



WOMEN AND POWER IN *TUHFAT AL-NAFIS*: GENDER STUDIES IN MALAY HISTORY

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Abstract

In classical Malay literature, female characters are often not given the opportunity by the author to defend their rights. Women are considered passive in facing life. In Malay literature the role of female figures in public is often depicted as achieving hegemony of power through marriage and alliances with allied kingdoms. A passive attitude is the image of women, but in the *Tuhfatun Nafis* Manuscript, Tengku Tengah is told as a woman who was active in the political turmoil between Raja Kecil and the Kingdom of Johor. For this reason, the author aims to establish the role of Tengku Tengah in the political turmoil at that time. This article uses qualitative methods in collecting sources. With this, the researcher carried out a library research using a text content analysis approach.

Keywords: Women; Classical Malay; Tuhfat al-nafis.

Abstrak

Dalam sastra melayu klasik tokoh perempuan seringkali tidak diberi kesempatan oleh pengarangnya untuk membela hak-hak mereka. perempuan dinilai pasif dalam menghadapi kehidupan. Pada sastra melayu peran tokoh perempuan di publik seringkali digambarkan sebagai pencapaian hegemoni kekuasaan melalui perkawinan dan persekutuan dengan kerajaan-kerajaan sekutu. Sikap pasif yang merupakan citra yang dimiliki perempuan, akan tetapi pada Naskah *Tuhfatun Nafis* ini menceritakan Tengku Tengah sebagai perempuan yang aktif dalam gejolak politik antara Raja Kecil dengan Kerajaan Johor. Untuk itu penulis bertujuan membangun peranan Tengku Tengah dalam gejolak politik pada saat itu. Artikel ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dalam mengumpulkan sumbernya. Dengan ini peneliti melakukan studi kepustakaan (library research) dengan pendekatan Analisis isi teks.

Kata Kunci: Perempuan; Melayu klasik, *Tuhfat al-nafis*.

INTRODUCTION

Historical writing about women in political contests often does not provide space for women¹. In classical Malay literature, female characters are often not given the opportunity by the author to defend their rights. Women are considered passive in facing life. This explains that in traditional Malay literary works, women's stories become second-class people whose actions are often ignored and marginalized².

This view was born as a result of patriarchal Malay culture. In the concept of patriarchy, women are depicted as world jewelry. The gentle, sweet, graceful, and passive nature of women

¹ Ruth Indiah Rahayu, "Menulis Sejarah Sebagaimana Perempuan: Pendekatan Filsafat Sejarah Perempuan," *Sejarah Dan Budaya: Jurnal Sejarah, Budaya, Dan Pengajarannya* 10, no. 1 (June 30, 2016): 95–104, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um020v10i12016p095>.

² Rahimah Hamdan and Shaiful Bahri Md.Radzi, "The Meaning of Female Passivity in Traditional Malay Literature," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 17 (August 20, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n17p222>.



makes female characters built into figures who are not independent and depend on the protection and supervision of men³.

Millet and Budiman stated that social culture in the family, society, and education always inserts a natural understanding of the patriarchal system that the physical appearance of men and women is different, causing differences in society⁴.

According to Azwar and Ikram in⁵ stated that in Malay literature the role of female figures in public is often depicted as achieving hegemony of power through marriage and alliance with allied kingdoms. Creese 2012⁶ continued that indeed the world of women in the palace only contains the waiting for love, bound marriages resulting from political contracts and alliances, as well as longing and prolonged misery.

This phenomenon of patriarchal domination is widely represented in traditional literary works. Passive attitudes, identical to domestic affairs, and not having the power to determine their own lives are the images of women⁷. However, in *Tuhfatun Nafis* the female figure Tengku Tengah is not affected by patriarchal domination.

According to Bardwick 1971, a woman's passivity is the hope of getting what they want, but this hope collapses due to the woman's weak ego. Women have few alternatives to control the disappointment and trauma that hit them. However, Bardwick divides the level of individual passivity, one of which is "Healthy passivity where women react intelligently to disappointment"⁸. In previous research, Tengku Tengah's passivity was described as passive as a manifestation of frustration, this is written in *Tuhaftun Nafis* "then the two of his brothers, Tengku Tengah, agreed that he would sit down with the Bugis King, hopefully this would be a way to erase this shame. So Tengku Tengah was willing to become Opu-Opu's wife"⁹.

