

Writing and Reciting Acehnese: Perspectives on Language and Literature in Aceh

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This thesis is dedicated to
my wife, Maslaila Daud, and our four lovely children
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Abstract

This dissertation is a descriptive study of Acehnese language literacy and literature within a multilingual culture. Acehnese is an Austronesian language, spoken by approximately 2.7 million people at the northern end of Sumatra, Indonesia.

Acehnese has existed in a multilingual contexts, notably Arabic and Malay, which have typically given shape to the development of Acehnese language literacy. Pathways to literacy acquisition are not direct: traditional literacy is developed through the contexts Arabic and Malay learning, while modern literacy is developed through the context of Bahasa Indonesia. The ability to read and write Acehnese texts in the Jawi script requires basic knowledge of Arabic and Malay in addition to adequate knowledge of Acehnese language itself.

Acehnese is written in two types of script: the Jawi and the Roman alphabet. The development of the Jawi script has a close link with the influence of Islam, while the development of the Roman script is due to the influence of modern secular education.

Acehnese displays exceptionally rich and distinguished poetic traditions. The various kinds and uses of poetry are described in some detail. Of special interest of this study is to explore the role of poetry and its relationship with literacy development. This is significant since virtually all Acehnese written texts, which serves a wide range of functions in the life of Acehnese people, are in verse. Some types of poetry are consistently written down: mainly *hikayat*, and as a result *hikayat* forms a major poetic text type within the genre of Acehnese poetry.

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work;

(ii) due acknowledgment has been made in the text to all other materials used;

(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies, appendices and footnotes.

Bukhari Daud

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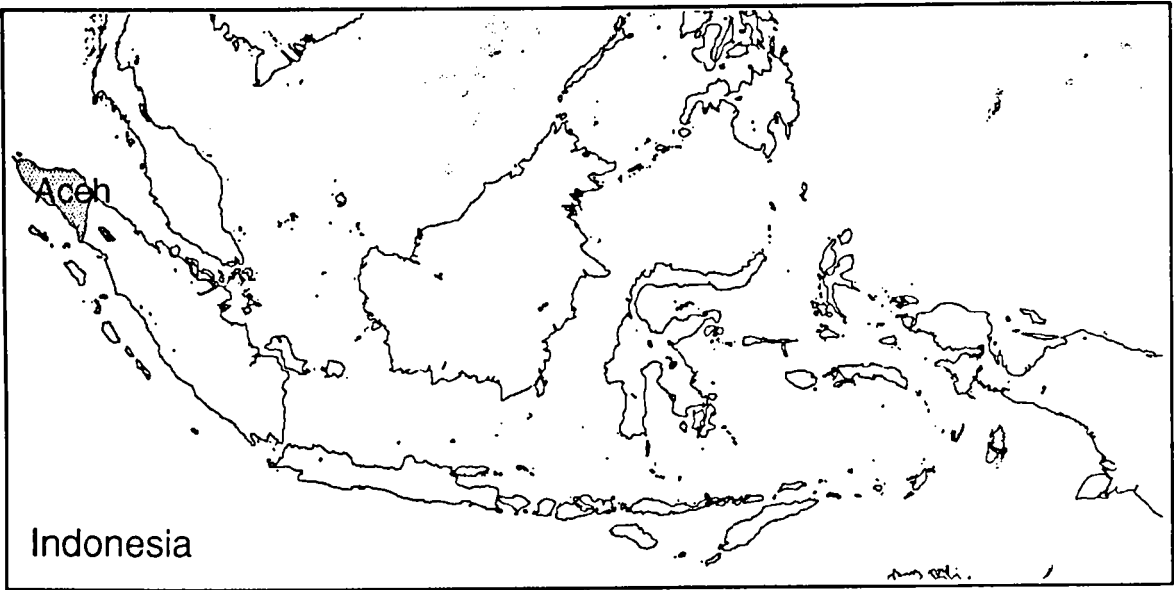
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Abbreviations

ABRI	= Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia
BI	= Bahasa Indonesia
BPS	= Biro Pusat Statistik
Dep. P dan K	= Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan
Dinas P dan K	= Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan
D.I/T.I.I	= Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia
GBPP	= Garis-garis Besar Program Pengajaran
IAIN	= Institut Agama Islam Negeri ('The State Islamic Institute').
INMA	= Identifikasi Naskah Museum Aceh ('Manuscript Identification of the Aceh Museum').
INPRES	= Instruksi Presiden ('Presidential Instruction')
KKN	= Kuliah Kerja Nyata ('Fieldwork Experience').
MEC	= Ministry of Education
MRA	= Ministry of Religious Affairs
PGSLP	= Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Lanjutan Pertama
P3KI	= Pusat Pengkajian dan Penelitian Kebudayaan Islam
PDIA	= Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh ('the Centre for Acehese Information and Historical Documentation').
PKA	= Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh ('Acehese Cultural Fair').
REPELITA	= Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun ('the Five-Year Development Plan').
RRI	= Radio Republik Indonesia ('Indonesian State Radio').
SD	= Sekolah Dasar ('Primary School').
SMP	= Sekolah Menengah Pertama ('Secondary School').
SMA	= Sekolah Menengah Atas ('High School').
SMU	= Sekolah Menengah Umum ('High School').
S.H.	= Snouck Hurgronje
Tgk.	= Teungku ('honorific title, and common term of address for male adult').
TVRI	= Televisi Republik Indonesia ('Indonesian State Television').

The Location of Aceh in Indonesia



Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study explores issues relating to literacy and literature in Acehnese, a language spoken in the Special Province of Aceh, at the northern end of Sumatra, Indonesia. Acehnese is one of the 'major' minority languages of Indonesia, spoken by approximately 2.7 million people: about 70% of the total population of the province of Aceh. It exists as a language in a wider context where Malay (now Bahasa Indonesia) and Arabic have for centuries functioned as lingua francas, especially in relation to literate communication. Acehnese also has its own literary tradition which is not separate from but is rather embedded within the wider context of literacy in Arabic and Malay/Bahasa Indonesia. Of special interest in this context is the role of poetry, since virtually all Acehnese written texts, serving a wide range of functions, are in verse.

This study considers the historical, geographical and social contexts of the Acehnese language itself. It overviews the history of Acehnese literacy, and the pathways of achieving literacy skill in the language. It also describes the orthographic systems used for Acehnese, both traditional and modern, and traces the relationship of Acehnese orthography with those in use for Arabic and Malay/Bahasa Indonesia. Finally it explores the nature and functions of poetry in Acehnese culture including aspects of poetic performance: this is crucial for understanding why Acehnese writing is almost exclusively limited to poetry.

1.2 Significance of this Dissertation

It is useful to highlight some particular aspects of this study which may be of interest to the reader:

- (1) It provides a description of a complex set of relationships, which together construct the nature of literacy in a multilingual culture.
- (2) It is a contribution to the understanding of literacy in Indonesia, a society where the standard language is not the mother tongue of most citizens.
- (3) It advances our understanding of Acehnese language and culture, which have a rich and distinguished poetic traditions.
- (4) It offers a valuable resource for literacy education and language planning in Aceh.

1.3 Methodology and Data

This study is primarily descriptive in nature. It attempts to describe aspects of Acehnese literacy and literature as clearly as possible. It is not based upon any particular preeminent theoretical framework, since the area of this study is a new one which poses its own very specific problems. The study of Acehnese literacy is not yet an established academic field, rather it touches on a variety of different disciplinary areas including history, literacy, linguistics and applied linguistics, literary studies and poetics, education, ethnography, and lexicography. Accordingly, literature relevant to this study is cited in the context of particular sections: there is no single literature survey as such.

The data for this study are drawn from many different sources: oral and written, as well as my own knowledge and experience as a native speaker of Acehnese. The data from oral sources are obtained by means of recordings, interviews, and direct elicitation. In addition to recordings which I made

myself, I was able to make use of Dr Durie's extensive collection of Acehnese tapes.

Two field work trips were undertaken to collect data: one was between January-April 1995, and the other was between January-February 1996. In addition to collecting data from oral sources during these periods, I was also able to collect archive materials and manuscripts, especially from the Aceh Museum and other institutions and government offices, including the Bureau of Statistics.

Many examples of verses of poetry are given in this study. Some are quoted from previous publications, some are from manuscripts, and the rest are from my own memory. All examples quoted from previous publications have been adjusted to a standardised modern Acehnese orthography (see Daud and Durie: forthcoming). A few exceptions apply to book titles, personal names, and some examples in Chapter Six, where I show a facsimile of some original texts for the purpose of contrast. With the examples cited from *Jawi* manuscripts, the texts have been transliterated into the Roman alphabet. English translation is given for each Acehnese example, and unless specified the translation is my own.

The data from written sources were obtained by reviewing previous relevant works, and these include works in the fields of literacy, literary studies, ethnography, history, linguistics, lexicography, and education. Some of these are academic, some are bureaucratic, and others are popular in nature. The written sources include the works of European writers and indigenous alike.

1.4 Overview of the Dissertation by Chapters

This first chapter gives a brief introduction to the whole work.

Chapter Two deals with the questions such as: What do we know about the history of the Acehnese language, the linguistic environment and dialect variations of Acehnese, and other linguistic elements that have penetrated Acehnese? This chapter sets the scene for examining Acehnese literacy by establishing its linguistic contexts.

Chapter Three explores how literacy in Acehnese language was traditionally acquired and in what contexts skill in Acehnese literacy is developed. It also deals with the question of which institutions are responsible for the acquisition of Acehnese traditional literacy. This is followed by a discussion of the traditional functions and roles of Malay and Arabic, as well as the role of early Malay writers, in shaping the traditional pathways to Acehnese literacy. This chapter ends with a description of uses of written and spoken Acehnese in its contemporary multilingual context: a major turning point in the history of Acehnese literacy was the establishment of the Indonesian state, including standardisation of Bahasa Indonesia, together with its literate form spelled in the Roman letters.

Chapter Four discusses the issues of Acehnese literacy in the modern post-colonial context, where a pathway to literacy in the mother tongue is formed through modern schooling in which Bahasa Indonesia plays a significant role as the medium and the target of both spoken and written instruction. This chapter also provides a historical account of the secularisation of education in the modern era and its impacts on Acehnese literacy. These include the replacement of the *Jawi* script with the Roman alphabet and changes in the attitude of the general Acehnese public towards public education. What is

interesting is not only what has changed since 1945, but also what has remained the same in literacy in the modern context. Recent historical developments of Acehese literacy education and its impacts on the Acehese written literature are also surveyed here.

Chapter Five deals with the orthographies of Acehese. It provides a technical description of the orthography, including the shift from the *Jawi* script to the Roman alphabet. It deals with the questions such as: How was Acehese orthography developed, what are the problems of using the *Jawi* script to represent Acehese, and what is the relationship between sound and letter in Acehese written in the *Jawi* script? Other important issues covered in this chapter include the influence of Snouck Hurgronje's work upon the development of Acehese Roman orthography; attempts towards standardisation; and the effects of the Indonesian spelling reforms on Acehese spelling. This chapter also addresses the role of technology and literacy education in the development and standardisation of orthography.

Chapter Six examines the structure of Acehese poetry, its metrical patterns, rhyme structures, and the structure of visual layout on the page. This chapter describes the prosody of Acehese verse, giving an account of the general principles which determine the range of verse types. This is a significant advance on previous description of Acehese verse by Dutch scholars. This chapter also describes how the verses written in the *Jawi* script and the Roman alphabet alike are laid on the pages, according to the various conventions which have been applied by Acehese writers.

The next two chapters describe the genres, purposes and functions of poetry in relation to Acehese literacy, as well as the contexts of poetry use and performance. It is important to address these issues in a study of Acehese

language literacy, because virtually all Acehnese written texts are in verse. Chapter Seven describes the purposes and genres of Acehnese poetry, as an attempt to provide answers to the questions such as what are the genres of Acehnese poetry, what is the relationship between poetry and prose, for what purposes poetry is composed, and how significant is the role of poetry in maintaining Acehnese cultural traditions. This chapter also highlights the contexts—poetic and non-poetic—of poetry use. It describes the various cultural performances and religious rituals wherein the use of poetry is vital: these involve both traditional and modern contexts. This chapter describes the types of performances in which poetry is extensively used, and the intended aims to be achieved from such performances.

Chapter Eight focuses exclusively on *hikayat* as a major genre of Acehnese poetry. It begins with some clarification of the term *hikayat* as it is used in both Acehnese and Malay. This chapter also highlights the issues of authorship, including matters relating to intellectual properties and the rights of copyists of *hikayat*. Following this is the discussion of Islamic influences on Acehnese *hikayat*. Two other major issues of this chapter are performance and classification of Acehnese *hikayat*. Where, how, and for what purposes *hikayat* are recited? Snouck Hurgronje's work is both reviewed and criticized here. This chapter concludes with a current classification of Acehnese *hikayat*.

Finally a concluding chapter summarises my findings and draws out their implications.

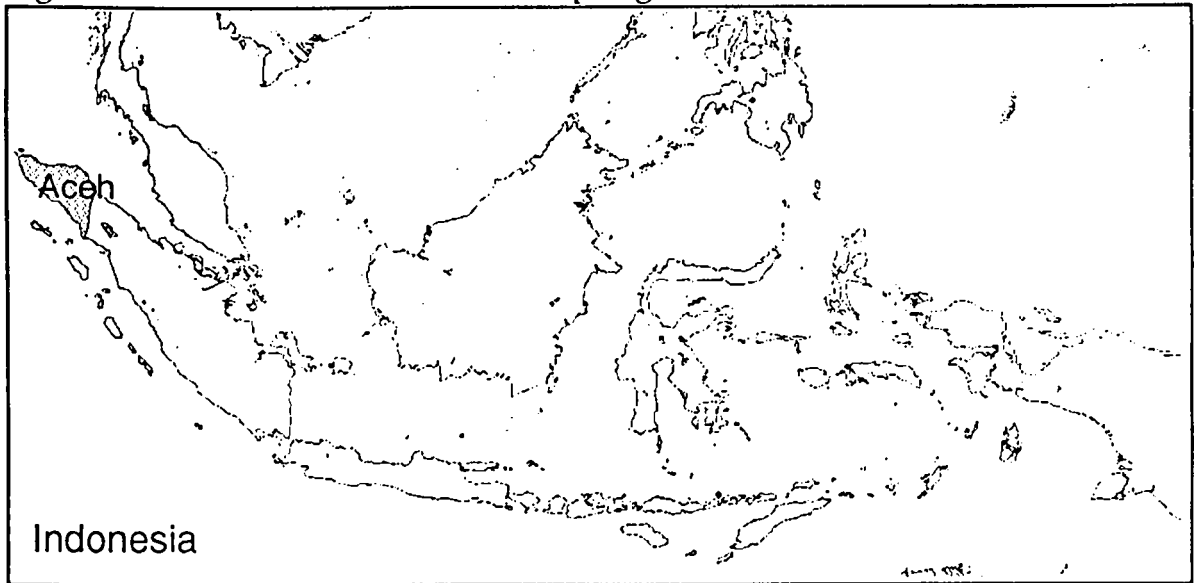
Chapter 2

Historical Background of the Acehnese Language

2.1 Introducing Aceh

Aceh has been frequently mentioned as an early entry point in the history of Islamic penetration to the Indonesian archipelago, and for this reason it has been named *Seuramoe Makah* ('the verandah of Mecca').

Figure 1 Aceh in the Indonesian archipelago



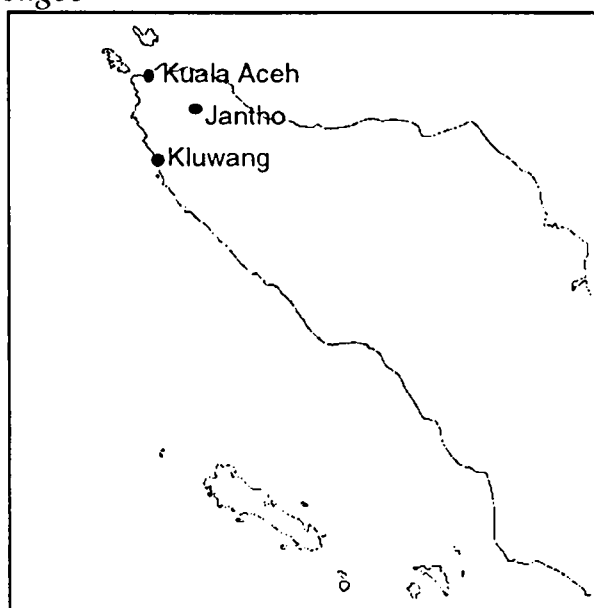
In the history of the Dutch colonial presence in the East Indies, Aceh was the most resistant area to Dutch control (Vlekke 1945:72).¹ From the early 17th century the Dutch had been at odds with the Acehnese people over keeping the Malacca strait and the Indian ocean around Aceh free of piracy (Siegel 1969:5). It was unlikely, if not impossible, for the Dutch to be able to do this unless they

¹Vlekke also include Madura in this category.

occupied Aceh, but this occupation was against the treaty of 1824 in which they had promised to respect the independence of Aceh (Vlekke 1945:168). The Dutch's attempt to 'pacify' Aceh began by sending their expedition to Aceh in 1873, but unexpectedly the expedition was "driven into the sea" (Siegel 1969:9). This brought a long bloody war between the Dutch and the Acehnese.

Aceh began to emerge as a major power in the north Sumatran region from the early 16th century (Djajadiningrat 1983:14-15), with the emergence of the Acehnese sultanate.² At that time the first known sultan—Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah—began to unify several kingdoms in the northern Sumatran region into a single power (Reid 1979:41). The Acehnese people have traditionally perceived their nation as *Aceh lhèe sagoe* ('triangular Aceh') reflecting its geographical layout which forms a triangle: Kuala Aceh being the north angle, Jantho being the east, and Kluang being the west.

Figure 2 *Aceh lhèe sagoe*



Each *sagoe* ('angle, corner, territory') is called after the number of its *mukim* ('a subdivision within a *sagoe* government'). Thus we have *sagoe 26 mukim*, *sagoe 25 mukim*, and *sagoe 22 mukim*: each is governed by a *panglima sagoe* 'territorial

²For a detailed description of the history of the Acehnese sultanate, see Djajadinigrat (1983) .

commander' (Anzib Lamnyong 1967:31).³ Snouck Hurgronje (1906:2) commented that the Acehnese like to compare this geographical image to a shape of *jeuëe* ('a winnowing basket').⁴

As a kingdom, Aceh reached its zenith and enjoyed its golden age in the first half of the 17th century, during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636).⁵ The Acehnese has preserved a memory of this golden age in a few lines of verses which are frequently chanted by people in Aceh. The verses read as follows:

Nanggroe Aceh nyoe seuramoe Makah

Nanggroe meutuwah pusaka kaya

Nanggroe bubé ôk asé lë leupah

*Lawét peurintah Iskandar Muda*⁶

'This nation of Aceh is the verandah of Mecca, the blessed nation, rich in heritage. It is a tiny nation, but produced great wealth, during the reign of Iskandar Muda.'

Today Aceh is one of the 27 provinces of Indonesia, located at the northern end of Sumatra. It stretches between 2 and 6 degrees of North Latitude and 95 and 98 degrees of East Longitude. Aceh has a total land area of approximately 57,365 square kilometres where we find 119 islands, 35 mountains, and 73 main rivers (BPS⁷ 1993). The province is bordered by the Straits of Malacca to both the East and the North. To the West we find the Indian Ocean (called by Indonesians: the Indonesian Ocean) which was the popular trading route for

³The picture of the triangular shape is also reflected in the three historical spots found in Aceh Besar: Indrapuri in the east, Indrapurwa in the west, and Indrapatra in the north.

⁴*Jeuëe* is a very significant tool in the life of Acehnese community. It is used in every household. It is mainly used to winnow rice, and to separate rice from dirt or grit prior to cooking.

⁵Also see Snouck Hurgronje (1906), Siegel (1969), Lombard (1986), and Djajadinigrat (1983).

⁶These verses are recited from my own memory, and perhaps almost all Acehnese native speakers can memorise these verses by heart.

⁷This is an abbreviation of Biro Pusat Statistik ('Central Bureau of Statistics').

the Indian, Chinese, Turkish, Persian, and Arab merchants in past centuries. The only land border is to the South where the province of North Sumatra is located.

As a province, Aceh is divided into eight regencies called *kabupaten*, two municipalities called *kotamadya*, two administrative towns called *kota administratif*,⁸ 142 districts called *kecamatan*, 591 subdistricts called *mukim*, and 5463 villages called *gampông* (BPS 1993). The *kabupaten* are: Greater Aceh, Pidie, North Aceh, East Aceh, West Aceh, South Aceh, Central Aceh, and Southeast Aceh. The *kotamadya* are Banda Aceh and Sabang, and the *kota administratif* are Lhokseumawe and Langsa. Each *kabupaten* is governed by a *bupati*, each *kotamadya* is governed by a *walikota*, and each *kota administratif* is governed by a *walikota administratif*. Although they bear different names, these three regional divisions are of equal political status.

2.2 Contemporary Linguistic Environment

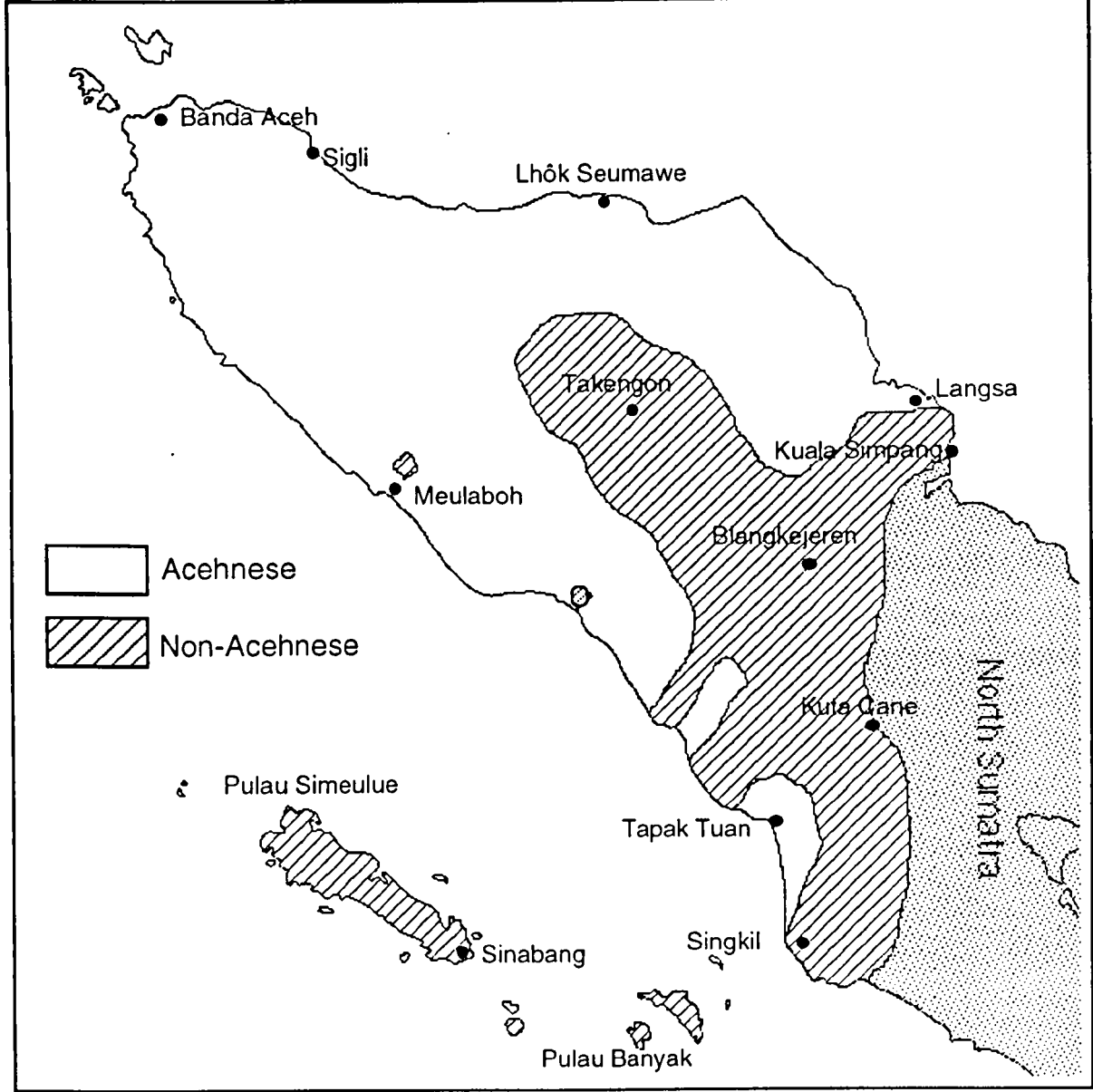
Aceh has a rich linguistic diversity. There are nine local languages in contact in this region of which Acehnese is the major one. Of the 3,422,693 (BPS 1993) total population, approximately 70% have Acehnese as their mother tongue. The rest of the population are the indigenous speakers of eight other languages found in the province: *Bahasa Gayo* ('Gayonese'), the Malayic—*Tamiang* and *Jamèe* (also called *Bahasa Aneuk Jamèe*, a variant dialect of Minangkabau spoken in West Sumatra)—the Batak related languages—*Kluet*, *Alas*, and *Singkil*—and the languages spoken in the island of Simeulu—*Defayan* and *Sigulai* (Sulaiman, et al 1977).⁹ Besides these indigenous languages, there are two other languages in common use in Aceh, Bahasa Indonesia (i.e. Indonesian, the national

⁸This title was just recently introduced by the central government as a partial step towards the local government autonomy package policy. In Aceh the town of Lhokseumawe (formerly the capital of North Aceh) and Langsa (formerly the capital of East Aceh) have been granted this status.

⁹See also Foley (1981) in Wurm and Hattori (eds.) *Language Atlas of the Pacific Area*, p.66-67.

language) and Arabic (i.e. the language of Islam); each plays various significant roles in Acehnese society¹⁰ (see section 3.7 for the discussion of functions of Arabic and Malay).

Figure 3 Regional distribution of the Acehnese language



The majority of Acehnese speakers reside along the coastal plains of the province, both the north and the west coasts (Durie 1985, Asyik 1987), whereas the speakers of most other indigenous languages are found concentrated in the

¹⁰I do not attempt to survey languages spoken by recent migrant or expatriate communities, e.g. varieties of Chinese, Toba Batak, Javanese, English, etc.

highlands and other more remote areas. Outside Aceh, smaller communities of Acehnese speakers are also found in Medan (i.e. the capital of North Sumatran province), Jakarta, Kedah and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, and Sydney in Australia.

The main Acehnese speaking areas are the *kabupaten* of Greater Aceh, Pidie, and North Aceh along the north coast, and the *kabupaten* of West Aceh along the west coast. The regions of East Aceh, and South Aceh are not only inhabited by many Acehnese speaking people, but also by other people of various linguistic backgrounds: this is true also of the major cities. Banda Aceh, for instance, includes many non-Acehnese speaking people because it is the capital city of the Aceh province which functions as the centre of government administration, education and business. Although Acehnese is spoken in East Aceh, this *kabupaten* is also a home of the other two indigenous languages—*Bahasa Tamiang* and *Bahasa Alas*, the latter is only spoken in a remote district of Lokop: most Alas speakers live in Southeast Aceh. The *kabupaten* of South Aceh represents a unique multilingual region. Besides Acehnese, three other native languages are indigenous to this region: *Bahasa Jamèe*, *Bahasa Kluet*, and *Bahasa Singkil*.

For this multilingual society, the lingua franca used to be Malay during the sultanate era, but it has been taken over by Bahasa Indonesia, a derivative of Malay, since Aceh officially became part of Indonesia after World War II. Arabic, although never a language of day-to-day communication, has had a very heavy influence on Acehnese. This is particularly related to the aspects of religious life—Islam. The influence of Arabic is not only reflected in borrowed words—generally by way of Malay—but also in the contexts of language use. Together with Bahasa Indonesia, Arabic has formed a multiglossic framing

which surrounds Acehnese: thus creating layers of relationship, with Acehnese on the inside, surrounded by Bahasa Indonesia and Arabic.¹¹

2.3 Family Relationship: Cham and Malay

“Islam and trade”, according to Siegel (1969:4) are the most frequent topics of discussion when people talk about the history of Aceh. Much less attention has been paid to the study of the Acehnese language, especially pertaining to its history. Even the majority of the native Acehnese native speakers themselves have very little knowledge on this subject, except a few who work in the language field. However, anyone who has access and sufficient contact with Acehnese would at least sense that this language has something in common with Malay and its offspring, Bahasa Indonesia, especially in the areas of lexicography and phonology. However, very few Acehnese are aware that this language is believed to belong to the Aceh-Chamic subgroup¹² within the mainland Austronesian¹³ and is closely related to Cham, a language spoken today in southern Vietnam and Cambodia, and has some common characteristics with Mon-Khmer languages (Durie 1985, Asyik 1987, and Thurgood MS). These languages are the linguistic remnants of the ancient Hindu Kingdom of Champa, which was based in what is present-day Vietnam.

The first to note the genetic relationship between Acehnese and the mainland Austronesian languages was Niemann. Niemann (1891) noted morphological and lexical similarities between these languages. Following his work, the genetic connection has been supported by a number of authors (see, e.g. Cowan 1933, 1974, 1981, 1982, 1991; Shorto 1975; Durie 1985, 1990; Durie, Daud and

¹¹This relationship is especially apparent in the structure of Acehnese texts, especially the written ones. A more comprehensive discussion of this relationship is given in Durie (1996).

¹²This term was introduced by Durie (1990).

¹³Besides Acehnese, the members of this family include Bih, Cham, Chru, Haroy, Jaray, Rade, Roglai, and Utset. They are all spoken in Mainland Asia (i.e. Vietnam and Cambodia).

Hasan 1994; Thurgood MS). The major evidence of this relationship can be seen in the similarities of their core lexicon, phonology and morphology.

Another similarity between these languages is also reflected in the process of linguistic changes, in which unstressed initial syllables of words found in Malay were eventually lost in both Acehnese and Cham. For example, the Malay *air* ('water') becomes *ie* in Acehnese and *ia* in Cham: the unstressed initial syllable [a] in *a-ir* is dropped. Similarly Acehnese and Cham tend to drop the unstressed vowel of the initial syllable retained in Malay, such as *beli* ('buy') becomes *bloe* in Acehnese and *blei* in Cham (see also Lee 1974). Thurgood (MS:33-37) gives a detailed list of evidence supporting his claim that Acehnese is in fact a Chamic language.

Perhaps the strongest evidence to date for the genetic relationship between the two languages is Cowan's (1974) and Shorto's (1975) studies of long versus short vowel (*aa* vs *a* : *eu* and *e*) correspondences and Durie's (1990) confirmation in reconstruction of Proto-Aceh-Chamic vowel correspondences.

The connection between the two languages is not only evidenced in the field of linguistics, but also reflected in the field of literature. For example, Cowan (1933) observed a close link between Acehnese *sanjak* verse and the verses of Cham used in the song of *kadhar* ('a musician-officiant'): they employ similar metrical patterns and structure of rhymes—both have eight feet within a line and the final foot of the first line rhymes with the middle foot of the second. Consider the following example, in which the rhyming feet are underlined: Acehnese:

Gah ban gajah sie ban tulô

Jitueng judô di nap mata (cited from Cowan 1933:149)

Cham:

Hadah parauv pauk bhong parauv

Papauh mök lauv prön lei cak mök (cited from Cowan 1933:151)

Po Dharma (1980:199-200) mentioned that in the oral tradition of Cham, there is a type of verse known as *dauh parauv* ('question in chanting'), which covers a wide range of topics, such as agriculture, love, and social events. The example that Po Dharma gave here illustrates a dialogue on why the rain has not eased.¹⁴ The first question was addressed to an egret, asking why it is skinny and then the story goes as follows:

"Egret, why are you so skinny?" "Because I cannot find fish", said the egret.

"Fish, why do not you go up to the surface?" "Because the grass is growing thick/tall", said the fish.

"Grass, why are you growing thick/tall?" "Because the buffalo does not graze on", said the grass.

"Why do not you graze on the grass, Buffalo?" "Because I was prevented by the wood bar", said the buffalo.

"Wood bar, why do not you let it go?" The wood bar said, "because Pa Ja Mbaik is not herding (the buffalo)".

"Pa Ja Mbaik, why do not you herd the buffalo?" He said, "because I have a stomach ache".

"Stomach, what is the problem with you?" "Because the rice is not cooked", said the stomach.

"Why are you not cooked, Rice?" The rice replied, "because the firewood is wet".

"Firewood, how do you get wet?" "The rain keeps falling", said the Firewood.

¹⁴Unfortunately the original Cham text is not given, otherwise we would have been able to see some other similarities such as the lexicon and the rhyme patterns.

"Rain, why do you do so?" The Rain said, "because the frogs keep scratching their legs".

"Now frogs, why do you keep scratching your legs?" The frogs replied, "we keep doing it because our ancestors did so, and how can we do not do it".

In Acehese this form of literature is known as *Haba Cakeuek* 'Story of a kingfisher', perhaps because it was the *cakeuek* who begins questioning. This story is published in Abdullah Arif's (1958) *Pantôn Atjeh: Pantôn Aneuk Miet* 'Acehese *Pantôn*: the *Pantôn* of Children'.

In ancient times the first Acehese speakers came to Sumatra and made it a trading outpost or a refugee colony from the large empire of Champa. However, this connection gradually faded away from memory upon the decline of Champa from c.1000 AD (Durie 1996:80, see also Cowan 1991 and Thurgood MSS). Champa was a major Southeast Asian power in ancient times and it managed to survive as a political entity through approximately twelve centuries, from c.200 C.E. to 1471 C.E. when it was absolutely defeated by the Vietnamese (Coedès 1968). Many Chams fled to Angkor and some to Hainan, Malacca, and Sumatra, i.e Aceh, where their ancestors used to make trading connections (Thurgood MS:11 ff). Djajadiningrat (1983:12) mentions that, according to the Malay chronicle, a Cham prince, called Syah Po Ling, came to Sumatra and had a share in establishing the Acehese dynasty in the second half of the 15th century. It was not long after this that Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah made a political expansion and unified Aceh.¹⁵

We have no evidence regarding the number of the Chams who came to Aceh at that time. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether the coming of these

¹⁵See Iskandar (1958) for a discussion of sources on the earlier history of Aceh.

people brought any heavy linguistic influence into Acehnese, or they themselves were submerged into the influence of Acehnese as far as the language is concerned.¹⁶

It is not yet clear at this stage in which Acehnese state then the Cham people landed because up to the beginning of the 16th century the north Sumatran coast was still divided, before Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah, reigned 1514-1530 (Alfian 1987:28), unified the whole area into a united Acehnese kingdom which was later known as *Aceh Dar-Assalam* 'Aceh the peaceful state' (Syamsuddin 1980:118). Marco Polo's fascinating picture of the region in 1292 reported the existence of eight kingdoms on Sumatra island, all lying in northern Sumatra.¹⁷ The kingdoms visited by Marco Polo included Ferlec ('Perlak'), Basman ('Peusangan'), Samara ('Samalanga'), Dagroian ('Nakur'), and Lambri ('Aceh')¹⁸, each of which was said to have its own language. We do not know whether Marco Polo was simply mistaken these languages which were later replaced by Acehnese, or whether he was referring to dialect differences. Today only Malayic Tamiang and Acehnese are found along this coast..

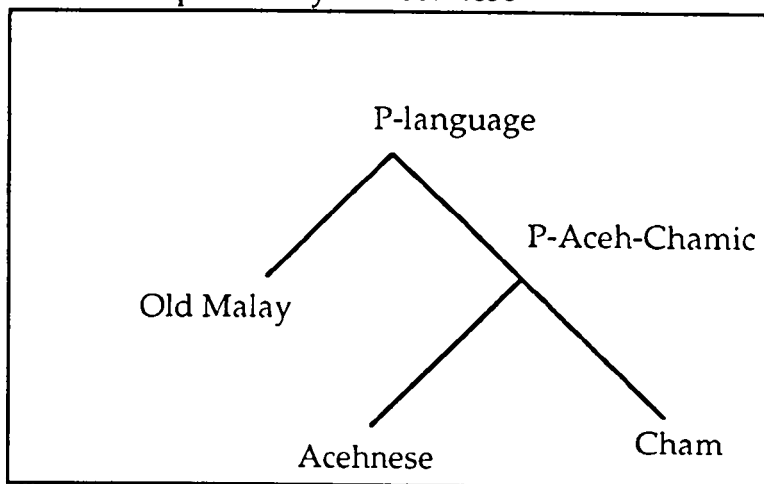
Perhaps Acehnese derived from the assimilation of the ancient Cham and old Malay which had been in existence in Sumatra prior to the arrival of the Chams. With regard to the historical link, Durie (1990) proposes that Acehnese is a daughter of a proto Aceh-Chamic language, a sister of Proto-Malayic (Adelaar 1985). This relationship can be presented as follows:

¹⁶Cowan (1991) argues that the number of refugees at that time was considerable.

¹⁷See Reid (1973). It seems that Marco Polo mistook Sumatra for Java, which some time referred to as Java Minor. See also Jones's (1984) introduction to Marsden's Dictionary and Grammar of the Malayan Language.

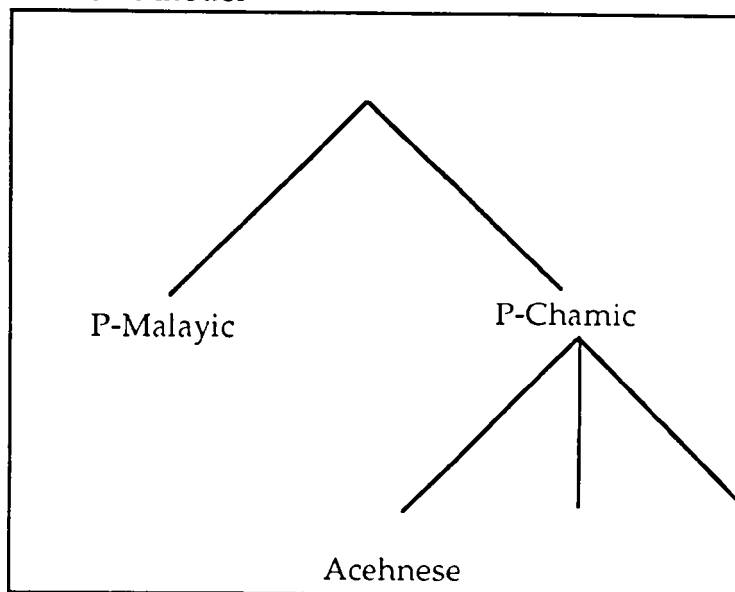
¹⁸See also Iskandar (1958).

Figure 4 A model of the prehistory of Acehnese



A different model of relationship is proposed in Thurgood and this can be represented as follows:

Figure 5 An alternative model



Another possible source of information concerning the Acehnese-Cham connection is in the Acehnese oral tradition by which historical accounts were passed on by word of mouth from one generation to another through a tradition called *peugah haba* 'story telling', and the recitation of *hikayat* 'narration in verse form'. In the traditional Acehnese society, the ability to memorise and store as many stories as possible in one's memory and the ability to retrieve the

stories by telling them to others were seen as a high reputation. During his stay in Aceh, Snouck Hurgronje (1906) observed that an important person in the Acehese society "is sure to have in his wallet a store of *haba jameun*" 'old stories'. Both *peugah haba* and reciting *hikayat* have served the purposes of passing knowledge, preserving personal experiences, as well as entertainment. Durie (1985:6) reported that during the course of his research in Aceh, he heard a recitation of a long *haba* which lasted over three nights. In today's modern Acehese society *peugah haba* and reciting *hikayat* are still alive as a tradition, especially in the rural areas where people live in villages. As an Acehese boy, I was told many stories, by my parents or by other villagers, including a story mentioning a historical relationship between Aceh and "Jeumpa".

We can note the presence in north Aceh of an ancient kingdom called Jeumpa, which Cowan (1990) relates to Champa. Our famous *bungong Jeumpa* ('Jeumpa flower'),¹⁹ is said in oral tradition to be originated from Champa, a special gift from the prince of Champa to the Acehese princess of the time. Regarding this flower, and also the kingdom of "Jeumpa", Cowan (1991:65) has this to say: "The equation is therefore perfect: the *jeumpa*-flower of Acehese = the *champa*-flower of the Cham language; hence Jeumpa = Champa". This is an example of the process of linguistic change in Acehese whereby *c* > *j* and *k* > *g* in the following words: *campur* > *jampu* ('mix') and *champa* > *jeumpa* ('jeumpa flower'); *kapur* > *gapu* ('lime stone'), *kampung* > *gampông* ('village'), *kuda* > *guda* ('horse'), and *kaki* > *gaki* ('foot') (cf. Thurgood MS).

This flower is highly appreciated. Today a folk song about the Jeumpa flower has become the most popular folk song of the Acehese community. The song reads as follows:

¹⁹In Cham, the flower is known as *Campa*.

Bungong Jeumpa, Bungong Jeumpa meugah di Aceh
Bungong teuleubèh-teuleubèh indah lagoina
Putéh kunèng meujampu mirah
Bungong siulah-siulah indah lagoina

'Jeumpa flower, Jeumpa flower, well known in Aceh. It is the flower of flowers. Very beautiful indeed: white, yellow blended with red, its petals are very beautiful indeed.'

Lam sinar buleuen, lam sinar buleuen angèn peuyôn
Lurôh siôn-ôn, siôn-ôn nyang mala-mala
Keubit that meubèe meunyö tatém côm
Leupah that harôm si Bungong Jeumpa

'In the moonlight, in the moonlight, tossed by the wind; the petals fall down: the withered ones. Very fragrant indeed, if we smell it. So sweet is its fragrant, this Jeumpa flower.'

2.4 Appearance of Acehese and Acehese Language Texts in the Historical Records

A survey of the Acehese early manuscripts, available in and outside Aceh, reveals that the oldest date for which there is evidence of an Acehese manuscript tradition is the year A.H. 1069 (C.E. 1658/59) which is mentioned in a manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un* 'Story of Syama'un', available in the collection of the Museum Aceh in Banda Aceh, Indonesia under the code INMA no. 110.²⁰ After this, we find three other old sources written in Acehese, which date back from 1713. The *Hikayat Makah Madinah* 'Story of Mecca and Medina' extols the praises of the two Islamic holy cities, Mecca and Medina, encouraging people to

²⁰Winsted (1969) claims that this *hikayat* is a translated version from a Malay text.

go on the pilgrimage. These manuscripts were brought to Europe and given to the library of King's College by William Marsden (Lombard 1986:28).

Afterwards these manuscripts were given to the library of School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Voorhoeve (1952) described these manuscripts in his article *Three Old Acehinese Manuscripts*, (1952).

It seems likely that the Acehinese language was formerly restricted to the regions of Greater Aceh and Daya. This assumption is supported by the diversity of Acehinese dialects spoken in these two areas which suggests a long period of habitation. We know that before Aceh extended its territory to Pidie, Pasai, Perlak and other regions along the north, and west coasts of Sumatra, the language of those regions was not Acehinese, but most probably Malay.

The oldest Acehinese kingdom—a state in the extreme north of Sumatra—has often been referred to as Lambri, Lamuri, or (Lang) Poli as identified by Indian and Chinese sources (Wheatly 1961:201). The earliest Chinese reference to Poli is dated c. C.E. 502-556 in the history of the Liang Dynasty (Groeneveldt 1960:80). This was also one of the kingdom mentioned by Marco Polo, and its position in the sequence of kingdoms along the coast suggests it is to be equated with Aceh. Indeed Lambri disappears from the historical records at about the same time that Aceh appears (Iskandar 1958). Osman Raliby (1980: 28,29) proposed that Lambri was centred near Krueng Aceh ('the Aceh river'), about five kilometres east of Banda Aceh where currently there is a village called Lam Barih. Another possible location of this kingdom is at Krueng Raya bay, about 31 kilometres north east of Banda Aceh where today we find a village called Lam Rèh. This village is located exactly at the mouth of the bay, facing the Indian Ocean. This Krueng Raya theory was proposed by T. Iskandar (1958) in *De Hikayat Atjeh*.

The Chinese source also revealed that this kingdom, Lambri, was an ally of the kingdom of Sriwijaya in defending against the attack of the Tamil kingdom of Chola coming from the Coromandel coast of India in 1025, and also when the kingdom of Sriwijaya came to attack Srilangka in 1278.²¹ We cannot know how long the kingdom of Lambri had existed prior to this date. In the year c. C.E. 1150 Lambri was included under the influence of Sriwijaya (Wheatly 1961:299)

The name 'Aceh' is not found in the historical records before 1500. The etymology of *Aceh* is unclear. A legend widespread in the Acehnese society today is that the word *Aceh* is an abbreviation which stands for *Arab*, *Cina* ('Chinese'), *Eropah* ('Europe'), and *Hindi* ('Indian'). If one considers the physical appearance of the Acehnese people today, he or she can find descendants of Arab, Chinese, European, and Indian. Osman Raliby (1980:28) added that among the native people of Acehnese, one may find those who resembles Malay, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, Turkish, Arab, and Persian. At earlier times other legends were more popular (see Djajadiningrat 1934:91, and Aboebakar 1980:19).

After 1500, the word *Aceh* appeared in the historical context used to refer to the port kingdom of Banda Aceh (Iskandar 1958:31). The word *Aceh*, according to Lombard (1986:11), was first used by Tome Pires in 1520 when he wrote *Suma Oriental* at the time he was in Melacca. He spelled it "Achei". Afterwards this word appeared in various 16th, 17th, and 18th century European documents as Achem, Achin, and Atchin. Portuguese called it 'Achem', while the English called it 'Achin' and the language 'Achinese'—a later spelling was 'Achehnese' (see Snouck Hurgronje 1906). Aceh [aceh] is used today by the Acehnese people

²¹However, Zainuddin (1980:45) added that Chola did not attack Sriwijaya or Palembang alone, but also "Jambi, Aceh, and parts of the Malay peninsula and Burma with the purpose of suppressing the piracy of the rulers who levied taxes on the trade between India and China."

themselves: they call '*Basa Aceh*' to refer to the language and '*Ureueng Aceh*' to refer to the people.

2.5 Historical Spread of Acehnese: Dialectal and Historical Evidence

The present day city of Banda Aceh and the region of Aceh Besar is assumed to be the original local homeland of the Acehnese kingdom. People from outside Banda Aceh such as from Pidie, North Aceh, West Aceh, and including people from Daya use the expression '*jak u Aceh*' ('going to Aceh') to mean 'go to Greater Aceh'. This gives us an impression that their regions were not Aceh proper (see also Snouck Hurgronje 1906). Based on the evidence of dialect variation, Durie (1985:3) suggests that "the oldest Acehnese speaking areas" are Aceh Besar and Daya, the present region of Lamno.²² If this is true, Acehnese was the language of at least two kingdoms in the past—Aceh and Daya. Thus when Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah subjugated Daya in 1520, they may have already spoken the same language.

The subsequent political expansion of the Acehnese kingdom into other states within the northern Sumatran territory initiated by Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah in 1520 through 1524 (Djajadiningrat 1983:20, Alfian 1987:9) undoubtedly resulted in the spread of Acehnese to these regions. This is perhaps the most significant starting point regarding the spread of Acehnese. Outside the regions of Aceh proper and Daya, Acehnese is found to be much more homogenous suggesting a shorter history of Acehnese language settlement. There is little dialect variation throughout the whole regions of North and East Aceh, and in West Aceh. In Pidie, Acehnese is not as diversified as in Aceh Besar and Daya (though more so than in North and East Aceh).²³ This

²²Lamno is located at the foot of *Gunong Geurutèe* ('Mount of Geurutèe'), approximately 80 kilometres west of Banda Aceh, facing the Indian Ocean.

²³These findings are based partly upon dialect field work conducted by Daud and Durie in 1993.

homogeneity suggests a comparatively shorter period of habitation of Acehese speakers in those regions.

2.6 Dialectal Standards and Divergence

There is no single universal standard dialect of Acehese spoken in Aceh today. Each region has its own particular dialect which is noticeable by others. In some parts of Aceh Besar and Lamno, the dialectal divergence clearly discernible across neighbouring villages which are less than one kilometre in distance. The native people are usually able to use this dialectal feature as a means to identify from which village a person is from.

Below is a description of the general picture of the major dialect regions.

(1) The Greater Aceh dialect region includes the areas of Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar. The dialect area is particularly noticeable for its most heterogenous variation. Among the major specific characteristics of this dialect are: a) the pronunciation of /r/ as a uvular fricative in the lowlands; b) the pronunciation of /s/ as a laminal alveodental stop; c) the pronunciation of a final /a/ as either a schwa or [ea]; d) the addition of /ah/ at the end of a phrase or sentence; e) the use of specific lexicon, such as *dron* ('you') rather than *droeneuh* ('you').

(2) The Pidie dialect is recognised today for its pronunciation of /s/ sound as a laminal alveo-dental fricative with a wide channel area (Durie 1985:12), and the insertion of /i/ sound between the vowel and /h/—thus [ih]—in some words that ends with a final /h/ (from proto * -s).²⁴

²⁴Apparently -ih was also found in Aceh Besar last century, and it is still found with very old speakers. Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:20) consider this as evidence of linguistic change that has taken place, and today the pronunciation of [ih] is regarded as Basa Pidie ('Pidie dialect'), (see also Snouck Hurgronje 1906).

(3) The North Aceh dialect is similar to Pidie dialect, except for the pronunciation of certain words such as *lông* for *lôn* ('I'), and the absence of [ih]. However, the dialects of North Aceh are, perhaps, the least divergent of all. All people in North Aceh speak Acehnese with only few differences (Durie 1985).

(4) The dialect of West Aceh combines features of other dialects. One major characteristic of this dialect is its rising intonation. This dialect is also similar to that spoken by the Acehnese speakers who live within the South Aceh region. In both South Aceh and East Aceh there is clearly a pattern of comparatively recent settlement.

2.7 The Sanskrit Element in Acehnese

Acehnese has had an earlier contact with certain Indian languages such as Sanskrit and Pali far before Arabic. We have a significant evidence regarding the influence of the Indian languages which is still retained in Acehnese.

Name of places such as Indrapatra, Indrapuri, and Biheue (< Bihar) are part of the evidence. Some evidence also still remains in the culture, for example, the entrance of a traditional Acehnese house is always in the east side of the house, in the direction of sunrise which is believed to be the direction of new life.

Making the entrance of a house towards the sunset is considered dangerous because "sunset marks the coming of the darkness" which is associated with black which symbolises death (Dall, 1982:35).

The following list of loan words from Sanskrit into Acehnese may serve as strong evidence. Cowan (1974:191) noted an obvious phonological change in these loan words: the long vowel /a/ in Sanskrit tends to be diphthongised in Acehnese. Below are some examples:

Table 1 Some Sanskrit loans in Acehnese

Acehnese	Sanskrit	Gloss
1. beuet	wac(a)	to read
2. bheuek	bhag(a)	share, portion
3. bumoe	bhumi	earth
4. gajah	gaja-h	elephant
5. gubeue	gopal(a)	to herd
6. hah	hast(a)	ell
7. jeue	jal(a)	fishing net
8. jeuët	jat(a)	become
9. labu	alabu	pumpkin
10. laksa	laksa	billion
11. manikam	manikam	jewel
12. meuntroe	mantri	minister
13. nanggroe	nagari	country
14. panah	panas(a)	jackfruit, breadfruit
15. putroe	putri	princess
16. raja	raja	king
17. sagay	sakal(a)	entire, merely, altogether
18. taleuek	tadag(a)	pond, lake
19. teue	tal(a)	palmyra palm
20. gurèe	guru	teacher
21. yôk	yok	yoke

Sanskrit words are cited from Cowan (1974:191-192).

2.8 The Malay Element in Acehnese

Even before the name 'Aceh' appears in the historical record, we can assume that Malay has exerted an influence on Acehnese, especially during the period

when Sriwijaya had its greatest influence. The unification of Aceh, covering the whole northern coast, into a great unified kingdom was taken by Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah, and within five years time (1520 - 24) he succeeded in subjugating the states of Daya, Pidie and Pasai (Reid 1973). Banda Aceh was then the capital city and played a role as the business and trading centre as well. Muslim traders from various origins such as Pasai, Pidie, Melacca, Gujarat and South India were active merchants in Banda Aceh. For this reason the language of the city was Malay rather than Acehnese. On describing the 16th century trading atmosphere in the city of Banda Aceh, in particular, Reid (1973:47), for instance, has this to say: "For some time to come the city of Banda Aceh was noted for its polyglot population, and the language of the city was Malay rather than Acehnese." Drewes (1972) reported that Malay was also used in Aceh's prison where Frederick de Houtman—a commander of a Dutch ship—was detained. This is especially judged from De Houtman's wordlist.²⁵

In fact, during the time of the sultanate, at least from the fifteenth century on, Malay had been used as the language of scholarship, letters, administration, royalty and trade in north Sumatra (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:14, Durie 1996:114). This is evidenced by the report of the Chinese embassy in 1416 to the port of Sumatra describing that its language and customs, such as the marriage, burial ceremonies and dress, were that of Melacca (Groeneveldt 1960:87). Aceh was the first and for a long time the only entrenched position which Islam claimed in Southeast Asia (Cady, 1964). This is perhaps due to the fact that at that time the Indonesian archipelago was still very "vaguely known to European cartographers, who only had travellers such as Idrisi and Polo to help them" (Brice 1981:viii). Most probably contact between Acehnese and Malay people intensified during the first half of the 17th century when the Acehnese kingdom reached the peak of its golden age. This contact would have

²⁵See also Durie (1996:14) for a description of the use of Malay in this regard.

happened mainly through two principal agendas of the Acehese kingdom—the spread of Islam and trading—in both of which Malay was used as a medium of communication. Under Sultan Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam (1607-36) Aceh had extended its control through the entire length of Sumatra along both coasts and into Malaya from the Johor frontier as far north as Kedah and Patani with the exception of Melacca (Cady 1964).

With such historical background, it is not surprising to find that Acehese has been strongly influenced by Malay while both Malay and Acehese itself have been heavily affected by Arabic particularly due to the introduction of Islam. The most obvious evidence of Malay influence in Acehese is in the area of lexicon. However, it is often difficult to discern whether all Malay-related Acehese words are borrowed from Malay, or whether they originate from the same mother language, and were adopted by both languages through different linguistic process.

2.9 The Arabic Element in Acehese

The influence of Arabic into Acehese came with the introduction of Islam to the region. There is some controversy about the exact date of the coming of Islam, but several sources (Gibb 1975:14, Brice 1981:viii, Leigh 1982:3, Ricklefs 1993:4, and Zainuddin 1980:60) agreed that Islam has settled in the area since the late 13th century. The inscription found on the gravestone of the Moslem king of Samudra, Sultan Malik Al Salih, dated C.E. 1297 (A.H. 696) clearly supports this claim. Some early borrowings may have come through trading contacts between Arab and the Acehese traders. Looking at the Acehese lexicon, most of the Arabic-origin words are related to religious—and by implication, educational—terms and practices and interestingly enough they frequently maintain their Arabic form in Acehese. Acehese lexicon maintains a relatively high degree of being monosyllabic. There is a tendency of syllable loss with words borrowed from other languages (see section 5.3.3).

However, such tendency is less likely to occur with Arabic loans, as can be seen in Table 4 below. It is an interesting area of investigation whether these Arabic words were initially borrowed directly from Arabic, or by way of Malay. Cowan's (1974) work on sound correspondences suggests that at least some Acehnese borrowings came directly, and not via Malay. Examples of these words are in table 2 below.

Table 2 Some Arabic borrowings in Acehnese

Acehnese	Arabic	Gloss
1. akheulak	Akhlâk	attitude, manner
2. haba	khabar	news
3. 'èleumèe	'ilmu	knowledge
4. hareuem	harâm	forbidden, illegal
5. imeuem	imâm	leader (in congregational prayer)
6. jakeuet	zakât	obligatory charity
7. jaweueb	jawâb	answer, reply
8. kitab	kitâb	book
9. kurusi	kursi	chair
10. nabi	nabi	prophet
11. nikah	nikâh	marry
12. pham	faham	understand
13. saleuem	salâm	greetings, peace
14. sabab/seubab	sabab	reason
15. sikin	sikkîn	knife

2.10 Summary and Conclusion

- (1) Acehese is spoken by about 70% of the total population of the Special Province of Aceh, at the northern end of Sumatra, Indonesia. Smaller communities of Acehese speakers are also found in Medan (i.e. the capital of North Sumatran province), Jakarta, Kedah and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, and Sydney in Australia.
- (2) Acehese exists in a multilingual environment where as many as nine other languages are in use. Of these languages, it appears that only Malay and Arabic that have contributed directly to the development of Acehese literacy and literature.
- (3) Linguistic and historical evidence have showed us to reveal that Acehese is closely related to Cham, an Austronesian language spoken in Southern Vietnam and Cambodia. The relationship between Acehese and Cham is particularly evident in the similarities of their core lexicon, phonology, and morphology. Additionally this relationship can also be observed in the area of folk literature of the two languages: we find a close link between Acehese *sanjak* and Cham *kadhar* verses, both in theme and metrical structure.
- (4) The oldest available written evidence of Acehese is the year A.H. 1069 or C.E. 1658/59, found in a manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un*. We have no evidence whether written Acehese had been used before this.
- (5) The name 'Aceh' is not found in the historical records—indigenous and foreign sources alike—before the 16th century. In Western literature, the name Aceh was first mentioned by Tome Pires in 1520 in his *Suma Oriental*. Following this, the name Aceh began to appear in various 16th, 17th, and 18th century

European documents as either Achem, Achin, or Atchin. Generally this refers to the port state centred around the present Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar.

(6) The first half of the 16th century marks the most significant period for the spread of Acehnese into the outer regions of the Aceh proper. This is related to the political expansion of the Acehnese kingdom into other states within the northern Sumatran regions, initiated by Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah between 1520 and 1524.

(7) In contemporary Aceh, we can identify four major dialect areas of Acehnese: the Aceh Besar, Pidie, North Aceh, and West Aceh. Further dialect distinctions are found within each of these major groups. Dialect diversity is especially evident in the regions of Aceh Besar and Lamno (i.e. part of West Aceh, adjacent to Aceh Besar), where dialectal variation is clearly noticeable between villages of only a mile or so in distance, or between villages separated by a river. This diversity suggests a comparatively longer period of habitation of Acehnese speakers in these regions. More recently settled areas (East and South) show less dialect diversity.

(8) In its development, Acehnese has had contacts with other languages, such as Indian languages, (e.g. Sanskrit), Arabic, and Malay, from which Acehnese have received some degree of influence. Therefore, elements of these languages are found in Acehnese.

Chapter 3

Literacy: A Traditional Approach

3.1 Introduction

In this study the discussion of Acehnese literacy is approached from two view points, traditional and modern. This chapter is devoted to the former whereas the latter is discussed in chapter Four. Topics covered in this chapter include the discussion of literacy definitions, traditional institutions involved in the development of traditional literacy in Acehnese, the contexts in which literacy is developed, the pathways to Acehnese literacy acquisition, and the people's perception of literacy. The central focus of this chapter is on literacy in traditional Acehnese society. The term 'traditional literacy' is here used to refer to the acquisition of literacy through the medium of the Arabic-derived script—the *Jawi*, especially prior to the establishment of the Indonesian state.

3.2 Definitions of Literacy

Today peoples of the world have become more and more aware of the importance of language and literacy in the process of human development. Pei (1949:280) strongly argues that literacy is the first and the most essential step in social improvement. Illiteracy has been seen as a phenomenon that can hamper or slow down the process of development. Thus UNESCO declared the year 1990 as the International Literacy Year (ILY) and called all nations of the world to participate in the activities which aim at eradicating illiteracy by the year 2000. Taylor and Olson (1995:vii), in the preface to *Scripts and Literacy*,

remarked: "Literacy is of concern to all nations, developed or under-developed, of the world." But what is literacy?

We do not have a single universal and widely accepted definition of literacy and therefore it is very difficult to find an accurate and precise answer to the above question. Defining literacy is a very complicated task. David Barton (1994), a well known literacy expert, recognises this difficulty as he says:

Looking at definitions of literacy may be an impossible task: the idea that complex concepts are susceptible to dictionary-like definitions is probably a myth (p. 19).

The complexity in defining literacy is also described by Baynham (1995) as follows:

'Literacy' is not the same thing to everyone, but a whole complex of ideological positions, which taken together can be read as the educational 'debate' on literacy (p. 6).

Venezky et al. (1990) devote their whole book to defining literacy.

The difficulty is related the fact that literacy is multi dimensional: it involves cross-disciplinary studies covering the fields of education, language, sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics and history (Baynham 1995:21).

Secondly there appears to be cross-cultural problems applying an English concept of literacy since the term has no precise translation in many other languages. Barton (1994), for example, argues that the word 'literacy' does not exist in many world's languages. In BI, a notion of illiteracy is the central concept, and 'literacy' is secondary. Illiteracy is known as '*buta huruf*' which literally means 'letter blind' and 'literate' in BI is simply not *buta huruf*.

Likewise Japanese, illiteracy may be translated as "sentence-blindness" (Barton 1994:22) conveying a different sense from the English term.

The term 'literacy' originates from the Latin *litteratus* which means "lettered, able to read, learned." Hence "the ability to read and write in at least one language" (McArthur 1992: 613). Traditionally literacy has been seen minimally as basic individual skills, which involve the capacity to read and write a simple letter such as one's own name and address. If a person is unable to demonstrate such a skill, he or she is classed as *illiterate* (McArthur 1992: 613). This basic ability to read and write is called "Clerical literacy" by Illich (1991:28). Gudschinsky (1976:3) defines literacy as follows: "That person is literate who, in a language he speaks, can read with understanding anything he would have understood if it had been spoken to him; and can write, so that it can be read, anything he can say". This definition is related to the social view of literacy proposed by Barton (1994:35):

Literacy is based upon a system of symbols. It is a symbolic system used for communication and as such exists in relation to other systems of information exchange. It is a way of representing the world to others.

Today these basic skills of reading and writing are no longer considered to constitute in themselves an adequate level of literacy. Rather 'literacy' is taken to involve the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing, critical thinking and even numeracy and cultural knowledge as well. The current trend has shifted to the view of literacy as a complex social practice set in a cross-cultural perspective (Barton 1994, Street 1995), not just a decoding/encoding skill. This implies that people make use of different levels and degrees of literacy in line with particular domains for which they need different types of literacy. Christie (1990) argued that it is necessary to be able to understand a very large range of written, for both the reading and the writing essential to participation in the community. Others who see the traditional definition of literacy as inadequate include Solomon (1986) and de Castell, Luke, and MacLennan (1986). Solomon, for instance, states that literacy

"obviously involves something more than the basic ability to read and write" (p.37). Garton and Pratt (1989) include both spoken and written language skills in their definition of literacy: thus proposing a much broader definition than the one that has previously been accepted. For them literacy is to be defined as "the mastery of spoken language and reading and writing" (Garton and Pratt 1989:1); in other words it is mature linguistic competence. This expansion of 'literacy' has occurred in a context of the English speaking world's pedagogical concerns. It makes little sense to apply this construct directly to Acehnese.

An alternative approach to the definition of literacy has been based among on the functions of literacy: what literacy can do for a person and what a person can do with the skills of literacy (Heath 1986). This leads us to the two common terms in literacy studies; literacy practices and literacy events. The first refers to all sorts of occasions in people's daily lives where the written symbols carry a function or role. The latter deals with the way in which literacy is actually used in people's daily lives (Barton 1994:36). In line with this, Taylor and Olson (1995:vii) say that "a literate person is one who is able to read and write so as to function adequately in society." Functional literacy is defined in line with the expected ability of individuals in different societies. Stubbs (1980:14) defines functional literacy as "the degree of literacy required for effective functioning in a particular community." Functional literacy can be seen as the ability to accomplish the day-to-day reading and writing activities in the society. These definitions begin with the question of what it means to function 'adequately' or 'effectively' in a society, especially since different social roles make very different demands on linguistic skills, even within a single society.

According to Stubbs, "there is no single definition of functional literacy for all the world's population", because different societies require a different kinds of literacy. Functional literacy was the approach used by Paulo Freire in Latin

America to empower the people to fight for their liberty (Mackie 1980, Bhola 1991). The approach of functional literacy deals with the concept of literacy skills which are relevant to the practical aspects of people's daily life. Arnove and Graff remark:

A belief in the efficacy and the printed word itself has been an article of faith. Then as now, reformers and idealists, shakers and movers of societies and historical periods, have viewed literacy as a means to other ends; whether a more moral society or a more stable political order. No less today than four hundred years ago, individuals have sought and used literacy to attain their own goals (Arnove and Graff 1987:2).

3.3 Traditional Acquisition of Literacy

The process of acquiring literacy may begin in the home and other social environments along with the development of a child's first language, either formally or informally. Mackie (1980:1) states: "Literacy is not acquired neutrally, but in specific historical, social and cultural contexts." In the case of the Acehnese, religious pursuit appeared to be the principal context for literacy acquisition: literacy is developed within the context of religion, i.e. Islam. In other situation it may be developed and spread through a process of socialization.

Literacy should not be seen as an end target in itself, rather it is a moving target. Literacy is a process that continues throughout one's life span and it is a key medium for achievement of progress, "a mechanism for the change", says Olson (1991:160). It has also been strongly held that literacy is the first and the most essential step in social improvement (Pei 1949:280). For example, in South America, it was within the contexts of political and social revolution that literacy was promoted. In this society Paulo Freire advocated literacy as the basic means to enable people to liberate themselves from oppression.

In traditional Acehese society, it is the pursuit of religious learning that acquisition and development of literacy normally takes as its initial and foundational goal. Thus literacy skill is developed and fostered through religious contexts, and for religious purposes. In terms of the functional view of literacy, adequate or effective functioning in Acehese society presupposes the active practice of Islamic faith, and literacy must be understood in this context. In this context, the principal targets of literacy acquisition are first Arabic then Malay.

The emergence of Acehese language literacy is mediated by the practices and events of Arabic and Malay literacy in Aceh. Therefore, probably, acquisition of literacy skills in Acehese has never been in a direct way, separated from Arabic or Malay literacy. Literacy begins with the ability to recite the Holy Quran, which is in Arabic, then proceeds to *Jawi*/Malay, then to Acehese. Thus "traditional literacy in Acehese assumes literacy in Malay and Arabic" (Durie 1995a:115). It was traditionally unthinkable for Acehese people to acquire literacy skills in their own language without first becoming literate in Arabic and Malay. There was no school or educational institution in Acehese society that children could attend in order to acquire Acehese language literacy. Formal schooling was formerly only available through the medium of *Jawi* for those attending *dayah* or through the medium of Malay/Bahasa Indonesia for those who attended a secular school.¹ So Acehese children did not receive any direct instruction in reading and writing their first language.

Today it is widely believed in western societies that providing access to literacy for young children and adults is an essential part of development (Ferdman, et. al 1994). Exposure to written texts during the pre-school years is believed to

¹ However, the secular school did not exist in Aceh prior to the Dutch colonisation. The first secular school—the three-year *Volkschool*— was initiated in 1907, in conjunction with the implementation of the Dutch *Etische Politiek*: the policy of providing education for the native people. See also Reid (1979:21) and Situmorang (1986:19-20).

result in a positive influence on children's developing literacy. To promote their children's literacy parents are encouraged to expose pre-school children to written texts by giving the children books, reading aloud to them, and taking them on library visits. While these literacy-support activities have become common practice in literate societies, they were unfamiliar in traditional Acehnese society. In those days, home and neighbourhood did not serve as encouraging environments for children's literacy development. Streets were not labelled, shops in the market were not named and traffic signs were not found. The only exposure to written texts for the children before they start schooling was through texts from The Holy Quran, an Arabic text, which is not the language of their day-to-day communication. There were no children's readers in Acehnese, thus 'emergent literacy' of the mother tongue was not recognised within the traditional construal of literacy.

3.4 Traditional Literacy Institutions in Aceh

Traditionally there were four institutions which greatly contribute to the development of traditional literacy: the *rumoh* 'home', the *meunasah* 'village community centre', the *ranggang* ('small pillared house surrounding a mosque or *dayah*'), and the *dayah* or *peusantrèn* 'a traditional Islamic live-in school'. All are functionally interrelated and inseparable in the attempts of providing the pathways to traditional Acehnese literacy.

3.4.1 The *Rumoh*

The first access to literacy for children in the traditional Acehnese society begins when a child, at age four or five, is supposed to start learning to recite The Holy Quran in Arabic. Preferably this elementary learning begins at home, *rumoh*, with father or mother as a teacher. As a matter of fact, literacy, in the sense of being able to read and write in a language, is not the primary concern

of the traditional Acehnese parents when they make an effort to provide their children an access to Quranic study. Rather performing religious obligation is the central issue; it is the parents' obligation to teach their children to recite and know the Holy book, otherwise they are seen as ignorant people who degrade the sacred values of their own religion, which is a sin. The initial learning begins from a very basic level, concentrating on recognising the Arabic alphabet, to knowing words, and gradually to reciting certain phrases. In most homes where it takes place, such very initial instruction is given at night time, immediately after the sunset, that is, after performing *maghrib* prayers. When the father acts as the teacher, the lesson takes place while waiting for dinner. Where the mother acts as the teacher, she may give the lesson while preparing dinner.

Traditionally learning practices associated with *beuet* stress the ability to recognise Arabic letters and the correct pronunciation of the letters. Usually the teacher reads each letter or word aloud and the children are required to repeat loudly after him or her. At this stage very little effort, if any, is made to teach the children to write and understand the meaning of what they read. Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II: 3) noted that this initial instruction "only gives practice to the ear, memory and organ of speech" with very little emphasis on understanding of the texts.

3.4.2 The *Meunasah*

If parents have no ability, opportunity, or inclination to teach, they usually send their children to a private teacher in the neighbourhood called a *teungku*, who teaches at a *meunasah*, the village community activity centre, where the Quranic reading class is normally administered by the village authorities. Normally the class is taught everyday in the evening. A *teungku* may take a large or small number of students; normally this depends upon the availability

of the space. In addition to the children from the village, a *teungku* may also take children from other neighbouring villages.

The word *meunasah* is derived from Arabic *madrasah*, which means a teaching institution or school. Some dialectal variations of the word *meunasah* are *meulasah* (in some dialects in Aceh Besar, i.e. in my own and surrounding villages), *beunasah* or *beulasah* (in *Aneuk Jamèe* dialect, South Aceh) (Snouck Hurgronje (1906,I:61), Kreemer 1931, Djajadiningrat 1934, Aboe Bakar, et. al 1985, and Sulaiman, et. al 1992:171).

