delivered up to their lodge. Kol.Arch. 2731, p.23, Malacca to Batavia 25 March 1754.

<sup>103</sup>

GM. 31 December 1757, p.654

<sup>104</sup>

GM. 31 December 1758, p.360

<sup>105</sup>

One of the connections of the Bugis princes was Upu Daing Biasa, Major of the Bugis at Batavia. Overbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.370

between Malacca and the Malays of Johore that posed a danger to the Bugis, and to Raja Alam, and it was this alliance that they consistently tried to destroy, by their overtures to Perak (and probably to Johore)<sup>106</sup> and by the terms they hoped to force on the government of Malacca.

The Dutch, on the other hand, claimed that they had entered the war for an 'irreproachable' reason 'since Raja Alam...wished to drive our ally out of his kingdom, whereby the balance (of power) would have been very harmfully upset if the Company had not come to Siak's aid'.<sup>107</sup> This respect for the power balance of the Straits was short lived, as was the determination of the Batavian government not to 'abandon our Johoor ally',<sup>108</sup> for after peace had been made with Daing Kemboja in 1758 the Dutch rejected Suleiman's requests that they set up a post at Riouw to protect his capital from the Bugis. The Dutch had not sought a conflict with the specific

<sup>106</sup>

The Malays at Riouw were not as united against the Bugis, and rivalry existed between Mansur Shah (Tun Dalam), the Sultan of Trengganu, who apparently hoped to succeed Suleiman as Sultan of Johore, and Suleiman's son, Raja di-Baroh. After the initial attack on Linggi Mansur retreated to Riouw, where he 'tried to get [Suleiman] and all the Malays to sail to Trengganu. S. Suleiman hears of the defeat at Linggi and is furious with [Mansur]: his son, Abdu'l-Jalil, Raja di Baroh, wants to fight [Mansur]'. Winstedt, JMERAS, X, ii, p.316

<sup>107</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2786, p.1459 . (Note by the Governor General Jacob Mosel about Malacca, 13 April 1758)

<sup>108</sup>

GM. 31 December 1757, p.648

intention of driving the Eugis from the area, but had been drawn into the war, despite repeated assurances in the beginning of the 1750's that they would remain outside the local struggles, as a result of the policies of the previous decade, initiated to improve the Company's share of the trade of the Straits.



Chapter VI - Riouw becomes a Centre of the Country Trade, 1760-1777

After beating off the Bugis attack in 1757, the Malacca authorities established an outpost at Linggi and negotiated treaties with Daing Kemboja and the Bugis and Malay leaders of Selangor, Naning and Rembau. These confirmed the rights ceded to the VOC by Johore in 1757 - Linggi and Rembau were ceded to the Company, which was to receive all the tin of these places and of the other territories of Johore and, most important of all, no foreign shipping was to be allowed to enter any of the ports of these states;<sup>1</sup> but, as previously, it soon appeared that the local rulers paid very little heed to Dutch 'rights'. The period after 1758 was, on the contrary, one of ever-increasing prosperity for the local ports, the most important of which were Riouw, Selangor, Kedah and Trengganu. Before Daing Kemboja died Riouw had become 'the rendezvous of the private English trade here in the Straits',<sup>2</sup> and a gathering place for merchants and products from all parts of the Archipelago, and beyond.

Daing Kemboja and his allies had made their peace with, and sworn submission to, the VOC early in 1758, but almost immediately

<sup>1</sup> Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol.6, p.148/9. Also Kol.Arch.2827, p.15, Malacca to Batavia, 6 February 1758

<sup>2</sup> Governor Crans Report on Malacca, 1777, p.538



it was learned that the ruler of Selangor had already broken his agreement, and allowed an English merchant to enter his port to trade opium for tin.<sup>3</sup> The Malacca government was informed of this by Mansur Shah, for the Malay rulers at Riouw were far from satisfied with the course of events. Raja Suleiman was in 'great fear' of the Bugis, and Mansur begged the Dutch to send a cruiser to patrol before Riouw, to defend the port from the Bugis.<sup>4</sup> He urged that Raja Alam and Daing Kemboja be completely crushed, and Dutch posts be set up at Selangor and Riouw to prevent the re-establishment of their power. The Malaccan customs officer, Avrij Verbrugge, who was sent to Riouw in 1759, reported that Sultan Suleimon was 'very sick', and his Bendahara also was very weak. Mansur Shah controlled the government.<sup>5</sup> The Trengganu prince returned to his own state at the end of 1759, after 'waiting three months' for some sign that the Dutch were prepared to support him against the Bugis. He left Suleiman's son, Raja Muda Sultan Abdul Jalil, known as the Raja di-Baroh, in charge at Riouw.<sup>6</sup>

This prince set out to negotiate a reconciliation with the Bugis, for with the departure of the Trengganu party Riouw was

<sup>3</sup>  
Kol.Arch.2827, p.18. Malacca to Batavia, 6 February 1758

<sup>4</sup>  
 Ibid, p.19

<sup>5</sup>  
Kol.Arch.2858, p.75. Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1759

<sup>6</sup>  
Kol.Arch.2858, p.30. Malacca to Batavia (copy of letter from Mansur Shah) 11 December 1759. See Chapter V, footnote no. 106

'bare of folk' and could not hope to defend itself.<sup>7</sup> There is some reason to believe that the return of the Bugis was not so repugnant to all sections of the people of Riouw, for since the Bugis departure Riouw had been 'empty and poor'<sup>8</sup> - it could not have been busy as an entrepot for foreign trade while cooperating with the Dutch. Raja di-Baroh went to Selangor to invite Daing Kemboja to return to Riouw with him. Sultan Suleiman died before this mission had been accomplished;<sup>9</sup> Raja di-Baroh also fell sick and died in Selangor, and so when Daing Kemboja returned to Riouw in 1761 it was to rule Johore as Regent, for the new Sultan was the Raja di-Baroh's eight year old son Ahmad.<sup>10</sup> Kemboja soon demonstrated the power of his newly established control, for when this child died after a brief reign, and the Malay faction attempted to install an adult candidate to the throne, the Bugis leader forced the issue and had the deceased child's younger brother, Raja Mahmud (a child of about two years) chosen 'by force, his armed Bugis overawing the Bendahara,

<sup>7</sup> Kol.Arch.2858, p.72. Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1759.

<sup>8</sup> Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.316. (Summary of the Tufhat al-Nafis; 'Piau is so empty and poor since the Bugis left that Sultan Sulaiman sends Raja di-Baroh Abdul-Jalil to fetch the Y(am) T(uan) Muda. from Linggi')

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p.316; GM 31 December 1761. Suleiman died on the 20 August 1760.

<sup>10</sup> Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.316.

Tenenggong and other Malays'.<sup>11</sup> A plot between the Malay chiefs of Riouw and Raja Ismael to attack Riouw and 'remove the infant ruler to safety' was also defeated by Daing Kemboja's Bugis forces. This was the last open attack made by the Malay factions on Riouw, though they continued to intrigue against the Bugis.<sup>12</sup> Thereafter the port was left in peace, and Daing Kemboja 'paid no heed to Malay jealousies and was fair to all races',<sup>13</sup> no doubt in the hope of promoting the peace and security necessary if Riouw was to become a major centre of trade once more.

He outwardly maintained fairly good relations with the Malacca government, probably for similar reasons, though he consistently defied the existing agreements between the VOC and Johore in his

11

Ibid, p.315. Malay opposition to the Bugis within Riouw had centred around Mansur Shah. His retreat showed that he did not expect to hold out against the Bugis without the help of the VOC. Other Malay chiefs left Riouw for the Mainland at this time; the Bendahara Muda took up permanent residence at Pahang.

Winstedt, JMBRAS, XI, ii, p.159

12

Winstedt, JMBPAS, XI, ii, p.159. Daing Kemboja defeated Raja Ismael in a sea battle off the Straits of Singapore. See also Winstedt, JMERAS, X, ii, p. 315

13

Winstedt, JMBRAS, XI, ii, p.159

efforts to rebuild Riouw's trade.<sup>14</sup> The Dutch had expected little else; in 1761 Governor-General wrote that the Company could expect little good from the new regime in Johore.<sup>15</sup> Though the terms of the 1757 treaty stipulated that no foreign Europeans should be allowed to come to trade in the ports of Johore, Riouw soon became a favourite stop-over port for many of the English private merchants who now began to trade regularly between India and China.<sup>16</sup> It was a port where they could freely buy many of the products of the Archipelago

14

For instance he refused to take sides in the VOC's quarrel with Raja Mahamud of Siak in 1760, Netscher, *Djohor*, p.106. He also took the trouble to cultivate friendly personal relations with the Dutch at Malacca. In 1759 the Malacca envoy Avrij Verbrugge took one of Daing Kemboja's daughters to Malacca to join her father, (Netscher, *Djohor*, p.96). In 1774 Daing Kemboja wrote to Malacca of his 'thanks to the Malacca people for their help to his children...' *Kol.Arch.3335*, Daing Kemboja to Malacca, 27 March 1774.

However, though in this same letter he had sworn to maintain his treaty with the VOC 'while the sun and the moon continue to shine' five years previously he had invited the English merchant, Francis Light, to establish a factory on Pulau Rijang (Pesong) near Bintan, 'for the convenience of carrying on trade with the English'.

*ESR Vol.I*, p.144. Light to Andrew Ross, 1 February 1769

15

GM 31 December 1761, p.680

16

By 1767 there had been 'a great increase in the trade of Johore' *Batavia to Malacca*, 30 May 1767, p.255. D. K. Bassett, in his study of 'British Commercial and Strategic Interest in the Malay Peninsula During the Late Eighteenth Century' (Eastin and Roolvink, *Malayan and Indonesian Studies*, p.123) states that British trade to Riouw was well established by 1771. This is substantiated by the Dutch comments

which were in demand in China, and sell quantities of cloth and opium from India.<sup>17</sup> Duties were low, consisting only as a rule of suitable gifts to the Regent and his officials.<sup>18</sup> Cargoes could be bought and sold easily, whereas in the smaller local ports merchants had sometimes to wait long periods, and give the local people payment in advance, for their cargoes.<sup>19</sup>

The town soon became a centre for the trade carried on by the Bugis to all parts of the Archipelago. Tin was no longer brought mainly from the peninsular territories of Johore, for foreign merchants had begun to call at Selangor itself. Riouw's supplies came increasingly from Ujong Salang and Palembang. Their trade to the former place flourished between the 1740's and the end of the 1760's, when the island became involved in the Thai-Burmese wars.<sup>20</sup> Bugis vessels also brought pepper from the nearby places of Andragirij and Jamhij, as well as from Manpauwa, Passir and the

<sup>17</sup>

Daing Kemboja told Light that 'all the productions of his dominions were tin plenty, wax, raw dammar, sago, betelnut, spars of any size or length you please'. Spices, gold and dollars were available at times. 'Goods to be sold there are opium, cotton, coarse long cloth, blue, white and red handkerchiefs, painted piece goods of all kinds, sticklac, guns, powder, muskets, scarlet cloth'.  
SSF, Vol. I, p.145. Light to Andrew Ross, 1 February 1769

<sup>18</sup>

Plakaatboek, Vol. 7, p.473

<sup>19</sup>

SSF, Vol. i, p.145. Light 'sold in one day ten thousand dollars worth of goods and received my money the next'

<sup>20</sup>

Forrest, Merqui, pp.32-3. See Chapter II, p.102



further North Coast of Borneo...' to Riouw annually.<sup>21</sup> These traders also sometimes brought spices, smuggled out of the Molucca's, though these were not always available, for the Dutch were still anxious to retain a monopoly of the spice trade.<sup>22</sup> Sales of spices at Riouw were noted by the Dutch in 1765, when 'about 80 Bugis Balocs (type of vessel) arrived with spices. They later continued to Kedah. The 'precious product' was sold to the Malay folk and European merchants at a lower price than the Company asked (when they allowed spices to be sold at all), and bartered to the English for cloth and opium.<sup>23</sup> Daing Kemboja told Light in 1769 that 'if any come into the Straits, this is the first port they call at'. The Dutch authorities believed that it was the availability of smuggled spices at Riouw which had drawn such a greatly increased traffic there by 1767.<sup>24</sup> Certainly the Bugis trade, which brought spices, pepper and tin, together with other less valuable products of the Archipelago to Riouw, must have been a very great factor in establishing the port as a centre of the Country Trade in the Archipelago.

<sup>21</sup>

Kol.Arch.3391, p.90. Malacca to Batavia, (Secret) 10 February 1777

<sup>22</sup>

In 1777, for instance, the Malacca government noted that in the preceding four years only a small amount of spices had been sold at Riouw. Kol.Arch.3391, p.91. Malacca to Batavia (Secret) 10 February 1777. See D. K. Bassett, 'British Trade and Policy in Indonesia', B.K.I., Vol.120, 1964, p.204-7 for a discussion of the contemporary Bugis trade in spices to Bencoolen

<sup>23</sup>

G1. 31 December 1766, p.873

<sup>24</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, p.255, 30 May 1767

The tin trade from Bangka, which became increasingly important in the 1770's, was apparently carried on by Palembang merchants.<sup>25</sup> Despite the Dutch treaty with Palembang, by which the ruler of that state promised to deliver all the tin and pepper output of his lands to the VOC,<sup>26</sup> vessels came yearly to Riouw from Bangka. In 1776 'five Palembang vessels, belonging to the king, and commanded by Hadjis or 'priests' appeared (at Riouw) laden with tin'.<sup>27</sup>

A thriving trade had also developed between Riouw and the ports of Java, which supplied foodstuffs to the Johore port, probably in return for cloth and opium. The Batavian government frowned on this trade for it had always been one of the VOC's main aims to control the distribution of these much sought-after products in Java. They also feared that too great an export of Javanese rice to Riouw might lead to a shortage of the grain in Java itself.<sup>28</sup> As early as 1761 they attempted to curb this traffic - 'to bring the trade at Riouw into stricter bounds' - by ordering that all goods brought to Batavia, Java's East Coast and Cheribon from 'any place in the Straits of Malacca except Malacca itself' were to be charged double toll.<sup>29</sup> If this affected Javanese trade to Riouw, it could not have

<sup>25</sup> Both Marsden, *Sumatra*, p.359, and Milburn and Thornton, *Commerce* p.348, mention that Palembang was frequented by Trading Vessels from Java, Madura, Bali and Celebes, but they do not mention that any tin was exported by these vessels. The Dutch do not mention any trade of the Bugis at Bangka or Palembang.