The implementation of Tengku Tengah's passivity did not only start because of frustration due to the cancellation of Tengku Tengah's marriage with Raja Kecil, which caused resentment in Tengku Tengah's heart. However, here the author tries to take another point of view that Tengku Tengah's marriage with the Bugis opu-opu was due to certain reasons. In the *Tuhfatun Nafis* text, the author argues that Tengku Tengah is not depicted as a weak figure and accepts things as they are. However, Tengku Tengah tried to rise and establish a working relationship with the Bugis Opu-Opu to defeat Raja Kecil.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article uses qualitative methods in collecting its sources. With this, researchers conduct library research with the text content analysis approach. Pioneered by Harold D. Laswell, content analysis is the in-depth study of written or printed information. For that the author notes

³ Rizqi Handayani, "Sastra, Perempuan, Dan Istana Dalam Kronik Melayu Sulalatus Salatin," *Buletin Al-Turas* 26, no. 1 (February 10, 2020): 103–20, <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v26i1.14410>.

⁴ Fatkhu Rohmatin, "Dekonstruksi Wacana Patriarki Dan Kebungkaman Perempuan Dalam Manuskrip Hikayat Darma Tasyiah," *Jumantara: Jurnal Manuskrip Nusantara* 10, no. 2 (December 31, 2019): 149, <https://doi.org/10.37014/jumantara.v10i2.598>.

⁵ Handayani, "Sastra, Perempuan, Dan Istana Dalam Kronik Melayu Sulalatus Salatin."

⁶ Handayani.

⁷ Rohmatin, "Dekonstruksi Wacana Patriarki Dan Kebungkaman Perempuan Dalam Manuskrip Hikayat Darma Tasyiah."

⁸ Hamdan and Md.Radzi, "The Meaning of Female Passivity in Traditional Malay Literature."

⁹ Virginia Matheson, "The Tuhfat Al-Nafis: Structure and Sources," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 3de Afl (1971), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27861195>.

some message or information on the primary source, then is given an interpretation¹⁰. With this the author seeks to take the meaning hidden in the data¹¹. The primary data on this study uses the Malay chronicle namely the Book of *Tuhfatun Nafis*. And for secondary sources researchers group journals, articles, e-books relevant to the research through Publish or Perish.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Image of Women in the *Tuhfat Al-Nafis* Manuscript

In *Tuhfatun Nafis*, Raja Ali Haji as the author pays great attention to facts in his writing. The reference used by the author is Malay History, namely about the origins of the Malay Kings. *Tuhfatun Nafis* is a work that tells a lot about Bugis¹². Since 1865, Raja Ali Haji has been the author of Malay literary works, namely Silsilah Melayu and Bugis or what is called *Tuhfatun Nafis*. However, this work has not received much attention from scholars and researchers, it is not as popular as similar texts such as *Sulalatus Salatus*, *Hikayat Hang Tuah*.

When Maxwell wrote in 1890 about Raja Haji, he mentioned *Tuhfatun Nafis* so that CO Blanden in 1899 when reading Maxwell's work, Blanden concluded that *Tuhfatun Nafis* was a historical work which contained Malay history up to modern times and included an explanation of the Selangor royal family. Winstedt gave appreciation to *Tuhfatun Nafis* because the manuscript of *Tuhfatun Nafis* was valuable and interesting. In 1932 Winstedt published this manuscript in Javanese script then in Latin script in 1965 in Singapore. The manuscript of *Tuhfatun Nafis* was borrowed by Sir Richard Winstedt when he served as general advisor to the Sultan of the Kingdom of Johor 1931. After its publication, the quality of *Tuhfatun Nafis* began to gain recognition that this history book became a very important book for studying Malay history and its society. However, attention to *Tuhfatun Nafis* reached its peak when Virginia Matheson conducted a dissertation research entitled: "Tuhfat al-nafis " (the precious gift): A Nineteenth Century Malay History, Criticically Examined. And then came Virginia Matheson Hooker's version of *Tuhfatun Nafis*. Until now, only Virginia Matheson has been a productive scholar in reviewing *Tuhfatun Nafis* and no one has been able to match her¹³.

Western scholars view Raja Ali Haji as a 19th century Malay polymath. His character role radiates from his vision to save the nation in the world and the hereafter, this can be seen from works that contain religious elements, such as his two great works, *Thamarat al-Muhimmah* (State Administration Works), and *Tuhfatun Nafis*¹⁴.

Women in Socio-Political Structures

Discussions about women have developed following the flow of science and technology, especially in literature. In literary texts, women are figures who take part in building literary narratives. The presence of women in literary works is not an ordinary figure, but they are able

¹⁰ Andi Muhammad Irfan Taufan Asfar, "Analisis Naratif, Analisis Konten, Dan Analisis Semiotik (Penelitian Kualitatif)," *ResearchGate Article 1* (2019), <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.21963.41767>.

¹¹ Samiaji Sarosa, *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2021).

¹² Muhammad Bahar Akkase Teng, "Tuhfat Al Nafis: Karya Sastra Sejarah (Melayu) Dalam Perspektif Sejarah," *Paramasastra: Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Sastra Dan Pembelajarannya* 2, no. 1 (2015), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26740/paramasastra.v2n1.p%25p>; Norazimah Zakaria, "Kepengarangan Hikayat Melayu Dan Tuhfat Al-Nafis," *Pendeta: Jurnal Bahasa, Pendidikan Dan Sastera Melayu* 3 (2012).