When the class is conducted at the *meunasah*, it is usually possible to take more children than in a home, since a *meunasah* is normally much bigger than an average house in the village. In both places, the children are normally divided into two groups on the basis of their level of fluency. The first group is those learning *kuruan ubit* (literally 'small Quran', i.e. introductory Arabic booklet) and the second is those learning *kuruan rayëk* (literally 'big Quran', i.e. the whole text of the Quran). The latter must have previously gone through the level of the first group experience. Instruction is given at night, normally beginning immediately after performing *maghrib* 'sunset prayers'. The duration of the class varies from village to village; some last for approximately an hour and others may last as long as two hours or more. Within the context of this learning, both the *teungku's* house and the *meunasah* can function doubly for the children—a Quranic learning class and a sleeping place as well. The latter, in fact, is another regular function of the *meunasah*, especially for boys and unmarried men of the village (Snouck Hurgronje 1906,I:61, Djajadiningrat 1934, and Aboe Bakar, et. el 1985). Unlike boys, girls do not normally go to *meunasah* for this purpose. They may receive the Quranic instruction from their own parents at home or from a private female teacher called *teungku inöng*. The class may be conducted at the teacher's house or at a special

building, usually smaller than a *meunasah*, called *balèe ureueng inöng* 'women's centre'.

The person giving this Quranic lesson is normally called *teungku* or *gurèe*. They may be male or female. According to Snouck Hurgronje (1906,I:71) *teungku* is derived from Malay word *tuanku* ('my lord'), a title of respect. More generally *teungku* is a term of respectful address for an Acehese male adult. It is used before one's name as article. It is considered rude in Acehese culture to call a person by name without using a title unless when the addresser and the addressee are at the same age and hold the same social status. As a title *teungku* can also be used on its own when addressing a man without mentioning his name. A person is called by this title as a means of respect, even though the speaker may be older. This is the term an Acehese would use when talking to an grown up male on the first meeting. The following popular Acehese old saying may give us an illustration of how Acehese people are bound to the use of titles:

Aceh teungku Meulayu abang

Cina toké kaphé tuan

'the title for an Acehese is *teungku*, *abang* for a Malay, merchant for a Chinese, and Mister for a Dutchman'.

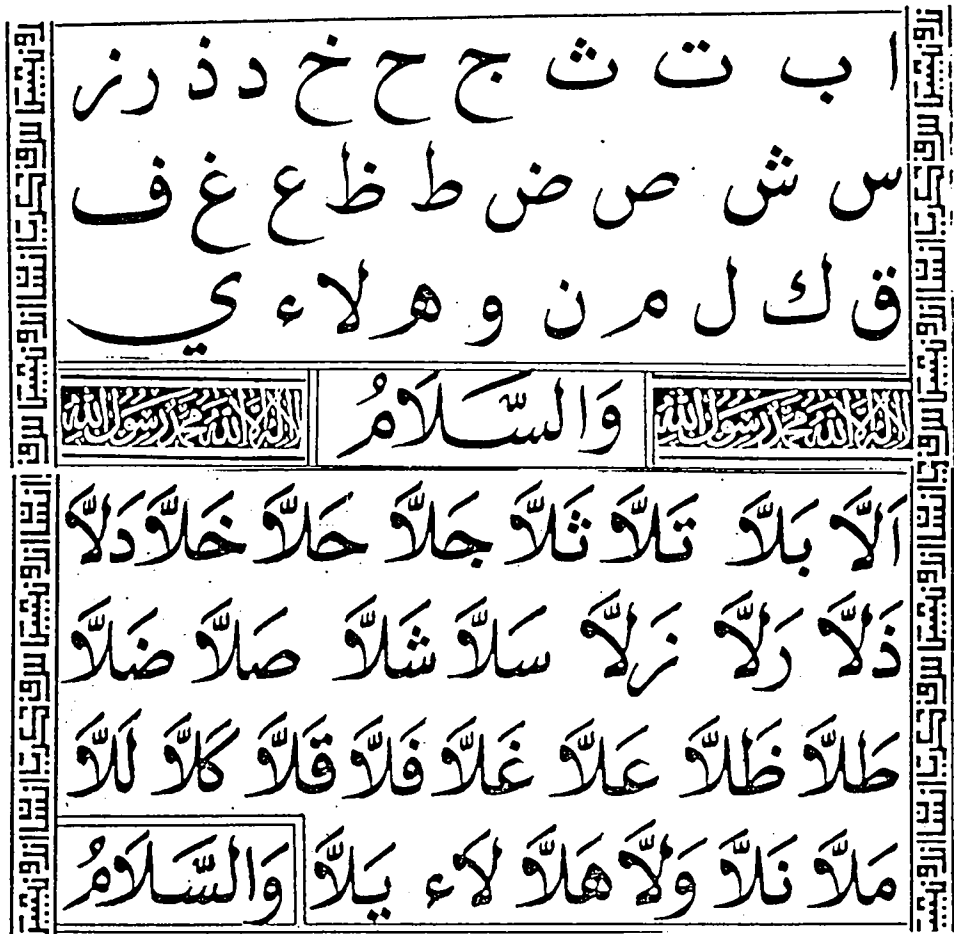
The term *teungku* has two senses. In one of its senses *teungku* bears religious connotations such as "religious scholar, cleric" (Asyik 1987:48) or being religiously learned and holding a religious position.

It is also common in Acehese society to use this title together with the name of the village where a person is from with or without the use of *di* preposition. This is a very common case, especially with regard to a highly respected person in Acehese society such as an ulama. For examples, *Teungku di Tiro* 'teungku'

from Tiro, *Teungku di Kuala* 'teungku' from Kuala, *Teungku Krueng Kalé* 'teungku' from Krueng Kalé, and so forth. In fact, many respected people in Aceh are more popularly known by the name of their villages, even though everyone who knows of them may know their proper names.

In traditional Acehnese society, the initial learning of Arabic is not undertaken because Arabic is a target second or foreign language. Neither is it for the purpose of building communication skills in the language. Rather, for the majority of Acehnese people, Arabic learning is intended to allow one to recite the Holy Quran as an act of worship; i.e. to perform a religious duty. Parents feel content when they know that their child, at certain stage, has mastered the ability to recite the Holy book, and they consider that they have fulfilled part of their religious obligations. The idea is that to be truly human is to worship God and submit to His will through Islam. A person is considered not yet human by Acehnese society when he/she does not know God and perform religious duty accordingly. Thus the fundamental aspects of literacy acquisition lie at the centre of religious duty.

Usually there are no clear well-structured targets set for this learning and there is no fixed duration of how long the children are required to proceed with this elementary learning. The children start with a *kuruan ubit*, a small book containing an introduction to the Arabic alphabet, words, short phrases, vowel sound markings (vocalisation) and portions of the last chapter (the 30th) from the Holy Quran, which is popularly known to Acehnese people as *Juh 'Ama* (in Arabic as *juzu 'amma*).



Children may spend a year or two in study before they conclude their study of *kuruan ubit*. Once they have reached this stage, the teacher would then recognise the children as *ka jituri arah*, 'able to recognise Arabic letters'. This means the children are considered to have acquired a basic command of Quranic reading and have the ability to recognise letters and vocalisation. They therefore can now proceed to begin reciting *kuruan rayek*, the big Quran; i.e. the whole text Holy Quran.

3.4.3 The *Rangkang*

Besides *rumoh* and *meunasah*, learning activity may also be conducted at the *rangkang*, a small hut open at the sides with four or six bamboo or small wood pillars supporting a simple roof. Traditionally *rangkangs* were built around a mosque and a *dayah*, functioning as lodges for students who are learning there. Therefore, a religious teacher who is teaching there is called *teungku rangkang*

(Djajadiningrat 1934, Kreemer 1931, and Aboe Bakar, et. al 1985). Within a religious context, *rangrang* can also be used to refer to a religious institution smaller and less formal than a *dayah*. Sulaiman, et al (1992:172) consider that *rangrang* was a form of indigenous secondary educational institution, although this mode of learning is hardly found in present day Aceh.

3.4.4 The *Dayah* or *Peusantrèn*

Parents who take learning of Islam more seriously may continue to educate their children further by sending them to a *dayah* /*peusantrèn*, 'a traditional Islamic live-in school', which is usually away from their own village. The term *dayah*, or also pronounced *dèah*, *doyah* (in some dialects) is borrowed from Arabic *zawiyah* (Snouck Hurgronje 1906,I:63, Djajadiningrat 1934, Kreemer 1931, Aboe Bakar, et. el 1985, and Sulaiman, et. al 1992:173). Snouck gives more attention to a physical description of *dayah* when he says: "Some gampông-chapels are built not on posts but on a raised stone foundation finished on the top with cement. Stone stairs give access to the building which is itself generally of wood, with a masonry niche (*mèhrab* or *mèrab*) to indicate the direction of Mecca. Its courtyard is sometimes surrounded by a low stone wall forming a square. Such more imposing structures are called *dèah*" (Snouck Hurgronje 1906,I:63).

Some Arabic-English dictionaries give the following meanings for *zawiyah*: as a noun it means "corner, a small mosque (without a minaret), prayer room" and as a verb it means "to hide away, to go into a corner" (Wortabet 1968, Cowan 1971, Hinds and Badawi 1986). In North Africa, *zawiyah* refers to "a small cupolaed mosque erected over the tomb of a Muslim saint, with teaching facilities and a hospice attached to it, usually the establishment of a religious order" (Cowan 1971).

Attending such a school is widely known by the Acehnese as *jak meudagang*, i.e. to leave one's own village for the purpose of learning at a *dayah* and live there during the course of the study. Here the children begin learning to read *Basa Jawoe 'Jawi* or literate Malay written in Arabic script' which Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:5) considers "indispensable" for an Acehnese person who wants to pursue studies beyond the basic teachings of Islam. This is, in fact, the second stage in the traditional acquisition of literacy. Usually a *dayah* offers two types of textbooks in *Jawi* and Arabic. Beginning students mostly learn the *Jawi* texts whereas advanced students deal more with the Arabic texts.

The primary purpose of *meudagang* is to gain religious knowledge. Siegel (1969:54-56) sees people leaving their villages for the purpose of *meudagang* as another form of *ranto* (leaving one's village to live somewhere else), in addition to the more popular type of *ranto*, that is when people leave their village for the purpose of earning a livelihood which was traditionally in the pepper growing regions. He also said that people going to *ranto* were those who "*jak u timu*" 'going to the east', since the pepper gardens were mostly in today's North and East Aceh which are eastwards of Pidie where his study was conducted. However, Siegel's generalisation is no longer valid today as the destinations of *meuranto* have shifted from rural agricultural centres to business centres in urban areas both within the region of Aceh and outside. In fact, even in the past, *ranto* was not limited to "*jak u timu*", but also going to other pepper planting regions in the west coast.²

²This is shown by a *hikayat ranto* composed by *Leubè Isa* who is also known as *Teungku Bambi* (Drewes 1980:3). This *hikayat* document the author's *ranto* life experience and his description of other people's life in the west coast pepper growing regions. It is full of essential messages, although religious messages seem to be the crux of the *hikayat*. This *hikayat* serves as cautionary advice, known as *haba peuingat* in Acehnese, to the people who think that *ranto* is wonderful and lucrative and money is the sole attraction because they have been misled by their evil desire. This *hikayat* revealed contrary facts about life in *ranto* which is full of "pitiable circumstances, distress, and demoralisation", to quote Drewes (1980:3). I would like to present here a few core lines of this *hikayat* taken from Drewes (1980:10 and 11). In the following quotation, Drewes' text has been adjusted to the modern Acehnese orthography for the purpose of reading convenience.

The two forms of *ranto*—*meudagang* and *jak u timu*—(Siegel 1969) clearly differ in terms of results. People returning home from *meudagang* bring knowledge, whereas those returning from the other *ranto* bring money. Siegel (1969:57) remarks: “Unlike the returned pepper grower, the *peusantrèn* student came

*Amma bakdu dudoe nibak nyan, nyo karangan phôn kumula
 Karangan keu ureueng lakoe, bungka di nanggroë tuha miida
 Tinggai nanggroë deungön ma wang, jak lam utan diun cut raya
 Tuhan peujeuet nanggroë ranto, sinan keu laloe inanusia
 Aceh Pidie tunöng barôh, lé that gadôh dalam rimba
 Peukeuh sabab nyan jeuet meunan, leungö tölän lön calitra* (Drewes 1980:10).

‘After this, here I begin to present my story. The story about men, young and old who leave the country. Leaving the country and their parents, all go to the jungle. God has created *ranto* regions, there men get themselves busy. From Aceh, from Pidie, north and south, many get busy in the jungle. For what reasons they come there, listen, my friends, to my story.’

*Sabab jipatéh iblih syétan, siribèe ban jipeudaya
 Jigusiek di ulèe jis’aih di glunyueng, teuma jitamöng u lam dada
 Limöng peukara jiyue dilèe, leungö sampèe lön calitra
 Phôn-phôn jiyue meudoe-angkat, keudua munadat hé syèdara
 Keulhèe jiyue tameujudi, teuma pancuri akhé dudoe* (Drewes 1980:10)

‘Because they follow Iblis and Devil, who persuade them with a thousand ways. He caresses your head and whispers in your ear, then enters your heart. He asks you to do five things, here they are, listen my friends. First to engage in homosexual actions, second to get involved in opium smoking. Third to gamble, and this eventually makes you a thief.’

*Keupeuet jiyue tameusaböng, that me-untöng jalan gata
 Limöng jiyue tameureuböt, ngön nyan tok limöng peukara
 Taleungö keu nyoe wahé adoe, séksa dudoe lam nuraka
 Nanggroë ranto na tatuban, keusikaran diun peukara
 Watèe sakét alôh-alah, apôh-apah han teukira
 Tabalék wie tabalék uneun, sapeue pi tan na rasa* (Drewes 1980:10).

‘Fourth to take part in cock-fighting, that you will gain profit from it. Lastly to go out plundering, and here concludes all the five. If you follow these, oh dear brother, you will be punished in hell fire. Do you know how life in *ranto* is, it is full of misery. You are in trouble when you get sick, you feel miserable. You turn left and turn right, you have nothing to eat’

*Tinggay sidroe baranggajan, rakan pi han jitém peutoe
 Apuy pi tan jujée pi han, kutika nyan dawök tamoe
 Adak na padé dalam keupök, hana soe tumbök pakri jeunoe
 Takeumeung jue gob hana sidroe, töh pakri proe tapeulagèe
 Yôh nyan teuingat nyan keu ma wang, teuingat yôh nyan keu ésentiri droe
 Adak h’an kujak masa dilèe, na soe peulagèe jan meumeunoe* (Drewes 1980:12).

‘You are always alone, no friends are willing to come by. No fire neither firewood, that is the time you keep sobbing. Even if there is rice in the barn, there is no one to pound it. There is no one to ask for, how should we go about it. Then one begins to think of his parents, to think of his wife. Had I not come here, there would be someone to take care of me at times like these.’

back a different person, ... the result of *meudagang* is the transformation of ordinary villagers into *ulama*" , i.e. a Muslim who is pious and knowledgeable in Islamic matters. It can be inferred from Siegel's remark that *dayah/peusantrèn* functions as an agent of change. With such a qualification, many become a *teungku* or *imeum meunasah*, a chief person responsible for religious oversight within a village community such as leading congregational prayers, teaching the Quranic class, leading funeral services and so forth. Also it is frequently found that a *peusantrèn* graduate is appointed for a higher and more respected position such as *imeum meuseujid*, a chief person responsible for a mosque whose major responsibilities include, among others, giving the sermon and leading the corporate prayers. Another distinct function in the community commonly filled by *peusantrèn* graduates is *kadi*, marriage celebrant, which in many cases is also performed by an *imeum meuseujid*. Traditionally these functions were licensed directly by the people in the community and recognised by the government. A person would only acquire such offices by virtue of their learning and religious literacy.

Through *meudagang* proficiency in written *Jawi* is developed. During the early years of learning at a *dayah/peusantrèn*, students are mainly involved in studying *kitab jawoe*, religious texts written in *Jawi*. One popular *kitab Jawoe* which the students learn at this stage is *Kitap Masaila* (translated from Arabic, *Masail al-Muhtadi Li Ikhwanil Muhtadi*).³ This treatise contains primary issues of Islamic teachings which every Muslim is supposed to learn. The text is presented in a simple language in the form of catechism, i.e. question and answer, and probably this is one reason for its popularity.

³There has been controversy among Acehnese experts concerning the author of this *kitab* because most of the available copies nowadays are anonymous. According to M. Adnan Hanafiah (1992:32) this text was written by Sheikh Daud Rumi (better known as *Teungku Chik di Leupeue*). However, other scholars believe this to be the work of Syekh Abdul Rauf who is better known by Acehnese as *Teungku Syiah Kuala*.

برهمفون کد وات . « سؤال » جیک کیت دتپائی اورغ
 مان یغ دنماکن اکامریت ؟ « جواب » بهوانیغ دنماکن اکامریت
 یائت عبارة درفد مغمفونکن امفت فرکار یائت ایمان اسلام
 توحید دان معرفة . سؤال : جیک کیت دتپائی اورغ : اف
 ارتق ایمان ایت ؟ جواب : بهوارتی ایمان ایت فرچای اکن
 بارغ یغ داتغ دغندی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم .
 سؤال : جیک کیت دتپائی اورغ : اف ارتق اسلام ایت ؟
 جواب : بهوارتی اسلام ایت یائت منجونهو غ دان متیکوت
 سکل تلیته الله دان متیکوت سبدا رسول الله دان منجاوهی
 سکل لاراعتن . سؤال : جیک کیت دتپائی اورغ : اف ارتق
 احسان ایت ؟ جواب : بهوارتی احسان ایت یائت بر بائنک
 چنت راس سرت تولى اخلاص یعنی مېمفرناکن کایلوکن
 سواتوصفة کمدين درفد دفر اولهش . سؤال : جیک کیت
 دتپائی اورغ : اف ارتق توحید ایت ؟ جواب : بهوارتی
 اتوحید ایت یائت متغیا ساکن دی سکیرا ۲ تیداله دفر اوله
 سکو توفدیغ دایساکن . سؤال : جیک کیت دتپائی اورغ

At the same time students also begin to learn some basic grammar of Arabic for the purpose of preparing themselves for a more advanced learning in the future years of their *meudagang* life. Advanced learning concerns the studies of *kitab Arab*, Arabic texts. The types of the Arabic texts used vary from *dayah* to *dayah*. This is usually dependent on the academic quality and learning of the *teungku* 'the teacher', who is usually the leader and owner of *dayah* as well. Normally a *teungku* would choose to teach his students the texts he studied during his own *meudagang* experience.

3.5 Recitation as the Central goal of literacy

Unlike in the western world, where the acquisition of reading and writing goes side by side, literacy skill in traditional Acehese society is defined by the ability to read aloud. The traditional word for 'read' in Acehese is *beuet* 'recite, read' which refers centrally to the recitation of the Holy Quran. Acquiring this skill is the central act of traditional education. Thus the Acehese word for 'teach' is *peubeuet* (literally 'cause to recite', and *jak beuet* 'go reciting' is the expression which means 'to learn' or go to traditional school. Also teaching children to recite Quran is referred to as *peujeuet* aneuk keu ureueng 'to make a child into a person'. Additionally the term *jak beuet* also connotes *jak meudagang*, to leave one's village for the purpose of attending a *peusantrèn*. When parents in Aceh are asked about where their son is, one possible answer is *ka jijak beuet*, 'he has gone reciting', i.e. left home to study at a *peusantrèn*. *Beuet*, in addition to the recitation of the Holy Quran, can secondarily also means to read aloud Malay or Acehese texts.

When *beuet* is applied to recitation of the Holy Quran, it may involve melodic recitation: usually loud recitation—chanting.⁴ When *beuet* is applied to reading *Jawi* texts, it means to read aloud, as the opposite to silent reading, without melody. When associated with the recitation of Acehese *hikayat*, *beuet* is done in a similar way of reciting the Quran, with a variety of tempos and melodies.

Silent reading was not recognised as a mode of literacy in traditional Acehese education, so that even the very concept can be difficult for Acehese people to understand. To many Acehese people 'silent' reading simply means 'unsounded' or private recitation, i.e. whispering to themselves. Therefore

⁴ Generally there are two styles of recitation tempo in this matter: *murattal* ('speed reading') and *tartil* ('slow reading'). The former refers to a quick manner of recitation, and the latter refers to a very slow melodious recitation. Different types of melody may be used in each style.

people coming from this tradition find it difficult to read silently without moving their lips.

For an average Acehnese *beuet* is a physical action, never a purely mental one. If reading were something only performed mentally, probably a traditional Acehnese person would refer to this activity as *niet*, 'forming an intention'.⁵ The difficulty many Acehnese people experience in mastering silent reading reflects a lack of exposure to written texts and reading practice. But more importantly, it relates to the traditional meaning of the word *beuet*; to 'read' is to recite, and reciting the Quran is both the archetype and the pinnacle of all reading practice. In Acehnese traditional sense, then, 'literacy' is above all the ability to recite the Quran.

3.6 Transformation of Literacy Skills

It is through these experiences, beginning from an ability to recognise Arabic alphabets, learning to read *Jawi* and then Arabic, that an Acehnese person could move on to acquire the skill of reciting Acehnese from written texts. Without going at least part way through the above experiences an Acehnese person is will be illiterate. However, Arabic and Malay literacy alone does not guarantee to make a person a skilled reader and writer of Acehnese. A good working knowledge of Acehnese itself is also required, and this something which is never taught directly.

Acehnese sounds, especially vowel sounds, are too rich to be represented by the *Jawi* script. For example, Acehnese has some 27 or more distinct vowel sounds, including diphthongs and nasals (Asyik 1987:17,18 and Durie 1985: 16, 17), but the *Jawi* script recognises only three vowel distinctions; *a*, *i* and *u*,

⁵ *Niet* is difficult to gloss in a simple manner. In Acehnese, it often means 'resolving in one's mind that one intends to do something'. This is a fundamental concept in Islam: a person should always have a clear intention prior to beginning an act, especially an act of worship.

which are grossly inadequate and “far from phonetically accurate” (Durie 1987:136) for the representation of Acehese sounds. Problems will arise when we need to represent contrasts such as \acute{e} in $\acute{e}k$ 'climb', \grave{e} in $\grave{e}k$ 'faeces', \underline{o} in boh 'fruit' and \hat{o} in $b\hat{o}h$ 'add'. Consequently, as Durie (1985:4) notes, the *Jawi* script obviously “lacks the power to distinguish most of the important phonological contrasts” across dialects of Acehese. However, Acehese texts have been produced and used for centuries in this script in spite of this apparent limitation. Readers are expected to use their own Acehese intuitions to link the *Jawi* symbols to the Acehese sounds supplying what the text does not (see section 5.3.2 for a detailed description of sound-letter relationships in Acehese). The knowledge of Arabic and Malay-Acehnese word correspondences are very helpful in this task (see section 5.3.3. for Malay cognates and Arabic loans).

3.7 Functions of Malay, Arabic and Acehese Texts

As mentioned elsewhere, Acehese literacy is developed through a multiglossic context in which the role of the pre-existing literacy in Arabic and Malay is inevitable. The goal of literacy lies in the pursuit of religious learning which is introduced through the medium of Arabic and Malay, therefore these languages play a determining role and function towards the development of Acehese traditional literacy.

3.7.1 Understanding the Term 'Malay'

Today the term 'Malay' has become problematic. It bears several connotations such as:

- (1) the people of Malaysia;
- (2) the standard language of the present day Malaysia;
- (3) various dialects;

- (4) the port kingdoms along the Strait of Malacca, i.e. in Sumatra and in the Peninsular; and
- (5) the *Jawi* or *Basa Jawoe* written language.

Famous Malay literati of the past such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin Pasai, and Abdul Rauf are Acehnese in the eyes of the Acehnese people. However, since they produced their written works in Malay, they are Malay in the eyes of the Malay people and in most cases they came from outside Aceh.

Therefore, the term 'Malay' needs to be treated specially here. Throughout this work the term 'Malay', unless otherwise specified, refers to the Malay language regardless of its dialect variations.

We have scarcely any data concerning the ancient Acehnese world, neither do we have much knowledge about Acehnese written literature prior to the first half of the 17th century. In Marco Polo's story we read that at the northern tip of Sumatra there was a kingdom called Lambri, considered today to be Aceh's precursor (Iskandar 1958), which is surmised "to be under the dominion of the Malay Kingdom of Sriwijaya" (Durie 1995a:114). But we know that prior to the emergence of Aceh and Acehnese language, Malay had been used in the island of Sumatra as a lingua franca, including today's region of Aceh. Historical evidence concerning this issue is given by Teeuw (1961), Winstedt (1969), and Braginsky (1994). We learn from history that Malay was the language of many coastal port kingdoms in the northern regions of Sumatra, i.e. today's Aceh, such as Perlak, Pasai, Pidie, and the Sultanate of Aceh. The *Minyè Tujôh* inscription from the end of the fourteenth century, found in North Aceh, contains the oldest Malay poem, written on a tomb, points to a long history of Malay usage in North Sumatran regions (Teeuw 1961:11, Braginsky 1994:222). Malay influence in the archipelago, including Aceh, was so strong that it was comparable to the influence of Latin in Europe. Thus "to Aceh Malay was what

Latin was to Europe in the middle ages" Winstedt (1969:88). The evidence of Malay influence can be obviously seen in many aspects of Acehnese and, perhaps, most of all in its lexicon. It is also not surprising that Acehnese literary works are heavily influenced by Malay literary traditions. Works such as *hikayat* and *pantôn* show a great similarity in both Malay and Acehnese.

In fact Malay influence is not only found on Acehnese, but also on other indigenous languages of the archipelago, and even on some Asian and European languages (Teeuw 1961:41-42). Teeuw notes the following studies of Malay influences on other languages: Blagden (1902) on Malay influences on Cham, Schlegel (1902) on Malay influences on Siamese, Van Ronkel (1903e) on Malay words in the Arabic of Arabs in Jakarta, Mok To Leong (1955) on Malay influences on Chinese spoken in Malaya, Piepers (1875), J. de G. H. (1876), Prick (van Wely) (1901; 1903a; 1906), and Kalff (1914; 1916; 1918; 1919) on Malay influences on Dutch, although this is "mainly lexicographic in nature" (Teeuw 1961:41), Hesseling (1899) on Malay influences on Afrikaans, Yule and Burnell (1903), Scott (1896-97), and Bartlett (1953) on Malay words in English, and Marre (1866; 1875; 1877-78) on Malay words in French.

3.7.2 Functions of Malay

The major functions of Malay in Aceh lie in written literature and in formal oral discourse. Malay has been traditionally used as a language of written prose in Acehnese traditional society. All religious textbooks, letters, magic charms (i.e. *peunurat*) and *sarakata* 'a chart of a family tree, genealogy' were written in this language.⁶ In many kingdoms in the Indonesian archipelago, including Aceh, Malay has been used in written literature and as the official language of the palaces, as the language of correspondence, scholarship, education, trade, arts

⁶In his *Rope of God*, Siegel (1969: 46,48,49, & 68) refers to *sarakata* as job descriptions written by sultan for *ulëebalangs*, traditional chieftains of Aceh.

and literary, diplomacy, legal documents such as passport, laws, contracts, seals of authority and lingua franca within the archipelago (Alisyahbana 1943, Teeuw 1967, Durie 1995a, Hanafiah 1992). Much earlier, Malay was used by the kingdom of Pasai as its official language, in trade and in the spread of Islam. The tradition of using Malay continues to the present time of modern Aceh under Indonesian government, although the language has now been called Bahasa Indonesia, i.e. the modern offspring of Malay. This language is currently used in all aspects of government administration nationwide. This is promoted by the centralisation of government administration in Indonesia: the central government controls all affairs and therefore government must be conducted in the national language. The forms and texts of public administration are very much 'prescribed' by the central government.

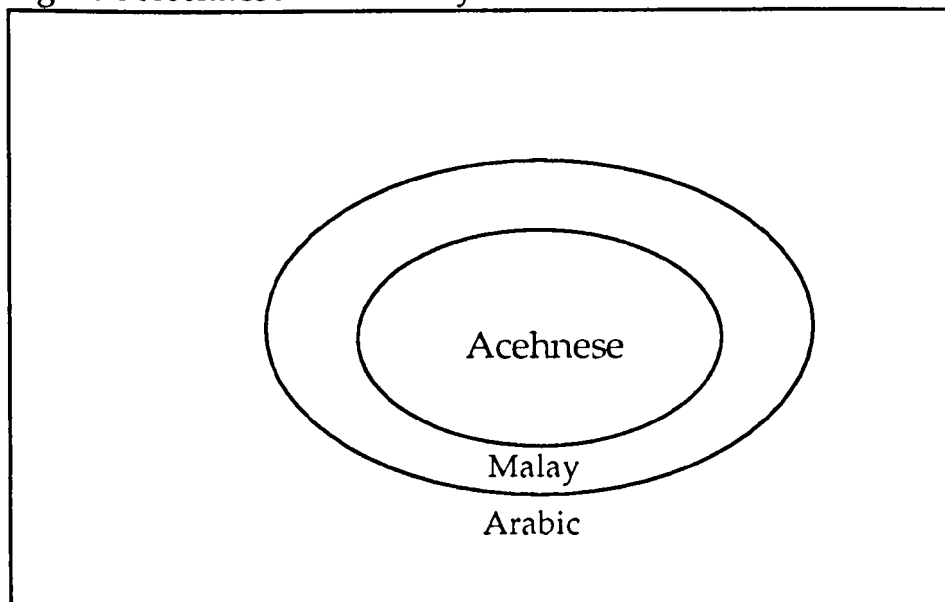
Concerning the spread and function of Malay within the archipelago, Teeuw (1967:4-6) remarks that Malay has been used as "the medium of contact for the whole archipelago, ... from Aceh, in the extreme North of Sumatra, to Ambon in the Moluccas". Apparently Malay is spoken with different dialects in these regions: a clear dialect distinction is noticeable across regions. In his *Studies on Malay and Bahasa Indonesia*, Teeuw (1961:42-49) divides Malay into seven major dialects. They are Malay of Malaya, Malay of Java, Chinese Malay, Sumatran Malay, Borneo Malay, East Indonesian Malay, and Cape Malay in Africa. In fact even within each of these regions further dialect variation can be noticed. In Sumatra, for instance, we can recognise the difference between the Malay used in Aceh, North Sumatra, West Sumatra, and South Sumatra: the respective 'local colour' is marked in each dialect.

Aceh started to flourish in the first half of the sixteenth century, especially after the fall of Malacca into the power of Portuguese. All small port kingdoms along the east and west coast of northern Sumatra were unified into one great

Acehnese Kingdom, an effort taken by Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah between 1520-24 (Winstedt 1969 and Reid 1973). This further elevated the role of Malay in the country since the people of the newly annexed colonies did not speak Acehnese but Malay, at least in the ports. Also, the position of Malay was consolidated as the royal government of the newly unified kingdom use Malay, rather than Acehnese, the indigenous language of the conquerors, as the official language of the palace and the royal court. After becoming a unified kingdom, Aceh began to grow into an important country in southeast Asia, especially in terms of its prosperity in trade and advancement of Islam. Spices, especially pepper, was Aceh's main product then, and these sufficed to attract traders from Europe, Arabia, Turkey, Persia, China, India, and elsewhere to come to Aceh. This made Aceh's capital, Banda Aceh, a cosmopolitan city which according to Reid (1973:47) was at that time "noted for its polyglot population". The language of communication in the city was Malay, rather than Acehnese which foreign traders might find "irrelevant to their communicative needs" (Durie 1995a:114).

As Durie's (1996a) reports "Acehnese has existed in a Malay and Arabic context for centuries." The use of Acehnese is characterised and framed by its most influential languages, Malay and Arabic. In order to understand the relationship of these languages, Durie (1996) proposes a "frame metaphor: Malay and Arabic act as concentric frames for Acehnese."

Figure 6 Acehnese in its Malay and Arabic context



For centuries Malay has been the language of 'external' or public communication in Aceh. Hooykaas (1965:52) noted that Malay texts were published in the Kingdom of Pasai at the beginning of the 17th century. It was Malay that the kingdoms of Pasai and Aceh used in propagating Islam and spreading Islamic culture (Sulaiman, et al 1992:145). Also Teeuw (1967:4-6) has the following to say on the Malay history:

"For many centuries this language had been the medium of contact for the whole Archipelago; not only serving as a lingua franca for the Indonesian peoples of different tongues,...but also serving as the contact language for the Indonesians of various tongues with foreign peoples. ...It was the language of trade between foreigners (Indians, Chinese, Arabs, Europeans) and Indonesians...it was also the language used by foreign missionaries to spread their religions, Islam as well as Christianity. From Aceh, in the extreme North of Sumatra, to Ambon in the Moluccas, Malay was the language of the literate, of the schools, which in the beginning were only religious schools."

In the past, the teaching of Malay in Aceh was through a *dayah* education. An example of Jawi pedagogy is the anonymous *Hikayat Basa Jarwoe* ('story of the Malay language'), which contains the beginning Malay lessons written in the

form of pantôn. Each Malay word is followed by its Acehnese equivalent and presented in rhythmic order so that it is easy for learners to remember. The introductory part is all in Acehnese describing, among other things, the purpose of the text. Below is the beginning part, quoted from Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:244):

*'Ajayéb sôbeuhanallah ,bah lôn kisah basa jawoel
saboh padan ban aturan, lôn bôh bangön meuduek adoe
bangön lagèe sang hikayat, sanjak teupat ban atô droe
keunöng ukô santeut sangat, takheun mangat jeuep-jeuep uroe*

'Wondrous. Glorify God. Let me tell about *Jawi* (Malay) language. Same manner of the rules, I give the structure like siblings. The structure like hikayat, which rhymes accordingly. In the right size and length, easy to recite everyday'

*misé kayèe jroh that rampak, cabeueng ngön bak get mupeudoe
teubiet pucôk di ujông bak, jroh that rampak bungong geuntoe
meung get lagèe keunöng sanjak, jeuet keu galak ureueng meujawoe
lagi utôh babah rancak, jitém galak baranggasoe
meung get bangön reumbang acôk (?), até tundôk bak beuet jawoe.*

'Like a shape of a shady tree, trunk and branches are just right. New leaves sprout on the top, the tree looks beautiful. When the melody and rhythm are good, people are happy to learn *Jawi*. People become clever and articulate, makes anyone attracted. When the structure is good, people feel the need to learn *Jawi*'.

Following this introduction, the Malay lessons begin and here is a set of example verses quoted from M. Adnan Hanafiah (1992:22), transcribed from the *Jawi* version. These lines of verse, set in Acehnese poetic style, are a kind of dictionary or word list in verse. The Acehnese words are in italics:

pergi *jak lari taplueng* bagi *bulueng* kami *kamoe*
yang ada *na tiada tan*, sama *sajan tadi bunoe*

yang gugur *srôt* bila *pajan*, tolan *rakan* isi *asoe*
yang cerpu *kawôh gaki*, bantah *paké* siapa *soe*

bangket *beudôh* yang lontar *srom*, belum *gohlom* bunyi *bunyoe*
yang harus *mèe* makan *pajôh*, buboh *tabôh* sini *sinoe*

basuh *srah* berhenti *piyôh*, jauh *jeuôh* kita *geutanyoe*
hilang *gadôh* bau *bèe*, minta *lakèe* duri *duroe*

yang pada *bak* bulu *bulèe*, anjing *asèe* siang *uroe*
lihat *kalôn* leher *reukueng*, kurang *kureueng* seorang *sidroe*

When oral communication is not possible in Acehnese—whether due to a distance or because the addressee is not an Acehnese—then most probably Malay was used. When a person had no ability to write, he/she would employ a scribe.

Normally when Acehnese people write to each other in Malay, we find that the recipient is treated like an outsider by using a high level of formality, reflected in the choice of lexicon. The words and expressions used in the letter, for example, would never be used in oral communication. For Acehnese, Malay is a language of ‘external’ communication, to be used when communicating with non-Acehnese speaking people and those treated like ones. Therefore, whenever Malay is used, the sense of ‘externalness’ still remains in the mind of the Acehnese speakers even if communication is taking place between themselves.

Looking at this background, therefore, it is not difficult to understand why Malay was the language used, in C.E. 1615, by the great king of Aceh, Sultan Iskandar Muda Meukuta Alam (reigned in C.E. 1607-1636), in his 'golden' letter to the king of England, King James I (Gallop and Arps 1991, Hanafiah 1992, and Durie 1995a). Thirteen years earlier, in C.E. 1602, Sultan Alauddin Syah of Aceh also used Malay to write a letter (a trading permit) to Captain Harry Middleton of England (Gallop and Arps 1991). We also find most early literary works coming from Aceh were written in Malay. These include many treatises relating to Aceh, e.g. *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, *Taj al-Salatin*, *Bustan al-Salatin*, *Undang-Undang Aceh*, *Hikayat Aceh*. I will briefly give an overview of these Malay treatises.

(1) The *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* 'the story of the kings of Pasai' is considered to be the oldest text of Malay historiography (Gallop 1994:55). This text relates the coming of Islam to the northern coast of Sumatra in the 13th century and presents the historical events from the time of Sultan Malikul Saleh up to the time when Pasai fell into the influence of Majapahit in C.E. 1250-1350. It was written in the 14th century after the fall of Pasai, although the precise date has never been revealed (Hooykaas 1965, Yock Fang 1975). According to Winstedt (1969) this work is older than the *Sejarah Melayu*, although some similarities are found. A modern Roman Malay version was edited by Russell Jones and in 1987 it was published by Penerbit Fajar Bakti, Kuala Lumpur.

(2) The *Taj al-Salatin* ('Crown of the kings') was written by Bokhari al-Jauhari (from Johor) probably in Aceh in C.E. 1603 (Hooykaas 1965:153). However, Winstedt (1969:137) argued that *Taj al-Salatin* was originally written in Persian by a jeweller of Bokhara, and the translation into Malay was done in Aceh. This treatise contains 24 chapters and an introduction. The contents are similar to the European *Il-Principe* (by Machiavelli) and the Indian *Kautilya Artha-*

Shastra (by Kautilya). The difference is that the description given in *Taj al Salatin* is adopted to the Islamic traditions (Hooykaas 1965, Winstedt 1969, and Yock Fang 1975).

(3) The *Hikayat Aceh* ('the story of Aceh') was written during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1606-1636). The writer is not known, although Syamsuddin Pasai was reputed to be the one but we do not have any evidence for this. Almost half of it presents the greatness of the sultan, but no direct mention of Sultan Iskandar Muda is made, rather he was referred to by other titles such as Raja Munawar Syah, Pancagah, Johan Alam, and Perkasa Alam (Yock Fang 1975, Lombard 1986). In 1958 this work was translated into Dutch by T. Iskandar.

(4) *Bustan al-Salatin* 'garden of the kings'. This text is considered as the major reference to the studies of Malay history and literature (see section 3.7.2.3 for more details).

(5) *Undang-Undang Aceh* ('the constitution of Aceh'). Not much is known about this text. Snouck Hurgronje (1906:13) reported that it contains collections of such public ordinances attributed to various Acehnese rulers, all dealing with trade, navigation, import and export duties, administration and ceremonies.

3.7.3 Early Malay Writers in Aceh

All famous prose and poetry writers who used to live and work in Aceh, during the sultanate era, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin Pasai, Nuruddin al-Raniri, and Abdul Rauf, produced their works in Malay, written in *Jawi* script. Most of their works are classed as 'the best classical Malay', as commented by Reid (1994:37), and these works have enjoyed high reputation in

the Malay literary world. Here I will present a brief historical account of each of these writers and their important works.

3.7.3.1 Hamzah Fansuri

Born in the second half of the sixteenth century in the town of Barus (i.e. Fansur) on the west coast of Sumatra (Braginsky 1994:223), he was a leading and greatest classical Malay writer. There are no records pertaining to the date of his birth nor to the year of his death (Drewes and Brakel 1986:1). He developed the classical Malay poem, the *syair*, in the early seventeenth century (Hooykaas 1965:131, Teeuw 1966: xi, Braginsky 1994:222). He wrote religious texts in both prose and verse and is known for his extraordinary ability to compose poetry. Three of his famous prose works are *Sharab al-'ashikin* (also called *Zinat al-Mutwahhidin*), *Asrar al-'Arifin fi Bayan 'Ilm al-Suluk Wat-Tauhid*, and *Al-Muntahi* (Winstedt 1969:141, Braginsky 1994:226-228).

3.7.3.2 Syamsuddin Pasai

Not much is known about the life of this writer, but what we know is that he was employed as the chief *kadhi* ('Islamic judge') in the Palace of Aceh under Sultan Iskandar Muda (Reid 1994:37). He studied under Pangeran Bonang from Java, and belongs to the same school of thought as Hamzah Fansuri. Drewes and Brakel (1986:1) note that Syamsuddin was a follower and a propagator of Hamzah's teachings in a "modified form". Therefore most of his and Hamzah's works were destroyed and burned when al-Raniri, who opposed Hamzah's doctrine of *Wujudhiyyah* 'union with God', came into favour in the Palace of Aceh. One of his important works that survived the fire is *Mir'at al-Mu'min* ('Mirror of the Believers'). Written in C.E. 1601, it contains 211 questions and answers about the attributes of Allah, the prophet, the words of God and the hereafter. Syamsuddin Pasai died in C.E. 1661 (Hooykaas 1965, Winstedt 1969, and Yock Fang 1975).

3.7.3.3 Nuruddin al-Raniri

Nuruddin al-Raniri's full name is Nuruddin ibn Ali ibn Hasanji ibn Muhammad Hamid al-Raniri. He was from Ranir (Gujarat, India) and came to Aceh on Sunday May 31, 1637 C.E. (Al-Attas 1966:14, Winstedt 1969:136) through Pahang after being in Mecca in 1621. He worked in the Palace of Aceh for about seven years under the reign of two kings. Al-Raniri: wrote *Sirat al-Mustaqim* in C.E. 1628 in Pahang before he came to Aceh. One year after his arrival in Aceh—in C.E. 1638—at the order of Sultan Iskandar Thani, he wrote his most important extant work *Bustan al-Salatin* ('Garden of the Kings') which contains among other things, religious knowledge, history of the prophets and of the kings of Aceh, and Islamic exhortations. This Malay treatise has been one of the major reference on studies pertaining to Malay history and literature. Al-Raniri has been considered by the Acehnese people as one of the most influential religious figures of Aceh's past and for this reason a state Islamic Institute in Aceh is named after him: *IAIN Ar-Raniri*, Hooykaas (1965), Winstedt (1969), Al-Attas (1966), and Yock Fang (1975).

3.7.3.4 Abdul Rauf

For Acehnese people, Abdul Rauf is popularly known as *Teungku Syiah Kuala* or *Teungku Di Kuala*. The exact date of his birth is not known but he lived in c. C.E. 1615-1693. He studied in Mecca for about 19 years and started teaching in Aceh in C.E. 1661 upon his return. Two of his best-known works are *Mirat al-Tullab* ('Mirror for students') and *Umdat al-Muhtajin*. He also translated the Arabic treatise of *Tafsir Baidhawī* into Malay. In Malay it was called *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*. It was published in Istanbul in C.E. 1884. Abdul Rauf taught in Aceh for about thirty years and his students were not only from Aceh but also from as far as Java. His piety caused the ordinary people to see him as a saint and a legend has developed in Acehnese society that Abdul Rauf was the person who

brought Islam to Aceh. Many consider his grave, just outside Banda Aceh, as a sacred place and remains a site of pilgrimage up to the present day. The state university of the Aceh province is named after him: *Universitas Syiah Kuala* (Hooykaas 1965, Winstedt 1969, Al-Attas 1966, and Yock Fang 1975). It seems that Abdul Rauf was the last scholar with an enduring reputation to have worked at the royal court of Aceh.

3.8 Functions of Arabic

Along with Islam also came Arabic, the language that has exerted the second biggest influence, after Malay, upon Acehnese. Arabic has played a significant role in Aceh, it is the language used in a “wider discourse within the Islamic world”, Durie (1995a). Aceh had become part of the Islamic world as early as the end of the 13th century (Brice 1981:viii, Leigh 1982:3, Ricklefs 1993:4, Zainuddin 1980:60). Arabic has a fundamental value for Muslims because it is the prescribed language of their formal prayers and the language of the Holy Quran.

All Muslims worldwide must have some knowledge of Arabic, although not all of them have the ability to use it for communicative purposes. This also applies for Acehnese people. There are very few people in Aceh with a good communicative command of Arabic. However, there is a number of Acehnese with enough understanding of Arabic to be able to read it with understanding. For Muslims Arabic is the religious language; i.e. the language they use to communicate with God. Arabic is used to perform the five-daily prayers, regardless of whether the performer understands the words or not: a Muslim believes that God understands whatever they say in their prayers. Arabic is used in a distinctly religious discourse in a very formulaic way. Arabic has always been associated with The Holy Book. The language of revelation, it therefore bears some degree of ‘sacredness’. Acehnese people would probably

stop and pick up any piece of paper with Arabic writing on it found on a road or footpath and save it. At the very least, they would certainly refrain from stepping on the paper.

Arabic is used as an introductory/opening and closing parts of any formal writing and speech. A public speaker, for example, would begin a talk by saying a few sentences in Arabic before opening up his or her topic. The most common opening remarks in Arabic are greetings, i.e. *Assalamu alaikum...* 'peace be upon you', phrases to glorify God, i.e. *Alhamdulillah...* 'all praises to Allah', and phrases to pray for prophet Muhammad, i.e. *Allahumma shalli 'ala Muhammad* 'oh Allah shower Your blessings upon Muhammad'. The speaker would conclude his/her speech with at least one or two Arabic words or phrases. Included here may be some closing remarks like *billahit taufiq wal hidayah* 'direction and guidance are from Allah', some words of prayers—choices vary—and finally conclude with *assalamu alaikum*. The use of Arabic in such a situation, both the beginning and ending parts, is not at all for ideational communicative purposes since both the speaker and the hearers might have no knowledge of the literal meaning of the utterances. Durie (1996a) calls such opening and closing conversational moves a "frame", for the Acehese language communication. Arabic is used in this way as a mark of solidarity, without which the speaker is seen as deliberately 'degrading' the religious norms. This 'frame' is also a way of showing a religious reputation or identity; the more you can use Arabic, especially with good pronunciation, the more religious and educated you sound to the audience. Religious scholars, high government officials and other people who are proud of being seen as highly educated would do the same either in their speech or written works (Hollander 1984:230).

There are also many Arabic phrases found in daily communication which have been incorporated into Acehnese as speech acts in their own right.

(1) greetings: *assalamu 'alaikom* ('peace be onto you'); this is the commonest expression of greetings in Acehnese regardless of time of the day when people meet. This form of greeting is used both at the time when people meet and when they leave.⁷ It is only used among Muslims.

(2) beginning an act: *bismillah* 'in the name of Allah'; it is part of the Islamic belief that an act is blessed by God when His name is mentioned prior to the commencement of the act, therefore, it is strongly suggested to begin an act by mentioning the name of God.

(3) expressing gratitude: *alhamdulillah* ('all praises belong to God'). This expression is partly appropriate to be used where 'thank you' is expressed by an English speaker. However Acehnese people would also use this expression in other situations such as on receiving good news, freedom from a problem, a relief from pain, and so forth. This expresses closure and fulfils an obligation of praise and thankfulness to Allah.

Another important context for the use of Arabic is in choosing people's names. Parents generally prefer to give their children Arabic names, following the names of the prophets of God mentioned in the Holy Quran, and those of great Muslim scholars. But this tendency seems to be gradually decreasing nowadays for a variety of reasons, including the secularisation of education, westernisation, frequent contacts with non-Muslims, exogamous marriages and political reasons: parents may sometimes choose Javanese names in the hope that their children might be identified more closely with the political mainstream of the Indonesian government.

⁷Other common greeting terms in Acehnese are *ho neujak* (where are you going), *pame neujak* (where have you been), and *èh na neujak* (up to where you go). The last is typically used in Pidie and North Aceh. Greeting terms referring to times of the day such as, good morning, good day, etc. are not recognised in Acehnese.

Although most people carry an Arabic name, they are not always addressed by that name. In many cases, the Arabic name only appears in formal written document such as ID card, certificate, passport and so forth or when a person is called upon before public in a formal context. Otherwise the Arabic name is simplified into an Acehnese version by dropping certain syllables from the original version. Also it is quite common that the Arabic word is phonologically adjusted to the Acehnese sound. Then this ‘simplified’ or ‘adjusted’ version is used as a person’s nickname by which he/she is addressed. Table 3 below shows example of this.

Table 3 Arabic names in Acehnese

Arabic Version	Acehnese Version
1. 'Abdullâh	Dôlah
2. 'Abdul Karîm	Dôkarim
3. Ibrâhîm	Beurahim, or Him
4. Idrîs	Deurih, or Rih
5. Muhammad	Amat
6. Muhammad Nûr	Matnu
7. Sulaimân	Lèman
8. Yunus	Noh
9. Yusuf	Suh
10. Zainab	Nab
11. Zulkarnain	Dôn

3.9 Functions of Acehnese

Acehnese is a living language used as the first language, mother tongue, by almost all members of the Acehnese society. Acehnese does not function as merely a tool of communication within the society, but also as a symbol of

ethnic pride and identity (Sulaiman et al 1977). Being an inside language⁸, as shown in Durie's (1996) frame metaphor, Acehnese is the language of 'internal', home, and interpersonal day-to-day communication within households in the society. It is the language of personal oral communication among members of the Acehnese society: it is used to express feeling of happiness and anger, bitterness and sorrow, secrets and vows, etc. Members of the Acehnese society prefer to use their mother tongue when communicating among themselves for this is a way of showing their sense of unity and togetherness. This language is used in both formal and informal discourse in a household and in a village community.

In a formal situation, however, the use of Acehnese is very frequently framed by both Arabic and Malay. Formal speeches such as Friday sermon, speeches given at a wedding and village community meeting always use this formula: Arabic for the opening formula, Malay for the welcome address, and Acehnese for the central part of the speech. The speaker would return to Malay and Arabic phrases to conclude his or her speech. When the formal situation is associated with any government affairs or is taking place within the bureaucratic environment, people are more inclined to use Bahasa Indonesia/Malay altogether: much less Arabic is used in such situations. An introduction to an Acehnese publication, for example, is often in Bahasa Indonesia/Malay.⁹ This is true today as it no doubt was in the period of the sultanate.

⁸The term 'inside language' in this metaphor should not be understood merely in text presentation. The term also represents the way the Acehnese people traditionally perceive their world of communication: Acehnese is used among those who are clearly identified as members of the Acehnese community or those who belong to the Acehnese culture. Others are identified as outsiders, thus a language of the wider world is used for communication with these people, no matter how limited knowledge an Acehnese person has in this language.

⁹See for example, the introduction to *Seumangat Atjeh* (Abdullah Arif 1956), *Himpônan Hadih Madja* (Hasjim M.K. 1969), and *Geunta* (Jauhari Ishak 1974).

Family gatherings, cultural ceremonies such as wedding, circumcision, and traditional festivities like *khanduri blang* 'similar to Thanksgiving in America', *peutrën aneuk* 'the first day for a new born baby to be taken out of the house, normally at the age of 44 days', *peupök leumo* 'bulls fighting', *peuék geulayang* ('flying kites'), and various folk plays such as *meuën gatok*, *meuën cato* ('playing chess'), and other such festivities are all examples of public contexts where Acehnese is used.

People also use Acehnese when they talk about their routines around the village: farming activities, market affairs, social events, festivities, and so forth. All sorts of communication around these activities are never associated with writing, i.e. printed messages, but are conducted in speech. People trust their memory; all events are recorded in memory instead of in diary. Information is passed from mouth to mouth. When a family plans to host a wedding party or any other kind of celebration, for example, a member of the household or a close relative is designated to act on behalf of the family to spread the word of invitation. This person would perform the duty by going from door to door and even from village to village. The same action is also taken whenever a member of the society dies. With this latter case in particular, as soon as receiving the news, people would stop whatever they are doing and rush to the house of the deceased.

Another typical use of Acehnese is in address terms. For Acehnese people it is not common and is considered impolite to address a person directly by name, i.e. first name in the English sense, except when the addresser is much older than the addressee, or between children of the same age. Also it would be an insult for an Acehnese person to be called by his/her last name, i.e. his/her father's first name.¹⁰ Acehnese people would use an address term pertaining to

¹⁰It is not a tradition of the Acehnese culture to maintain a family name, and the notion of first and last name is not in practice. Instead Acehnese people usually use their father's name in

kinship, social or religious title before a person's name. Some of the commonly used kinship terms are *bang* or *polem* 'older brother', *kak*, *da* or *po* 'older sister', *yahwa* 'older uncle', *yahcut* 'younger uncle', *nyakwa* 'older aunt', *makcut* ('younger aunt'). Terms pertaining to religion are *teungku* or *gurè* 'religious teacher', *teungku chiek* 'highly respected religious scholar', *Imeum* 'prayers leader', and *teungkukadi* 'marriage celebrant'. Some titles are associated with a person's profession such as *keuchik* 'head of a village', *utôh* 'carpenter, blacksmith', *mugèe* 'retailer', *pawang* 'hunting and sea-fishing experts', *chèh* 'leader of a *seudati* group', *mandô* 'foreman', *keurani* 'clerk, train conductor', *tabib* 'traditional doctor', *dokto* 'medical doctor', and *meuntri* 'male nurse'. However, two address terms; *pak* 'father' and *buk* 'mother', deriving from *Bahasa Indonesia* are commonly and widely used today to address an adult male and female respectively.

Today the prototypical 'genuine and full time' users of Acehese are village people; those who never associate themselves with any government dealings and written communication, never have any necessity to communicate with people from outside the society, never go out from their own village except to a marketplace or other places within the Acehese speaking society, and never attend any level of formal education, including *pesantren* in this regard. Acehese speakers living in urban areas would be unlikely to fall into this category. They may encounter non-Achese speakers such as Chinese shopkeepers and consequently may have to switch into using Malay. Code-mixing can always be observed in the urban area since it is the place where people from different linguistic backgrounds meet. Also the urban area is a boundary zone between the outsiders and the insiders.

place of their last name in the western sense. In my case, for example, my given name is Bukhari, and my father's name is Daud. Thus Bukhari Daud. My son, Putra, will be Putra Bukhari, instead of Putra Daud.

When Acehnese is written it would most probably be in verse rather than in prose and it is generally used as an aid to the oral performance (Durie 1996). However, many poetic performances are not associated with written texts, including some where a performer has an ability to create an impromptu oral text right on the spot. This is what happens, for instance, with the performances of *seudati* and *rapai*, both are popular male heroic dances of Aceh (see sections 7.8. for a description of *seudati* performance, and 7.9. for *nasib*).

3.10 Two Manuscript Collections

As a window into Acehnese literacy, let us consider the two main Acehnese manuscript collections: Tanoh Abèe library and the Aceh Museum. These are revealing in the range of traditional texts they include. Besides, there are also some personal collections such as the collections of Anzib Lamnyong, A. Hasjmy, and Talsya. There are also many manuscripts scattered in different places in Aceh in the hands of people in the rural villages who do not know the significance of the manuscripts. What they know is that the item is a sacred legacy of their ancestor inherited from generation to generation and they are obliged to protect it. For this purpose, for instance, they would wrap the manuscript they have in a piece of white or red cloth, store it somewhere safe in the house and never permit anyone to touch it. One family may possess one or more collections of such a nature. Unfortunately they are not always aware that after some time the manuscript gradually deteriorates and is eaten by insects.

The Aceh Museum has been the major public collector over the past two decades or so and has been able to collect a reasonable number of old manuscripts from various sources, especially from people in the rural areas. The Museum would send people to villages to search for the manuscripts and buy them from the owners. A more intensive effort of manuscript collection

was initiated in the early 1980s, although the Museum previously had some manuscript collections. As of February 1994, a total of 412 manuscripts have been catalogued by the Aceh Museum. The data presented here are based on this catalogue.

About the language: the majority of the manuscripts are written in Malay (169), followed by Acehese (100), and Arabic (55). Some are written in mixed languages such as in Arabic-Malay-Acehese (17), Arabic-Malay (44), Arabic-Acehese (7), and Malay-Acehese (12). The oldest date of these manuscripts is MS. No. 92, *I'tiqâd Ittihâd wa al-Hulul*, written in mixed Arabic-Malay languages by Qadhi Hafizlallah Ta'ala in A.H. 30 Ramadhan 1003 (C.E. 1588). Other older Malay texts are those of Nuruddin al-Raniri, such as *Sirât al-Mustaqîm* ('the straight path') dated A.H. 1044 (C.E. 1633). The earliest date for an Acehese text is the year A.H. 1069 (C.E. 1658), MS. No. 110, *Hikayat Syama'un*.

It is very interesting to note here that the majority of the titles given in the catalogue are in Arabic, even though the text may be in Malay or Acehese or in mixed languages. Of the 412 manuscripts in the catalogue, 207 have Arabic titles, 80 have Acehese titles, 32 have Malay titles, and the rest are without a title (the title could not be identified or could have been lost with the first pages, a common occurrence). It is rather problematic here to give a precise account of titles, because many of the citations in the catalogue do not refer to a single independent text, but to several mixed texts bound together in one bundle; some are in the same language, others in mixed languages. For example, MS No. 293, contains four different texts, two in Arabic and two in Malay, and MS No. 409, which consists of three different titles, two in Arabic and one in Malay. We also find that in one bundle some texts have no titles, probably they could not be identified because some beginning pages have been lost.

The Tanoh Abèe library merely holds a religious collection. It keeps about 900 manuscripts and so far today only 604 of them have been listed in two volumes by PDIA in cooperation with the owner of the library, Teungku Muhammad Dahlan Al-Fairusy. Volume One lists 400 manuscripts, and was published in 1980. This volume was compiled by Wamad Abdullah, the then Director of PDIA and Teungku Muhammad Dahlan Al-Fairusy. Of the 400 manuscripts in this volume, 126 are anonymous and the rest are written by 144 different authors. Volume Two lists a further 204 manuscripts written by 93 different authors. It was compiled by Zunaimar, a staff of the PDIA and Teungku Muhammad Dahlan Al-Fairusy. This volume was completed in 1992 and published in 1993 by the PDIA. The Tanoh Abèe collections are all related to Islam in general, but they can be classified under the following subjects: Islamic Law, Philosophy, History, Ethics, Biography, Science (especially, Astronomy), Linguistics (especially, Arabic grammar), and Literature (especially, Arabic poetry). Not all manuscripts are dated. The oldest among the dated manuscripts is the year A.H. 1019 (C.E. 1600) found in the manuscript of *Miratul Mukmin*, (Mirror of the Believers) the work of Syamsuddin Sumatrani (Abdullah and Al-Fairusy 1980, Zunaimar and Al-Fairusy 1993).

Unfortunately this catalogue does not give information about the language in which the manuscripts are written. Most of the titles are in Arabic: 528 out of 604 titles, but this does not guarantee that the texts are in this language too. A few of the titles are in Malay: 76 out of 604 titles. It seems significant that no titles are found in Acehese. The guardians of the collection appear not to have regarded Acehese texts as something of their attention. It is commonly found with the Malay literary works that the title is presented in Arabic, especially when the text is about Islam, although the contents is in Malay; *Syifaul Qulub*

(Remedy of Hearts), the work of Nuruddin al-Raniri, is one such Malay work in the collection with an Arabic title.

3.11 Survey of Early Malay Manuscripts Found in Aceh

This survey of Malay literature is solely based on the collection held by the state Aceh Museum, in Banda Aceh. There are undoubtedly other Malay manuscripts available in Aceh in various private collections. As mentioned earlier, the Aceh Museum has 169 Malay manuscripts. The number of texts is actually much greater since some bundles do not only contain a single but several texts. However the Museum Aceh catalogue identified each bundle under one code and consider it as one item. These Malay manuscripts consist of a great variety of subjects, not only pertaining to religion but also to science such as astrology/astronomy and pharmacology. Generally these texts could be classified into twelve categories.

(1) Islamic Law

These texts concerns many aspects of Islamic law such as what is lawful and unlawful for Muslims, matters regarding the five daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadhan, income and property taxes, pilgrimage to Mecca, and other religious issues including marriage law and issues pertaining to family inheritance. This category constitutes the highest percentage of the Malay manuscripts in the Aceh Museum. Most derive from the 17th and 18th centuries when Aceh was a great centre of Malay scholarship. Of the popular ones in this category are Al-Raniri's *Sirat al-Mustaqim*, Abdul Rauf's *Mirat al-Thullab*, *Masail al-Mubtadi*, *Bidayatul Mubtadi*, *Kitab Faraidh*, and *Rubu' Nikah*.

(2) Islamic Education/Instruction

Texts in this category deals with various lessons regarding Islamic teachings. They present issues pertaining to morality, relationship between children and

parents, husband and wife and how should people behave towards each other as well as people's attitudes towards animals and nature. *Sairu al-Salikin*, the work of Abdussamad al-Palembany, *Wasiat Imam Syafi'iy*, *Tambih Tujuh Belas* and *Bidayatul Hidayah* are some of the better known ones.

(3) Theology

These texts mainly deal with the character and attributes of Allah and other matters pertaining to Islamic faith. Texts such as *Qawa'id al-Islam*, *Kasyful Asrar*, *Bishifat al- 'Isyirin*, and *Akbar al-Karim* are included in this category.

(4) Sufism (Islamic Mysticism)

The texts in this category deal with one's attitude in relation with God such as what one should do to maintain one's relation with God. The major issue in sufism is to discourage people from excessively loving the worldly materials: the central focus of life should be the search for God and serve Him alone. Al-Raniri's attack on the teaching of Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin Pasai, *Thibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Adyan*, is included in this category, as it deals with mysticism. Other texts are *Hidayat al-Muttaqin*, *Bayan al-Thariqah*, *Bahru al-Wahdah* and *Jalan Salik dan Jalan Sulknya*.

(5) Astrology and Astronomy

These texts deal with matters of deciding the dates in lunar calendar, giving people's names in association with the day of their birth, choosing the auspicious days of the month for the purpose of doing specific things such as erecting a building, planting trees and growing crops, and matters pertaining to the interpretation of dreams. The famous text in this category is *Kitab Muja'abat*.

(6) Pharmacology

These texts contain descriptions and names of traditional medications to cure certain diseases. Included here list of certain chants or magic charms. There are some untitled manuscripts in this group and the *Kitab Mujarabat* mentioned above also belongs to this category.

(7) Sexology

This is very rare. One of the manuscripts under INMA No. 06 is about this subject. The title is not known, but it contains a description of what a husband should do in order (for both husband and wife) to achieve the maximum pleasure during the sexual intercourse. Another text pertaining to this subject is called *Azimat Kuat Zakar* ('charms for a stronger penis'), one of the titles under INMA N0.120.

(8) Translation of the Holy Quran

There are a few manuscripts of this category but only under two titles; one is the work of Abdul Rauf, *Tarjumanul Mustafid*, and the other is *Tafsir al-Quran al 'Adhim*, which is anonymous.

(9) Linguistics

This is a description of the linguistic rules pertaining to the way of reciting the Holy Quran which is known as '*Ilmu Tajwid* ('the prosody of Quranic recitation').

(10) Holy epics

These narrative texts reveal the story of the past time heroes from which Muslims are supposed to learn a lesson. Some of these stories are based from the Holy Quran such as the *Isim Tujuh* ('the seven names'), narrating the story of seven saints who slept in a cave for the period of three hundred and nine

years. Other texts are *Hikayat Nabi Musa* ('the story of the Prophet Moses') and *Hikayat Abu Syammah* ('the story of Abu Syammah').

(11) Mythic epics

These texts present stories of the past time mythical figures with their powerful and supernatural attributes. The figure is typically a young man who, with his extraordinary power, could defeat the enemy and finally becomes a king and takes the princess as his wife. Only two Malay manuscripts in the Museum Aceh belong to this category: *Hikayat Kanca Mara* ('the story of Kanca Mara') and *Hikayat Banta Sena* ('the story of Banta Sena').

(12) History

It is quite surprising that only one manuscript is found in this category despite the fact that Aceh was known as a Malay centre for some time in the past. This is the well known *Bustan al-salatin* 'Garden of the kings' written by Nuruddin al-Raniri in C.E. 1637. This text gives an historical account of Aceh, the kings who used to reign in Aceh, especially the story about the greatness of Sultan Iskandar Muda.

3.12 Summary and Conclusion

Literacy in the Acehnese language is not a principal target of public education. It has always emerged within the contexts of other language learning—Arabic and Malay in traditional setting. Consequently there is an indirect pathway to Acehnese language literacy acquisition: Arabic and Malay literacy taking precedence. Literacy begins with learning Arabic, it may then proceed to Malay, and finally to Acehnese.

Arabic learning begins as children learn to read and recite the Holy Quran. They are taught how to spell Arabic letters, pronounce short words and

phrases, so that eventually they might be able to read and recite the holy book as an act of worship. The word *beuet* ('to read, to recite') is significant in understanding the context of traditional Acehnese literacy: in its core sense *beuet* refers to the recitation of the Holy Quran. Acquiring this skill is traditionally regarded as the central act of education (in Aceh).

Peubeuet ('to cause to recite') is the common term for teaching, and *jak beuet* ('go reciting') is for attending class or going to school. Teaching children for the purpose of learning the Quran is referred to as *peujeuet aneuk keu ureueng* 'making a child human', and parents have full responsibility to ensure this happens. Thus the first step to literacy centres around learning the holy book. 'Reading' as *beuet* strictly recitation, for which reciting the Holy Quran is the archetype and the pinnacle of all reading practice. The main goal is not understanding, but memorisation and skill in recitation. Success is measured by the accuracy and quantity of memorisation. Thus, above all literacy is the ability to recite the Holy Quran.

Silent reading was not recognised as a mode of literacy in traditional Acehnese education, so that even the very concept can be difficult for Acehnese people to understand. To many Acehnese people 'silent' reading simply means 'unsounded' or private recitation, i.e. whispering to themselves. Therefore people coming from this tradition find it difficult to read silently without moving their lips.

For an average Acehnese *beuet* is a physical action, never a purely mental one. If reading were something only performed mentally, probably a traditional Acehnese person would refer to this activity as *niet*, 'forming an intention'. The difficulty many Acehnese people experience in mastering silent reading reflects

a lack of exposure to written texts and reading practice. But more importantly, it relates to the traditional meaning of the word *beuet*.

From the seventeenth to the early twentieth century, there were four institutions that contributed to the development of Acehese literacy: the *rumoh*, the *meunasah*, the *ranggang*, and the *dayah/peusantrèn*. However, Acehese language was never taught here. Initial access to literacy was provided at the *rumoh* or at the *meunasah*, where memorisation is a principal mode of learning. Learning beyond this initial stage would normally take place at a *ranggang*, or a *dayah/peusantrèn* where writing skill begins to be developed. Attending such a school, children normally would have to leave their own village—*jak meudagang*. During this time they learn to read and write Malay and Arabic language skill, in addition to other subjects of Islamic studies. These were solely undertaken by means of Arabic and *Jawi* scripts.

With such literacy skills, an Acehese person can now move on to acquire the skill of reciting Acehese written texts. In other words, it is the Arabic and Malay literacy skills which Acehese people transfer to write and recite their own language. However, Arabic and Malay literacy alone cannot guarantee to make a person to be a skilled reader and writer of Acehese: he or she needs to have a good working knowledge of Acehese itself.

What then is the context in which this knowledge can develop? Today the prototypical 'genuine and full time' users of Acehese are village people; those who never associate themselves with any government dealings and written communication, never have any necessity to communicate with people from outside the society, never go out from their own village except to a marketplace or other places within the Acehese speaking society, and never attend any level of formal education, including *peusantrèn* in this regard. Acehese

speakers living in urban areas would be unlikely to fall into this category. They may encounter non-Acehnese speakers such as Chinese shopkeepers and consequently may often have to switch into using Malay. Code-mixing can always be observed in the urban area since it is a centre for business where people from different linguistic backgrounds meet, and the place of government or state discourse, e.g. bureaucracy, and higher state education. Also the urban area is a boundary zone between outsiders and insiders. It is therefore increasingly difficult for urban Acehnese to acquire Acehnese language literacy skills.

The role of Malay written communication in Acehnese society has a particular value as a marker of 'external' status. When oral communication was not possible in Acehnese—whether due to a distance or because the addressee is not an Acehnese—then most commonly Malay was used. Whenever there was a need to use written Malay, and the person had no ability to write, he/she would employ a scribe.

When a written message was intended for a speaker of Acehnese, the recipient is treated like an outsider by using the high level of formality which written Malay marks, reflected for example in the choice of lexicon—the words and expressions used in the letter, would never be used in face to face communication. For Acehnese, Malay is a language of 'external' communication, to be used when communicating with non-Acehnese speaking people and those treated like ones because of distance. Therefore, whenever Malay is used, the sense of 'externalness' still remains in the mind of the Acehnese speakers, even if communication is taking place between themselves.

A problem of studying traditional Malay writing in Acehnese is that not all kinds of manuscripts are equally well preserved. We know that seals, coins,

letters, archives, magic amulets, contracts and other legal documents were in Malay (see also Gallop and Arps 1991, and Alfian 1987). However some of these are ephemeral in nature, not kept longer than their immediate function, e.g. contract document. What is collected in libraries and museum is limited to a) what the institution values, and b) what is available for collection among the wider community.

For some time, in the past, Aceh was noted as a centre of Malay scholarship and literature. As a result a great deal of Malay works are found in Aceh: of the 412 manuscripts held by the Aceh Museum, for example, 169 are in Malay which cover a great variety of subjects. These include Islamic Law, Islamic Education/Instruction, Theology, Sufism (Islamic Mysticism), Astrology and Astronomy, Pharmacology, Sexology, Translation of the Holy Quran, Linguistics, Holy Epics, Mythic Epics, and History.

Chapter 4

Literacy Within The Modern Period

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of modern Acehnese language literacy—the skill acquired through the Roman alphabet—in the Indonesian context, changing functions of Acehnese, attempts to develop Acehnese as a school subject, and its impact on the development of modern Acehnese literature. Since the modern Acehnese literacy emerged within the context of BI, this chapter begins with the historical development of BI: exploring how the language gained social and political ground in the archipelago so that it now enjoys the status of the official state language. This includes the efforts taken for literacy campaigns and the process of developing and spreading of the national language throughout the huge population.

4.2 Bahasa Indonesia and National Literacy

That Malay was chosen as the national language of the Republic of Indonesia was not a coincidence. Behind this choice lay a long historical, social and political process in which the language found its shape and status, until the time the language was renamed Bahasa Indonesia (hereinafter BI). This history provides evidence of how linguistic issues have played a social and political role in the struggle for a national identity. This resulted in the acknowledgment of the existence of a national language, BI, which ever since has continued to be consolidated in its position as a unifying device for the

multiethnic nation under the umbrella policy of 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika' 'Unity in Diversity' (Daud 1996:17).