<sup>26</sup> *Cornus Diplomaticum*, Vol.6, pp.59-64 (1755); Renewed pp.221-2 (1763), p.393 (1775) and pp.404-5 (1776)

<sup>27</sup> *Kol.Arch.3391*, p.90. Malacca to Batavia (Secret) 10 February 1777

<sup>28</sup> *Plakaatboek*, Vol.7, pp.902-3

<sup>29</sup> G1. 18 October 1762, p.27. *Realia*, Vol.II, p.185

been in a lasting way, for in March 1774 the Batavian government felt it was necessary to renew their efforts and directly forbade traffic between Johore and the ports of Java.<sup>30</sup> This direct intervention did not last long, however, for after two months, in April 1774, 'taking into consideration that the Johorese might be able to pretend that the lack of opportunity to obtain the necessary supplies provided the authority for them to overcome their need by means of piracy', it was decided to allow the ruler of Johore

Daing Kemboja to send five ships annually to Samarang, to fetch rice and other necessary supplies.<sup>31</sup> Soon afterwards, in January 1775, the prohibition was completely abandoned, because the authorities at Samarang had reported an important decline in the small trade there, and a subsequent drop in the profits derived from the tolls at that port.<sup>32</sup>

As well as being 'frequented by perahus from Borneo, Bali, Java and all the Eastern islands', Riouw was also visited by vessels from 'Siam, Cambodia, Tisfimpo (?) Quinam (Annam) and Cochin China'.<sup>33</sup> In 1766 the trade of Chinese junks there was said to be 'very frequent'.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup>

Plakaatboek, Vol. 8, p.853

<sup>31</sup>

Ibid, p.858-9

<sup>32</sup>

Ibid, p.902

<sup>33</sup>

SSR, Vol. I, p.145

<sup>34</sup>

G.M. 31 December 1766, p.873. It is difficult to judge what proportion of these junks came from China itself, and what from the Chinese settlers in different parts of the Archipelago

The junks brought a variety of wares to exchange for tin and pepper; some Chinese merchants even re-exported opium brought to China from India by European merchants.<sup>35</sup>

The mainstay of the trade at Riouw during these years was undoubtedly the number of European vessels, especially the English private traders, who brought opium and cloth from India in exchange for the tin, pepper and other local products of the Archipelago. Their place in the trade between India and China was increasing rapidly at this time.<sup>36</sup> By the end of the period they had almost totally replaced the Indian merchants who had for so many years brought cloth from their country to the Archipelago, and had also gained a predominant place in the trade in tin and pepper to China.<sup>37</sup> Though English, Danish and French merchants had been frequent visitors to the ports of the Straits throughout the century, this period from the mid-1760's onward saw a great increase in the annual numbers of English and other foreign country traders who came through the Straits, generally en route to China. In the first half of the century, no more than ten private English merchant vessels

<sup>35</sup>

H. B. Morse; The East India Company Trading to China, Oxford, 1926-9 Vol. 2, p. 89

<sup>36</sup>

Bassett, 'British Commercial and Strategic Interests', in Bastin and Roolvink, p.123, et al.

<sup>37</sup>

Arasaratnam, B.K.1. Vol. 123, p.330. and Batavia to Malacca, 30 June 1779, p. 665



had ever called at Malacca in any one year;<sup>38</sup> in 1769 the number had increased to 26. Ten years later it had more than doubled again,<sup>39</sup> Many of these were known to call at Riouw, or other Asian ports in the Straits. Some probably called there but not at the Dutch port. There was also a marked increase in the number of ships belonging to the English Company which called at Malacca during this period, but these did not call at the Asian ports.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, the increase in the number of country traders to visit the Straits after 1760 was closely linked with the increase in the English East India Company's trade to China. Many of the Company ships carried cargoes which had been brought back to India from the Archipelago ports by country traders.<sup>41</sup> Sometimes the link was less direct. The increased trade to China grew out of an increased demand for tea in Europe. The European merchants still

38

I obtained this figure from the Malacca Boomboeken for the years 1700-1750. The number of foreign ships calling each year are listed separately in a section entitled Incoming Foreign Shipping

39

In 1764 there were 24 English vessels at Malacca, in 1768, 28; 1769, 26 private, 12 Company; 1770, 29 private, 11 Company; 1773, 25 private, 8 Company; 1775, 36 private, 9 Company; 1774, 50 private, 11 Company; 1776, 75 private, 10 Company; 1779, 56 private, 5 Company. Malacca's Boomboeken 1764 and the December Generale Missiven of 1769 (p.814), 1770 (p.1059); 1771 (p.1364); 1773 (p.1288); 1776 (p.1764); 1775 (p.763); 1777 (p.1408); 1778 (p.1145) and 1779 (p.1109)

40

Bassett, 'British Commercial and Strategic Interests', in Bastin and Roolvink, p.138

41

Wright, Economic Problems, p.247



found it difficult to provide cargoes which could be readily sold in China to provide for the purchase of tea, however.<sup>42</sup> A partial solution to the problem was found in the carriage of products from the Archipelago, especially pepper and tin. Bengal opium became a very important item of import to China in the latter half of the century. But trade in these commodities presented new problems to the East India Company. It was difficult for them to obtain cargoes of tin and pepper in the Archipelago, where these were cheapest, without falling foul of the VOC. Also it could be a long and difficult business to collect these cargoes.<sup>43</sup> Opium posed a different problem. It was contraband in China, and its import by the Company would lead to new disputes with the Chinese authorities, and perhaps damage the whole of the Company's trade there.<sup>44</sup>

The private merchants, or Country Traders, served a valuable purpose by becoming intermediaries in these two trades. They collected cargoes of pepper, tin and other products from the Archipelago, which were either made available in India, or sold in

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H. Furber, John Company at work, Cambridge (Mass.) 1948, p.164-5

43

See for instance Beeckman, Pinkerton's Voyages, p.117, and other journals of early traders to the Archipelago.

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H. B. Morse, Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to India (5 Vols., Oxford, 1926-9), gives many examples of the difficulties encountered by Europeans trading to China at this time

China. They also took opium to China and smuggled it into the country. The receipts for the goods taken to China were paid to the English Company's factors there, helping to supplement their lack of specie. The country traders drew the money out again in India or elsewhere.<sup>45</sup>

Riouw was not the only port catering for this growing stream of the Country Traders to the Straits, though according to Dutch sources it was the best-frequented.<sup>46</sup> Malaccan authorities also noted with concern the growing trade at Selangor, Kedah and Trengganu. The ruler of Selangor paid little heed to the promises made to the VOC in the 1758 treaty, and the port soon attracted many English private merchants.<sup>47</sup>

In 1759 the Malacca government tentatively suggested that a Company outpost be established at Selangor, for they despaired of ever controlling the smuggling trade of the Bugis port with guardships alone.<sup>48</sup> Even then the suggestion would have been very difficult to implement and the central government was in any case far more interested in contracting than expanding its forces

<sup>45</sup>

Furber, John Company, p.165

<sup>46</sup>

'It is a place which greatly injures Malacca by its smuggling trade, since it is the rendezvous of the private English trade here in the Straits...' Cran's Report on Malacca, 1777, p.538

<sup>47</sup>

G.M. 8 April 1766, p.1872, about opium smuggling

<sup>48</sup>

Kol.Arch.2858, p.79; Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1759

in the Straits. The post at Linggi was disbanded in 1759,<sup>49</sup> largely on the grounds of expense.

In the following two decades, very little effort was made by the Dutch to curtail the foreign trade at Selangor, to which the availability of tin and spices attracted the country traders. In 1765 the Malacca government reported that the Sultan of Selangor had allowed the vessels of the pirate Panglima Paree to shelter in the Selangor River after attacking a ship belonging to the VOC.<sup>50</sup> The Malaccan government wrote objecting to this, claiming full reparations for the loss of the ship and its cargo, the restitution of two Europeans who had been carried off after the capture of the vessel, and the surrender of the chief of the pirates. To their superiors they confessed that 'This resentment is not really in proportion to the great size of the crime'; but they were unable to punish Selangor appropriately because they lacked the necessary vessels and manpower.<sup>51</sup> The ruler of Selangor replied politely to the Dutch accusations that he had 'greatly wished for the presence of a Company ship 'when the pirates had been in his river, but had been unable to act against them without this support.'<sup>52</sup>

49

Kol.Arch. 2863, p.352. G.M. 31 December 1760. It was hoped that the post was now unnecessary because the Company had raised the price it was willing to pay for tin.

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Kol.Arch.3045, p.25. Malacca to Batavia, 14 September 1765

51

Ibid, pp.16-18

52

Ibid, p.23

The Malacca authorities then tried to hamper trade at Selangor by cutting off traffic to and from the port from the south, which sailed past Malacca daily, without stopping at the Dutch port to receive a pass for their voyage, in accordance with the sixth article of the Dutch treaty with Selangor of January 1758.<sup>53</sup> These restrictions could not have been very effective for in 1777 the retiring Governor Jan Crans wrote that 'Selangor is most injurious to the Company, on account of the frequent trade there of the English in particular, who mostly take tin from there...'<sup>54</sup>

Kedah's trade, ruined in the civil wars of the 'twenties, had revived by the middle of the century.<sup>55</sup> By 1750 the ruler of Kedah was able to equip ships of his own to trade to India. He also traded to ports in Sumatra; in 1751 the Malacca government were unable to do any profitable business in Indragiri, because vessels belonging to the king of Kedah were in the port.<sup>56</sup> A vessel belonging to the king of Kedah was seized by officials of the British Company at Madras for payment of a debt in 1759,<sup>57</sup> but other voyages were more successful, and his ships brought back

<sup>53</sup>

Ibid, p.25-6

<sup>54</sup>

Crans, Report on Malacca, 1777, p.538

<sup>55</sup>

Ouerbeck, JMBRAS, IV, iii, p.361

<sup>56</sup>

Kel.Arch. 2673, p.419, Malacca to Batavia, 17 August, 1751

<sup>57</sup>

H. D. Dodwell, A Calendar of Madras Dispatches, Vol.I (Madras, 1930) p.261



'material which is most sought after in the Straits, and which is hawked about in small vessels and bartered along both coasts (of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula)'.<sup>58</sup>

Kedah was visited annually by the passing Danish, Swedish, French, English and other European ships journeying to China, which bought supplies of rice there.<sup>59</sup> A Dutch captain sent to buy rice in 1754 reported that nine foreign ships lay in the river when he was there, one English, one French, and seven Indian. He was unable to procure any rice, however, for the Company had angered the king of Kedah by its monopolisation of the tin output of Perak. He therefore refused to allow rice or other goods to be sold to the Company's servants, except as provisions.<sup>60</sup> This ban was still in force in 1757, when the king of Kedah refused to sell food to Malays who went to Malacca while it was being besieged by the Bugis.<sup>61</sup> In 1761 the Dutch attempted to improve their relations with Kedah by allowing Chinese junks to pass Malacca to go to the northern port.<sup>62</sup> However, the Malacca government continued to fear that the Kedah ruler would succeed in breaking up the Company's alliance with Perak by his intrigues at the Perak court. In 1765 a dispute

<sup>58</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.29

<sup>59</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2753<sup>p.25</sup> (Captain Gerrit Zeeman's Report, 19 June 1755)

<sup>60</sup>

Ibid, p.23

<sup>61</sup>

Netscher, TEG, Vol.13, p.310

<sup>62</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2891, p.685 GM. 31 December 1761



between the Company and Perak seemed likely to give Kedah the 'longed-for chance to break Perak away from the Company' for which that king had waited 'for so many years - so much so that (he) had promised to dispose of all Perak's elephants each year if Perak will separate from the Company and deliver all its tin to him'.<sup>63</sup> The king of Kedah could probably sell large quantities of tin to country traders and Indian merchants to take back to India to supply the Company's China vessels.

The links between Perak and the VOC were not broken, and this valuable supply of the mineral did not become available in Kedah, but the port prospered until it suffered a bad reverse at the hands of the Bugis warrior Raja Haji in 1770.<sup>64</sup> According to Bugis chronicles, he and his brother the Sultan of Selangor decided to apply to Kedah for payment of the debt of 'twelve Bahara of dollars still owing by Kedah for the help of Daeng Parani and the other Bugis Upus formerly rendered.'<sup>65</sup> The king of Kedah refused to pay the debt, so the Bugis sacked the port of Kedah. It is likely that the demand for payment was in part at least only a pretext for this attack, the real motive for it lying in the desire of the Bugis to destroy a prosperous rival which attracted trade that might otherwise have come to Selangor.

<sup>63</sup>  
Kol.Arch.3045, p.19. Malacca to Batavia, 25 January 1765.  
Elephants were the second most important product of Perak

<sup>64</sup>  
Kol.Arch. 3203, p.1362 GM. 31 December 1771

<sup>65</sup>  
Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, X, ii, p.315. See also Winstedt, 'Notes on the History of Kedah', *JMBFAS*, XIV, iii, p.178-9

Kedah did not recover from the blow, and was forced to seek an ally to guard against further depredation by the Bugis.<sup>66</sup>

It was during this period that Trengganu first became well known to the Malaccan government as a port frequented by European and Chinese merchants. In 1754 Captain Gerrit Zeeman, who had been sent from Batavia to report on the trade of Kedah and Trengganu, had trouble even in locating the latter port, for not only was it not shown in any of the Company's charts, the Malacca Shahbandar himself could give no definite information of the whereabouts of that port. Captain Zeeman had eventually to postpone his visit, as Trengganu had become inaccessible because of the coming of the monsoon.<sup>67</sup>

The VOC's interest in Trengganu was stimulated at this time by a desire to monopolise the pepper production of that state. But the Malacca government was unable to obtain the favourable conditions

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Dalrymple wrote some years later that 'This place (Allestar) was plundered and burnt, in 1770 by the Buggesses, aided by some of the king's own relations; since which it has continued in a very poor state; the only trade left it is with Sangoon'. Dalrymple, Oriental Repertory, Vol. I p.400. The king of Kedah sought an alliance first with the English Company (See Bassett, 'British Commercial and Strategic Interest', Bastin and Roolvink, pp.125-6) and later with Raja Ismael, the dispossessed prince of Siak. (Batavia to Malacca 30 April 1771, p.21). A letter from Kedah to Malacca in 1780 expressed that ruler's desire to cooperate with the VOC in every way possible. (Kol.Arch.3474, Kedah to Malacca, 10 January 1780). Kedah's search for an ally finally lead to the cession of Penang to the English Company in 1786

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Kol.Arch. 2753, pp.20-1

they had hoped for,<sup>68</sup> and the pepper of Trengganu remained available to passing vessels en route to China, and to the Chinese junks which came to fetch their own cargoes. In 1762 pepper was selling at Trengganu at the 'excessive' price of 12 Spanish dollars per pikul.<sup>69</sup> Four years later, the Batavian government noted the frequent trade of the Chinese there,<sup>70</sup> but nevertheless granted permission for vessels from Trengganu to trade to Batavia in January 1774.<sup>71</sup>

The authorities at Malacca and their superiors at Batavia watched the development of trade at these ports closely, and deplored it often, but for most of this period did little to combat its growth. After the fruitless efforts of the previous decade the VOC's rulers did not wish to become involved again in any activities in this area. In December 1759 the post set up at Linggi to control the trade of the Bugis there was withdrawn, and proposals were made to withdraw the Company's post from Pulau Gontong in the Siak River at the same time.<sup>72</sup> This latter post was, however,

<sup>68</sup>

See Chapter I, p. 47. In 1758 the Dutch hoped to negotiate a treaty with Mansur Shah to deliver all the pepper of Trengganu to them, but he avoided their demands and by 1760 it had been decided not to send any more expeditions from Malacca directly to Trengganu as the price had become too high. Batavia to Malacca, 31 December 1759, p.172

<sup>69</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 14 September 1762, p.520

<sup>70</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3052, p.873. GM. 31 December 1766

<sup>71</sup>

Plakaatboek, Vol.8, p.841

<sup>72</sup>

Kol.Arch. 2858, p.99. Malacca to Batavia, 10 March 1759. The officers at Malacca argued that a fixed post was 'absolutely indispensable if foreign trade is to be kept out (of the Siak River)'. The post was said to be a small drain on the Company, as it was staffed from Malacca

maintained until 1765, because of an uprising against the VOC by Raja Mahomet of Siak.<sup>73</sup> In 1770 the Batavian government was also contemplating the withdrawal of the factory in Perak, which Governor Albinus had been so jubilant to gain twenty-four years previously.<sup>74</sup> They were persuaded to keep up the establishment at Perak, but it is significant that the suggestion to disband it came immediately after the Bugis attack on Kedah, and was accompanied with the comment that the Malacca government must keep strictly neutral in local affairs.<sup>75</sup>

The reasons for the Dutch withdrawal into strict neutrality again are not difficult to see. They had just had a sharp lesson in the expensive futility of any involvement in local affairs. Governor Albinus' ranprochement with the ruler of Johore had led to the siege of Malacca, and in return little seemed to be gained. The Johorese had submitted once more to the Bugis who flouted Dutch demands as openly as ever, despite the new treaties of 1758-9. Even Sultan Mansur Shah of Trengganu, who had urged the Malaccan officials into open conflict with Daing Kemboja, was willing to give very little in return for their support. In Siak, Raja Mahomet had turned openly against the Company after he had been restored to power by Dutch forces. Even Perak was an unstable ally, and had seemed ready to break off the contract with the VOC when the Bugis besieged Malacca.