¹³ Alimuddin Hassan, "Historiografi Melayu Kajian atas Tuhfat Al-Nafis Karya Raja Ali Haji," *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 8, no. 2 (July 31, 2017): 396, <https://doi.org/10.24014/af.v8i2.3818>.

¹⁴ Annuar Ramadhon Kasa and Akmaliza Abdullah, "Pemikiran Raja Ali Haji Tentang Sifat Dengki: Analisis Terhadap Thamarat Al-Muhimmah Dan Tuhfat Al-Nafis (Raja Ali Haji's Thought on Envy: An Analysis Based on Thamarat Al-Muhimmah and Tuhfat Al-Nafis)," *UMRAN - International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies* 9, no. 3 (October 27, 2022): 67–81, <https://doi.org/10.11113/umran2022.9n3.577>.

to play a role in something that changes the flow of the text. This gives rise to the understanding that the presence of women is very influential in literary works. However, the problem of women in literary texts is always depicted as weak and powerless inferior figures. Even Haryati Hassan¹⁵ said that women were only used as concubines, lust satisfiers, considered playthings and kept women by the King¹⁶.

In feudal society, the role of women has been determined by society, religion and customs, all of which are carried out by men. They are not allowed to do work that has not been done by women for generations, their work only concerns the state of the house, they are not allowed to leave the house alone and are not allowed to show their greatness in public. This kills women's creativity in public, the regulation of women's lives has been recorded in customary law. Women will be married at the age of 13-14 years old if they have learned domestic lessons such as cooking, sewing, taking care of themselves and serving others. So the education they receive is only related to their role after marriage, namely becoming a wife, housewife, and daughter-in-law. Because of this system, the view that women's position is lower than men's emerged¹⁷.

Most Malay narratives are written by men. So that the discussion of female characters is always interpreted as second-class, inferior, and submissive characters. However, classical Malay narratives are cultural products that indirectly allude to the dominance of Patriarchy. Stories in classical narratives written by men provide limitations on femininity for female characters according to the thoughts of male shadows. As a result, women are never central characters in Malay narratives. For this reason, in classical Malay tales, the role of women is often found to be a sacrifice for the happiness of others¹⁸.

In the *Tuhfatun Nafis* manuscript, it not only tells the story of the journey of the Bugis opu-opu in the Malay lands but also tells about women who have main attractions such as Tengku Tengah. Traditional historiography of the Malay kingdom is proof that women played a role in saving the unstable political atmosphere in the sultanate. In the Johor-Riau kingdom, *Tuhfatun Nafis*, for example, indirectly mentioned female figures such as Encik Pong, Tengku Tengah, and Tengku Kamariah who had a big impact on political peace. It can be concluded that the role of women in the Malay Sultanate was as leaders of the state, resolvers of political crises, peacemakers, determinants of the heir to the throne, mediators of political relations, successors to the legacy, and initiators of changes in leadership.

The two sisters, Tengku Tengah and Tengku Kamariah, were the initiators of changes in the leadership of the Johor-Riau kingdom. However, the role of Tengku Tengah was greater, causing a crucial event, namely the oath of allegiance between the Bugis and the Malays. The contribution of Tengku Tengah is caused by several factors, namely¹⁹:

First, Tengku Tengah's marriage to Raja Kecil was cancelled. After the fall of Johor due to Raja Kecil's attack in 1713 AD, Raja Kecil wanted to propose to Abdul Jalil's daughter, Tengku Tengah, as a sign of submission to Raja Kecil's power. During the holidays, Sultan Abdul Jalil's

¹⁵ Noor Syahidah Mohamad Akhir, Siti Aisyah Yusof, and Azrul Shahimy Mohd Yusof, "Model Kapal Dalam Al-Quran Dan Naskhah-Naskhah Melayu," in *International Conference on Heritage and Civilisation (ICHAC)* (Pulau Pinang: Universiti Teknologi MARA, 2018).

¹⁶ Raka Gunaika, "Citra Wanita Dalam Kesusasteraan Nusantara," *Article, Competition* (Malaysia, n.d.), https://waqafilmunusantara.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/140_Article_CITRA-WANITA-DALAM-KESUSASTRAAN-NUSANTARA_competition.pdf.

¹⁷ Ding Choo Ming, *Wajah Terbuka Dan Hidup Tertutup: Gender Dan Seksualiti Dalam Karya Sastera Melayu Riau Pinggir Abad Ke 19*, SARI: *Jurnal Alam Dan Tamadun Melayu* (Malaysia: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2006).

¹⁸ Handayani, "Sastra, Perempuan, Dan Istana Dalam Kronik Melayu Sulalatus Salatin."