Once BI was established as the national language, a new challenge emerged: the struggle to promote literacy for more than half of the population who were still illiterate in BI following independence. Consequently all sorts of linguistic, social and cultural problems have needed to be tackled in the effort to make BI the common language of communication in the people's daily life, as well as to make it the official language of instruction in the educational system. As Alisjahbana (1962:2) stated, the goal has been to make BI "the language of the daily newspaper, the radio, political meetings, the correspondence in government and business, and of modern science, law, and literature."

4.2.1 Overview of History

Historically the rise of the ideal of having a national language began in the early 1900s. This was in line with the emergence of the so called 'national awakening' or national consciousness—amongst the indigenous peoples from a range of ethnic backgrounds—in the efforts of searching for a national identity whilst still under colonial rule.

An emergent modern state needs a national language as focus of its identity, identifying and unifying forces, but which language to choose is often not easy to decide. Success in adopting an indigenous language, rather than the language of the ex-colonial regime, as the national language has significant social and political implications.

It can be assumed that establishing a national language in a country of such ethnic and linguistic diversity as Indonesia is not a simple task. The Indonesian archipelago consists of about 13, 677 islands (Gunarwan 1981:5) where we find

about 400 different native languages,¹ most of which belong to the Austronesian language family (Nababan 1979). Those ethnic languages might have competed with each other to become a national language. Despite their linguistic pluralism, the Indonesian people were able to achieve a unanimous agreement, to accept BI as their 'only' national language. This should be accepted as a great success which many other developing nations have not been able to achieve.² Some other countries with similarly complex linguistic backgrounds such as Singapore, The Philippines, India, and several African countries such as Ghana and Kenya, after independence, faced a tremendous problem with the establishment of the national language. Some countries came up with more than one national language or adopted the language of the ex-colonial government as the national language because of disagreements over the use of a particular ethnic language (Samsuri 1980, Gunarwan 1981, Anwar 1985). Another positive achievement made by the Indonesian people, is that they are able to nominate BI as both the national and official language. In some countries the national and official languages are different. For example, in India, Hindi is the national language, but the official language is English. The national language of Pakistan is Urdu, but the official language is English. Similarly in The Philippines English is used as an official language while the national language is Tagalog. There are five major significant stages in the development of the Indonesian national language through which it has gained its current position of widespread acceptance and use in the country.

¹ A smaller number of languages could be seen in some other studies. For example, Alisjahbana (1962) and Gunarwan (1981) reported that the number was 250, but Diah (1982) said that the number ranges from 250 to over 400. The difference is partly due to a controversial interpretation as to whether to regard particular related languages as a language or a dialect, but also to more accurate information on linguistic diversity, causing estimates to be revised upwards.

² A similar situation is found in Tanzania where a regional language, Kiswahili, has been raised to the status of national language (Fasold 1984).

4.2.1.1 Malay as a Lingua Franca

For a millennium, prior to its adoption as the national language of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, Malay had served as a common language and the language of intercultural communication in many coastal port kingdoms³ in the archipelago (Indonesia Handbook 1995, Alisjahbana 1962, Teeuw 1967, Usman 1977, Anwar 1985, Abas 1987). This is the stage when Malay played a significant role as a lingua franca throughout the Indonesian archipelago. During this period Malay was used as a language of wider communication among the different ethnic groups and foreign traders particularly for the purpose of trade dealings. The language was also used by missionaries in the propagation of religions, especially Islam and Christianity (Sumardi 1970:1, Surjomihardjo 1979:63, Gunarwan 1981:7, Anwar 1985:3).

What are the major factors that enhanced the use of Malay as a lingua franca in the region? The answer to this question is related to the reputation of two significant kingdoms found in the Malay native regions on both sides of the Malacca Straits: Sriwijaya in Sumatra and Malacca on the Malay Peninsular. The kingdom of Sriwijaya existed in South Sumatra, where the present day Palembang is located, from 7th to 12th century. Sriwijaya was one of the two major powers in the Indonesian archipelago beside Majapahit in Java. The influence of Sriwijaya was especially pronounced in maritime affairs and it had connection with other powerful kingdoms in the world. For centuries the Malacca Straits, which served as a main trading route between East and West, was controlled by Sriwijaya (Situmorang 1982:15-16).

When the influence of Sriwijaya faded, a new power appeared on the other side of the Straits, the kingdom of Malacca. This coincided with the spread of Islam in the region where Malay was used as an instrument of this religious

³These coastal port kingdoms were Aceh, Pasai, Perlak, Aru, Sriwijaya, Minangkabau, Riau (in Sumatra), Jakarta, Demak (in Java), Bugis, Makassar, Bone and Goa (in Sulawesi), Ternate and Tidore (in Maluku) and some other kingdoms in Kalimantan.

propagation. Additionally, oral literary works such as the Malay *hikayat*⁴ began to be written during the zenith of the kingdom. This also marks the development of written literature in Malay. Malay was also used for legal documents and official correspondence of all kinds.

Additionally Alisjahbana (1971) proposed some other supporting factors for the enhancement of Malay as a lingua franca. Malay people were known as seafarers who moved from one place to another and inhabited the coastal areas of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku, Ambon and other islands, and they even reached as far west as the island of Madagascar.⁵ Also as Malay was adopted for use as a lingua franca, it developed a form which was comparatively easy to learn and sociolinguistically it is much simpler in comparison with, e.g. Javanese which recognises levels of speech, namely *Ngoko* (low), *Madya* (middle), and *Krama* (high).

4.2.1.2 Official Language of the *Volksraad*

The *Volksraad* ('People's Council') was created by the Dutch government in May 1918. Immediately a proposal was made by the indigenous members of the Council concerning the language issue; they felt the need to use a unifying indigenous language, Malay, in the *Volksraad*. A motion was directed to the government requesting the right to use Malay along with Dutch by the members of the Council during the Council's sessions. The request was granted by a royal decree of June 25th, 1918 stating that the members were granted the freedom to use either Malay or Dutch, although afterwards not all Indonesian members of the Council used Malay during the sessions, but kept

⁴Oral narration which may be tale, romance, story, and history. Including here some famous Malay *hikayats* such as *Hikayat Muhammad Ali Hanafiah*, *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, and *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain* (Situmorang 1982:16). See chapter Six for a description of Acehnese *hikayat*.

⁵Nababan 1979:261 notes that the present day population of Madagascar (approximately 5.5 million) are a mixture of African, Arab, and Indonesian stock, but their languages are clearly of Malayo-Polynesian family, resembling the Ma'anyan Dayak Languages spoken in the Central Kalimantan province of Indonesia.

using Dutch instead (Gunarwan 1981:7). This date is considered as the starting point of the emergence of consciousness-raising among the Indonesian people of the need to have a national language (Teeuw 1967:8). However, the emergence of an ideal of Indonesian nationality appeared much earlier through the nationalist cultural movement called Budi Utomo ('Noble Endeavour'), founded on May 20th, 1908 by Dr. Wahidin Sudiro Husodo (Idris 1982:401). This date has been accepted as the landmark of the national awakening by most Indonesians and therefore May 20th is commemorated annually as '*Hari Kebangkitan Nasional*' (i.e. the National Awakening Day). Initially this organisation aimed at promoting Javanese culture and advancing the peoples of East Indies. Subsequently the rise of the nationalism in the archipelago so affected the organisation that it shifted its direction to a broader scope and used Malay, rather than Javanese, as the official language (Anwar 1985:18).

4.2.1.3 The Youth Pledge of October 28th, 1928

One of the most significant landmarks in the development of BI took place in 1928. This was the time when a number of young people representing their respective local youth organisations convened in a congress in Jakarta. These youth organisations included *Jong Java*, *Jong Sumatranenbond*, *Jong Celebes* and *Jong Ambon* (Diah 1982:37). The congress formulated what came to be known as *Sumpah Pemuda* ('Youth Pledge'). The congress resulted in a very important declaration—on October 28th, 1928—in which BI was officially declared as '*Bahasa Persatuan*' ('unifying language'). Eventually this date came to be seen as another landmark of the emergence of BI as a political instrument (Rosidi 1964, Usman 1977). It is for this reason the Indonesian people today commemorate October as '*Bulan Bahasa*' (i.e. the month of language).

The Youth Pledge declaration contains three principal ideals: that they belong to one country, one nation and share one national language, in spite of the

existing ethnic and linguistic pluralism. The original text, written in what had up until then been known as 'Malay', reads as follows:

Pertama: Kami putra dan putri Indonesia mengaku bertumpah darah yang satu, tanah tumpah darah⁶ Indonesia.

[First: we, boys and girls of Indonesia, pledge that we belong to one fatherland, the fatherland of Indonesia]

Kedua: Kami putra dan putri Indonesia mengaku berbangsa yang satu, bangsa⁷ Indonesia.

[Second: we, the Indonesian boys and girls, pledge that we belong to one nation, the Indonesian nation].

Ketiga: Kami putra dan putri Indonesia menjunjung tinggi bahasa persatuan, Bahasa Indonesia.

[Third: we, the Indonesian boys and girls, highly respect the unifying language, BI].

With regard to the national language issue, the most important result of the Youth Pledge of 1928 was the formal recognition it gave to the existence of a national language (Diah 1982:63). Certainly this had a positive political impact for BI to appear as a unifying factor in resistance against the Dutch colonial government. It became clear to nationalists that BI could be used as a 'glue' to bind together all people from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds in the archipelago to stand hand in hand to establish a country. Following this particular event, the Youth Congress, BI started to serve a political function and started to be seen as a symbol of national identity and nationalist sentiment (Abas 1987:9).

⁶'Tanah tumpah darah' literally means 'land of the blood shed'. Hence the land of birth, the home town (Moeliono 1988), the fatherland, the country; Indonesia.

⁷Literally 'bangsa' means 'race', hence a group of people of the same race, traditions, language, and history as well as having its own government (Moeliono 1988). Bangsa also means nation; the Indonesian nation.

4.2.1.4 The Japanese Occupation

The status of BI was further entrenched during the Japanese occupation in Indonesia from March 1942. A language policy was promulgated by the Japanese authorities as soon as they arrived, prohibited the use of Dutch for any official and educational purposes. Instead, BI was endorsed as the official language for education and administration until the time when the Indonesian people would have learned Japanese (Diah 1982:41). Hence BI was used as the language of instruction at all levels of the educational system, and Japanese was the only foreign language taught from the upper levels of elementary school to higher education⁸ (Moeliono 1986:37).

4.2.1.5 A National Language

When the Japanese surrendered to the Allied Forces, on August 17th, 1945, the Indonesian nationalist movement leaders seized power and proclaimed the independence of Indonesia. When the Constitution was drafted, one article was devoted to the national language issue: article 36, of chapter XV. In this article BI was endorsed as the state language: "Bahasa Negara ialah Bahasa Indonesia" ('The state language is Bahasa Indonesia') (Situmorang 1982:10). In this way BI was enshrined in the constitution as the national language, above all others. That BI was adopted so readily in 1945 as part of the country's constitution is a sign of its previous broad acceptance in the nationalist movement.

A well known scholar of BI, Slamet Muljana, said in his introductory remarks at the opening ceremony of a BI seminar held in Jakarta in 1968:

Among the emerging nations of Southeast Asia Indonesia is blessed to possess a national language. Many factors, psychological, sociological and political as well, have helped to enhance the development of Bahasa

⁸At that time there were only two higher educational institutions in Indonesia: 1) the Medical School in Jakarta (i.e. the present day University of Indonesia, 2) the Technical College in Bandung (i.e. the present day Bandung Institute of Technology).

Indonesia for that purpose. The third point of the Youth Pledge of 1928 has been realised since independence was proclaimed in 1945. ...Bahasa Indonesia is now used throughout the archipelago from Sabang (in northernmost Sumatra), to Merauke (in easternmost Irian Jaya) (Abas 1987:14).

The unanimous acceptance of BI as the national language was also attributed to the fact that BI was not a native language of any major ethnic group like Javanese. Hence this eliminated the fear of a particular group dominating as far as the language issue is concerned.

The text of the proclamation of independence was written in BI and was read by Sukarno before a public crowd in Jakarta. The proclamation news spread quickly, especially in the island of Java, but it took a short while for the news to reach the people in other islands due to communication difficulties of the time. The text contains the following messages as cited in Anwar (1985):

We the Indonesian people herewith declare Indonesian Independence. Matters relating to the transfer of authority (will) be carried out in an orderly manner and in the shortest possible time (p.52).⁹

4.2.2 Functions of Bahasa Indonesia

BI is a living and developing language. The number of its speakers is increasing and the domains of its use are continually expanding. BI and its antecedent, Malay, have played a number of important functions both before or since independence. But what are the factors that enable a language to play a significant role in a society? Moeliono (1988:2) noted that usually this is related to political, economic and demographic considerations.

⁹The original proclamation text in BI reads as follows:

PROKLAMASI

Kami bangsa Indonesia dengan ini menyatakan kemerdekaan Indonesia. Hal-hal yang mengenai pemindahan kekuasaan dan lain-lain, diselenggarakan dengan cara seksama dan dalam tempo yang sesingkat-singkatnya.

Jakarta, 17 Agustus 1945. Atas nama bangsa Indonesia,

Sukarno - Hatta

There are five titles to which BI has been commonly attached, namely 1) Bahasa Resmi (official language), 2) Bahasa Negara (state language), 3) Bahasa Nasional (national language), 4) Bahasa Persatuan (unifying language), and 5) Bahasa Kesatuan (unification language).

The term 'official language' denotes a language has an official recognition by the government as a language for governmental communication. In the case of BI, this official recognition is stipulated in the Constitution. The language is officially used in the government administration, meetings, schools and in other types of official events. 'State language' could be interpreted as a language of an independent nation which has its own government. 'National language' is interpreted as a language used as an instrument to express a national identity as opposed to an ethnic identity. The term also indicates that the language serves for the importance of a nation rather than a region or an ethnicity. 'Unifying language' is a language that could be used as a unifying instrument for the purpose of bringing together all available ethnic groups in the region into one Indonesian nation. In the absence of a unifying language, it is difficult to imagine how communication could be made in a country where about 400 languages are in use. 'Unification language' signifies the unification of geographical regions into one country. Although the islands are geographically scattered, they belong to one country, Indonesia (Situmorang 1982:9-10, Abas 1987:4-5).

The functions of BI as the national and as the state language are elaborated in more detailed by Halim (1976) as cited in Nababan (1979:259). These are:

(1) as the national language, it functions as:

(i) the symbol of national pride;

(ii) the symbol of national identity;

(iii) a tool to enable the unification of the various ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds and languages into a unified Indonesian nation;

(iv) as a tool for inter-regional and intercultural communication.

(2) as the state language, it functions as:

(i) the official language of the state;

(ii) the medium of instruction in education;

(iii) a tool for communication on the national level for the planning and implementation of national development and government affairs;

(iv) a tool for the development of culture, science, and technology.

(3) the official language for the development of culture, science, and technology.

Have these functions been put into practice by the Indonesian people? Has BI fully served the above mentioned functions? These questions were addressed in a seminar on the National Language Policy, held in Jakarta in February 1975. The seminar concluded that BI functions effectively both as the national and as the official language of Indonesia (Abas 1987:12). In all levels of formal education, from primary schools to universities, there is no other official medium of instruction in use other than BI, except that during the first three grades of primary schools a local language may be used in particular areas, provided that the pupils are not yet able to communicate in the national language.

Studies conducted by Gunarwan (1981) and Diah (1982) indicated that BI has been accepted as the only medium for all prominent national newspapers and magazines. The same is true with the national broadcasting, both television and radio. However, a very small number of local newspapers and local radio

stations can be found using a particular ethnic language. In such cases, generally both the newspapers and the broadcasting are intended for the people of that particular ethnic background and they have a local rather than a national function. However, in the field of television broadcasting, it appears that only BI is used as the medium of broadcasting: where indigenous language programs occur, they are always in the context of BI language programs. This is in line with the national policy with regard to the treatment of local languages in that the state respects and preserves local languages which are well maintained by the respective speakers because the local languages themselves form part of the national culture.

Today BI is well established in the nation. It is the language of the mainstream of society. Those who do not speak the language would see themselves as disadvantaged while others would regard them as uneducated. BI is predominantly used in business dealings, the publication of books, journals, magazines, and newspapers seminars/conferences, commerce, advertising, entertainment and family life. As a result of the government's strong commitment to improve education, the rate of literacy in BI has significantly increased since independence. From only about 20 per cent¹⁰ (Kementrian P.P.K 1952) of the population literate at the time of independence, the literacy level gradually increased to 42.90 per cent in 1961 and 87.26 per cent in 1994 (National Bureau of Statistics 1995). With regard to the current functions of BI, Gunarwan (1981:2) has the following to say:

Today BI is a modern language in its own right. It is the language of education from elementary to university level. It is capable of being used as the vehicle language of modern science and technology.

Different nuances of feelings are expressible using BI. These are all due to the fact that a great deal of effort has been, and continues to be, made

¹⁰It was difficult to obtain precise and reliable statistical figures during this time due to the unstable political situation. In fact, Diah (1982:72) reported, some of the figures were suspected to have been inflated for political purposes.

to develop and elaborate the language. Despite the success at engineering the language, however, one fact remains: spoken BI has not been standardised. There continues to be a great deal of variation in the use of spoken BI.

4.3 National Literacy Programs

In terms of 'who' is the promoting agent, literacy campaigns can be classified into two types: "colonial literacy" and "dominant literacy" (Street 1995:16).

Colonial literacy is the literacy imparted by outsiders as part of the conquest with all sorts of political and economic interests, and dominant literacy is advocated by the members of the same society. Literacy promotion in Indonesia belongs to this second type.

Indonesia has an explicit literacy policy made by the central government to be applied nationally in the whole country. The policy clearly favours one language, BI. The government views local or indigenous languages as expressions of local Indonesian culture and therefore would protect and develop the language(s) if they are still used and maintained by the native speakers, but they have no national status apart from this. This policy is stated in the explanatory remarks of Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution (Situmorang 1982: 32-33). However there is a number of reasons for the promotion of BI.

The most significant one is the dissemination of national unity.

Constitutionally, the position of BI is stated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia: 'the state language is Bahasa Indonesia'. This meant that promotion of literacy in BI became a priority of national language planning policy from the beginning of the Indonesian state, with a focus on enhancing the standards language's prestige and improving literature and oral communication skills in it.

The literacy campaigns were developed by the Indonesian government for the following purposes: to increase the rate of literacy in the national language and

to promote a sense of national unity. BI, as the national language, needed to be cultivated, not only as a common medium of communication by which people could formulate their thoughts and express ideas, but just as significantly for the purpose of building a national unity, that is to strengthen and maintain the feelings of nationalism and unity which was seen as a principal factor in achieving national stability. BI was regarded as a very significant cultural means to unify the multi-ethnic population into a nation.

4.3.1 The Goals of Literacy

Following Street's (1995:28) classification regarding the transmission processes of literacy in a society, the goals of literacy can be described in terms of "autonomous" and "ideological" models. By 'autonomous' it is assumed that illiterate people are lacking in communication skills and therefore are less likely to achieve self-development. Providing them with literacy skills will support them in getting better life prospects. Therefore the central question is how literacy skills can be imparted so that they are able to decode written signs. The 'ideological' model of literacy is not only concerned with basic literacy skills, such as how to read words, but also with the future development of literacy itself, thus how to read the 'world'. It emphasises that literacy itself can be articulated through various ideological positions. The ideological model stresses long-term consequences of literacy such as constructing the meaning of literacy for the betterment of social and political significance. Under the ideological framework, Baynham (1995:8) asserts that the definition of literacy is shaped by ideological perspectives on what literacy is, how it should be taught, and who should have access to it. According to Moss (1994:148) those supporting the ideological framework are of the opinion that language, be it oral or written, does not occur in a vacuum and it cannot be separated from its social and physical environment. In Indonesia, both 'ideological' and 'autonomous' goals have been pursued. Literacy in the national language, BI,

regarded as an instrument to promote the national ideology of unity in the multi-ethnic and scattered population.

Mayo (1994:31) notes that literacy is very much tied to the concept of citizenship since it is regarded as central to a person's ability to exercise and make full use of citizenship rights. The level of literacy in the population is closely connected to the success of the country's development progress.

Oxenham (1980:51) noted, "the more literate people are, the more willing they are to accept and work for improvements in their societies". However, it is very complicated to determine how much literacy is needed for the purpose of such participation. Universal literacy in BI was adopted as the target of the national effort. Proficiency in BI, as the national language, is regarded as necessary for all citizens so that they are able to participate in and benefit from national development. This goal presented many logical problems.

In Indonesia, development plans and the necessary guidelines are written in BI, and a problem is how to convey this crucial information to the people if they are not literate in the language, as the written messages can only be understood by those who are able to read. Presenting development policies and plans by oral means is one possible answer to the question, but in a country like Indonesia, as a nation of scattered islands, this method is hampered by geographical conditions.

At the beginning of independence approximately 80 per cent of the population was still illiterate in the national language (Kementarian P.P.K. 1952:7). This was a severe problem which needed special attention. The government was aware that the development would be very difficult to pursue under such conditions. A government program called *Pemberantasan Buta Huruf* (PBH); 'combating illiteracy' was launched immediately after independence.

The state sponsored literacy campaigns were administered by the Department of Mass Education and they focused on two areas: adult literacy and child literacy programs.

4.3.2 Adult and Child literacy

This program was intended for adults and older youth through short term literacy classes to develop reading and writing. In order to support this program, literacy centres were set up throughout the country. By the end of 1951 there had been 46,000 literacy centres set up. After seven years of work in providing literacy education to the people, the Department of Mass Education found that the results were not very promising. The PBH program was considered to be too costly, teacher-dependent, and time consuming. The country was very poor at that stage, the number of teachers was insufficient, and the government wanted the people to be literate within the shortest possible time.

A new approach was introduced which emphasised social and political motivation and self-help. It focused upon specific 'literacy events' (Heath 1982). An example of this approach was an emphasis on literacy in the first general election, for which being literate was one condition to be eligible to vote. This election could thus be construed as a national literacy event. It was then known as "*Gerakan Raksasa*" ('the giant movement') which commenced in 1953 (Kementrian P.P.K. 1952:4). Such literacy events¹¹ were carried out under the following conditions:

- a) independent of time and place;
- b) independent of teachers;
- c) in the cheapest possible way;

¹¹Street (1995) prefers to employ the concept of 'literacy practices' because for him 'literacy practices' incorporate not only 'literacy events' as empirical occasions to which literacy is integral, but also folk models of those events and the ideological preconceptions that underpin them."

d) in the shortest possible time; and

e) not in the form of a formal class (see also Daud 1996:24).

In other words the new approach highly emphasised individual efforts to acquire literacy. Basically the approach was carried out as follows:

- (1) A small self-taught book was provided for every illiterate person with a minimum of assistance from others, and people were not gathered in a classroom atmosphere;
- (2) A keyword card was made available in a public place where people usually gathered. Each school pupil and literate person was encouraged to assist illiterate people.

At that time the government tried hard to promote the idea or to make everyone aware that literacy was a national necessity and it was the duty of all to eradicate illiteracy. A literacy motto was introduced: "*Setiap orang dapat mengenal huruf dan menulis kata-kata sederhana*" 'everyone is able to know the alphabet and write simple words' (Kementrian P.P.K. 1952:6).

These strategies proved more effective. Literacy in BI began to grow in the population as more and more people became aware of its significance and appreciated the opportunities provided by these literacy events. As Soemardjan (1988:20) argues, the stimulation of motivation to acquire education served as a key supporting factor for the success of reducing illiteracy.

The child literacy program was intended for school age children through formal schooling (Kementrian P.P.K. 1952:12, Diah 1982:72). These two approaches—adult and child literacy programs—were highly successful. The rate of illiteracy was reduced to 57.10 per cent in 1961. Ten years later, in 1971, the figure had declined to 39.08 per cent, and continues to drop to 28.34 per

cent in 1980, 15.92 per cent in 1990 and finally to 12.74 per cent in 1994 (National Bureau of Statistics 1995).

Alongside the development of literacy, the proportion of the population who are speakers of BI has continued to increase. This is due to several additional factors, including:

(1) Urbanisation. The population has steadily migrated towards multilingual urban communities, and away from monolingual village communities. This requires communication in a language which is common to all, that is BI.

(2) Inter-ethnic marriages. Parents who have different first languages almost invariably choose to use BI at home and this eventually becomes the children's first language.

(3) Prestige and identity. Speaking BI is a means for people to express their identity and prestige since it is the language of the educated, and a symbol of participation in public life. The tendency of speaking BI is more likely to take place either within families of mixed ethnic-parents or with parents who share the same ethnic language.

4.3.3 Literacy and Education

Literacy cannot be separated from providing education in general. Indonesia has proved its commitment to provide educational opportunities for its people. Educational opportunity is provided for the whole population, not only through formal schooling, but also through informal channels of education which are particularly intended for the people who have never had the opportunity to attend formal education (Daud 1996:25). This commitment is evidenced by national expenditure in the sector of education which is growing steadily. At the beginning of the first REPELITA¹² (i.e. the five-year

¹²The abbreviation of *Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun*.

development plan), in 1969, the government allocated 6.8 per cent of the total national development budget to the field of education. This figure increased to 8.3 per cent in the second REPELITA, 10 per cent in the third REPELITA, and 12.8 per cent in the fourth REPELITA (Dept. of Information 1994). This commitment has been reflected in the significant increases in the level of literacy.

In the early 1970s the New Order government launched three national programs to focus on the fulfilment of the people's "basic needs": rice intensification, family planning, and primary school development (Sjahrir 1986:89). Our concern here is with the policy of improving primary education which is called the INPRES¹³ Sekolah Dasar (Sjahrir 1986, BPS 1995). Under this special policy hundred of thousands of primary schools were built in almost every village throughout the country to supplement the existing primary schools which were built during the previous periods.¹⁴ The immediate impact of this program was not confined to the primary education sector. It led also to economic outcomes such as job creations and improving infrastructure in the affected areas. For instance, new teachers and administrative staff were needed in the operation of the newly built schools. At the same time the public roads, i.e. the main access to the schools, needed to be improved as well. In some isolated villages, new roads had to be built prior to the construction of the school, otherwise the construction materials could not have been transported to the construction site (Daud 1996:25).

Once the schools were made available to the population, the principal bottlenecks in provision of educational opportunities had been overcome. The

¹³INPRES is an acronym for *Instruksi Presiden* 'presidential instruction'. Here it is related to the development of primary schools under the scheme, the funding for which came from the national development budget (Sjahrir 1986, BPS 1995).

¹⁴Sjahrir (1986:104) cited that prior to the existence of the INPRES scheme, the regional (or provincial) government was responsible for education, the Ministry of Education gave technical guidance and Parents-Teacher Organisations had to raise funds for other expenses.

increased number of educational institutions made available to the people helped to spread of the national language, since it was taught as a required subject from grade one on, and it was used as the main medium of instruction, except that during the first three grades the use of a local language was also permitted. The construction of such a large number of primary school buildings was a tangible development outcome which helped to increase support for the New Order government (Sjahrir 1986:104).

4.3.4 Responsible Institutions

Since the early days of independence, Indonesia has implemented a centralised administration system: a top-down approach. This centralisation promoted the dissemination and development of the national language, especially through the operations of various national institutions and government bodies.

Moeliono (1986) gives the following descriptions of three planning bodies which contributed to the development of BI, ordered chronologically:

(1) In 1947 the *Panitia Pekerja Bahasa Indonesia* (Working Committee on BI) was formed. The committee was assigned to develop terminology, write grammar books to be used in schools, and compile a new dictionary of BI. In March, 1948 the *Balai Bahasa* (Language Office) was formed to replace the Committee. The *Balai Bahasa* was attached to the Ministry of Education, Instruction and Culture.

(2) In May 1969 the government formed the *Lembaga Bahasa Nasional* (National Language Institute) which was responsible for studying and developing BI and the regional languages of the country. The institute was also in charge of promoting the development of literature, both in BI and the regional languages, teaching foreign languages and translation. Prior to the formation of the *Lembaga Bahasa Nasional* ('the National Language Centre'), many other language institutions had been established and had undergone various changes of its

name and status, especially between 1948 - 1969. But all of them dealt with the development of the national language in general ways.

(3) On April 1st, 1975 the Lembaga Bahasa National was amalgamated into the *Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa* ('Centre for Language Cultivation and Development'). Today this institution is recognised as an official government body which bears full responsibility for the development and preservation of BI. Under the new name, the centre was assigned more responsibilities concerning language, including:

- a) conducting research in both literature and language teaching;
- b) compiling dictionaries both in BI and the regional languages;
- c) overseeing activities concerning the cultivation and development of language and literature;
- d) overseeing foreign language teaching in Indonesia.

Besides the *Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa*, many other institutions and organisations which directly or indirectly contribute to the development and spread of the national language. Included here are the armed forces, legal institutions, religious organisations, publishers, and professional organisations (Moeliono 1986). Other institutions include those of the media, both printed and electronic, and secular and religious educational institutions, from primary school to higher education. All of these institutions require a shared language in their trans-regional operations and as a result they all have promoted the use and spread of BI. This also means that these institutions have invoked to promote and accelerate literacy acquisition in BI. I shall briefly review here the role of some of these institutions.

4.3.4.1 The Schools and Higher Education

BI is the official medium of instruction in schools and higher education throughout Indonesia. The language is also a compulsory subject in the

curriculum. On the one hand, knowledge of the language is spread by means of teaching it formally as a school subject, and on the other hand the communicative environment is created by using it as a medium of instruction. As a result the language has become a gateway of educational opportunity.

In higher education the role of BI is even more substantial. Since 1979, universities, both state and private, have been open to students from all over the country regardless of where a university is located. Therefore it is common that students, lecturers, and other academic as well as administrative staff of a university come from different parts of the country and bring with them different linguistic backgrounds. This inevitably makes BI the only viable medium of communication on university campuses outside as well as inside the classroom. Of course BI is also the medium of instruction, and thesis and research projects are all written in the language.¹⁵

On completion of course work, university students are required to do field work, a kind of community service program which the Indonesian universities call KKN, an abbreviation of *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* which literally means 'real work course' as opposed to theoretical course work in class. KKN is a three-month program during which the students are expected to work in a community away from their university, and in many cases they are sent to remote rural villages. The students are expected to be able to share the knowledge and skills they have learnt from their courses with the people of the villages and in return to learn something they never receive from their formal education. For example, the students may choose to provide a language class, provide extension on public health, small business and so forth. At the same time the students may learn how to plant a tree, how to draw well water with a bucket, how to feed

¹⁵Some departments of foreign languages require students to write their thesis in the target language they are learning. For example, the English Department of Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, where I was a student and now a teaching staff member, requires students to submit their thesis in English. This policy could be different at other universities throughout the country.

cattle and perhaps learn something of the local language. This convergence between the urban and the rural people, perhaps between the literate and the illiterate, is another means by which the national language is promoted.

4.3.4.2 The Media

The media is another institution which helps accelerate the spread of BI, since it can penetrate even the most remote regions of the country. BI is the predominant language of the Indonesian media, both electronic and printed. The national radio (i.e. the Radio Republik Indonesia abbreviated as RRI) broadcasts all programs in BI. When *Televisi Republik Indonesia* ('Television of the Republic of Indonesia'), abbreviated as TVRI, started nationwide in 1976, BI was used from the beginning as the official language of broadcasts. The *Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa* have been using both RRI and TVRI to offer a special program of teaching the national language to the public. These programs were widely watched and listened to in villages where BI would otherwise have seen little use. The teaching of the national language through radio, according to Ruskhan (1990:2), aims at increasing the people's knowledge of the status and functions of BI and to educate the people to be able to use the language correctly. Of the printed media, *Medan Prijaji* (first weekly, then daily), *Sarotama* (newspapers), *Indonesia Merdeka* (magazine), and *Poejangga Baroe* (an association of writers) were perhaps the most influential, during the early stages, for the development of and the awareness of using BI. By means of these printed media, people were able to learn how to use the language correctly.

4.3.4.3 The Armed Forces

The Armed Forces, known in Indonesia as ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia) consisting of the army, navy, air force and police, operate in all provinces all over Indonesia. Members of the Armed Forces consist of people from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds and they are usually

transferred from one post to another during their service, and consequently the ABRI scatters people of different regions all over the country. ABRI employees form a military society by living together in military housing provided by the government which in BI is known as *asrama* ('dormitory'). Within military society BI is not only the language of the military operation, but also the common language of communication. Due to frequent transfers during the term of service, it is highly likely that an ABRI member will find a spouse from a different linguistic background. This intermarriage certainly fosters a new linguistic environment in an ABRI household, and the new family will use BI as their home language. As we have noted, in these contexts BI will be the first language of their children as well. Similarly shifts to BI as the home language will also occur for the children of ABRI members whose spouses speak the same regional language. Children will have little possibility to learn the native language of their parents because they will have few opportunities to be exposed to a community of speakers of those languages as they move from place to place (Daud 1996:26-27).

4.4 Literacy and the Secularisation of Education

This section focuses on the following issues: 1) definitions of 'secular' and 'secularisation', 2) historical accounts on secular education in Indonesia, 3) the national system of education in Indonesia, 4) the role of religion in Indonesian educational institutions, and 5) the consequences of secular education for literacy.

4.4.1 Definitions of Secular and Secularisation

Meagher, et al (1979) has the following to say about secularisation:

The process by which religious influences on political and social institutions are replaced by a nonreligious orientation. Since the Peace of Westphalia (1648) the term has been used more specifically with reference to the seizure of church property by the state, as was done by

many revolutionary governments of the 19th century following the pattern established by the French Revolution. It very often signified a radical anticlericalism, but in some cases it was the only way to secure a more equitable distribution of wealth (p.3242).

Another definition of secularisation, given by Cross (1974), reads as follows:

Secularisation is the historical process by which human culture, temporal society and its institutions, the arts and sciences, etc., have achieved a certain relative autonomy from religion, Christianity in its institutional form and sacral character, and have thereby attained a new and distinctive value in and for themselves (p.1256).

The term 'secular' presupposes the existence of two domains of authority, the affairs of religion and affairs of the world. 'Secular' can be understood as pertaining to the worldly affairs, in contrast to those belong to God. The term 'secular' also has connotations of effective denial of God's existence and presence in the world or the confinement of religious authority to a limited domain. Thus 'secularisation' is a process by which religious authority and influences are removed from public institutions such as education, the courts, government, and so forth. Secularisation thus relates to the process of partitioning off authority into separate secular versus religious domains. When a government of a country does not officially handle religious issues as part of the government affairs, it is called a secular government. Likewise education is labelled 'secular' when religion is excluded from the curriculum, or any discussion of religion is approached from an outsider's point of view.

4.4.2 Historical Accounts on Secular Education in Indonesia

In Chapter Three, it has been noted that traditionally religious institutions played an important role as literacy centres in Aceh, and that literacy was acquired as part of religious learning. Contact of Indonesian people with Europeans, especially Dutch, has brought about radical changes in the

archipelago, not only in terms of political and economic conditions but also in terms of educational forms and systems. Moeliono (1986:33) gives the following historical remarks about the condition of education in the archipelago:

Before the 19th century, neither the Netherlands Indies Company nor the Government paid a great deal of attention to the education of the native population. In the mid 19th century, government education was limited to elementary schools for Dutch and military children. No secondary education was provided.

Clearly it was the Dutch colonial government that introduced the system of government or secular schooling in the modern sense to Indonesia. Public education for the native people was initially provided by the Dutch government under the implementation of the "Etische Politiek" (Hasjmy, et al. 1969:369, Poerbakawatja 1970:25, and Situmorang 1982:19) which stated that the Dutch government was in debt to the Indonesian people and that repayment was made by means of providing education for the native population. According to Van Der Wal (1960:5) in 1871 a Royal Decree was enacted concerning regulations for the education of natives. Scholars were of the opinion that the Indonesian natives should have whatever the Dutch had with regard to education. Poerbakawatja (1970:27) reported that there was a strong belief among the Dutch scholars that western education was of a great benefit for the natives.

However, the spread of education did not start until the second decade of the 20th century, and, even then, only primary education was made available, and that was restricted to particular native communities. This limitation came about because that education was to be "financed as much as possible from local or personal resources" (Van Der Wal 1960:6). After the schools were built most of their graduates were employed by the Dutch government. It was cheaper for the government to employ 'educated' Indonesians compared to

bringing people from the Netherlands (Situmorang 1982:20). The need for workers as civil servants, especially those employed in low level jobs, was one of the reasons for providing western education for the indigenous people (Van Der Wal 1960:8, Hasjmy, et al. 1969:369).

4.5 A National System of Education

As we have noted, following independence, the field of education began to receive great attention from the Indonesian government and a national educational policy was introduced. The policy is officially written into the Constitution in Chapter XIII, article 31 which consists of two verses as follows:

- a) Every citizen shall have the right to obtain an education.
- b) The government shall establish and conduct a national educational system which shall be regulated by law (Dept. of Information 1989).

The term 'national education' refers to education which is rooted in the Indonesian culture and based on *Pancasila* ('the Indonesian state philosophy') and the 1945 Constitution.¹⁶ In order to be able to provide education for the huge number of school age children, many things needed to be done. School buildings needed to be built and school teachers needed to be trained. Also there was a significant need for a national educational law so that education could be implemented in a consistent way and for the same objectives nationwide. In 1950 the first educational law¹⁷ was passed. It was known as '*Undang-Undang No. 4 Tahun 1950*', and it concerned the principles of education

¹⁶Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 2 Tahun 1989 tentang Sistim Pendidikan Nasional, Bab 1, pasal, ayat 2.

¹⁷The Indonesian educational law has been amended several times. Following this first one were: (a) Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 1954 tentang Pernyataan Berlakunya Undang-Undang Nomor 4 Tahun 1950 dari Republik Indonesia Dahulu tentang Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan dan Pengajaran di Sekolah untuk Seluruh Indonesia, (b) Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1961 tentang Perguruan Tinggi, (c) Undang-Undang Nomor 14 PRPS Tahun 1965 tentang Majelis Pendidikan Nasional, and (d) Undang-Undang Nomor 19 PNPS Tahun 1965 tentang Pokok-Pokok Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Pancasila.

and teaching at school (Poerbakawatja 1970:112). The current educational law was passed in 1989 namely *Undang-Undang No. 2 Tahun 1989* concerning the system of national education.

However, education does not only take place in school but also within the family and the society. Therefore, the responsibility over education is not only borne by the government alone, but is mutually shared by families and society. Acknowledging such sharing of responsibility, government policy has enshrined the collaborative policy of '*Trilogi Pendidikan*' ('trilogy of education') which splits responsibility for education between family, school, and society.

4.5.1 Goal of Education

The goal of national education is formulated in the Educational Law, *Undang-Undang No. 2 Tahun 1989* in Chapter 2, Article 4 which can be translated as follows:

National education is aimed at elevating the intellectual life of the nation and at developing the complete Indonesian people, i.e. those who are devout and God fearing, with high morality, possessing knowledge and skill, stable personality, physically and mentally healthy, independent and taking responsibility for the common welfare and for the good of the nation.¹⁸

National education is regarded as an instrument for the advancement of science and technology, but it is believed that it cannot be separated from the moral and cultural norms and values. For this reason Pancasila¹⁹ and religion

¹⁸The original texts in BI reads "Pendidikan Nasional bertujuan mencerdaskan kehidupan bangsa dan mengembangkan manusia Indonesia seutuhnya, yaitu manusia yang beriman dan bertaqwa terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa dan berbudi pekerti luhur, memiliki pengetahuan dan ketrampilan, kesehatan jasmani dan rohani, kepribadian yang mantap dan mandiri serta rasa tanggung jawab kemasyarakatan dan kebangsaan (Bab II, pasal 4).

¹⁹Pancasila is the principle of the state ideology, consisting of five basic principles; a) belief in one supreme God, b) just and civilised humanity, c) national unity, d) people's sovereignty, and e) social justice for all Indonesian people). The word 'Pancasila' originated in Sanskrit; 'panca' means five and 'sila' means principle.

are taught as compulsory subjects in all levels of education. They are taught continuously from kindergarten to higher education in both state and private schools (Indonesia Handbook 1995:245).

4.5.2 The Structure of the School System

The Indonesian national system of education is organised in terms of 'formal' and 'nonformal'. Formal education is organised through formal schooling which is gradual and hierarchical. Nonformal education is organised outside formal schooling through teaching and learning activities either conducted by the government or other non government bodies.

The formal school system in Indonesia has been heavily influenced by the western school system. In aspects such as the school structure and curriculum, it is modelled on the western schools (Diah 1982:71). The stages of formal education in Indonesia could be described as follows:

(1) Basic education: provides students with basic knowledge and skills and is compulsory for nine years, consisting of six years of primary school and three years of junior secondary school. Basic education is also aimed at preparing students to enter secondary education. The primary school is called *SD (Sekolah Dasar)*. It consists of six grades. At the age of six a child is entitled to enter *SD*, but this becomes compulsory at the age of seven. The junior secondary school is called *SMP (Sekolah Menengah Pertama)*, and consists of three grades.

Pre-school education is not officially included as part of the formal schooling system. It "can also be conducted" alongside formal education and it stands as optional (Educational Law No. 2, 1989, Article 12, verse 2). Nevertheless many parents prefer to send their children to pre-school for one or two years before they enter primary school. The preschool is called *Taman Kanak-Kanak*, abbreviated as *TK* ('kindergarten'). All *TKs* are under private management, but the government may provide assistance with matters such as procurement of

teachers and teacher education. TKs run by religious organisations are usually 'religious' in nature, specifically provided for children of a particular religious denomination. Hence, throughout the country we find *TK Islam* (Islamic Kindergartens), *TK Katolik* (Catholic Kindergartens), *TK Protestan* (Protestant Kindergartens), to cite a few.

(2) Secondary education. This consists of general school, vocational school, and special school. The general school provides students with a priority of expanding knowledge and skills as a preparation to continue to a higher level of education. The vocational school provide students with particular occupational skills and professional attitudes to prepare them to enter the job market. Special schools are provided for physically or mentally disabled students. The general high school is called *SMA (Sekolah Menengah Atas)* which consists of three grades. Vocational high schools appear in various names depending on their nature of speciality. Some examples are given below:

- a) *STM (Sekolah Teknik Menengah)*, i.e. technical school.
- b) *SPMA (Sekolah Pertanian Menengah Atas)*, i.e. agricultural school.
- c) *SMKK (Sekolah Menengah Kesejahteraan Keluarga)*, i.e. home economic school which is predominantly attended by girls.
- d) *SMIK (Sekolah Menengah Industri Kerajinan)*, i.e. craft school.
- e) *SMIP (Sekolah Menengah Industri Pariwisata)*, i.e. tourism school.

(3) Higher education: consists of two types, academic and professional. Academic education is mainly aimed at the mastery of science, technology, and research, while professional education is more aimed at developing practical skills.

There are two government ministries directly involved in running the formal schooling system, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MRA). With the exception of religious schools which are run by the MRA, all other types of school, be it public or private, are under the control of the MEC.

4.5.3 Public Education System

What is meant by a public school in the Indonesian context is a formal educational institution which is run and controlled by the state. The three levels of education mentioned above (see 3.2.3.2) are all included here. The curriculum of the public school system is determined by the MEC and implemented in the public school system nationwide through *Kantor Wilayah Depdikbud*, the Office of Education which represents the Ministry of Education at the provincial level. Schools are obliged to use the curriculum they receive from the central government.

The educational system in Indonesia is highly centralised. This is understandable from the government perspective. Geographically the country is widely scattered and the population is extremely diversified, in ethnic, linguistic and religious background. Moreover the country had been under colonisation for centuries prior to independence in 1945. Hence there exists the danger of national disunity and ethnic fragmentation; some ethnic groups have shown their resistance to the central government and tried to separate their respective regions from Indonesia. Through education, in general, the government attempts to inculcate the sense of national unity and love of the country.

Universitas ('university') is the most common form of higher education. Other higher educational institutions are *Institut* (institute), *Sekolah Tinggi* (school of higher learning), and *Akademi* (academy). Like the basic and secondary

education, higher educational institutions may also be public or private in nature. State universities are called *Universitas Negeri* and private ones are called *Universitas Swasta*. Currently there are 47 state universities all over the country, and at least one *Universitas Negeri* in each province. Some provinces may have two or more. This is the same with *Universitas Swasta*. Nevertheless, overall the number of *Universitas Swasta* throughout the country is much greater than the *Universitas Negri*.

Can the Indonesian public school be categorised as 'secular'? From the description given above it is evident that the public school system is 'secular' in the sense that it is controlled by the state and it has a non-religious orientation. However, it does not seem to be 'secular' in the other sense because religion is included as an area of study in the curriculum, and the national goal of education includes promotion of devotion to religion (see section 4.5.1 above). Furthermore, there is a distinct system of state-run religious schools.

4.5.4 Private School System

The 'private' notion here mainly is concerned with the nature of ownership and of the financial sources by which the institution is run and maintained. Most private educational institutions belong to a foundation, be it profit, non profit or religious. Some are owned by individuals.

The private school system comprises all educational institutions not under direct control of the state. The private school system is available at all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education. Therefore, under this system, we find kindergartens, primary schools, junior secondary schools, secondary schools, institutes, academies, schools of higher learning, and universities. The schools may be general or vocational. They may also be religious in orientation. They may or may not receive financial or other types of assistance from the government. If they receive any assistance from the government in

whatever form, they are normally obliged to fulfil certain requirements. If the schools do not receive any government assistance, normally they have more freedom in various aspects: they are not obliged to implement the technical policies set up by the government and there is no restriction that they are bound to with regard to curriculum content, except for the inclusion of Pancasila and the use of the national language as a medium of instruction (Diah 1982:77). However, a licence and official recognition from the government is a prerequisite for establishing a private educational institution. As far as basic structures are concerned, there is no difference between private and public schools.

Many private schools are 'religious' in nature due to the fact that the schools are built and run by religious organisations. *Muhammadiyah* (a reformist Islamic organisation), for instance, runs Islamic private education system, from kindergarten to university levels, throughout the country.²⁰

4.5.5 Religious Education

The religious school system discussed here comprises state funded and administered religious schools run by the MRA which are all Islamic in nature. Like the public school stream, the Islamic school stream also runs from the level of basic education up to higher education. Nevertheless, the number of Islamic schools is much smaller compared to the number of public schools under the MEC. As the name connotes, the schools in this stream place particular stress on Islamic teachings and Arabic, but the medium of instruction is BI. Idris (1982:504) calls these schools 'modernised' Islamic schools. Islamic elementary and secondary schools are called *Madrasah*, a direct borrowing word from Arabic which means 'school'. Hence, *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (MI) for primary school, *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (MTs) for junior secondary school, and *Madrasah*

²⁰Thus we find TK Muhammadiyah, SD Muhammadiyah, SMP Muhammadiyah, SMA Muhammadiyah, and Universitas Muhammadiyah.

Aliyah (MA) for high school. The higher educational institution under this stream is called *Institut Agama Islam Negeri* (IAIN) i.e. the State Islamic Institute, which is equivalent to *Universitas Negeri* to a certain extent. One major difference is that all courses undertaken at IAIN are within Islamic contexts. In addition to undergraduate studies, the IAIN also offers graduate degrees in the field of Islamic related studies.²¹

4.5.6 The Role of Religion in Indonesian Education

*Pelajaran Agama*²² (religious lesson), as it is called, is a required subject at both public and private schools, from primary level to higher education. The teaching of religion as a school subject is compulsory, and is conducted based on the regulations collaboratively enacted by the Minister of Education and Culture and the Minister of Religious Affairs (Poerbakawatja 1970:143). Since there are five officially recognised religions in Indonesia (Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Hinduism and Buddhism) the choice of which religion to be taught varies from one school to another. Usually a school chooses to teach a religion to which the majority of students at the school belong. However, if there is a student who does not belong to the major religious group, the school is obliged to provide a special religious teacher for that individual student. So there might be more than one religion being taught at a particular school depending on the background of the student population.

The purpose of providing religious education at schools is to offer opportunities for followers of a religion to understand, comprehend, and implement their respective religious teachings. It is expected under the state ideology that religious education can serve as an instrument by which a

²¹Graduate degrees (Master's and PhD) are only available at few IAIN such as IAIN Jakarta, IAIN Aceh, and IAIN Ujung Pandang. Other IAIN only offer undergraduate courses.

²²Under the Islamic school stream, this subject is divided into many other separate subjects pertaining to particular branches of Islamic learning such as Tauheed (faith), Fiqh (Islamic Law), Quran (Quranic learning), Hadith (traditions of the Prophet) and so forth.

harmonious life among the multi-religious followers throughout the country could be enhanced (Indonesia 1993: 183).

4.6 The Impacts of Secular Education upon Literacy in Aceh

Once the western schooling system and all its traditions were adopted in Aceh, radical changes in educational environment could be observed and these changes are here refereed to as consequences of the secularisation of education. The consequences can be described in terms of changes in orthography, political power, and social attitudes to modern education.

4.6.1 Changes in Orthography

Prior to the introduction of the western educational model in Aceh, *Jawi* script had been traditionally used for writing. Therefore we find all early manuscripts from Aceh are written in this script, they may be in Malay or Acehnese, or in mixed languages.²³ Since the Roman alphabet was introduced within modern secular schools, gradually the use of the Arabic-based script has become marginalised. This led to a 'redefinition' of Acehnese literacy. It is no longer Arabic-oriented in that traditional literacy had been developed through learning the Holy Quran, but it has shifted its direction towards Roman alphabet. Conversely children attending the modern schools cannot be expected to be able to read the *kitab*, religious texts written in *Jawi*, upon completion of their formal education. While in the past it was difficult to find people among members of the Acehnese society who could read and write Latin script, at present it is not easy to find those who are able to read and write Acehnese properly in *Jawi* script.

²³It is commonly found in Aceh that early literary works are written in blended languages. Of the 412 manuscripts listed in the catalogue of the Aceh Museum, 44 are blended in Arabic-Malay, 17 are blended in Arabic-Malay-Acehnese, 12 are blended in Malay-Acehnese, and seven are blended in Arabic-Acehnese.

4.6.2 Changes in Political Power

Traditionally there were two political powers in Acehnese society, the *ulèebalang* (traditional chieftain) and the *ulama* ('religious scholar'). The *ulèebalang* gained their power mainly because they owned land and controlled trade. This power was passed from one generation to another. In modern Acehnese society the *ulèebalang* no longer retain any political power and are not distinguished from other citizens. However, they may still keep their noble title before their name, *Teuku* (for male) and *Cut* (for female).

The *ulama* gained their power because they had control over religious institutions, instruction and places of worship. Unlike the *ulèebalang*, the *ulama* could not pass on their power to their children. In order to become an *ulama* one had to pursue studies in a *peusantren* (Siegel 1969:56) for a number of years. Usually an *ulama* is respected for his knowledge of religion, a prerequisite for the appointment of religious positions in the society. These include positions such as *imeum meunasah* (a person responsible for religious matters within a village) and *imeum meuseujid* (a preacher and leader of Friday prayers of a mosque).²⁴ Many *ulama* run their own *pesantren* wherein they teach students who come from many different regions. The bigger the number of students attending the *pesantren*, the more powerful an *ulama* becomes. All the students and their parents, and perhaps their immediate relatives and friends, become supporters of the *ulama* in one way or another.

In present day Aceh, the power of such *ulama* is no longer as significant as it once was. Nowadays even the term '*ulama*' no longer bears the same connotations, as there are people who are considered as *ulama* but are not the products of a *peusantren*, neither do they supervise a *peusantren*. They could be people working in the government in their capacity as government employees, but they have the background and qualities for which they are entitled to be

²⁴Traditionally one mosque serves for several villages. Therefore, as an *imeum meuseujid* an *ulama* has a higher position and a wider influence in the society.

classed as *ulama*. Access for *ulama* to participate in government affairs has lessened the segregation between the world of the *ulama* and that of the government. The existence of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the state cabinet and the *Majlis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI), Council of Indonesian Ulamas, as unofficial advisers to the government with regard to religious matters, are clear evidence of the *ulamas'* integration into the state, as in the existence of a state-run religious school system. Nowadays, almost all of the political power has shifted from the *ulama* to the government.

4.6.3 Social Attitudes to Modern Education

The Dutch saw the traditional education provided at *peusantrèn* taught the Acehnese children nothing but hatred and rivalry against the Dutch government (Reid 1979:21). In order to pacify Aceh, the Dutch authority felt the need to replace such a traditional education with a system that may suit their purpose. By providing modern education the Dutch expected that the Acehnese people would no longer listen to and obey the doctrines of *ulama* (Alfian et al. 1978:135). So an exceptional effort was made in establishing the modern education. In 1907, for the first time, the three-year *volkschool*, known as *sekolah desa* ('village school'),²⁵ was established in Aceh (Reid 1979:21): located in Aceh Besar with 38 students (Alfian et al. (1978:136). By 1909 there had been 51 schools in the whole region of Aceh, and the number increased to 258 by the beginning 1920 with over 15.000 students (Alfian et al. 1978:136; Reid 1979:21). Children were forced to attend school and if they did not their fathers might be forced to take extra labour, such as working on the roads or paying fine. Additionally the Dutch employed some *ulèebalang* ('local traditional ruler, chieftain') to watch for parents who did not send their children to school.

²⁵Although called *sekolah desa* ('village school'), according to Hasjmy et al (1969:328), the schools were only found in towns. Alfian et al. (1978:136) also reported that many local people who opposed these schools referred to them as *sikula dësya* ('the school of sin').

However, access to secondary school was limited to the children of the *ulèebalang* and other high class families. Thus not all graduates of the *sekolah desa* were given equal opportunity to continue their education outside Aceh. It was not until 1930 that the first secondary school, MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*), was opened in Aceh (Hasjmy et al. 1969:328).²⁶

There was an obvious gap between the traditional and modern school systems. Within the modern schooling system as brought in first through Dutch administration, teachers and students wear a shirt and pants, discarding the tradition of wearing *ija krông* ('sarong') and *kupiah*—a hat made from the black velvet material—the traditional mode of dress for those learning at a *peusantren*. Also uniforms was introduced as part of the school regulations which is not a practice at a *peusantren*.

Segregation was felt in the school system introduced by Dutch administration: it was based on nationalities (Van Der Wal 1960:9). Thus, there were schools for Chinese, Arabic and Ambonese (children of the military). The primary education, in particular, was differentiated according to the children's social status (Hasjmy et al. 1969:369): certain schools were particularly intended for children of the common folk and others were specially provided for the Dutch and aristocrat children.

The educational system initiated by the Dutch was not widely welcomed by the general public in Aceh, especially the *ulama* and at the village level (Hasjmy et al. 1969:327). Many parents worried that their children would gradually acquire similar way of thinking as the former colonial powers if they send them to the colonial schools, since this type of education originated from the western colonising cultures. Other parents even went to the extent that they chose not to send their children to such schools because they were of the opinion that

²⁶Prior to the opening of this school, some *ulèebalang* and few other successful people sent their children to Bukittinggi or Java for secondary education (see also Reid 1979:21-ff).

their children would be transformed into *kaphé*,²⁷ infidels (i.e. the colonialist), had they attended the state schools. Some even went to the extreme that they believed those who attended the colonial schools and learned to write in the Roman script would lose their right hand in the hereafter. Thus, with reference to traditional and modern education, we find two terms commonly used in traditional Acehnese society: *peujeuet aneuk keu ureueng*—making children human—by means of teaching them the Quranic lessons, and *peujeuet aneuk keu kaphé*—making children infidels—by means of sending them to secular schools. The latter was often used by Acehnese people as a sarcastic expression and was a sign of ambivalence towards public education.²⁸ However these terms are rarely used in contemporary Aceh.

The implementation of religious education was another factor that could be considered as the cause of social resistance to modern education. Under the traditional system, i.e. at *pesantren*, religion was the central focus of education, or in other words, education was primarily based on religion. However, within the modern schooling, the subject of religion is treated as peripheral and as just one area in the curriculum. Consequently, extended participation in the modern education no longer carries with it the expectation described by Siegel (1969:57) of transforming an ordinary person into an *ulama*.

The need was felt for an alternative type of education that could ensure the development of native cultures. Attempts were taken as early as 1912 by *Muhammadiyah* (an Islamic socio-religious organisation pursuing the reformation of Islamic teaching and belief)²⁹ and *Taman Siswa* (a movement to provide indigenous education) in 1922. Both organisations rejected the government educational system and made every endeavour to establish their

²⁷Since the Aceh War, this derogatory term has been used by the Acehnese to refer to the Dutch (Sjamsuddin 1985:30).

²⁸According to Hasjmy et al. (1969:327) Some people even showed their ambivalence towards the Malay schools because they associated them with the colonial schools.

²⁹Muhammadiyah was founded in Jogjakarta in 1912 (Sjamsuddin 1985:32).

own system of education based on the indigenous cultures (Poerbakawatja 1970:27-29). These initiatives initially emerged in Java and later on gradually were expanded to the outer islands.

Reactions to the education provided by the colonial government also arose in Aceh. Community leaders and religious educators worked together to establish private schools³⁰ in different parts of Aceh. Sjamsuddin (1985:19) reported, there were at least 98 of such schools by the late 1930s. Some details of these schools are given in Hasjmy et al. (1969:371-372) and Reid (1979:23-24). These include:

- (1) *Jamiatul Diniyah*, established in 1930 by Tgk. Muhammad Daud Beureueh, in Sigli, Pidie.³¹
- (2) *Madrasah Al-Muslim*, established in 1930 by Tgk. Abdul Rahman Meunasah Meucap, in Matang Geulumpang Dua, North Aceh.
- (3) *Djadam (Jamiatuddiniyah Al-Mustaslah)*, established in 1931 by Tgk. Syekh Ibrahim, in Montasiek, Great Aceh.
- (4) *Madrasah Iskandar Muda*, established by T. Panglima Polem Muhammad Daud, in Lam Pakuk, Great Aceh.
- (5) *Masakinah Tanjungan*, established by Tgk. Syekh Abdul Hamid, in Samalanga, North Aceh.
- (6) *Perguruan Islam*, established in 1926 by Tgk. Abdul Wahab, in Seulimum, Great Aceh.
- (7) *Diniyah Indrapuri*, established by Tgk. H. Ahmad Hasballah, in Indrapuri, Great Aceh.
- (8) *Perguruan Normal Islam*, established by Tgk. Muhammad Nur El Ibrahimy, in Bireuen, North Aceh.

³⁰Most of these schools are nowadays no longer in operation except the following: (1) H.I.S. Muhammadiyah have been turned into a private school system organised by Muhammadiyah. (2) Madrasah Al-Muslim in Matang Geulumpang Dua is now a college of education, no longer an Islamic school, (3) Masakinah Tanjungan in Samalanga and Perguruan Islam in Seulimum have been turned into *pesantren*.

³¹In Hasjmy (1969:371) this school was called *Madrasah Sa'adah Abadiyah*.

(9) *Perguruan Taman Siswa*, initiated by Sutikno Padmosumarto, in Banda Aceh, Sabang, Meulabôh, and Jeunieb.

(10) *H.I.S. Muhammadiyah*, initiated by Zainul Baharuddin, in Banda Aceh, Sabang, Sigli, Takengon, Langsa, and Kuala Simpang.

4.7 Recent History of Acehnese Language Literacy Programs in Schools and Education

Acehnese language literacy programs have gone through different historical stages in its development from the colonial time up to the present. Here this development is described under two historical headings: the colonial period or pre-independence stage and the post-independence stage. The Acehnese language literacy programs described here are concerned particularly with attempts to promote Acehnese language literacy by means of Latin script through government formal education. These are considered here as 'modern approaches' to literacy acquisition in contrast to the traditional one discussed in the previous chapter.

In the modern approach the route to Acehnese literacy acquisition is more direct, through learning BI without the mediation of Arabic. As Durie (1996: 117) notes "It is now assumed that all young Acehnese should learn to read Indonesian" i.e. BI. Access to literacy skills in the modern approach is provided through formal schooling in which early literacy skills are disseminated. Literacy in the Indonesian national language is provided in Latin script and it is promoted as the main target of national literacy campaign. This inevitably gives major impacts on the development of literacy efforts in indigenous languages throughout the country.

4.7.1 The Pre-independence Stage

During this period Acehnese language literacy programs were initiated under the colonial rule. Attempts to provide literacy in the vernacular languages

were due to the Netherlands-Indies government's policy, known as the "Etische Politiek" (Hasjmy, et al. 1969:369, Poerbakawatja 1970:25, and Situmorang 1982:19), providing public education for those among the indigenous population who were not given access to the Dutch colonial educational system. Native education was given in the vernacular languages as much as possible, and this gave rise to the promotion of regional languages. The purpose of literacy provision was in part to train indigenous people in basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic so that they could be employed in low level jobs which were considered inappropriate for the Dutch (Hasjmy, et al. 1969:369), but also to educate the native elites—the future rulers—upon which the Dutch depended for system of government, e.g. the *ulèebalang* class in Aceh (Reid 1979:21).

What follows is the chronological development of what we know of the promotion of Latin script in Acehnese language literacy.

(1) Mohammad Djam and Njak Tjoet

After the publication of Snouck Hurgronje's ethnography of Aceh (Hurgronje 1906, first in Dutch in 1894), two school teachers, namely Mohammad Djam and Njak Tjoet, started to promote the Latin orthography by means of formal teaching at schools with sponsorship from the Dutch authorities. They wrote a school reader called *BATJOET SAPEUE: Kitab Beuet keu Aneu' Miet* ('A Bit of Everything: A Reader for Children'). In 1911 the book was published by the Government Publishing House in Batavia. This book is considered very significant in the history of Acehnese literacy in that it is the first Acehnese written material in Latin script made expressly for the purpose of promoting Acehnese literacy amongst the Acehnese people. Following the publication of this book, Mohammad Saleh wrote *PUNCA* ('core'), a teaching manual for teachers, explaining how to use *Batjoet Sapeue* at schools (Aboebakar Atjeh nd:33). This marked the beginning of the formal teaching of Acehnese literacy

in schools. Further research is needed to find out the number of schools in Aceh during that time, and the proportion of the school curriculum devoted to the teaching of Acehnese literacy, and what use was made of these materials. It may not be possible to determine these any more.

(2) Aboebakar Atjeh and L. De Vries

In 1930 Aboebakar Atjeh and L. De Vries wrote a school reader called *Lhè Saboh Nang* ('Three Siblings') which was published in 1932 by J.B. Wolters-Groningen, Batavia.³² The book was used as a reader in primary schools in Aceh. It can be inferred that the book was widely accepted since the writers received another order from "*oereueng di ateueh*" ('people above'), i.e. higher official, to write a sequel for use in higher grades (Atjeh and De Vries 1932:3). They accepted the task and in February 1932 Aboebakar Atjeh and De Vries completed a pair of readers, '*djeumba peutama*' and '*djeumba keudua*' (volume one and two). This book is called *Meutia: Seunambat Lhè Saboh Nang* ('Pearls: a sequel to Three Siblings'). Volume one consists of three chapters, namely *Meuneugoe* ('farming'), *Bhailh Hiweuen* ('about animals'), and *Nasihat* ('advice'). Both *Lhè Saboh Nang* and *Meutia* are illustrated with pictures taken from Acehnese everyday life. They are clearly modelled on the pattern of European school readers, using stories from the children's everyday world, in contrast to the traditional approach which begins with Quran recitation.

4.7.2 The Post-independence Stage

For more than a decade after independence, there seemed to be a vacuum of Acehnese literacy teaching at schools. We do not find any Acehnese literacy books published during the period for school readers. Perhaps it was due to

³²*Lhè Saboh Nang* was recently (1994) republished by the Dinas P dan K Daerah Istimewa Aceh for the purpose of preservation of Acehnese culture, language and literature. This edition has been adjusted to the modern Acehnese orthography, but the pictures have been kept as original.

Indonesia's unstable political situation, and the Acehnese rebellion against the Indonesian central government.³³

The following section describes the attempts made by the following people with regard to promoting Acehnese literacy, especially through formal education.

(1) Jauhari Ishak, Khalid Ibrahim and Abu Hani

By 1968 Acehnese was being taught as a required subject in primary schools from grades one to six in Aceh. This could be clearly seen in the *Surat Ketetapan* (letter of decision) dated April 9, 1968, issued by the Chairman of Inspection for Preschool and Primary School Education of the Special Province of Aceh signed by Z.A. Ibrahim (Ishak, et al. 1974: 5). It is stated that the books written by Jauhari Ishak et al. are included in the list of 'required' books for Primary Schools. Those books comply with the current Lesson Plans of the Department of Education and Culture and have fulfilled the required conditions. Jauhari Ishak's book are called *Geunta: Kitab Beuet Basa Aceh* ('Vibrations: Acehnese Reader'), first published in 1968 by P.T. Sakti, Banda Aceh. *Geunta* consists of six *jeumba* (volumes), one for each grade of primary school. The book was warmly endorsed by the government educational authority, as can be seen in the *Kata Sambutan* ('foreword') given by Drs. Idris Adamy, Head of the Office for Primary Education and Culture of the Special Province of Aceh. He has the following to say:

Sudah sewajarnya jika Bahasa Aceh kembali kita tempatkan pada fungsinya semula sdebagai bahasa ibu, bahasa pengantar dan bahasa pergaulan dalam masyarakat Aceh. ...Buku bacaan "GEUNTA" bagaikan suluh yang dapat menanam jiwa patriotisme di dalam jiwa anak-anak didik.

³³See Sjamsuddin's (1985) *The Republican Revolt* for a comprehensive account of the Acehnese rebellion.

[It would be appropriate if Acehnese returns to its original functions as a mother tongue, a medium of instruction and a language of communication within the Acehnese society. ...“GEUNTA” serves as a light which can foster patriotism in the mind of students (Ishak 1974:6)].

Up to 1978 ‘*Geunta*’ had been republished twice (third edition). Evidently the book was widely used in schools and probably in public as well since it was commercially released through book shops. In his introduction to the third edition in 1978 Ishak said:

Alhamdulillah cetakan ke-2 telah habis dalam peredaran. Cetakan ke-3 ini telah kami sesuaikan dengan Kurikulum SD 1975. Ejaanya telah kami sesuaikan pula dengan Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan.

[Praise God, the second edition has sold out. This third edition has been adjusted to the 1975 Primary School Curriculum. The spelling has also been adjusted to system of the Reformed Spelling³⁴ (Ishak 1978:6)].

Besides *Geunta*, which he wrote together with Khalid Ibrahim and Abu Hani, Jauhari Ishak also wrote another book by himself, *Tatabahasa Aceh* (Acehnese Grammar). The book was published in the same year and by the same publisher.³⁵ It was recommended to be used in grade six of Primary School and in Junior Secondary School. There are some differences between *Geunta* (G) and *Tatabahasa Aceh* (TA), these are:

- a) G is a reader, while TA is a grammar.
- b) G is illustrated with pictures, while TA is not.
- c) G is written in Acehnese, except the forewords, while TA is written in BI.
- d) G consists of six volumes, while TA is only one.

³⁴This refers to the Reformed Spelling system in Bahasa Indonesia which was launched or promulgated in 1972.

³⁵First published in 1968 by P.T. Sakti, Banda Aceh. The second and third editions were published by Firma Pustaka Faraby, Banda Aceh.

It is worth mentioning that Jauhari Ishak was himself a school teacher and a productive Acehnese writer of his time. He initially wrote the books as voluntary effort, not part of the government initiated book writing project. He presented his work to the Acehnese educational authority from whom he received positive recognition. More importantly, the government issued an official recommendation³⁶ for the book to be used in schools, among other things saying:

Setelah kami teliti, ternyata buku ini baik dipergunakan untuk sekolah-sekolah lanjutan di Daerah istimewa Aceh. Oleh karena itu kami sarankan kepada pendidik untuk menggunakan buku ini.

[Upon examination we discovered that this book would be useful to be used in Secondary Schools in the Special Province of Aceh. Therefore, it is recommended that educators use this book (Ishak 1974: 7)].

(2) Budiman Sulaiman

The next period is marked by the influence of Drs. Budiman Sulaiman. In 1975 a new curriculum for primary school was introduced, called *Kurikulum Sekolah Dasar 1975* (the 1975 Primary School Curriculum). In this curriculum, the teaching of *bahasa daerah* ('local language') was integrated into the subject of Bahasa Indonesia (Article 6, verse 3) at a national level. The study of *bahasa daerah* was no longer an independent subject in its own right but is taught as a partial portion of BI. The time allocation for *bahasa daerah* was two hours per week (Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 1982:7).

Along with the change of the curriculum, the teaching materials for *bahasa daerah* were also affected. In 1978 a committee for writing school readers (Panitia Penyusunan Buku-Buku Bacaan) was formed by the educational

³⁶This refers to Surat Ketetapan No. 999/A5/Idpukk/1968, dated April 8, 1968 signed by Athaillah.

authority of the Special Province of Aceh. The committee,³⁷ chaired by Drs. Budiman Sulaiman, worked for approximately one year to complete the task. As a result four kinds of book were produced, these are:

- i) *Basa Acèh: Meurunoe Baca ngon Teumuléh* (Acehnese: Learning to Read and Write), consisting of two volumes. Book one is intended for grade one and Book two is intended for grade two.
- ii) *Basa Acèh: Peulajaran Basa* (Acehnese: Language Lessons), consisting of four volumes. This book is used from grade three through to grade six.
- iii) *Basa Acèh: Bacaan* (Acehnese: Reading), consisting of four volumes. These are intended for grade three, four, five, and six respectively.
- iv) *Basa Acèh: Pedoman Guru* (Acehnese: Manuals for Teachers), consisting of six volumes. Books one and two are used as the manuals for teachers how to use the *Acehnese: Learning to Read and Write*. The rest serve as the manuals for both the *Acehnese: Language Lessons* and *Acehnese: Reading*.

Budiman Sulaiman is known in Aceh as an expert on the Acehnese language and is a productive writer of Acehnese materials. Until recently he was a full time lecturer³⁸ at the Department of Bahasa Indonesia, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh. Many times he was a team chairman of Acehnese language research and book writing projects sponsored by the government. Prior to becoming a full time lecturer at Syiah Kuala University, he taught Indonesian at Secondary Schools in Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe (North Aceh) where he also taught some Acehnese, including the *Haba Peulandôk* stories. He has the following to say:

³⁷The committee is chaired by Drs. Budiman Sulaiman and the committee members are Drs. Zaini Ali, Drs. Ibrahim Makam, Drs. Z. A. Ibrahim, Drs. Djauhari Ishak, and Razali Cut Lani, B.A

³⁸Pak Budiman, as he is called by most people in Aceh, recently retired, but currently he is still teaching at the Indonesian Department, Syiah Kuala University.

Sejak tahun 1958 naskah buku *Haba Peulandôk* ini telah penulis gunakan sebagai bahan bacaan pengajaran Bahasa Daerah (Bahasa Aceh) untuk murid-murid SMA Negeri Banda Aceh dan SMA Negeri Lhokseumawe.