<sup>73</sup> ———  
*Realia*, Vol. II, p. 185. The post was finally withdrawn on the 7 May 1765

<sup>74</sup> ———  
*Batavia to Malacca*, 30 April 1771, p. 23

<sup>75</sup> ———  
*Ibid.*, p. 21



Even more important to the calculations behind Dutch policy at this time was the fact that the VOC's interests were best served by a policy of neutrality. Most of the Company's interests profited by maintenance of the status quo for this period. The tin trade, for instance, was thriving as it never had before, despite the increasing numbers of foreign merchants who came to buy the mineral.<sup>76</sup>

Malacca's supplies of tin came mainly from Perak in the second half of the century, and though both the Bugis ruler of Selangor and the ruler of Kedah intrigued in the court of Perak to break up the alliance between this state and the Company, neither succeeded. The rulers of Perak apparently felt that only by maintaining this link with the Company would they be able to keep any measure of independence. The sale of tin to the VOC meant an assured income; Malacca presented this small state with an alternative market for tin, which was its main product, and enabled it to avoid having to sell the mineral to the Bugis, who controlled most of the tin trade in the Straits.<sup>77</sup> Significantly, the main disagreements between the VOC and Perak after 1760 centred around the method used by the Dutch to pay for tin, for the Malacca government found it difficult on

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See Chapter II, pp. 97-100

77

The situation is comparable to that of 1716, when the Bugis brought tin to Malacca because the Raja Muda of Johore controlled most of the trade with foreign merchants in the Straits. Perak had never been a port of call for country traders, and if the ruler of Perak had had to sell all his tin through the Bugis he would in all probability have received far worse terms than he did from the Dutch.



several occasions to send enough acceptable specie to Perak.<sup>78</sup> The Company began to introduce rupees into its payment, along with Spanish dollars, when these were found to be acceptable to the Perak king.<sup>79</sup> The Company had little influence over Perak's other activities. In 1765 the king of Perak allowed the Raja Muda to set out with eight vessels, allegedly to act against the pirates who had recently threatened the Perak River, by in reality, so the Malacca government contended, to engage in piracy himself. When the Company's official at Perak, acting on orders from Malacca, remonstrated with the king over this, he was told that 'although the VOC had a treaty with Perak by which it received all the tin produced there, it had no right to interfere in any of the other affairs of the state'.<sup>80</sup> This same ruler rejected Dutch attempts to lower the price paid for Perak tin,<sup>81</sup> and threatened to send his tin to Kedah if the Company did not provide sufficient supplies of acceptable specie to pay for the deliveries of the mineral.<sup>82</sup>

His successor found himself in a weaker position and allowed the Dutch to lower the price paid for tin in 1773.<sup>83</sup> He was faced with increasing pressure from Selangor after the successful Bugis attack

<sup>78</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3045, p.19. Malacca to Batavia, 25 January 1765

<sup>79</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3045, p. 8. Malacca to Batavia, 25 January 1765

<sup>80</sup>

Ibid, p.35

<sup>81</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 14 June 1766, p.292

<sup>82</sup>

Kol.Arch.3045, p.19. Malacca to Batavia, 25 January 1765

<sup>83</sup>

Crans' Report on Malacca, 1777, p.546

on Kedah in 1770. In that year the Bugis fleet had come to Perak on its way north, and the Sultan of Perak had been forced to send a member of his family to accompany the expedition to Kedah. He had also to consent to the marriage of his niece to the Sultan of Selangor.<sup>84</sup> Another marriage between the royal houses of Perak and Selangor occurred while Governor Crans was at Malacca, and he disliked this 'close alliance which now exists between Perak and Selangor, for once the Slangorese are established as a power in Perak, they shall try to make the Perakans turn against the Company'.<sup>85</sup> This had not happened by 1777, however, and Crans admitted that 'the present Perak king acts as a well disposed prince'<sup>86</sup> towards the VOC, and had apparently withstood the growing pressure of the Bugis, as his predecessors had withstood the blandishments of the king of Kedah, and maintained his connection with the Dutch, to the benefit of their tin trade.

Traffic in other goods did not proceed so prosperously; but paradoxically, the Company's establishment at Malacca became profitable though the sale of Company goods practically stopped almost completely during this period.<sup>87</sup> After being a last-post for the

<sup>84</sup> Raja Chulan, Misa Melayu, (Kuala Lumpur, 1966) p.220

<sup>85</sup> Crans' Report on Malacca, 1777, p.545. This may have referred to the same marriage, but the Dutch report says that the 'small son of the prince of Perak (was) wed to the daughter of the ruler of Selangor' in 1776

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p.546

<sup>87</sup> See Chapter I, p.64, and Appendix I

greater part of the eighteenth century, in the late 1760's Malacca began to more than pay its way. This new prosperity, as Governor Schippers pointed out, sprang from the same ever-increasing trade through the Straits which benefited the Asian ports.<sup>88</sup> The number of ships and vessels coming to Malacca increased annually, and with it, the sums collected in customs and anchorage dues. The members of the Dutch government at Malacca were eager to encourage this trade in every way possible.<sup>89</sup> Governor Crans wrote that, to ensure the increasing prosperity of the town, 'traders are to be dealt with on a friendly and honest basis', and 'the inhabitants (of Malacca) are to be encouraged in all permitted trade.'<sup>90</sup> A large proportion of the trade of the burghers was still carried on with Siak.<sup>91</sup> This state had also tended to increase its ties with the Dutch Company as the prosperity of the Bugis at Riouw and Selangor increased, and they gained a still more powerful position in the Straits.

In 1761 the Company had assisted in another coup d'état in Siak, in favour of Raja Alam, eldest son of the late Raja Kechil. This prince had allied himself with the Bugis in the previous decade,

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Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.31. (Governor Schippers' Report on Malacca, 1773)

89

The Dutch officials at Malacca had since 1745 received between them a quarter of the profit from the customs dues, divided according to rank, so they had every reason to encourage this trade. Batavia to Malacca, 12 November 1745, p.714

90

Governor Crans' Report, 1777, p.548

91

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.32

after he had been driven out of Siak in 1755 by his brother, Raja Mahomet, who had Dutch support. Raja Mahomet, though restored to power by the agency of Dutch arms, had shown little willingness to come to Malacca's aid when the town was besieged.<sup>92</sup> The Company, to which Sultan Suleiman had ceded the territory of Siak, proceeded to place severe restrictions on trade to the Siak River. The entry into the river of all vessels from the west, including those from Acheh, Kedah and any port in India, was strictly prohibited. It was hoped thus to control the profitable gold and cloth trade.<sup>93</sup> A post was established at Pulau Gontong in the river mouth to enforce these regulations, and guardships patrolled the area.<sup>94</sup> These precautions must have been effective, for Raja Mahomet grew very restive, and in 1758 turned openly to piracy to augment his income.<sup>95</sup> The Dutch authorities were alarmed, but before they were able to take any action to curb his activities, Mahomet made a surprise attack on Pulau Gontong and massacred the Dutch forces there.<sup>96</sup>

Such an act could not be let go unpunished. The Malacca government hastily made peace with Raja Alam, for it was felt to be impractical to invade Siak without the aid of a Malay force.<sup>97</sup>

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Netscher, *Djchor*, pp.87-8; Kol.Arch.2753, p.3293, Malacca to Batavia, 27 September 1755

93

*Plakaatboek*, Vol. 7, pp.257-261

94

Kol.Arch. 2776, p.12. Malacca to Batavia, 4 February 1757

95

Kol.Arch. 2858, pp.15-16. Malacca to Batavia, 19 October 1759

96

Kol.Arch. 2863, p.549; GM. 31 December 1760

97

Batavia to Malacca, 25 June 1761, p.260



A treaty between the VOC and Siak was signed in January 1761,<sup>98</sup> and he was soon placed in control of Siak by the Company's forces. Raja Alam and his son, Mohamet Ali, maintained peaceful relations with the Dutch even though at times they did not conform strictly with the terms of the 1761 treaty, and the Company played no further military role in Siak.<sup>99</sup> Trade between Malacca and Siak continued to be important to both, though the Company tried to cut off direct trade to Siak from Java or from ports to the west of Malacca. In 1765 the garrison at Pulau Gentong was withdrawn as it was felt to be too expensive to maintain.<sup>100</sup>

Mohamet Ali succeeded his father as ruler of Siak in 1766, and proved to be well disposed to the Company, and favours the Malacca inhabitants that go there to trade as much as it is in his power, without supporting himself entirely by smuggling as others do, or allowing it; so that I must say of him...that a prince such as he has not ruled for a long time....<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup>

See Appendix 2 (Malacca-Siak, 1761)

<sup>99</sup>

It seemed at first that Raja Alam would injure the VOC's interests in Siak as much as his brother had. He installed his son Mohamet Ali as ruler of Siak (in defiance of the 1761 treaty, which gave the VOC the right to approve any such appointment) and proceeded to invade Patapahan. He 'hindered trade with the inland people' and postponed payment of his debts to the VOC. He also disputed the agreements he had made over the amount of duty to be paid at Siak by Malacca merchants (GM. 31 December 1765, p.1587). Mahomet Ali aroused the VOC's suspicions by declaring himself Sultan on his father's death without seeking the consent of the Malacca government. See Netscher Djohor, pp.130-33; Batavia to Malacca, 3 August 1763, p.590; et al.

<sup>100</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 15 October 1765

<sup>101</sup>

Governor Crans Report, 1777, p.544



Eager to maintain this favourable state of affairs, Governor Crans urged the Governor General to relax certain restrictions which had been placed on the trade of this ruler to Java, so that Mohamet Ali might be allowed to send six rather than only two vessels to Java each year.<sup>102</sup> These vessels were 'only sent to fetch rice and salt', according to the Siak ruler.<sup>103</sup>

Mohamet Ali's desire to maintain good relations with Malacca was undoubtedly influenced by the feud between this prince and his cousin, Raja Ismael, son of the former ruler of Siak, Mahmet. Raja Ismael had become one of the leaders of the Malay faction who still opposed Bugis ambitions in the Straits. He became closely allied to Mansur Shah and spent several years in Trengganu.<sup>104</sup> In 1774, however, he had made a bid to re-capture Siak. This had failed, and he had set up his headquarters in the Rokan River. Mahomet Ali had applied to Malacca for help to 'dislodge' Ismael, but Crans had decided that it would be wiser to leave the matter as it was; 'it is to be hoped that the fears of the one regarding the other will force them both to act peacefully and shall oblige their further attachment to the Company'.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3391, pp.92-4. Malacca to Batavia, (Secret)  
10 February 1777

<sup>103</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3362, p.341; Malacca to Batavia, (Secret) 15 January 1776

<sup>104</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3045, p.4 Malacca to Batavia, 6 April 1765

<sup>105</sup>

Governor Crans' Report, 1777, p.543

This was what happened, for even when Ismael succeeded in defeating his cousin in 1777, he was lenient in his dealings with the defeated prince and continued to cooperate with the Dutch. He had continued to oppose the Bugis at Selangor and Riouw, and probably felt that he could not also alienate the powerful VOC.<sup>106</sup>

Behind the insistence of the central government that Malacca take no initiative to try to force trade away from the Bugis entrepots there also lay the knowledge that the Bugis, though now a very powerful group in the Straits, were still not without opposition. Perhaps the Dutch hoped the native powers in the area would once more destroy themselves by internal quarrelling and leave the VOC as the controlling power in the area.

Though Daing Kenboja had become firmly established as ruler of Riouw after the death of the boy-king Ahmad, many Malays obviously still wished to see his power broken. Mansur Shah remained the leader of this faction, and after his return to Trengganu had allied himself with Raja Ismael of Siak.<sup>107</sup> Early in the 1760's Raja Ismael 'urged on by the Malays of Riau, Trengganu and Pahang' planned to attack Riouw and capture the young Sultan Mahmud. He was to have been aided by the Malays of Riouw, but Daing Kenboja learned of the plot and defeated the Siak prince in a sea-battle off Singapore.<sup>108</sup> Daing Kenboja then prepared to attack Siak, but was

<sup>106</sup>

Netscher, *Djohor*, pp.135-6

<sup>107</sup>

Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, X, ii, p.314

<sup>108</sup>

*Ibid*, p.315

dissuaded from this by the Malacca government.<sup>109</sup>

This was the last open attempt on Riau during Daing Kemboja's lifetime, though Malay hatred for the Bugis still smouldered; 'according to the chronicle of Engku Busu of Dungan, the Malays yearly appealed to the Dutch and to the [English] East India Company to attack Riau'.<sup>110</sup> For some time, however, the Trengganu Malays were occupied in a war with their northern neighbours, Kelantan and Patani, who according to Mansur Shah had allied themselves with that Daing Kemboja to attack him.<sup>111</sup> Trengganu withstood this attack and by the 1770's the Malacca government was again reporting that plots were being woven by Mansur Shah against the Bugis.<sup>112</sup> After 1770 the ruler of Kedah combined with Raja Ismael against Selangor, but never prosecuted the attack.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>109</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 14 June 1766, p.295. In 1763 Daing Kemboja had been supplied with gunpowder from Malacca to use against Ismael. The Batavian government disapproved of this new enthusiasm of the Malacca government in their relations with this prince, who, as the supreme government comment, were also pirates, and might put the gunpowder 'to bad use'. GM. 31 December 1763, p.1590

<sup>110</sup> Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.314. This comment of the author of the Tufhat is echoed in the Sadjarah Radja-Radja Riau I; 'Every year the Bendahara of Pahang sent letters to the Dutch, Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Batavia, asking help to fight the Bugis at Riau'. Winstedt, JMBRAS, XI, ii, p.159

<sup>111</sup>

Kel.Arch. 3335 (Sultan Mansur Shah to Malacca, 2 October, 1774)

<sup>112</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.32; Governor Crans' Report, 1777, p.542

<sup>113</sup>

GM. 11 April, 1775, p.62

Potentially more dangerous to Bugis power than this continuing hostility of the Malay princes, was the breach which developed between the rulers of Riouw and Selangor at this time. In his report on local affairs in 1777, Governor Jan Crans wrote that

the differences between those two princes daily increase, so that one would rather willingly see the decline of the other, and would even promote and help (this), as Your Excellency can see from the letters exchanged with Daing Kemboja. This Raja of Slangor is a rebellious prince, not wishing to act at all as befits one subject to the government of Johoor, but, sustained by his increasing wealth drawn from the smuggling of opium and tin with the English, he glares not only on Johoor but even on his neighbouring Pera...<sup>114</sup>

Daing Kemboja's hostility to Selangor is strongly evident in a letter written to Malacca in 1774, in reply to inquiries made by the Dutch as to whether he was associated with the piratical activities of his relative Raja Ibrahim, son of the Sultan of Selangor. Daing Kemboja claimed that he strongly condemned Ibrahim's activities. The Selangor prince established a position in the mouth of the Linggi River, and was causing unrest there. Kemboja requested that the VOC dislodge him from this position, 'for as long as he remains there he shall certainly ruin the traffic - Although he is my relative I shall in no sense mix myself with such doings'.<sup>115</sup> This may have been merely the usual bland denial in reply to a Dutch accusation, but the grievance in regard to being cut off from trade at Linggi,

<sup>114</sup>

Governor Crans Report, 1777, p.541

<sup>115</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3335; Daing Kemboja to Malacca, 27 March, 1774



together with the rather bitter tone in the remainder of the letter, has a very convincing ring. Daing Kemboja was by now an old man, and the Sultan of Selangor was outside his authority; he had been installed as Sultan of Selangor 'without consulting me on the matter at all.' 'Previously', the Ricuw prince continues, 'no one has ever become King in Selangor without the consent of the ruler of Johore, but now he is the first to have set himself up [in this way]'.<sup>116</sup> In 1775, fearing a combined attack by Kedah and Raja Ismael, the Sultan of Selangor is reported by the Dutch to have invited the English Company to build a fort in his territory. The Malacca government added that the antagonism between the Raja of Selangor and Daing Kemboja 'seem an important factor in the former's decision to apply to the English'.<sup>117</sup> It is likely that the Bugis warrior hero Raja Haji, who was Daing Kemboja's cousin and brother of the Sultan of Selangor, probably sided with the latter in this break, for he was instrumental in forcing the ruler of Perak first to install his brother as Sultan, and later to allow the Sultan of Selangor to marry a young member of the Perak royal household.<sup>118</sup> Daing Kemboja disapproved of this marriage.<sup>119</sup> This coolness between the Bugis princes may have encouraged Governor Crans to write in his Report in 1777 that 'I feel it is best to leave Ricuw

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<sup>116</sup>

Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3362, p.335. Malacca to Batavia, (Secret), 6 March 1775

<sup>118</sup>

Raja Chulan, *Misa Melayu*, p.220

<sup>119</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3335, Daing Kemboja to Malacca, 27 March 1774



undisturbed for as long as the present prince Daing Kemboja remains alive, for after his death, there will probably be great confusion, and if the Company then wished to help Malacca, I feel that it would easily be able to bring Riouw to submission if it took a hand in the game...<sup>120</sup>

Thus, by opting to return to a policy of non-interference in local affairs, the rulers of the VOC actually gained safeguards for its most pressing interests in the Straits. Over a century of ruling in Malacca had shown the difficulties of attempting to shut off foreign trade from the Malay entrepôts. Though Riouw and Selangor prospered with the greatly increased trade that came to the area in this period, so did Malacca. And the prosperity and growing power of the Bugis were more effective in forcing the local Malay states, especially Perak and Siak, two states 'of very great profit both to the Company and this place',<sup>121</sup> to cooperate with Malacca than ever Dutch treaties or guardships had been. The Company made no attempt to upset this favourable status quo while Daing Kemboja ruled Riouw, more especially after his split with Selangor. However, the affairs of the Straits were closely watched in Malacca, and by 1777 the Batavian government had already indicated that if the Company's wider interests in the trade of the Archipelago became threatened by the position of the Bugis they were prepared to abandon the policy of neutrality.

<sup>120</sup>

Governor Crans' Report, 1777, p.538

<sup>121</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.32

Chapter VII - The Capture of Riouw; 1777-1784

In 1775 Governor Jan Crans informed the Governor General that the Raja of Selangor, fearing that he was about to be attacked by the combined forces of the ruler of Kedah and Raja Ismael, at a time when he was estranged from his allies at Riouw because he had quarrelled with Daing Kemboja, had written to the English government at Madras, inviting them to build a fortress in his territory.<sup>1</sup> This was not an unusual step for an Asian prince to take, as the Dutch were well aware; only ten years before the Sultan of Trengganu, Mansur Shah, had made a similar appeal to the English, but his offer had been refused.<sup>2</sup> The news that Selangor had approached the Madras government was much more alarming to the Dutch. Governor Crans argued that this was 'a very serious matter which could greatly injure the Company...', for if the English became established at Selangor, 'great damage was to be expected not only to Malacca, but to Perak, which would rob the Company of the whole tin trade (of the Straits)'.<sup>3</sup> His arguments led the Governor General to authorize Malacca to act against the Bugis in Selangor, if reliable information was received that the English had accepted this offer.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>  
Kol. Arch. 3362, p.333. Malacca to Batavia, 6 March 1775

<sup>2</sup>  
G.M. 31 December 1766, p.872. Daing Kemboja had also 'proposed to have an English resident to reside on Pulo Bijang' (an island near Riouw), in 1769. The Dutch may not have been aware of this offer made to Light in 1769, as they do not mention it. SSR, Vol.I, p.144

<sup>3</sup>  
Governor Crans' Report, 1777, p.539

<sup>4</sup>  
Ibid, p.540

Apprehension that the English Company would attempt to renew their contact with the Archipelago had been a recurrent theme in the Dutch correspondence, but in the 1760s and 1770s their fears were reinforced by the activities of the English. The problems which the English Company faced in their growing trade to China were only partially solved by the expansion of the country trade, and the Court of Directors began to consider establishing a British settlement in the China Sea or the Malay Archipelago, where local products in demand in China could be collected.<sup>5</sup> It was also hoped that Chinese junks might come to such a port, where the trade would be free from interference by the monopolistic Chinese Co-Hong, and the terms of exchange more favourable to the English. In the 1760s the search for a suitable entrepot was carried on outside the Dutch sphere of influence in the Archipelago; it was confined to the temporary English occupation of Manila, and the attempt to establish a settlement at Dalambangan in the Sulu Archipelago. During the following decade, however, the English Company's payments problem in China became more acute, and official British missions were sent to negotiate a possible settlement at Aceh, Kedah, Riouw or Trengganu.<sup>6</sup> The Dutch were aware of this increased activity of the English in the Archipelago. In 1769 they had speculated that Daing Kemboja and the Sultan of Selangor might draw on English help for their war with Kedah.<sup>7</sup> They

<sup>5</sup>  
Basset, B.K.I. 120, p.197

<sup>6</sup>  
Bassett, 'British Commercial and Strategic Interests', in Bastin and Koolvink, (1964), pp.126-130

<sup>7</sup>  
G.M. 31 December 1769, p.811

noted with satisfaction that the English Company's mission had 'abandoned' Kedah in September 1772, and that they had also left Aceh hastily.<sup>8</sup> It was hoped that the failure of these missions would benefit Dutch trade, particularly the tin trade at Ujong Salang.<sup>9</sup>

In these circumstances Governor Crans had no doubt that the English would accept the Sultan of Selangor's offer,<sup>10</sup> to the great detriment of the VOC, for not only the tin trade, but 'the whole of the small trade of these Straits would be infringed, which would be most ruinous for Malacca, as this is at present the one thing which returns the greatest profit.'<sup>11</sup> The English company, however, had not acted on this offer by the time Governor Crans left Malacca in 1777, perhaps for reasons similar to those which had prevented the establishment of an English post at Kedah or Trengganu in 1772.<sup>12</sup> Therefore he had been unable to use the Governor General's authority to attack Selangor. He warned his successor, Governor De Bruijn, that 'the intention of the Selangor prince to give an establishment to these rivals of ours remains too evident from the favours of an unhindered trade which they enjoy; therefore Your Excellency should always keep one eye open in this direction, to crush that seed in the bud.'<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> G.M. 31 December 1773, p.1286

<sup>9</sup> Batavia to Malacca, 31 May 1773, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> Kol. Arch. 3362 p.333, Malacca to Batavia (Secret) 6 March 1775.

<sup>11</sup> Crans, Report, 1777, p.539

<sup>12</sup> Basset, in Bastin and Roolvink, (1964), p.127

<sup>13</sup> Crans, Report, 1777, p.541



By the mid-1770s, therefore, the government at Malacca, with the support of the Central Government, were already prepared to precipitate another outright clash with the Bugis if by this means they could prevent the cooperation between them and the English in the Straits, developing to the point where the English Company was able to establish an official post in Bugis territory. In the period which immediately followed it became apparent that even without the benefit of an official establishment, English merchants were capturing a rapidly increasing proportion of the trade of the Archipelago. From 1777 on the delivery of tin to Malacca began to decline once more,<sup>14</sup> and the Malacca government could find no other cause for the decrease, than the large export of tin from the Straits by English merchants. By 1779 this had come to exceed the whole amount collected there by the Company.<sup>15</sup> For though the ruler of Perak remained 'the good friend' of the VOC, he 'appears not to have sufficient power over the lesser chiefs and notables of his kingdom to prevent their smuggling trade with Slangoor.'<sup>16</sup> The Batavian government was however more seriously concerned about the large quantities of tin from Bangka which were being shipped by the English indirectly from Riouw,<sup>17</sup> for Bangka by then supplied the Company with the major portion of its tin supplies. Relations between Holland and England had deteriorated in Europe as well as in Asia at this

<sup>14</sup>

Chapter II, p.102

<sup>15</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3446, p.53. Malacca to Batavia, 12 February 1779

<sup>16</sup>

Ibid., p.51

<sup>17</sup>

Ibid., p.53



time,<sup>18</sup> making it unlikely that the English Company would cease its search for a suitable entrepot within the Archipelago.

By 1779 it had also become clear that Riouw's trade would not be disturbed by the split within the ranks of the Eugis which Governor Crans had predicted.<sup>19</sup> In 1777 Daing Kemboja had died at Riouw. The Company had been notified of this event by 'our friend', the old regent's son, Raja Ali, who had claimed the title of Raja Muda.<sup>20</sup> He had been recognised as such by the Batavian Government, who had written to the new ruler expostulating about the frequent breaking of the treaty between the Company and Johore, especially those articles which required that the ruler of Riouw exclude 'foreign Europeans' and merchants without a Company pass from his port.<sup>21</sup> Raja Ali seems to have shared his father's quarrel with Selangor,<sup>22</sup> and the Dutch government no doubt hoped that he would need their support to

18

Nicholas Tarling, Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Malay World, 1780-1824 (Brisbane, 1962) p.6

19

Crans, Report, 1777, p.538. See Chapter VI, p. 231

20

Batavia to Malacca, 28 April, 1778

21

Batavia to Malacca, 11 June 1778, p.309

22

After failing in his bid to exclude Raja Haji from the office of Raja Muda, Raja Ali displayed reluctance to join with Selangor in the attack on Malacca, and probably did not take part in the siege. See W. E. Maxwell, 'Raja Haji', JSERAS, No.22, (1890), p.218. (A Translation of a section of the Tufhat Al-Nafis).

continue to rule Riouw, and would therefore be forced to concede to their demands that the English trade at Riouw be restricted.<sup>23</sup>

Crans had apparently misjudged the situation, however, for Raja Ali was not in the event able, or perhaps willing, to create an open breach between Riouw and Selangor. The office of Raja Muda was claimed by Raja Haji, son of the former Bugis Raja Muda Daing Chela. He had been at Pontianak in Borneo when he was brought news of Daing Kenboja's death, and he sailed to Pahang, where he secured the support of the Bendahara of Johore for his election as Raja Muda.<sup>24</sup> Raja Ali's party was not strong enough to oppose this famous warrior; Sultan Mahmud, together with another son of Daing Kenboja, Raja Abdul-Samad, sailed to Pahang to welcome Raja Haji to Riouw. He apparently encountered no further opposition.<sup>25</sup> The Malay faction did not attempt to take this opportunity to renew their struggle against Bugis power in Johore. Raja Ismael was settled at Rokan, and had shown no interest in continuing his feud with the Bugis for some years;<sup>26</sup> this may have prevented Mansur Shah from making a move to

<sup>23</sup>

Netscher, (*Djohor*, p.169) argues that Raja Ali was seeking the VOC's support for himself knowing that his election would be contested; but he does not consider that the Company might also have been 'fishing in troubled waters' here. Though the Batavian Government was sometimes out of touch with events in Riouw (see below p.246 the reports of Governor Crans had undoubtedly alerted the Central Government to the situation in Riouw at this time.

<sup>24</sup>

Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, X, ii, pp.315-316

<sup>25</sup>

*Ibid*, p.316

<sup>26</sup>

Crans, *Report 1779*, p.543. In 1779 Raja Ismael made a new, successful attack on Siak, and from then until his death in was occupied with firmly establishing his rule. *GM*. 31 December 1779, p.1109.

drive the Bugis from Johore, of which he claimed to be the rightful Sultan.<sup>27</sup> The death of Daing Kamboja had thus left the Bugis stronger rather than weaker, for Raja Haji's rule restored good relations between Riouw and Selangor, where his nephew Raja Ibrahim had become Sultan, and Riouw now became 'very prosperous.'<sup>28</sup> Governor De Bruijn complained that the new Raja Muda of Riouw 'threw open the trade there to all and sundry without the slightest attention to our protests and warnings about the violation of existing treaties between the Netherlands East India Company and Johore.'<sup>29</sup>

The government at Batavia was no longer prepared to leave Riouw undisturbed, nor to wait on events in the hope that the prosperous trade of Riouw would somehow be destroyed. The first serious move they made to curb the trade of the Straits struck at Malacca as much as the native ports. In 1778 the traffic of any Chinese junks to the Straits, or indeed to any port in the Archipelago, except Batavia, was strictly prohibited.<sup>30</sup> Three vessels were to be allowed to make the voyage to Macassar and Banjermasin. This trade had been restricted by a regulation of 15 May 1753, but had not decreased. The 1778

27

Crans, Report, 1777, p.542. Governor Crans and his predecessor, Governor Schippers, make it clear in their reports of local affairs that the Trengganu prince had not slackened in his opposition to the Bugis

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Winstedt, JMBRAS, X, ii, p.314

29

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.56

30

Plakaatboek, Vol. 10, (1778), p.234

regulation restricted the trade still further; no junks were to go to 'Malakka, Johor or Riouw, Atjeh, Passir or elsewhere in those seas'. Provision was made for the strict enforcement of the edict, and the vessel of any merchant who defied the new rule was to be confiscated. Notices to this effect were posted in Dutch and Chinese at Malacca and Batavia, and communicated to the Chinese merchants at Canton by the VOC's supercargoes. Nachodas leaving the roads in China were given writings in Chinese, and notices of the new regulation were also sent to Amoy.<sup>31</sup>

These precautions must have had some effect, for in March 1779 the Malacca government received a letter from Raja Haji asking that Chinese trade at Riouw be allowed to continue.<sup>32</sup> The letter also contained various other complaints of the way he and his subjects had been treated by the Dutch. He objected, for instance, to the way that the government at Malacca had 'acted against the old friendship' between the Company and Johore, in claiming that vessels coming to Malacca with no cargo for that port still had to pay toll and thus be searched. Even royal vessels, the Bugis leader said, now had to pay toll as ordinary men. Raja Haji also argued that the VOC could have no complaint about the sale of prohibited goods such as spices at Riouw, as these goods had been obtained only from the Company's outposts. He did not answer the other accusations of the Dutch, nor did he refer to the Company's desire to renew the old treaty.