[Since 1958 the writer has used the text of "Haba Peulandôk" as reading material for teaching Acehese to students of the state High School in Banda Aceh and Lhokseumawe (Sulaiman 1978: 3)].

In 1977 Sulaiman published a significant work called *Bahasa Aceh*.³⁹ The book contains some comparisons and similarities between Acehese and BI. His purpose was to provide guiding principles for learners of Acehese to use 'correct' Acehese based on Acehese grammar. It also serves as guiding principles for speakers of Acehese to use 'correct' BI based on the grammar of BI. The book was written based on his observation that Acehese speakers have shown some tendencies of mixing Acehese with BI: they use Acehese with the patterns of BI and vice versa. In everyday oral communication, there appear some indications that the use of Acehese has shifted in the direction of BI (Yusuf, et al. 1986: 9). This happens because Acehese and BI (it was Malay) have coexisted in Aceh for centuries. The author expects that the book could serve as guiding principles for Acehese speakers to help them to avoid the problem of assimilation. Sulaiman (1977:3) notes that using Acehese with the grammatical patterns of BI and using BI with the grammatical patterns of Acehese is a linguistic practice which can interfere with the growth and development of both languages.

4.7.3 Kurikulum Muatan Lokal

In 1993 the Minister of Education and Culture introduced new regulations which applied to the primary school curriculum. The new regulations were enacted by Ministerial Decree number 060/U/1993 dated February 25th, 1993 (Dep. P dan K 1993: 2). The purpose of the decree is to officially make some

³⁹The book consists of two volumes; volume 2 was published in 1978.

adjustment of the primary school curriculum to adapt it to the current system of national education, the *Undang-Undang No. 2 Tahun 1989* (Act Number 2 of 1989). The decree is considered significant in that it marks a decentralisation of the national system of education with special reference to regional educational demands of each province. Previously the whole content of the curriculum was determined by the central government to be implemented nationwide. Under the new policy each province is given autonomy to set, approximately, as much as 10 per cent of the curriculum from local content, according to the special requirements and characteristics of each province. As a result, now we find two types of curriculum used at the basic educational level: the national curriculum and the '*Kurikulum Muatan Lokal*' (Local Content Curriculum).

The local Department of Education in each province is mandated to determine the local curriculum content and in so doing the institution in charge should consider the following:

- a) local language(s), local arts, local crafts, special characteristics of the local environment, English, and other matters considered significant by the school or by the local authority;
- b) the inclusion of local language(s) is dependent upon availability of an appropriate syllabus, materials/the course books, and the teaching staff;
- c) the inclusion of the local curriculum content must not reduce the content of the national curriculum (Dep. P dan K 1993: 29-30).

This curriculum is meant to provide primary school students with opportunities to learn about the heritage and cultural traditions of their local region through which a love for the local environment and culture could be fostered. The implementation of this curriculum is also intended to counteract any influences of foreign cultures which do not comply with the norms and values of the *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution (Dep. P dan K 1994: Buku A:2).

Government policy stipulates that special characteristics of the province are to be used as guiding principles in making the *Kurikulum Muatan Lokal*. In order to meet this purpose, the Acehnese *Kantor Wilayah Departemen P dan K* (the Provincial Department of Education and Culture) has determined to fill in the ten per cent portion of the curriculum with the following five subjects, namely:

i) *Bahasa Daerah Aceh* ('Language(s) of the Region of Aceh');

ii) *Tulisan Arab* ('Arabic Script');

iii) *Budi Pekerti/Akhlak* ('Islamic Morals');

iv) *Ketrampilan dan Industri Kerajinan Daerah* ('Skills of Indigenous Crafts'); and

v) *Bahasa Inggris* ('English') (Dep. P dan K 1994: Buku A: 3-5).

Of the five subjects included in the curriculum, only *Bahasa Daerah Aceh* and *Tulisan Arab* were made compulsory, the rest are optional. *Bahasa Daerah Aceh* is taught two hours per week in all grades of Primary School (i.e. six grades) and Junior Secondary School (i.e. three grades). *Tulisan Arab* is offered from grade three of Primary School and in all grades of Junior Secondary School. This curriculum began to be effective from the first semester of 1994. However, due to various limitations it will take some time until all schools could or would implement it.

4.7.3.1 *Bahasa Daerah Aceh*

The term '*Bahasa Daerah Aceh*' in this curriculum refers to a local language used by the population of the Aceh province.⁴⁰ However, since Acehnese (*Bahasa Aceh*) is spoken by the majority of the population of the Aceh province (approximately 70%), it can be assumed that most schools choose to teach the

⁴⁰There are eight other local languages spoken in different regions of the Aceh Province. They are *Bahasa Gayo*, *Alas*, *Tamiang*, *Jamèe*, *Kluet*, *Singkel*, *Defayan*, and *Sigulai* (Sulaiman, et al 1977: 24-25). See also Wurm and Hattori (1981:66-67).

Acehnese language. Presumably for this reason the provincial Department of Education has only provided one set of teaching guidelines (*GBPP: Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengajaran*), which are designed for teaching Acehnese. If any schools choose to teach another local language other than Acehnese, especially in the non-Acehnese speaking areas, it is suggested they use the model which has been developed for Acehnese. This is clearly stated in the guidelines which reads as follows:

Bagi daerah yang menggunakan bahasa daerah selain dari Bahasa Daerah Aceh, dapat dianjurkan dengan berpedoman pada Muatan Lokal Bahasa Daerah Aceh (Dep. P dan K 1994: Buku D: 3).

[In a region where a language other than Acehnese is taught, it is suggested to refer to the guidelines which have been designed for Acehnese].

It seems that the *Kurikulum Muatan Lokal* could serve as a promising means for promoting Acehnese language literacy. If the curriculum endures and is implemented well, the teaching and learning of Acehnese within formal institutions could thrive. Through formal teaching the speakers of Acehnese will be able to learn their own language consciously: they will become aware of the structures of Acehnese; and more importantly they will be able to acquire reading and writing skills in the language. In turn, some effects or logical consequences of this curriculum development will emerge. These include the demand for the establishment of Acehnese language institutions which are responsible for all Acehnese language matters. Other implications include the development of teacher training, research, and publishing institutions.

4.7.3.2 Resource Materials and Professional Development of Teachers

Here some comment is offered on ways in which resource materials and professional teachers for Acehnese language teaching are developed.

More resource materials are needed in order to support the implementation of the local curriculum content in relation to local language content. The two most critical ones are resource materials and professional development of teachers.

(1) Resource Materials

Resource materials specially designed to be used for teaching Acehnese are still very limited. So far the only available resources are the books mentioned previously, but unfortunately none are publicly available on the market at present. The books written by Budiman Sulaiman and colleagues have been used by some schools, and made available to the schools through the local Department of Education. The publication of these books was financed by the government through a project under the management of the Department of Education. Additionally, in 1992, the Dinas P dan K published a school reader called *Bungong Jeumpa* 'Jeumpa Flower', written by Tgk. Mahyiddin Yusuf, Tuanku Abdul Jalil, and M. Hasan Gade. This book was prepared particularly to fill in the gap of the absence of school books in Acehnese in relation to the development of the local curriculum.⁴¹

Publication of Acehnese materials is still needed, not only course books for particular use at schools, but also other types of materials to be used both at schools and outside by the public. Such materials could be Acehnese-Indonesian or Acehnese-English or wholly in Acehnese. They could include dictionaries (picture dictionaries, idiomatic dictionaries), encyclopedias, diglot books, journals, magazines and newspapers. Other useful resources could included audio and audio-visual materials specially designed for educational purposes.

⁴¹Some texts in this book appeared to have been reproduced from other sources: *Lhèe Saboh Nang and Geunta*.

At present dictionaries are still very limited. Two of the best dictionaries are Acehese-Dutch: Kreemer (1931) and Djajadiningrat (1934).⁴² Unfortunately only a handful of old educated Acehese people and very few among the younger generation understand Dutch and therefore could utilise them. There is one Acehese-Indonesian dictionary written by Aboe Bakar, Budiman Sulaiman, M. Adnan Hanafiah, Zainal Abidin Ibrahim, and Syarifah Hanum published in 1985. There is also an Indonesian-Acehese dictionary written by Hasan Basri, published in 1994. A trilingual (Acehese-Indonesian-English) thesaurus and lexicon is currently being prepared by Durie and Daud (in press with Pacific Linguistics) for local release in Aceh. Until recently no Acehese encyclopedia has been published and the same is true for diglot books, journals and magazines. Although there are no special Acehese newspapers, *Serambi Indonesia*, a local major newspapers published in BI, spares three half-columns for Acehese language material: one is daily and two are weekly. These could provide useful resources for promoting Acehese literacy.

(2) Teachers

A study by Yusuf, et al (1986) on the teaching of Acehese at Junior Secondary School in the Special Province of Aceh reported that no professionally trained Acehese language literacy teachers were available at the schools.⁴³ The term 'professional' here refers to the nature of the teacher's educational background, i.e. specially trained as an Acehese language teacher. The reason is obvious. The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Syiah Kuala University, which is the only official institution in the Special Region of Aceh responsible for teacher education,⁴⁴ has never offered an Acehese studies program

⁴²Djajadiningrat's dictionary has so far been the most comprehensive and largest. It consists of two volumes: vol. I consist of 1011 pages and vol. II consists of 1349 pages.

⁴³The absence of 'professional' Acehese language literacy teachers is also found at other levels of formal education in Aceh.

⁴⁴There used to be another teacher educational institution called PGSLP (Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Lanjutan Pertama) which particularly trained teachers for Junior Secondary Schools in

wherein Acehese language teachers can be formally and professionally accredited. Given the absence of such professionally prepared teachers, to implement the new curriculum, schools are encouraged to make use of the existing school teachers who are talented and able to speak Acehese. The provincial Department of Education took the initiative to provide the teachers with some in-service training in Acehese, especially in the areas of orthography and grammar. Certainly the training was far from adequate, but it is a step toward promoting Acehese literacy. Alternatively the schools may seek assistance from community leaders who are considered, by school board staff, to have the skill of teaching the language.

Ideally teachers of Acehese language should be those who are competent in the language, and well trained in the literacy requirement of the language, in addition to holding other general qualifications usually required to perform the teaching job. Yusuf, et al. (1986: 13-14) consider that teachers of Acehese language should demonstrate the following:

- a) adequate knowledge of Acehese for particular instructional purposes;
- b) adequate knowledge about teaching methodology and strategies of teaching Acehese;
- c) resourcefulness and creativity in finding ways to sustain the local culture and to support the teaching-learning process of Acehese;
- d) the ability to make regular assessment to evaluate the progress the students have achieved in the subject;
- e) a passion and motivation for teaching the language, because these two factors are very significant in achieving the teaching goal as well as in fostering the positive attitudes toward Acehese.

various fields of study, except in Acehese. This institution was closed down in the early 1980s.

4.7.4 Implications of Acehnese Literacy

The general goal of language teaching is to develop the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. When the language being taught is the mother tongue of the learners, usually the first two skills have already been naturally acquired by the learners to a substantial degree and they are able to continue to use the skills naturally in their daily life, therefore less formal teaching is required in these areas. Since Acehnese is a mother tongue language for a majority of the population of Aceh, what needs to be emphasised is the teaching of reading and writing, the skills which are closely related to the use of a script, contrast to BI, which includes a strong emphasis on spoken skills. Language teaching is also aimed at fostering positive attitudes toward the language being learned. In the modern world, it is not plausible to suggest that people will respect and appreciate a language which is excluded from literate education.

4.8 Changing Functions of Acehnese in Modern Indonesian Society and its Impacts on Literacy

All living languages have changed and continue to change over time (Richards, Platt and Weber 1985:156). There are various factors which can cause language change such as the response to social changes taking place in a society (Paul 1995:74) and speakers' attitudes towards language in use (Winter 1995:552). The following discussion of changes occurring in Acehnese is an attempt to describe changes in functions of Acehnese which have been taking place within the Acehnese speaking community, particularly those which have some relevance for literacy development. This is not an attempt to provide a description of diachronic changes of the Acehnese language itself.

As Acehnese people have entered a modern Indonesian society following the independence of Indonesia, there have been a lot of changes in the use of Acehnese. Such changes are classified here into two categories: expansion and

retraction of functions. Functional expansion is particularly related to the advancement of technology and mass media, whereas retraction in functions is connected with factors such as centralisation of government system, modernisation, and intermarriage between Acehese people and other people of different linguistic background.

4.8.1 Functional expansion

The term 'functional expansion' is here referred to expansion in the domains of Acehese use. Recently developed functions include the use of Acehese in advertisements, entertainment, and printed media (books, newspapers). The major factors for the functional expansion of Acehese are various social advance which are currently taking place in Aceh, especially advances in the area of mass media and technology. Some functional expansion of Acehese could also be attributed to the cultural event known as *Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh*: 'the Acehese Cultural Fair', abbreviated as P.K.A.⁴⁵

4.8.1.1 Advertising language

Although commercial advertisements are not at all new in Aceh, the use of Acehese in advertisements is still uncommon. However in the past few years have a few commercial products begun to be advertised in Acehese. The majority of print and electronic advertisements in Aceh are in BI. So far radio has been the only electronic medium in which Acehese has been used in advertisements, although these are still very limited in number.

4.8.1.2 Audio Recordings: Songs and Plays

The introduction of inexpensive cassette technology has led to many commercial recordings of Acehese songs and plays which traditionally could only be heard if one was present at the performance places. Since the late

⁴⁵This Cultural Fair has been conducted three times: in 1958 (PKA-1), in 1972 (PKA-2) and in 1988 (PKA-3). A description of PKA-3, in particular, was composed in Acehese verse by Syèh Rih Krueng Raya in 1988.

1970's commercial albums of Acehnese language performances in audio cassette have been released and made available for purchase in the markets.

Mostly these are the production of the following musical groups:

- a) *Rencong Meutia Group*, directed by Ibnu Arhas and Cut Rosmawar;
- b) *Mutiara Group*, directed by Dolles Marshal and Azlina Zainal;
- c) *Zahrela Group*, directed by A. Bakar A.R., Armawati A.R., and Cut Fitriani; d) *El Sahara Group*, directed by El Bahar A.M. and Yacob Tailah;
- e) *Da'iyul Fata Group*, directed by M. Yusuf Ishaq;
- f) *Bob Rizal Group*, directed by Bob Rizal; and
- g) *Sabirin Lamno Group*, directed by Sabirin Lamno (see section 7.7.2 for the classification of musical style).

Some *seudati*⁴⁶ performances (a kind of dance recitation) have also been commercially recorded in cassette tape format. The famous recording albums include those performed by:

- a) Syeh Lah Bangguna Group;
- b) Syeh Rih Muda group;
- c) Nek Rasyid Bireuen Group;
- d) Syeh Lah Geunta Group; and
- e) Syeh Rih Muda Group.

⁴⁶Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:221) spelled '*sadati*' instead of '*seudati*', and he argued that the word most probably originated from an expression used by an Arabic poetry reciter to address his audience, "*ya sadati*" (Arabic for 'Oh, masters'). The first word '*ya*' has been corrupted in Acehnese.

Also included here should be the so-called *seudati tunang* ('seudati competition') which is very popular.

Acehnese plays or *drama Aceh* are known as *sandiwara*.⁴⁷ *Drama Aceh* incorporates a lot of features from modern plays such as the setting of the stage, lightings, costumes, and etc. The modern feature of this play is also reflected in the way language is used—code switching between Acehnese and BI.⁴⁸

These plays have developed new genres in the use of Acehnese. At the same time they have also reproduced older genres: stories of the play are based on older *hikayat*. The plays that have commercially been released include those performed by the following groups:

- a) *Assahara Group Sigli*, directed by Ahmad Harun and Yusuf Syam;
- b) *Dhin Pelor Group*, directed by Udin Pelor;
- c) *Rencong Meutia Group*, directed by Ibnoe Arhas;
- d) *Sinar Jeumpa Group*, directed by Umar Abdi and Ahmad Harun;
- e) *Teater Bulôh Peurindu* , directed by Sofyan Mus;
- f) *Teater Jeumpa Aceh*, directed by M. Salim Khan;
- g) *Cutma Ruhôy Group*, directed by Ibnoe Arhas; and
- h) *Teater Sinar Harapan*, directed by Yusuf Syam.

The production of these plays in audio recording format has provided useful resources for the radio stations that broadcast programs in Acehnese.

⁴⁷The terms drama and *sandiwara* have become popular in Acehnese as in BI.

⁴⁸For further description of diglossic framing in the presentation of this play, see Durie's (1996) *Framing the Acehnese Text: Language Choice and Discourse Structures in Aceh*.

4.8.1.3 Radio and Television

For a long time the mass media in Aceh was monolingual: in BI, the national language. Today newspapers, magazines, radio and television broadcasting are all in BI. However, a new development has emerged resulting in further expansion in the use of Acehnese. The state radio station broadcasts two programs in Acehnese. Local news in Acehnese is broadcast two times daily, approximately five minutes each. The second is a special weekly program of *hikayat* recitation. We also find at least two commercial (private) radio stations which broadcast programs in Acehnese: one in Banda Aceh—*Radio Duta Kencana*—and another in North Aceh—*Radio Kazuma Bawana Swara*. A special program made by *Radio Kazuma Bawana Swara* promotes the development of Acehnese literature. The public listeners are invited to write *pantôn* to be recited by the radio announcer, and the writer's name is mentioned prior to recitation. The *pantôn* must be written on special sheets provided for sale by the radio management. This program is broadcast twice weekly. The radio manager said that most of the writers are young people. The initiative taken by *Radio Kazuma Bawana Swara* is similar to the one taken by the *Serambi Indonesia* daily (see below) in that they encourage people to become involved in writing Acehnese.

Until 1993 the only television channel available in Aceh was the national channel, *Televisi Republik Indonesia* (TVRI), broadcast from Jakarta in BI. However, when the local television station was established in 1993, two programs in Acehnese were introduced. One is *poh beurakah* ('casual chatting') and the other is the PMTOH show (see chapter Seven for a description of PMTOH performance). *Poh beurakah* is broadcast weekly while PMTOH show is broadcast as a special program, so it is not a regular program.

4.8.1.4 Newspapers

There have never been any newspapers in Aceh fully published in Acehnese. However, since 1989 the daily newspaper *Serambi Indonesia* has allocated three columns for Acehnese publications: one daily column and two weekly columns. The daily column is called *Apit Awé* 'swinging or whipping rattan'. The weekly columns are *Aceh Lam Haba* 'Aceh in the news' and *Haba Bak Rangkang* (literally: stories from religious school).

Apit Awé is intended to present social criticism through the use of proverbs and old sayings. Quite frequently it is directed against the government. The term *Apit Awé* is an allusion to a well known Acehnese proverb: *Apit-apit awé, soe nyang keunöng ureueng nyan maté* 'swing a rattan whip, whoever it hits will die'. The reference is to indiscriminate punishment when a wrongdoer conceals his or her identity: the point is that it is better for a wrongdoer to take responsibility and endure the punishment than for others to suffer innocently in indiscriminate reprisals. Sjamsul Kahar, the Chief Editor of *Serambi Indonesia*, gives the following remarks on the significance of *apit awé*:

The saying about *Apit Awé*, is still used to disclose wrongdoing. The *Apit Awé* saying is used to make the guilty person to show him/herself and confess, otherwise innocent people could be harmed. A swinging rattan cannot detect who is and who is not guilty (translated from Kahar's forewords in *Apit Awé*, edited by Muchsin et al. 1994).⁴⁹

The *Apit Awé* column is presented in a form of a dialogue between two typical Acehnese characters, talking about the day-to-day issues taking place in the modern Acehnese society. One character is represented by *Polém* (a kinship

⁴⁹The original text reads as follows: Akan halnya *apit awe*, masih saja digunakan untuk menyingkap suatu perbuatan yang dilakukan oleh seseorang yang tidak bertanggung jawab. Dengan *apit-apit awé, soe nyang keunöng ureueng nyan maté*, seseorang yang telah berbuat salah dan merugikan orang banyak, diharapkan bisa menunjukkan dirinya bahwa dialah yang bersalah. Sebab kalau tidak, orang lain akan celaka. *Awe* tidak kenal siapa yang benar, siapa yang salah (p.i).

term literally, 'older brother') and the other by *Pang* (a short form of *Panglima* which literally means 'commander').

Traditionally such sayings were only passed on orally. Today, in addition to the oral transmission, they are also presented in written contexts, collected and stored outside the people's memory. The *Serambi Indonesia* has initiated this writing tradition since it was founded in 1989, and it has captured the interest of the general public in Aceh. After five years of daily appearance as a corner column, *Apit Awé* columns were collected and edited by Said Muchsin, Drs. Mohd. Harun al Rasyid, Drs. Amir Hamzah, and Hasyim KS for publication in book form, and the first edition was published in 1994.

Aceh Lam Haba appears on Saturdays while *Haba Bak Rangkang* appears on Sundays written in verse. Unlike *apit awé*, which is written by the editors, these two columns are written by readers. The reader-writers send their articles to the editor and they are rewarded if their article is published. *Aceh Lam Haba* usually reports on current events in Aceh. *Haba Bak Rangkang* is usually cautionary or religious advice intended for either general readers or a special reader group such as the younger generation. Such advice is of the kind traditionally taught by a *teungku* at the *rangkang*, and the same message is now presented directly to readers by a modern means.

4.8.1.5 P.K.A.

P.K.A. stands for *Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh* 'Acehnese Cultural Fair'. It is mainly intended for the development and promotion of Acehnese culture, including the culture of other ethnic groups found in the Special Province of Aceh. This cultural fair has been hosted three times: the first one in 1958, the second one in 1972, and the third one in 1988. This cultural fair has in some ways strengthened awareness among Acehnese people about their ethnic cultural heritage. This has happened for the following reasons:

- (1) the immediate need to produce Acehese in print for various purposes during the event: as a result it provides Acehese speakers with more exposure to print in their own language;
- (2) the P.K.A. provides various opportunities for Acehese speakers to be directly involved or they have opportunity to observe and experience the cultural events which they previously have heard through *haba* and *hikayat* by oral means;
- (3) the P.K.A. is organised by the local government: many educated Acehese people including those who live outside Aceh get involved. This makes P.K.A. a prestigious event and as a result people are proud to participate in it. Poets are seeking sponsorship: provides an opportunity for self-promotion, a kind of cultural marketplace.

4.8.2 Functional Retraction

'Functional retraction' is a reduction in the functions of Acehese within the Acehese speaking community. Language shift often takes place when speakers of a language move to a new place where the dominant language is different. In this view the issue of language shift often emerges within migrant communities such as the Quechua-speaking migrants in Peru, reported by Myers (1973) and the Yiddish-speaking people in America, reported by Fishman (1991). Additionally, language shift may also take place as a consequence of language contact (Richards, Platt and Weber 1985:156) and also due to deliberate attempts made by governments or social pressure groups (McArthur 1992:575). A study made by Kulick (1992) of the Gapun community in Papua New Guinea, is an example of the latter situation. It is within the context of language contact that functional retraction in the use of Acehese has been taking place.

Reductions in the functions of Acehnese can be attributed to centralisation of the government system and planning, to modernisation, and to intermarriage. As has been discussed elsewhere, the Indonesian government adopts a centralised system of administration. This means that the power is held by the central government and the government administration is only carried out in the national language, BI. Since it is favoured by the government, as Richards, Platt and Weber (1985:156) noted, BI has several advantages. These include being the target of the national literacy effort, its status as an official language and use in formal education, and its use as the language of the national public media. Participation in the national political, economic, and educational life is not possible without acquisition of the national language. This elevates BI to the highest possible position and makes it more prestigious in the country.

Modernisation penetrates Acehnese community by means of BI. This means that access to social advancement and modern life could only be achieved through the use of BI. If one deliberately ignores BI and chooses to lock himself/herself in the indigenous language, certainly one will be cut off from the modern world and from opportunities for advancement. Acehnese becomes stigmatised as a mark of lack of access to privilege.

Intermarriage is a common social phenomenon in today's Acehnese community, as elsewhere in the country. In most cases communication within an intermarriage household is carried out by using BI. The children born from such family will speak BI as their first language. They may or may not have the opportunity to learn the first language of their parents as the second or even third language.

Through the three factors of centralisation, modernisation and intermarriage, BI has exhibited its major influence upon the use of indigenous languages throughout the country, and consequently local languages are marginalised. Members of an indigenous community are faced with a great dilemma. If they

choose to maintain their loyalty to the indigenous cultural heritage and identity by sticking to the indigenous language, they will be cut off from social advancement and modern life. Alternatively do they seek for social advancement and modern life at the expense of their cultural heritage and identity?

4.8.2.1 The Religious Domain

A shift has also penetrated religious contexts, such as the Friday sermons, in which the traditional use of Acehnese has been challenged by BI both in urban and rural areas (Hanafiah and Makam 1984: 4). The Friday sermons were mostly given by *ulama* from *peusantren* education background, where Acehnese was the medium of teaching-learning activities and *ulama* could expect to prepare for a teaching career in which Acehnese is used for most oral communication. However, today many *khatib* 'the person giving the Friday sermon' are those who are educated in modern educational institutions, such as the IAIN and therefore they are trained to use BI for education. It is a natural phenomenon that people will pass on what they have learned and they will teach in the language of their own instruction. Hence sermons are shifting to BI.

4.8.2.2 Family Domain

Functional retraction also occurs within Acehnese households. Parents may use more BI than Acehnese when talking to their children, or they may code switch between Acehnese and BI. This situation is more prevalent in the households where the parents have modern education and with families living in the urban areas. One reason for this may be the inclination of such families to associate themselves with social prestige and modern life: they have modern education and they live a city life, and therefore speak a modern and prestigious language—BI. However more research is needed to determine the precise

reasons and motivations for code-switching from Acehnese to BI across households.

There is a phenomenon that the older generation commonly treat children born from such families differently as far as the language use is concerned. In the view of the older generation, these children belong to a *modèrèn* 'modern' generation as opposed to the 'traditional' generation: the generation of their parents. As the modern generation these children should speak the language of the modern life, BI—a language of *dônya maju* ('modern world'). Acehnese is not their language, but their parents' language, a language of the past—*basa gampông* 'village language', i.e. language of the traditional era.

The following examples show how children are treated with regard to their language use. A friend of mine, who is an Acehnese speaker, talks to me in Acehnese, but suddenly he switches into using BI when talking to my children. A relative of mine, who lives in a village and does not have a fluent command of BI, comes to visit us in the city would usually ask my children the following question: *peue na jeuët kamarit basa Aceh?* 'can you speak Acehnese?', with a general assumption that they cannot. If he finds out that my children can speak the language, they are praised, but if they cannot they are not blamed.

Similarly my children will encounter such experiences whenever we go back to the village where I was born and spent the first sixteen years of my life. My fellow villagers would speak to me in Acehnese, but would try to use BI when speaking to my children. Such changes of social attitude towards the treatment of different language in the family are highly significant. One language is associated with modernity and the other is associated with traditional life. An assumption is universally shared that the one is taking over from the other.

Another pattern of functional retraction of Acehnese can be observed in the speech of the younger generation. They tend to associate themselves with modern life. They prefer to show that they have a modern education and

therefore they are not backward. This situation is apparent not only with the children born from the two types of family mentioned above, but also with children born and brought up in villages. Through the use of language they demonstrate the 'modern features' to distinguish themselves from the characteristics of traditional life. These features are, for instance, reflected in their pronunciation and choice of lexicon when they speak Acehnese. One common phonological change is in the pronunciation of /t/: from alveolar to interdental, and the pronunciation of /s/: from dental stop (in Great Aceh) to alveolar fricative. The new pronunciation is adapted to and associated with the pronunciation of BI.

The functional retraction phenomenon is also evident in lexical choice. The younger generations of Acehnese speakers are prone to choose words which are borrowed from BI although they know that more indigenous equivalents are available. The latter may sound rather archaic or traditional, like villagers' talk. So the younger generation, for example, tend to say *buka* instead of *peuhah* 'open', *ikôt* instead of *seutôt* 'follow', *lampu* instead of *panyot* 'lamp', and *bulat* instead of *bunthok* 'round', to give a few examples.

Such phonological and lexical features are used by the younger generation as a means by which they demonstrate their modern identity. Even though they still speak Acehnese, it is different from the Acehnese traditionally spoken by their parents. They see BI as a more prestigious language and therefore they make every endeavour to associate themselves with it. As an Indonesian citizen, an Acehnese has to adapt to the power of BI, or else be marginalised. In describing such a situation, Fishman (1991:6) has the following to say:

The common problem encountered by the indigenous people in preserving their ethnocultural values by means of the local language is that they are disadvantaged by the competition of aspirations for political power and economic success.

4.8.3 Relevance for Acehese Literacy Development

One important principle in literacy education is to create a rich literacy environment in which 'print' can be found everywhere. In such an environment children are surrounded with written language and it is widely held that exposure to written language can familiarise the children with it and as a result it encourages the children to learn to read and write. According to Olson (1994:1) "the ubiquity of writing" is a major feature of modern societies. Further he wrote:

Almost no event of significance, ranging from declarations of war to simple birthday greetings, passes without appropriate written documentation. Contracts are sealed by means of a written signature. Goods in a market, street names, gravestones; all bear written inscriptions. Complex activities are all scripted whether in knitting pattern books, computer program manuals, in cooking recipe books. Credit for an invention depends upon filing a written patent while credit for a scientific achievement depends upon publication. And our place in heaven or hell, we are told, depends upon what is written in the Book of Life (p. 1).

Once the environment is made available, it is the task of teachers or any other responsible adults to consciously make the children aware of the available print and utilise it as a learning resource. In doing so, one of the specific procedures suggested by Schwartz (1988:61) is "exploiting everyday print". People, especially children, can profit greatly from the print available in their own language. In the case of Aceh, Acehese society has not yet become an environment where 'print is everywhere' in the Acehese language. On the contrary, where print is found it is almost all in BI. However, all sorts of new developments given above, especially under functional expansion, have potential to lead towards establishing a kind of positive atmosphere for the development of Acehese language literacy.

If Acehese language literacy can be developed side by side with literacy in BI, then we could find biliteracy or even multiliteracy a common practice in Acehese society. This implies that different language skill is used in different contexts and for different purposes. Barton (1994:6) commented that the growth of biliteracy and multiliteracy may lead to diversification of literacy.

Looking at language use in Acehese society, both in the past and the present, it could in fact be argued that signs of biliteracy or multiliteracy have long existed. Three languages, Acehese, Malay, and Arabic, have coexisted in Acehese society, but only Malay and Arabic have been widely associated with literacy, leaving Acehese largely confined to oral discourse. For example, during the sultanate era, the official role was played by Malay and then taken over by BI after Aceh became a province of Indonesia. As Durie (1996:80) commented, "Malay has been, and remains in its modern guise of Indonesian, the standard language of written communication." This implies that all types of written language use, including those referred to by Olson (1994:1) above, have been dominated by Malay and occasionally by Arabic. It is the concern of this study to describe the barriers which inhibit the use of 'literate' Acehese which has been played by Malay for a long time, in the modern literate Acehese society.

4.9 Acehese Modern Literature

Acehese modern literature can be defined as any literary works in Acehese which appear in a modern genre, different from the classic ones. It appears in different genres and concerns modern Acehese everyday life such as current developments. Acehese modern literature may still appear in the form of *hikayat*, but it does not talk about the life of the Acehese kings, rather it relates to contemporary Acehese issues. *Haba peulandôk*, for example, was merely an oral folktale, now it has been transferred to writing and become a school reader. Another type of literary work which can be categorised as Acehese

modern literature are translations such as *Hikayat Robinson Crusoe*, the work of Teukoe Mansoer (see below).

In the late 1920s Teukoe Mansoer Leupung began to write Acehnese using Latin script. He was one of the early writers who employed this script to write Acehnese in both verse and prose forms. Some of his works were published in a magazine called "Tani" (*Lansbouw Maandblad*), an agricultural magazine published by the Office of Agriculture in Aceh. The magazine was edited by Nyak Umar (Aboebakar Atjeh:nd:34). Two well known works of Teukoe Mansoer appeared in the form of hikayat, *Sanggamara* and *Robinson Crusoe*. *Sanggamara* consists of two words, *sangga* means 'to block', 'to protect' and *mara* means 'disaster', hence 'warding off disaster'. Written in 1929, it consists of 30 subtopics which illuminate various norms and values of 'adat Aceh' ('cultural traditions of Aceh') that Acehnese people are supposed to uphold. The message is meant for anti-western values and people are encouraged to take actions on protecting *adat* ('cultural traditions'). The book is concisely composed with a beautiful rhythmic pattern and is easy to read and understand. In order to be able to transform the knowledge of the outside world to the Acehnese readers, Teukoe Mansoer adapted *Robinson Crusoe*, a widely read novel in European languages, into Acehnese verse which then he called *Hikayat Robinson Crusoe* ('the story of Robinson Crusoe'). Both *hikayat* were reprinted in 1970 by Teukoe Mansoer Foundation, Jakarta. Unfortunately, Teukoe Mansoer's works never penetrated the curriculum of a formal education.

However, there have been some books published for commercial purposes and public enjoyment. These include Abdullah Arif's well known *Seumangat Atjeh* and *Nasib Atjeh* (1956), and *Pantôn Atjeh* (1958) consisting of *Pantôn Ureueng Tuha*, *Pantôn Muda-Mudi*, and *Pantôn Aneuk Miet*. Araby Ahmad was another

writer of the time with his famous *Tanda Mata: Batjaan Dewasa and Haba Si Miskin* (1959).

In the 1960s Acehese literature written in Latin script was further enriched by the works of H. M. Zainuddin. First, he reproduced *Hikajat Prang Sabil* ('story of the holy war') and it was published in 1960 by Pustaka Iskandar Muda, Medan. Prior to this publication, this hikayat had long disappeared in public because it was prohibited—both reading/reciting and keeping it—by the Dutch colonial government (Zainuddin 1960: preface). Second, Zainuddin wrote '*Bungong Rampoe*' (anthology), a collection of old *pantôn* which was published in 1965 by Pustaka Iskandar Muda, Medan. This work was a result of his 30 year adventure to the East and West where he was able to collect some good *pantôn* to which he added the rhythm and pattern. Below is what he said in Acehese concerning his work:

Lhèe plôh thôn lôn peusapat pantôn-pantôn jameuen klasik nyoe, ka lôn jak u timu:—Peureulak, Langsa—u barat—Meulabôh, Tapaktuan—teuma lôn piléh nyang gèt-gèt, teuma lôn susôn canèk jih, beukeunong bukhô.

[Zainuddin 1965: 4]. (For thirty years I collected these old classical pantôns, I went to the East—Peureulak, Langsa—to the West—Meulabôh, Tapaktuan—then I collected the good ones, then I arranged their verse so that they rhymed].

While the history of writing in other languages may date back to about 4000 B.C. (Pei 1949:87), the tradition of writing in Acehese is quite a recent issue.⁵⁰ A radical change began to take place after independence. When the national system of education became secularised and the Roman script substituted the *Jawi*, the waves of change also affected Acehese literature.

⁵⁰Writing in Acehese was first made in *Jawi* script and then attempt was made to use Roman script which was characterised by the appearance of Snouck Hurgronje's work in the late 19th century.

Acehnese was predominantly used in oral tradition in traditional Acehnese society. If anything was written it was not a usual act of day to day communication of the society, rather it related to special purposes. When people felt they needed to write something, especially prose writing, most probably they would do so in Malay. Durie (1996) argues that traditionally Acehnese writing appeared in verse, not in prose with very few exceptions. The most common form of Acehnese written literature is hikayat. It is written for the purpose of recitation or performance.

4.10 Summary and Conclusion

The introduction of western education system to Aceh has brought significant changes in the development of Acehnese literacy in particular, and education in general. Since the target of universal literacy taught at schools is BI, Acehnese is taught as a partial portion within the context of BI. A major shift in Acehnese literacy has occurred since then: the replacement of the *Jawi* script with the Roman alphabet. As such pathways to Acehnese language literacy has become less indirect than the traditional ones: now it goes from literacy in BI to Acehnese. So far Acehnese society has not yet become a conducive environment—where ‘print is everywhere’ in the Acehnese language is not yet established—to support the development of literacy. On the contrary, where print is found it is almost all in BI.

Since the late 1960s, efforts to write Acehnese in Latin script and incorporate it into formal school instruction were taken by Djauhari Ishak (1968), and Budiman Sulaiman (1979). Unfortunately, due to various reasons, their efforts, especially to keep Acehnese teaching at schools, were not sustained. Not all families and individuals share the same understanding of the significance of literacy skills in the local language. People generally feel more compelled to acquire literacy skills in the national language, BI, because it is more

demanding and more prestigious. However, efforts to bringing back Acehese into the formal education curriculum continued to be taken. In 1993 the Indonesian central government granted each province an autonomy in primary education: freedom to set approximately 10 per cent of the primary school curriculum with local content. The provincial government in Aceh took this opportunity to include Acehese language teaching in the curriculum. This seems to be a promising opportunity for further development of Acehese language literacy.

In contemporary Acehese society there have been a lot of changes in the use of Acehese. Such changes are classified here into two categories: expansion and retraction of functions. Functional expansion is particularly related to the advancement of technology and mass media: the use of Acehese has been extended to various new contexts—commercial advertisements, audio recordings, radio and television, and newspapers. These have potential to lead towards establishing a kind of positive atmosphere for the development of Acehese language literacy.

Retraction in Acehese functions is connected with factors such as centralisation of government system, modernisation, and intermarriage between Acehese people and other people of different linguistic background. Such functional retraction is particularly evident in the family and religious domains.

However, the educational system initiated by the Dutch was not widely welcomed by the general public in Aceh, especially the *ulama* and the village community. Many parents refused to send their children to such schools, because they were of the opinion that their children would be transformed into *kaphé*. Thus *peujeuet aneuk keu kaphé*—making children infidels. Some parents even went to the extreme that they believed those who attended the colonial

schools and learned to write in the Roman script would lose their right hand in the hereafter.

Chapter 5

Orthographies of Acehnese

5.1 Introduction

The writing system of a language is generally known as 'orthography', from the Latin *orthographia*. In Greek this word is made up from *orthos* 'right, straight' and *grapho* 'I write': thus 'correct writing' (McArthur 1992:732). The term 'orthography' is generally used to refer to spelling and to standard or accepted spelling used to write a language. It is also related to a normative set of conventions for writing, especially spelling (Richards, Platt and Weber 1985:203). The history of writing dates back 5,000-6,000 years when it was invented for the first time by the Sumerians in the southern region of Mesopotamia (Pei 1949:22, McArthur 1992:1132). In Acehnese, writing is quite a recent development: no Acehnese written text has been found prior to the 1600's.¹ The earliest attested Acehnese writing was made in *Jawi*, the Arabic-based script, or what Gallop and Arps (1991:33) call "the Perso-Arabic", which has also been traditionally used to write Malay and other indigenous languages of the Indonesian archipelago. In the late 19th century, the Roman alphabet was introduced for Acehnese by Dutch scholars, notably Van Langen (1889) and Snouck Hurgronje (1892).

¹ Before Islam there may have been an Indian derived script in Aceh. Indic syllabaries are attested in other languages of the region, e.g. the Batak syllabaries, the south Sumatran script, the Kawi script in Javanese and also the traditional script of Champa.

There are three types of writing system commonly used to write the languages of the world today: alphabetic, syllabic, and morphemic. However, the term 'orthography' is more likely to be associated with alphabetic writing than with the other two writing systems. In alphabetic writing systems each letter represents a sound segment, such as a, b, c, etc. in English, and ا (alif), ب (ba), ت (ta) in Arabic. Languages such as Arabic, English and Russian, for example, all write in alphabetic system but each uses a different script: Arabic uses Arabic script, English uses Roman script, and Russian uses Cyrillic script. In syllabic writing systems, each symbol represents a syllable. Katakana and Hiragana in Japanese are examples of syllabaries. Also included here are the Indian-derived *Kawi* used to write Javanese, and the Batak syllabaries in Sumatra. In morphemic writing systems symbols and combinations of symbols directly represent morphemes or formatives of words, not sounds. This picture-based system was used in the early writings of Sumer and Egypt. Today this system is used in Chinese.

Acehnese is written with an alphabetic system. It uses two types of script: the Arabic-derived script called *Jawi*, and the Roman script. The first is also known in Acehnese as *harah* (also *haraih*: dialect) *Jawoe* 'Jawi script' and the latter as *harah Latèn* 'Latin script'. The use of *Jawi* script in Acehnese is much older and more traditional, and it is particularly associated with Islamic culture and literature in the region; whereas the use of Roman script is a recent development and it is more likely to be associated with the influence of western culture, (i.e. the Dutch), or contemporary Indonesian national culture.

5.2 History of the *Jawi* Script

This script was adopted for Acehnese from Malay, which for centuries served as the language of written communication and scholarship, as well as the language of the royal court in Aceh. The *Jawi* Malay was adopted by those

Acehnese people who were learned in Malay, to write their own language. We do not have any firm evidence concerning when the script was used for the first time to write Acehnese. However, examinations of early Acehnese manuscripts reveal that the oldest existing Acehnese writing is found in a manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un*,² which was written in the year A.H. 1069 (C.E. 1658-59) (Museum Aceh 1987:41; Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:157). Durie (1996:79) also mentions three other earlier sources of the Acehnese writings. One is the anonymous manuscript of *Hikayat Tujôh Kisah* ('tale of seven stories') dated A.H. 1074 (C.E. 1663-64) and the other is the manuscript of *Rawiyatôn Sabeu'ah*, rendered into Acehnese by Raseuni Khan in the year A.H. 1090 (C.E. 1679) (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:176ff). Both of these works appeared to be versions of the same Malay source—Ar-Raniri's *Akhbar al-Akhira*. The third is the letter that Tuan Ahmad wrote from Mecca to his relatives in Aceh, which is clearly dated: Tuesday, 13 Rabi' II, 1125 (C.E. May 9, 1713). This manuscript is also known as *Hikayat Makah Madinah* ('a story of Mecca and Medina'), for it tells about the two Muslim holy cities (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1991:175). These early manuscripts are all indigenous in character. Subsequently the Jawi script came to be used more readily for Acehnese *hikayat* texts, not just for specifically religious ones.

Obviously the appearance of this script is closely linked to the advent of Islam in Aceh. As elsewhere in the world, the penetration of Islam is usually followed by other cultural forms originating in the Arab world in addition to the teachings of the religion itself. Since the Muslim holy book is written in Arabic script, a major effort has always been made by the non-Arabic people all over the world to learn the language of the holy book. The fact that Persian,

²This is clearly not Seuma'un as cited in Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:157), Durie (1996:115), Durie (1996:79), and the Museum Aceh catalogue under code 110. In the manuscript the name Syama'un is written with the initial letter شى (shin), not س (sin). Thus شماءون and elsewhere in the manuscript it appears as شمعون

Urdu, Malay and Acehnese are written in Arabic script is obvious evidence of the influence of Islamic traditions on these languages.

5.3 Description of the *Jawi* Script

The term *jawi* comes from Arabic, an adjective for *Jawa* (Java—Javanese). Roolvink (1986 [1975]:3) commented that early Arab writers such as Ibn Baththuthah³ used the term *Jawa* to denote the island of Sumatra and anything related to it is called *Jawi*, such as *bahasa Jawi*, i.e. *bahasa Sumatra* ‘the language of Sumatra’. Jones (1984:xiv-xv), in his introduction to *A Dictionary and Grammar of the Malayan Language*, discussed two other meanings of the term *jawi*: 1) a term used to denote the writings of the vernacular language of the Malays; 2) a derivative from the name of *Jawa* (i.e. Java) which in ancient time used by some Arabic traders to refer to a product of Java such as لبان جاوی ‘*luban jawi*’ ‘camphor’ which is in fact not a product of Java but of northern Sumatra; and 3) a term for cattle.⁴ Echols and Shadily, in their *Indonesian-English Dictionary*, (1992:238) include another meaning of the word *jawi*, i.e. Malaysia or Indonesia (as the homeland of Indonesians and Malays who are in Mecca).

Acehnese *Basa Jawoe* ‘Jawi language’ refers to the Malay language as written in this Arabic derived script. In this study the term *Jawi*, unless otherwise specified, is used to denote the script derived from Arabic which is used to write Acehnese. In this usage it is capitalised.

Jawi, like its Arabic mother, is written from right to left. This script consists of thirty three letters: twenty eight original Arabic letters and five new letters

³Also see Dunn (1986:255-258) for a detailed itinerary of Ibn Baththuthah's visit to Sumatra.

⁴Jones also mentioned that according to Mr. Raffles the word *jahwi* in Malay means ‘anything mixed or crossed’, as in *anak jahwi* (‘a child of mixed parents’) and *bhasa jahwi* (‘the language of country written in the character of another’).

created as innovations to represent the sounds which do not exist in Arabic.

Table 4 below shows the letters of the *Jawi* script with their Roman equivalents on the right side.

Table 4 Representation of the Jawi letters

1. ا (alif), ء (hamzah) = ? (or a)	18. ظ (zha) = zh
2. ب (ba) = b	19. ع (ain) = ‘
3. ت (ta) = t	20. غ (ghin) = gh
4. ث (tsa) = ts	21. غ (nga) = ng
5. ج (jim) = j	22. ف (fa) = f
6. چ (ca) = c	23. ف (pa) = p
7. ح (ha) = h	24. ق (qaf) = q
8. خ (kha) = kh	25. گ (kaf) = k
9. د (dal) = d	26. گ (ga) = g
10. ذ (dzal) = dz	27. ل (lam) = l
11. ر (ra) = r	28. م (mim) = m
12. ز (zai) = z	29. ن (nun) = n
13. س (sin) = s	30. ن (nya) = ny
14. ش (syin) = sy, ch	31. و (wau) = w (or u)
15. ص (shad) = sh	32. ه (ha) = h
16. ض (dhad) = dh	33. ی (ya) = y (or i)
17. ط (tha) = th	

Twelve of these letters are rarely used in Acehnese, except for Arabic loan words. They are ث (tsa), ح (ha), خ (kha), ذ (dzal), ز (zai), ص (shad), ض (dhad), ط (tha), ظ (zha), غ (ghin), ف (fa) and ق (qaf).

All letters presented above are consonants. It is quite difficult to represent Acehnese vowel sounds independently in this script, except for *a*, *i*, and *u*

sounds: these sounds can be represented by letter ا (alif), ي (ya), and و (wau) respectively. However these letters are also used to represent other vowel sounds, as we shall see in the following section.

5.3.1 Writing the *Jawi* Letters

In *Jawi* script, letters are connected to each other in order to form a word—some are connected to the right, some are to the left, some are connected in both directions, and some are not connected at all. Generally each letter of the *Jawi* script appears in four forms as follows:

- (1) As an independent form: in this form a letter stands on its own and is not connected to the right nor to the left, as given above.
- (2) As an initial form: in initial position a letter is usually connected with another letter on its left, except for ا (alif), د (dal), and ر (ra).
- (3) As a middle form: in this form a letter is connected to both its right and left. Special notes should be made here concerning ا (alif) and ن (nya): the first does not have a distinct middle form and the latter undergoes a change in its diacritic—the diacritic is located above when the letter stands on its own and when it takes the final position, but when the letter takes the initial and middle positions the diacritic is located underneath.
- (4) As a final form: when a letter takes this position it can only be connected to its right.

The following table shows different features of selected individual letters: as an original, initial, middle, and final form.

Table 5 Different features of selected individual Jawi letters

Original Form	Initial Form	Middle Form	Final Form
ش (shin)	ش	ش	ش
ن (nya)	ن	پ	ث
ا (alif)	ا	ى ؤ	ى ؤ
گ (ga)	ز	ز	ك
ه (ha)	ه	ه	ه

The *Jawi* script was originally adapted from Arabic script to write the Malay language. Since at least as early as the 16th century, *Jawi* Malay has been used by the Acehnesse kingdom as a language of the royal court and written communication. Acehnesse was merely used in oral communication and oral literature: if anything needed to be written it would be done in Malay. In c. C.E. 1602 the Acehnesse Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah used Malay to write a trading permit⁵ issued to an English sea captain and a letter of trading authority given to Captain Harry Middleton (Gallop and Arps 1991:36, Durie 1996:82). The 17th century' Malay monumental letter, known as the golden letter, was sent by Sultan Iskandar Muda to King James I of England in C.E. 1615 (Gallop and Arps 1991:34, Durie 1996:114). Scholars like Hamzah Fansuri, Nurdin ar-Raniry, and Syeh Abdul Rauf, who were employed at the court of Aceh during the classical Malay period all wrote in Malay. The famous Malay eschatological work of Nurdin ar-Raniry, *Akhbar al-akhira* 'News of the Hereafter', was written in Malay at the court of Aceh in A.H. 1052 (1641-42).

⁵Concerning the dating of this document, Gallop and Arps (1991:36) commented as follows: Though undated, it can be set with certainty in 1602 by tracing the career of Sir Harry Middleton, a merchant and sea captain, who in 1601 accompanied Sir James Lancaster on the first voyage to Indonesia of the recently formed English East India Company. At Aceh, in June 1602, Middleton was appointed to the command of a vessel named *susan* and sent to Pariaman on the west coast of Sumatra, where he obtained a cargo of pepper and cloves, arriving back in England on 21 June 1603. It is likely that the trading permit dates from this voyage.

These are all evidence that the Malay writing tradition has existed in Aceh for quite a long time. Since World War II this traditional writing of *Jawi* has been gradually taken over by Bahasa Indonesia—the offspring of Malay, written in Roman script.

There is a close link between use of specific orthographies and educational practices. During the time of the sultanate, formal education—given at *pesantrèn*—in Aceh was carried out through the medium of Malay. Books of instruction were all written in Malay, which Acehnese call *kitab jawoe* ‘book written in *Jawi* Malay’ and most of these books were about the teachings of Islam. Thus, at that time, to be literate in Aceh meant to have acquired literacy in Malay and to a certain degree in Arabic. Literacy in Acehnese never became a formal educational issue until the early 20th century, when for the first time, an Acehnese reader, *Batjoet Sapeue* (‘A bit of Everything’)⁶, written by Mohd. Djam and Njak Tjoet in 1911, was introduced into the primary school curriculum. Traditionally, Acehnese writing was made possible by transferring the literacy skills one has acquired for Malay and Arabic. These language writing traditions inevitably influenced written Acehnese.

The first Acehnese-Dutch dictionary written in *Jawi* script was published in 1889 (van Langen 1889). This dictionary has appeared to remain the only published Acehnese dictionary in *Jawi*. Van Langen wrote this dictionary based on the existing Acehnese *Jawi* texts of the time. The transcription of Acehnese sounds used in this dictionary—next to each entry—is phonologically not representative and is far from the actual Acehnese pronunciation. Major influence from the *Jawi* Malay writing conventions is evidenced in the transcription. For example, *بوڠكوس* is transcribed as ‘boengkoes’ = /buŋkus/, which in actual pronunciation is /buŋkoh/ or /buŋkoih/.

⁶This book is the first school reader written in Roman script.

5.3.2 Sound-letter Relationships in Acehnese

For Acehnese written using *Jawi* script, we find a very complex relationship between sound and letter. Durie characterises such complexity as follows:

...Acehnese writing conventions are layered with extremely complex interlingual spelling conventions in which the relationship of letters to sounds is many-to-many, and Acehnese words are read through Jawi and Arabic (1996:116).

What Durie described above is especially evidenced in the phonological representation of Acehnese vowel sounds. Acehnese has thirty four distinct vowel sounds, including nasals and diphthongs (Asyik 1978:1-2, 1987:17-18).⁷ For slightly different counts, see Sulaiman (1979:18-26) and Durie (1985:16-17). The *Jawi* script, like its Arabic ancestor, has only three vowel distinctions. This implies that a single *Jawi* letter can be used for several different representations of Acehnese vowels. This shortcoming has resulted in great complexity in representing Acehnese vowel sounds. It also causes difficulty in contrasting dialect variations across regions. In *Jawi* orthography we are unable to distinguish, for instance, vowel and diphthongs, final [-ih] in the dialect of Pidie, and final [-oi] in the dialect of Lamno. The deficiency of the *Jawi* script for representing Acehnese sounds was also recognised by Snouck Hurgronje when he said:

This character is inadequate for representing the consonants and wholly incapable of representing the vowels of the Acehnese. Thus it comes about that the Acehnese adhere to the spelling which represented their language in a bygone age when many sounds now lost or modified occurred; thus they write *r* at the end of syllables but do not sound it; they write *l* at the end of syllables but sound it as *y* or *ë*; *s* is changed in the same position to *h* or *ih*. For all these reasons one can hardly read Acehnese written by Acehnese without having previously mastered the colloquial (1906:xix).

⁷This number may appear to be slightly smaller in dialects where some diphthongs with [i] do not exist.

Snouck Hurgronje blames language change, believing that the *Jawi* script is used to represent the older form of Acehese. I think this is one factor, but a more significant factor is the influence of Malay spelling. For example, the word *tikôh* (dialect: *tikôih* 'mouse' is spelled تيكوسى (t.y.k.w.s) in *Jawi*. This could be taken as evidence of linguistic change since final /s/ has evolved into final /h/. However, this may also be understood as influence from *Jawi* Malay writing conventions upon Acehese written in *Jawi*. In any case it is true that تيكوس is the correct *Jawi* Malay spelling for Malay *tikus*.

One needs to have a good working knowledge of Acehese, in addition to literacy skills in Malay and Arabic, to be able to interpret Acehese texts written in the *Jawi* script. Reading an Acehese text written in *Jawi* does not merely involve decoding activity, but also some guessing to work out how a *Jawi* letter, especially a vowel, is supposed to be pronounced. Despite this constraint, however, the *Jawi* script functions effectively for Acehese. This may have been connected to the interrelationship between Malay and Acehese literacy.

We shall now proceed to provide a description of the sound-to-letter relationships in the *Jawi* script with special reference to the complexity of sound representations previously mentioned.

(1) In the *Jawi* orthography, the glottal stop / ʔ / is represented by ا, ء, ڪ or ق.⁸ *Alif* (ا) is used to represent a glottal stop when it occurs at word-initially, as in the words اير 'ie' ('water'), اوجوي 'ujoe' ('try, test').⁹ When a glottal stop occurs syllable-initially (intervocalically), it is often represented by *hamzah* (ء). This can

⁸However, the glottal stop is usually not represented at all in Roman orthography (see section 4.3).

⁹Both of these words are cited from van Langen (1889), p. 10 and 11 respectively.

be seen in the words like سۇم 'seu-uem' ('warm') and نۆۋە 'teu-ôt' ('knee').

When the glottal stop occurs in the syllable-final position, it is either represented by kaf (ك) or qaf (ق), as can be seen in the following words: جك *jak* 'go, walk' and فوجوق *pucôk* 'top'. There is no restriction concerning which words should only use one or the other letter: it is entirely a matter of native speaker's intuition. In the words such as ايك *ék* 'climb' and اتيق *iték* 'duck', glottal stop appears in different positions—word and syllable-initially as well as syllable-finally. Finally when Arabic ع (ain) occurs in syllable-final position, it is also pronounced as a glottal stop, e.g. معنا (m.ain.n.alif) 'makna' 'meaning', معراج (m.ain.r.alif.j) 'mèkreuet' 'ascendance of prophet' and معصية (m.ain.shad.y.t) *maksiet* 'immorality'. However, where there is a following vowel, ع (ain) is often followed by a nasal vowel, e.g. كوءيه (k.w.ain.y.h) *ku'èh* 'grudge'.

(2) The Jawi letter ي (ya), as a vowel, basically represents the /i/ sound in Malay. However, it is open to several phonological representations of Acehnese vowel sounds, such as i, e, and ε. This can be seen in the following example:

- a) pronounced ɔə, such as in دورى = d.w.r.y : /durɔə/ 'thorn';
- b) pronounced e, such as in فادي = p.a.d.y : /pade/ 'unhusked rice';
- c) pronounced ε, such as in بالي = b.a.l.y : /balε/ 'meeting platform';
- d) pronounced i, such as in ناريت = n.a.r.y.t : /narit/ 'word, speech'.

(3) The Jawi letter و (wau) may be used to represent Acehnese back rounded vowel sounds such as u, o, and ɔ. Example:

- a) pronounced u, as in دوم (d.u.m) /dum/ 'many';
- b) pronounced o, as in برو (b.r.u) /baro/ 'new';
- c) pronounced ɔ, as in فوه (p.u.h) /pɔh/ 'beat', 'kill'.
- d) pronounced εə, as in كابو (k.alif.y.w) /kayεə/

(4) Some initial and final phonemes represented in the *Jawi* script are not pronounced, and in the Roman alphabet they are usually not written. These include:

a) Loss of initial [h-], as shown by the words in the following table.

Table 6 The loss of initial [h-] in Acehnese

Written	Pronounced in Acehnese	Gloss
هاتی (h.alif.t.y)	/ʔate/	heart
هوجن (h.w.j.n)	/ʔujɯən/	rain
هوتڠ (h.w.t.ng)	/ʔutaŋ/	debt

b) Loss of final [-r], as can be seen in the words listed in Table 7 below.

Table 7 The loss of final [-r] in Acehnese

Written	Pronounced in Acehnese	Gloss
توکر (t.w.k.r)	/tuka/	change
فڠچر (p.n.c.r)	/panca/	spray

c) Loss of both initial and final phonemes. This occurs, for example, in the word هڠچور (h.n.c.w.r): the initial /h/ and the final /r/ are lost. Thus, /ʔanco/ 'broken into pieces'. The words ایر (alif.y.r) is spelled /air/ in Malay, which has two syllables: *a-ir*. In Acehnese this word undergoes both phonemic change and syllable loss at the same time: the initial syllable /a/ and the final phoneme /r/ have been dropped. Thus /iə/ 'water'. Another word which undergoes a similar loss is the Malay پیر (ny.y.r) /piur/: *nyi-ur*, which in Acehnese becomes /u/ 'coconut'—the initial syllable /nyi/ and the final phoneme /r/ have been dropped.

(5) *d* and *t* sounds. These sounds are not distinguished in Acehnese at the end of a word. Many of the Malay cognates that end in final *d* sound are borrowed

from Arabic, such as **احد** (alif.h.d) 'ahad' 'Sunday', **مقصود** (m.q.shad.w.d) *maksud* 'purpose', and **مسجد** (m.s.j.d) *masjid* 'mosque'. In Acehese these words are pronounced with final *t*: thus *Aleuhāt*, *meukeusuet*, and *meuseujit*. It is important to note here that no final oral stops in Acehese are voiced.

(6) *p* and *b* sounds. These sounds have no phonological contrast in Acehese when they occur at the end of a word: most cognate words which are spelled with **ب** 'b' are descended from Arabic in which *p* does not exist. As noted earlier, since literacy skills are acquired by way of Arabic and Malay, there has been a tendency for final /p/ to be written as **ب** 'b' when it occurs as a final phoneme of a word. Additionally this tendency is also applied in writing indigenous words in Acehese, such as **كوب** (g.w.b) /gɔp/ 'other persons', **نوب** (r.n.w.b) /ranup/ 'betel leaf', and **كب** (k.b) /kap/ 'bite'.¹⁰

(7) The consonant cluster [lh] is represented by *Jawi* [t.l.], especially in the words with Malay cognates. This can be seen in the words such as *lhèe* 'three', written **تلو** (t.l.w), Malay /təlu/; and *lhôk* 'bay', written **تلوق** (t.l.w.q), Malay /təluk/. Some indigenous words have also been written with this convention, such as *lheuch* 'finish', written **تلس** (t.l.s) as if it were Malay /təlas/, which is not even a word in Malay.¹¹

5.3.3 Writing Malay cognates and Arabic loans

In Acehese, Malay and Arabic borrowings are typically written in their original form. Moreover many indigenous Acehese terms which have cognates in Malay are spelled as if they were borrowed from Malay, even

¹⁰These words, the *Jawi* version, are cited from van Langen (1889:5-5).

¹¹Thurgood (1997:65-66) argues that this cluster comes from Proto-Chamic primary cluster *tl. However, he said, it is not possible to tell from internal evidence whether the cluster was already in the language that Proto-Chamic descended from, or it developed early in pre-Chamic.

though they are clearly not borrowed. As there was no direct access to Acehnese literacy, writing and reading have been approached by way of Arabic and Malay literacy (Durie 1996:115). Pre-existing writing conventions in Malay were simply transferred to write Acehnese. It is clear that Acehnese written texts are produced and used by people who have acquired literacy skills through the *Jawi* Malay education system. As a result, Acehnese writing has been heavily influenced by Malay and Arabic. In a sense Acehnese is read and written 'through' Arabic and Malay. This influence is especially apparent in early Acehnese manuscripts.

Since the *Jawi* Malay writing conventions are used in writing of Acehnese, many Acehnese words are written as if they were their Malay cognates, e.g. *اير* (alif.y.r) /iə/ 'water' (Malay: *air*) and *كوليت* (k.w.l.y.t) /kulet/ 'skin' (Malay: *kulit*). Many Acehnese words have equivalent or corresponding cognates in Malay, and there are also many words which have been borrowed from Malay. Since the two languages differ greatly in their sound system, especially in vowel sounds, it is very useful to look at the sound differences in these languages. This is especially vital in our understanding of the *Jawi* orthography. The following examples provide clear evidence of such influences which affect a variety of phonological as well as morphological aspects of Acehnese words. The phonemic differences may affect the initial, middle, and final phoneme of an Acehnese word. In some other instances there may also be syllable loss.

(1) Malay /i/ sometimes corresponds to /æ/, /e/, /i/, or /ε/ in Acehnese. In the *Jawi* orthography, the words are spelled in the same way for both Malay and Acehnese, but they are pronounced differently: the Malay pronunciation is given in the brackets. Consider the following example in Table 8 below.

Table 8 Various Acehnese pronunciations for Malay final [-i]

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehnese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
دوري ¹² = d.w.r.y: (duri)	/durɔə/	thorn
بومي ¹³ = b.w.m.y: (bumi)	/bumɔə/	earth
فادي ¹⁴ = p.alif.d.y: (padi)	/pade/	unhusked rice
سوحي = s.w.c.y: (suci)	/suci/	pure

(2) Malay /u/ sometimes corresponds to /ɛə/, /o/, /u/ in Acehnese. This is shown by the following words¹⁵ in Table 9 below. The Malay pronunciation is given in the brackets.

Table 9 Various Acehnese pronunciations for Malay final [-u]

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehnese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
بولو = b.w.l.w: (bulu)	/bulɛə/	hair
كايو = k.alif.y.y: (kayu)	/kayɛə/	wood, tree
باهو = b.alif.h.w: (bahu)	/baho/	shoulder
قبور = q.b.w.r: (kubur)	/kubu/	grave

(3) Malay final /al/ sometimes corresponds to Acehnese final /ai/¹⁶, as shown by the following example in Table 10. The Malay pronunciation is given in the brackets.

¹²Cited from Abdul Hamid & Mohd. Dom (1977:37).

¹³Cited from Abdul Hamid & Mohd. Dom (1977:67).

¹⁴Cited from Abdul Hamid & Mohd. Dom (1977:84).

¹⁵Cited from van Langen (1889:12).

¹⁶In Acehnese Roman orthography this may be represented by /i/ or /y/: thus it written as /ai/ or /ay/.

Table 10 Correspondence of Malay final [al] and Acehese final [ay]

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
اوال = alif.w.alif.l: (awal)	/away/	early
كافل = k.alif.p.l: (kapal)	/kapay/	ship
تريغكل = t.y.ng.g.l: (tinggal)	/tinggay/ ¹⁷	live

(4) Malay final /s/ corresponds to Acehese final /h/, as shown by the following words in Table 11. The Malay pronunciation is given in the brackets.

Table 11 Various Acehese pronunciations for Malay final [s]

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
باريس = b.alif.r.y.s:(baris)	/bareh/	line
لواس = l.w.alif.s: (luas)	/luwah/	wide
ڤتوس = p.t.w.s: (putus)	/putoh/	cut off

(5) The Malay schwa (ə) occurring between consonants (CəC) in the first syllable is often lost, especially where the second consonant is [l] or [r], thus CC in Acehese. Since schwa is not written in *Jawi*, it causes no lack of transparency in its representation. Consider the following example in Table 12. The Malay spelling is given in the brackets.

Table 12 The loss of Malay schwa in Acehese

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
برى = b.r.y : (beri)	/bri, bre/	give
بلي = b.l.y : (beli)	/bləə/	buy
كراس = k.r.alif.s : (keras)	/krutəh/	hard
كلي = g.l.y : (geli)	/gli/	ticklish

¹⁷The *ng* in *tinggay* 'live, dwell' is pronounced as a single nasal consonant, with no nasalisation of the following vowel.

(7) Some Acehese words undergo a syllable loss which is retained in Malay.
 This may occur with initial or final syllable.

a) The loss of initial syllable can be seen in the following words¹⁸.

Table 13 The loss of initial syllable in Acehese

Malay	Acehnese	Gloss
دودق = d.w.d.q (duduk)	دوق = d.w.q /duək/	sit
توتف = t.w.t.p (tutup)	توف = t.w.p /top/	close, shut
بوبه = b.w.b.h (bubuh)	بوه = b.w.h /boh/	set, put in

It may be hypothesised, with the words in this group, that the Acehese form are original and the Malay have a CV reduplication.

b) In a handful of Indic borrowings, Acehese seems to have borrowed from a different source from Malay: the Malay has a final syllable which is not found in Acehese. Consider the example¹⁹ in Table 14 below.

Table 14 The retention and loss of final syllable of Indic borrowings

Malay	Acehnese	Gloss
باچ = b.alif.c: (baca)	بج = b.j: /buət/	read
چوري = c.w.r.y (curi)	چور = c.w.r: /cuə/	steal
هست = h.s.t (hasta)	هس = h.s: /hah/	ell
جال = j.alif.l: (jala)	جي = j.y: /juə/	hand-fishing net

These words show that Acehese has a preference for monosyllabic, but Malay for disyllabic words.

¹⁸The Malay words are cited from Marsden (1984) and the Acehese words are cited from van Langen (1889).

¹⁹The Malay words are cited from Marsden (1984) and the Acehese words are cited from van Langen (1889).

Arabic loan words are written in their original Arabic form but are pronounced in Acehese pronunciation as is clear from rhyme in poetry. Some of such words²⁰ are given in the following table.

Table 15 The Acehese pronunciations of Arabic loans

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced in Acehese</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
تقدير = t.q.d.y.r.	/tuwuḍi/	fate
جواب = j.w.alif.b)	/jawuḥap/	answer
خبر = (kh.b.r.	/haba/	story, news
سلام = s.l.alif.m.	/saluḥam/	greetings
ظاهر = zh.alif.h.r.	/lahe/	born, obvious
طاعة = th.alif.ain.t)	/taḥāt/	obedient
قصة = q.y.sh.t.	/kisah/	narrate, story
مسجد = m.s.j.d.	/muḥsujit/	mosque

5.3.4 Some Archaic Spelling Features

Some archaic features appear to have been preserved in the Acehese *Jawi* orthography. For example, some words spell final -t (ت) as -j (ج). Consider the words²¹ in the table below.

²⁰All of these words are cited from the manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un*.

²¹The first three words in the table (göt, röt, and beuet) are cited from van Langen (1889:9). the word seutöt is cited from the manuscript of *Hikayat Inöng Meusunoh Aneuk* (Langen 1889:99), whereas srët is cited from the manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un*.

Table 16 Features of some archaic words

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ڤج (g.j)	/gʌt/	good
ڤج (r.j)	/rʌt/	road, path
ڤج ²² (b.j)	/buət/	read, recite
سڤج (s.t.j)	/swʌt/	follow
سڤج (s.r.j) ²³	/srət, rhət/	fall

Furthermore, there are many other words which are clearly not Malay cognates, which preserve a final /s/, /l/, and /r/ in the *Jawi* orthography. This can be seen in the example given in the following table.

Table 17 Acehese words written as if they are Malay

<u>Written</u>	<u>Pronounced</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ڤدس (b.d.s)	/buɗʌh/	get up
ڤايس (p.l.y.s)	/paleh/	nasty
ڤال (w.a.l) ²⁴	/woə/	return, go home
هور (h.u.r)	/hu/	burning
يور (y.u.r)	/yuə/	order, ask

There are also some other Malay-like features of specific words in the Acehese *Jawi* writing. For example, the word سڤمڤهڤڤڤڤ = s.m.b.h.y.ng., ‘*seumayang*’ (‘prayer’): spelled with *b* (ڤ) and *h* (ه) but they are not pronounced. Another word spelled in this way is ڤنڤڤڤڤ = p.n.j.ng., ‘*panyang*’ (‘long’): *j* is spelled as *ny*.

²²This word is derived from Sanskrit (Thurgood 1997): cf Malay *baca*.

²³This word is spelled سڤروڤ (s.r.w.j) in Van Langen (1889:144).

²⁴According to Thurgood (1997) this words derives from Proto Chamic *wil.

5.4. Romanization

As has been stated previously, Acehnese was initially written, although quite rarely, in *Jawi* script. Romanization of Acehnese began along with the influence of Dutch power, especially with the coming of the Netherlands Government's special adviser for religious and political matters, Dr. Snouck Hurgronje. C. Hurgronje, to Aceh in 1891. During his seven-month stay in Aceh, Snouck Hurgronje was able to collect much material on Aceh, including matters pertaining to Acehnese language and literature. In compiling the report to his government, Snouck Hurgronje had to find a way of writing Acehnese terminologies; as conventions for writing Acehnese in Roman script did not exist at that time, Snouck Hurgronje had to invent his own to serve the purpose of his mission. So he created a spelling system for Acehnese based on the Roman script. According to Aboebakar Atjeh (nd:45) Snouck Hurgronje adopted the French alphabet and spelling conventions, because many vowel and consonant sounds of this language have similarities with Acehnese. This spelling system is especially marked by its phonological representation of the vowel sounds: the digraph *eu* (u) being the most prominent one. Snouck Hurgronje's work, *Studiën over Atjèhsche Klank-en Schriftleer*, in which he described the orthography he invented, was first published in 1892. Further description of this orthography was given in his *Atjèhsche Taalstudiën* (1900) and in the introduction to his most influential work, *The Achehnese* (1906). Since then most Acehnese writings in Roman script have adopted Snouck Hurgronje's spelling system.

The spread of Snouck Hurgronje's orthography was strengthened by Mohd. Djam and Njak Tjoet, both primary school teachers, who used the spelling system to write the first school reader in Acehnese, *Batjoet Sapeue* ('a bit of everything'), in 1911. In the same year Muhammad Saleh wrote *Puntja* 'core' as an accompanying teaching manual for *Batjoet Sapeue*. Afterwards the reader

was introduced into the school curriculum.²⁵ Snouck Hurgronje's spelling system was further promoted by the publications of other school readers, *Lhè Saboh Nang* 'three siblings' and *Meutia* 'pearl' (De Vries and Aboebakar Atjeh 1932); Kreemer's (1931) *Atjèhsch Handwoordenboek: Atjèhsch-Nederlandsch*; and certainly Djajadiningrat's (1934) *Atjèhsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*, the most comprehensive Acehnese dictionary ever produced which has been used as a standard reference to the Acehnese language.