<sup>31</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3396. (Biljet by the High Government, 1 May 1778)

<sup>32</sup>

Kol. Arch. 3474. (Raja Haji to Malacca, March 1779)



The Malacca government replied to these complaints in detail, after consulting Batavia on several of the points raised.<sup>33</sup> The general restrictions on Chinese trade could not be relaxed, at least until Raja Haji on his side showed more willingness to fulfil his undertakings to the Company. Concerning vessels from Riouw which called at Malacca, the governor freely admitted 'that because of the breaking of the treaty by Johor, and the great harm done to this place by supplying Slangoor directly with goods formally brought here,' now and then vessels from Riouw and Selangor which did not unload cargo at Malacca were charged. He denied that royal vessels had been taxed, however.<sup>34</sup> The Central Government had believed that royal vessels from Johore had been taxed at Malacca, however, for they passed a resolution in May 1779 against this practice.<sup>35</sup> The Malacca government argued that they had no way of ascertaining whether vessels which produced the royal 'chiap' or seal really belonged to the king or nobles. They also argued that the Company had never granted any passes allowing European ships to call at Riouw, and therefore the Raja Muda should not admit them to the port. Any vessel that came to the port without a Company pass to Riouw, or which brought any goods which were not listed on that pass, must be treated as a smuggler. The importance of this last matter was stressed, and Raja Haji was warned that, if he wished to be regarded as the Company's friend, he must confiscate and declare all the tin and pepper which was brought to Riouw on vessels without authorised passes.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Col. Arch. 3474 (Malacca to Raja Haji, 20 December 1779)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Realia, Vol. II, p.188 (11 May 1779)

<sup>36</sup> Col. Arch. 3474 (Malacca to Raja Haji, 20 December 1779)



Raja Haji's reply indicated that he was not prepared to go to these lengths to retain the friendship of the VOC. He answered none of the Malacca government's charges, but stated that he was to the VOC as a man of eighty is to a young prince, and that all things lay in the hands of the Almighty.<sup>37</sup> He did not even send the customary gift with his letter, or express thanks for the gift sent from Malacca.<sup>38</sup> He concluded with a request that the Dutch send him a supply of five iron cannons. Not surprisingly, this request was not granted.

Correspondence between Malacca and Raja Haji ceased for a time after this. The Dutch government proceeded to take what steps it could, short of open warfare, to curtail the smuggling trade of the Bugis. Cruisers were sent to patrol the river of Linggi and the Larut river in Perak.<sup>39</sup> The guardship at Linggi was sent in answer to the request of the ruler of Rembau that the Bugis be kept out of the river. The Company had just<sup>40</sup> successfully concluded a new contract with Rembau. The Bugis 'also appear to have lost their credit with the king and some notables in Pera', though some of the latter 'still made common cause with the Bugis'.<sup>41</sup> Investigations were made in Palembang to find the principal persons engaged in the tin smuggling there, in the hope of cutting Riouw off from its source of supply. In 1782 the Dutch officials at Palembang had drawn up a

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Kol. Arch. 3474, (Raja Haji to Malacca)

38

Kol. Arch. 3478, p.232 Malacca to Batavia, (Secret), 15 February 1780

39

Kol. Arch. 3474 pp.34-6. Malacca to Batavia 14 February 1780

40

Ibid, p.34. Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. 6, pp. 424-8

41

Kol. Arch. 3474, p.35

list of 19 Palembangers and 12 inhabitants of Riouw who were involved in the trade; the Governor-General 'hoped that now the king with this specific information, will have more success in suppressing smuggling'.<sup>42</sup> The Government at Batavia were also waiting for the arrival of an envoy from Trengganu in June 1780.<sup>43</sup>

In that month news arrived at Malacca from India that England had declared war on Holland in the previous December. It was believed that English sea power in the Bay of Bengal was weak, and that Batavia was not threatened with invasion, but Malacca was in a far more vulnerable position. The government there asked the Governor General to note the weakness of their position, and to send extra European soldiers; for the Malacca government was uncertain how faithful their Asian troops would prove in the event of an attack.<sup>44</sup>

For a time, however, Malacca seemed threatened more by the Bugis than the English. Raja Haji was perhaps encouraged by the news that the English were now at war with the Dutch, to move against the Company. He may have felt that this was the only way to protect his power in the face of growing Dutch hostility. No record of his intentions has been left, however. Governor De Bruijn wrote at the later date that this prince was 'very secretive in his plans,

<sup>42</sup>

GM. 31 December 1782, p.1171. See also Kol.Arch. 3491, p.149, Malacca to Batavia, 7 December 1781

<sup>43</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 30 June 1780, p.662. The Sultan of Trengganu had informed Malacca in 1779 that he intended to send a mission to Batavia in that year, to request pardon for his son-in-law Raja Ismael, and to seek a moderation of the prohibition of Chinese trade. Kol.Arch. 3491, p.95, Malacca to Batavia, 20 February 1781

<sup>44</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3485, pp.2414-20. Malacca to Batavia (secret) 17 August 1781

and will reveal them to no one before they are properly ripened'.<sup>45</sup> It appears from the Dutch reports that an attempt was made to form an alliance between Riouw, Selangor and Boni, presumably against the VOC. This at least was what the Malacca government suspected, when they were informed by Batavia in 1781 that Raja Haji and his nephew, Raja Ibrahim of Selangor, had sent envoys to the ruler of Boni in Celebes, 'not only to express continued friendship but offering to come to his assistance in times of need', in fact to form a defensive alliance.<sup>46</sup> Governor De Bruijn wrote to Raja Haji and Raja Ibrahim to inform them that he was aware of their mission to Boni, and prepared for any hostile moves they might make. He wrote that Boni needed no other ally than the Company, and that all future correspondence with Boni must be abandoned, if these princes did not wish to arouse the suspicion of the Governor General that they had tried to win Boni away from its bonds with the Company. 'For', he concluded 'I fear that the Company otherwise shall use means of force there against, which will be disagreeable to my friend'.<sup>47</sup> Malacca's suspicions had been further aroused by a rumour reported by the Resident at Perak, that a fleet of ships were being fitted out at Selangor and Riouw. This rumour proved to be false, but the

<sup>45</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3491, p.895. Malacca to Batavia (Secret), 14 October 1782

<sup>46</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3495. Malacca to Raja Haji, 1781. In December 1781 a daughter of the Sultan of Selangor had been married to a brother of the king of Boni, Aroe Tommongang, whom the Malacca government feared 'had designs to capture Perak'. Kol.Arch.3491, p.163, Malacca to Batavia, 7 December 1781

<sup>47</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3495 (Malacca to Raja Haji)

suspicious of the Dutch that these powers were contemplating hostile action remained.<sup>48</sup>

The tone of the letter sent from Malacca, the last section of which amounted to an open threat, may have alarmed Raja Haji, for his actions became for a time conciliatory. He wrote to Malacca that he had had no intention of annoying the Company by communicating with Beni; nor did he have any 'bad intentions against the Malacca government'.<sup>49</sup> In May 1782 he sent envoys to Batavia with a friendly letter, containing official notification of his elevation to his present office, together with assurances of his willingness to fulfill the treaty with the Company and a request that his envoys might trade free of tolls at Batavia.<sup>50</sup> The Governor-General somehow received the mistaken impression that this letter came from the son-in-law of the previous Raja Muda, and that the former Bugis leader had died.<sup>51</sup> This may account for the friendliness with which he greeted this mission. A letter was sent to Raja Haji in June 1782 wishing him good luck in his new high office, and urging him to renew the old contract and to this end to send a mission to Malacca.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3495, p.183. Malacca to Batavia, (Secret) 7 December 1781

<sup>49</sup>

Ibid., p. 184. The Sultan of Selangor, however, did not answer Malacca's letter, which had been even more hostile in tone than that sent to Riouw.

<sup>50</sup>

Realia, Vol. II, p.188

<sup>51</sup>

GM. 31 December 1782, p.1182. 'The Regent of Riouw Raja Haji is dead, and has been succeeded under the same name by his son-in-law, who has advised us of this succession by a considerable embassy...

<sup>52</sup>

Netscher, Djohor, p.170



A letter and gift were also sent from Malacca to Riouw in August, requesting that an envoy be sent to Malacca to renew the contract and especially to discuss the matter of dividing prizes captured with the help of this prince.<sup>53</sup> Raja Haji promised to send an envoy to Malacca, though Governor De Bruijn felt that it was doubtful that the prince would do so, or ever be willing to bind himself to the Company, or to put a stop to the smuggling of tin and pepper from Palembang.<sup>54</sup>

Instead of sending envoys with the authority to negotiate a new treaty, Raja Haji himself came with a large force to Muar in October 1782.<sup>55</sup> He sent two emissaries to Malacca, 'not only to inform us of his arrival at this place, but that he came here intending to go to Malacca because he had no fit messengers to send to discuss the matters raised by Commissioner Rappa,' during his recent visit to Riouw. Abraham De Wind was sent to Muar, to inquire whether the prince wished to come to Riouw to draw up a new treaty and sign a convention against the English.<sup>56</sup>

De Wind's report ended any hopes the Dutch might have had that Raja Haji intended to co-operate with the Company. The Malacca envoy first found it difficult to gain an audience with the Rujis leader. When at last this was accomplished, Raja Haji answered

<sup>53</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3499, p.892. Malacca to Batavia, 14 October 1782

<sup>54</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3520, p.93, Malacca to Batavia (Secret) 13 September 1782

<sup>55</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3499, p.892. He came with more than 100 small vessels

<sup>56</sup>

Ibid, p.893

his questions about a new treaty in an arrogant 'and more or less ruffled' manner.<sup>57</sup> He declared that a contract between Johore and the VOC already existed, which he had always held to; that he had no power to forbid the trade in pepper and tin in the kingdom of Johore 'for his subjects were of old accustomed to carry on a free trade'; that the prohibited articles came from the territory of the Company itself, and if they wished to prevent the export of these articles they had the power to do so; that the Dutch and English companies were both very powerful, and comparatively he was very weak, and could not therefore take any part in the struggle between them; and, finally, that an English ship had been overmastered in his port and carried off'.<sup>58</sup>

This last point referred to the capture of the British Company's ship the Betsy at Riouw by a French privateer in February 1782. It is not possible to say whether or not Raja Haji had condoned this, in the hope of sharing the valuable prize (the ship carried a cargo of 1154 chests of opium). The captain of the French ship had negotiated with Riouw indirectly, and both parties may have been deceived by the go-between<sup>59</sup>. A Bugis account of the war implies that the vessel was captured as a result of information forwarded to

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Kol.Arch. 3499, pp.902-3. (De Wind's Report on his mission to Muar, 9 October 1782)

58

Ibid., p. 905

59

See Netscher, Djohor, p. 170

the Dutch by Raja Haji.<sup>60</sup> This writer also refers to a vague story that the capture of the Eetsy was the result of one of Mansur Shah's intrigues against the Bugis.<sup>61</sup> Whatever Raja Haji's attitude to this affair had been, by October he felt it necessary to display his grievance with the Company and to this end had brought his forces to Muar.<sup>62</sup>

Raja Haji's reply to De Wind had aroused the Malacca government's suspicions of his intentions, but they replied to his letter 'in a friendly way'. The increasing number of the Bugis force congregated at Muar,<sup>63</sup> together with some information given by one of the envoys who had come from Muar, strengthened the Dutch

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Maxwell, JSBRAS, 22, p.213. The author of the Tufhat al-Nafis claimed to have obtained this information 'from the local histories of Siak and Selangor, corroborated by the statements of old men who were alive at the time...' He writes that Raja Haji had made a convention with the VOC by which it was agreed that the enemies of the Dutch should be the enemies of Raja Haji, and all booty and prizes should be divided equally between the allies, if Raja Haji took part in the operations. It is clear from the Dutch records, however, that they had not at this time succeeded in gaining such an agreement. It is difficult to see any motive that could have tempted the Bugis to risk the English trade at Riouw except the hope of an easy profit, in the spirit of the piratical life in which Raja Haji had been previously engaged.

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Ibid, p.213

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This action had roused the hostility of many of his nobles and subjects at Riouw. Kol. Arch. 3499, p. 908. Malacca to Batavia, 15 October 1782

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The force at Muar 'stands at 2600 men and daily increases'. 300 armed marksmen disembarked at the village of Kesang near there. Kol.Arch. 3499, p. 895

fears that Raja Haji had come to attack Malacca, and had hoped to gain entrance to the town by the pretence of a friendly mission. Governor De Bruijn decided not to send any further European envoys in case they were held as hostages. Instead the regent of Rokan, who had recently come to Malacca as an envoy from Siak, went to Muar to tell Raja Haji that if he wanted to treat with the Company he must send letters or envoys to Malacca. Governor De Bruijn felt that it was necessary to show Raja Haji their suspicions of him, 'so that he would not pursue a plan to come to Malacca in a friendly guise, and so attack the town.'<sup>64</sup> Fearing that the Eugis might proceed with an attack in any case, an urgent plea for help was sent to Batavia.

Raja Haji revealed to the Regent of Rokan that he had come to Muar to gain compensation for the capture of the Betsy. He wanted a quarter share in the prize, and if the Company would not consent to these terms, he would become their open and declared enemy. This action had been forced on him because of the resentment of the English, and the bitter reproaches which were piled on him daily by his subjects, both the nobles and the common people alike. Many of them depended on the English trade for their livelihood. In September five English ships by-passed by Riouw to punish him for countenancing the capture of the Betsy.<sup>65</sup>

Faced with such an ultimatum, the Dutch at Malacca decided not

<sup>64</sup>

Ibid, pp. 897-8

<sup>65</sup>

Kel.Arch. 3499, pp.908-9. Malacca to Batavia, 15 October 1782



even to pay the prince the small douceur that had been authorised for his part in the capture of the Betsy. Instead they informed him that his contract with the VOC forbade the entry of foreign ships to Johore territory without an official pass, and therefore the admission of the Betsy to Riouw was illegal. They added that he had not at the time made any effort to assert the neutrality of his port, and that his demand of a quarter of the prize money was unreasonable.<sup>66</sup> Raja Haji left Muar on the 17 October to return to Riouw, where the Malacca government believed he intended to raise a stronger power. His departure coincided with the arrival of news from India that an English fleet was embarking many men and was thought to be aiming to attack Malacca.<sup>67</sup>

The Dutch government decided that forceful action must be taken at once to bring the Bugis activities to an end, and their opinion was shared by their superiors, who agreed that 'the humiliation of this regent is now a necessity, as much to punish him for his unjust aggressions as to warn the neighbouring princes against following

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Ibid, pp.909-910

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Kol.Arch. 3499, p.914. Malacca to Batavia, 30 October 1782. In July the Malacca government had been informed that the English had approached the ruler of Siak to secure his aid in a war against Malacca, though he had not responded to their plans, but instead informed Malacca. Kol.Arch. 3517, p.70. Malacca to Batavia, 10 July 1782. The government at Malacca were still fearful of an English attack. It was soon learned, however, that the Indian force had gone to Trincomalee. Kol.Arch. 3499, p.918. Malacca to Batavia, 14 October 1782

his example'.<sup>68</sup> They added that the English 'will not at present be able to give the Bugis any worthwhile assistance'. A small fleet was sent immediately to blockade Riouw, in the expectation that reinforcements would soon be received from Batavia or from Trengganu or Siak. No attempt was to be made to attack Riouw until further forces were sent.<sup>69</sup>

The blockade lasted nearly a year, disrupting the trade at Riouw, where 'rice and all kinds of provisions were dear, for trading boats could only enter with difficulty, being intercepted by the ships of war, sometimes they got through and sometimes they did not'.<sup>70</sup> An English observer, Captain Light, declared that

They stationed some of their vessels in the tract through which the Bugis vessels from Borneo and Celebes always come, and under decoy of English colours, they seized numbers of vessels that came that way, plundered them, and put the crews to death, without sparing a man...the blockade continued for six months, during which time no vessel of any nation was allowed to approach the place.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless the Dutch authorities were dissatisfied with the progress of the war, and finally the Batavian government sent 'reinforcements of ships and troops and ordered that two delegates of our [Malacca] Council should have command of the expedition. It was decided that

<sup>68</sup>

Batavia to Malacca, 17 November 1782. The Batavian Government sent the warships 'T Hoff ter Linde and Dolphin for this purpose

<sup>69</sup> Kol.Arch. 3499, p.931. Instructions given to Captains Tojer Abo and Christian Fredericil Winter Heim, Captains of the ships Dolphin and 'T Hof ter Linde, at Batavia, 17 November 1782

<sup>70</sup>

Maxwell, JSBFAAS, 22, p.215

<sup>71</sup>

SSR., Vol. I, p.150. (Light to Andrew Ross, 1784)

these delegates were to be the Vice-Governor Lemker and the Sabandhaar van Papendrecht'.<sup>72</sup> These reinforcements joined the fleet blockading Riouw, and it was decided to attempt an attack on the port. The attack met with disaster, for three of the largest ships ran aground and one caught fire and exploded. The others barely escaped. A landing was made but was beaten off 'with great loss'. The leader of the expedition, Heer Lemker, had been killed in the explosion of the ship.

The wreck remained burning for three days in the channel through which we had to pass. In the meantime the spring-tide had subsided, and the blowing up of the Malax Welvaart had deprived us of the flower of our crews and of our strongest vessel. The council of war took the unanimous resolution to raise the siege, we being in want of everything and far too inferior in strength.<sup>73</sup>

Meanwhile, the ruler of Selangor, Raja Ibrahim, hearing that Riouw was being attacked by the Dutch, set out to invade Malacca.<sup>74</sup> After the siege of Riouw was raised he sent to ask Raja Haji to

<sup>72</sup>

P. C. Hoynk van Papendrecht, 'Some old Private Letters from the Cape, Batavia and Malacca'. JMERAS, II, i, p.21

<sup>73</sup>

Ibid, pp. 21-22. A stirring account of the blockade as seen from the Bugis point of view is included in the Tufhat al-Nafis. See Maxwell, JSERAS, 22, pp.215-217

<sup>74</sup>

Maxwell, JSERAS, 22, p.188. This article contains a translation of Malacca's Dagregister for January to December 1784

join the attack on Malacca. According to a later Bugis chronicler

There was a great difference of opinion among the young Rajas in Riau, some being in favour of his going and some being altogether against it...Raja Haji himself was bent upon going: first, because the Selangor men were actually fighting; secondly, because his royal relative had personally come to ask him; and thirdly, because he hoped for merit in the sight of God by waging a religious war'.<sup>75</sup>

The following siege on Malacca laid a great strain on the garrison there, which was no longer kept at full strength.<sup>76</sup>

The siege lasted six months. In the words of the Ehabandar van Papendrecht, 'Then we were in great embarrassment...The enemy harried us in so closely, except on the sea-side, that it was a great boon that Admiral Van Braam came with the Government squadron to relieve us, in which he would not have succeeded but for the death of Raja Hadji'.<sup>77</sup> Van Braam's fleet, consisting of six ships and six smaller vessels, arrived at Malacca on the 29 of June.<sup>78</sup>

This fleet was a state force sent to Asia in an attempt to shore up the waning power of the VOC after the disastrous Fourth Anglo Dutch War. After raising the siege on Malacca, Van Braam proceeded first to Selangor, where he drove out the forces of

<sup>75</sup>

Ibid, pp.218-9

<sup>76</sup>

Sonnerat, Voyages, p.20

<sup>77</sup>

Papendrecht, JMFRAS, II, i, p.22. Francis Light wrote that during the siege 'the Dutch were unable to procure any subsistence from the land, or to move one step beyond their bound hedge, which is close to the town. The Dutch garrison is weak, so that the fate of the town is doubtful'. SSR, Vol. I, p.150 (Light to Andrew Ross, 1784)

<sup>78</sup>

Maxwell, JSERAS, 22, p.202



Sultan Ibrahim and installed Mohamad Ali of Siak as the new Sultan, and then to Riouw, where the Bugis power was also broken. The majority of the Bugis there abandoned the port after 'a severe battle on the 29 October' with Von Braam's fleet, and retreated to Borneo under the leadership of Raja Ali.<sup>79</sup> The Malay Sultan, Mahmud, capitulated to Van Braam and concluded a new treaty with the Company, renouncing any treaty he had had with the Bugis and promising that a Bugis would never again be appointed to the position of Raja Muda. It also granted to the VOC the right to establish a garrison at Riouw, and promised that Europeans other than servants of the VOC were not to be allowed to trade at Riouw. Delivery of tin at 36 reals the bahar, and other commercial privileges that the Company required from Johore were also granted.<sup>80</sup>

In an attempt to convince the Directors of the English Company of the need to move swiftly to procure a settlement in the Straits, Light had prophesied that if the Dutch

overcome the Malays, they will destroy the ports of Rhio and Selangor, and establish factories at these places and at Pera and Quedda, which will entirely prevent any other nation from having a share in the trade of these countries, so far as to hinder them from bartering their opium and other goods for tin, pepper and other articles which are the produce of [these] countries, and so compell all other countries to deal with them [the Dutch] alone'.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup>

Maxwell, JSEBRAS, 22, pp.208-210

<sup>80</sup>

See Netscher, Djohor, pp.188-199

<sup>81</sup>

SSZ, Vol. I, p.150

For a time after the capture of Riouw it seemed that this might indeed happen. In 1786 the same writer declared that though the Dutch had lost Selangor again, they continued to blockade the port with two of their large ships and several smaller ones.<sup>82</sup> He went on to say that 'The Dutch now possess both sides of the Straits of Malacca from the Point Rmania to the Latitude 5° North, nothing is left but the small kingdoms of Queda and Atjeh'. The Dutch had also taken steps to cut off all communications between the Straits of Malacca and Borneo.<sup>83</sup>

Dutch power was far more apparent than real, however, for it was based on the presence of a strong fleet in the area, which could not be maintained. Moreover, the change in the status quo brought about by the destruction of the Bugis power at Riouw which appeared to benefit the Dutch so greatly brought with it certain important disadvantages. The English, fearful that the VOC might in fact be able to impose their influence on the local princes, hurried to establish a settlement on Pulau Penang, (where the VOC had no sort of territorial rights), which might act as a new focal point for

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Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor had retreated to Pahang, but in 1785 he returned with support from Pahang, and drove out the Siak prince (Mohamet Ali had left his deputy Sayid Ali in Selangor) and the Dutch garrison. Winstedt, JMBPAS, X, ii, p.313. See also Hall, Southeast Asia, p. 331. He defied the Dutch blockade which was immediately sent for a year, but was finally forced to submit.

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SSR, Vol. I, p. 198

the trade in pepper and tin, and the Bugis trade to the Archipelago.<sup>84</sup> The Malacca government also found the ruler of Perak far less willing to accede to their demands for the delivery of tin, now that the threat of Bugis power had been removed. After the English became established at Penang, much of the Perak tin was taken to them; in the three years 1787-1790, the Dutch at Malacca received altogether less than 50,000 lbs. of tin from there, the rest going to the English at Penang.<sup>85</sup>

Malacca's trade was thus harmed rather than helped as a result of this war, and Governor De Bruijn was accurate in his fears that the Riouw trade would soon 'establish itself somewhere else' if it could not be attracted to Malacca.<sup>86</sup> Both Governor De Bruijn and his successor, Governor Couperus, stressed that a change in the commercial policy of the Company at Malacca would now be of much more help in winning the trade of the Straits back to the Company, than any number of fleets. Couperus pointed out, for example, the folly of trying to make the people of Perak deliver tin to Malacca by force of arms. The mineworkers were poor people, he argued, and

<sup>84</sup>

SSR. Vol. I, p.204. The Court of Directors wrote to India in 1786 that 'you will observe by our letter...concerning Rhio, the great importance of which we think it is to secure a proper establishment to which the Bugis and Malays may resort for the purchase of opium, piece goods and European Manufacturers'. See also SSR. Vol. II, pp.1-28, a letter by the English merchant James Scott emphasising the need for the English Company to occupy Ujong Salang since Riouw and Selangor had been lost to the Dutch.

<sup>85</sup>

J.E. de Hullu, 'A. E. Van Braam's Memoire over Malakka en den Tin Handel Aldaar.' BKI, 76, (1920), p.299.

<sup>86</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.62

would merely flee away from Dutch forces and leave the tin mines unworked; whereas if Malacca could buy tin at its dearest price, and be satisfied with a small margin of profit, they would soon win back the tin trade of the Straits. He compared the convenience of Malacca as a harbour with the disadvantages of the Penang roadstead for ships engaged on the run to China.<sup>87</sup> Governor De Bruijn estimated that a slackening of the restrictions on the cloth and other trades, and the admission of the unrestricted traffic of Chinese junks to the port, would yield a rich reward in the tolls and duties collected at Malacca.<sup>88</sup>

But the directors of the VOC made no move to implement this advice, and seemed resigned to lose the tin and pepper trade to the English, rather than relax the restrictions on trade at Malacca, to the possible detriment of trade at Batavia.

For though the members of the Malacca government hoped to gain a greater place in the Straits trade by the disruption of Bugis-English trade at Riouw and Selangor, and despite the pessimistic fears of the English country traders, as voiced by Scott and Light, the Dutch had not become involved in this war with the Bugis in order to establish their control of the trade of the Straits. At no time in the eighteenth century had a government at Batavia been willing to commit substantial forces to curb the rival trade centres in the Straits of Malacca. It is impossible to believe that the members of the Central

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<sup>87</sup>de Hullu, BKI, 77, p.609<sup>88</sup>Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.58



government would have deviated from the policy of their predecessors at this stage of the Company's fortunes, when its interests had become firmly centred on their territorial power in Java.<sup>89</sup>

It may be argued that this war was merely a defensive action undertaken by the VOC to protect their establishment at Malacca from the aggression of Raja Haji. Governor De Bruijn declared that Raja Haji had become 'so rich and powerful' as a result of the contraband trade he allowed at Riouw, that he had 'dared to form a plot to capture the town and fortress of Malacca by surprise, in order to draw the trade and revenues of the place to himself'.<sup>90</sup> It is possible that Raja Haji may, as the Dutch suspected, have been planning an attack on Malacca by 1781, though there is no other evidence of this than the suspicions of the already hostile government at Malacca.<sup>91</sup> The Malay account of the war cites the capture of the Betsy as 'the beginning of the events which led to Riau being embroiled in war'.<sup>92</sup>

If Raja Haji had been tempted to make an unprovoked attack on the Company, he probably hoped to gain more than just the 'trade and revenues of Malacca', which would have been a poor reward, for the trade had dwindled to 'little or nothing' by the 1770's,<sup>93</sup> and the Regent of Riouw reputedly drew his revenue from the tin trade rather than tolls imposed on visiting shipping.<sup>94</sup> It must, however, be

<sup>89</sup>

Hall, Southeast Asia, p.317

<sup>90</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVI, i, p.56

<sup>91</sup>

Kol.Arch. 3495, p.183, Malacca to Batavia (Secret) 7 December 1781

<sup>92</sup>

Maxwell, JSBRAS, 22, p.213

<sup>93</sup>

Harrison, JMBRAS, XXVII, i, p.31

<sup>94</sup>

Plakaatboek, Vol. 7, p.473

considered as a possibility that this prince, who was to all accounts a rather reckless warrior, had decided that the only way to capture the tin trade of Perak, and subdue the other Malay states in the area, was to drive out the Dutch settlement, which presented the Malay states with a steady market for their goods and a source of gunpowder and perhaps more substantial support.

It should also perhaps be considered whether the Bugis might not have made war on the Dutch for religious reasons. This appears an unlikely explanation of their actions, however. Raja Haji of all the Bugis leaders has the most marked reputation for piety, though this may to some extent be due to the very fact of his death in a war against unbelievers.<sup>95</sup> However, the description of his piety, given by the author of the Tufhat al-Nafis, who states that at the very hour of Van Braam's attack on his stockade Raja Haji 'did not cease reading a religious book,'<sup>96</sup> is substantiated by the Malacca Shahbandar, Papendrecht, who noted that the Bugis regarded Raja Haji as a 'living saint'.<sup>97</sup> It is significant, however, that the description of the war given by the Bugis chronicler, who claimed to have drawn his material partly from the tales of old men who had fought at the time, makes no claim that this was a crusade, or that

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'War against enemies of El-Islam, who have been the first aggressors, is enjoined as a sacred duty; and he who loses his life in fulfilling this duty, if unpaid, is promised the rewards of a martyr'. Quoted in Maxwell, JSBRAS, 22, p.219, footnote 2

<sup>96</sup>

Ibid, p.221

<sup>97</sup>

Papendrecht, JMBFAS, II, i, p.22

Raja Haji was motivated to any great extent by religious zeal.<sup>98</sup> Raja Haji's own words to Malacca's envoy, the Regent of Rokan, in 1782, show that he was moved to anger against the Dutch for more material reasons.<sup>99</sup> The actions of the Bugis throughout the century appear to have been strictly pragmatic and aimed at capturing and securing their hold on the more important sections of the trade of the Archipelago that were not controlled by the Dutch; it is unlikely that they would have risked their position at Riouw on any grounds which were not intended to further their ambitions, or to protect the structure that had already been built up.

The most likely explanation for Raja Haji's moves against Malacca is, therefore, that he had become apprehensive of Dutch intentions towards the Bugis establishments. They had been willing to support a rival candidate as Regent of Riouw, and had begun to present their 'protests and warnings about the violation of existing treaties' in a much harsher fashion than had ever been the case while Daing Kemboja ruled Riouw. The outbreak of war between the European companies presented an excellent opportunity to attempt to move against the Dutch to negate the threat they represented to Bugis power in the Straits, and perhaps at the same time, alter the situation in the area so that the Bugis would be able to fully dominate the Malay states. The only inexplicable action of Raja Haji is the part he played in the capture of the Betsy.

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Maxwell, JSBRAS, 22, p.213

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Kol.Arch. 3499, p.503. Malacca to Batavia (Secret)  
15 October 1782

Though the Dutch finally acted against the Bugis in response to Raja Haji's menace to Malacca, in sending a fleet to blockade Riouw it was carrying through a policy which had been present in spirit if not in fact, since 1775. In contrast to the war of 1756/7, the Company could not be said in any way to have been drawn into this conflict because of the involvement of the Malacca government with the local Malay states. The contrast is underlined by the actions of the Batavian government after the siege of Malacca had been raised, in carrying the war to the Bugis and establishing positive control of Riouw and Selangor. This decisive action was continued in their attempts to break up the trade of the Bugis between Borneo and the Straits.