There is no doubt that Snouck Hurgronje's works have greatly influenced Acehnese orthography and this is reflected in many published Acehnese texts, either by indigenous or foreign writers. The treatment of final *b* is an example. Snouck Hurgronje thought, presumably with his Arabic background knowledge, that the final bilabial stop /p/ in Acehnese is always *b*. This has determined the pioneered work of Djajadiningrat (1934)—*Atjèhsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*—the most comprehensive Acehnese-Dutch dictionary, and other works on Acehnese by Dutch scholars. Since then many Acehnese authors have followed the Dutch tradition, with a few exception of those who made a mixture. Sulaiman (1979), for instance, insists that in Acehnese *p* never occurs at the end of a word, therefore all words ending in *p* in *Bahasa Indonesia* are written as *b* in Acehnese.²⁶ Asyik (1987:26) suggests that all Arabic loan words belonging to this category be written in their original form—with final *b*—although they are pronounced with a final *p*. Variations still remain, but the developing tendency is now to write *p* for indigenous words and *b* for Arabic borrowings.

²⁵The introduction of this book into the school curriculum was in line with the Dutch government's regulations concerning the provision of elementary education for the native people in the Netherlands East Indies. Although the regulations were enacted by Royal Decree in 1871, they were not implemented until the early 1900s, when schools were built in some native communities, and the curriculum for schools was developed (van Der Wal 1960:5-6).

²⁶The example of Indonesian words given by Sulaiman, in this case, includes *hadap* ('to face'), and *asap* ('smoke'). According to Sulaiman in Acehnese these words should be written as *hadab* and *asab*.

Following Snouck Hurgronje's creation of Roman orthography for Acehese, for several decades Acehese writings in Roman script were generally made in a slightly modified version of this system. The standard reference for this orthography is Djajadiningrat's Acehese-Dutch dictionary (Djajadiningrat 1934). However, since World War II, minor changes have been made from time to time in line with the changes that have occurred with the spelling reform of the Indonesian national language—*Bahasa Indonesia*. Also technological changes post Word War II—specifically loss of access to the diacritics ` , ^, and ¨ used by the Dutch—have had some impact on Acehese Roman orthography. Since there is a link between the orthographic reforms of the national language and the local languages that use Roman orthography—Acehese included—it is useful to present here an overview of the spelling changes in *Bahasa Indonesia*, followed by a description of how the changes affected Acehese spelling system.

5.4.1 Indonesian and Malay Spelling Reforms

In its development *Bahasa Indonesia* has undergone a number of spelling reforms, and each of them is named as follows:

- (1) The Van Ophuijsen Spelling (1901)²⁷;
- (2) The Soewandi Spelling (1947);
- (3) The Renewal Spelling (1957);
- (4) The Melindo Spelling (1957);
- (5) The New Spelling (1968); and
- (6) The Improved Spelling (1972) (Moeliono 1975:1-5).

Note should be taken here that the Renewal (1957), the Melindo (1957) and the New (1968) spelling reforms were agreed draft proposals: they did not

²⁷During this period the language was still called *Bahasa Melayu* ('Malay').

achieved public implementation level. This implies that only the Van Ophuijsen, the Soewandi, and the Improved orthographies have been fully implemented: the 1972 Improved Spelling being the current one.

Prior to 1900, there was no official Roman orthography recognised for Malay. Writing in this language used to be done in the Malay *Jawi*. Roman orthography was introduced after Dutch power was established in the Indonesian archipelago: for some time spelling varied between individual writers as standard conventions did not exist. As the need for a standard spelling was felt, the Dutch government appointed Van Ophuijsen, a Dutch scholar, to work on a proposal for standard spelling conventions to be used for writing Malay. Assisted by two indigenous language experts, Engku Nawawi Soetan Ma'moer and Moehammad Taib Soetan Ibrahim, Ophuijsen conducted fieldwork to several Malay speaking regions, such as Sumatra and Kalimantan. In 1901 the results of their work was proclaimed by the Dutch government as the standard and the first official Roman spelling system for *Bahasa Indonesia* (Situmorang 1986:80). This spelling has some similarities with the Roman spelling introduced by Snouck Hurgronje for Acehnese, such as *oe* for /u/, as in the word *baroe* /baru/ ('new'); and the use of a superscript comma (') to represent a syllable final glottal stop, as in the word *bapa'* /bapa?/ ('father'). The Van Ophuijsen Spelling was officially adopted by the first Congress of *Bahasa Indonesia* in 1938.²⁸

Two years following Indonesian independence, in 1947, motivated by the spirit of nationalism, the Minister of Education and Culture, Minister Soewandi

²⁸Other congresses of Bahasa Indonesia are as follows:
- The second Congress was held in 1954 in the city of Medan.
- The third Congress was held in 1968 in Jakarta
- The fourth Congress was held in 1978 in Jakarta
- The fifth Congress was held in 1985 in Jakarta
- The sixth Congress was held in 1990 in Jakarta.

proposed a spelling reform, which was based more on political than linguistic considerations (Moeliono 1975:1). The major changes affected by this reform are: the superscript comma was substituted by *k* to indicate a syllable final glottal stop, and the digraph *oe* for /u/ is replaced by the letter *u*. During the first few decades after independence, minor changes kept being introduced due to new developments in the Indonesian national language. In the late 1950s there was a joint effort between Malaysia and Indonesia for the purpose of spelling reform. Coincidentally, at that time Indonesia had just completed a proposal for spelling reforms; the Renewal Spelling. Thus, what was formulated by the joint spelling system was basically absorbed from the proposal of the Renewal draft (Moeliono 1975:3). The effort was intended to create a uniform spelling conventions to be used in both countries, considering that *Bahasa Indonesia* and *Bahasa Malaysia* were historically one language—Malay. This resulted in the birth of the *Melindo* (i.e. Malaysia-Indonesia) spelling and both parties agreed to promote this spelling system by various means in the countries beginning in early 1962 (Moeliono 1975:3). Unfortunately this agreement failed to be fully implemented at the time due to the *konfrontasi*, a political confrontation between the two countries.

The birth of the Indonesian New Order government under President Soeharto, in the late 1960s, also gives rise to a new spelling reform called *Ejaan Baru* ('New Spelling'), which, according to Moeliono (1975:3), was the most comprehensive in substance and in coverage of topics. Changes were made in the alphabet, spelling of words, capitalisation, italicisation, and punctuation. Upon completion of the proposals for the change, this spelling reform was then decreed by the President—with the Presidential Decree No. 57, year 1972—as the *Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan* ('the Improved Spelling'). It was officially launched on August 17th, 1972—at the celebrations of the 27th anniversary of Indonesian independence—by the President who declared that it would be

implemented nationwide. This is the current orthography of Bahasa Indonesia.²⁹

5.4.2 Post World War II Developments

Since World War II, the writing of Acehnese in Roman script has been significantly affected by the Indonesian spelling reforms described above. The influence of the reforms is apparent in Acehnese publications which appeared soon after each reform. In other words, the impact of Indonesian spelling reforms has always affected Acehnese: although Acehnese has had its own Roman orthography it has always been spelled 'through' Indonesian. When in 1947, for example, the Indonesian spelling reforms changed the letters *oe* into *u* to represent /u/, and the superscript comma (') indicating a glottal stop was replaced by *k*, individual writers of Acehnese immediately began to follow these conventions without prior agreement of experts or authority. However the diphthong [e] following the vowel sounds is still retained in Acehnese: some writers write it with a dieresis [ë]. Similar things also happened following the 1972 Indonesian spelling reforms when more phonemes were changed. These include the changes of:

- (1) *tj* into *c* as in *tjok* > *cok* ('take');
- (2) *dj* into *j* as in *djôk* > *jôk* ('give');
- (3) *ch* into *kh*³⁰ as in *chatib* > *khatib* ('person giving sermon on Friday prayer');
- (4) *j* into *y* as in *jah* > *yah* ('father'); and
- (5) *sj* into *sy* as in *sjeuruga* > *syeuruga* ('paradise').

More generally since World War II, Indonesian spelling conventions have exerted a steady influence on Acehnese Roman orthographies. This influence is

²⁹Note that exceptions apply to personal names, such as Soeharto (not Suharto); and some traditional trademarks.

³⁰This applies only to Arabic borrowing words.

seen, for example, in the widespread tendency for Acehnese words with Malay/Indonesian cognates to be spelled as Malay/Indonesian counterparts. For example, Malay/Indonesian spelling has a contrast between final *p* and *b*, the latter being restricted to Arabic loans. In contrast, Acehnese has only one final bilabial stop, written as *b*, although this is phonetically [p̚].³¹ Thus we find in Acehnese that words which are identified as Indonesian borrowings ending in *p* may be spelled with *p*, e.g. *silap* 'error' and *ratap* 'lament'. This then is quite similar to the pattern of Malay influence we have seen with *Jawi*, although not so extensive in its effects. Budiman Sulaiman (1979:19), being aware of the inconsistency in using both *p* and *b*, claims that the phoneme /p/ never occurs word-finally in Acehnese. Therefore, he proposes that all Malay/Indonesian cognates spelled with *p* be written as *b* in Acehnese: thus *asap* > *asab* 'smoke' and *hadap* > *hadab* 'face, encounter'.³²

Prior to World War II, there were very few Acehnese publications appeared in Roman script. Following the independence of Indonesia, some Acehnese language publication, although very limited, began to develop. This was marked by the appearance of the works of Abdullah Arif, *Seumangat Atjeh* ('The Spirit of Aceh') vol. 5, and Sjih Min Djeureula, *Peungchianat Bangsa* ('Traitor of the Nation'), both dated 1946. Some features of the earlier Dutch orthography were preserved in these works (and also in the later works of Abdullah Arif published ten years later, in 1956: *Nasib Atjeh* 'The Fate of Aceh' and *Seumangat Atjeh* 'The Spirit of Aceh' vol.12), such as the use of the diaeresis *ë* to indicate the vowel diphthong *œ* and the superscript comma *'*, in some words, to indicate a glottal stop. In general, however, their innovations agree with the Soewandi spelling conventions of 1947.

³¹The choice of *b* rather than *p* for [p̚] was made by Snbouck Hurgronje (Durie 1985:20).

³²Phonetically Acehnese final [-p] and [-b] is [p̚], i.e. unvoiced, as we have already noted. However, phonologically we could say that voicing is not contrastive in syllable-final position.

The retention of dieresis for *oë* [ɔʷ] in works of 1956 shows that Acehnese Romanised spelling is not completely derivative, but does have some conservative aspects of its own. The diaeresis in *oë* originally was needed to contrast [ɔʷ] with *oe* [u], but post 1946 the diacritic " became redundant since *oe* was now spelled as *u*. Nevertheless some authors conservatively kept the dieresis of *oë*. for a decade or so after the change from *oe* to *u*.

5.4.3 Acehnese Standardisation

Since the Dutch era, there have been three formal attempts at standardising Acehnese spelling. All the three attempts have been made through formal seminars held in 1966, 1980, and 1992. All other changes in Acehnese spelling conventions post World War II have been informal, occasional, and individual in nature.

5.4.3.1 Seminar Bahasa Aceh, 1966

This seminar entitled *Seminar Bahasa Aceh* ('Acehnese Seminar'), and was convened by IKIP Banda Aceh (Jauhari Ishak 1974:35).³³ This was inspired by the spirit of the Acehnese people to implement the special status of autonomy granted to Aceh by the central government in the fields of religion, education, and culture.³⁴ Efforts began to be made to bring back Acehnese into the school curriculum, to fill in the official cultural curriculum portion. At the same time, there arose a need to provide Acehnese course books for use in schools in line

³³IKIP stands for Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan ('The Institute of Teacher Training and Education'). Initially, IKIP Banda Aceh was an affiliate of IKIP Bandung. In the late 1960s it merged into Universitas Syiah Kuala and became two faculties: The Faculty of Teacher Training and The Faculty of Education.

³⁴For the sake of political stability, the Indonesian government granted Aceh a status of Daerah Istimewa ('Special Region'): thus Propinsi Daerah Istimewa Aceh ('The Special Province of Aceh'), by the Prime Minister Decree No.1/Missi/1959, dated 26 of May 1959 (Sejarah Daerah 1978:189).

with these efforts. It was mainly for this purpose that the 1966 seminar was convened. A standard reference of spelling conventions determined by this seminar is Jauhari Ishak's *Tatabahasa Aceh* (1968). Diacritic symbols over vowels are used in this spelling, except for the diaresis " over letter *e* and *o*. No symbol is used to indicate a nasal sound. A detailed description of this orthography is given in Table 18.

5.4.3.2 Seminar Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Aceh, 1980

This seminar was convened by Prof. Ibrahim Hasan, attended by seventy three language experts and educational practitioners, and hosted on August 25-26 1980 by Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh. In the report of the seminar (Seminar Pembinaan 1980:1) it is stated that the seminar was established for the following reasons:

- 1) the lack of standardised Acehnese spelling conventions to be used as a guide for oral and written language usages;
- 2) the teaching of Acehnese in schools, especially in primary schools, within the Special Province of Aceh had not been fully implemented: some schools did, whilst others did not teach Acehnese;
- 3) Acehnese had not been sufficiently used in the mass media and cultural events in the regions; and
- 4) a well-planned and organised effort had never been taken as to codify Acehnese terminologies which may be of a contribution to the development of the national language.

The official report of this seminar makes no mention of the 1966 seminar: indeed it presupposes that no standard spelling convention was in existence. This seminar was entitled *Seminar Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Aceh* ('the seminar for Acehnese cultivation and development'). Three topics were discussed in this seminar:

- 1) Acehnese Spelling—papers in this topic were presented by Budiman Sulaiman, Ibrahim Makan, and Aboe Bakar.
- 2) The Development of Acehnese Through Teachings and Mass Media—papers in this topic were presented by Darwis A. Soelaiman, Abdul Gani Asyik, Idris Ibrahim, and Zainal Abidin Ibrahim.
- 3) The Contribution of Acehnese to the National Language—only one paper, by Zaini Ali, was presented in this topic.

The spelling conventions decided by this seminar are basically the continuation of the system previously invented by Snouck Hurgronje, except for the change of some letters to adjust with the previous spelling reforms of *Bahasa Indonesia*, especially the 1972 reform. Three important results were concluded by this seminar concerning Acehnese spelling. Firstly, a proposal on standard spelling conventions was agreed upon, identified as *Ejaan Bahasa Aceh Yang Disempurnakan* ('Improved Acehnese Spelling'). A list of conventions is given in Table 18. Secondly, the Rector of Universitas Syiah Kuala was assigned to seek an official recognition for the conventions, as a standard Acehnese spelling, from the Minister of Education and Culture.³⁵ Thirdly, a recommendation was made to the provincial government and to the Department of Education, i.e. Kanwil P & K ('the provincial department of education') to take further steps for the implementation of the spelling conventions.

5.4.3.3 Seminar P3KI, 1992.³⁶

This seminar was convened by Prof. H. Ibrahim Husein, MA, director of P3KI, hosted at the State Islamic Institute (IAIN), Banda Aceh. The seminar was inspired by an effort to publish a remarkable translation of the Holy Koran into

³⁵No evidence of a follow-up actions are known regarding this point.

³⁶P3KI stands for Pusat Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam ('Centre for Islamic Cultural Research and Studies').

Acehnese verses by Tgk. Mahjiddin Jusuf. The spelling conventions determined by this seminar are identified as *Ejaan P3KI 1992* ('the 1992 P3KI Spelling'), and the standard reference to this spelling is found in the introduction to Jusuf (1995): *Al-Qur'an Al-Karim dan Terjemahan Bebas Bersajak Dalam Bahasa Aceh* ('The Holy Koran and Free Translation in Acehnese Verse').

The use of spelling conventions previously determined by the 1980 seminar requires proper technology to represent the diacritic symbols ` , ´ , and ^ over particular vowels. Being aware of this difficulty, the 1992 seminar attempted to find a more practical way of writing Acehnese, aiming at simplification. As a result, two conclusions were achieved by this seminar:

- 1) spelling with diacritics is used only in scientific writings and language teaching;
- 2) spelling without diacritics is used in any other writings.

Furthermore, Arabic loans having خ (kha) is consistently written as *kh* as in *akhīrat* ('the hereafter'), and Arabic ش (syin) is consistently written as *ch* as in *chetan* ('devil'): in many other orthographies this Arabic letter is written as *sy*, thus *syèetan*.

A feature of the orthography not mentioned in the introduction is the use of the superscript comma ' to indicate a glottal stop followed by a nasal vowel, e.g. 'oh 'until', and especially in Arabic loans to reflect Arabic ع 'ain', e.g. 'azeueh 'punishment', ta'at 'obedient', and 'eleumee 'knowledge'. Typically 'ain' corresponds to glottal stop and nasalisation in such loans. This nasal symbol is not used for nasal vowels after other consonants. Thus it is omitted from the word *han* [h'an] 'no, not'. See Table 18 for a full description of these spelling conventions.

Table 18 A summary of Acehnese Roman orthographies.

IPA	E.g.	S.H. 1892	Dj.D. 1934	A.Ar. 1946	Araby 1959	Sy.R. 1959	Dj. I. 1974	B.S. 1977	Sem. 1980	Sy.R. c.1988	P3KI 1992	D.&D.
a	ba	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
ɾ	tahɿ	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	ë
e	ék	é	é	e, é, ê	ee	ee	é	é	é	é	e	é
ɛ	èk	è	è	e	è	è	è	è	è	è	e	è
u	kheun	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu	eu
i	pakri	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i
o	bōh	ò	ò	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
ʌ	bōh	(ò, è)	(ò, è)	(o, è)	(o, è)	(o, è)	o	ö	(o, è)	(o, è)	o	ö
o	bōh	ō	ō	o, ð, ô	oo	oo	ô	ô	ô	ō	o	ô
u	bū	oe	oe	oe	u	u	u	u	u	u	u	u
Və {ɔə}	ig toe	ë	ë	e {oë}	e	e {oë}	e	e	e	e	e	e
Vi#	awai	j	j	j	j	y	i	i	i	i	i	i
ç##	meuih	ih	ih	ih	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)
##?V	apa [ʔapa]	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
V?##	bak	ء	'	k, '	k	k	k	k	k	k	k, '	k
V#?V	laôt [laʔot]	ء	'	Ø, -	Ø, -	Ø, -	Ø	-	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
V?#CV	paksa	ء	'	k, '	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k
CV	h'an	CV	CV	CV	C'V	CV	CV	C'V	C'V	C'V	CV	C'V
#?V	pa'è	çV	'V	V, 'V	'V	'V	V	'V	'V	V, 'V	V, 'V	'V
c	ɿang	tj	tj	tj	tj	tj	c	c	c	c	c	c
j	jéh	dj	dj	dj	dj	dj	j	j	j	j	j	j
ʃ	sɿh	(c)	(c)	sj	sj	sj	sy	sy	sy	sy	ch	sy
j	yah	j	j	j	j	j	y	y	y	y	y	y
b	bū	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
d	du	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
g	gop	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g
h	ho	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h
k	kap	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k
l	lom	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l
m	mita	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
n	nang	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
ɲ	nyan	nj	nj	nj	nj	nj	ny	ny	ny	ny	ny	ny
ŋ	ngui	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng
p	pat	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p	p
p#	rap	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	p, b	p
r	rôk	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r
s	som	ʃh	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s	s
t	tan	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t	t
w	wèh	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w

Notes on Table 18

Abbreviations:

- S.H. Snouck Hurgronje.
- Dj.D. Djajadiningrat.
- A.Ar. Abdullah Arif.
- Araby Araby Ahmad.
- Sy.R. Syèh Rih Krueng Raya.
- B.S. Budiman Sulaiman.
- Sem. Seminar Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Aceh.
- D&D Daud and Durie.

Symbols

() the particular sound of the row does not occur in this dialect.

Instead another sound, represented in the brackets, is found.

[] phonetic transcription.

{ } an exception to the general pattern found for a row.

word boundary

- # syllable boundary

– Ø this represents a sound which is left unrepresented in the orthography. In syllable initial position, glottal stop is usually not represented in orthographies. Thus [ʔon] may be spelled as *ôn*.. Ideally each Acehnese word beginning with a vowel sound is pronounced with a glottal stop, such as *aneuk* /ʔanuk/ ('child'), but it is usually not represented in writing. Snouck Hurgronje used an Arabic hamza (ء) to represent all other glottal stops: the syllable-initial and the syllable final, such as in *laôt*, *laén*, *bèk*, and *tôk*. These words were written by Snouck Hurgronje as *laʔôt* /laʔot/ ('ocean'), *laʔén* /laʔen/ (different, other'), *bèʔ* /beʔ/ ('do not'), and *tôʔ* /toʔ/ ('arrive').

Where two variants are given, the first is the preferred one, except that Araby Ahmad and Syeh Rih Krueng Raya both used ' in one 1959 publication for a glottal stop before a nasal vowel (as in 'uet 'swallow'), and ' in another publication from the same year: this variation is reflected in the table.

Comments on particular sources

Araby Ahmad 1959 includes one example of *-ih*, in a heading. Otherwise he uses *-h*.

Abdullah Arif 1946 and Syeh Rih Krueng Raya 1959 write *Və* diphthongs as *Ve*. However they preserve the diresis used by the Dutch writers to write the vowel [ɔə]. This reflects the ambiguity in the Dutch-based orthography between *oe* which stood for [u] in Dutch, and *oë*, which stood for [ɔə]. Note that Abdullah Arif (1946) still uses *oe* for [u], but Syeh Rih Krueng Raya (1959) had shifted to using *u*, so his retention of the diresis was merely a residue, no longer necessary for disambiguation.

Djajadiningrat's dictionary makes a distinction between the two superscript commas — ' and '. The former represents a glottal stop after a vowel or before an oral vowel, and the latter a glottal stop before a nasal vowel. In Acehese publications after 1945, wherever either symbol is used, I could observed no distinction made between ' and ': they are treated as mere typographic variants of the same symbol. In such cases the table uses the symbol '.

Snouck Hurgronje did not distinguish between the sounds ʌ and ɔ because the contrast is not found in the area where his data was mainly collected.³⁷

Consequently all words having the ʌ sound, such as in *beuö* /buʌ/ ('lazy')

³⁷Snouck Hurgronje's work mainly deals with the dialect spoken around the city of Banda Aceh, especially the dialect of Meuraksa (i.e. Ulèltheue), west of Banda Aceh, where his principal informant—also consultant and scribe—comes from.

appeared to be ɔ or ɛ in Snouck Hurgronje's: thus *beuo* /bɯɔ/ 'lazy' or *rèt* /rɛt/ 'road'. This is also reflected in Djajadiningrat's dictionary as it is written mainly based on the system created by Snouck Hurgronje with rare exceptions.

In Malay and Indonesian both *-b* and *-p* appear in final position in the orthography. In Acehnese these sounds are not in contrast in final position: phonetically there is only a final unreleased [p]. Arabic has no contrast between *b* and *p* at all: it has only *b*. How then to spell the Acehnese final bilabial? From an Arabic perspective the appropriate letter to use would be *b*. And indeed, ever since Snouck Hurgronje, the tradition in Acehnese has been to write the syllable-final bilabial stop as *b*. This is useful for the many Arabic loans which end in *b*: they are written as spelled in Arabic. However confusion arise in spelling the many Acehnese words whose cognates in Indonesian end in *-p*, for example [asap] 'smoke'. To spell this *asab*, following Snouck Hurgronje's system, seems inconsistent for a community literate in Indonesian. P3KI adopts a sensible compromise, by using *p* for final bilabials, except for Arabic loans, e.g. *kitab* 'book' but *asap* 'smoke'.

Further notes

A feature not noted here is whether the orthography represents an intervocalic approximant [j] after [i] and [w] after [u], e.g. in [tuwan] or [muliya]. The Dutch writers did not represent these glides, thus *toean*, *moelia*. Similarly, more recent Acehnese publications and the 1980 standard also omit them, most likely under the influence of *Bahasa Indonesia*. However they are included in some authors, e.g. Syeh Rih Krueng Raya's *Hikayat Hasan Husen* in 1959, e.g. *Seubab Hasan duwa istri, teuka beuntji sitjeulaka* (p.8) and *Aneuk nanggroë mangat hatee, radja 'adee that bahgija* (p.15). These features are also included in D&D.

The letters *f, v, q, x*, and *z* are only used to write borrowed words from foreign sources which are not adjusted to Acehnese pronunciation.

Acehnese has three groups of consonant clusters: clusters which are formed by [r], [l], and [h] respectively as a second letter. They may occur word initially and/or word medially. These three groups of clusters are:

- (a) The clusters with [h] as a second letter are: *bh, ch, dh, gh, jh, kh, lh, mh³⁸, nh, nyh, ph, rh, th*;
- (b) The clusters with [r] as a second letter are: *br, cr, dr, gr, jr, kr, pr, tr*; and
- (c) The clusters with [l] as a second letter are: *bl, cl, gl, jl, kl, pl*.

Discussions of these consonant clusters are also found in Asyik (1978, 1987; Sulaiman (1979); Durie (1985); and Djunaidi (1996).

Arabic خ (kha) appears as either *kh, ch, k*, or *h*, and ش (syin) appears either as *sj, sy, tj, c*, or *ch*, but this should not be mistaken for cluster with [h] as a second element.

5.4.4 Orthography and Technology

There seems to be a close relationship between orthographic revision and technology. During the colonial times, Dutch typewriters and printing type available in Indonesia would have had diacritic symbols. A number of Acehnese vowel sounds could thus be appropriately represented or distinguished by using the diacritic symbols, such as the dieresis over the vowels *ë* and *ö*, the accent over the vowels *è* and *é*, and the circumflex over the vowel *ô*. By means of such technology, Djajadiningrat (1934), for example, was able to consistently represent all the vowels using the dieresis “”, the superscript

³⁸This cluster is found in a dialect of north Montasiek and Blang Bintang in Aceh Besar, such as in the word *mhu* ('bunch'). Thus *saboh mhu pisang* ('a bunch of banana').

‘ and ’, the accents ` and ´, and the circumflex ^, as well as using italics to mark the "nasalised consonants", such as in the words *khèb* ('stink'), *saïh* ('whisper'), and *toem* ('the shooting noise').³⁹

However, technological limitations became important for Acehnese orthography following the independence of Indonesia. This is especially apparent beginning from 1950's onwards when the available typewriters and printing types in Aceh increasingly had no diacritic symbols.⁴⁰ So graphs for the vowels developed which did not use diacritic symbols, and the tendency was to write in a somewhat less laborious system. Diacritic symbols are absent from most publications made during this period. Two vowels with diacritics were often represented as digraph: *é* as *ee* and *ô* as *oo*. Such replacements are especially evidenced in the works of Araby Ahmad (1959) and Syèh Rih Krueng Raya (1959). The superscript commas ' and ´ which in Snouck Hurgronje's system respectively represented a glottal stop and 'nasal' glottal stop, are merged into ' or lost altogether, and italics are no longer used to indicate nasalised consonants. All these innovations seem to have occurred more or less spontaneously, without any formal attempts at standardisation. Consequently this leads to a high level of orthographic inconsistency in Acehnese publications.

Amidst the technological deficiency, however, spelling with diacritics were preserved in most academic publications, e.g. Jauhari Ishak's (1974) *Tatabahasa*

³⁹In fact those nasalised consonants indicate a following nasal vowel, see the orthographic table for elaboration.

⁴⁰When Jauhari Ishak, Khalid Ibrahim and Abu Hani published their second edition *Geunta* (1974)—the first edition was published in 1968—a note was included regarding the difficulty they experienced with the use of diacritics in their earlier publication: *Khusus untuk jilid 1, 2, kami mengalami kesulitan dalam menggunakan tanda-tanda è, é, dan ô karena tidak ada pada percetakan.* 'For volumes 1 and 2 in particular, we had difficulties in using diacritic symbols over the letter è, é, and ô because they were not available at the printing house' (p.3).

Aceh ('Acehnese Grammar') and Budiman Sulaiman's (1979) *Bahasa Aceh* ('Acehnese Language'). Some authors who have no access to the technology seem to have inserted the diacritic symbols by hand, e.g. Bung Sof's (1961) *Bungong Situngkôl* 'A Bunch of Flower' and Aboe Bakar, et al. (1985) in their *Kamus Aceh Indonesia* 'Acehnese-Indonesian Dictionary', whereas publications made by popular writers almost always follow the diacriticless models developed in the 1950s, e.g. Syèh Rih's (1971) *Pedoman Masyarakat* 'Public Guidance and Tgk. Abdul Muthalib's (1973) *Kisah Inong Zaniyah* 'The Story of a Prostitute'.

5.4.5 Inconsistency and Spelling Errors

There is still a considerable variety and inconsistency in the writing of Acehnese today, despite the existence of standard conventions. There are six main factors causing inconsistency and spelling errors in Acehnese.

- 1) Limitation of technological means, as previously discussed, which means that Acehnese vowel distinctions are difficult to represent.
- 2) Lack of Acehnese literacy education.
- 3) Lack of a recognised and publicised standard, especially prior to 1980, and lack of published popular texts which could exemplify standards;
- 4) Lack of accessible resources, especially an Acehnese-Indonesian dictionary. The first dictionary of this kind was published in 1985, but many printing errors are found, especially with diacritics. Also this dictionary is not publicly available in the market.⁴¹ Although three Dutch-Acehnese dictionaries have been published from early on, the copy of which are very rare in Aceh and are almost inaccessible.
- 5) Lack of coordination in publication, e.g. autopublishing or local publishing, and low proofing standard norm;

⁴¹This dictionary was the result of the national and regional language and literature development project, published by Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa ('Centre for Language Cultivation and Development'), Jakarta.

6) Dialect variation makes standardisation of spelling more difficult.

5.4.6 Spelling Inconsistency and Literacy Education

It appears that attempts to provide a Romanised Acehnese literacy education have not been successful. The initial attempts made during Dutch colonisation, in the early 1900's, failed as soon as World War II broke out and Japanese power began in Indonesia. Moreover, during that period, the number of schools was very limited and the level of participation in formal education was very low. After Indonesia became independent, *Bahasa Indonesia* was set as the target of national universal literacy all over the country (Daud 1996:23). This left Acehnese and other local languages neglected, as far as literacy education is concerned.

Occasional efforts to teach Acehnese in formal (Romanised) education began to reappear from the mid 1960s: a marked effort, in this case, was made by Jauhari Ishak, a school teacher in Banda Aceh. He wrote a school grammar book called *Tatabahasa Aceh* 'Acehnese Grammar', and in 1968 he co-authored a school reader called *Geunta* ('vibrations') with Khalid Ibrahim and Abu I Iani.⁴² Jauhari Ishak managed to convince the provincial educational authority to introduce Acehnese literacy education to formal schooling. As a result, the books were accepted by the government and an official decree was issued stating that the books were to be included among the compulsory books for the Primary Schools in Aceh.⁴³ Because of this, Jauhari Ishak's spelling system has had some influence in forming later spelling conventions.

⁴²Both of these books were published by P.T. Sakti, Banda Aceh in 1968. Later editions, beginning from 1974, were published by Firma Pustaka Faraby, Banda Aceh.

⁴³The decree is known Indonesian as *Surat Ketetapan*. The grammar book was decreed by the *Surat Ketetapan* No.999/A5/Idpukk/1968, dated April 8, 1968, and the school reader, *Geunta*, was decreed by the *Surat Ketetapan* No.930/B-3/Um, dated April 9, 1968, as required language textbooks.

Another attempt to promote Romanised writing appeared in the 1970s, this time outside the school system. This is marked by the publications of books and booklets. A number of *hikayat*, be it traditional or new creation, and other types of shorter verses such as *likè Aceh* and *lagu Aceh* were produced or reproduced in booklet style and made available for purchase in the market. Unlike previous efforts, which were taken by academics and supported by educational authority and the local government, this attempt was initiated by popular writers and non-government agencies, for commercial purposes. A significant contribution to this effort was made by Toko Buku Gali 'Gali Bookshop', Percetakan Radar 'Radar Printing House', and Pustaka Mahmudyah 'Mahmudyah Library'—all are in Bireuen, North Aceh; Percetakan KUD Rahmat and Toko Buku Rata—Banda Aceh; and Penerbit Saiful—Medan. With a few exception, these booklets were printed without using diacritic symbols. It appeared that such publication was partly triggered by the 1972 PKA-2⁴⁴ 'the Second Acehnesse Cultural Fair'. When the PKA-3 'the Third Acehnesse Cultural Fair' was hosted in 1988, similar 'spirit' of publishing reappeared: more Romanised booklets were published.

In line with this attempt, the state Aceh Museum, since the beginning of the 1980s, has initiated to make its publication series on its collections. Although the publication is in Bahasa Indonesia, a high proportion of Acehnesse writing is needed to write the names and other details of the collections.

5.5 Summary and Conclusion

Acehnese is written in two scripts: *Jawi*, an Arabic derived script, and the Roman alphabet. The former is generally associated with the more traditional

⁴⁴This is an abbreviation of *Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh ke 2*, a significant cultural event for the maintenance of Acehnesse language and culture.

Acehnese, and the latter with the modern era. *Jawi* began to be used in the mid 17th century by the people who acquired their literacy skills in Arabic and Malay: they transferred their Arabic and Malay writing skills to write Acehnese.

Roman alphabet for Acehnese was developed by Snouck Hurgronje in 1892, and popularised it through his significant work, *The Acehnese* (1906).

Afterwards this spelling system was adopted by scholars, foreign and indigenous, who wrote on Acehnese. The standard reference of this orthography is Djajadiningrat's (1934) *Atjèhsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek* 'Acehnese-Dutch Dictionary'.

The *Jawi* orthography has some limitations. These are mainly caused by the lack of orthographic symbols to appropriately represent Acehnese sounds. This constraint is particularly apparent in representing the Acehnese vowel sounds: The *Jawi* has only three 'vowel' letters— ا (alif), و (wau), and ي (ya)—to represent more than thirty Acehnese vowel sounds, including nasals and diphthongs. There is a many-to-many relationship between sounds and letters in this orthography: one letter may be used to represent more than one sound and likewise a particular phoneme may be represented by different letters.

In *Jawi* orthography, Acehnese has been spelled as if through Arabic and Malay. Malay cognates are written as if they were spelled in Malay, and likewise Arabic loans are too spelled as in their original form in Arabic, but they are pronounced in Acehnese and this pronunciation may vary across dialects. Consequently, the *Jawi* orthography is only possible to be read by those who are literate in Arabic and Malay, in addition to having a good knowledge of spoken Acehnese.

Romanization of Acehese is closely related to the expansion of Dutch power to Aceh. After Snouck Hurgronje created the Roman orthography, partly as a means by which to serve his political mission, for the first time in the history literacy education in Acehese was introduced to public schooling. *Batjoet Sapeue*, written by Njak Tjoet and Mohd. Djam—both were school teachers during the colonial period—appeared as the first school reader in Acehese language in 1911. The tradition of using Roman script became more popular in schools, especially since after the World War II, when Indonesia became independent. Since then the development of Acehese Roman orthography has been influenced by the Indonesian orthography and by the promotion of universal Indonesian literacy in Roman letters: the changes taking place with the reforms of the Indonesian spelling system have affected Acehese spelling as well. This in a sense continues the earlier *Jawi* tradition of Acehese being spelled as if through Malay.

It appears that higher educational institutions in Aceh have played a significant role in standardisation of Acehese spelling. All the three seminars on Acehese spelling were convened by tertiary institutions: the 1966 seminar was convened by IKIP 'Institute of Teacher Training and Education', the 1980 seminar was convened by Syiah Kuala University, and the 1992 seminar was convened by IAIN 'State Islamic Institute'.

Chapter 6

Poetry in Acehnese: A Focus on Structure

6.1 Acehnese Verse

Acehnese is rich in literary works, especially in verse: some show purely Acehnese origins in that they are original creations in Acehnese; others are derived from other languages, particularly from Malay and Arabic, by means of translation or adaptation. The interrelationship between the Acehnese and the Malay worlds and the special religious connection between Acehnese and Arabic language and culture have facilitated such translation and/or adaptation. Also a few works have been found to be translated or adapted versions from Indian and Persian sources, either directly or by way of Malay (Abdullah 1991:69-70). Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:67) commented that many branches of learning written in Malay or Arabic is usually “popularised” into Acehnese in the form of rhyming verses, especially in the forms of *hikayat* and *nalam*. The famous Malay eschatological work by Nuruddin al-Raniri, *Akhbar al-Akhira*, for example, was adapted into Acehnese verse in A.H. 1074 (C.E. 1663/1664) by Raseuni Khan in order to make it more familiar to the Acehnese people who could not read in Malay (Durie 1996:115). We also find a version of a European language text in Acehnese verses: *Hikayat Robinson Crusoe*, by Teukoe Mansoer Leupueng (1970). Recently the Muslim holy book, The Quran, has also been translated into Acehnese by Tgk. Mahjiddin Jusuf (1995), also in verse form.

In this study poetry is taken to be a literary composition in verse form (McArthur 1992:791), and is also a comprehensive term which encompasses any kind of metrical composition (Cuddon 1977:509). Investigations of traditional Acehnese literary works, especially the written rather than oral texts, show that poetry is more dominant than prose. We do find some Acehnese written prose works, but these are mostly limited to reading materials specially developed for educational purposes, i.e. readers for school children such as *Lhè Saboh Nang* 'the Three Siblings' by Aboe Bakar Atjeh and De Vries (1932), *Geunta* ('Vibrations') by Jauhari Ishak, Khalid Ibrahim and Abu Hani (1974), and *Haba Peulandôk* 'the Story of Mousedeer' published by Budiman Sulaiman (1978).¹ These readers mostly draw on the oral tradition on telling stories and folktales.

Acehnese verse is rhymed and is composed, in some cases written, to be performed or recited particularly to those who do not read and write in a public forum. Generally the performances are accompanied by musical instruments, tambourine being a prominent one as in the performance of *rapai*. However, there are performance types which are typically performed without using the aid of musical instruments, such as the well known *seudati* dance and *nasib*.

6.2 *Narit Meupakhôk*

In Acehnese, verse is known as *narit meupakhôk* 'rhyming speech/text'. This term comes from the root word *pakhôk* 'to bump against some thing, or to collide with some thing'. In poetry, *pakhôk* means 'rhyme'. Another common Acehnese word for 'rhyme' is *bukhô*. Both of these words are frequently used interchangeably in the context of Acehnese poetry. When a text does not rhyme or does not rhyme properly, for instance, an Acehnese person would say: *nyan hana keunöng pakhôk*, or *nyan hana keunöng bukhô* 'that does not hit the rhyme' (Aboe Bakar, et al. 1985:661). In its metrical pattern, *narit meupakhôk* can

¹The original text of *Haba Peulandôk* was written in *Jawi* script by Tgk. Yahya Baden.

be classified into two verse forms: *sanjak* verse and *nalam* verse—the former is used in almost all Acehese verse types, while the latter is restricted to *nalam*.

Further distinctions can be made between different kinds of *nalam* and *sanjak*. Of special significance is the *pantôn*, a verse unit composed of two couplets which is based upon the *sanjak* form.

Non-Acehnese writers, beginning with Snouck Hurgronje (1906) have called the *hikayat* verse form *sanjak*², a term borrowed from Arabic *saj'* 'rhymed prose' (Cowan 1976:398). This form was contrasted by Snouck Hurgronje with the form of *nalam*. However the term *sanjak* is not in common use in Aceh today to refer to *hikayat* verse form. Acehese people would normally use the term *hikayat* when they talk about the *narit meupakhôk* composed in the *sanjak* metre, regardless of its content, or whether the whole text itself can be called a *hikayat*. It is not clear whether Snouck Hurgronje's use of the term '*sanjak*' reflected a contemporary Acehese term for this metre, or whether he adapted this term to his own literary purposes.

6.3 Patterns of Rhythm

Rhythm as discussed here is limited to its use in poetry. McArthur (1992:869) defines rhythm as follows:

The arrangement of words into a more or less regular sequence of long and short syllables (as in the quantitative metre of Latin) or stressed and unstressed syllables (as in the accentual metre of English), and any arrangement of this kind.

²In Malay/BI the term '*sanjak*' refers to a short narrative in particular form such as *syair*, *pantun*, and *gurindam* (Moeliono 1988:782). Echols and Shadily (1992:473) define "*sanjak*" in BI as poem, verse, lyrics, and rhyme. *Sanjak* is usually used interchangeably with *sajak*, although there has been some debate about whether these may be two distinct terms.

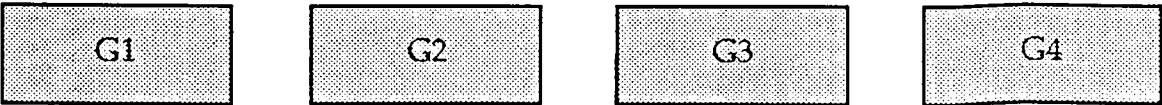
To Fraser (1970:1), rhythm is like the motion of waves on the sea shore which break on the sand. The motion of each wave creates a basic similarity even though absolute similarity in the manner that two waves break, for example, is hardly identifiable. In poetry, rhythm constitutes in the primary arrangements of sound, that is, a regular rise and fall in the flow of sound. Rhythm appears as a result of a regularity in sound movement and usually it occurs in a recurrence of beats or pulses.

6.3.1 Rhythm of the *Sanjak* Verse

Acehnese *sanjak* poetry is composed of verses. The length of each verse can be measured by the number of syllables that make up the verse. In Acehnese poetry this verse measurement is known as *buhu*. A common *buhu* of Acehnese poetry is between 16 and 20 syllables. A well-known Acehnese poet, Anzib Lamnyong³ (Tgk. Abdoellah Badaly 1959), states that the *buhu* 16 'the 16-syllable verse' is more traditional and less preferable to the younger generations: they like the poetry of the *buhu* 20 'the 20-syllable verses'. Most early Acehnese works are composed in the *buhu* 16, such as *Hikayat Syama'un* and *Hikayat Nabi Yusuf*. My own view is that poetry of *buhu* 16 is more difficult to compose, especially with regard to the arrangement of its internal rhyme.

Each verse of *sanjak* poetry has four intonation or stress groups: let us label them G1, G2, G3, and G4, where G1 and G2 form a half verse unit and G3 and G4 form a unit of the other half. The rhythmic structure of the most common types of Acehnese *sanjak* can be represented as follows:

Figure 7 The rhythmic pattern of a *sanjak* verse



³See Anzib's introduction to *Hikayat Malém Diwa*, by Teungku Abdoellah Badaly (1959).

Each group normally consists of two feet, and each foot consists of two, sometimes three, syllables. Each foot is typically iambic or anapaestic: it consists of two or three syllables, with the stress on the final syllable within the foot.

In a verse of 16 syllables, all groups consist of two iambic pairs of feet with two syllables each. Below is an example of the *buhu* 16 verse, cited from *Sijudô Pahlawan Aceh* (Araby Ahmad 1960:23):

Judô sidéh/ di mideuen prang/, kaphé geuprang/ dum geuheungkoe

ô ya Allah/ lôn jak sajan/, bahlé sinan/ bandum kamoe

Bahlé syahid/ ban sikawan/, di dalam prang/ bila nanggroe

Pat laén h'an/ ulôn peugang/, meulaénkan/ bak droeneuh Po

'My spouse is there in the battle field; fighting and killing the *kaphé*. Oh God, I will be with him; I prefer to be there together. Let all of us die; in the war for the country. Nothing else I will trust, except in You my dear Lord.'

Within a foot, the final syllable is stressed in accordance with the phonological structure of Acehnese. Furthermore, a stronger stress falls on the final syllable of each intonation group (i.e. on the second foot within a group). An example below shows this structure; the stronger stresses are underlined:

Punca kisah/ bak hikayat/, deungö sahibat/ tueng umpama/

Sidroe ureueng/ kheun riwayat/, rupa hibat/ sideurhana⁴

'The core story of this hikayat, listen and learn from it, my friend. According to the story, there was a person, who was good looking and humble.'

In a 20-syllable metre each group consists of an iambic foot and an anapaestic foot. The three syllable foot may come first or second within the group.

⁴*Hikayat Robinson Crusoe*, by Teukoe Mansoer Leupung (1970:3).

Consider the following example: in the first verse the three syllable foot appears second in G1, G2 and G3, but first in G4; in the second verse the three syllable foot comes second in G1 and G4, and first in G2 and G3. The three syllable feet are underlined.

*Sabab rôh meugrak / citak lôn ulang / ramè that rakan / nyang mantöng harwa
Teungöh gop galak / lôn citak reujang / buët sabé seunang / hana teupaksa⁵*

'The reason I reprinted this hikayat is because many people still ask for it. As long as people like it, I will print it without delay. In this way both I and the readers are happy, no one feels coerced.'

Some *buhu* 20 verse does not consistently achieve 20 syllables per verse.

In nursery rhymes and some traditional sayings, the *buhu* 16 or *buhu* 20 pattern is not followed rigorously, often a shorter verse is found. This is true of the following rhyme (Abdullah Arif 1958) in which the first verse employs *buhu* 12—G1 and G3 having only two syllables—and the second verse has a normal *buhu* 16. The following example reflects this pattern.

Dén-dén / pula pisang / bambang / pula padé (buhu 12)

Raja Tampôk / geujak meuprang / ulëebalang / geuhëi saré (buhu 16)
(Abdullah Arif 1958:13).

'A dragonfly grows banana, a butterfly grows paddy; king Tampôk goes to war, all ulëebalang are invited.'

In some nursery rhymes the four intonation groups are very short, consisting of only one foot, which may have one or two syllables. Consider the following example with a *buhu* 6 in verse one and a *buhu* 8 in verse two; the one-syllable feet are underlined:

⁵*Miftahul 'Ibadah*, by Tgk. Basyah Kamal Lhông (1977:3).

T'um / beudé / blé / kilat / (buhu 6)

Reubah / alèe / asèe / lumpat / (buhu 8) (Abdullah Arif 1958:9)

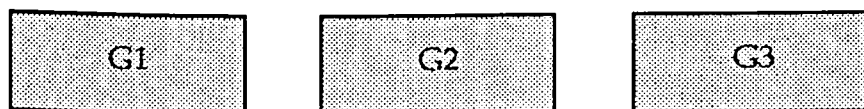
'A rifle fires, lightning flashes. A rice pounder topples over, a dog jumps.'⁶

More details on the metrical structure of nursery rhymes are given in Chapter 7.

6.3.2 Rhythm of the *Nalam* Verse

Nalam poetry has only three intonation groups in a verse (hereafter labelled as G1, G2, and G3). This rhythmic structure can be represented as follows:

Figure 8 The rhythmic pattern of the *nalam* verse



Each intonation group normally consists of two pairs of iambic feet, and each foot has two syllables. Thus each *nalam* verse normally consists of twelve syllables. From this metrical pattern, it can be understood that the *nalam* verse only has a single *buhu* structure: *buhu* 12 'the 12-syllable verse'. Consider the following example, where a slash indicates an intonation group:

Nyan keu ureueng/nyang neugaséh/uléh Tuhan

Lagi leupah/nibak bahya/seukalian

Leupah nibak/harô hara/padang mahsya

Lheueh bak titi/teutap gaki/trôh bak kausa

(*Munjiatul Anam*, by Tgk. Di Lam U 1957:3)

'Those are the people who are loved by God, and they are saved from all sorts of calamities. Moreover they are saved from the calamity of the day

⁶This translation is taken from Durie (1996:91).

of resurrection, saved from the bridge, their feet are secure: they are able to reach the river of Paradise⁷.'

Here is another example:

Wajéb iman / dum geutanyoe / akan nabi

Wajéb patéh / peue nyang neukheun / uléh nabi.

Beu tapatéh / nyang goh datang / neupeuhaba

Miseue mawöt / nyang that sakét / tapeurasa

(Anzib Lamnyong 1974:6)

'All of us, we must believe in the prophet; we must obey whatever the prophet says. We must believe in what he says about what has not happened; such as death, the pain of which we cannot bear.'

Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:78) reports that *nalām* may also consist of a dimetre; as can be seen in another work of Syèh Marhaban Hadat called *Caé Hadat* ('Poems of Hadat) wherein each verse consists of two pairs of iambics, forming a *buhu* 8:8

Nyoe karangan / Habib Hadat //

*That meuceuhu / jeueb-jeueb bilat //*⁹

'This is the composition of Habib Hadat; it is well-known in every country.'

In Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:204) two more verses of this *nalām* are cited:

Nalam Hadat / kakeu sudah //

Di dalam nyan / peuet boh kisah //

'This is the end of Nalam Hadat; it consists of four topics'.

⁷There is a popular belief in Islam that there is a bridge connecting *padang mahsya* ('the resurrection field') and Paradise. The bridge is long and narrow, it is very difficult to pass through, and underneath it is a hell fire.

⁸This work has various names—*Caé Hadat*, *Nalam Hadat*, *Hikayat Hadat*, and *Kisah Hadat*.

⁹See Snouck Hurgronje (1906, I:78).

6.4 Rhyme and Rhyme Position

Rhyme is defined as the repetition of identical or similar sounds (Barnet, Berman, and Burto 1964:153) and it is an important aspect of poetry. Rhyme is a general and literary term for the effect produced by using words that end with the same or similar sounds (McArthur 1992:867). Rhyme can be a major source of “aesthetic” satisfaction, it can be used as a rhythmical device to intensify the meaning of a verse, and it can help to make a verse easier to remember (Cuddon 1977:559). As mentioned earlier (see 6.2 above), Acehnese has two words for ‘rhyme’: *pakhôk* and *bukhô*. They both bear the same meaning and therefore can be used interchangeably.

It is a common feature of poetry, in many languages, that rhymes take the end and/or middle rather than the beginning positions within a verse. Acehnese poetry also uses both end rhyme and internal rhyme. This is reflected in both *sanjak* and *nalam* verses. Durie (1996:91) observes that these rhyming patterns are related to the patterns of poetry found in other languages of the region: the end rhyme may be influenced by Malay, whereas the internal rhyme may be inherited from the Southeast Asian mainland. Cowan (1933) pointed out that Acehnese *sanjak* metre shows a similarity in its pattern with the metre of Chamic poetry, and in his later work (Cowan 1982) he discovered that Acehnese *sanjak* metre also shares similar rhyme position with a Thai metre. These similarities are especially apparent in the internal rhyme pattern.

6.4.1 The Rhyme of *Sanjak*

There are two types of rhyme in *sanjak* poetry: end rhyme and internal rhyme.

6.4.1.1 End Rhyme

The end rhyme is fixed across many verses: if the last syllable of one verse ends in *a*, the last syllable of the next verse should end in the same sound and so on.

An example of end rhyme can be seen in the following verses of *Hikayat Ranto* (cited from Drewes 1980) where the end rhyme is in *oe*.

Lôn cok daweuët deungon keureutah, teuma lôn kisah keu pié droe

Supaya jeuet keu 'ibarat, jeuet seulamat dua nanggroë

Geutanyoe taudép dalam dônya, dua peukara h'an tom sunyoe

Saboh bagoe tuntut 'èleumèe, mita gurèe nyang peuhareutoe

Dua bagoe mita hareukat, tapiléh pat laba rugoe

Meung bèk teungku jalan salah, banci Allah keu geutanyoe (p.6).

'I took ink and paper, then I wrote about my own attitudes. I hope it would be of some guidance, for safety in both worlds. We live our lives in this world, we can never get away from two things. First is to seek for knowledge, seek for the teacher who teaches us. Second is to work to earn a living, profit and loss should taken into account. Do not choose the wrong path, for Allah will hate us.'

In some hikayat, such as *Hikayat Sanggamara* (Teukoe Mansoer Leupung 1970) and *Hikayat Potjut Muhammad* (Drewes 1979), the author maintains a single end rhyme throughout the whole text: all final syllables end in *a* sound, as in the following verses of *Hikayat Sanggamara*:

Neumèe énsan bak riwayat, kheun nèk Hadjad ureueng tuha

Peutama phôn nyan keuh adat, ngon peuteupat dum peukara

Kléng ngon Cina maséng babat, maséng adat dum hana sa

Lôn bôh dali nak bèk silap, tueng 'ibarat kata maja (p.34).

'Nèk Hadjad, an old person, told a story about people. First comes *adat* with which all problems are handled. Indian and Chinese are different, each has a different *adat*. I give a reference as a guide, take a lesson from the saying of the elders.'

In a long poetic composition such as *hikayat*, a composer may change the end rhyme from time to time. There is no convention regarding the number of verses after which the end rhyme may be changed. Some composers change the end rhyme when they begin a new major section or thematic unit so that each section differs in its end rhyme irrespective of its length. Alternatively the same end rhyme may be used for two or more sections. Arif (1956) in his *Seumangat Aceh* 'The Spirit of Acehnese' uses *at* in the introduction (19 stanzas), *a* for the first two sections (90 stanzas), *éh* for the second two sections (76 stanzas), *i* for three sections (86 stanzas), and then he reverses to *a* for the remaining five sections (210 stanzas).¹⁰

In *Hikayat Raja Istambôy* (T. Radja Mahmud Suddin T. 1963) the composer employs as much as four variations in the end rhyme: in the introduction, which consists of 12 stanzas, he uses *ôn*, *ôm*, and *ông* interchangeably from verse to verse. The preface, 17 stanzas, and the first seven stanzas of the beginning part of the *hikayat* end in *a*, but the next 189 stanzas end in *o* or the diphthong *oe* and then the poem reverts to final *a* for 56 stanzas. 54 stanzas after that end in *i*, and the same sounds used in the introduction—*ôn*, *ôm* and *ông* are used again through out the remaining verses, 45 stanzas.

There are at least three reasons for a composer to alter the end rhyme. First is to avoid monotonous recitation.¹¹ In some texts we can find that the composer gives a clear hint when a transition is made. In the following example a *pantôn* is used as a transition: this is a common strategy. In this particular example it is interesting that the author remarks upon the change of rhyme.

¹⁰Here 'stanza' refers to a physical grouping of the verses on the page: see section 6.7.2.2.

¹¹It is necessary to note that *hikayat* is commonly recited before a public audience and mostly for entertainment purposes, except for *Hikayat Prang Sabi* which was often recited for the purpose of motivating people to participate in the war, in addition to entertainment.

Pageue lampôh ngön geulundông, ubi jagông pageue padé

*Meunyo sabé saban ujông, kureueng meuphôm hé boh haté*¹²

'Geulundông tree is used to fence a garden, rice plants are surrounded by cassava and corn : If the end rhyme is always the same, it makes it difficult for my dear friends to follow.'

Another reason is to enable a richer use of vocabulary, and a third reason is to show off the composer's skill, since some end rhymes are harder than others to sustain.

Common end rhyme sounds found in Acehnese poetry are the monophthongs *a, é, i, u, o, ô* and also diphthongs *eue, oe*, and *èe*. Also found, although less common, are the vowel-consonant combinations, e.g. *ah, éh, ék, ôk*, and *at*.

Another rhyme is vowel-nasal, with a fixed vowel quality, but the nasal varies freely between *m, n*, and *ng*, e.g. *an-am-ang; én-ém-éng; or ôn-ôm-ông*.

6.4.1.2 Internal Rhyme

There are two patterns of internal rhyme in a *sanjak* verse, one is primary and obligatory and the other is secondary and optional: each of which is set in different pattern. The presence of this secondary rhyme is felt to provide a verse with more aesthetic value.

6.4.1.3 Obligatory Internal Rhyme

The obligatory internal rhyme of a *sanjak* verse can be represented by the following formula: the final syllable of G2 rhymes with the final syllable of G3. This obligatory formula is found across all *sanjak* poetry, i.e. *hikayat, pantôn, hadih maja, miseue* and *h'iem*. It is found in everything from the short *buhu* 6 to a fulsome *buhu* 20. Consider these examples: the first is with *buhu* 6, and the second with *buhu* 20.

¹²Cited in *Hikayat Robinson Crusoe*, Teuku Mansoer Leupung (1970:57).

'Oh troe tumpoe pi klat

'Oh deuek dumpeue leugat (Hasjim MK. 1977:170)

'When (you are) full, even tumpoe¹³ is tasteless; when (you are) hungry, everything tastes good.'

Bèk tachôt langèt ngön puténg sadeuep, laôt bèk taseuet ngön paleuet jaroe
(Hasjim MK. 1977:249).

'Do not even (try) to poke the sky with a sickle rod, and bail out the ocean with (your) palms.'

In some cases this internal rhyme is kept constant across a sequence of many verses. The following verses of *Hikayat Sanggamara* (Teukoe Mansoer Leupung 1970) show that the composer employs the obligatory formula, keeping it constant. The rhyming syllables are indicated by a double slash within a verse:

Tameututô ngön bahsa droe//, bahsa nanggroe// nyang biasa

Bahsa laén bèk tapakoe//, beuthat raghoe// bak beurkata

Rôh sukaran aduen adoe//, jeuet keu laloe// bula mata

H'an geuteupeue laba rugoe//, teukap jaroe// haté luka (p.91).

'Speak our own language; the common language of our country. Other languages just ignore; although they sound good. When siblings are in difficult time; they cannot think rationally. They forget the consequences; so that their hearts are broken.'

In other texts we find that the internal rhyme varies from verse to verse. Consider the following verses of *Hikayat Prang Sabil* (Zainuddin 1960) where we find rhymes in *oe*, *èe*, and *an* in verses one, two, and three respectively. The rhyming syllables are indicated by a double slash within a verse:

¹³*Tumpoe* is a favourite traditional Acehnese sweet pudding cake, usually eaten with glutinous rice.

Peue nyang gadöh Tuhan gantoe//, uroe dudoe// laén neubré

Meunan bangön di ureueng dilèe//, hana padèe// geuprang kaphé

Barang dum tagaséh laén bak Tuhan//, siat h'an jan// ka hana lé (p.11)

'Whatever you lost (in the war), God will replace it in the hereafter. That is the attitude of the people in the past, never get distracted from fighting the *kaphé*. No matter how much you love anything else but God, it lasts only shortly.'

In *pantôn*, which consists of two *sanjak* verses, the obligatory internal rhyme is always the same in each of the two verses of the *pantôn*. This can be seen in the following verses of *Pantôn Meuseunda* (Zainuddin 1965:15). The double slash marks the rhyming syllables within a verse and across verses.

Kulam di leuen ie jeureunèh//, timoh di binèh// geulima saka

Di lôn kukhém di gata beungèh//, salèh peue jeunèh// tapeukrôt muka

'The pond in the front yard has clear water, a sweet guava tree grows beside it; I smile, you get mad, why are you frowning?'

There is another example of a *sanjak* poetry in which we find a rhyme uniform in both verses, this time a proverbial saying (or *hadih maja*). Note the unusual *buhu* 12 structure in verse one: verse two is a normal *buhu* 16.

Bubèe dua jab // seureukab // dua muka

Keunoe pi toe keudéh pi rab // bandua pat// meuteumèe laba (Hasjim M.K. 1977:60).

'A bamboo fish trap has two openings, a bird trap has two doors; close to this side, near to the other: making a profit at both places.'¹⁴

6.4.1.4 Secondary Internal Rhyme

The secondary internal rhyme found in some *sanjak* poetry follows the following formula: the final syllable of G1 rhymes with the end of the first foot

¹⁴This is how the Acehnese people would describe a hypocrite, a person with double faces.

of G2. This is found in only some recent works, including those by Abdullah Arif, Tgk. Basyah Kamal Lhông, and Syeh Rih Krueng Raya. The secondary internal rhyme usually appears in verses which employ *buhu* 20 ('the 20 feet verse'), and in this case the other (obligatory) internal rhyme is held constant. Consider the following examples, in which the secondary internal rhymes are indicated by a double slash and the obligatory internal rhymes are underlined. First is an example from *Nasib Aceh* (Abdullah Arif 1956):

Nasib Aceh nyoe// jinoe// hai rakan, lôn bri sambôngan jiléd keudua

Jiléd nyang keuphôn// ka lheuêh lôn// peutrang, jinoe lôn karang jiléd keudua
(p.5)

'Now to this *Nasib Aceh* my dear fellows, I presented the second volume, I have already presented volume one, now I have composed the second one.'

A second example comes from *Kareuna Matuan* (Syeh Rih Krueng Raya 1968). This illustrates all three kinds of rhyme: the primary internal rhyme is underlined, the secondary internal rhyme is indicated by a double slash within a verse, and the end rhyme is in bold and underlined.

Lakoe pi kaya// nama// meugah that, di jih buet meuhat jibloe-bloe u thô

Pèng jih meuribèe// bajèe// meukilat, haté seunang that po dara barô (p.5)

'The husband is rich and well known; his job is trading copra. He has a lot of money and wears fancy clothes; his wife is so contented.'

6.4.2 The Rhyme of *Nalam*

A *nalam* verse shows two types of rhyme pattern: the end and the internal rhymes—the former is obligatory and the latter is optional.

6.4.2.1 End Rhyme

In *nalam* there is a variable end rhyme which links verses in couplets.¹⁵ Thus if there are four *nalam* verses, we will find that the end syllable of verse one rhymes with that of verse two, and the end syllable of verse three rhymes with that of verse four. This end rhyme pattern is reflected in the following example, where a double slash indicates the rhyming syllables within each verse pair—verse one with verse two, and verse three with verse four:

Ureueng ta'at neubri nèkmat dalam kubu//

Nèkmat syeuruga Tuhan buka keunan laju//

Beutapatéh uroe kiamat dudoe teuka//

*Nyan keu uroe keususahan harô hara//*¹⁶

'The obedient people are showered with (God's) mercy in their grave, the pleasure of paradise is immediately open to them. We must believe that the day of resurrection will come, that is the day when discomfort and calamities occur.'

Sometimes we find that an end rhyme is maintained over more than one pair.

A strict alternation of end rhyme in every two verses is consistently maintained by Tgk. Di Lam U (1957) in his *Munjiatul Anam*, throughout the whole text: 580 verses. The same end rhyme may reappear several times within a page. For example, on page 11, he shifted the end rhyme in the following sequence: *euet* > *an* > *a* > *euet* > *a* > *ah* > *an* > *at* > *ah* > *at* > *ak* > *ut* > *a* > *at* > *ah* > *an*. There is no significant difference in the frequency of occurrence of each sound.

¹⁵The term 'line pair' needs to be emphasised here because the idea of stanza is generally not applied to the *nalam* verse.

¹⁶Cited from *Wajéb Iman*, edited by Anzib Lamnyong (1974:6).

6.4.2.2 Internal Rhyme

The possibility of the internal rhyme in *nalam* verse was not mentioned by Snouck Hurgronje (1906), but it does sometimes occur. An internal rhyme within a *nalam* verse is organised in the following order: the fourth foot rhymes the eighth, that is, the final syllable of G1 rhymes with the final syllable of G2, and this rhyme varies from verse to verse. Consider the following example, a double slash indicates the rhyming syllables within a verse:

Habéh maté// bandum saré// maléngkan Tuhan

*Langèt bumoe// kön lé meunoe// ka neusimpan*¹⁷

'All died, none left, except God. The sky and the earth do not look like this any more, God wraps them up.'

Unlike in the *sanjak* verse, the internal rhyme in the *nalam* verse is not obligatory. However, the degree of aesthetic quality of a *nalam* verse is higher when such rhyme pattern is present.

6.5 Imperfections of Rhyme

Sometimes we may find that composers may fail to achieve and fit the rhyme in the above structures. This can lead to 'imperfections' in the quality of the poetic works. This happens when the intended rhyme do not correspond exactly such as pairing *è* with *é*, *an* with *ang*, *om* with *ong*.¹⁸ Imperfect rhymes regularly occur in both internal and end rhymes. The following are some examples of the imperfect rhyming structures with both end and internal rhymes:

(1) This example is cited from *Si Miskin* (Araby Ahmad 1959:55) where *an* is paired with *ang* to form the end rhyme, they are underlined:

¹⁷*Wajéb Iman*, edited by Anzib Lamnyong (1974:6).

¹⁸Some apparent imperfections maybe due to dialect differences. Here I use examples which are clearly not of this kind.

Lém Amat geuduek bak keudèe sidroe, hana geutusoe ureueng berjalan

Ka pijuet badan ka itam asoe, sabab lam uroe geucatok ladang

'Lém Amat was sitting alone at a coffee shop; he does not recognise anyone passing by. His body has become thin and his skin has turned dark; for he worked in the sun hoeing his farm.'

(2) Here is an example of imperfect internal rhyme, cited from *Hikayat Hasan Husén* (Syèh Rih Krueng Raya 1959:5), where *én* is paired with *an*, in the first verse, and *i* is paired with *é* in the second verse, they are underlined:

Calitra nyoe Hasan Husén, cuco janjôngan Nabi kita

Makneu Fatimah ayahneu Ali, ban dua maté jiénanya

'This is a story of Hasan and Husén; the grandchildren of our prophet. Fatimah is their mother and Ali is their father; they both were murdered.'

In a few cases imperfections appear to be due to the use of borrowed expressions from Arabic: in this case the composer gives a higher priority to content rather than form of the verse, and wishes to use a precise Arabic term rather than a rhyming synonym. The use of such Arabic word or expression is more apparent at the beginning of a text,¹⁹ usually in praise of God and the prophet, but does not always interfere with the rhyming pattern. Often such word or expression is taken from the Quran, it bears sacred value and it is regarded as untranslatable.

For example, in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (Zainuddin 1960) we can see both the internal rhymes *ah - ang*, *i - ah*, and *i - an* and the end rhyme, *i*, *an*, *in*, and *at*, do not fit. The imperfect rhymes are underlined, and the Arabic words are in bold.

¹⁹For a detailed description of such use of Arabic in Acehnese text, see Durie's (1996) *Framing the Acehnese Text: Language Choice and Discourse Structures in Aceh*. *Oceanic Linguistics*, vol 35:1

Geusurôh meuprang sabilôllah, deuh nyata trang wahé akhi

Peureuman Allah nyang that suci, peureuman Allah dalam Quran

Ingat hai mokmin peureuman Rabbi, peurintah Tuhan Rabbul 'alamin

Neubloe mokmin neuyue prang kaphé, rot tamaté jalan 'ibadat (p.5).

'It is clear oh dear brothers; we are ordered to fight in the path of Allah. The sacred words of God; the words of God in the Quran. Oh believers, remember the words of God, the orders from God of the universe. The believers have been paid to fight the infidels, you will die in the path of worship.'

In such cases we can speak of suspending or overriding the rhyme, since the author makes little attempt to even get an approximate match in the sounds. It is striking that such overriding of the rhyme is in fact quite rare, in most cases where Arabic is used I have found that the rhyme is adhered to the common principle.

More typically the composer employs borrowed lexicon, especially from Malay, to help achieve or sustain the rhyme, when they could not think of a suitable Acehnese word. Sometimes the Malay word may be a genuine borrowing into Acehnese, but often it is simply translational equivalent of a common Acehnese word. In such cases the Malay and Acehnese words are often cognate, but the rhyme is different due to many historical changes that have affected the final syllables of Acehnese. Some examples are *hari* for Acehnese *uroe* 'day', *kami* for *kamoe* 'we exclusive', *kita* for *geutanyoe* 'we inclusive', *nama* for *nan* 'name', and *nyawa*, for *nyaw'öng*, 'soul'. Consider the example below, cited from *Tanda Mata* (Araby Ahmad 1959:10) where the very foreign-sounding Malay word *hari* 'day' is in bold:

*Teuka di ulôn leupah that sayang, yue ngui seulèndang di tiep-tiep **hari***

Yue ngui keubaya ngön bajèe panyang, ngön ija pinggang bodoh h'an meukri

'About myself, it was so sad; I was asked (by my husband) to wear a scarf every day. I was asked to wear *keubaya* and long dress; with sarong I look stupid.'

6.6 *Pantôn*

A *pantôn* is a short poetic form composed in *sanjak* which conveys a quite general meaning using very concise and specific imagery. Typically a *pantôn* consists of two verses. Consider the following example:

Putéh-putéh putik boh jambèe, boh timon kirèe geulhap ngön saka;

*Meungh'an tapatéh amanat gurèe, pagé meuteumèe apui neuraka*²⁰ (Abdullah Arif 1958:6)

'All white is the young *jambèe* fruit, cucumber is dipped in sugar; if we do not heed the teacher's advice, in the Hereafter we will certainly go into the fire of hell.'

The unity of a *pantôn* is signalled by the use of a fixed internal rhyme: in the above example each verse uses the same internal rhyme in *èe*, thus *jambèe* — *kirèe* and *gurèe* — *meuteumèe*. As we have seen, *sanjak* verse does not necessarily hold this internal rhyme fixed, but in a *pantôn* this rhyme must remain the same across the two verses. However, much more important than the constant internal rhyme is the communicative structure of the *pantôn*, for unlike *sanjak* and *nalam*, the form of *pantôn* involves not only certain constraints on rhythm and rhyme, but also restrictions on the way the meaning is expressed.

In a *pantôn* the first verse is called the *bungong* 'flower' or *canèk* 'stem'. This is an introductory part which uses imagery, often from nature, or from memorable events in Acehnese life. The second verse is called *asoe* 'contents, flesh, message' and it conveys the core meaning of the *pantôn* in plain language.

²⁰There is no link between *canèk* and *asoe* in this *pantôn*.

The meaning of the *bungong* often has a clear link to the *asoe*, that is, it builds up an implicit meaning of the *pantôn*. This can be seen in the following *pantôn*:

Pat ranup nyan hana mirah

Pat peuneurah nyang hana bajoe

Pat nariet nyang hana salah

Hana bak awai teuntèe na bak dudoe

'Where can you find a betel leaf which is not red (after being chewed), and where can you find a rice pounder without a peg; where can you find an infallible speech, if not at the beginning there is surely at the end.'

This *pantôn* describes that *mirah* 'red' is the basic nature which is embedded in a betel leaf (although its actual colour is green or light yellow, it produces red sap), and that *bajoe* 'peg' is an inseparable part of a rice pounder.²¹ Thus everything has its basic nature, and mistake, error or fault is the basic nature of a speech. The intended message from this *pantôn* is that speech is not error-free regardless of who makes it, and therefore it is not to be taken for granted. This *pantôn* is frequently uttered as an ending remark of one's speech, especially a long one, as a sign of politeness and humility.

The *bungong* may be used as a 'puzzle' or an 'appetiser' in preparing for the plain message which occurs in the second part, the *asoe*. For example in the following *pantôn* the account of a gourd which withers even while it is being watered sets the scene for the message of the *asoe*: the care of a wife has led to disappointment when her husband divorced her.

²¹There are two words in Acehnese for 'rice pounder': *peuneurah* and *jeungki*. Although *bajoe* can be separated a *peuneurah* physically, it cannot be used without using *bajoe*.