It could not be said, therefore, that the VOC entered the war reluctantly, or ended it before they had firmly achieved their object. That object was not to force the trade back to Malacca, but to break up the co-operation of the Bugis with the English at Selangor and Riouw. It was plain that the English company was determined to establish an official outpost in Southeast Asia as soon as possible. The Dutch aimed to prevent this post being set up at Selangor or Riouw. Such a post would have 'answered every purpose' of the English Company,<sup>100</sup> provided them with a convenient base to attract the trade of the Archipelago, and, in the Bugis, an excellent tool to manage this trade. These actions of the Archipelago's trade which the Dutch still hoped to keep to themselves

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As the English Court of Directors themselves said. SSR, Vol. I, p.204



would soon have been conquered. Conversely, once the English were officially allied to the Bugis, it would have been much harder for the servants of the VOC to move against this group. The Batavian government may not have known that Raja Haji had again invited the English to establish an outpost at Riouw,<sup>101</sup> or that this offer had been accepted, and that Thomas Forrest was in fact on his way to present this acceptance when Riouw was conquered;<sup>102</sup> but they were aware of the imminent likelihood of such an event, and that the most effective way to prevent its happening was to take over Riouw.

The capture of Riouw represented a far greater gain to the VOC than the mere suppression of a rival trading establishment which was damaging their trade at Malacca. The gain may seem to have been negated by the establishment of an English base at Penang two years later, but both the Dutch and the English were well aware of the disadvantages of Penang, as compared to Riouw.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>101</sup>

SSR, Vol. I, p.159. (Letter from Thomas Forrest)

<sup>102</sup>

Bassett; in Bastin and Roolvink, (1964) p.139

<sup>103</sup>

See, for instance, Governor Couperous' disparaging remarks on Penang, De Hullu, EKI, 77, p.610.

### Conclusions

During the eighteenth century the Straits of Malacca were on the periphery of the VOC's interests, and the establishment at Malacca became increasingly a bastion for the Company's more vital interests in the archipelago proper, rather than a place from which the Company could extend its prestige and influence over the 'neighbouring Indian monarchs and princes...'<sup>1</sup>

The central government at Batavia were at all times reluctant to expend any of their resources in an effort to bring the Malay states under control.

In 1714 its members were alarmed by the growing power of the Johore ruler, and indignant at the manner in which he flouted the declared aims of the Malacca government; but they did not feel that the rival trade of Riouw was so damaging to the Company's interests that it had to be ended at all costs. Later in the century, other members of the central government of the Indies were similarly reluctant to take any action to curb the growing power of the Bugis; but when it became obvious that the growing trade of the English at Riouw presented a threat to the VOC's control of the trade of the rest of the Archipelago, they accepted the need to force the Bugis into submission whatever the cost, and sent such forces as became available to do this.

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<sup>1</sup> Leupe, JMERAS XIV, i, p.12, and p.30 above

The Dutch government at Malacca, which in itself never possessed more than 600 military personnel and often far less, which had only a few small armed vessels at its disposal, and would rarely have been financially capable of raising a large force from its own revenues, was entirely dependent on the material support of the central government in any scheme to enlarge the town's control over the trade of the Malay states. The government at Batavia continually refused to furnish this support; they sent forces to relieve Malacca when it appeared in danger from the Bugis in 1722, and when it was actually besieged in 1756, but did not leave them in the Straits on that occasion long enough for the Malacca government to move against the Bugis to suppress the local competition to the VOC's interests. It must be concluded that these interests were not considered vital, whereas the monopoly trade to Java and the east of the Archipelago which was threatened in 1784, was.

Therefore, the Dutch government at Malacca could not dominate the surrounding states, nor could it force the trade of the area to concentrate at the old port once again. On the contrary, the policies of the VOC were so restrictive that Malacca probably lost trade after it was taken over by the Dutch. The central government apparently preferred to lose the profits from this trade altogether, rather than allow Malacca to develop into a rival entrepôt to Batavia.

However, the Malacca government was not a continual target for the attacks of the local states, either, and for the most part maintained peaceful relations with the Malay states, though a

continuous battle was waged for control of the important local trades.

It would be wrong, however, to decide that because the Malacca government was unable to force the Malay states to deliver up their most valuable products in tribute, as the old Malacca Sultanate had, or to prevent the development of rival entrepôts such as those at Riouw and Selangor, the continued presence of this Dutch outpost was irrelevant to the history of the development of the Malay states in the eighteenth century. The VOC's continued control of Malacca, coupled with the restrictions placed on trade there, created a need for an alternative entrepot in the area to serve the needs of the passing merchants. The VOC had already paved the way for a Malay power to attempt to establish such an entrepot, and consequently to attempt to capture a large proportion of local trade, when it helped to upset Aceh's dominance of the Straits in the previous century by forming an alliance with Johore, and capturing much of the tin and pepper trade of Sumatra from the northern state.<sup>2</sup>

However, the very presence in the Straits of the Dutch outpost, an offshoot of a powerful Java-based power, helped to prevent the development of a political or commercial structure which was able to succeed to the power of the Malacca Sultanate and Aceh, and dominate the surrounding states, channeling trade from India, China and the Archipelago to a central entrepot once more.

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<sup>2</sup> See Introduction, p.34. Bassett 'Changes in the pattern of Malay politics, c.1629-1655'. p.15



Even though the Batavian government would not act to suppress the development of entrepôts at Riouw or elsewhere in an attempt to force all trade to Malacca, they were never prepared to risk losing control of this 'frontier-place', and provided extra forces to relieve it on the rare occasions that it was menaced. So the Dutch port was always there as an alternative market to any Malay entrepôt that appeared likely to dominate trade in the area, to accept the products of any Malay group who rebelled against the would-be overlord, and as a centre from which they could obtain foodstuffs, many of which had to be imported to the area, and also munitions. The Asian powers which sought to dominate the Straits in this period were thus unable to subordinate all other ports, as Srivijaya and Malacca had done, because an attack on Malacca would have led to warfare with a power far stronger than any of the Malay states.

The effects of this can be seen in the way that the Bugis, in their early struggle to retain the position they had taken up in Selangor against the powerful forces of Johore, turned to Malacca as a market for their tin and a source of foodstuffs and munitions. The rulers of Perak and Rembau, at a later period, also adopted this policy in an attempt to maintain their independence in the face of growing Bugis power. They saw in the Dutch a possible ally, <sup>and</sup> though they did not receive a great deal of military aid,<sup>3</sup> they thus

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Though the Dutch had established a fort at Perak with about 120 soldiers attached to it, it is doubtful if this force would have been much help in repulsing a Bugis attack, in view of their easy surrender to the English in 1781. The presence was probably more powerful as a sign of Dutch interest in the area rather than in any real sense.

avoided having to deal with this powerful neighbour; and the dominant Bugis state was deprived of an important economic weapon in its efforts to subdue all its rivals.

Because of this the VOC could be said to have contributed to the collapse of the old cycle of political development in the Straits, preventing the growth of any single state to a position of dominance over the area, which had always entailed control over trade. The power vacuum left by the collapse of first Malacca, then Aceh, and the withdrawal of Siam and China from events in the Malay peninsula was not filled by the Dutch, nor by Johore, for the Dutch presence helped to prevent first the Raja Muda, then the Bugis, from extending the power of Johore over all the neighbouring states. At the end of the eighteenth century the area was composed of several small, weak states, which had broken away from the rule of the Sultan of Johore, and had no power to resist the growing pressure from Siam, and later from Great Britain.

This had not been the case at the beginning of that century. It has previously been believed that by that time the rulers of Johore, greatly weakened in their power by a series of struggles over the succession, had abandoned their attempts to compete with the Dutch Company for control of local trade, and that this competition was only revived after the Bugis gained control of Riau. It has been shown, however, that this port had developed into a rendezvous for the trade from China, Java and India, and even for some English merchants, before Daing Marewa and his Bugis supporters settled in the Straits, and it is apparent that Johore,

far from being moribund, was in the second decade of the century making a strong bid to dominate the area under the rule of the Raja Muda Tun Mahmud. This mistaken notion of the state of Johore at the time stems from Netscher's interpretation of the events which lead up to and followed the conclusion of the 1713 treaty between the VOC and Johore. His failure to recognise that this treaty had very little real importance in the relations of Johore and Malacca, and did not signify the submission of the Malay power, is almost certainly due to his basic presumption of the superiority of Dutch power over the forces of the Malay states.

Netscher was an official of the Government of the Netherlands East Indies and, though he made every effort to represent the position of Johore realistically, and utilised many Malay chronicles to do this, he approached the history of the eighteenth century with the preconceptions of the nineteenth, and the conviction of the superiority of European over Asian powers. He was unable to see the real weakness of the Malacca government, and its inability to intervene decisively in the affairs of the Malay peninsula. For instance, he made no attempt to explain why the VOC refrained from intervening in the affairs of Johore during the period when the Bugis were consolidating their power, but commented that perhaps they were awaiting a request for help by the weakest party, and in the meantime had confined their interference to 'protests

against the violation of their privileges and to friendly pressure to uphold these'.<sup>4</sup> His interpretation has perhaps led to an over-estimation of the power wielded by the Dutch in the Straits and, for instance, of their position in the tin trade.

The Bugis who later gained power in Johore came to the peninsula while the Raja Muda was still in a strong position, and at a time when a prosperous trade was being conducted at Riouw. After they came to power they seem to have aimed at establishing a similar type of state. But Johore under Bugis rule developed in a different direction, and though the Bugis rulers became very powerful in the Straits and developed a thriving entrepôt trade at Riouw, they did not control as much territory as the Malay prince had done. The Bugis alienated the Malay nobles, and created a split within the former territories of Johore which was not healed. Siak and Trengganu remained bitterly opposed to the Bugis rule of Johore. Moreover, Bugis control over the states of Perak and Rembau was less than has sometimes been asserted. The continuing cooperation of the ruler of Perak with the government of Malacca after 1746 despite the intrigues of the Bugis in that state shows that their power was far from complete. Dutch reports that the Bugis had been driven from the Linggi river in 1779, and that the ruler of Linggi was asking for the support of the VOC to keep them out of the

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<sup>4</sup> Netscher, Johor, p.69



river, indicate that their dominance over this Minangkabau state was also incomplete.<sup>5</sup>

Bugis ascendancy in the Straits also differed from the attempts of earlier powers to dominate the area, in several ways, one being that they allowed two entrepôts to grow up, rather than channeling all trade to one port. Bugis rulers also appear to have made no attempt to carry on their own trade to India or China, as the Raja Muda had done, being content to bring the wares of the Archipelago to exchange with the Country Traders for Indian and Chinese wares.

By the 1760's they had also given up the habit of forcing foreign trade into their ports; the Dutch complain of them after this as smugglers rather than as pirates.<sup>6</sup> The Bugis had clearly adapted their methods to the new conditions of trade in the Straits which followed the great influx of Country Traders; they probably found that these merchants, who came in well armed ships, were better dealt with peacefully, and responded more favourably to the benefits of easy trade and the availability of a range of products which could be sold in China, than to force. In some ways these English merchants had more influence on developments in the area than the Dutch. For, as the Bugis leaders gave up the old practice

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Kel.Arch. 3446, p.58. Malacca to Batavia, 12 February 1779. Hall, *Southeast Asia*, p.333, discusses the breakaway of Rumbau (later Negri Sembilan) from Bugis influence, but this would indicate that their power in that state was declining before their forces were defeated at Rincow and Selangor

6

Crans, *Report*, 1777, p.542, et al

of forcing passing trade into their ports by a patrolling fleet, the Malay princes, whom neither the Bugis nor the Dutch had brought under control, engaged in piratical expeditions more often to augment their revenue. The type of 'piratical activities' that the Dutch had complained of in the times when the Raja Muda or the Bugis were attempting to centralise trade at Rieuw, had by the 1770's given way to a more nefarious type of piracy, where the aim was not to force a vessel to a given port, but outright robbery. Such were the piracies the Dutch reported in the latter part of the century.

Thus, though Van Leur's declaration that Europeans had no decisive power over events in most parts of Asia before 1800<sup>7</sup> is clearly true in the case of the Straits of Malacca, it would be as erroneous to conclude that their presence in the area is irrelevant to the history of the development of the Malay States as it would be to argue with Netscher that the Dutch Company were a dominant force in the area. To obtain a balanced view of the subject the fact of Dutch occupation of Malacca must be taken into consideration,

7

In his essay 'On the Eighteenth Century as a Category in Indonesian History' Van Leur pointed out the inconsistency of writing Indonesian history in a European framework, when at that period 'Economically, there was no ascendancy, no preponderance; militarily the same can be said regarding land power, though perhaps there was European superiority in some areas;....Politically the power of the Oriental States remained unshaken'. J. C. Van Leur, Indonesian Trade and Society, (The Hague, 1955), p.283

for the government there played its own part in the pattern of events. Dutch Malacca added an extra strand to the web of developments in the area, and it may be that, though their direct influence was of little account, indirectly they upset the balance of political development, and paved the way for the conditions of the nineteenth century when the chronic disunity and instability in the area invited foreign intervention.

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### Section I. Manuscript Sources

- 1 The main sources for this thesis were the records of the VOC preserved at the Algemeen Rijksarchief (General State Archives) of the Netherlands, in The Hague. Microfilm copies of the dispatches relating to Malacca were obtained for the University of Singapore by Dr Graham Irwin, and in 1967 copies of these films were made for the library of the Department of Pacific History of the Australian National University. The following series were consulted :

A. Overgekomen Brieven uit Batavia, 1700 - 1784. The letters and appendices written to the Netherlands by the Governor General and Council. This series falls into two parts, the first being the Generale Missiven, or general letters written bi-annually (sometimes a third smaller letter was sent) to the Heeren XVII to inform them of events in Asia. Of these I have read the extracts relating to Malacca. The second and fuller part is a selection sent in to Batavia from the buitencomptoiren and passed on, almost wholly, it appears, to the directors. These dispatches from Malacca to Batavia include letters from the Malacca government, memoirs of the retiring Governors of Malacca, copies of the Malacca Boomboeken, letters from Asian rulers to Malacca, dispatches from Malacca's out-stations at Perak and other places, and other miscellaneous items. This latter series is very voluminous and was not available on microfilms for the years 1750 - 1784. I was able to consult selections of the material for these years, concentrating mainly on the letters from Malacca to Batavia, in the Rijksarchief at The Hague.

B. Inkomende Briefboek Batavia, 1700 - 1784  
Copies of the letters from the Governor General and Council to Malacca.

Wherever possible I have indicated the Archive repository number of any reference by the preface Kol. Arch. As the microfilm copies were not numbered according to this system this was not always possible, and where I have not been able to discover the repository number of a dispatch I have indicated the source used by the prefix letters of the relevant series (see Abbreviations) and the date of the dispatch.



2 Other manuscript sources consulted to supplement the above were :

A. The Malacca Church Archives (read on microfilm at the Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia), Kuala Lumpur.

B. Selections from the records of the English East India Company, preserved at Commonwealth Office, London. The series consulted were the

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Appendix 1

I have listed below the annual Income and Expenditure of the VOC's establishment at Malacca over a period of eighty years in the eighteenth century. A year's trading was calculated from the first day of September until the last day of August. The income represents monies gained from the sale of spices, cloth and other of the Company's goods, and from port dues, customs tolls and the sale of various toll forms. These figures are drawn from the general statement included each year in one of the letters sent from the Governor and Council at Malacca to the Governor General and Council at Batavia. In several cases this statement was missing from the records, but a similar statement was generally included in the Generale Missiven for the convenience of the Heeren XVII and the figures were drawn from this. The amounts are shown in guilders.