Bukön sayang lôn kalôn labu

Teungöh lôn sibu ka maté pucôk

Hana lôn sangka meunan buet teungku

Teungöh lôn bri bu taleuek ka geujôk (Zainuddin 1965:69)

'I feel sorry for the gourd plant; It is dying while I am watering. I was stunned by the *teungku*'s attitude; he divorced me while I am feeding him.'

Sometimes the message of the *asoe* can be predicted after hearing the first verse. This is especially true for people who can be identified as adepts: they only need to hear the introductory verse and they will be able to grasp the core message of the *pantôn*. In most *pantôn*, however, the introductory verse is mysterious, having an obscure connection with the second verse in its meaning. In this case the *bungong* is used as a complement of rhyme and as an aid to memory, not to mention the mystery of the poetic imagery which cannot always be easily explained.²²

In addition to parallelism between the two verses, the *canèk* itself often contains two images which, for the sake of literary harmony, need to be kept in balance. Thus plant is grouped with plant, flower with flower, mountain with mountain, river with river, and so on. This is seen in the following *pantôn*, in which grass and the banana leaf are used in parallel. A couple has been recently married: so recently that a path has not yet been worn into the grass outside the house (traditionally owned by the wife) by the footsteps of the husband returning home to his wife each day. Likewise he has hardly begun to enjoy the wife's cooking, for the banana leaves used to wrap his food have hardly had time to wither. Why does the husband wish to leave home so soon?

²²In Malay pantun, according to Winstedt (1969:195), these first two lines are allusive and the relevancy of meaning between the two parts may be very remote.

Naleueng di leuen goh lom reubah

Ôn bu kulah goh lom layèe

Cutbang neutrën neucok langkah

Pat neukeubah bungong mangat bèe (Zainuddin 1965:21)

'The grass in the front yard is still standing; the banana leaf used to wrap the rice is not yet withered. You (my lover) go down and depart; who is going to care for me?'

6.6.1 Acehnese *pantôn* and Malay *pantun*

Acehnese *pantôn* are similar in form to the well-known Malay *pantun* (Snouck Hurgronje 1906, I:78).²³ This can be seen in its structure—it consists of an introduction followed by the main body of the message. It seems likely that the Acehnese *pantôn* may have been borrowed from the Malay *pantun*, or they both share a common origin in Austronesian prehistory. The etymology of the term *pantun* itself, according to Winstedt (1969:193), is unclear. Alisjahbana (1985:12) even considers that it is a useless effort to determine its origin because this relates to the history of how people express their mind and feelings which cannot be traced from a single factor alone.

However, differences remain between the Malay *pantun* and the Acehnese *pantôn*. Firstly, the Malay *pantun* is quite restricted concerning the number of words in a line: each line, with a rare exception, consists of four words. This is not the case in Acehnese *pantôn*. Secondly, with regard to the pattern of rhyme, the Malay *pantun* and the Acehnese *pantôn* differ in the structure of their internal rhymes, apart from their similarity with the end rhyme. The common internal rhymes of the Malay *pantun* are as follows:

²³The Malay *pantun* has also influenced similar verse form in many other Indonesian regional languages, especially in Javanese (Hutomo 1993:XLIX). In the 19th century this Malay verse form was introduced into Western poetry by Ernest Fouinet (Cuddon 1977:468).

(1) The second word of each line rhymes. In the following example the rhyming sound is *i*.

Burung nuri burung dara

Terbang kesisi taman kayangan

Cobalah cari wahai saudara

Makin diisi makin ringan (cited from Alisjahbana 1985:17)

'A parrot and a pigeon, they fly towards heaven. Try to find (the answer), my friend, the more it is filled in, the lighter it is.'

(2) The second word of the first line rhymes with that of the third, and the second word of line two rhymes with that of line four. This pattern is shown by the following *pantun* wherein the word *manggis* 'mangosteen', line one, rhymes with *menangis* 'cry', line three; and *kakek* 'grandfather', line two, rhymes with *kakek* in line four. Consider this *pantun* below:

Pohon manggis di tepi rawa

Tempat kakek tidur beradu

Sedang menangis nenek tertawa

Melihat kakek bermain gundu (cited from Alisjahbana 1985:18).

'Mangosteen grows beside a swamp, a place where the grandfather sleeps. The grandmother was crying while she was laughing, as she saw the grandfather playing marbles.'

In contrast, the internal rhyme of the Acehnese *pantôn* follows the pattern of *sanjak*, but with a constant internal rhyme. Consider this example:

Rangkang di blang peudap ôn awé, rangkang di glé peudap ôn sala

Di gata na soe peuseunang haté, di lôn bahlé lôn peutheuen hawa (Zainuddin 1965:18).

'A rangkang in the rice field is roofed with rattan leaves; a rangkang in the hills is roofed with pine needles. You have someone who gives you pleasure, but I have to restrain my desire.'

The *é* sound in the word *awé* 'rattan' of the first half verse rhymes with the word *glé* 'hill' in the middle of the second half verse, and the *é* sound of the middle of the second verse in *haté* 'heart' rhymes with the *é* sound in *bahlé* 'let it be' in the middle of the last half-verse.

6.6.2 *Pantôn* of more than two verses

Sometimes *pantôn* may have more than two verses: some consist of three verses, some of four, and some of six.²⁴ The half-verses in a *pantôn* are known as *rungkhé*. A *pantôn* with a six-fold *rungkhé* is called *pantôn rungkhé nam*, with an eight-fold *rungkhé* is called *pantôn rungkhé lapan*, and with a twelve-fold *rungkhé* is called *pantôn rungkhé dua blah*. Such a long *pantôn* is, according to Zainuddin (1965:7), traditionally known as *haba meualeuet* or *haba meucanèk* 'flowery story'. This type is very rare and today it is almost never heard. It is interesting that a long *pantôn* seems to deviate from the general convention: it may make use of an extended metaphor with a more explicit interpretation than a *canèk* would normally have. Consider the following eight-fold *rungkhé pantôn* which alludes to a powerful person who uses others for their own interest and completely abandons them when the work is finished. These verses are laid out so that each line of the page is one *rungké* or half-verse. The first four *rungkhé* metaphorically build an image, whereas the message is conveyed by the last four *rungkhé*.

²⁴This is also true in Malay *pantun*. See, for example, Raffel (1967:12), Winstedt (1969:193ff), and Sudjiman (1986:55).

Kamoe geuneunöt lantui

Watèe geungui saja mulia

'Oh lheueh geuplah kayèe

Dalam abèe geugeulahwa

'Oh geumeublang sabé geu-uroh

Watèe keumeukoh kayém geumaba

'Oh lheueh jiwoe padé lam krông

Tôp keukubông böh-böh muka (Zainuddin 1965:6)

'We are like timber used as a mallet, valued when needed; once the wood is split, it is tossed aside. We are called on during the planting season, we are in demand at harvest time. Once the rice has been put in storage, the door is shut and they do not want to know us.'

Similarly the *canèk* or *bungong* is not employed in the twelve-fold *rungkhé pantôn* cited below. This *pantôn* describes a pathetic and unlucky situation faced by people at one point in life, using a string of images. In this case the *asoe* comes first, in line one, and the remaining eleven half-verses are a string of parallel images.

Beuranggapeue buet h'an lé asé

takeumawé putôh taloe

tateumeutak patah parang

tameulayang putôh taloe

taceumeulhö patah tungkat

taseumurat kuweuet jaroe

tateumeucob patah jarôm

tateumeuôm tutông asoe

tajeumeurang tiréh jalô

tageumarô luka asoe

tameurusa beukah aréng

tameujaréng putôh kanoe (Zainuddin 1965:6-7).

'All kinds of work are now difficult: we go fishing and the line breaks; we cut down trees and the machete snaps; we fly kites and the line breaks; we thresh rice and our sticks are broken; we write and the hand is strained; we sew and the needle breaks; we warm ourselves and get burned; we cross a river and the canoe leaks; we scratch ourselves and our flash gets a wound; we trap deer and the trap breaks; we go fishing with a net and the net breaks.'

6.7 Structure of the Text Layout

There is no single convention for the layout of Acehese poetry, either for *sanjak* or for *nalam* verses. We find a great variation in the ways the written verse is organised on the page. Since Acehese has been written in two scripts, the *Jawi* script and the Roman alphabet, and each has rather different types of layout, we will describe variations found in texts for both types of orthography.

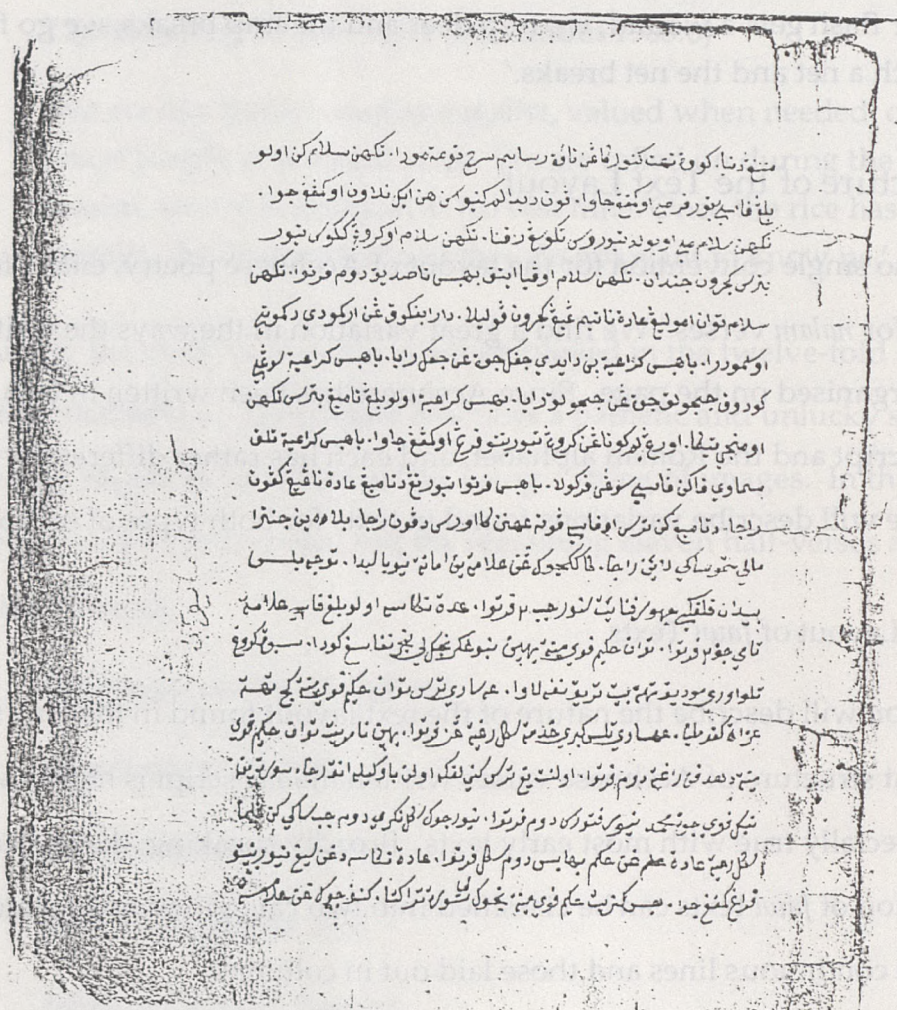
6.7.1 The Layout of *Jawi* Texts

This section will describe the nature of the text layout found in the *Jawi* texts. The layout structure of Acehese verses written in *Jawi* script is highly variable: this is especially true with most early texts. Broadly speaking, the layout organisation of *Jawi* texts can be classified into two categories: texts which are written in continuous lines and those laid out in columns.

6.7.1.1 The Texts Laid Out in Continuous Lines

In this category the text is written continuously on the page, like prose, and the verse does not correlate with the page lines. At a quick glance, such a layout

may look rather crowded, but it is understandable when we think of the cost of paper at that time: paper was very expensive and sometimes also scarce, especially during war. Traditionally the paper was obtained from as far away as Europe and China. A verse may begin at the beginning or at any part of a line. Markers may be used to separate verses, but there is no mark or symbol which indicates a half verse unit. There is variation in the use of markers at the end of a verse. For example, in the texts of *Hikayat Pocut Muhammad* and *Hikayat Malém Dagang* (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:320-324), the end of a verse is marked by a dot:



In the text of *Hikayat Makah Madinah* (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:344), the three-dot sign is used to end a verse:

تکن کن: انق کون دودی کمال جنتی هائی
بیچ منا: بیچ ری کو کنه کم کو تری دمناسری
لم جی ریا: تقصیر ما ما بک تاتره دام بین
دقا لم تا کن کتا: کمو هندی دعا دو هتا نسین
سی سموتن لم جالترا: بیتا لقا اوری مالم
دوم نلسی سلام لکود عا: بکلو سستی غنی کا
کتاری فی کهند و تا کارنیا: جنی کو مقصود
دعا بالخرین د فقیر کن ما کتا: دوم سن
سجود بک تاتوا در کنتی تا و ر حج جودا
بکا اود ب عمر خنجی نیم کو کنجی دو هتا
کنا: بک حاما ئی فای دودی دیک تفکری
بیچ هن فنا: بیچ ری مدا سلام کو تون انک
کن بیچ منا: کبه سلام ستر تعظیم کن تون
دوم بیچ تاتو هتا: سلام شمریم نبی محمد
سمیم عاده تفکری کتا: سسی تا هائی کا سم
سایغ تم تا بیچ حال دا کغ هتا: الحمد لله
ولم نهم هتا توده ننسبسا: هن خرابی لم

Whereas in the text of *Rawiyatôn Sabeu'ah* (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:348)

no mark at all is used to indicate the end of a verse:

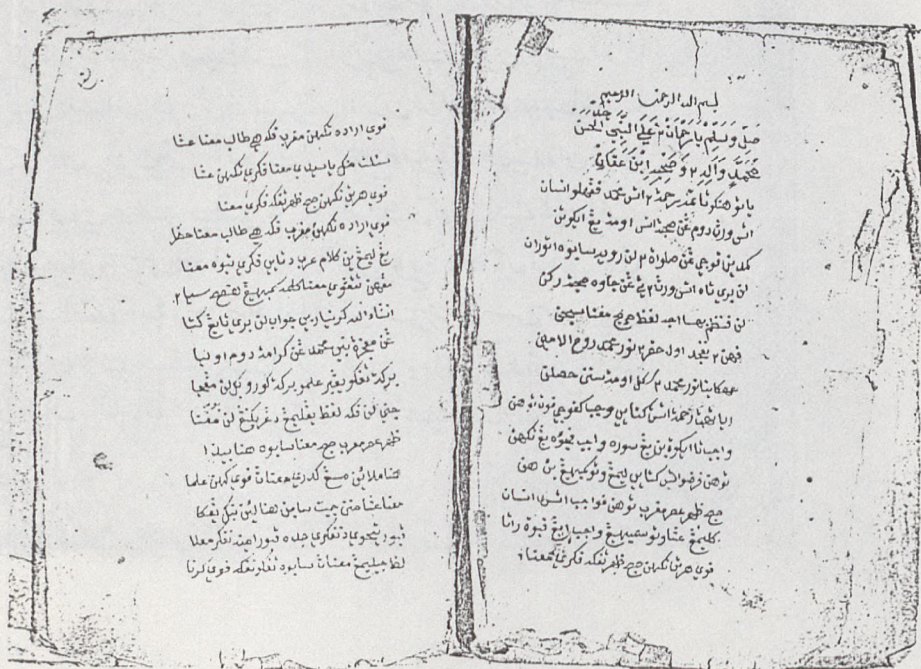
تغافل و دری گشت خدای او و غیبار سنی خان انقار
فین ایر ماس به چه پنا ایگان جفن زوی تن
وین تنی نجه بناتند فت هن دکا بهاس جوی میت
جنوین جبهه ایگان پیر آباد و م تنون تغافل غده
اولن فنه لم خدا هج و سرین سکوغ فله یهن ید جفوق
ملی جبهه ملا بولن محرم وری نجه ید بن ننه دوم چرترا
جفوقی نام کتاب الله توجه قصه جات سمنامول قصه
نور محمد تلمیسی نجات کن لنگا مترو قصه نجات صوفیه
احول اسکریه سنی سزاتند قیامه میرز سقوی تلمیسی
سوقیامه سکا تلمیسی ناکرک دوم غن اسبی قصه دو
دی امرکز شرکا پندر توجه دنیا قصه و کفن با الله
شهادت قصه خیر نور محمد ید فهن نجات یع فرنام
یه که الله قیات مظهر نور الی کرک یوهی انشا اس
ذات یفن صفته ین که نجات هی سنی سزاتند بن مخلوق
لاکی حال سنی یع قیات لمان الله و کاشی مفسه

6.7.1.2 The Texts Laid Out in Columns

This structure is generally found in more recent manuscripts. In this category, the main variation lies in the number of columns on the page, and whether the page is consisted of one, two or three columns. Other variations relate to the use of symbols or markers in dividing the columns.

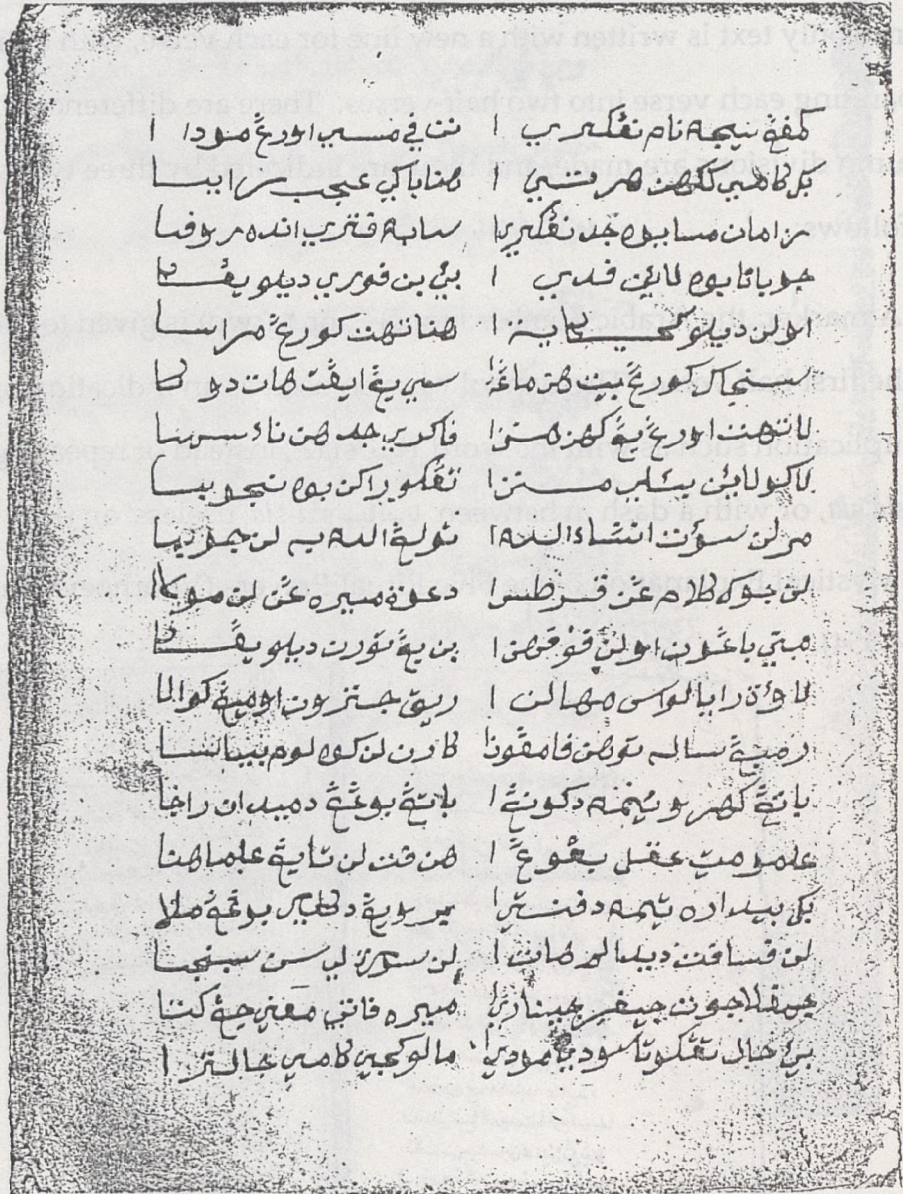
Commonly text is written with a new line for each verse, with a division separating each verse into two half-verses. There are differences in the ways column divisions are made, and these are indicated by three types of indicators as follows:

(1) A marker: the Arabic number ١ (one)²⁵, or ٢ (two) is given to indicate the end of the first half verse. The symbol ٢ is also used as an indication of word reduplication such as with the word سڀيا 'sia2', instead of repeating the word سڀيا *sia sia*, or with a dash in between سڀيا-سڀيا *sia-sia* 'useless' on page 2, line 6th, in the Mystical Explanation of the Five Ritual Prayers (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:354).

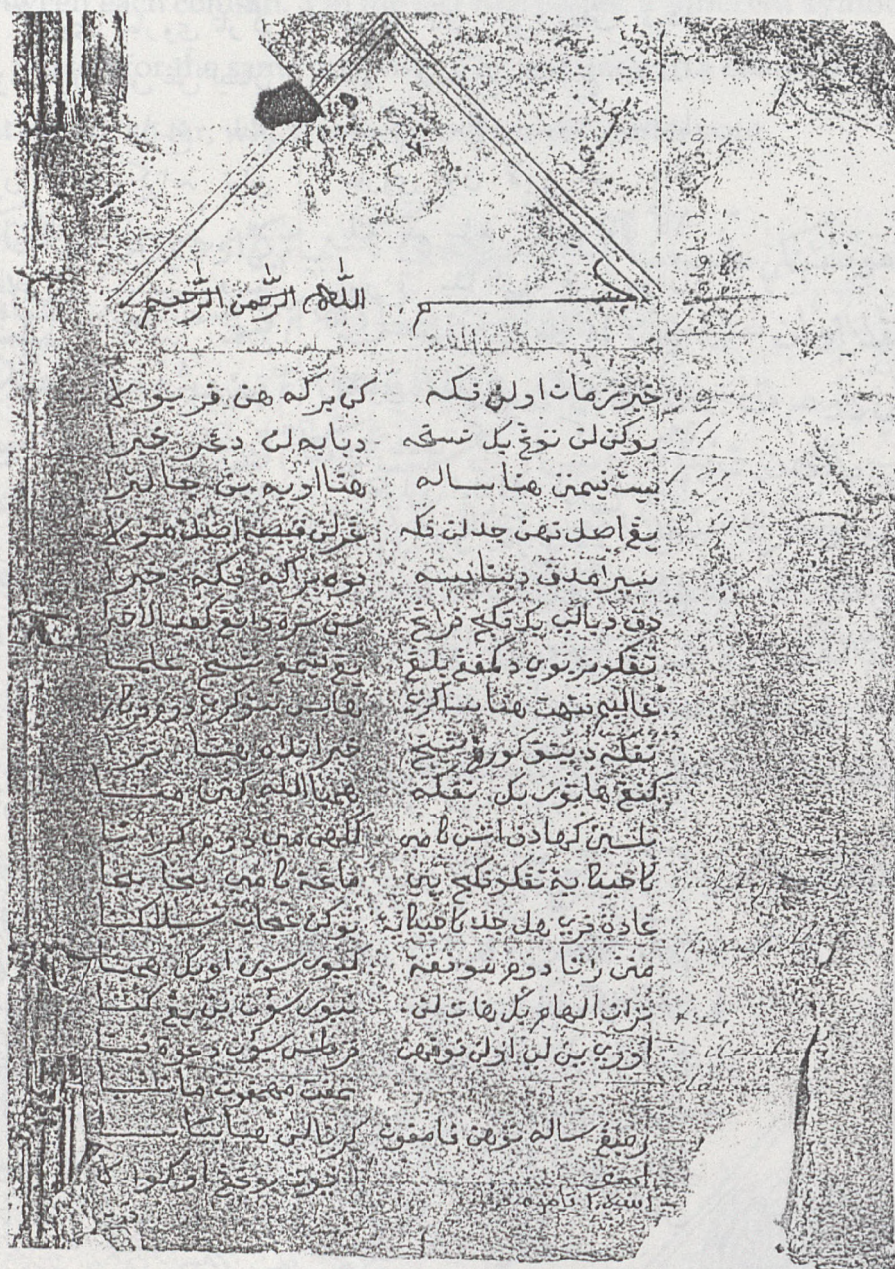


²⁵This character is also used for the first letter, alif, in Arabic.

(2) An empty space between the two halves of a line. Each first half of a verse is written in the right column and the second half is written in the left column. In this way the number of lines can determine the number of verse in a page. An example of this category can be seen in the text of *Hikayat Putroe Gumbak Meuih* (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:332).



In most other texts only a space indicates the column division. Among the early treatises, the text of *Hikayat Banta Beuransah* (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:328) fits in this category. Most Jawi texts published after 1960s, which are found in the market nowadays, belong to this group.²⁶ Consider the following example:



²⁶These include among others 1) *Bahaya Siribèe*, *Hikayat Syèh Padeulôn*, *Hikayat Siti Khazanah*, *Kisah Aulia Tujôh* (Murtadha Yusuf); *Akhbarôl Karim* (Tgk. Usman Fauzi); *Hikayat Nubuet Nabi Muhammad* (Tgk. M. Jakfar Abdullah); *Hikayat Wapheuet Nabi Muhammad dan Sahbat* (Tgk. H. Ahmad Yusuf); and *Cahaya Permata* (Tgk. Nyak Radén Usman Bakar and Ibnu Abbas Mön Mata).

(3) A third technique for dividing lines is to draw a vertical line or lines from the top to the bottom of each page which split a page into two halves. *Seujarah Darôssalam* (Tgk. Basyah Kamal Lhong 1959), for example, includes in this category.

<p>تامومۂ تاغن غن معاف دوشا دالم کنارغ تامغیش ماتا علیکم سالم نسوة سافا جاروی لون لایغ اته جالا بک نتم سایش کافن اوئن کالا اورغ مداکش هئا سودرا نبة قرآن قل هو بناچ کاموی مداکش هئا سافوی نا لون بری کراکن کتندا ماتا گنتو لون فولغ ایجا کروغ سوترا جینوی لون کارغ دغر براتا سمبوغ جیلید سا جینوی لون رنتغ کتنگکو مردا مکیسا کارغ نبری سجهترا واهی یا توهن اته گلی فنچا ردوق مرتدغ کتنگکو مودا سورة جیلاش دکوتا راجا منن چیه ماچم باکوغن تما غن تفأ توان کورغ ریکا بی نکا ماسم بک سابوه مساجد کفدومن دسینوی کانا کالیه لون کارغ جن ساکیه کورا رامه لم چاوان گنتو اومودا دالم اوری تراغ اکم غن دارا بک ناتا سمفن</p>	<p>سینوی کتایوی جاروی تارگم گنتو سالم لون کهن غن لیسان کادغ متمغ نیک اتغ بلغ منن لون حاجه کرابه تولن کادغ لون ماتې دگلی غن دبلغ نتم خندوری سسیسی فیسغ نتم سلمه سفتنه کلام نهارف فهلا رایا بک ترهن چوما یغ موده فگه کنارغ گنتو صدقه سیداله بوه منجغ معاف لون لا کوی مریدوی اولغ اما بعد لاجو لون ریکا جینوی هی ادوی لون فتو هبا دغن افواه شیده کوالا داوجوغ دوروغ اورغ مروسا کبه اوندغن لون توان بوکا داچیه بارة کیته ته سوکا تروه اوسغکی نحاصل کتکا فت ۲ یغ کورغ بی نکهن چیدرا اوبی یغ موفهوم لون سوسون لنجا سبغوه عوه دودوی هن مومبنا گنتو اولون جوق فوجوق اوئن چافا گنتو فیسغ کلت اوبه بک گوها فاتوه تاکه قصه علما</p>
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A very rare example of a three-column text is a manuscript of *Hikayat Syama'un* (Nyak 'Isyah Ali 1658), the oldest Acehese manuscript, each column containing half of a verse. A symbol, which looks like the Arabic ر, with a decorative figure on top of it, is used at the beginning and end of each page line, and between each column. On the last two pages, a different symbol, a small circle, is used for the same purpose. The text ends in a colophon. This is the only text found, so far, which is set in a three-column layout.

هين مويند کي يقيناً کهن سراقه يي کمي بک اوري پي ننک کتا
کنايظ اولن سيد ديا نالن کي بک بجا را قريش جواب هينا معلوم
بک کي دوم دن بجا را بک کي يقيناً مفهوم يي دن بک معلوم ننک کتا
بکيت ناکه صدق ننک کي ابيجا رپي کتا بکي اوري خجني سيد ديا
کد يه اونکر کتا اسکلدارا سيد ديا اوري خجني دن بک قنوان کهي نيا
پراي نهت غي فصولات اويخ اوقهن فراخ بک ارا بکي اوقه دن بک ديو
دوم قالو بکي کمر يي بجا را بک ان کالو فکر يي دن بک مويند کتا
جواب قريش دن موفقه مشيو حاجه اکل سمندرنا اسراقه کهن جبي تا ايقت
بک ناسنا قصه نافخه يي ناخه هو يي المطلب جک کا عايب کتا يي دومين

۱۰ جگر و حی قولی کشف کنی ۱۰ تنوخی بیر ارقا دعوا به طاعتی کان فکم ۱۰
 ۱۰ کافا تنص لیه علماء ستمفران فریوتی ۱۰ نکوایم کهن قولی ارقا ۱۰
 ۱۰ دیدلرینا جیت فکر عاده فرایض هنجید هنا نکوایم ۱۰
 ۱۰ عاده فرایض نکوایم هنجید هنا لا تقو کبریا ۱۰
 ۱۰ صدقه مت فیصم نیلی خبر امین ۱۰
 ۱۰ یارب العالمین قبول مؤمن ۱۰
 ۱۰ لکود عامی ساجده ۱۰
 ۱۰ سکون قولی ۱۰
 ۱۰ لاف سنن ۱۰
 ۱۰ تنم ۱۰
 ۱۰ هیا ۱۰
 ۱۰

6.7.2 The Layout of the Texts Written in the Roman Alphabet

With regard to line organisation, a major difference is found between texts produced by Dutch writers or those indigenous writers who had been trained and/or employed by Dutch people on the one hand, and the texts produced by the indigenous writers on the other.

6.7.2.1 Printed Texts Produced by the Dutch Writers

The general layout characteristic of text in this category has each verse written in one line, and the lines are not grouped into stanzas. However, there are variations in the way punctuation and other markers are used to indicate the half verse break and the end of a verse. In some texts we find that a comma is used at the end of each first half unit of a verse to indicate a division of the two half units, while in other texts a long dash (—) is used for the same purpose.

When a line space cannot accommodate the whole verse—this is commonly the case with the 20 syllable verse—variations are found in the way the remaining words, often one or two, are written. In some texts the extra word (s) are written at the beginning of a new line, while in others they are written underneath the end part of the line with or without a square bracket, following a European convention. Damsté, for example, in his rendering of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (Damsté 1928)²⁷ uses a long dash marker for the half line break and writes the remaining word(s) underneath the end portion of a line. Consider the example below:

sit njang neublöë atra ngòn njawòng — tapeutamòng oeba^s
[prang sabi
neublöë ka lheuëh meuhaj hareuga — keu joem tjeuroega
[njang that tinggi

²⁷However, Damsté's later work, *Hikayat Èelia Tuijòh* (Damsté 1939) differs with this one, that is the square bracket is not used to block the remaining words of a verse which are written underneath the end part of a line.

(It is wealth and soul that God has bought; let us relinquish these in the holy war. God has bought these at great cost; the price is highest heaven).

A rather different style is employed by Tgk. Mohamad Noerdin in *Kitab Bungong Situngkôy* (Tgk. Muhammad Noerdin 1930) where he uses a comma as a half line break and the remaining word(s) are written underneath the end portion of a line without a square bracket. Consider the following example:

Meung njang inong doem koepaloe, āgam oe timoe koepoebleut
mata
Bè' kamarah keu oereueng nanggroë, lôn njang peugoë bidjèh
mata
Pakon tapeugoë ma teungkoe droë, takheun djeunoë peue keu-
reuna

'The women will be hammered; the men will chased to the East. Do not scold the common people, I was the one who wake her up. Why did you wake her (the princess) up? Now tell me the reason.'

In some texts, a comma is used as a half line break but no punctuation is used to indicate the end of a verse. The remaining word (s) of a line are written at the beginning of a new line. This type is employed by Drewes in both his renderings of *Hikayat Pocut Muhammad* (Drewes 1979) and of *Hikayat Ranto* and *Hikayat Teungku Di Meukék* (Drewes 1980) as in the following example:

Tanggôh ngôn piké umu lhèe uroe, neuu lumpoe leumah rusia
Yôh nyan uroe pi ka seupôt, that klam kabôt sagai dônya
Teukeudirôllah peurintah Tuhan, Pocut intan leumah rusia
Ka leumah lam rusia Allah, Tuhan bri tuwah deungön bagai
Na nyeum neuék gunong nyang manyang, leumah neupandang sagai
dônya (Drewes 1979:38).

'It took three days (for the Prince) to make up his mind; then he saw a vision in his dream. The day time has turned to night; the world has become dark. It is by God's permission that the Prince had a dream. God revealed a secret; the Prince was granted good luck and happiness. He felt like he was climbing a high mountain; he could see the whole world.'

6.7.2.2 Printed Texts Produced by Indigenous Writers

A universal characteristic of the texts produced by indigenous writers in Roman script lies in the verse layout. One verse is written across two lines: each line consists of a half verse. One 'stanza' then consists of two verses or four lines on the page.²⁸ This stanza does not necessarily constitute an actual textual unit; more often it is an orthographic device to facilitate easier reading, or a melodic arrangement.²⁹ Nevertheless the two-verse unit is important feature of printed texts produced by indigenous writers.

The situation is similar with *nalam* as with *sanjak*. *Nalam* is composed in couplets as indicated by the rhyme scheme, but when written in traditional *Jawi* script, the couplets of *nalam* are not organised in stanzas—each verse follows the other without a break. We can see this, for example, in the *Jawi* version of *Nalam Wajéb Iman* 'The Nalam of Compulsory Faith', printed in the book of *Hikayat Wapheuet Nabi Muhammad* (Tgk. Murtadha Yusuf 1987, copyist), which is 51 couplets in length. However, when this same *nalam* was reproduced in the Roman script by Anzib Lamnyong (1974), he grouped each couplet into a stanza.

²⁸An exception should be made in this case for the works of Teukoe Mansoer Leupung (*Sanggamara* and *Robinson Crusoe*): each verse is organised in a stanza, except for the *pantôn* verses which he uses as a transitional marker throughout the text: a stanza is made up of two verses and each verse is split in two lines. Drewes (1979), in his edition of *Hikajat Potjut Muhamat*, made no mention of such melodic arrangements.

²⁹A common melody is two verses: the same melody is repeated every two verses. This melodic structure is especially consistent in the verses of *pantôn*. Sometimes a melody is one verse. An unusual three-verse melody, which sometimes ends in the middle of the line, is reported by Siegel (1976:329).

Variation is found in the use of punctuation such as comma, colon, semicolon, and full stop at the end of each line. In most texts a verse is treated as a complete sentence and therefore it ends with a full stop. A comma is used at the end of every first line, i.e. the first half of a verse, which is considered as part of a complete sentence. This structure can be found, for example, in the texts of *Wajéb Iman*, edited by Anzib Lamnyong (1974), *Miftahul 'Ibadah*, by Tgk. Basyah Kamal Lhông (1977)³⁰; *Hikayat Raja Istambôï*, by T. Raja Mahmud Suddin T. (1963): and in some works of Syèh Rih Krueng Raya³¹ such as *Hikayat Hasan Husén* (1959), *Peunoh Harapan* (1959), *Kareuna Ma Tuan* (1968), and *Nasib Aneuk Meuntui* (1970).

Seot 'Ali karamallah,
 Ensya Allah Tuhân pelahra.
 Yoh nyan memoe tuanta 'Ali,
 Ne-e Sôï ka naze'a

Nyum getanom droene sajan,
 Ingat penesan Fatimah Zuhra.
 Lheeh nekhen nyan han le narit,
 Kalimah Tauhid han le nebaca.

Hingga teka tengoh malam,
 Troh panggelan Allah Ta'ala.
 Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un,
 Rahmat Allah ateeh gata.

In some other texts we find that a comma is used at the end of the second line (i.e. to indicate the end of the first verse) while a full stop is only used at the end of the fourth line (i.e. to indicate the end of a stanza). No punctuation is used at the end of each half verse, i.e. end of line one and three. This can be

³⁰The original text of this *hikayat* is written *Jawi* script by Tgk Basyah Kamal Lhông. Anzib Lamnyong (1977) made a transliteration of the text into the Roman alphabet.

³¹Some other works of Syèh Rih Krueng Raya employ a different type of layout structure. It is possible that the layout structure is determined by the publisher rather than by the composer himself.

seen in *Nasib Acèh 'The Fate of Aceh'* (Abdullah Arif 1956), *Sya'ir Kerukunan Rakyat Acèh A Poem of Peace for Acehnese People'* (Abdullah Arif 1962).

ALHAMDULILLAH pudjoë keu Tuhan
Seulaweuët sadjan akan saidina,
Seulaweuët sakeuem ateuch djändjôngan
Dudoë nibak njan keumokmin dumna.

Rakan ngon sahbat umat Islam
Dara ngon agam ban saboh dônja,
Sjahdan adapôn waba'dulkalam
Lôm bri maklumkan sipatah haba.

NASIB ATJEH njoë djinoë hai rakan
Lôn bri sambôngan djiléd keudua,
Djiléd njang keuphôn ka lheuch lôn peutrang
Djinoë lôn karang djiléd keudua.

Another variation can be seen in *Lhè Saboh Nang* (De Vries and Aboebakar 1932), *Meutia: Seunambat Lhè Saboh Nang* (De Vries and Aboebakar 1932); *Seumangat Acèh* (Abdullah Arif 1956), *Pantôn Acèh: Pantôn Ureueng Tuha* (Abdullah Arif 1958); (3) where a comma is used at the end of each line, except at the end of line four where a full stop is used to mark the end of a stanza.

Bandum meucheuluk didalam 'alam,
Karônja Tuhan peutan ngon peuna,
Neupeudjeuet uroë geunantoë malam,
Putéh ngon hitam Tuhan peurupa.

E Ja Ilahy, Gata njang Rahman,
Tabri tulôngan keulôn njang hina,
Lôn meung tji sambông udjông karangan,
Haba pandangan keulileng dônja.

E ja Tuhanku, Gata njang trôih pham,
Laén tjit'awan umat dum njang na,
Bubé njang ék djeuet batjut lôn peutrang,
Lôn keumeung karang habaran dônja.

In a nursery rhyme *Peulalée Adoe* (Jauhari Ishak, Khalid Ibrahim and Abu Hani 1974), for example, only a full stop is used at the end of the fourth line and no other punctuation is used.

do kuda ldo
si bunsu jak ku dodo
beureujang rayek dara baro
teumpat geuro asoe ate ma.

do kuda ldang
cicem subang ateueh pageue
beureujang rayek putroe seudang
oh tuha ma na soe saweue.

In the text of *Hikayat Raja Jeumpa* (Abu Za'im 1960) a comma is used at the end of line one and three, semicolon is used at the end of the first verse in a stanza (i.e. the end of line two), and full stop is used at the end of the fourth line to indicate the end of a stanza.

Ladju lé neuék dalam meuligoë,
Diradja nanggroë ka beungéh raja;
Neuhila peudeueng neumat bak djaroe.
Neutrón lé dudoë di Radja Muda.

Ladju ka neudjak bak sinjak putroe.
Hingga tróih sampoe u leuen astana;
Meuhej lé sigra jóhnjan aneuk droë,
Seureuta sigo ngon radja Djeumpa.

Wahé aneuk lón djantóng haté droë,
Wahé sambinoë dan Radja Djeumpa;
Ta trón keuh keunoë wahé tjut putroe,
Ta trón beusigo dua ngon radja.

In some texts no punctuation is used at all at the end of any line. This can be found in the works of Zainuddin such as *Hikayat Prang Sabil* (1960), *Bungong Rampoe* (1965); in the works of Araby Ahmad such as *Tanda Mata* (1959), *Si Miskin* (1959), *Hikayat Tajul Muluk* (1961); and in *Hikayat Putroe Hijô Ngön Meureuhôm Acèh* (M. Thaib Sany 1960).

Salèh teusinggoong adeek ngon poleem
 Salèh han djiteem tjotjok tjalitra
 Sifeuet di Insan silap tjit kajeem
 Ka meunan lazeem ateuch rueng doonja

Saboh tjalitra loon keumeung kireem
 Gantoë peusunteeng sjeèdara dumna
 Geunantoe loon djook bak saboh muscem
 Euntjien ngon peundeeng keu tanda mata

Salèh susunan sungkap geunireeng
 Salèh tjit djuleeng loon tuan rika
 Salèh tan bèda batang ngon ranteeng
 Salèh tan ta'zheem bak susoon haba

Salèh tjit meutjree njang hak meudjandreeng
 Salèh tjit leumbeeng loon sangka suda
 Bak mita kujuen salèh rooh makeen
 Bak mita gantjeeng rooh kawat buta

6.7.3 Some Other Features of The Text

There are some other typical textual features found in Acehnese texts, such as the beginning and the closing. We will first examine some typical opening features. Two common features mark the beginning of a text.

(1) The text begins with the use of an Arabic word or expression such as *bismillahirrahmanirrahim* 'in the name of God, the beneficent, the merciful', *alhamdulillah* 'praise God', *subhanallah* 'glory God', usually in praise of God and the prophet, or as greeting expression such as *assalamu 'alaikôm* 'peace be to you'. Consider the examples below:

ALHAMDU LILLAH pudjoë keu Tuhan.
Njang pëudjeuot 'alam ban sigom dônja,
Seulaweuet saleuem ateneh djandjôngan
Saidilmukarram rasul njang 'a'la.

Teuma keuwaréh, sahbat ngon taulan,
Laén nibak njan keumokmin dumna,
Amma Ba'du ladju 'oh lheueh njan.
Saleuem lôn tuan keurakan dumna.

(2) The text begins with a *pantôn*. In *Dèsja dan Seeksa* 'Sin and punishment' (Abidin Maqam 1959:7), for example, the following *pantôn* is used:

Di binèh rumoh timoh bak giri
Di binèh guci timoh bak gadông
Deungo rakan jroh nyoe saboh rawi
Hal Salma Siti wanita gampông

'A grapefruit grows near the house, a purple yam grows near the water jar. Listen, my friends, to this story; about Salma Siti, a village woman'

One common closing feature of Acehnese text is that some mentions of the author, the day and date when the work is completed, and the place where the work is composed are made. In many text we find the word *tamat* 'the end' at the end part of a text. It is common that some early Jawi texts end with a colophon, but it is not the case with later ones.

6.8 Summary and Conclusion

Narit meupakhôk 'rhyming speech/text' is the term used to refer to rhyming poetry in Acehnese. Two types of metrical pattern are identified in Acehnese poetry: *sanjak* and *nalam* metre. *Sanjak* is the metre in which most Acehnese poetry is composed. A *sanjak* verse consists of four intonation groups: G1, G2, G3, and G4, each normally has a pair of iambic feet, or a combination of one iambic foot and one anapaestic foot. An iambic foot comprises two syllables, the second of which is stressed; while an anapaestic foot consists of three syllables and the stress falls on the last one.

A verse composed in *nalam* metre consists of only three intonation groups: G1, G2, and G3 with two iambic feet each. Thus a *nalam* verse normally has twelve syllables. The *nalam* metrical pattern is only found in poems also known as *nalam*.

There are two common types of rhyme structure in *narit meupakhôk*: end rhyme and internal rhyme, and these are found in both *sanjak* and *nalam* verses. The end rhyme pattern is fixed in *sanjak*: the same end rhyme is employed across a number of verses. However, in *nalam* there is a variable end rhyme which links pairs of verses into rhyming couplets. Two types of internal rhyme may be found in *sanjak*: one is primary and obligatory and the other is secondary and optional. The primary rhyme is absolutely essential: without it *sanjak* verse would be felt to be extremely deficient. In contrast the secondary rhyme adds an additional complexity or richness to a *sanjak* verse. The structure of the primary internal rhyme is as follows: the final syllable of G2 rhymes with the final syllable of G3. The secondary internal rhyme pattern is: the final syllable of G1 rhymes with the last syllable of the first foot of G2. Some *nalam* has an internal rhyme, and its pattern is as follows: the final syllable of G1 rhymes

with the final syllable of G2. Not all *nalam* has this internal rhyme and this possibility appears to have been borrowed from *sanjak*.

Sometimes we may find that the quality of rhyme is imperfect, when a composer fails to achieve the general rhyme patterns. This is then called *hana keunöng pakhôk* 'the rhyme does hit the mark', and the verse which falls into this category is marked as *janggal* 'awkward'. Rhyme imperfections may also be related to the use of Arabic loans.

The variations found in the physical layout of written and printed texts are connected to economic and technological conditions of the time when the texts were printed. The earlier texts, both in *Jawi* and Roman scripts, were mostly written continuously or in columns. Our impression is that an earlier writer tried to utilise as much of the surface of the paper as possible, so that not much of a page is left empty.

With regard to more recent texts, most of them were printed after Indonesia became independent when the printing technology in the country, especially in Aceh, was still very limited. The typewriter was often the only tool which people could use to print. Most of the texts were printed in small duplicated books or booklets, a half or a quarter of an A4 page. This means that the page was not wide enough to fit a whole verse across in the traditional style.

Although printing technology has changed and developed a great deal in Aceh, present publishers of Acehnese poetry in Roman script have continued the tradition of half-verse lines. We also find that verses were grouped in pairs with these texts.

Chapter 7

Poetry in Use

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with how poetry is used in Acehnese culture. It surveys the purposes for which poetry is used and the contexts in which it occurs. Also included is description of the various types of performance, be it cultural or religious, of which the recitation of poetry is an integral part.

Poetic performances occur in a wide variety of contexts which are conventionally recognised as being ones in which poetry is used. These include *hikayat*, *ratéb*, *seudati*, *nasib*, *rapai*, *liké*, *lagu*, *meukat ubat*, and *meurajah*. Some of these performances are distinctively Acehnese—that is they are created in Acehnese and do not have close parallels in other language(s)—and some others are originated in or adapted from other languages. In this case possible origins may be found in Malay, Javanese, Arabic, Persian, and Indian (Abdullah 1991: 69).

7.2 Purposes of Acehnese poetry

Acehnese poetry is composed to serve specific conventional purposes or functions, which will be outlined in the following discussion. We can distinguish seven major purposes of poetry in Acehnese society:

- i) as entertainment;
- ii) as a means of cultural transmission for the maintenance of cultural traditions;
- iii) as a pedagogical device;
- iv) as a persuasive device;
- v) as a means of worship;
- vi) as a means of preserving and passing on personal experience;
- vii) as a means in the performance of various kinds of speech events (e.g. in magic incantations, wedding negotiations, curses, and lullabies).

These purposes are not mutually exclusive but embedded in various day-to-day aspects of life of the society.

7.2.1 Entertainment

Like many other traditional communities in the archipelago, Acehnese people enjoy practising and listening to various kinds of verbal arts. These range from purely verse forms such as *hikayat*, *pantôn*, and *nalam*, to the prose narrative *haba* 'stories'. Verbal arts may be expressed with or without the accompaniment of musical instruments.

Public gatherings, be it cultural, social and religious alike, are often enlivened with poetic performance. There are many factors that make poetry entertaining. Firstly, people are entertained by the rhyme and rhythm of poetry: the aesthetic qualities of the sound itself. Secondly, people are entertained by the message conveyed by poetry. Thirdly, people are entertained by the melodious performance of the reciter or performer, which may be enhanced by use of musical instruments.

7.2.2 Cultural Transmission

Acehnese poetry is an integrated part of Acehnese oral folklore. It has been used by the Acehnese people to preserve their experience, history and traditions. Norms and values are shaped through texts through which we will

be able to understand the way the people think and the values they hold at the time. Phrases of poetry are evocative of Acehnese life, and may even be thought of as a code which represents a wealth of experience of life. Often a short Acehnese verse may convey a meaning which can be a substitute for a lengthy explanation in prose. For example, one only need to say '*oh leupah krueng jiglueng rakét*' ('having crossed a river, the raft is kicked away') to illustrate the attitude of a selfish person who is ungrateful to other people who have helped him or her in one way or another. When a person intends to learn Acehnese culture, one has to make oneself familiar with very many of such texts. Therefore, poetry plays a major role for the Acehnese people to maintain their cultural traditions. For example, much oral history of Aceh and the Acehnese people is preserved in the form of *hikayat*, and cultural values and traditions are preserved in *pantôn* or *hadih maja*.

One will not be able to achieve a comprehensive understanding and knowledge concerning the values of Acehnese traditional culture without gaining a familiarity with Acehnese poetry in its various forms.

7.2.3 Poetry as a Pedagogical Device

As mentioned elsewhere (see Chapter Three), in Acehnese traditional society the *dayah* was the principal institution where formal education was conducted through the medium of Malay or Arabic. However only the minority of school-aged children attended such formal education, whereas the rest gained their knowledge informally, as their lives progressed, through various social activities taking place in the community. Occasionally those who had attended the *dayah* education would transform their formal knowledge into Acehnese verse in the form *nalam* or *hikayat*, so that they would be able to share it with the rest of the community, many of whom were not literate.

In the villages it is common that children make use of verse in their learning: they memorise a few verses concerning the attributes of God, such as *Nalam Sipheuet Dua Plôh* 'verses concerning the twenty attributes of God'; the stories of the Prophet Muhammad, such as *Hikayat Nubuet Nabi Muhammad* 'verses about the Prophet Muhammad'; and the rewards or punishment that human beings will receive after death, such as *Hikayat Bahaya Siribèe* 'verses about one thousand calamities'. Even a guide to learning Malay was composed in verse known as *Hikayat Basa Jawoe* 'verses about the Malay language' as an aid for the Acehnese speakers in their Malay language education (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:243).

7.2.4 A Persuasive Device

The effectiveness of using poetry for this purpose has especially been shown by the effect of war epics such as the heroic poems of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* 'verses of the Holy War' and *Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni* 'verses of the Dutch War'. The former played a major role in resisting the Dutch: upon listening to this *hikayat* listeners would trade their lives in the battle field for heavenly rewards (see for example Hasjmy 1971, Reid 1979, and Siegel 1979). A detailed description of such war *hikayat* is given in Chapter Eight.

7.2.5 A Means of Worship

Acehnese poetry is used in contexts of religious worship known as *ratéb* and *rapai* (see detailed description of these in section 7.5 and 7.6 below). In this case, religious formulas are composed in verses and they are chanted repeatedly as an act of worship.

7.2.6 A Means of Preserving Personal Experience

There are some exceptionally interesting poetic works in Acehnese intended for this purpose. Earlier in this century Leubè Isa recorded his experience of living in the pepper gardens on the West Coast in what we know as *Hikayat Ranto* (see also Drewes 1980:2-ff). Following this, Abdullah Arif in his *Seumangat Aceh*, did

the same with his travelling experiences to Europe and North America.

Teungku Hasan Ibrahim of Bireuen also preserved his personal life experiences in *Ana Wahiya* 'I and she' (see Chapter Eight). The songs of Ibnoe Arhas, *Ureueng India* 'the Indian person', and Sabirin Lamno, *Adék Marina* 'Miss Marina', also reflect their personal experience (see section 7.9.2.2 below).

7.2.7 A Means in the Performance of Various Kinds of Speech Events

As mentioned elsewhere, the use of poetic language is an integral part of day-to-day communication in Acehnese society. In various speech events people would choose to express themselves in poetic language rather than in plain one. At a wedding, for example, negotiations between the bride and the groom's families are traditionally expressed in poetry. Virtually all lullabies are in verse. Some abusive phrases or curses are also found to be composed in verse. A formal speech would be seen as less successful if the speaker did not evoke one or two verses of poetry.

7.3 Poetry in Non-poetic Contexts

As in many other languages of the archipelago, Acehnese poetry exists in a vital tradition of oral composition: the use of poetic language is highly prevalent wherever Acehnese is used. We can observe that generally poetry is used in two kinds of contexts. We find that some kinds of speech events, including many performance types, must take place in poetry. For example language used in a song or a *seudati* dance will necessarily be in poetry. On the other hand, poetry is commonly used in speech contexts which are not distinctively poetic. The bulk of this chapter is concerned with what may be called poetic contexts, where the dominant mode of language use is poetic. however let us first consider the role of poetry more generally, as it is used in non-poetic contexts.

Phrases of poetry are frequently used in virtually any Acehnese speech context. This is particularly true of the form known as *pantôn* —the structure which has already been described in the previous chapter—and the proverbial sayings known as *hadih maja*.

7.3.1 The Use of *Pantôn*

Pantôn are frequently used in people's daily conversation. One may be uttered to give emphasis to a particular message whether a piece of advice, a humorous remark, sarcasm or even an abuse and threat. A talk, especially a public one, will usually sound rather plain to the ears of many Acehnese without the accompaniment of a number of *pantôn*. In the market or in other traditional business settings, we often hear people use *pantôn* in selling goods. Here is an example of a *pantôn* used by a fish seller, cited from De Vries and Aboebakar (1932:44-45):¹

Eungkôt, eungkôt

Meung h'an tabloe hana patôt

Ikan bulan eungkôt bagok

Barangsoe harok saboh jitôt

'Fish, fish; if you do not buy, that's not good. *Bulan* fish! *Bagok* fish!
Anyone who wishes can bake one.'

¹In this chapter, for ease of presentation, I will use a line for each half-verse or *rungkhé*. This follows contemporary conventions for presenting Acehnese poetry in Roman script.

Bloe hai bloe

Mangat reujang kamoe meuwoe

Mubri mantong murah-murah

Rugoe samah h'an meuihroe

'Buy! Come on, buy! So that we can go home soon. We will give you a cheap price; even if we make a loss we do not care.'

Pantôn can occur in many contexts which are not distinctively poetic. However they also appear frequently in poetic works which use *sanjak*, such as *hikayat*, *nasib*, *ratéb*, *rapai*, and *seudati*, and *pantôn* are often chanted as lullabies.

However, *pantôn* never appear in *nalam* as their metre is incompatible with that of *nalam* (see section 6.3.2).

Some texts are completely composed as a sequence of *pantôn*: this may be true for example of formal conversations at weddings (see section 7.8.1), and also some *h'iem* 'riddles' are composed in *pantôn* format (see section 7.13).

We also find that a *pantôn* may appear in the midst of a poem which is not itself in *pantôn* form. One may be used as an opening formula or *khuteubah* in a text of *hikayat* (Abdullah 1988:60) such as in *Ana Waliya*, the work of Tgk. Hasan Ibrahim of Bireuen. More frequently *pantôn* are used as a transitional marker—to shift from one episode to another or from one subject to another. In *Hikayat Pocut Muhammad* the following *pantôn* is used to introduce a new section of the narration about Banta Muda.

Aneuk siwaih jipho u blang

Daruet canggang susah raya

Bah lônpeuduek siat 'ohnan

Lôn kurangan Banta Muda

'A baby hawk flies to a rice field; the (giant) grasshopper is in trouble.
Let me stop here (about this subject); I will narrate about Banta Muda.'

In *Hikayat Robinson Crusoe* (Teukoe Mansoer Leupung 1970), the author employs *pantôn* as a marker of end rhyme shift. With the *pantôn* below, he shifts from an *oe-a* (from previous verses, not shown in this example) into *é-am* end rhyme:

Pucôk krueng Leupung na Gampông Pandé

Seutöt binèh glé geupula nilam

Lôn tuka ayat ngön huruh maté

Misé mim maté ka jipoh lé lam (p.91)

'Gampông Pandé lies at the Leupung river upstream; the *nilam* plants are grown along hill side. I shift the rhyme into a consonantal ending.'

In this section we have seen that *pantôn* are used in various kinds of non-poetic contexts, e.g. conversations, speeches, and in the market place. They are also found embedded in larger poetic texts such as *hikayat*.

7.3.2 The Use of *Hadih Maja* 'ancestral sayings'

In Acehese we also find that many proverbial sayings are in poetry. These are known as *hadih maja*². The word *hadih* bears a strong cultural significance as it

²In the Preface to *Peribahasa Aceh*, Adnan Hanafiah and colleagues (1977:x) proposed to use the term *narit*, thus *narit maja*, instead of *hadih* because the latter bears sacred values as it is a religious term referring to the prophet's sayings, and is not felt to be appropriate to use it in reference to the sayings of the ordinary people.

derives from a religious context of Arabic *hadith* 'the sayings of Prophet Muhammad' which function as a code of law in Islamic tradition. *Hadih maja* are old sayings: words of advice from the ancestors concerning rules of everyday life. They address moral values which are not prescribed by religion. *Hadih maja* is usually expressed in short poetic phrases: concise and meaningful but somewhat variable in their poetic form. Consider the following example, cited from Hasjim M.K. (1969):

Adat meukoh reubông,

hukôm meukoh purieh.

Adat jeuet beurangho takông,

hukôm h'an jeuet beurangho takieh (p.11).

'*Adat* (i.e. cultural traditions) is like cutting bamboo shoot, (but) law is like cutting bamboo ladder. *Adat* can be interpreted loosely, but law cannot.'

Note that this saying has an alternating final end-rhyme in *ieh* and *ông*, and also a poetic structure being composed of two couplets. It also has dual parallelism, each couplet contrasting law and tradition. However there is no internal rhyme, and the second couplet is longer than the first. Such sayings are very frequent, and although some may be recognised as being in *pantôn* form, many, like this one, are not. They are not distinctively characterised by use in a poetic text: indeed an irregular rhyme or rhythmic pattern may make some sayings difficult to incorporate into *sanjak* poetry.

Such sayings, and also *pantôn*, form a rich repository of cultural traditions. The above example is useful as an illustration of the way in which poetry helps to strengthen cultural values. We can see this by examining the use of keywords in this *hadih maja*. These keywords are *adat* 'cultural traditions', *hukôm* 'law', *reubông* 'bamboo shoot', *purieh* 'bamboo ladder', *kông* 'turn', and *kieh* 'interpret

analogically'. Each of these keywords carries a very strong connotation in Acehnese culture. In order to understand this *hadih maja*, first of all one needs to understand the meaning of the keywords and their significance in the life of the Acehnese people. Furthermore, one also needs to trace why a particular word is paired with another, such as *adat* with *reubông* and *hukôm* with *purieh*. *Reubông* 'bamboo shoot' is a common vegetable item in Acehnese traditional cuisine. No rule is set on how and when to cut it up: there is no harm if one does it in his or her own way. So is *adat*: there is a great flexibility in dealing with it. *Purieh* 'bamboo ladder' is a bamboo trunk used for climbing up trees, especially palm. The bamboo chosen for this purpose must be strong, usually a mature and full-grown one. Once this bamboo is used as a *purieh*, it is no longer seen as a common bamboo: it has become a very significant tool for the user in earning his or her living. Therefore, cutting or breaking the *purieh* means destroying a tool by which a person makes a living: it causes serious consequences. This is interpreted to mean that dealing with law is a serious matter: law cannot be handled carelessly as it may bring serious consequence. Thus *adat* is flexible, but law is definite.

Although *hadih maja* do not necessarily express religious doctrine, many people take them as truths and they believe that breaking their advice may bring harm to life. We can see therefore that in everyday Acehnese, speaking poetic sayings—including *pantôn* and *hadih maja*—plays an extremely important role.

However our primary concern in this chapter is with the uses of poetic texts which form distinct genres or performance types in their own right. These are contexts in which poetry is the primary mode of communication.

7.4 Poetic Contexts and Poetic Text Types

The major genre of poetic contexts and text-types in Acehnese literature is *hikayat*. It covers a wide range of Acehnese literature from short narrative to epic. As compared to other Acehnese poetic forms and text types, *hikayat* has been more frequently studied by foreign scholars and indigenous alike. In this study one chapter (see Chapter Eight) is wholly devoted to the discussion of *hikayat*.

The following sections deal with a description of the contexts in which the use of poetic language is integral. Most of these are formal performances: they may be in traditional or modern contexts; others are the contexts of speech acts which involve considerable use of poetic language.

7.4.1 The Problem of Classification

As we have seen, Acehnese has two major verse forms: *sanjak* and *nalam*. We have also seen that a *pantôn* is a verse form in *sanjak* which has certain distinctive additional properties (see Chapter Six).

One difficulty with describing Acehnese poetry is that native Acehnese terms are not necessarily ideally suited for classifying forms or text types in a scientific fashion. Some terms are ambiguous, having a number of distinct meanings. This is especially true of the word *hikayat*, which bears four meanings: *hikayat* as a metrical form, having the same meaning as *sanjak*; *hikayat* as a text-type; *hikayat* as a type of performance; and, somewhat imprecisely, *hikayat* in reference to any poetic work presented in rhyming verse.

Sometimes a term has been adapted for scientific description of Acehnese poetry, but it is not used in precisely the same way as a native speaker of Acehnese would use it. For example Snouck Hurgronje used the word *nalam* to refer to a metrical form:

Our remarks on the form of Acehnese literary works would be incomplete without some mention of the *nalam*. This word is the Acehnese pronunciation of the Arabic *nazm*, meaning poetry. The Acehnese however understand thereby writings composed in a metre imitating one of those employed by the Arabs. (Snouck Hurgronje 1906, II:77)

We have followed Snouck Hurgronje in using *nalam* in the preceding chapter to refer to a metrical form. However for most Acehnese people, a *nalam* is not a 'writing' composed in a specific metrical form, but rather a kind of text used in teaching children about Islam which is sung by them so that it can be learned off by heart. It is true that *nalam* have a metrical form which is different from that found in *hikayat* or *pantôn*, and Acehnese people would be aware of this, but the term *nalam* in its non-technical use does not refer to a metrical form so much as a text type, and an essential aspects of the definition of this text type is the context in which it is used (i.e. religious contexts). For this reason El Rasyidi refers to a *liké* or religious song a *nalam*, although it is in *sanjak* verse (see section 7.9.1).

Such terminological difficulties occur often in Snouck Hurgronje's description of Acehnese literature (1906). He frequently took Acehnese terms and used them as if they were European literary terms. For example we have seen that he defined *nalam* as a type of written text having a certain metrical form, in much the same way as a textbook on English literature might define a sonnet. However for Acehnese people this whole way of thinking is foreign to the everyday understanding of the *nalam*. Similarly Snouck Hurgronje required that a *hikayat* should be composed in *sanjak* form (1906, II:77), however at least one poem written in the metre of *nalam* is widely referred to as *Hikayat Basa Jarwoe*, which suggests that the metrical form of a *hikayat* is by no means its most significant defining feature.

Similarly the term *nasib* was used by Snouck Hurgronje to refer a portion of the recitation in a performance, such as in *ratéb* and *seudati*. He reported, for example, that in a *ratéb* the *nasib* is recited during intervals: such a piece is recited by one or two of the performers, and the rest join in with a refrain in chorus (1906, II:218). From a sample of what he called *nasib*³, I would argue that he must have mistaken this for the *radat* of a *liké* (see section 7.9 below).

In the previous chapter on the structure of Acehnese poetry, terms like *sanjak* and *nalam* have been given a precise structural sense. However in this chapter the focus is upon the uses of poetry, and terms for contexts and types of poetry will be used in ways which are much closer to everyday Acehnese understandings.

7.5 Ratéb

Acehnese borrowed the word *ratéb* from Arabic *ratib*. One meaning which an Arabic-English Dictionary might give for *ratib* is 'monotonous' (Cowan 1976:325). In Acehnese today the term *ratéb* has two meanings. The first refers to the repetitious chanting, in a monotone, of certain words of faith or religious expressions in praise of Allah (see also the definition given by Djajadiningrat 1934:502), the second refers to lullabies. The most popular expression chanted during *ratéb* in the first sense is *la ilaha illa Allah* 'there is no god but Allah', the statement of faith. When words or expressions are chanted specifically in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, this is known as *seulauweuet*. The act of

³*Meuseujidél Haram Allahu Allahu,
Meuseujidél Haram na ureueng lhèe droe
Nabiteu sidroe sahbatneu dua
Neupeuét surat keudéh nanggroe Cham
Geuyue masôk éseulam bandum Beulanda
Kaphé Yahudi h'an jitén masôk
Dalam suntôk runtôh agama*

'*Meuseujidél Haram*, oh God, oh God, *Meuseujidél Haram*, there are three people there—the Prophet and his two companions. He sent a letter to the country of Jordan, inviting all the Dutch to become Muslims. The heathen Jews refused it, they always destroy religion.'

chanting in praise of Allah is called *meuratéb* and *meuseulaweu* refers to chanting in praise of the prophet.

Ratéb in a religious chant is merely an act of worship and it has nothing to do with performance. It is a common practice among practising Muslims to spend some time chanting the *ratéb* either individually or in groups. In the Acehnese community the *ratéb* is usually chanted in a group following the evening congregational prayers at a *meunasah*, a *dayah*, a mosque, or at other praying places. Individually, however, one can chant the *ratéb* at any time. There is a practice among the people following particular mystical societies to assemble in a place on a certain night—Friday night is the most frequently chosen—for the purpose of chanting *ratéb* together. Such acts of worship are more common during the month of Ramadhan: in some places people may spend the whole night long chanting the *ratéb*.

The second derivative meaning of *ratéb*, refers to a lullaby chanted to put babies or children to sleep, which begins with the same expression used in religious chanting: *la ilaha illa Allah*. This is what the Acehnese people called *peuratéb aneuk* ‘to chant *ratéb* as lullaby for children’. Such a meaning of *ratéb* is also given in Djajadiningrat (1934:503), *tapeuratéb aneuk gata, bèk jimo*⁴ ‘chant *ratéb* to your child, so that she/he will not cry’. In this case a few other verses, usually composed in *sanjak* form, are added to the original *ratéb* formula. Consider the following example:

⁴In this quotation, I have adjusted the spelling into the modern Acehnese orthography.

La ilaha illa Allah ,

Aneuk cut nyoe beumeutuwah ,

Beurayëk aneuk beupanyang umu ,

Bak ulëe tutue jiprëh ma ngön yah

'There is no god but Allah, may this little baby be a good person. May this child grow and live a long life, and wait for Mom and Dad at the bridge, i.e. on the day of judgement.'

These are the understandings of *ratéb* which apply in contemporary Aceh.

Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:216 ff) defined of *ratéb* as follows:

The word *ratéb* (Arabic *ratib*) signifies a form of prayer consisting of the repeated chanting in chorus of certain religious formulas, such as the confession of faith, a number of different epithets applied to God, or praises of Allah and his Apostle (p.216).

This definition is fully consistent with the first meaning given above. However there are several problems with Snouck Hurgronje's discussion of the *ratéb*.

Firstly, Snouck Hurgronje included the formulae chanted in praise of the Prophet as *ratéb*, but these are properly regarded as *seulaweuet* as previously discussed.

A second problem is that Snouck Hurgronje discussed *ratéb* at length under the heading of games and pastimes. This implies that *ratéb* belongs to some sort of entertainment rather than a ritual act of worship. He commented that the Acehnese *ratéb* may look like a "parody on certain form of worship" to those who understand Islam but are unfamiliar with the Acehnese customs (1906, II: 216). This gives a misleading impression of the *ratéb*. Presumably he got such an impression on listening to the loud and noisy voice but unclear expression uttered by Acehnese people chanting the *ratéb* in chorus, but the remark

displays a misunderstanding of how Acehese people themselves regard the significance of *ratéb*.

Furthermore Snouck Hurgronje claims that in Acehese tradition, *ratéb* is chanted in chorus while an individual chanting is referred to as *zīkr* (1906, II:216). In Arabic *zīkr* means 'remembrance', and specifically invocation of the name or titles of God as used in repetitious chanting in praise of God (Cowan 1976:310). Indeed this is what we know of as *ratéb* in Acehese, but there appears to be no distinction made between corporate and individual chanting in these terms. The distinction made by Snouck Hurgronje is not reflected in Djadiningrat's definition of *liké* (1934, I:967), which makes no reference to individual in contrast to group performance. One of the citations in Djadiningrat's dictionary entry for *liké* is instructive: it refers to a performance of *liké* in which the voice was as sweet as the sound of a violin. In Acehese this is something one might say about singing, but never about a *ratéb* performance, in which the sweetness of the tone of recitation is simply not a factor. Indeed today we find that Acehese *diké* or *liké* refers to a religious song, which is normally, but not necessarily, performed by a group (see section 7.9.1). Djadiningrat's citation suggests that this was also true a hundred years ago, and Snouck Hurgronje's description was based upon inadequate information.

Still another problem with Snouck Hurgronje's discussion of *ratéb* is that he included under this heading a number of performance types which are not compatible with the definition. He described five types of *ratéb* performance, namely *ratéb saman*, *ratéb niènsa*, *ratéb sadati*, *ratéb pulét*, and *ratéb rapai*. He commented that most of these *ratéb* are related to the development of certain forms of mysticism. For example, *ratéb saman* is attributed to a teacher of mysticism known as Muhammad Saman of Madinah whose teaching has

reached Aceh; *ratéb mènsa* is associated with *zikr al-minshari*, of kind of ritual performed by those following that group of mysticism; and *ratéb rapai* is attributed to a great saint of mystics known as Ahmad Rifa'i. Snouck Hurgronje is of the opinion that these *ratéb* are all related to religious acts or certain forms of worship, although they are not strictly made obligatory by religious law.

Snouck Hurgronje's description may perhaps have reflected the situation of the 19th century Aceh. Certainly his study cannot serve as a current description of the performing arts of the contemporary Aceh. It appears that *ratéb mènsa* and *ratéb pulét* are not known in Aceh today. *Saman*, *sadati*, and *rapai* still exist, but they are something quite distinct from what is described in Snouck Hurgronje's report. They are not known as *ratéb* and not associated with any forms of religious worship, instead they are traditional dances which are performed with or without accompaniment of musical instruments. Also it would be misleading to describe them as repetitious chanting. It seems difficult to determine how much Snouck Hurgronje was describing a situation which has now changed, or how much his accounts were simply inaccurate.

7.6 Rapai

Rapai bears two meanings in Acehnese. The first meaning refers to a musical instrument—a tambourine or drum made of wood (usually from jackfruit tree) and goat skin. As a musical instrument *rapai* is not tuned to any particular key; it is used as an aid to create rhythm for the recitation. The other meaning refers to a performance of poetry accompanied by the beatings of the *rapai* in the first sense. *Rapai* is attributed to the name of a teacher of mysticism Ahmad Rifa'i (Snouck Hurgronje 1906, II:251; Djajadiningrat 1934:496; Aboe Bakar et al. 1985:779) who is a younger contemporary and reputed to be a disciple of the great mystic Abdul Kadir Jailani.

There are two kinds of *rapai* dance known today in Aceh: one is *rapai dabôh* which is more traditional; and the other is *rapai gèlèng*, which is a new creation.

7.6.1 *Rapai Dabôh*

This performance is called *rapai dabôh* because the beatings of *rapai* is intended to accompany the performance of *dabôh*, cognate with Malay *dabus* or *debus*. In Malay *dabus* is used as a term for a sharp iron used to wound one's body (Aboe Bakar et al. 1985:152) as a ritual display of invulnerability in the dance of the same name (Echols and Shadily 1992:134). However in Acehnese *dabôh* refers only to the type of performance itself and the act of performing it is called *meudabôh* or *top dabôh*. This show utilises various kinds of sharp blades such as *peudeueng* 'sword', *parang* 'machete', *sikin* 'knife', *rincông* 'Acehnese dagger' and hot iron bars or chains. On describing the *dabôh* dance, Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:250) commented that this performance would cause Western people to be amazed and it would make them shrug their shoulders in unbelieving amazement. Often the audience of *rapai dabôh* is overwhelmed by the show of invulnerability to the extent that they forget to attend to the recitation of poetry or the beatings of the tambourines.

The performance of *rapai dabôh* is directed by a leader of the performance known as *khaliphah* who is fully responsible for the performance. A *khaliphah* is considered to possess spiritual power to protect the performers from being hurt or cut by the weapons, and also to heal someone who happens to become injured during the performance. This latter is important because some *dabôh* performances involve self-injury or mutilation followed by miraculous healing. Kartomi (1991:529-531) observed that a man passed a piece of rattan through two holes he had made in his leg without feeling any pain or after effects.

Kartomi's study of *dabôh* appears to be the first academic and systematic accounts of the contemporary *dabôh* performance. However, she has

misinterpreted some principal Acehese terms and sometimes mistaken them for Indonesian terms. For example, *rincông* was interpreted as 'Acehese sword' and *peudeueng* was interpreted as 'small sword' (Kartomi 1991:529). *Rincông* is not a sword but a dagger, i.e. Acehese dagger; and *peudeueng* is a long sword, usually longer than one's arm. Kartomi called the performers the *top dabôh*: "the performers (*top dabôh*)" (p.529) and "...the *top dabôh* could harm themselves" (p.530). However *top dabôh* is a verb phrase, not a noun and it refers to the action of performing the *dabôh*. The performers are called *ureueng meudabôh* or *awak top dabôh*. Also Kartomi used both the term *kalifah* (i.e. *khaliphah* in my own dialect) and *rifa'iyah* as synonymous referring to the leader of the performance, whom she describes as 'a religious leader' (p.529). These two terms have different meanings: the first refers to the leader of the *dabôh* performance, which is not a religious office; and the latter refers to the branch of the mystic teachings advocated by Ahmad Rifai (see Snouck Hurgronje 1906,II:251; Djajadiningrat 1934:496; Aboe Bakar et al. 1985:779).

With regard to its history, Hadiningrat, in an account of *debus* in Banten in the region of West Java (1982:31-32), suggested that this type of performance emerged first in Aceh along with the rise of Islam in the region, and that it gradually spread to other regions, especially through the West coast of Sumatra. Outside Aceh, this performance is found today in many other parts of the Indonesia such as in North and West Sumatra, Banten and Maluku with its respective local variations. The prevailing opinion among the Acehese is that the emergence of this form of performance is closely related to the influence of Islam in the region, and is linked to the development of a particular branch of mysticism linked with the name Ahmad Rifa'i.

Apart from its considerable entertainment value, this performance also has other purposes specifically to inculcate the belief in the power of God. The

principal message is that by believing in God it is possible for a person to obtain the power of invulnerability which in Acehnese is known as *keubai*. Hadiningrat reports that God is regarded as the source of all power and a performer expects to be granted a particular power provided that he obeys God in religion. In order for a person to achieve the state of *keubai*, one has to go through particular stages of training in mysticism under the guidance of a teacher. Also the person must fulfil other requirements set forth by the teacher which include a strong belief in God, a firm belief that the power of invulnerability can be obtained by reciting from the words of God (i.e. from the Quran), and avoidance of all evil deeds such as consuming alcoholic drinks, gambling, committing adultery and theft (Hadiningrat 1982:30).

Along with the beatings of the *rapai* 'tambourine', special verses are recited. Such verses are composed in *sanjak* metre (i.e. in the form of *hikayat*). They are not written down. Thus from *rapai dabôh* the audience can be entertained by four related aspects: the music, the poetry, the dance and the show of invulnerability. The verses chanted along with the performance of *rapai* may vary from one performance to another. However, in each performance there are particular components required, such as *saleuem* 'greetings', *kisah* 'narration of story', *do'a* 'supplication' and *amanah gurèe* 'guru's advice'. The *saleuem* is chanted as the beginning formula. At this stage the slow beatings of the *rapai* are done in harmony with the slow style of poetry recitation. Below is an example of verses which may be recited at this stage:

Salam 'alaikôm tanglông hékeumat

Jaroe tamumat tanda mulia

Ranup kamoe bri beuneutém pajôh

Hana kamoe bôh racôn ngön tuba (Adat dan Budaya 1988:120).

'Peace be upon you, distinguished one, let us shake hands as a sign of honour. Please eat the *ranup* we offer, we have not put in any poison.'

Following the *saleuem* is a *kisah*, which is a narration of particular story.

Generally the *rapai* players prefer to narrate a *kisah* of a particular sacred saint who is believed to have some degree of supernatural power. This may be about Nabi Khoylé 'the Prophet Khidhir' who is believed to dwell in the great ocean, yet his body never gets wet. The beginning verses of this *kisah* are as follows:

Deungö lôn kisah habaran ganjé

Di Nabi Khoylé lam laôt raya

Neuduek dalam ie tubôh h'an basah

Karônya Allah keu sidroe hamba

'Listen, I narrate a strange story, the Prophet Khidhir in the great ocean. He dwells in the water, yet his body does not get wet. That is the blessing of God to His servant.'

The following lines introduce a *kisah* about a domestic saint known as Teungku Lhôk Pawôh (from West Aceh):

Deungö lôn kisah Teungku Lhök Pawôh

Kubu neu jiôh di dalam rimba

Bak sithôn sigö leumah pupanji⁵

Mudah rahseuki umat lam dônya (Adat dan Budaya 1988:121).

‘Listen, I narrate a story of Teungku Lhök Pawôh, whose grave is far off in the jungle. Once a year the *pupanji* appears, this brings prosperity to human beings.’

Do’a plays a very important role in this performance. The *do’a* contains some verses of supplication by which the *rapai* players ask for God’s assistance and protection for their performance. By chanting such verses, under the leadership of the *khaliphah*, they build a close relationship with God who has the power to turn sharp blades blunt and burning iron cold. Kartomi (1991:529-530) reported that the *kaliphah* believe they inherited their ‘*èleumèe keubai* from the Prophet David who mastered the knowledge of the essence of iron, and also from the Prophet Abraham who knew the essence of fire. Among the verses of this nature are:

ôh ya Tuhanku neutulông kamoe

Nibak malam nyoe neubri seujalitra

Bèk neubri ayéb malèe ngön keuji

Bèk Allah bri tubôh binasa

Ya Tuhanku kamoe neutulông

Bak ujông rincông nyang tajam mata

Ujông meulipat mata meugulông

⁵This seems to be a *rapai* context-specific term, it is not found in any Acehnese dictionaries.

Potallah tulông nyang kabui do'a

Ngön tulông Tuhan kamoe pageue droe

Beutumpôi beusoe beutajam do'a

'Oh God, please help us, shower your blessings on us tonight. Do not give us embarrassment and shame, do not let our body be destroyed. Oh, God please help us, for the point of the dagger is sharp. May the sharp point folds back and the blade be blunt, with the help of God who answers prayer. With God's help we fence ourselves in, blunt be the iron, sharp the prayer.'

In some other common verses of *do'a* we find the name Abeudôkadé is invoked besides God. This gives us clear evidence that this performance is attributed to the well-known teacher of Islamic mysticism, Abdul Kadir, who is regarded as the source of the knowledge of *keubai*. These verses are as follows:

Ya syoilélah Abeudôkadé

Sigala ranté beukeunöng do'a

Beusijuek ban ie ancô ban abèe

Beureukat gurèe nyang puphôn do'a (Jauhari Ishak and Abu Hani 1974:37-38).

'Oh, master of God, Abdul Kadir; may all sorts of chain be affected by this prayer. May they be cold like water, and shattered into pieces as fine as ashes, in accordance with the blessing of the teacher (i.e. Abdul Kadir) from whom we received this prayer.'

Prior to the commencement of the *dabôh* proper and the display of invulnerability, there is a long recitation of verses known as *amanah gurèe* ('teacher's exhortation'). This serves as a reminder to the *dabôh* actors to be sure of their preparation before starting. Also they are reminded of death, God's commands and the Prophet who brought these commands to human beings. After this exhortation, a *dabôh* actor is expected to be able to retain his attitude

of humility and confidence that the ultimate power comes from God alone.

Below are some verses of such an *amanah*:

Amanah gurée nyoe tangö hé rakan

Lôn yue pi tan lôn tham pi hana

Meung goh habéh makriphat beusoe

Bèk tatop droe wahé syèedara

‘Listen my friend to this guru’s advice, I neither order nor forbid you. Without a complete understanding of iron’s substance, do not stab yourself, my friends.’

Tatop dabôh hayôh hai rakan

Lôn yue pi tan lôn tham pi hana

Teukeudi matwöt gata hai rakan

Kamoe bôh kaphan pasoe keureunda

Tatop dabôh beusunggôh haté

Abeudôkadé angké syeuruga

Niet beuteupat kasat beuseunang

Tapeumanyang Allah Ta’ala

‘Come on, my friends, start to *top* ‘stab’ *dabôh*, I neither order nor forbid you. In case you die, my friends; we will shroud you and put you in a coffin. If you *top dabôh* with full confidence, you are guaranteed paradise by Abdul Kadir. May your intention be sure and true, exalt God the Almighty.’

Tatop dabôh tanari-nari

Kubu Nabi taniet talingka

Niet beuteupat kasat beuseunang

Tapeumanyang Nabi mulia

Tatop dabôh beusimban-simban

Peujôk bak Tuhan tubôh ngön nyawa

Niet beuteupat kasat beuseunang

Tapeumanyang surôh Rabbana (Abdullah Arif 1958:16).

'*Top dabôh* while you are dancing, as if you were walking around the Prophet's grave. May your intention be sure and true, exalt the honoured Prophet. *Top dabôh* with all your might, submit your body and soul to God. May your intention sure and true, exalt our Lord's command.'

At this stage the performers also recite some verses specifically directed to the weapon they are using. They use their '*èleumèe makriphat*⁶ 'knowledge or science of essences' to communicate with the weapon as a method of controlling it: they tell the iron to be blunt and the fire to be cold. At some point they even curse and threaten the weapon. We can see such form of communications in the following verses:

Wahé beusoe beusoe bëlali

Pakön di kah darôhaka

Nyoe kurajah ngön do'a droe

Beutumpôi jinoe ujông ngön mata

⁶In this mystical theory everything has a *makriphat* or knowledge about its essence. The *dabôh* performers need to acquire a mystical understanding of the *makriphat* of the materials they are using, such as iron and fire, in order to be able to control them.

Meunyo kapajôh di kah hai beusoe

'Oh uroe dudoe kah kuseurapa

Wahé ranté beurijang sijuek

Wahé ngeu bruek beurijang mala

Beusijuek ban ie leupie ban timah

Beureukat kalimah la ilaha illallahu

'For God's sake, oh iron, why be treacherous? I recite my prayer over you: may your blade and point be blunt now. Iron, if you bite, I will curse you in the Hereafter. Oh, chain! cool down quickly. Oh, glowing coals of coconut shell; fade quickly. Be as cool as water and as cold as tin; with the blessing of the words *la ilaha illallahu*.'

7.6.2 *Rapai Gèlèng*

This type of *rapai* is performed by twelve to twenty male dancers in a sitting position: they kneel on the floor in a row, sitting so close to each other that they are shoulder to shoulder. Each dancer handles a tambourine which is the only musical instrument in this performance. The term *gèlèng* 'to shake head' is attributed to the act of the dancers who shake their body and head to the right and left as they are beating the *rapai* and reciting the verses. *Rapai gèlèng* is a new creation, that is, it does not have a deep traditional cultural tradition in the society. It appears to be a modern creation of those who have expertise in the field of performing arts. In *Adat dan Budaya*⁷ it is mentioned that *rapai gèlèng* was created in 1980 by a group of experts in West Aceh. Initially it was performed as an intermezzo to the chanting of *dalaé*.⁸ The poetry chanted along

⁷This is a guide book or prospectus prepared by the West Aceh contingent to the PKA-3 in 1988. (*Adat dan Budaya* 1988).

⁸A form of non formal worship by chanting the attributes of God in chorus in the Arabic language. Traditionally each village in Aceh had a *dalaé* group which consisted of unlimited

with this performance is composed in *sanjak* or *hikayat* metre. The majority of verses recited are in praise of God and the Prophet and these include some particular verses of *pantôn* or *hadih maja* which are associated with this purpose.

The performance begins with a *saleuem* 'greetings' which is expressed in three ways—by means of *likok* 'body postures'—bending forward to the audience; beatings of the *rapai*; and chanting of verses. Since this type of *rapai* has emerged in modern Aceh, the story narrated as a *kisah* during the performance is not of the past Aceh but of the present Aceh, such as the description of current developments of the province or development messages from the local government which have been composed in Acehnese verses. Most importantly, *rapai gèlèng* is not associated with any particular religious rituals nor it is attributed to any particular branch of mystic teachings.

7.7 *Seudati*

Seudati is perhaps the most heroic and patriotic performance of all Acehnese dances as far as the movements are concerned. This dance is performed by male dancers, led by one who is called *syèh* ('leader').⁹ There are also one or two reciters known as *aneuk seudati* ('child of *seudati*'). They stand at one corner of the stage and chant poetry along with the performance. *Seudati* is performed in a standing position.

A major distinction between *seudati* and other performances is that in the *seudati* performance no musical instrument is used. The dancers create noises by stamping their feet on the floor, beating their chest and snapping their fingers.

number of members. On a particular night, usually Friday night, the group assembled at the *meunasah* to chant the verses of *dalaé*.

⁹A recent innovation has been made with regard to gender division in *seudati* which has resulted in the formation of female *seudati* group known as *Seudati Inöng*. Although this is called *seudati*, it is completely different from our subject here.

These are all done in harmonious rhythm along with the recitation of the verses.

7.7.1 The Etymology of *Seudati*

There are two theories concerning the etymology of the word *seudati*. Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:221) argues that the term *seudati* derives from Arabic love poems, that is, *ya sadati* 'oh, my masters', an expression used by a languishing lover directed to the audience. According to Snouck Hurgronje this expression has been borrowed by the Acehnese people in a corrupted manner. Another theory holds that the word *seudati* derives from the Islamic expression of *syahadatain* 'the two statements of faith': there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. The latter would be a common public opinion held by the Acehnese people today. However it is difficult to find a clear and logical link between this concept and the actual performance of *seudati*.

Although the term *seudati* may have been derived as Snouck Hurgronje reports, the *seudati* dance we see today in Aceh seems to be different in various ways from the *seudati* he described in the late 19th century. He reported that it was performed by 15 to 20 men and accompanied by a pretty little boy in female dress who had been specially trained for the purpose. The use of a small child for *seudati* is no longer found in Aceh today. The *aneuk seudati*, or 'seudati child' is today always an adult, although the name has survived unchanged.

7.7.2 The Dance and Recitation

The beginning of a *seudati* performance is marked by the group's entering the stage, led by the *syèh*. They walk gracefully in a half-dancing movement and form a row, stand still for a few seconds and bend forward to salute the audience. Afterwards they begin dancing in various formations known as *likok* ('literally: to move one's body gracefully') while snapping their fingers and beating their chest. The sounds produced from such finger snapping and chest

beating creates a special musical rhythm of the *seudati*. The *aneuk seudati* then begins chanting the verses of *saleuem* 'greetings'. Each time the *aneuk seudati* completes a verse, it is then repeated by the whole group in chorus. Below is an example of such verses:

Sallam 'alaikôm lôn tamöng lam seueng

Lôn mubri saleuem jamêe dumna

Saleuem kamoe bri beugöt neusambôt

Meubèk neubri rhët u lua tika

'Peace be upon you, I enter the stage; I give greetings to all visitors.
Receive with care the greetings we give, do not let it fall off the mat.'

Dalèh pih saleuem bak ureueng patôt

Meung h'an neusambôt kureueng mulia

Kareuna saleuem Nabi kheun sunat

*Jaroe tamumat syarat mulia*¹⁰

'Moreover, these greetings come from respected people; it is disrespectful to refuse it. For greetings are recommended by the Prophet, and shaking hands is a sign of honour.'

Following the *saleuem* then is usually, but not always, a *kisah* 'story' which is a narration of any chosen story, be it a traditional or a more recent one. Some favourite *kisah* narrated by Syèh Lah Geunta group¹¹ are:

- a) *kisah Poteumeureuhôm* 'the story of Sultan Iskandar Muda';
- b) *kisah Jak Woe* 'the story of returning home';
- c) *kisah Meuseujid Aceh* 'the story of the Aceh Grand Mosque';
- d) *kisah Nasihat* 'the story of Advice';

¹⁰These verses are transcribed from a commercial recording of Syèh Lah Bangguna group from a copy available in Durie's private collection, Code SE 005.01. The performance was staged in early 1980.

¹¹A copy available in Durie's private collection, Code SE 001.01.

e) *kisah Moderen* 'the story of modernity'; and

f) *kisah Bakat di Laôt* 'the story of waves in the ocean'.

From other *seudati* groups we find other different *kisah*. Syèh Lah Bangguna, for example, narrated *kisah uroe pahlawan* 'the story of the Indonesian national hero day'; and from Syèh Rih Muda group we hear *kisah pembangunan* 'the story of the country's development'. In a *seudati tunang* 'the *seudati* competition', the *kisah* is usually a critique of the opponents' personal inadequacies.

An example of traditional *kisah*, *kisah Meuseujid Raya* 'the story of The Aceh Grand Mosque', as narrated by Syèh Lah Geunta group, begins as follows:

Di lôn na lônjak u Banda Aceh

Nyang cukôp leubèh Meuseujid Raya

Bak teungöih kuta teudöng meusigak

Tujôh boh pucak teudöng meubanja

'I went to Banda Aceh, (of what I saw) the most outstanding thing is the grand mosque. It stands in the centre of the city, with its seven domes.'

Bak teungöih pucak na bintang buleuen

'Oh malam hireuen takalôn rupa

Bak babah pintô na lampu neon

Watëe tapandang seumilu mata

'In the centre of the dome we see the moon and the star, it is astonishing during the night. There is a neon light at the mouth of the gate, our vision becomes blurred on seeing it.'

Di keue meuseujid na saboh kulam,

Meu ie di dalam teubiet meupanca

Uroe Jumeu'at watèe tapandang

Ureueng seumayang sampoe u lua

'In front of the mosque there is a pond, the water of which is sparkling.
On Friday when we see it, the people who come to pray overfill the
mosque.'

All verses recited in *seudati* performance are composed in *sanjak* metre and most of them appear in the form of *pantôn*, except those of the *kisah*. It is also interesting to note that the reciters insert extrametrical expressions halfway through each verse. Such additional expressions may be an exclamation, affirmation, or any expression, but it does not add anything to the narration. Consider the following example:

Bak teungöih kuta = hai saudara = teudöng meusigak

Tujôh boh pucak = hai apa Burak = teudöng meubanja

'In the centre of the city = oh brothers = the mosque stands, seven domes
= oh uncle Burak = stand in row.'

The insertion must rhyme with the immediately preceding syllable of the verse proper: in the preceding examples we see an *a-a* rhyme and *ak-ak* rhyme.

7.8 Nasib

Nasib is a form of changing dialogue in poetic form used by two narrators in a question-answer manner either to exchange ideas or to argue about a particular matter. *Nasib* is usually performed by males, yet there is no cultural restriction that female may not take part. There are two kinds of *nasib*: *nasib biasa* 'common *nasib*' and *nasib tunang* 'competitive *nasib*'. In order to be able to

perform *nasib*, one is required to possess a fairly high skill in creating impromptu verse.

7.8.1 *Nasib Biasa*

Nasib biasa 'common nasib' was traditionally a common practice in a wedding ceremony in which one narrator represents the groom and the other represents the bride. In Acehnese wedding traditions, on the day or night of the wedding the groom is escorted to the bride's house by a big group of people, immediate family members, relatives and friends, from his village. Similarly at the bride's house a big group of people are waiting to welcome the groom and the companions. Before the groom and the companions are permitted to enter the bride's house, the two narrators present a dialogue on behalf of both parties. The first speaker poses his/her questions or arguments in a number of verses which afterwards are immediately replied to by the second narrator. The first speaker, in this case the one representing the groom, speaks first to inform the other party about the purpose of their presence. The other speaker (the one representing the bride) replies accordingly. The dialogue could go on and on up to the point where all required conditions are fulfilled and the groom's party is permitted to enter the bride's house. The speaker's literary skill is very significant in this matter. Failing to reply with the necessary response may cause a severe embarrassment to the party he/she represents.

This kind of *nasib* is also known as *pantôn meukarang* 'clustered pantôn' because the poetic exchanges are composed in *pantôn* format. Below is an example of a *nasib* or *pantôn meukarang*: A is the groom's spokesperson while B is the bride's (the host's) representative.

A: *Salam 'alaikôm teungku di sinoe*

Nyoe pat kamoe ka troh meuteuka

Mugréb sidéh 'insya keunoe

Bungong jaroe h'an sapeue na

'Peace be upon you, brother here (the host); here we have come. We left our home after *mugréb* (after sunset prayer) and we arrived at '*insya* (the time for evening prayer); we have brought no gift to offer'.

B: *Taék u glé takoh peureulak*

Takoh sibak kayèe jatoe

Wahé teungku ho neumeujak

Ka meusak-sak u leuen kamoe

'We go up the hill to cut down *peureulak* tree; we also cut down one teak tree. Oh brother, where are you going, bringing a big crowd to our front yard?'

A: *Ijô-ijô naleueng sambô*

ijô birô naleueng lakoe

Lôn jak intat lintô barô

Asoe kasô judô putroe

'So green is the *sambô* grass; blue-green is the *lakoe* grass. I come to escort the groom; company for the princess in bed.'

B: *Allah, Allah teungku meututwahl*

Jaroe dua blah ateueh jeumala

Ureueng po rumoh geuyue wakilah

Geulakèe langkah u ateueh tika

'Good God, oh dear *teungku*; all our respect goes to you. I speak for the host; you are invited to step onto the mat.'

A: *Kru seumangat hai teungku waki*

Hana lôn turi nyang ureueng tuha

Nyoe keu jinoe barô phôn meuri

Tanyoe dua si tameusyèedara

'What a great surprise, oh *teungku waki*¹²; I did not know the respected one. But now you have indeed become known to me; let's make our families as one.'

B: *Kru seumangat teungku boh haté*

Padum tréb sabé lôn cinta-cinta

Nibak malam nyoe barôn phôn halé

Keudéh beusampé u dalam tika

'What a great surprise, my dear fellow; how long I have been expecting you. Tonight, for the first time, you are present; please come inside, onto the mat.'

A: *Aneuk tiyông di công bak bungong*

Jikeumeung tamöng u dalam cintra

Nyoe na bacut lôn teumanyöng

Teungku peukeunöng jarweueb haba

'A *tiyông* chick perched at the top of a flowering plant; intending to enter into the cage. I have something to ask; could you give a clear reply.'

Such dialogue goes on and on until the two parties reach a point when the groom is accepted and handed over to the host—the bride's family—so that the official wedding can begin to take place. Note that the *bungong* in these *pantôn meukarang* is sometimes a greeting or an exclamation instead of the usual imagery.

¹²Literally: Mister/brother representative, in this case a person representing the groom's party.

A similar dialogue in *pantôn* was also traditionally used between lovers (Snouck Hurgronje 1906,I:76) as means by which they express their feelings toward each other. In the following example, the man expresses his intention to propose, but he does not have the courage to do so because he is afraid that his proposal will be turned down. Surprisingly the girl gives a positive reply and requests that the man speak to her father. This dialogue is expressed in the following *pantôn*: the first *pantôn* is uttered by the man and the second by the girl.

Mirah-mirah bungong jambèe

Lurôh meukeubèe angèn timpa

Napsu lôn na h'an lôn jeuet lakèe

Lôn takôt malèe rhöt suara

'So red is the *jambèe* flower; all falling down buffeted by the wind. An intention is in my heart, but I have no courage to ask; I am afraid my request will be in vain.'

Sutra putéh geucop kupiah

Sutra mirah geupeukrông ija

Bak lôn hai cutbang h'ana meubantali

Keudéh bak ayah neupeutroh laba

'White silk thread is for sewing a hat; red silk thread is for sewing a sarong. I do not disagree, oh my darling; express your feelings to my father.'

Although the *pantôn meukarang* may have been influenced by Malay *pantun berkait* 'connected or linked *pantun*', they are distinct. The principal feature of the Malay *pantun berkait* is the repetition of previous lines in the next: the second and fourth lines of one quatrain or stanza reappears in the first and third of the next (Winstedt 1969:205 and Sudjiman 1986:55). Consider the following example:

Ikan duri di atas batu

Ikan sepat di padang saujana

Putri yang baik buat menantu

Sifatnya lengkap tujuh laksana

'A catfish lay upon a rock; a dainty perch upon the plain. A good girl for a daughter in-law; who has a perfect attitude.'

Ikan sepat di padang saujana

Mati dipatuk anak geroda

Sifatnya lengkap tujuh laksana

Patutlah dengan paduka bunda

'A dainty perch upon the plain; pecked to death by a young eagle. A girl of perfect attitude; suitable for mother princess.'

Mati dipatuk anak geroda

Pandai melompat ke dalam berunda

Patutlah dengan paduka bunda

Pandai mengambil hati baginda

'Pecked to death by a young eagle; jumping cleverly into a pond. Suitable for mother princess; who can please the prince.'

Such repetition is not found in Acehnese *pantôn meukarang*.

7.8.2 Nasib Tunang

Nasib tunang 'competitive nasib' is the performance of *nasib* by the two narrators for competition purpose (I have already mentioned the competition of *seudati tunang*). During the performance each poet tries to exhibit his or her skills in composing verses. Such skills include the ability to create the composition, the

ability create meaningful verses and the ability to fulfill the requirements of poetic beauty, such as the metrical pattern of verse and the structure of rhyme—both end and internal rhymes. Among the well-known *nasib* performers in this century, especially within the region of Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar, are Syèh Hak Montasiek, Syèh Mud Jeureula, Syèh Yahya Ateuek and Syèk Rih Krueng Raya.¹³

The main subject of the composition generally deals with personal affairs of the two performers: each gives a personal description of their opponent, such as biography, physical appearance and life experiences. This description mainly deals with personal inadequacies presented to the audience in a humorous manner so that laughter is often heard from the audience. Sometimes they tell of a particular negative side of the opponent's life to deliberately insult him before the audience. Such an insult, however, is not meant to hurt the opponent, but to entertain the audience.

Nasib tunang begins with an opening formula: the recitation of some verses in praise of Allah and the Prophet—*pujoe* and *seulauweuet*, chanted by the performer who is given the first turn. Below is an example of such formula chanted by Syèh Hak Montasiek in his *nasib tunang* ('nasib competition') with Syèh Mud Jeureula, hosted by the Museum Aceh on December 24th, 1983.

Alhamdulillah pujoe syukôr keu Tuhan

Nyang peujeuet 'alam langèt ngön dônya

Peujeuet lat batat bermacam-macam

Jén deungön énsan dan hantu rimba

¹³I have never seen Syeh Rih Krueng Raya's *nasib* performance and none of his *nasib* recording is available in Durie's collection. In Durie's personal interview with him in August 1988, Syèh Rih Krueng Raya claimed that he was the best *nasib* performer, unbeatable in whole Aceh.

Ngön seugala kudrat iradat Tuhan

Mudah-mudahan tanyoe sentosa

Ka panyang umu neubri lé Tuhan

Waras pikéran tambah teunaga

'Oh lheueh lôn pujoe Po ku ya rahman

Seulaweuat sajan ateueh ambiya

Lheueh nyan keupada keluarga gopnyan

*Ali pih sajan saidina Uma*¹⁴

'All praise and thanks be to God, who created the universe, heaven and earth. He created all things, spirits and people as well as the spirits of the forest. By His power and will, we are all kept safe and secure. We have been granted long life, intelligence and energy. After I praise my merciful Lord, praise be to the Prophet. After that to his family, including Ali and our master Umar.'

Following this comes the *saleuem hôreumat* 'greetings and salutation' to the audience. Generally a special salutation is directed to a few important persons among the audience by mentioning their names. In this performance, for instance, Syèh Hak Montasiek directed his special salutation to the director and staff of the Museum Aceh when he said:

¹⁴These verses are transcribed from an audio cassette available in Durie's private collection, Code NA 001.1 which was recorded from a live performance of *nasib tumang* hosted by the Museum Aceh on January 10th 1987.

Phôn-phôn lôn horeumat Bapak T. Yunan

Nyang bri undangan keu kamoe dua

Teuma 'oh lheueh nyan Bapak Pimpinan

Bapak Nas sajan ngön Pak Zakaria

'First of all I salute Mr. T. Yunan, who invited both of us here, then Mr. Nas and Mr. Zakaria.'

After that he directed his greetings to the general audience. On completion of these greetings, he immediately shifted the direction to his opponent, Syèh Mud Jeureula. Here Syèh Hak began with a special *pantôn* praising his opponent. However, then he shifted abruptly into a verse of challenge and at the same time handed the turn over to the opponent, using a *pantôn*:

Aneuk kuek putéh jiéh công arôn

Di aneuk tiyông jikarom boh nga

Jaroe dua blah di ateueh ubôn

Kru seumangat bak lôn Syèh Mud Jeureula

'A baby white heron sleeps on top of a pine tree; a baby mina bird broods on a *nga* fruit.¹⁵ With my two hands on my forehead, *kru seumangat*¹⁶ from me (to you) oh Syèh Mud Jeureula.'

¹⁵This is the name of a tropical tree whose fruit is eaten by birds.

¹⁶*Kru seumangat* has no literal meaning. This cry is used to bring back one's soul after undergoing a severe shock or being frightened. Syèh Hak used it as an indirect attack to his opponent as though the person has lost his soul and is powerless.

Alah hai Syèh Mud keumala zaitôn

Sapeue tan bak lôn keu tanda mata

Lôn pulang rumoh ka reulöh tampông

Lôn pulang rincông ka ubit mata

'Oh Syèh Mud, my dear; I have nothing to give you (as a gift). I wish to give you a house, but the roof is broken; I wish to give you my *rincông*, but its blade has worn out.'

Yôh goh Lam Pakuek gampông Lam Bugak

Yôh goh Lam Bithak na Gampông Raja

Hé Syèh Mud Sibrèh bèk lé neusangak

Syèh Hak ka nadak neusambông teuma

'Before Lam Pakuek there is a village called Lam Bugak, before Lam Bithak there is a village called Gampông Raja. Oh Syèh Mud from Sibrèh do not just sit still, Syèh Hak (I) am exhausted, now you continue.'

Afterwards the second performer, Syèh Mud Jeureula, began with similar opening formulae, but he avoided using the same verses that the first performer had already used: otherwise he would be regarded as less skillful. Upon completing the opening formula, Syèh Mud responded as much as he could to the earlier challenge and he ended his turn by throwing down new challenges to which his opponent had to respond. Such exchanges would go on and on until the convenor calls a break or a finish. There is apparently no ending formula for the *nasib tunang*, only a beginning.

Although this performance is called *nasib tunang* 'nasib competition', there is no adjudication of an actual loser or winner. Usually the audience might debate about which performer is favoured, but each performer will claim that they are the best.

7.9 *Liké* and *Lagu*

Liké (*diké* in some dialects) and *lagu* in Acehnese are both types of songs: the first term refers to traditional songs and the latter to modern western-influenced songs. There is no significant difference between the poetry used in *liké* and the one used in *lagu*, except that in the latter we may find more metrical irregularities. We shall provide below the description of both *liké* and *lagu* so that clear similarities and differences can be drawn.

7.9.1 *Liké*

The word *liké* may have derived from Arabic *zīkr* 'to remember', especially to remember God by means of repetitious chanting, loudly or silently, of particular words or expressions concerning the attributes of God; the act of which is better known in Acehnese as *meuratéb* (see section 7.5). Today the term *liké* no longer shares the original meaning of the Arabic word. With regard to the musical component, no one melody is in a fixed association with a *liké*. Instead a *liké* can be chanted with any type of melody, depending on the choice of the performers. However, during a performance a single melody is maintained throughout. Furthermore, it is not traditional for music to accompany the chanting of a *liké*.

7.9.1.1 The Contents of *Liké*

A *liké* consists of two parts: *radat* ('refrain')—the first two verses of the poem—and *kisah*—the remaining verses of the poem which narrate a particular story. The *kisah* of a *liké* is confined to religious discourse which appear in a wide range of topics such as moral exhortation, prophetic stories, and eschatological stories. Usually the narration of a *kisah* within a *liké* is quite brief—approximately between ten to twenty verses. In a *liké* booklet compiled by Tgk. Abdul Mutalib (1988), for instance, we find a number of *liké* and each is approximately of the same length. The names of these *liké* are:

- a) *balah guna ma* 'reciprocating a mother's care';
- b) *aneuk yatim* 'orphan';
- c) *beudöh meujaga* 'get up and stay awake, i.e. for worship';
- d) *Nabi Yusuf* 'the Prophet Joseph';
- e) *Mikreuet Nabi* 'the Prophet's ascension';
- f) *blang padang Mahsya* 'the field of Mahsya';¹⁷
- g) *tiang agama* 'the pillars of religion'; and
- h) *nyawöng jibaë* 'the soul's cries out'.

The following is an example of such a *liké* (i.e. including the *radat* and the *kisah*). The topic of the *kisah* is *beudöh meujaga* 'get up and stay awake'.

The *radat*:

Sulôh nyang atwai beudöh bèk éh lé

Sulôh nyang akhé beudöh meujaga

'Oh ban teukeujôt teuma taduek lé

Laju tapiké limöng peukara

'Get up at the early *sulôh* 'one third of the night' and do not sleep anymore, at the later part of the *sulôh* stay awake. Once you are awake sit down immediately, then think about the five things.'

The *kisah*:

Pertama phôn ingat keu Tuhan

Keu dua tèelan ingat keu dèesya

Ingat keu dèesya tamoe beukayém

Teuma takhém-khém 'oh neubri bala

'Firstly think about God, secondly think about sin. Cry more often when you think about sin, but laugh when calamity occurs.'

¹⁷According to the Islamic belief, *mahsya* is the place in the hereafter where all mankind will assemble for the final judgement before God.

Teuma nyang keu lhèe ingat keu maté

Geutanyoe tacré tatinggai dônya

Dônya tacinta tinggai di sinan

Geutanyoe tarwoe bak asai mula

'Thirdly, think about death, when you divorce the world and leave it.
The world you love stays here, you return to your origin.'

Asai bak tanoh meuzwoe bak tanoh

Tuhan peuteungöih blang padang Mahsya

Teuma nyang keu peuet ingat keu kubu

Taduek teukukô tarô ie mata

'You come from earth and return to earth, God will raise you up in the
field of Mahsya. Fourthly, think about the grave; sit dejectedly, your
tears flowing.'

Kubu pih seupôt lagi lom arat

Leumah lé teumpat dalam nuraka

Teuka ngön azeueb meubagoe-bagoe

Nyum talakèe woe keunoe u dônya

'The grave is so dark and narrow, then you will see your place in the
hell. There come different types of misery, that you wish to return to the
world.'

Teuma keu limöng ingat akhirat Hana trép lambat taduek lam dônya

Taduek lam dônya hana trép kukôh

Tamsé tapiyôh yup kayèe raya

'Fifthly, think about the hereafter, you will not live long in this world.
Life in this world does not last long, it is like a moment's rest under a
shady tree.'

Taduek lam dônya hana trép lambat

Nanggroe akhirat nyang keukai baka

Ban limöng peue nyoe beuna taingat

Supaya teutap ibadat gata

'You will not live long in this world, the hereafter is what lasts forever. Always remember these five things, so that you will persist in true worship.'

There is a well-known *liké* narrating an account of the life of the Prophet Muhammad which is better known as *liké molôt*: this is a *liké* related to the birthday of Muhammad, or *molôt* festival. This *liké* is specially chanted on religious occasions such as the celebration of the the Prophet's birthday.

7.9.1.2 The Style of *Liké* Recitation

A *liké* is usually chanted by a small group of people. There is no restriction regarding the precise number of people that makes up the group. The tempo varies from one *liké* to another, depending upon the melody employed. The beginning of *liké* is marked by a solo chanting of the *radat* by a leader, who is known as *ureueng ba radat* 'the person leading the *radat*'.¹⁸ Afterwards the whole group repeat the *radat* verses in chorus. In addition to leading the *radat*, the leader(s) is also responsible for the narration of the *kisah* during which other members of the group are silent. Each time the leader(s) completes two verses of the *kisah* (i.e. a single stanza), the *radat* is repeated by the whole group. This continues until the *kisah* ends. Such is a traditional style of *liké* recitation and it is still maintained in Acehnese society.

¹⁸Sometimes there is more than one person (i.e. two or, with a rare exception, three) taking this role and in such a case they begin chanting the *radat* together. The other members of the group will repeat the *radat* in chorus after them.

Recently, however, an innovation was made by T.M. Yusuf El Rasyidi, who is the chairman of a singing group called Aceh Mulia Peusangan Group.¹⁹ El Rasyidi introduced two new factors to the recitation style: the use of musical instruments (which is not traditional), and the omission of the *radat*. There are two types of instrument used by this group: organ and drums—both are used simultaneously throughout the recitation. The music is played in the background at a low volume, which suggests that it is only a secondary element to the performance—with the singing being primary.

The second element that El Rasyidi introduced was the omission of the *radat*. In this new style, the leader begins by chanting the first verse only, and as soon as he completes it, the whole group will continue to chant just the second verse in chorus. The leader and the chorus continue to take turns reciting the verses.

7.9.1.3 The Contexts of *Liké* Performance

In many cases *liké* is not an independent or principal performance of itself, but an interlude or intermezzo to a particular main event. The performance of *liké* is never used in a competition unlike *seudati* and *nasib*. The choice of the *kisah* is usually appropriate to the event—it is usually the responsibility of the leader(s) to choose a *kisah* which is regarded appropriate for the event therewith. The celebration of the Prophet's birthday, *khanduri molôt*,²⁰ is one of the major events in which *liké* is chanted.

¹⁹A cassette recording of this group is available in Durie's private collection (N 001.01) entitled *Nazlam Aceh*. El Rasyidi has called this *liké* a *nalam* (see discussion in section 7.4.1).

²⁰There is a strong tradition in Aceh, and in many other Muslim societies worldwide, to observe this date. The celebration is marked by the big feast which in Acehnese is known as *khanduri* (in other dialects: *kanduri*, *kanuri*, *kauri*), in this case called *khanduri molôt*. There many other types of *khanduri* in Aceh such as *khanduri ureueng maté* 'khanduri of the deceased'—the *khanduri* offered by the deceased family after the funeral, i.e. on the seventh, the tenth, the 44th, and the 100th day after one's death). Other types of *khanduri* include 1) *khanduri blang* ('khanduri of the rice field') which is offered by the farmers either during the planting season or prior to harvesting; 2) *khanduri laôt* ('the khanduri of the ocean'), offered by sailors at a particular time of the year; 3) *khanduri woe runnoh barô* ('the khanduri of entering a new house'), offered by a family when they begin to live in a new house; and 4) *khanduri ureueng meukawén* ('the khanduri of a wedding'). For more details concerning the various types of *khanduri*, also see Snouck Hurgronje 1906, I:194-294; Djajadiningrat 1934:662-664; and Aboe Bakar et al 1985:375-376.

7.9.2 *Lagu* 'song'

Lagu is song in the modern sense in which lyrics and music are inseparable: lyrics are written and set to music, and specifically associated with one particular tune. In Acehnese this is more specially known as *lagu Aceh* 'Acehnese song', a modern context in which Acehnese poetry is used. The *lagu* has emerged in line with the advance of recording media in the region. Unlike *liké*, each *lagu* has a distinctive melody and it is always sung with that particular melody. Furthermore, the creator or composer of a *lagu* is often known. In contrast *liké* melodies are anonymous and not linked to specific *liké* verses.

In its musical styles, *lagu Aceh* is heavily influenced by songs from other languages, such as Arabic, Indian, Indonesian and Malay. Such influence can be easily obviously recognised in the styles of its music and melody. On these basis a sub-classification of *lagu Aceh* can be made as follows:

- (1) styles which derived from Arabic songs are known as *nasyid* and *qasidah Aceh* 'Acehnese song in Arabic style';
- (2) a style which derived from Indian songs is called *lagu dangdut Aceh* 'Acehnese dangdut';
- (3) songs associated with the style of Indonesian are known as *lagu pop Aceh* 'Acehnese pop'; and
- (4) a Malay song style is called *gambus Aceh* 'Acehnese song in Malay style'.

However, since the development of *lagu Aceh* is still in its rudimentary stage, one should not expect to find a complete distinction between one style and another in this classification. Some mixing of styles is especially found in the songs of Ibnoe Arhas.²¹

²¹Ibnoe Arhas has appeared to be the most productive singer of *lagu Aceh* in the past twenty years or so. He has produced various styles of *lagu Aceh* such as the *dangdut*, the *qasidah*, and the *pop* styles, most of which are available in the market.

7.9.2.1 *Lagu Nasyid*²² and *Qasidah Aceh*

In Arabic the term *nasyid* means 'song', 'hymn', and 'anthem' such as in *nasyid wathani*, i.e. national anthem (Cowan 1976:965); and *qashidah* is 'an ancient Arabic poem having a tripartite structure'²³ (Cowan 1976:769). In Acehese both *nasyid* and *qashidah* are understood to be *lagu* 'songs' which have a close association with the style of Arabic music and melody.

In the *nasyid* in particular, the tambourine is the principal musical instrument and it is played by every performer. A song may be sung by an individual singer or in chorus. Sometimes they sing in the manner of *liké* recitation—the song is sung by a particular individual and the group repeat the lyrics together. It appears that *nasyid* is more associated with a performing group, but *qasidah* is not.

With regard to their content, the songs in this category generally deal with moral and religious issues. In the *qasidah* of Ibnoe Arhas, for example, we find such themes as *Rukôn keu Limöng* 'The Fifth Pillar, i.e. of Islam', *Runtôh Akhlak* 'Moral Degradation', *Dônya ka Tuha* 'The World is Old', *Janji Tuhan* 'The Promises of God', and *Harwa ngön Napsu* 'Desire'. In the *Nasyid* of Yusuf Ishak²⁴ we find other religious and moral topics including *Bèk Durhaka* 'Be not Treacherous (to your parents)', *Nikmat Tuhan* 'The Mercy of God', *Buleuen Puasa* 'The Fasting Month, i.e. Ramadhan', and *Bak Akhé Zameuen* 'When the World Ends'.

²²In Aceh *nasyid* is always performed by a group called *group nasyid* ('nasyid group') whose members are predominantly female. Today the most well-known *nasyid* group is Da'iyul Fata, a group directed by Yusuf Ishak. Except for their director, all singers in this group are girls.

²³In McArthur 1992:1056) the term triplet is used instead of tripartite structure which is applied to the insertion of triple rhyme into a sequence of heroic couplets.

²⁴He is better known as Yysis (i.e. his acronym for Yusuf Ishak) and is a leader of *nasyid* group called Da'iyul Fata.

7.9.2.2 *Lagu Dangdut Aceh*

The word *dangdut* is an onomatopoeic term which refers to music characterised by the beatings of Indian drums. Probably the popularity of the *dangdut* in Indonesia was brought about by the influence of Indian films. *Lagu dangdut Aceh* is influenced in its musical style by Indonesian *dangdut* songs, which were developed much earlier, with Acehnese poems as their lyrics. The development of *dangdut* songs in Aceh was initially pioneered by Ibnoe Arhas and Cut Rosmawar in the late 1970s. Among their early songs *Lakoe Tuha* appears to have been very popular. Below is the lyric of this song:

Meunyö lôn piké até lôn meutamah bingöng

Lë ureueng inöng geupiléh lakoe nyang tuha

H'an geupiké bah kana inöng

Asai mantöng lë beulanja

Bah beu keujam bah beu bingk'èng

Asai lë pèng gadöh tuha

'When I think, my heart becomes more confused; many women choose to marry old men. They do not even care if the man is already married, as long as he has much money; regardless of his cruelty and harshness, if he is rich, old age counts for nothing.'

Di kamoe inöng jameuen nyoe hana meupiké

Asai bak até ka cocok peue lom takira

Meunyo na pawôn meuuké

Peue tapiké lakoe tuha

Asai dibloe bajèe bébé

Bak haté abéh peukara

'Nowadays, we, women, do not think much; if he is compatible, what else matters?. If we can have an engraved pendant, we do not mind an old husband; if he buys *bajèe bébé*,²⁵ that's all what we want.'

Bahagia geuudép di dalam dônya nyoe

Tapiléh lakoe ureueng nyang tuha

Bahagia lôn rasa terseurah bak Tuhan

Nyang peunténg rumoh tangga lôn aman

Udép lôn seulalu seunang

'Happiness (i.e. for women) in this world is to get to marry an old man. Happiness, I think, comes from God. For me, the important thing is to have a peaceful home and a happy life.'

Memang jameuen nyoe jinoe nyoe jameuen ka akhé

Hana malèe lé ureueng dum di dalam dônya

Meubalék duek, meusuet pacok

Ureueng dum dök bak buet jahé

Keu Tuhan h'an lé diingat

Ibadat h'an lé soe piké

'Indeed this is the time when the world is going to end. Now everyone in this world is shameless. If you sit on the extreme edge of a bench, the

²⁵A type of woman fancy dress which was fashionable of the time.

other end will fly up in the air. Many people are engaged in evil deeds, God is no longer remembered and worship is neglected.'

Most *lagu* are set in *sanjak* metre. This song has a fairly consistent metre, although the third verse varies from the others—its tune also is different. Although the metre used in this song is different from *sanjak* —the verses are not of equal length—it still shows the dual pattern of internal rhyme and end rhyme: the pattern is especially clear in the second stanza, where a consistent internal rhyme in *é* is combined with an end-rhyme in *-a*.

We find other Acehnese *dangdut* singers following Ibnoe Arhas in producing *dangdut*, including Nur Ainun, Nurbanat Arhas, A. Bakar A.R., Armawati A.R., Dolles Marshal, Azlina Zainal, El Bahar A.M., Zakiah Zulfan, Hajjah Rosmainiwan, M. Yacob Tailah, and Irma Idris. A young *dangdut* singer, Sabirin Lamno, recently appeared and added on the existing collection of this genre. All of these people have contributed in one way or another to the development of *lagu dangdut Aceh* which is the most widely listened to nowadays in comparison with the other types of Acehnese songs.

7.9.2.3 *Lagu Pop Aceh*

Lagu pop means pop songs, i.e. Acehnese songs accompanied in Indonesian popular music styles which have received heavy influences from the western music. Ironically this type of 'pop' song has not become popular in Aceh. Although there is not much different between *lagu pop* and *lagu dangdut* with regard to their words: the principal difference lies in the music. *Lagu pop Aceh* was initially introduced by Isdati and Rohani Jeumpa with their first release of a cassette tape in 1979. In the late 1980s, a young singer, Bob Rizal, produced a recording of other songs of this type.

7.9.2.4 *Lagu Gambus Aceh*

Lagu gambus Aceh is a kind of song accompanied by a specific type of musical band, playing in a specific style. The principal instruments used to accompany the song are violin and accordion. *Lagu gambus Aceh* is very similar to the Malay orchestra. This type of song has not become popular in Aceh, therefore not much can be discussed here. The only commercially released cassette found is called O.K. Gambus Elmunir, sung by Jisma Barat and Nurainy A.R. The recording was produced by Mawar Record.

7.10 *Meukat Ubat* 'selling medicine'

Meukat ubat literally means 'selling medicine', and the person doing this job, generally male, is called *ureueng meukat ubat*. It is quite common in Aceh to come across *ureueng meukat ubat*, especially in the market place. Anyone, indeed, can become *ureueng meukat ubat* since there is no special legal requirement set forth for this job; neither are there any regulations concerning the types of medicine they are allowed to sell and the places where they are allowed to sell it.

In order to be able to attract the attention of the people in the public place, a medicine seller usually makes use of poetic skills. For this purpose he may recite a *hikayat*, either from his memory or with an aid of a written text, or incorporate in his talk some verses of *pantôn*, *hadih maja*, and *h'iem*. I have observed a medicine seller using Acehnese verses as to describe the symptoms of intestinal worms:

Tanda-tanda ureueng meuglang

Mata lhôk rusôk lham, pruet ijô leubô itam

Geuduek mumang, geutinggông pitam

'The signs that a person has worms are: the eyes and the ribs are sunken, the stomach looks green and the anus looks black. He/she feels dizzy on sitting down, and is fainted on squatting.'

Medicine selling has a special significance in the overall context of Acehese poetry because it is the means by which a number of published poets and some notable poetic performers make much of their livelihood. These include Syeh Rih Krueng Raya (now deceased) and PMOTH. Medicine selling a high level of verbal skill, and as such it provides one of the best opportunities for poets to make a living from their art.

7.11 *Meurajah* 'incantations'

Meurajah is a common practice in traditional Acehese society as a healing method to various kinds of disease. The person practising *meurajah* is called *ureueng meurajah*, i.e. traditional healer. Acehese incantations are composed in verse, although the metrical feet and the patterns of rhyme are not as strict as those of *hikayat*, *pantôn*, and *nalam*. The verses are believed to have intrinsic magical power which can be called upon, provided that the chanter follows certain prescribed rules and particular physical movements (Yusuf, et al. 1997:1).

A healer uses the incantation verses to communicate, not with a patient, but with the disease being suffered by the patient. The disease is treated as a living entity and is perceived as an evil being occupying and controlling the patient. Therefore, a healer, by chanting the incantation, asserts authority, threatening the disease so that it will abandon the patient's body. In his/her incantation, names of more powerful beings such as God, and others who are perceived to

be powerful are mentioned as to show that the mentioned names would stand on his/her side. In the following verses we can see how a healer threatens a disease:

Kaék u langèt kugando

Katrön u bumoe kubôh cintra

Kupandang laôt laôt thô

Kupandang glé glé ancô

Beureukat do'a Siti Patimah

Beureukat kalimah la ilaha illahu

'(If) you go up to the sky, I will catapult you; (if) you go down to earth, I will cage you. (If) I stare at the ocean, the ocean will dry; (if) I stare at the hills, the hills will break (into pieces). By the power of Siti Patimah's²⁶ incantation, and by the power of the word *la ilaha illahu*.'²⁷

7.12 *Saman*, *Meuseukat* and Other Dances

In Acehnese, dance requires poetry. All Acehnese dances are performed together with poetic recitation. At a dance there are therefore at least two modes of performance being presented as one—song and dance itself—and often there will also be musical instruments playing. Each dance has its own conventions about the nature of poetry which is appropriate to recite along with it. Nevertheless, for various dances there is considerable freedom about what may be chanted along with the dance, for example, there is no restriction concerning the contents of a *kisah*, which may be performed. Performers may sing some verses of *pantôn*, for instance, to convey particular messages, i.e. comments about development, moral advice, or social criticism.

²⁶Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad, was married to the fourth caliph of Islam.

²⁷This is part of the Islamic confession of faith.

Saman may be performed by eight to twenty male performers. It is more popularly known as the dance of 'one thousand hands' as the dancers make various movements of their hands across their chests. The impression of one thousand hands is more obvious particularly when the tempo of the dance increases to the quickest point of the performance. *Meuseukat* is a version of *saman* performed by female dancers.

Most dance requires patronage or income of some kind. The Acehnese local government has been making a keen effort in training dance performers through various *sanggar* ('studio, group') where they are trained to be able to perform various dances. One of the well-known such groups today is *Sanggar Cut Nyak Dhien*, which is managed by the office of the governor of Aceh. Also at the *kabupaten* level, each region has at least one group under the management of the respective regional government. Besides this there are many other dance groups all over Aceh under private management. These groups are professional and they are invited to perform at various official events to entertain the official guests or visitors, or at other types of events sponsored by the government. Such performances are used by the Acehnese government as a medium to promote aspects of Acehnese culture.

7.13 *H'iem*

H'iem means riddles. These may occur in a wide variety of contexts. However they are also used in as a group activity to kill time, similar to the way people work on crossword puzzles in a literate society. *H'iem* can be also be considered as a means to develop critical thinking. Here is an example of an Acehnese *h'iem*:

Na saboh cicém sayeuep jih beusoe

Jijak jiwoe su jih that subra

Eumpeuen jih minyeuek meukato-kato

Nyum h'an tom tro cicém ceulaka (Jauhari Ishak and Abu Hani 1974:33):

'A bird with iron wings; back and forth making noise. It consumes tons of oil; but the cursed bird is never satisfied.'²⁸

Snouck Hurgronje (1906, I:67) notes that some of the Acehnese *h'iem* are identical in virtually all respects with those of the Malay, Javanese and Sundanese. This may be true for *h'iem* composed in prose. However, many Acehnese *h'iem* which are composed in verse and these show their own typical Acehnese characteristics.

The *h'iem* which are composed in prose usually appear in a statement or question form, for example:

Peu boh nyang hana bak?

'What fruit has no tree?'

The answer is *boh leupieng* 'leupieng fruit'. One might expect a *leupieng* fruit to come from a *leupieng* tree, but in fact a *leupieng* fruit is a coconut eaten out by a squirrel or a rat, and there is no such thing as a *leupieng* tree.

Some examples of *h'iem* include a pun or some other expression having a double meaning. Consider this example:

²⁸The answer is an aeroplane.

Campli bak bintéh.

'The chilli (hangs) on the wall.

Tapéh na keueung?

'If you grind it, is it spicy hot?'

OR: 'Is coconut fibre spicy hot?'

The answer to the first question is yes, to the second the answer is no. Note that the keyword in this *h'iem* is *tapéh*: which could mean 'we grind' or 'coconut fiber'. In order to be able to give a correct answer to this *h'iem*, one must interpret the keyword and discern the pun.

However, some *h'iem* are composed in verse : some are short, others are long .
An example of a short verse *h'iem* is:

Taék glé tatrön glé,

meuteumèe aneuk nyang meukudé.

Cuba peuglah!

'We go up and down the hills, we find a child with scabies. Try and solve it!'²⁹

An example of a *h'iem* composed in a longer form is:

Neupeugah keulôn na saboh cicém

Disinoe kayém ureueng peugah kri

Meunan pi sidéh di nanggroë luén

Ureueng dum meuchén haté beureuhi

'Tell me about a bird which is often mentioned by people here and people in other countries. Many people are fond of this bird.'

²⁹The answer is: *boh panah* 'jackfruit': this fruit has a skin with lumps on it and the tree grows in hilly regions in the forest.

Asoe ngön darah di jih meulaén

Takalön licén hana leumah ri

Bulèe ngön sayeuep pi hana mubréng

Keubit meulaén cicém ugahri

'Its flesh and blood are clear and lean as though they are inseparable. The feathers and wings are so beautiful, and indeed it is an outstanding bird.'

Tacr'ah tapajôh tacrôh taguréng

Basah deungön kréng bandum cit rasi

Meunyo tareubôh tabôh lam piréng

Meunyo masak kléng tabôh lom campli

'We can fry and eat it dry or in sauce. If you cook it in soup, then put it in bowl; you need to add extra chilli if you cook it in Indian curry.'

Watèe takalön wareuna cicém

Alah hai polém putéh beureuhi

Tacuba peugah bak lôn hai polém

Peu nan jih cicém 'ajib sikali

(Yusuf, Mahyiddin, Abd. Jalil and Hasan Gade (1992:18-19).

'When you look at its colour, oh dear older brother, it is pure white. Now my older brother, tell me the name of this strange bird.'³⁰

Some *h'iem* use Arabic expressions such as phrases from the holy Quran. Such phrases are not meant to be understood as a statement of Quranic teaching;

³⁰The answer is: *manok putéh* 'white chicken'

rather they are used merely as an kind of 'bungong' element to being the rhyme.³¹ Consider the following example:

Innallazina kafaru

Sigeuca iku siribèe mata

(Ramli Harun 1988:35)

'Innallazina kafaru; a little tail with a thousand eyes'.³²

7.14 Children's Rhymes

Until now the discussion of poetry has dealt with those used by adults. It would be incomplete to leave untouched the poetry which is commonly used among children whether by children themselves or by adults for children (for example in lullabies). Children's rhymes are all associated with specific contexts such as games, riddle telling, role plays, or getting to sleep (lullabies). Some rhymes are versified tales which appear in question-answer format such as *Haba Cakeuek* 'the kingfisher tale' or in the form of *hikayat* such as *Haba Keubeue Galeuen* 'the tale of the pale buffalo'. In *The Kingfisher Tale* each question takes a line and the answer to it completes the next line. The kingfisher takes the role of a king and therefore everyone calls it *po* 'lord, master'. The kingfisher begins the story by asking the *naleueng panyang* 'tall grass' why it is growing tall:

³¹Thus we cannot agree with Harun (1988:34), who argues that the use of Arabic phrases indicates that *h'iem* are used for educational purposes. Moreover, religious people would discourage the use of the Quranic phrases for such purposes.

³²The answer is: *jeue*, a tapering net used in the shallows.

Pakön panyang di kah naleueng?

H'ana soe röt di lôn hai po.

Pakön h'an karöt di kah keubeue?

H'ana soe rabé di lôn hai po

(Abdullah Arif 1958:12).

'Why are you growing tall, grass? No one (no cattle) has grazed on me, my lord. Why don't you graze (on the grass), buffalo? No one takes me (to graze), my lord.'

Haba Keubeue Galeuen 'Tale of the Pale Buffalo' is composed in the form of a *hikayat*. An obvious children's characteristic of this work can be seen at the beginning: a bowdlerised Arabic expression is used as an opening formula. Thus *biseumillah* 'in the name of Allah' is twisted into a nonsense word *biseumileueng* to rhyme with the word *baplueng* 'taken away' in the second line. Also from its content, we can see that this tale is specially intended for children. It relates a story of how a father and a son take care of their buffalo, depicting family life in Acehnese traditional agrarian society, where buffalo or cow is a principal means of cultivation. A few lines of this tale are given below:

Biseumillah biseumileueng

Patah langay keubeue baplueng

Adak jiplueng pi ka meulho

Dalam rabo bak binèh lueng

'*Biseumillah biseumileueng*, the buffalo breaks the plow and runs away. It is obvious where the buffalo would run, into the bush near a creek.'

Na sikeujap trôh ureueng po
Geupeusaho geulét u krueng
'Oh lheuh manoe putvoe lam weue
Laju geuhue taloe ateueng
Beudöh Si Gam jijak lam weue
Jicok keubeue ka jisuleueng

(Abdullah Arif 1958:18)

'Shortly afterward the owner comes and pushes the buffalo into a river. After a wash the owner walks the buffalo (through the dike of the rice field) into the stable. Then the boy comes into the stable and begins feeding the buffalo.'

Acehnese children's rhymes are both complex and varied in their metre, so it is difficult to classify them in metrical terms. The number of verses is not fixed: some have two, others have two and a half, three, or even more than three verses. Many rhymes resemble the metrical structure of a *pantôn*, but with some variations.³³

Often the first phrase is short: usually the size of an intonation group, or half of a *runghé*, and it takes part in the rhyme scheme as if it were the end of a full-length line. For example in the following rhyme *Pét-pét kô*, the first short phrase rhymes with the middle of the following line. Note also that the second line is still somewhat short, having 6 syllables, and the first phrase with its 3 syllables is half this in length. The remaining lines are a normal length for a *sanjak junkhé* or half-verse, with 8 syllables each.

³³Abdullah Arif (1958) published a collection of such poetry called *Pantôn Acèh: Pantôn Aneuk Miet* 'Acehnese *Pantôn*: Children's *Pantôn*' which contains various types of children's rhymes. Although he calls this collection *pantôn*, the book contains various kinds of children's poetry, and none of the poems found in this collection is composed in exactly the same structure as the *pantôn* proper.

Pét-pét kô

Jeurukhô di para

Ho nyang kaplueng, ho katajô

Yup jeurukhô kujak mita

(Abdullah Arif 1958:6).

'*Pét-pét kô*, an animal trap is above the ceiling. Wherever you run or go, I will find you even under the trap.'

Often the opening phrase consists of nonsense words. In addition to the previous example, consider the following, in which the short nonsense phrase introduces the end-rhyme.

It lan sahit

Rumoh raya pintô ubit

Di ayah ka geumeukawén

Hana geuchén keu lon ubit

(Abdullah Arif 1958:11).

'*It lan sahit*, the big house has a narrow window. Father is married (i.e. remarried), he does not care even for little me.'

The next example is representative of a very common children's rhyme structure. It is like the preceding, but also note that the end of the first half of line 2 (*maté pik*) introduces the internal rhyme found of the next verse, which occurs at the end of line 3 (*chik*) and the middle of line 4 (*putik*). This is structured like a *pantôn* with a fixed internal rhyme, in which *maté pik* would have rhymed with the end of the preceding half-verse. The variation from the *pantôn* structure is that the initial phrase is shorter, and it concludes with the end-rhyme in -ô.

Pik leuwik leuwô

Maté pik tinggay tazô

Tangieng uroe lagèe ma chik

Malam putik sang dara barô (Abdullah Arif 1958:10)

'*Leuwik leuwô* the squash vine, the vine dies the stick remains; during the day (she) looks like a grand mother, but like a bride during the night'.

Here is another example which begins in the same way.

Pok-pok yé

Jak u blang jak u glé

Pöt boh mèn saboh karang

Pöt boh ram saboh tangké

Nyang putik taprom di bak

Nyang masak tapajôh lé (Abdullah Arif 1958:6)

'*Pok-pok yé*, going to rice field and to the hills; picking up a bunch of tamarind, picking up a stem of ram fruit; leave the green ones on the tree, let's eat the ripe ones.'

Today these rhymes are used by children only in rural areas. New types of children's games and rhymes are increasingly penetrating the Acehnese children's world through the medium of Bahasa Indonesia.

7.15 Nalam

Nalam is a term borrowed from Arabic *nazm*, meaning verse or poetry (Cowan 1976:978). This type of verse form is also known as *rajat*, from Arabic *rajaz*

(Abdullah 1991:61). The term, *nalām*, is better known by the majority of Acehese people, whereas *rajaṭ*, is only familiar to literary experts.

Nalām differs from the other two Acehese verse forms, *hikayat* and *pantôn*, in both its structure of composition and in the nature of its theme. The structural differences have already been described in the previous chapter. Unlike *hikayat* and *pantôn*, the functional range of *nalām* use is rather limited, being typically confined to the context of religious instruction. No *nalām* has been used, for example, in romance and fiction. Its distinctive prosody sets *nalām* apart as a unique form among Acehese verse types. *Nalām* is composed in a trimetre, a pattern not found in other types of Acehese poetry. The metrical pattern has been adapted from Arabic poetry. Adjustments may have been made from Arabic quantitative long and short syllabic patterns into the Acehese simple quantitative pattern. Here follows is a description of the common features of *nalām*:

Unlike *pantôn* or *hikayat* verses, *nalām* is unlikely to be created impromptu. Since its main theme is religion, it is usually composed for didactic purposes by an *ulama* 'religious scholar' who is learned in Malay and Arabic. After studying Islam from Malay or Arabic sources, may use *nalām* to present his learning in Acehese so that students who do not have access to either Malay or Arabic can benefit from it. Clearly then *nalām* has a clear linkage to the traditional religious educational institution, the *peusantrèn*.

Nalām is taught to children in the village classes at *meunasah*. As a village boy, I used to learn to recite *nalām* in chorus with other boys in my group. The verses were passed to us orally: the teacher would recite two or three verses loudly and we would repeat them after him. In this way within a night we could learn a number of verses by heart. Sometimes a teacher may ask an individual student to recite a number of verses before him and ask another to continue.

This learning and reciting process would go on for years. These same *nalam* will be passed on to other generations of students.

The recitation of *nalam* is never meant merely for entertainment purposes; although reciting it can be quite entertaining, *nalam* is above all an aid to learning, notably religious materials. *Nalam* poetry invariably contains laws and regulations pertaining to particular doctrines and practices of Islam. *Nalam Rukôn Lhèè Blah*, for example, relates details of what has been prescribed about *seumayang* 'the five-daily prayers', as can be seen in the following verses:

Wahé ureueng nyang seumayang tadeungö lôn

Seumayang gata limöng watèè padum rukôn

Rukôn teuma kheuen ulama ahlôy pikah

Watèè limöng pham beu keunöng rukôn lhèè blah (Abdullah 1991:61)

'Oh those who pray, listen to me; how many principles are there for your prayers five times a day? The Islamic law experts say; there are thirteen principles you should know well regarding the five prayer times.'

7.16 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has provided a description of uses of poetry in various contexts, where the dominant mode of language use is poetic; and the role of poetry more generally, as it is used in non-poetic contexts.

As in many other languages of the archipelago, Acehnese poetry exists in a vital tradition of oral composition: the use of poetic language is found wherever Acehnese is normally used as a mode of communication. We can observe that generally poetry is used in two kinds of contexts: poetic and non-poetic. Some kinds of speech events, including many performance types, must take place in poetry. For example language used in a song or a *seudati* dance will necessarily

be in poetry, and this even extends to religious domain. On the other hand, poetry is commonly used in speech contexts which are not themselves distinctively poetic.

This chapter has also considered the purposes of poetry: how poetry is used as a medium to serve the various purposes in Acehnese society. For Acehnese people, poetry is not merely a form of verbal art used for entertainment, but also as a means of cultural transmission, worship, preserving and passing on personal experience, and in the performance of various kinds of speech events. Also poetry is used as pedagogical device, particularly in religious education, and it has been an effective persuasive device during the war most notably through performances of the *Hikayat Prang Sabi*.

In addition to describing the various types and contexts of poetry, this chapter has also attempted to provide critical reviews on previous works, particularly the work of Snouck Hurgronje. These include Snouck Hurgronje's misrepresentation of particular aspects of Acehnese poetry, including the misapplication of terms such as *ratéb* and *nasib*. Whilst there have certainly been many changes in Acehnese culture since Snouck Hurgronje's field studies in Aceh, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that some aspects of his descriptions of Acehnese verbal arts are inaccurate.

Chapter 8

Hikayat: A Major Genre of Acehnese Poetry

8.1 Introduction

Hikayat is the major genre of Acehnese poetry. *Hikayat* texts covers a wide range of subjects in Acehnese literature, concerning various aspects of Acehnese life, from personal tales to various types of epics. The importance of the *hikayat* can be seen from the fact that in public collections which hold Acehnese manuscripts, by far the most frequent text type is the *hikayat*. Moreover the oldest Acehnese manuscript is also a *hikayat*: *Hikayat Syama'un*. Because of its importance, and the comparatively greater amount of material available on *hikayat* texts, it has been necessary to give the *hikayat* its own separate chapter here.

This chapter first considers the definition of the Acehnese *hikayat*, contrasting the understanding of this term in Acehnese and Malay contexts. The issue of authorship is also addressed here. This is followed by a discussion of the Islamic influence upon Acehnese *hikayat*, and a description of *hikayat* performance, both in traditional and modern contexts. Classification of *hikayat* is another major issue discussed in this chapter. A revised classification system is proposed, supported by reviews and critiques of previous classifications, especially the one devised by Snouck Hurgronje. Aspects of the metrical structure of *hikayat* poetry and the visual layout of *hikayat* texts on the page have already been covered in Chapter Six.

8.2 Defining *Hikayat*: Acehnese contrasted with Malay

The term *hikayat* is well-known to scholars of Malay literature (see for example Winstedt 1969, Teeuw 1969, Hooykaas 1965, Shellabear 1975, Drewes 1986, and Jones 1987). It is therefore useful to clarify the difference between *hikayat* in Acehnese and *hikayat* in Malay.

The term *hikayat* came into Acehnese and Malay from Arabic *hikayah* 'story', 'tale, narrative', 'account' (Cowan 1976:198). The use of this term reflects the influence of Islam and Islamic culture upon these languages. Despite its common origin in Arabic, the understanding of the word *hikayat* is different in both languages. The principal difference lies in its form: a Malay *hikayat* is a prose narrative, be it a history, story, fable, or romance, whereas in Acehnese a *hikayat* is presented in verse form. Despite this difference there are many similarities. Notably both the Malay and Acehnese *hikayat* are formal performance genres which deal with narratives of epic dimensions. As Durie (1996) has observed, both are 'intended for an extended oral performance using a melody': the Malay *hikayat* is sung prose, the Acehnese one is sung poetry. Both deal with similar subjects. So the difference between these two genres which bear the same name is in fact most accentuated when they are only considered in their written form: in their performance they would appear much more similar.

Before discussing the Acehnese genre of *hikayat* it is necessary to note a three- (or four-) way ambiguity in the use of this term. In Acehnese *hikayat* can refer to:

- i) a text-type—defined by its poetic form and the nature of its subject matter.
- ii) a poetic performance—this refers to the actual act of reciting or performing of a *hikayat* text, whether plainly recited, or with accompaniment of musical instrument of some kind;
- iii) a metre. The term *hikayat* can also be used to refer to the kind of metre in which a *hikayat* is written, i.e. to *sanjak*. Because of the possibility of confusion, the less ambiguous *sanjak* has been preferred here as the term to refer to the metre.

In addition to the traditional sense already defined, Acehnese people today sometimes use the term *hikayat* more broadly to refer to any poetic work presented in rhyming verse. Sometimes a *nalam* may be referred to as a *hikayat*, for example. This fourth sense of *hikayat* has resulted in some confusion. However, here we shall be concerned with the understanding of *hikayat* as a narration in a verse form, and these other senses needs concern us no longer.

As a text-type, *hikayat* forms the dominant and most prestigious genre in Acehnese literature. It also occupies the highest position, as far as the quantity is concerned, in the statistics of Acehnese manuscripts. Research conducted by a team from Fakultas Keguruan Universitas Syiah Kuala (1971) documented a total of 96 distinct *hikayat* titles found in various collections in Acehnese community. In Voorhoeve and Iskandar's (1994) catalogue of Acehnese manuscripts a total of 145 *hikayat* titles are listed under various headings: the number of manuscripts is of course much greater. This catalogue is largely based on materials collected between 1890 and 1940. A more recently compiled collection, that of the Aceh Museum includes at least 77 *hikayat* manuscripts which have been documented and catalogued in that collection (see the Museum's INMA¹ series of manuscript catalogues).