Year	Income	Expenditure	Profit	Loss
1700/1	52295/6/8	121870/1/8		69629/15/-
1701/2	53929/13/8	135719/1/8		81790/9/8
1702/3				
1703/4	36927/14/-	150590/7/8		113662/13/8
1704/5	52590/18/-	163220/12/8		110629/14/8
1705/6	235919/3/-	142735/13/-	93183/10/-	
1706/7	58078/17/8	146275/16/-		88196/12/8
1707/8				
1708/9	126713/1/-	141933/1/6		15220/15/-
1709/10	70528/5/-	157984/6/-		87456/1/-
1710/11	83017/1/8	160028/6/8		77045/5/-
1711/12	138272/9/-	101416/3/-		36856/-/-
1712/13	141335/17/8	155695/1/8		14359/4/-
1713/14	72736/9/-	131532/11/8		58796/2/8
1714/15	64613/14/8	133133/13/8		68519/18/8
1715/16	75403/7/8	125307/8/8		49904/1/0
1716/17	82025/9/-	131246/12/8		49221/3/8
1717/18	93647/3/-	134999/-/-		41352/-/-
1718/19	71282/-/8	133609/5/8		62327/5/-
1719/20	88172/-/-	136371/13/-		48199/13/-
1720/1	103861/5/8	155530/19/8		51669/14/-
1721/2	69195/4/8	142587/17/-		73392/12/8
1722/3	95661/12/8	172601/6/-		76939/13/8
1723/4	92621/4/-	158084/19/-		65463/15/-
1724/5	113255/4/-	153652/7/8		40397/6/8
1725/6	60159/5/8	142546/-/8		82386/15/-
1726/7	132888/14/8	143818/-/-		10929/5/8
1727/8	77883/13/8	150123/15/8		72240/2/-
1728/9	80314/10/8	149048/17/-		68734/6/8
1729/30	63840/-/-	155309/15/8		92869/16/8



Year	Income	Expenditure	Profit	Loss
1730/31	46831/19/8	146614/4/8		99782/15/-
1731/2	130501/-/-	167743/4/8		37242/4/8
1732/3	94918/3/-	151763/10/8		56845/7/8
1733/4	100747/12/-	161353/13/8		60606/1/8
1734/5	67026/19/-	145559/4/-		78532/5/-
1735/6	132968/4/-	138955/7/-		5927/5/-
1736/7	58072/4/8	150605/14/-		92533/9/-
1737/8	138814/12/-	157687/18/8		18872/18/8
1738/9	75012/5/8	146847/10/8		71834/15/-
1739/40	122875/7/8	156257/7/8		33382/-/8
1740/1	144083/4/-	1561299/19/8		12046/5/8
1741/2	82692/17/-	153555/-/-		70862/15/8
1742/3	109974/4/-	141685/2/8		31710/18/8
1743/4	69234/16/8	123667/16/8		54433/-/-
1744/5	9526/10/-	120969/18/8		25723/8/8
1745/6	122694/17/-	130062/-/-		7367/9/8
1746/7	108762/4/8	118785/3/-		10022/18/8
1747/8	111996/15/-	121038/4/8		9041/9/8
1748/9	99590/5/-	118797/16/8		19207/11/8
1749/50	87856/15/8	125181/7/8		37324/12/-
1750/1	103213/9/8	178282/5/-		75068/5/8
1751/2	118513/12/-	142434/18/8		23921/6/8
1752/3	133362/12/8	141214/8/8		7851/16/-
1753/4	144321/6/-	122321/6/-	21511/-/-	
1754/5	111534/19/-	175075/10/8		63540/11/8
1755/6	104519/1/8	198486/15/-		93967/13/8
1756/7		235984/12/-		
1757/8		213507/6		
1758/9	115924/7/8	168348/13/-		
1759/60				52424/5/8
1760/1	117486/18/8	192252/5/-		
1761/2	96166/11/-	136485/14/-		74765/6/8
1762/3	100293/9/8	131094/1/8		40321/3/-
1763/4	104309/19/8	114313/5/-		30795/11/-
1764/5		114057/9/-		10003/5/8
1765/6	131695/9/-	121331/-/-	10364/9/-	
1766/7	140990/14/-	167152/18/8		
1767/8	147610/19/8	163645/17/-		36526/13/9
1768/9	120473/6/-	116618/12/8	3854/13/8	16034/17/8
1769/70	124833/16/-	121628/3/-	3205/13/-	
1770/1		116843/12/-		
1771/2	150652/16/-	138420/11/8	12234/4/8	
1772/3	160818/16/-	123330/8/-	36988/8/-	
1773/4	188553/11/8	122417/18/-	66135/13/8	
1774/5	210767/2/-	129777/11/8	80989/10/8	
1775/6	168176/12/-	127509/1/8	40667/11/-	

Year	Income	Expenditure	Profit	Loss
1776/7	178312/14/-	127523/7/-		
1777/8	183522/9/-	117455/-/-	66067/9/-	
1778/9	164152/1/8	113235/10/-	50889/11/8	
1779/80	162396/16/8	112013/1/8	49783/15/-	
1780/1	140666/9/-	131374/19/8	9291/9/8	
1781/2				
1782/3	150017/14/-	144130/6/-	5887/8/-	

## Appendix 2

The following are copies of treaties signed by the VOC on one side, and the rulers of Johore, Siak and Perak, at different times during the period covered by this thesis. I have not tried to include all the treaties concluded between the VOC and the Malay powers, only those which have an important bearing on events discussed in the thesis, viz., the treaties with Johore of 1689, 1713 and 1756, with Raja Alam of Siak in 1761, and the treaty with Perak, by which Malacca was to receive all that State's tin output, of 1746. The later treaties with Perak were similar in form.

The first four treaties given below are abridged versions published by E. Netscher in his monograph De Nederlanders in Djohor en Siak, pp.38-9. The fifth is from the Corpus Diplomaticum, Vol. V, pp.430-1.

### 1. Malacca-Johore 1689

#### Artikel 1

Vernieuwing en bevestiging van al de vroegere tractaten.

#### Artikel 2

Uitsluitende en tolvrije handel der Compagnie in 's konings landen.

#### Artikel 3

Geene vestiging van Mooren of Jentieven in de Djohorsche landen wordt toegelaten. Ten handel komende, worden zij zwaar belast.

#### Artikel 4

Tolvrije handel van Djohor op Malakka.

#### Artikel 5

Tot de meerderjarigheid van den Sulthan wordt aan de Compagnie toegestaan tolvrije alleenhandel in lijnwaden, contanten, tin en goud op de rivier van Siak, met vrijheid om er een houten huis op te rigten. Een klein vaartuig met lijnwaden van den bandahara zal jaarlijks daar toegelaten worden.

#### Artikel 6

De bevolking langs de rivier van Siak en affluenten heeft het recht om houtwerken aan de Compagnie te verkoopen.

De Djohorsche sabandar van Sebauwa zal 's Compagnies handel niet mogen tegenwerken.

#### Artikel 7

De onderdanen van Djohor mogen op de rivier van Siak handelen in provisiën en kleinigheden. Hunne vaartuigen zijn onderworpen aan visitering door 's Compagnies vaartuigen en aan confiscatie van verbodene waar.

#### Artikel 8

Wederzijdsche uitlevering van weggelopen slaven en overloopers. Menschenroof wordt met den dood gestraft. Ook de eerste vrijwillig weggelopen slaaf wordt, tot afschrik, met den dood gestraft.

#### Artikel 9

Onderdanen van Djohor zal geen overlast worden aangedaan door 's Compagnies kruisers op de rivier van Siak of Bengkalis. Djohorezen, aanleiding tot ongenegen gevende, zullen worden gestraft.

#### Artikel 10

Djohor zal 's Compagnies belang zooveel mogelijk behartigen en het contract trouw naleven.

### 2. Malacca-Johore 1713

#### Artikel 1

Bevestiging van de oude vriend-en bondgenootschap tusschen de G.I. Compagnie en Djohor.

#### Artikel 2

Vrije handel van de Compagnie en hare onderdanen in de landen van Djohor en van de onderdanen van Djohor in het ressort van Malakka, mits de gewone tollën betalende; handel in opium door Djohorezen verboden.

#### Artikel 3

Vrije handel der Malakkasche ingezetenen met 's Compagnies passen op de rivier van Siak en hare spruiten, zonder tol de betalen wanneer geene lading wordt gelost of ingenomen. Ditzelfde voor Djohorsche vaartuigen op Malakka, mits binnen drie dagen vertrekkende.

#### Artikel 4

Malakkasche vaartuigen, naar Petapahan gaande, betalen eene vaste som als tol aan den Djohorschen sabandar.

#### Artikel 5

Vrije aankap of inkoop van hout in Siak door de Compagnie en de Malakkasche ingezetenen.

#### Artikel 6

Uitlevering van gedroste slaven of schuldenaren.



Artikel 7

Vrijdom van tol voor de Compagnie op de rivier van Siak. De Gewone geregtigheden blijven onverdeeld aan den Sulthan.

Artikel 8

Wanneer de Compagnie al de plaatsen en landen van Djohor zal hebben ten onder gebracht, zal zij door het gansche rijk tolvrij kunnen handelen.

Artikel 9

Alleenhandel der Compagnie in tin te Selangoer, Kalang en Linggi.

Artikel 10

Geene toelating van vreemde Europeanen in het rijk van Djohor, zonder pas van de Compagnie.

Slot

"Dit contract zullen de koning en de Compagnie staande houden en daarvan niet afwijken, zoolang <sup>zoo</sup> en maan hun schijnsel van zich geven. En op deze wijze zullen wij van onze vijanden ontslagen kunnen worden en de E. Compagnie met gemak en naar gencegen haren handel drijven. Maar zoo de E. Compagnie dit contract niet onderhoudt, zal zij ook den koning van Djohor niets kunnen wijten.

Wat aanbelangt de reeds gevallene en nog te maken kosten, zoo in's Compagnies als in 's konings dienst, zal een ieder, die ze gemaakt heeft of nog maken zal, die moeten dragen."

4. Malacca-Siak (Raja Alam) 1761

Artikel 1

Padja Alam onderwerpt zich aan de Compagnie en belooft vriendschap jegens den koning van Djohor

Artikel 2

De vijandelijkheden van Radja Alam enz. zullen voor altijd ophouden.

Artikel 3

Wanneer Siak door de hulp der Compagnie aan het bestuur van Radja Alam zal zijn toevertrouwd, zal hij het Radja Mohamad geroefde en diens schuld van de Compagnie overnemen.

Artikel 4

Geen doorgraving van rivieren mag plaats hebben.

Artikel 5

De Compagnie zal dadelijk Poelce Goentoeng weder bezetten en het recht hebben ook elders in Siak vestingen te bouwen, en de rivier te laten bekruisen.

Artikel 6

Indien de Compagnie, wegens de hulp aan Radja Alam verleend en de "daaruit voortgevloeide successie," wordt aangevallen, zal Radja Alam zich met de Compagnie vereenigen ter bestraffing.

Artikel 7

Alleenhandel der Compagnie in lijnwaden.

Artikel 8

Visitatie der vaartuigen op de rivier van Siak.

Artikel 9

Vrijdom van tol voor de Compagnie. Radja Alam mag van anderen heffen 2½ pCt. inkomend en uitgaand regt.

Artikel 10

De hoofden van "het moordgespuis" overleveren aan de Compagnie.

Artikel 11

's Compagnies vrienden zijn ook die van Radja Alam, en hare vijanden ook de zijnen. Hij zal medewerken om straat Malakka van roovers te zuiveren.

Artikel 12

Op verzoek van Radja Alam wordt aan zijn zoon Mohamad Ali vergiffenis geschonken, mits hij zich, bij de kerst van 's Compagnies magt in Siak, onderwerpt; anders wordt hij, als de overige hoofden der moordenaars, uitgeleverd.

Artikel 13

De opvolging in Siak staat aan de goedkeuring der Hooge Regering. De opvolgers van Radja Alam zullen deze artikelen moeten bezweren.

5.

Malacca-Perak 1746

Articulen van vrede en onverbrekelijk verbond, besloeten tusschen den koning van Pera, genaamt Sultan Malpasaar Johan Bordollat Peer Allam ter eenre, en de Vereenigde Nederlandse G'octroyeerde Generaale Oostindische Comp. ter andere zyde, door ons, ondergeschrevenen, verhandelt, als zijnde van den E.E. Agtb. Heer Wilhelm Bernhard Albinus, gouverneur en directeur over de stad en fortresse Malacca, benevens den E. politiquen raad daertoe gequalificeerd.

Art 1

Langesien sijn Hoogheyd niets liever dan een onverbrekelyke alliantie met d'E. Comp. is begeerende, presenteerd denselven een plaats beneden 't koningsfort en Ixamanas woning, om daar tot securiteyd van den gerusten handel op te bouwen, als by d'E. Comp. g'oordeelt sal werden te behooren.

Artikel 6

Indien de Compagnie, wegens de hulp aan Radja Alam verleend en de "daaruit voortgevloeide successie," wordt aangevallen, zal Radja Alam zich met de Compagnie vereenigen ter bestraffing.

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Artikel 11

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Artikel 12

Op verzoek van Radja Alam wordt aan zijn zoon Mohamad Ali vergiffenis geschonken, mits hij zich, bij de komst van 's Compagnies magt in Siak, onderwerpt; anders wordt hij, als de overige hoofden der moordenaars, uitgeleverd.

Artikel 13

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5.

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Articulen van vrede en onverbrekelijk verbond, beslooten tusschen den koning van Pera, genaamt Sultan Malpasaar Johan Bardollat Peer Allam ter eenre, en de Vereenigde Nederlandse G'octroyeerde Generaale Oostindische Comp. ter andere zyde, door ons, ondergeschrevenen, verhandelt, als zijnde van den E.E. Agtb. Heer Wilhelm Bernhard Albinus, gouverneur en directeur over de stad en fortresse Malacca, benevens den E. politiquen raad daertoe gequalificeerd.

Art 1

Zangosien sijn Hoogheyd niets liever dan een onverbrekelyke alliantie met d'E. Comp. is hegeerende, presenteerd denselven een plaats beneden 't koningsfort en laxamanas woning, om daar tot securiteyd van den gerusten handel op te houden, als by d'E. Comp. s'oordeelt sal werden te behooren.

2

Vergunt voorschreven Sijn Hoogheyt, dat niemand anders dan de Comp. alleen, met uytsluyting van alle andere natien, al den thin, in Pera vallende, sal rogen inslaan, mits dat de Comp. voor de khaer van 375 pond Hollands, te wegen met 's Comp<sup>ies</sup> balans en gewigt, sal betaalen 26 ducatonen d'khaer, en voor tol twee Spaense realen, sonder aan verdere thollen en gerechtigheden subjectte zijn.

3

Dat Zijn Hoogheyt ten eersten een mandaet sal laten afkondigen, dat de na buyten willende vaertuygen eerst aan de besetting sullen aanleggen, om gevisiteerd te werden, en dat zig niemand te eeniger tijd den thin ter sluyks verstoute na buyten te voeren, of dat by agterhaling hunne geheele lading door die van d'E. Comp. voor confiscabel verklaart sal werden, d'cene helft ten voordeele van Zijn Hoogheyt en de andere helft ter decisie van d'E. Comp<sup>ie</sup>.

Aldus gecontracteerd op heden, den 25en July Ao. 1746 op de baly van den Laxamana in presentie van Radja Moeda, genaemt Siandaar en den Dato Laxamana Nachoda Posama.