¹INMA is an abbreviation of Identifikasi Naskah Museum Aceh.

8.3 *Hikayat* versus *Haba*

Acehnese makes a distinction between *haba* 'story' (or *haba jameun* 'old traditional story') on the one hand, and *hikayat* on the other. A prose narrative, presented in everyday language, either in oral or written form, is called *haba*—this is what could be called a *hikayat* or *cerita* in Malay (Jones 1985)—but when a narrative is presented in verse form it is called *hikayat*. For example, the well-known mouse deer tales composed in prose is known as *Haba Peulandôk*, whereas the equivalent composed in verse is known as *hikayat* (i.e. *Hikayat Peulandôk* or *Hikayat Peulandôk Kancê*). Another example is *Hikayat Si Rhang Manyang*² which is also well-known as a traditional *haba*.³ In most cases it seems that a narrative may well have circulated orally in *haba* form, or perhaps also as a *kisah* in various other kinds of poetic performances, before being turned into a *hikayat*. Often the production of a *hikayat* version of a story marks that point at which the story is first put into writing.

8.4 Authorship of *Hikayat*

Traditionally it was a common practice for Acehnese *hikayat* composers not to mention their names in their works, as Acehnese *hikayat* were commonly composed as anonymous texts. Normally only a copyist's name is recorded on a manuscript and this is likely to be changed by later copyists. Moreover authors are required to be modest about their identity. In European literary tradition an author's name is recorded at the beginning of a text, but in Acehnese traditional literature the information concerning the author or rather

²This *hikayat* is the work of Syèh Rih Krueng Raya. The date is not given, but from the spelling system we can guess that it was written prior to 1972, when the new spelling reform was passed out.

³The *haba* version of this narrative is known under different names such as *Haba Seubab Teukabô*, *Haba Aneuk Lupa Nang*, *Haba Amat Rhang Manyang*. Also note the dialectal variation of the consonant clusters 'sr' vs 'rh' in *rhang/srang* which is also evident in other words such as *srah/rhah* ('wash') and *rhët/srët* ('fall').

the copyist, date and place is recorded at the very end part of the work. Often this last page is the first one to be damaged or get lost.

This situation has caused some difficulties for researchers of Acehese literature. This is not to say that none of the Acehese *hikayat* have identifiable authors. We know of a small number of works which are not anonymous. There is the famous war epic, the *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (see Damsté 1928, Zainuddin 1960, and Hasjmy 1971) which was apparently composed as a written text by *Teungku Chik Panté Kulu*.⁴ A more recent *hikayat* which is not anonymous is *Seumangat Aceh: Hikayat Haba Lua Nanggroe* 'The Spirit of Aceh: Stories of Foreign Countries' (Abdullah Arif 1956).

A second question is the mode of composition and transmission, whether oral or written. Snouck Hurgronje (1906:100-ff) describes the case of Dôkarim's heroic poems—*Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni*—which was composed orally by its illiterate author. About this author Snouck Hurgronje said:

Dôkarim (i.e. Abdul Karim) of Geulumpang Dua in the VI Mukims of the XXV is the composer of this hikayat. Writer we may not call him, for he can neither read nor write. He went on, as he tells us for five years gradually composing this poem in celebration of the heroic deeds of the Acehese in their conflict against the Dutch, adding fresh matter from time to time as he gained enlightenment from eye-witness.

We can assume that at times *hikayat* have been passed out or transmitted orally from one person to another, from generation to generation by word of mouth, and this represents the more ancient mode of transmission. We can observe that various other poetic text types include a *kisah*—or story—component, so the composition of narrative poetry is firmly established in the oral poetic

⁴Also known as Haji Muhammad (see Ibrahim Alfian, et al 1978, and Hasjmy 1971).

tradition. Certainly oral transmission is especially obvious in the case of blind *hikayat* performers which one encounters from time to time in Aceh.

Public recitation and hearing, and private copying of texts were traditionally the two main ways of transmission and preservation of *hikayat* texts. However today other methods have become important, including the development of manuscript collections in museums, printing and publishing of texts, and also production of audio recordings.

The idea of intellectual property (i.e. the rules of copyright and plagiarism) in the modern sense did not apply to the traditional Acehnese *hikayat* composers or copyists. As memorisation was a principal method of preservation, we frequently find in existence several different versions of a *hikayat*. These differences are not merely due to the usual processes of copyist error. On the contrary, performers of a *hikayat* will typically add something of his or her own material as he or she learns the text, changing in order to suit the audience and their particular circumstances. Likewise when a *hikayat* is copied or committed to writing the same thing happens: a writer or a copyist is likely to extend it to varying degrees. For these reasons we can understand why Drewes (1979:6) reported several versions of *Hikayat Pocut Muhamat* of different lengths: the longer versions vary between 2350 and 2700 lines, whereas the shortest versions are found to have only between 1835 and 1900 lines.

8.5 Islamic Influences on Acehnese *Hikayat*

In general Acehnese *hikayat* are strongly influenced by Islam. Religious (i.e. Islamic) themes often appears in a *hikayat* even if the work is not considered essentially religious in its topic. The word *hikayat* itself denotes clear evidence of Islamic influence because it is an Arabic borrowing. The advance of Islam in Aceh accelerated the development of Acehnese *hikayat*. It does not seem

plausible, for example, that the majority of Acehnese people would have acquired Arabic and Islamic knowledge directly from Arabic sources during the early periods of Islam in Aceh. Since Malay was the lingua franca, initially the new religion penetrated through the medium of this language. However, even Malay was not known by many village people at that time.

The Acehnese *hikayat* was a means to popularise the knowledge of Islam amongst the Acehnese people, usually working from literary Islamic works. This can be seen, for example, from the work of Raseuni Khan, *Râwiyatôn Sabeu'ah* 'the seven narrations', an Acehnese translation of Al-Raniri's Malay version of *Akhhbâr al-Âkhira* 'news of the hereafter' (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:178). Raseuni Khan reported that the book's message would not be able to reach the majority of Acehnese people, who could not read and write in Malay, unless it is made available in their mother tongue. At the beginning of the work he gives his reason for undertaking the translation: "*Basa Jawoe miet jituban, jibôh ikatan cara taba*" (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:349). The Acehnese people know very little of the Malay (written) language, so he wrote it in the manner of our (Acehnese) recitation.⁵ As the book contains important Islamic teachings and very few Acehnese could read and understand it in Malay, Raseuni Khan took the initiative to make it available in Acehnese by turning it into the form of *hikayat*, for common public recitation.

It may also have happened that a learned Acehnese person would recollect the Islamic knowledge he or she has learned from various sources and present it to the people of Aceh in a new *hikayat* which is not a translation. Some works which Snouck Hurgronje (1906) classified under religious works as books of instruction and edification are composed in this way. This process seems to

⁵In this text Raseuni Khan refers to himself as the third person: in interpreting the use of prefix *ji-*, especially in *jituban* and *jibôh*—the first refers to the Acehnese people and the last refers to himself.

have been one way: we do not know of any original Acehnese works which have been adopted or translated into the literature of Malay or other languages.

We can trace some other evidence of the Islamic characteristics shown by Acehnese *hikayat*. One is in their titles: many *hikayat* have their title in Arabic, although the spelling is adjusted to the Acehnese phonological system when Roman orthography is used. For example, *Akheubarôn Karim*, from Arabic *Akhbaru al-Karim* 'the great news', *Tambihôy Énsan*, from Arabic *Tanbihu al-Insan* 'warning, advice for the people' and *Mènhaïôy 'Abidin*, from Arabic *Minhaju al-'Abidin* 'the road of the pious'. Such *hikayat* are usually translations from Islamic sources, either direct translations from Arabic or by way of Malay from Persian or Indian sources.

Many *hikayat* narrate a story about the famous people mentioned in the holy Quran such as *Hikayat Pra'un* 'Story of Pharaoh', *Hikayat Nabi Usuh* 'Story of the Prophet Joseph' and *Hikayat Èlia Tujôh* 'Story of the Seven Sleepers'. These are used for teaching or transmitting knowledge of Islam. Also many *hikayat* begin with some religious (Islamic) expressions as opening formulae such as '*ajaéb subeuhanallah* 'Glory be to God, How Wondrous', *deungön bismillah lôn puphôn kalam* 'in the name of God I begin this work', and *alhamdulillah pujoe keu tuhan* 'All praises be to God alone'. Such expressions have become a kind of opening formula for the recitation of *hikayat* and they are comparable to the 'once upon a time' of fairy tales in English. These are all obvious evidence of Islamic influences on Acehnese *hikayat*.

8.6 The Performance of *Hikayat*

For the sake of clarity, we need to reiterate here that the term *hikayat* bears three meanings—*hikayat* as a metrical form, *hikayat* as a text-type, and *hikayat* as a type of performance. The discussion of *hikayat* in this section deals with the last

meaning. Generally *hikayat* is composed to be recited and conversely it is never intended for silent reading⁶. Performance here refers to any recitation of *hikayat* for a public audience.

8.6.1 Places of Recitation

Traditionally the common venue for *hikayat* recitation was the *meunasah* (Hiliry 1981:24) since it functions as a common public centre within a village where the village residents meet for various purposes. *Hikayat* may also be recited at other public places in a village such as *balèe* 'a building with no walls, for public use, and usually it is smaller than a *meunasah*', at any public functions, cultural festivities or even in market places or private houses depending on the purpose of recitation. During the time of the sultanate, *hikayat* used to be recited at royal courts as a formal performance to entertain a royal audience. In the villages the recitation is traditionally performed at night times to entertain the villagers after a hard day work in the paddy fields or in the gardens. During the times when electronic media and entertainments were not yet in existence, we can imagine how such *hikayat* recitation contributed significantly as an aspect of public entertainment.

Rhyme and rhythm are two aspects of *hikayat* that contribute greatly to its entertainment function. The audience is entertained by a melodious voice of the reciter(s) in addition to the varieties of styles, the rhymes and the rhythmic patterns of the verses. Rhyme can create sound echoes and the rhythmic patterns of the recitation can create the sense of music which affects the pulse and heart beat. All together these can ultimately create a source of aesthetic satisfaction to the listeners.

⁶However, it is possible to use a *hikayat* for this purpose, especially the ones recently written as literary works which are not originated in the oral tradition such as Abdullah Arif's *Seumangat Acèh: Hikayat Haba Lua Nanggroe* (1956); and Araby Ahmad's *Tanda Mata* (1959), but this is not a tradition in Acehnese society.

Different *hikayat* are recited for different occasions and purposes. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* 'The Epic of the Holy War', for example, used to be recited during the Dutch-Acehnese war before the troops go down to the battle field, or as Siegel (1979:263) puts it, it was 'chanted before men went off to attack the Dutch.' It was also a common practice that this *hikayat* was recited in the villages of throughout Aceh as to inculcate the spirit of *jihad* 'fighting in the Holy War against the enemy of religion' among the Acehnese people (Also see Hamidy 1974 for an example of an actual effect of the *hikayat* as reported by Anzib Lamnyong).

Hikayat Bahaya Siribèe 'The *hikayat* of one thousand calamities' may well suit the audience at a *rumoh ureueng maté*⁷ 'home of the deceased' following the funeral as to remind the listeners about life after death. At a wedding ceremony, a romantic *hikayat* such as *Hikayat Gumbak Meuh* may be more preferable. Conversely such *hikayat* would be considered inappropriate to be recited on the celebration of *Molôt Nabi* 'The birthday of the Prophet Muhammad', instead *Hikayat Wafeuet Nabi* 'The *hikayat* of the prophet's death' would be recited. Some *hikayat* are considered appropriate to be recited for more than one purposes.

8.6.2 Styles of Recitation

Hikayat is usually recited in a clear and loud voice with the aid of melody before a public audience. Some reciters may use a written text as an aid to their memory, others perform their recitation merely based on their memory.

⁷In Acehnese society, it is customary for relatives, friends, and neighbours to visit the house of the deceased during the first ten days following the funeral. The main event is to say prayers and recite the holy book known as *mendaruh* ('recite the holy book together') which usually takes place in the evening.

Hikayat may be recited solo and by a group, or even by two reciters in turns.

The recitation may be done with or without musical accompaniments.

A melody or melody style is traditionally called *lagèe* in Acehnese. The employment of different *lagèe* is intended to create variety in the recitation style.

We know of two *lagèe* styles used in *hikayat* recitation: *lagèe bagah* 'fast tempo style' and *lagèe meulèt* also known as *lagèe jareueng* 'slow tempo style'. Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:75) reported that the former style was identified as *lagèe Aceh* or *lagèe Dalam*, which was the style used by the reciters at the royal court of Aceh, whereas the latter was called *lagèe Pidie* which was the common style employed by reciters in Pidie. This correlation appears not to hold today.

Each *lagèe* style has several varieties. However, no hard and fast rules are set in this matter in the sense that a reciter is free to choose whichever style is preferable to him or her. In fact, it is a common practice that a reciter changes from one style to another during a performance. For example, a reciter may begin reciting with one variety of the *lagèe jareueng*, which is the common case, and after a while he or she may shift into the style of *lagèe bagah*. Along with the style shifting, commonly the reciter also raises the tone of his or her voice. Usually, but not always, this functions as a clue that the recitation will end shortly. Besides, the change of *lagèe* is usually intended to avoid monotony and to entertain the audience.

Besides the traditional styles mentioned, two kinds of innovation have recently been made with regard to the style of recitation. Innovations were introduced by Teungku Ilyas Abdullah in his recitation of *Hikayat Nabi Sulaiman* 'Story of the Prophet Solomon' and *Hikayat Raja Siujud* 'Story of King Siujud'⁸: the use of musical instruments—flute and tambourine—and the adoption of tunes from

⁸This recitation is available in audio tape recording produced by Mawar Record in the early 1980s for commercial purpose.

popular songs as *hikayat* melodies. He started reciting the opening formula—the *khôteubah*—with a very slow style using a common traditional tune. Afterwards he shifted into a tune he adopted from particular popular songs. He may maintain a particular tune throughout the recitation or shift into a different tune at a particular point during the recitation.

Another innovation is introduced by Teungku Adnan, better known as *PMTOH*,⁹ pronounced *pèm toh*: this is a spoonerism based upon the expression *poh tèm* 'beat a tin drum'. In fact what he beats during his performance is not a tin drum, but a tambourine as an aid of keeping the tempo of recitation. This is quite a unique style of performance which is totally different from the traditional recitation style which relies upon the reciter's voice alone. In his performance *PMTOH* makes use of modern technology such as microphone and other necessary props such toy gun, doll, wooden sword, helmet, false nose and wig. He also uses other aids such as tambourine, and different types of clothing including woman's dress and soldier's uniform. These are all meant to match a particular character from the *hikayat* he is reciting to make the performance more lively. Siegel (1979:269) reported that Teungku Adnan got this idea of innovation from watching movies. He said if the props are used to accompany the recitation of *hikayat* the audience would be able to see what the characters are doing like they do in the movie, that is, the audience do not only listen to the story but also visualise the actual events of the *hikayat*. His performance is a dramatisation of *hikayat*: he does not merely recite the verses of the *hikayat* but also acts out the meaning.

PMTOH does not use a text in his recitation but recites directly from his memory and sometimes he improvises some extra verses impromptu during the performance. Such impromptu verses usually relate not to the story of the

⁹As spelled, this is a name of a leading commercial bus company operating in the whole regions of Aceh and between Aceh and Medan, and to a limited frequency to Jakarta.

hikayat but to other subjects or topics related to the context of the performance. For example, when he performed at the PKA-3 in August 1988, after the usual opening formula, he narrated a few impromptu verses related to the history of the PKA as in the following:

Sigohlom ulôntuan baca hikayat

Ulôn riwayat bacut peuristitwa

Tanggay dua plôh peuet bak buleuen lapan

Peukan kebudayaan jadêh geubuka

'Before I begin reciting *hikayat*, I will briefly narrate an event. On the 24th of August, the Acehese Cultural Fair was officially opened.'

Budaya Acêh jithêe lé kaphé

Sidêh diuké di nanggroe Beulanda

Ka tujôh blah thôn pakön h'ana lé

Seudêh bukön lé taingat bangsa

'Acehese culture is known by the western people, it is preserved in the Netherlands. It has been seventeen years (since the last Cultural Fair), it makes us very sad when we think about this.'

The recitation is performed on a stage known as *panggông* 'a lifted wooden platform'. He sits in the centre of the platform beside a big trunk wherein he keeps all the props he needs for the performance. Usually *PMTOH* recites the more traditional *hikayat*, particularly those deriving from Indian romances. *Hikayat Malém Diwa* is the one that he prefers the most. He holds that this *hikayat* is sacred, requiring a *khunduri* to be offered prior to its recitation. In August of 1988 I attended his performance in Banda Aceh at the events of the Acehese Cultural Festival known as PKA-3.¹⁰ Before commencing the

¹⁰PKA-3 stands for Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh ke-3 where *PMTOH*'s performance was one of the main events.

performance he invited, from among the audience, three orphans to whom he offered a *khanduri* 'a ritual meal' which he had prepared. He said '*nyoe keu syarat*' 'this is the requirement'.

Like other reciters *PMTOH* employs both slow and fast styles in his recitation, however his melody is quite distinctive and instantly recognisable. He is well-known for his ability to create distinct types of voice for different characters which he can shift smoothly from one to another such as from male to female voice and from crying to laughter.

8.7 Classification of *Hikayat*

Because of the large number of *hikayat*, and their quite diverse characters, it is necessary to identify some kind of typology or classification of *hikayat* texts. The historical starting point for this task is the ethnographic work of Snouck Hurgronje *The Acehnese*, in which he supplied a classification and sometimes quite detailed description of all the *hikayat* texts known to him. This formed the major part of his overview of Acehnese literature.

In this section I will first discuss Snouck Hurgronje's classification, and then propose one which seems more appropriate to the full range of *hikayat* texts known today.

8.7.1 Snouck Hurgronje's Classification

The earliest classification of Acehnese *hikayat* was devised by Snouck Hurgronje (1906) and it was based on the situation as he encountered it in the 19th century Aceh. Snouck Hurgronje conducted this literary research as a secondary activity during his stay in Aceh between July 1891 and February 1892. His

main mission was as a special adviser to the Dutch government in Aceh.¹¹ His work has been adopted by other researchers of Acehese literature such as Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994) and other Western scholars or those trained in the Western tradition. In Snouck Hurgronje (1906,II:66-189) we find that *hikayat* are classified as *hikayat ruhé*¹², epic *hikayat*, original treatises, fiction, fables relating to animals, and religious works which are categorised as legends relating to the pre-Mohammedan, legends relating to the Mohammedan periods, and books of instruction and edification.

Recently Adnan Hanafiah (1992)¹³ proposed a rather different approach to *hikayat* classification. He divided *hikayat* into five groups: history, law code, religion, code of tradition, and folklore. A more recent classification is made by Durie (1996:93) in which Acehese *hikayat* are classified into nine groups: four categories of epics (mythical folk epics, moral epics, war epics and of romances); three further categories of narratives (versified folk tales, personal tales, and cautionary or hortatory tales); abusive texts; and texts for religious edification and instruction.

Snouck Hurgronje's work, *The Acehese* (1906), has been widely used as a standard reference to studies on Acehese literature, so some comments are made here with special reference to his Chapter Two, vol. II, concerning Acehese literature.

First, Snouck Hurgronje's work was based on the 19th century situation and some of the data are no longer relevant to current situation of Acehese literary

¹¹We can understand this from the comment he made regarding his mission in Aceh as he says: "In Aceh soon I saw that the available data regarding the language, country and people fell far short of what was wanted, so I extended my inquiry beyond the limits of my commission." (Snouck Hurgronje, I:v).

¹²In Durie (1996:93) this type of *hikayat* is called "abusive texts".

¹³This work is in Bahasa Indonesia and unpublished, presented in Kuala Lumpur in November 1992 in a seminar on Bengkel Sejarah Bahasa Melayu dari Berbagai Kota.

world in the contemporary Aceh. Things have changed and keep changing. These changes have had some effects on literature. The traditional form of *hikayat ruhé* described by Snouck Hurgronje, for example, is no longer in existence and is not even known by the younger generation. Probably even in Snouck Hurgronje's time it had marginal status as a text-type. In my view, even in the traditional era, this kind of work was not recognised as a genre of *hikayat*. What Snouck Hurgronje calls "the hero" of *hikayat ruhé*, the *Hikayat Po Jambô*, was known to him merely by name (Snouck Hurgronje 1906, II:80).

On the other hand, new types of *hikayat* have emerged over the past forty years, most of which have been published for commercial purposes. While once one could only hear *hikayat* from public recitations, today some of them are made available in audio or even video tapes or in a printed form for private reading. Similarly, in the past only one or two copies of the text were available in the possession of a particular person within a region, but today many *hikayat* have been published and made available to be purchased in the market.

Second, Snouck Hurgronje's division of Acehnese literature into the written and the orally transmitted types does not seem to be appropriate. In 19th century Aceh, written literature in the Acehnese language was not yet developed in the sense of 'literature' usually understood in the west. All forms of literature, even those written down, were essentially oral in nature and transmitted orally. We do find a few written texts of the time, but they were used as an aid to oral transmission, i.e. as an aid to public recitation and as a support to memory. Certainly no production of Acehnese text is intended for private silent reading as in modern literature, or for an exclusively written mode of transmission.

Third, Snouck Hurgronje treated *hadih maja*¹⁴ under Acehese prose as a kind of *haba*. We know that *haba* in Acehese is a prose narrative, but in contemporary usage *hadih maja* is not a narrative, but a proverb in verse. Therefore, we do not find such stories as legends or romance composed in the form of *hadih maja*. In many respects, *hadih maja* are identical to proverbs in English. *Hadih maja* expresses values cultivated through concise sayings of the ancestors pertaining to particular matters which are not regularised by religious code of laws. Most *hadih maja* are composed in verse. Consider an example below:

Peuturôt prang ancô nanggroe

peuturôt putroe malèe raja

peuturôt napsu malèe h'an lé

Peuturôt haté hilang nyawa (Hasjim MK 1977:16).

'Keep making war and the country will be destroyed, keep listening to the princess and the king will be embarrassed; keep following your desire and you will have no shame, keep following your heart and you will lose your life.'

However, some *hadih maja* are found in short phrases or expressions. Consider the following example:

Lagèe Beulanda pula labu (Hasjim MK 1977:47).

'As the Dutch grow pumpkins, i.e. following a strategy of expansion.'

¹⁴To quote his words, "The first kind of *haba*, which relates to the past history of the country, combines instruction with amusement, and is in so far akin to what the Acehese call *hadih maja* = tales or traditions of grandmothers, or rather of female ancestors" (p. 68).

8.7.2 A Current Classification

The classification that I am going to propose in this study is based on the current situation, that is, what is found in contemporary Acehese literature. On this basis, Acehese *hikayat* can be classified into two major categories: epics and non-epics.

8.7.2.1 Epic *Hikayat*

The term 'epic' derives from the Greek word *epos* whose original meaning includes 'word', 'saying', 'line of poetry', 'tale' and 'song' (Drewes 1979:2). Cuddon (1977:220) defines epic as:

a long narrative poem, on a grand scale, about the deeds of warriors and heroes. It is a polygonal, heroic story incorporating myth, legend, folk tale and history. Epics are often of national significance in the sense that they embody the history and aspirations of a nation in a lofty or grandiose manner.

Among the principal elements of an epic are as follows: it is majestic or dignified in its theme and style, it deals with legendary or historical events of national or universal significance, it relates the glorious deeds performed by warriors and heroes, and it is of a significant length (McArthur 1992:376).

Acehese epics can be divided into four groups; historical epics, war epics, religious epics and romances or mythical epics. Sometimes these classifications may seem to overlap as one group contains some characteristics of the other. For example, we may find some historical facts are intertwined in war epics, and likewise religious elements may be found in historical epics. For this reason, here the primary classification is based upon the elements which are more dominant in a work. Thus a narrative is considered to be a historical epic if it shows stronger historical characteristics than religious or legendary aspects.

(1) Historical Epics

These kinds of *hikayat* usually narrate significant stories relating to the history of Aceh. The prominent works that belong to this group are *Hikayat Malém Dagang* and *Hikayat Pocut Muhamat*, both of which relate stories of ancient Aceh. *Hikayat Malém Dagang*¹⁵ relates events which took place during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda, especially the achievements made by Malém Dagang in the expedition to attack Johor. *Hikayat Pocut Muhamat* provides us with events taking place within the Acehnese kingdom. When Raja Muda,¹⁶ an older brother of Pocut Muhamat, was in power the country was in chaos: laws and traditions were not fully observed because there was competition for the throne. The context is depicted in the following verses of the *hikayat*:

Ureueng meukapai bungka meulaôt

Dum teumakôt tuha muda

Peukeuh seubab jeuet teumakôt

Aceh meureubôt larang hana

'Sailors going to the sea, young and old are all in fear; why are they in fear, because no one will stop robbery.'

H'an soe larang ureueng meureubôt

Kareuna ka jeuet raja dua

'Oh gop kalön hana keumali

Jikheun Aceh tan agama

'None takes control of robbery, as there are two kings in a country; it is an embarrassment to Aceh, as if Aceh does not hold on religion.'

¹⁵The name Malém Dagang is attributed to the admiral in command of the expedition against Johor made during the reign of the great Sultan Iskandar Muda who was in power from AD 1607-1636 (Drewes 1979:9).

¹⁶See Ramli Harun (1988:28).

Meunan keuh meugah jeueb-jeueb nanggroe

Seubab bak droe Raja Muda

Trôh meugah u nanggroe rayëk

Hingga ka trôh nanggroe Ierupa (cited in Ramli Harun 1988:29).

'Such news has spread to each country, and it is all because of Raja Muda; the news has spread to great countries, even to Europe.'

Raja Muda had a rival who wanted to take over his throne and this rival sultan was said to be descendant of a *sayyid*,¹⁷ whose father was once a ruler of Aceh (Snouck Hurgronje 1906,II:89). Pocut Muhamat was not happy to see such a chaotic situation in the country and acted to begin collecting support for his brother.

Another work included within this group is *Hikayat Nun Parisi* which provides historical accounts of two early kingdoms: Pasai in North Aceh, and Samudra¹⁸ or Syamtalira in East Aceh (Adnan Hanafiah 1972:6).

Some historical accounts of Aceh are also found in many war narratives. However, since such works give more emphasis on battles than on historical events, in this study they are considered under war epics.

(2) War Epics

These epic *hikayat* normally provide descriptions of battles that took place in Aceh: most of them relate the events of the Dutch-Acehnese war, some describe the events of the Japanese-Acehnese war and a few are about the Acehnese civil war.

¹⁷The term *sayyid* is attributed to the honoured and respected Arabs, especially the descendants of Prophet Muhammad.

¹⁸This is of course the origin of the name 'Sumatra'.

Two examples of Acehnese war epics that relate the events of Dutch-Acehnese war include *Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni*¹⁹ and *Hikayat Prang Cut Ali*.²⁰ *Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni* was composed by Abdul Karim, better known in Acehnese history as Dô Karim. Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:100) reported that Dô Karim was illiterate and he composed the verses gradually within five years during which he kept upgrading and adding new verses as he witnessed the war events. Snouck Hurgronje met Dô Karim and wrote down the verses from his recitation. Thus, we can probably assume that Dô Karim kept updating his composition with more new verses after Snouck Hurgronje.

A popular epic which narrates the events of the Japanese-Acehnese war is *Hikayat Prang Pandrah*. It was originally written in *Jawi* script by Muhammad Abdul Muthalib of Bireuen in 1959, but later Anzib Lamnyong reproduced it in Latin script and it was published in 1960 by Maktabah Aceh Raya. Today this *hikayat* is available in the market in two editions. Unlike *Hikayat Prang Sabi* and *Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni*, which were written or composed during the war time, the composition of *Hikayat Prang Pandrah* was made over a decade after the war. Certainly the purpose of composition is different as well: it did not serve as a propaganda to drive people to the battle field, but rather as war literature for the younger Acehnese who did not witness the event themselves.

A war epic may contain religious exhortations which can cause people to become involved in war and fight in the battle field. This is shown by *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, perhaps the most popular war epic and one which has been the subject of study by a number of both domestic and western scholars (see, for example Damsté 1928, Hasjmy 1971, Siegel 1979, and Mohammad Ali 1995). In

¹⁹*Gômpeuni* or *Kômpeuni* is a common term used by Acehnese people to refer to the Dutch colonial authorities from the Dutch East India Company. Details of this *hikayat* are discussed at considerable length in Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:100-117).

²⁰The verses of this *hikayat* were recently used by Mohammad Ali (1995) for her Ph.D thesis, *Verses of War: Acehnese Hikayat on the War Against the Dutch*, at the University of Sydney.

Durie's (1996) classification this *hikayat* is considered under what he calls "cautionary and hortatory tales" group (Durie 1996:100). *Hikayat Prang Sabi* showed its effectiveness in inflaming the emotion of the Acehnese people and was used as a moral and psychological device to encourage them to participate in the Dutch-Acehnese war through public recitation. The verses of this *hikayat* have successfully cultivated in the hearts of the Acehnese people the feelings of love for their country and religion and hatred for the Dutch authority. On hearing the recitation of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* the Acehnese people were stimulated and inspired to join the fight in the Holy War. An incident was reported by Anzib Lamnyong (1967:35 ff) that in 1908 a person of Peurada village called Lém Abah ran amok against the Dutch officials in front of Balai Teuku Umar (a kind of City Hall in Banda Aceh at that time) upon hearing the recitation of the *hikayat*. Lém Abah was 25 years old and was recently married to Ti Hawa. One night a recitation of the *hikayat* was made at Lém Abah's house where a big crowd of people gathered secretly for the recitation. When the recitation ended, about midnight, the gathering dispersed and the house became quiet, but Lém Abah could not bring himself into sleep. The verses of the *hikayat* previously heard were striking his mind, especially the following verses:

Hadih Nabi cit ka sahèh

Hana röt wèh bak prang sabi

Neubri bulueng h'an peue dalèh

Cit ka teuprèh syeuruga tinggi

Hé teungku cut bungong tanjông meuh

Bèk lé taweueh keu dônnya ini

Tiek u likôt böh beulheueh-lheueh

Jak eu beudeuh syeuruga tinggi

'The sayings of the prophet clearly stated that we cannot avoid the Holy War. God has provided the highest heaven as a reward. Oh dear teungku, the golden flower, love not this world any longer. Abandon it completely, come and see clearly the highest heaven.'

Aneuk ngön judô bèk sayang lé

Rabbôlkadé nyang peulahra

Aljihadu wajibôn 'alaikôm

Makna meuphiôm dum syèdara

Di Blang Mahsya adeueb peudéh

Muwoe dum habéh agam dara

Wahé teungku wajéb tapatéh

'Adeueb peudéh hana ngön sa

'Think no more of your wife and children, God almighty will care for them. *Jihad* (fighting in the war) is your obligation, the meaning of which (*jihad*) is understood by all. There is a severe punishment in the hereafter, where all men and women will return. Oh teungku, you must believe, that the severe punishment is incomparable.'

Nyankeu teungku bèk lalè that

Bak 'ibadat hé syèdara

Barangri 'amai wahé sahbat

Nyang leubèh that tajak ngada

Lagi jinoe peureulèe 'in

Amaduddin bak agama

Meunan neukheun Saidil Mursalin

Beutayakin tanyoe dum na

'Therefore *teungku*, do not be ignorant, forget not your worship. My dear friend, the best deed of all is fighting in the war. Moreover, it is now desirable for (the protection of) your religion. That is what the prophet said, we all must believe (in what he said).'

Aljihadu wajibôn alaikôm

Makna meuphôm dum syèdara

Phôn syahadat dua seumayang

Teulhèe muprang deungön Beulanda

Beutapatéh wahé adoe

Beudöh jinoe tajak ngada

Beutapatéh wahé adoe

Teulah dudoe jan tagisa

'*Jihad* is your obligation, the meaning of which is understood by all. First is saying *syahadat* (declaration of faith), second is performing prayers, and third is fighting against the Dutch. Believe (in these), oh younger brother, now stand up and let's go to war. Believe (in these), oh younger brother, otherwise you will regret later when you die.'

Lém Abah got up, pulled out his *rincông* 'Acehnese dagger' and sharpened it, and went down to town to find *Beulanda* 'the Dutch'. As he passed the Atjèh

Sociteit²¹ Lém Abah ran into a Dutchman and attacked him at once, stabbing him with the *rincông*. Lém Abah was arrested and sent to exile in Java and his fellow villagers had never heard of him ever since.

The Dutch authorities confiscated all the available copies of this *hikayat* and prohibited the Acehnese people from keeping and reciting it and even from hearing its recitation. Consequently the manuscripts of the *hikayat* were scarce in Aceh for some time after the war. In 1960, an Acehnese poet, H.M. Zainuddin, published a version of this *hikayat* from manuscript sources and from people's memory. He wrote the verses in Latin script and it was published by Pustaka Iskandar Muda in Banda Aceh (see Zainuddin 1960). In the introduction to the book H.M. Zainuddin told us how he did the job:

Naskah jameun na lôn keubah

Lôn seuleu'ah peubarô teuma

Lôn böh nyang brök lôn tueng nyang jroh

Saboh-saboh gantoe haba (p.1)

'I had an old manuscript, I tried to reorganise it. Some parts of it I omitted (the bad one) but I kept the good ones, and some parts of it I changed.'

²¹This place is located about two hundred metres to the east of the grand mosque of Banda Aceh, Mesjid Raya. After Independence, this place was known as B.T.U. (Balai Teuku Umar), a building for public functions, i.e. as a city hall, named after the Acehnese hero Teuku Umar. Today part of this site has become a shopping centre.

Habéh lôn jak jeueb-jeueb teumpat

Jak peusapat dumpeue haba

Habéh timu jak u barat

Trôh bak teumpat Haji Nyakna (p.1)

'I went to all places, to collect all stories. From east to west, until I got Haji Nyakna's place.'

The second publication was by Abdullah Arif who reproduced the *hikayat* verses in *Jawi* script and published it by himself in the form of booklet in four volumes: each volume contains one story.²²

The main contents of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* are extracted from the religious principles taught by the Holy Quran and hadith 'the sayings of Prophet Muhammad'. The text consists of four *kisah* (i.e. stories) namely, *Kisah 'Ainul Mardhiah* 'story of 'Ainul Mardhiah', *Kisah Pahala Syahid* 'story of martyrdom rewards', *Kisah Sa'id Salmy* 'story of Sa'id Salmy', and *Kisah Muda Bahlia* 'story of the newly wed'.

An exceptional war epic is *Hikayat Éseutamu* (i.e. story about Istambul) which describes the Crimean war between Russia and Turkey in the 19th century (Voorhoeve and Iskandar 1994:54 ff).

There are some other war narratives such as *Hikayat Prang Raja Khiba* (Adnan Hanafiah 1972:5), also mentioned in Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:156), describing war events which took place outside Aceh, e.g. in Arabia during the early days of Islam.

²²This publication is not dated. However, Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994:73) estimate that the publication was made in 1963.

(3) Religious Epics

The epic *hikayat* considered under this group are those which narrate significant events and holy figures known in the Islamic world. In Snouck Hurgronje (1906) and Voorhoeve and Iskandar (1994) these epics are categorised as legends relating to the pre-Mohammedan and the Mohammedan periods. The narration of these events and figures is usually based on the information available from religious sources such as the Holy Quran, the *hadith* 'the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad', and/or from other Islamic literature. Therefore the Acehnese people, as they are Muslims, believe that these works are true stories although they are often considerably elaborated and adapted. Included in this group are *Hikayat Nabi Usuh* 'a narrative about Prophet Joseph'²³ and *Hikayat Èlia Tujôh* 'a narrative about the seven saints'²⁴. In both *hikayat* we find that the composer gives reference to the original sources of information including *kuruan* 'the Holy Quran', *hadih nabi* 'the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad', *tapeusé* 'the interpretation of the Holy Quran', and *haba lam kitab* 'stories from Islamic literature'. In *Hikayat Nabi Usuh*, for example, such reference is clearly stated at the beginning part of the *hikayat*, beginning from line number six, after the common opening formula:

Jinoe lôn peugah saboh riwayat

Haba lam kitab Kisasônnabi

Ibeunu 'Abah po riwayat

Wahé sahbat droeneuh rawie

²³A copy of the manuscript of this *hikayat* is available in Durie's private collection at the University of Melbourne, Australia. The text is written in Jawi script, consisting of 225 pages. In the Holy Quran the main narration regarding Nabi Usuh is in Surah ('chapter') 12th.

²⁴This *hikayat* was transliterated by Damsté and published by Koninklijk Instituut in 1939. The main narration of Èlia Tujôh is found in Surah 18th of the Holy Quran.

Lam tapeusé nyang meuteuntèe
Hadih pangulèe Muhammad nabi
Nabi Muhammad nyang seumeugah
Ibeunu 'Abah nyang deungö kri

Di Muhammad Tuhan peutrön
Lam kuruan nyang that mulia
Beutaiman beutapatéh
Bèk peujayèh haba nabi

'Now I relate a narration, a story from a book called *Kisasônnabi* ('stories of apostles'). My dear friends, this story is narrated by Ibnu 'Abbas ('a close companion of Prophet Muhammad'). More precisely I refer you to tapeusé and the sayings of Muhammad. The original story was told by Muhammad to Ibnu 'Abbas. Muhammad received it from God, as it is revealed in the Holy Quran. You must believe it, and what the prophet said do not distrust.'

In *Hikayat Èlia Tujôh* the attribution of a source is given as follows:

Sabeuda nabi soydén karim
Tujôh isém neuyue aja
Antara 'Isa ngön Muhammad
Ureueng nyan meuhat saboh masa

Dalam tapeusé geuritwayat

Nan ngön sipheuet geupeunyata

Suratôy kahpi bak juh sôbeuhan

Disinan tèelan lahé nyata

Padum-padum na peureuman Tuhan

Peungajaran keu nabi kita

Ureueng nyan tujôh lapan ngön asèe

That meuteuntèe kalam rabbana

'The honourable prophet has ordered you to learn the seven names. Between the times of Jesus and Muhammad, those people lived. It is narrated in the commentary on the Quran regarding their names and attributes. It is clearly mentioned in *Suratul Kahfi* ('a chapter in the Holy Quran'). These are all revelations from God, and teachings of our prophet. In the story there are seven people and a dog, there is no doubt about God's words.'

Such *hikayat* typically include a significant amount of elaboration: extra materials, often involving local colour, are added to enrich the narration so as to suit the local audience. In *Hikayat Èlia Tujôh*, for example, such elaboration can be seen from the very beginning where the composer includes various additional elements reflecting local beliefs. The composer claims that the protagonists of the *hikayat* bear sacred values. If their names are written somewhere inside a house, the dwellers are protected from disease and catastrophe. Seamen are encouraged to write the seven sleepers' names on their boats so that they are saved from the rough ocean waves. The crops will grow well and yield much more, provided that the farmer writes these names on the farm. Such information has no official religious status in Islam, but merely reflects local customs.

(4) Epics of romance and mythology

It is quite difficult to make a clear division between the works which belong to romance and mythology in Acehnese literature: each employs elements which might be regarded as typical to the other. Romance, for example, is mainly concerned with adventure, love, and chivalry of characters who live in a remote world, but this work is often accompanied with the involvement of supernatural beings—both human and non-human—and mythical as well as magical events which are common elements found in mythology. Likewise, while the primary concern of mythology is creation—how something came into existence—Acehnese myths are often enriched with various elements of romance.

In general, the Acehnese works belonging to this group have the following characteristics:

- (a) the pursuit of love is commonly the main theme of the narrative;
- (b) the subjects of the story commonly have some supernatural power;
- (c) the names of the main characters are often not everyday Islamic or Acehnese names;
- (d) the characters are often challenged or assisted by supernatural beings;
- (e) the main character is often the member of a noble family;
- (f) with very few exceptions, the scenes are set in places unknown to the Acehnese.

This kind of epic comes from Acehnese oral traditions and the original person who created the work and the date when the work was first created are unknown. Some, if not all, may derive from Malay or other sources. Perhaps this group constitutes the biggest number in the collection of Acehnese *hikayat*. Of the famous example are *Hikayat Malém Ditwa*, *Hikayat Jugi Tapa*, *Hikayat Asai*

Padé, Hikayat Putroe Gumbak Meuh, Hikayat Indra Budiman, and Hikayat Banta Beuransah. Most of these *hikayat* are treated by Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:121 ff) under fictional works. Scholars (see for example, Snouck Hurgronje 1906, Durie 1996) report the contents of these *hikayat* are significantly influenced by the works from pre-Islamic sources, including materials from Indian and Persian origin. Most narratives of this type give priority to mythical adventures and miraculous events which centre around the pursuit of love or chivalry, although elements of historical information might be found in some works of this group. In Acehese society, works of this group have been mainly used for entertainment purposes with some degree of educational content.

The most popular work within this group is *Hikayat Malém Diwa*, one of the few that are set in Aceh. Most Acehese people believe that this *hikayat* has existed since a long time ago in ancient Aceh (Anzib Lamnyong 1959:4) and that its hero, Malém Diwa, was an historical figure. The story was set in Nanggroe Piadah (today's North Aceh). Malém Diwa is a son of the ruling king of Nanggroe Piadah called Raja Tampôk. Malém Diwa is believed to have extraordinary capabilities. For example, he is able to take as his wife a *putroe* (i.e. princess, nymph) from Nanggroe Antara 'a country between the earth and the sky' whose beauty is incomparable to any women of the earth.

Hamidy (1974:7) reports that the Acehese people have seen Malém Diwa as a symbol of success. According to Hamidy Malém Diwa is believed to have been a real person and a member of the Acehese society. He elevated the prestige of his own people through his success in being accepted by the people from another country. Hamidy suggests that this perception grew to the extent that Malém Diwa came to be seen as a sacred figure. Today the *hikayat* cannot be recited or performed without fulfilling proper requirements. Prior to the recitation and upon completion of the *hikayat*, a *khanduri* or ritual meal (Durie

1996:98) must be offered, otherwise it is believed that some sorts of catastrophe or misfortune will strike the village. So highly is the figure of Malém Diwa regarded, that the Acehnese have granted him a purely Islamic socio-religious title of *teungku*, thus Teungku Malém. The name *Malém Diwa* includes a pre-Islamic reference in the Hindu title *Diwa*, from *deva* 'divinity' and an Islamic term *malém*, from Arabic *mu'allim* 'learned one, master'. This reflects the syncretistic combination of Islamic and local pre-Islamic elements in the story. This *hikayat* also includes a number of stories about how animals, plants and places got their names.

8.7.2.2 Non-epic *Hikayat*

As the name denotes, works belonging to the non-epic category are usually shorter than the epic *hikayat* previously described. However, this is not without exception. Unlike many epic *hikayat*, most works within this category were originally composed as written texts and are not anonymous, although some are not dated. A non-epic *hikayat* can be a complete story in itself or it can comprise several different topics. The non-epic works are of various kinds: they can be classified into a number of groups—religious/moral works; social criticism; personal tales; history; and fables.

(1) Religious/Moral Works

Any *hikayat* whose contents are considered appropriate to be used for the promotion of religion and moral edification are included in this group. Within the non-epic category, religious/moral works are the most prominent. The works within this group cover a wide range of topics, but all are related to religious and moral edification. They can be further classified as:

- (a) *hukôm agama* 'religious laws and regulations';
- (b) *haba akhirat* 'eschatological narratives'; and
- (c) *haba peuingat* or *nasihat* 'advisory and cautionary tales'.

Most *hikayat* under this group have been classified by previous researchers categorised as books for religious instruction and edification (see, for example, Snouck Hurgronje 1906, Voorhoeve & Iskandar 1994, and Durie 1996).

The religious works classified as *hukôm agama* 'religious laws and regulations' are usually not stories, but explanations of particular religious regulations in broader detail. The original sources of the contents are verses of the Holy Quran, hadith, or books of Islamic law written in other languages. The Acehnese versions use the *hikayat* format as a means to popularise the laws to the Acehnese people, especially to those who do not understand other languages. The work of Teungku Seumatang, *Akeubarô Karim* 'the great news' is the main example in this category. Ten topics are discussed in this book.²⁵ Other works included here are *Kisah Duablah Peukara* 'the story of the twelve matters' and *Cahya Permata* 'the radiance of a diamond' written by Tgk. Usman Bakar & Ibnu Abbas (1936). People are instructed to discard eleven attitudes which inhibit their personality and hold one essential attitude, *yakin* 'faith'. Voorhoeve & Iskandar (1994:181) listed the eleven attitudes to be discarded as follows:

- a) *'ujôb* 'self-complacency';
- b) *seumeu'ah* 'vainglory';
- c) *ria* 'arrogance';
- d) *teukabô* 'ostentation';
- e) *lubha* 'greed';
- f) *teumeu'a* 'covetousness';
- g) *deungki* 'envy';
- h) *dam* 'malice';

²⁵These topics are 1) *Sipheuet Tuhan* ('the attributes of God'), 2) *Dalil Na Tuhan* ('the evidence of God existence'), 3) *Sipheuet Nabi* ('the attributes of the prophet'), 4) *Rukôn Agama* ('the pillars of religion'), 5) *Hukôm Meusuci* ('regulations on purification'), 6) *Qadha Hajat* ('regulations on using toilet'), 7) *Peusuci Najih* ('purifying the unclean'), 8) *Wajêb Manoe* ('regulations on taking shower/bath'), 9) *Tueng le Seumayang* ('performing ablutions') and 10) *Syeuruga* ('heaven').

- i) *lan* 'suspicion';
- j) *waham* 'delusion'; and
- k) *syök* 'distrust'.

Another *hikayat* that discusses religious regulations is *Hikayat Tambéh Tujôh Blah* 'seventeen points of faith'. Voorhoeve & Iskandar (1994:183) note that the author mentions that he composed this work based on an Arabic source *Munir al-Qulub Dawa' al-Zhunub* 'enlightment of hearts, cure for sins'. Probably also the translation of the Holy Quran can be considered as a *hikayat* in this category.

The *Haba akhirat* are primarily concerned with the matters of death and life after death, such as what will happen to people who live in faith and to those who deviate from the path of God. Through these works people are reminded that this worldly life is short and the only eternal life is after death. Quite often the writers give warnings that people should examine well what they do and how they live their life because they will certainly face a severe judgement. Works of eschatology are typically composed by an *ulama* 'learned person in Islam'. Some well-known works concerning eschatology are *Miftahul 'Ibadah* ('the key to worship'), *Hikayat Bahaya Siribèe*²⁶ 'a thousand disasters', *Hikayat Tujôh Kisah*²⁷ 'seven stories' and *As-Sa'ah: Tanda-Tanda Kiamat* 'the time: the signs of the doomsday', the last mentioned being the work of Z. Abidin Maqam (1959). The following lines of *Miftahul 'Ibadah* (Tgk. Basyah Kamal Lhông 1977:18 ff) describe what an individual will encounter at the time of their death:

²⁶Voorhoeve & Iskandar (1994:179) notes that this text appeared in print together with *Nalam Sipheuet Dua Plôh* of Teungku M. Amin Tiro (also known as Teungku Dèah Côt). It was printed in Cairo in 1938 (A.H. 1357). Murtadha Muhammad Yusuf reproduced a copy of this *hikayat* (undated) in his *Jawi* handwriting based on the original manuscript and published by Gali book shop in Bireuen and this is the version that is available in the market today.

²⁷Elsewhere appears under the title of *Rawiyatôn Saben'ah*, a translation of Al-Raniri's *Akhbar al-Akhirah* made by Raseuni Khan in 1663/1664, see Durie (1996:115).

Malikulmawot ²⁸meuhat geudatang

Keupada énsan ureueng rab maté

'Oh ban takalön h'an töm nyang meunan

Teumakôt yôh nyan meugeunta haté

Teuéh teuhanta mata meumandang

Lidah nyang tajam h'an jeuet marit lé

Di Malaikat geupeurab reujang

Nyawöng geureugam deungön sigra lé

'Certainly Malikulmawot will come to a dying person. The angel looks to you like nothing you have never seen, and your heart trembles with fear. You are lying down and your eyes are looking around; your tongue is now paralysed. The angel is quickly approaching; grabbing your soul immediately.'

Teumakôt leupah sôsa hana ban

Di ateuch tilam badan meugulé

Ka trôh bak watée geulakée pulang

Nyawöng ngön badan jinoe lôn peucré

²⁸*Malikulmawot* 'the Angle of death' is a term used to refer to 'Izrail: the angel whose duty is to bring death to all living creatures.

Jinoe lôn pinah amanah Tuhan

Tinggaikeu badan nyawöng peureugi

Nanyum ka reulöh ban saboh 'alam

Gadöh pandangan 'oh nyawöng meucré

'You fall on your bed; you look so scared and worried. The time has come, God wants your soul back; now I will separate your body and soul. Now I will remove God's gift; the body is left and the soul is gone. You feel like the whole world is broken; you lose your sight as the soul is gone.'

Di Malaikat leugat geureugam

Geutarék reujang phôn-phôn bak gaki

Masa nyan takliek ka teutiek pangsar

Lakèe bantuan hana areuti

'The angel firmly grabs your soul; pulls it out from your feet. At that time you cry so hard that you faint; you cry for help but in vain.'

The religious or moral works which are classified as *haba peuingat* or *haba nasihat* 'advisory and cautionary tales' are mainly concerned with advice to be implemented and cultivated in the society. In some works such advice is also known as *wasiet* 'will'. *Sanggamara* 'preventing calamity', the work of Teuku Mansoer Leupung, is a well-known composition in this category. This book comprises thirty one different topics, all concerning religious and moral advice. The aim of the book is reflected in its title: the word *sangga* means 'to block', 'to protect', or 'to prevent', and the word *mara* means 'calamity', or 'disaster': by following this advice, religious or moral calamity will not happen in the society. There are *haba peuingat*, *nasihat* or *wasiet* specially directed to children, others are specially aimed for men or women.

Pedoman Masyarakat (Syèh Rih Krueng Raya 1971) is another example of this category. Syèh Rih's *wasiet* for the Acehnese children is expressed in the following verses:

Allah hai aneuk inöng dan agam

Nyoe pat peuneusan Syèh Rih Krueng Raya

Wasiet bak ulôn siôn lôn peutrang

Meubèk krang ceukang aneuk ngön poma

Beu na tapatéh putéli ngön itam

Bèk na bantahan keu ureueng dua

Malam aneuk cut tabeuet Kuruan

Bak peulajaran bèk tuzwö gata

Meuh'an taikôt karôt keumudian

Balasan Tuhan aneuk keu gata

Tapubuet surôh peujiôh larang

Narit krang ceukang beu na tajaga (p.7).

'Oh dear children, boys and girls; here is the will of Syèh Rih Krueng Raya. A piece of advice given to you; be not rude to your mother. Please observe what is good and evil; argue not with the two persons (your parents). At night you learn to read the Holy Quran; and do not forget your school work. Failing to do these you will fall into trouble; you will be punished by God. Do your obligation, but avoid what is prohibited; do not use bad language.'

Not all *haba peuingat* or *nasihat* are given directly as such. Some are conveyed by relating examples from which people can learn. Such messages are

conveyed, for example, by Muhammad Abdul Muthalléb (1975) through his *Rugoe Meubahra* 'big loss' which narrates a story of a young man who physically tortured his own mother. He accused his mother, mistakenly suspecting her of sexual wrong-doing. *Nurleila Dara Seutia* 'Nurleila: A Loyal Girl', the work of Syèh Rih Krueng Raya (1986) should also be included in this category. In this work Syèh Rih gives an example of a loyal woman who is not influenced by wealth and beauty.

(2) Social Criticism

In this category a writer critiques conditions which ideally are not supposed to happen in Acehese society. Through poetry a writer initiates campaigns against the undesirable social conditions. One of the most comprehensive work in this category is *Tanda Mata* (Araby Ahmad 1959). In this work Araby Ahmad criticises five developments in Acehese society:

- a) the trend for women to wear short dresses, better known as 'You Can See';
- b) *pergaulan bebaih* 'freedom for boys and girls';
- c) the trend for young men to wear tights;
- d) following western culture;
- e) women fighting for emancipation.

Syèh Rih Krueng Raya's (1968), *Kareuna Ma Tuan* 'Because of the Mother -in-law' is also included in this category.

(3) Personal Tales

This is a small but interesting group of texts. Such works deal primarily with the narration of one's personal life experience—good or bad ones—typically in the hope that they can be of some benefit to other people. Most *hikayat* are anonymous, but personal stories are exceptional in that respect, since the preference is to avoid all reference to the writer, apart from some self-effacing

remarks. *Hikayat Ranto*, *Seumangat Acèh*, and *Ana Wahiya* are of popular examples of this kind. We will briefly discuss these *hikayat* here.

Hikayat Ranto is the work of Leubè 'Isa, also known as Teungku Bambi (Snouck Hurgronje 1906, II:120 ff and Drewes 1980:3). He does not reveal much to us about himself, but concentrates on his experience of living in a *ranto*: the pepper growing regions in the West Coast of Aceh.²⁹

The word *ranto* originally comes from Malay *rantau*: a plain, an extent of level ground, a reach of a river, flat sea-coast particularly at the mouth of rivers (Marsden 1984:150). In Acehnese the word *ranto* has developed to refer to a work place away from one's own village. When one leaves one's village with the intention of seeking a better life elsewhere, this is called *jak meuranto* 'go on the *ranto*'.

From its length and style this *hikayat* can be classified as an epic. But since the element of individual experience is more dominant than that of epic, it is classified here under personal tales with a strong element of social criticism. Teungku Bambi makes use of his own experience to warn other people that it is not easy to work and live in a *ranto*. He describes how people are so intent on following their greed that they forget their family and religious commitments, as he says in the following verses:

Amma b'akdu dudoe nibak nyan

Nyoe karangan phôn kumula

Karangan keu ureueng lakoe

Bungka di nanggroë tuha muda

²⁹Snouck Hurgronje (1906, II:117) recognises this *hikayat* as purely Acehnese as far as the form, subject and origin is concerned, and classifies it under the heading of original treatises.

Tinggay nanggroe deungön ma wang

Jak lam utan dum cut raya

Tuhan peujeuet nanggroe ranto

Sinan keuh laloe manusia

Acèh, Pidie, tunong barôh

Lë that gadôh dalam rimba

Peuebu sabab nyang jeuet meunan, leungö tèelan lôn calitra

Sabab jipatéh iblih syèethan

*Siribèe ban jipeudaya*³⁰

'Now I will begin this story, a story of men—young and old, who leave their village. They leave their village and parents, all go to the jungle. God has made the *ranto* a place wherein man forgets everything. Many people from Acèh, from Pidie, from south and north, are busy working in the jungle. Why did they do so? Listen, my friends I will tell you: because they listen to the Devil and Satan; they obey whatever they say.'

Personal experiences are also related by Abdullah Arif in his *Seumangat Acèh* 'Acehnese Ambition' wherein he narrates the events of his trip overseas which took place in 1954 and 1955. The events are presented in their chronological order, from *phôn-phôn beurangkat* 'the beginning of the trip' to a description of the last country he visited, Canada: *di nanggroe Kanada* 'in Canada'. In a modern sense, this is similar to a personal diary, but Abdullah Arif makes it much more than a diary: he wrote this *hikayat* as his gift to his friends, relatives and other fellow Acehnese, as he said:

³⁰Taken from Drewes (1980:10) with some adjustments on orthography.

Kisah lôn bungka u lua nanggri

Bacut lôn rawi bak pirak lipat

Tanda mata lôn keu karông wali

Nyang na meuturi sidroe-droe sapat

Bandum syèedara putra ngön putri

Sama sikali rata jeueb teumpat (p.6)

'The story of my trip to other countries, which I have written in a book. It is my gift to all relatives, and to those I know here and there, to all friends men and women in all places.'

Also in this group is a unique autobiographical narrative—*Ana Wahiya* 'I and she', written by Teungku Hasan Ibrahim of Bireuen, North Aceh. This work is very interesting and even extraordinary in many respects. First, it is not common for a traditional Acehnese to write an autobiography. Second, it is not common that one's autobiography be written in the form of *hikayat*. Third, often an autobiography is a supplement or a companion to another or other works that one has produced: for Teungku Hasan Ibrahim, it is apparently his only written work in Acehnese. Fourth, a *pantôn* is used as an opening formulae in the text, unlike other *hikayat* which normally use religious expressions in praise of God.³¹ And finally, in contrast to Abdullah Arif, who uses a first person narrator, Teungku Hasan speaks of himself in the third person by using the prefix *geu-* ('he/she') and calls himself *Teungku Himpa*.³²

This work is quite long: 128 pages. A major emphasis is given to the story of his marriage, although his other life experiences such his childhood and his pursuit

³¹Perhaps due to Teungku Hasan's background as an *aneuk seudati* in his young age.

³²This is an acronym for his name, his father and mother, and his village: Hasan Ibrahim Manèh Panté Ara (personal communication with his son, Mawardi Hasan).

of learning on the *ranto* are described as well. At the beginning he tells us about his childhood, e.g. his father died when he was three months old:

Salah bacut hana lé ku

Tinggai ibu ngön aneuknda

Lhèe buleuen ban lheueh di dapu

Maté ku geutinggay dônnya

Tinggay aneuk teungöih susu

Rupa ku geuturi hana

Geupeulahra uléh ibu

Seun sigitu rayëk sigra (p.2)

'But one thing, his father is gone, the child was in his mother's care. Three months after his birth, his father left this world. The baby was left without knowing his father's face. His mother took care of him and he gradually grew bigger.'

He attended both modern school (i.e. *Sikula Meulayu* 'Malay School') as well as the traditional *pesantrèn*. At the age of thirteen he started a *seudati* group with his fellow villagers, but his teacher, his own relative, was totally against what he did. He decided to leave his village to begin a new life on the *ranto*³³ to spend his time learning in a *pesantrèn*. His conversation with his mother on seeking permission to leave the village is a touching piece of writing:

Di lôn hajat jak meungaji

Nak lôn turi Tuhan Esa

Nak lôn tu'oh ban kheuen nabi

Lôn turi hukôm agama

³³Puloe Kitôn is mentioned as his first *ranto* destination.

Ban geudeungö uléh umi

Geujaweueb lé pantah sigra

Meunyö tajak bak meungaji

Izin lôn bri hé aneuknda

"I intend to pursue learning (i.e. attending a pesantrèn) so that I will come to know God and the prophet's teachings about religious law." On hearing this, his mother immediately replies: "if you go to seek knowledge, you have my permission, dear son."

Nyang na bacut lôn weueh haté

H'an peue lôn bri tan hareuta

Pakri tajak hai boh haté

Hana soe bri pat beulanja

Seuôt Himpa wahé umi

U bak rabbi neumeudu'a

Meuna du'a nibak umi

Tulông rabbi keu aneuknda

"But I feel bad for I have no wealth to provide you with. Oh my sweet boy, how can you go, for no one is going to provide?." Himpa replies, "Mother please pray to God, with your prayers God will help your child"

Meunyö meunan hai boh haté

Ban nyöng piké nibak gata

Beu seulamat bungong padé

Beu meusampé ma peulahra (p.5-6).³⁴

“If you say so, my dear child, please go as you wish. May God protect you, my darling, and I am proud to have raised you”

(4) History

Works of history are known in Acehnese as *haba seujarah* 'tales of history'. Some historical works have been discussed in the previous section under epics.

Within the non-epic group we find a few short historical narratives which relate actual events which have taken place in Aceh: typically the account is written down soon after the event. Three such works are briefly discussed here.

The *Hikayat Seujarah Darôssalam*, (Teungku Basyah Kamal Lhông 1960) relates the history of how Teungku Muda Wali built Darussalam as a centre of religious education in South Aceh. Teungku Muda Wali, traveled to Java to seek permission and insights from the central government. But his trip caused many different reactions among the Acehnese people because the affairs of the 1950's separatist movement were not totally settled. This issue is described in the following lines:

Nyang phôn lôn peugah langkah u Jarwa

Kali keudua jalan röt Padang

Geujak atway phôn ka lheueh lôn rika

Röt Kuta Raja kapay teureubang

³⁴As an Acehnese native speaker, I was not able to hold back my tears as I read these verses.

Seubab rôh langkah dairah Jawa

Mita bicara pakri nyang timang

Mita pikéran bak tuan beusa

Keudéh u Jawa ngön meuntroe sajan (p.6)

'First I will tell you about the trip to Java; which is the second trip via Padang. The first trip was already mentioned; via Kuta Raja by plane. The purpose of his trip to Java is to find a fair solution; to seek advice from the higher authority such as ministers.'

The second work of history is *Nasib Acèh*³⁵ (Abdullah Arif 1956), in which Abdullah Arif relates the history of the rebellion of D.I./T.I.I.³⁶ led by Teungku Daud Beureuëh against the Indonesian central government. Another historical work entitled *Si Judô Pahlawan Acèh* 'A pair of Acehnese heroes' by Araby Ahmad (1960). In this *hikayat* Araby Ahmad tells about heroic deeds of a couple called Nyak Miga and Cut Bandi (also known as Cut Awan) who fought together with Teungku Chik Di Tiro in a battle against the Dutch at Aneuk Galông.³⁷ The author states that he wrote this *hikayat* based on actual historical events:

Haba lôn cok lam seujarah

Kön hikayah salah ratwi

Bukön dongèng nyang lôn peugah

Kön beurakah nyang lôn laki

³⁵This work consists of three volumes.

³⁶This stands for Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia, a political movement aiming at establishing an Islamic state.

³⁷A village in Aceh Besar, approximately 14 km east of Banda Aceh. There was a fortress called Bèntèng Aneuk Galông.

Haba nèk lam seujarah

Haba ayah nyang beurani

Biek panglima gagah-gagah

Jeueb ho meugah rata nanggri

'I collected this news from history; it is not a misinformed history. What I tell you is not a fiction; neither it is a comedy. This is a story of our ancestor in the history; the story of a courageous father. They were brave commanders; well-known to all countries.'

(5) Fables

This group is very small. *Hikayat Peulandôk Kancé* is a versified version of the well-known *Haba Peulandôk* folk stories.³⁸ Another example is *Hikayat Kisah Hiweuen* or *Hikayat Nasruan Adé* (see Voorhoeve & Iskandar 1994:135 ff).

Neither of these are well known today.

8.8 Summary and Conclusion

The term *hikayat* came into Acehnese and Malay from Arabic '*hikayah*' which means 'story', 'tale, narrative', 'account'. However, today the understanding of the word '*hikayat*' is different in both languages: in Malay *hikayat* is a prose narrative, be it a history, story, fable, or romance; whereas in Acehnese it has been restricted to any narration presented in verse form. Nevertheless Malay and Acehnese *hikayat* are both formal performance genres.

In Acehnese the term *hikayat* can be thought of on three levels: as a text type, as a type or context of poetry performance, and as a metrical form of composition.

³⁸This prose version was initially written down by Teungku Yahya Badén. Later it was reintroduced and edited by Budiman Sulaiman which in 1978, and was published by Pustaka Mahmudiyah, Bireuen.

More broadly *hikayat* is also understood by the Acehnese public as any piece of poetic work presented in rhyming verse.

Most *hikayat* are anonymous. They are passed out or transmitted orally from one generation to another by word of mouth, and this represents the more ancient mode of transmission. However, exception applies to religious *hikayat*. The idea of intellectual property (i.e. the rules of copyright and plagiarism) in the modern sense did not apply to the traditional Acehnese *hikayat* composers or copyists. Different versions of a *hikayat* are frequently found: each narrator could add something of his or her own preference to the version as he or she learned it, or change it in order to suit the audience.

Islamic influences are evident in Acehnese *hikayat*: Islamic themes often appear in their topics, even if the work itself is not essentially religious. The word *hikayat* itself denotes clear evidence of Islamic influence because it is an Arabic borrowing, although it might have come to Acehnese via Malay. The advance of Islam in Aceh accelerated the development of Acehnese *hikayat*, and in turn the Acehnese people used *hikayat* as a means to popularise the knowledge of Islam amongst the Acehnese people themselves.

Generally *hikayat* are composed to be recited. *Lagèe bagali* and *lagèe jareueng* were the two styles traditionally used. A major innovation in *hikayat* recitation was introduced by Teungku Adnan through his performance of PMTOH. Traditionally the common venue for *hikayat* recitation was the *meunasah* and other public places. In the villages the recitation is traditionally performed at night times to entertain the villagers after a hard day work in the paddy fields or in the gardens. During the time of the sultanate, *hikayat* used to be recited at royal courts as a formal performance to entertain the royal audience. Teungku Adnan usually performed on stage using all necessary aids to enliven the show.

In any situation *hikayat* recitation contributed significantly as an aspect of public entertainment.

Different *hikayat* are recited for different occasions and purposes. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* 'The Epic of the Holy War', for example, used to be recited during the Dutch-Acehnese war before the troops go down to the battle field, to persuade people to fight in the Holy War. This indicated that *hikayat* was an effective persuasive device.

I have proposed here a current classification of Acehnese *hikayat*: epics and non-epics. This classification is based on the current situation: what is found in contemporary Acehnese literature. Epics include historical epics, war epics, religious epics, and epics related to romances and mythology. Non-epics cover religious/moral works, social criticism, personal tales, history, and fables.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

This study has provided an introduction to issues relating to Acehese literacy and literature in the context of Acehese language and culture. In doing this, it has covered a wide range of topics including history of the Acehese language, literacy in the Acehese language—the cultural context and historical development of this literacy; orthographies of Acehese; and Acehese poetry—its structures and functions. Because Acehese studies is a comparatively undeveloped area, it has been necessary to provide a great deal of descriptive material on many of these topics.

I will not attempt to provide a systematic summary of the whole work here; this has already been done in the introduction, and at the ends of each chapter. Rather I will attempt to provide a critical synthesis of some issues covered in the dissertation.

After the introductory chapters, two main parts to this dissertation were presented. These are literacy and orthography on the one hand and poetry on the other.

Issues of literacy were examined from the perspectives of two traditions, which have been called 'traditional' and 'modern'. Traditional literacy was discussed in reference to the pathways to literacy in the Acehese language, as well as the contexts in which literacy is acquired. This was linked to the significant role played by the traditional religious institution, the *peusantrèn*, and the Malay

language, on the development of Acehnese language literacy. I have attempted to show how Arabic-derived script, the *Jawi*, was developed for the Acehnese language purpose. The use of *Jawi* script is the principal mark of traditional Acehnese language literacy. In order to be able to read and write Acehnese texts in this script, one has to have basic knowledge of Arabic and Malay in addition to the knowledge of Acehnese language itself. Thus in this sense the pathway to literacy goes rather indirectly: from Arabic to Malay then to Acehnese.

On the other hand, the principal characteristic of modern Acehnese language literacy is the use of Roman script. Romanization of Acehnese has largely resulted from the introduction of secular educational system, as a part of the Dutch colonial policy. In the modern sense, the role of the traditional religious institutions in literacy development is taken over by the modern educational institution, the school. A significant change takes place in the mode of literacy acquisition: the 'dismissal' of the *Jawi* script. Consequently the pathway to Acehnese language literacy is more direct: from Bahasa Indonesia to Acehnese, instead of through Arabic and Malay. The shift also occurs in the orientation of learning: from religious towards an emphasis on general knowledge.

In this dissertation the study of Acehnese language literacy is paired with a general account of Acehnese poetry. This is because virtually all Acehnese writing is in poetry. For an Acehnese person, to write or read their own language is to use poetry. We find that poetic texts pervade whole aspects of life of the Acehnese society. Poetry is composed and used by Acehnese people for many purposes: as entertainment; as an act of religious worship; to aid pedagogy, as a mode of cultural transmission; for the preserving and passing on personal experience; and as a means in the performance of various kinds of speech events. Acehnese poetry has shown its effectiveness as a means to

persuade the Acehnese public to go to war, and it provides the framework for children's games. It is the vehicle for remembering traditional wisdom, and the necessary accompaniment of all dance forms.

In the face of these diverse uses of poetry, it is notable that only one kind of poetry is consistently written down: the *hikayat*. (Apart from *hikayat*, we also find that other examples of poetic texts are sometimes recorded in writing, including letters, published collections of *pantôn*s, and some religious poems such as *nalam* .) The special place that the *hikayat* occupies among Acehnese written texts is a sign of its great cultural importance, whilst at the same time, the Acehnese *hikayat* cannot be understood without reference to other expressions of poetic art in Acehnese society. A tradition of research on the Acehnese *hikayat* was developed by Snouck Hurgronje and his students, but it lacked much awareness of the broader context of poetry in Acehnese language and culture. This is a lack which this dissertation seeks to rectify.

If Acehnese literacy must be poetic in character, and if we are to seek to promote Acehnese language literacy, then we must ask the question: What is the nature of Acehnese poetry? I have described the various forms and uses of poetry known in Acehnese. The most significant contexts—cultural, religious, and social—to which the use of poetry is integral have all been described. Throughout this study I have also attempted to clarify a set of terminologies for discussing Acehnese poetry, and I have attempted to keep these as close as possible to everyday Acehnese poetic metalanguage.

This study has some implications for educational policy and praxis. How are we to evaluate attempts at developing literacy in the Acehnese language through the modern schooling system? There have been many difficulties, including the problem of dialect differences, confusion over standardisation,

teachers' lack of formal training in Acehnese literacy, and limited teaching materials. But perhaps above all there is the problem that Acehnese literacy as taught in the 'modern' mode relies heavily on European models of how literacy is acquired. For example, the readers for Acehnese school children have mainly used short prose narratives from the children's own world to develop reading skill. This might make sense if adult Acehnese wrote and read prose text. But, as we have found, this does not happen and it seems highly unlikely that this situation will change. After all, the Acehnese have had several centuries to develop a prose writing tradition, and it has not yet developed.

Acehnese literacy will always be a second or third literacy for Acehnese people (after Indonesian/Malay, Arabic and perhaps other languages). The question is what function shall it play? If poetry will continue to be the main mode of Acehnese written texts, then the task facing Acehnese educational planners and curriculum development teams is to foster a school-based Acehnese literacy program which works together with patterns of poetry used in Acehnese society. Such a program may need to extend the types of poetry which are written down. It will need to foster skill in composing and appreciating poetry as part of the curriculum. This task will face the challenge of the increasing alignment of fluency in Acehnese with lower educational achievement, as children of educated Acehnese increasingly take Bahasa Indonesia as their first language. For educators of city children, an additional difficulty will be the rich connections with village life and nature that Acehnese poetry displays.

Also there continues to be a need for greater study of Acehnese poetry in all its manifestations. The Dutch tradition focussed upon the epic literature, treating the *hikayat* as a written text in the European philological tradition. It largely ignored, overlooked or misconstrued other types of Acehnese poetry. This lack still needs to be remedied, and this dissertation is a contribution towards this goal.

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