¹⁹ Haryati Hasan, "Isu-Isu Wanita Dalam Manuskrip Melayu Abad Ke-15 Hingga Abad Ke-18," *Perspektif: Jurnal Sains Sosial Dan Kemanusiaan* 6, no. 1 (2014).

family visited Raja Kecil, including Tengku Kamariah, who was also Abdul Jalil's daughter. So Raja Kecil was fascinated by Tengku Kamariah. "After a short period of time, Raja Kecil became engaged to the son of Sultan Abdul Jalil, whose name was Tengku Tengah. On the holiday, Sultan Abdul Jalil, his son, came to visit Raja Kecil. So his son, Tengku Kamariah, also joined him. So Raja Kecil looked at Tengku Tengah Kamariah's appearance, and he fell in love with her too. So he also asked Tengku Kamariah, but that didn't happen with Tengku Tengah. Shahadan then married Tengku Kamariah to Raja Kecil ²⁰".

Second, Sultan Abdul Jalil humiliated during meeting with Opu-Opu Bugis. During a meeting between Opu-Opu Bugis and Raja Kecil in Johor, an incident occurred that embarrassed Sultan Abdul Jalil's family. This caused Sultan Abdul Jalil's children to become increasingly angry with Raja Kecil. So King Sulaiman and Tengku Tengah as the son of Sultan Abdul Jalil made a strategy to collaborate with the Bugis opu-opu by marrying Tengku Tengah to one of them who would later be able to overthrow Raja Kecil's throne. "Syahadan Sultan Abdul Jalil and his treasurer and his majesty King Sulaiman sat in sorrow after being humiliated by Raja Kecil and reportedly wanted to be made treasurer again. So his son's heart burned and on the big day he ordered Sultan Abdul Jalil's sons to bring a number of positions, and even more so, Sultan Abdul Jalil's heart broke at Raja Kecil's actions, while after that King Sulaiman's young people's hearts were very hot. Then he reached a consensus between his two brothers, Tengku Tengah, who wanted to place him with the Bugis King, in the hope that this would be a way to erase this shame. So Tengku Tengah was willing to become the wife of that opu-opu" ²¹. In order for King Sulaiman's mission with Tengku Tengah to be successful in establishing relations with the Bugis opu-opu, King Sulaiman promised opu-opu Opu's five siblings became the young rulers for generations.

Third, Death of Sultan Abdul Jalil. After establishing a political marriage relationship with Opu-opu Bugis, Opu-opu Bugis and his entourage left Johor to help with the conflict that was occurring among the Bugis in Matan. However, the atmosphere in the Kingdom of Johor itself became chaotic because there were two kings, namely Sultan Abdul Jalil and Raja Kecil, and there were more and more slanders that vilified each other until the two camps split, one defending Sultan Abdul Jalil and the other Raja Kecil.

As a result of disputes caused by several factors, Sultan Abdul Jalil left Johor for Seluyut and then created a fort. In Seluyut there was a battle with Raja Kecil and the Seluyut camp suffered defeat. Then Sultan Abdul Jalil moved to Trengganu and lived there for three years. At that time, Raja Kecil left Johor because the country was in chaos and Raja Kecil went to Riau and created a country there. Sultan Abdul Jalil then went to Kuala Pahang to create a new country in Kuala Pahang. The country of Kuala Pahang was also attacked by Raja Kecil led by Admiral Nakhoda Sekam, so Kuala Pahang lost. Then because of his defeat, Sultan Abdul Jalil had to surrender to Raja Kecil in Riau. However, only halfway through the journey, Admiral received a letter from Raja Kecil to kill Sultan Abdul Jalil.

"Syahadan said the sahibul saga, when a messenger from Raja Kecil, named Emas Raden, came and brought a letter to Admiral Admiral Sekam. So in the letter, "Don't take Sultan Abdul Jalil to Riau again, kill him once, we'll just know he's dead." As for Tengku Tengah, when he heard that his father had gone missing, he came out with one yard and set it aside for the Minangkabau who were left behind. So the Master of Sekam screamed and said to all the Minangkabau people, "Don't fight against the

²⁰ Matheson, "The Tuhfat Al-Nafis: Structure and Sources."

²¹ Matheson.

daughters of the female kings, or you will all be killed by Raja Kecil and your household will be hampered ²²".

After observing the meaning contained in the text of *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, it can be concluded that Tengku Tengah is not a helpless woman, because the concept of helplessness is a form of individual action that has the perception that the actions she has taken will not be... get and bring about changes in the results as expected. This powerlessness factor is the lack of knowledge and the lack of opportunity to make decisions ²³. While in the text that has been explained above, the figure of Tengku Tengah took part in the politics of the Johor kingdom, he made decisions with his brother, the King Ibrahim to marry the Bugis opu-opu with the aim of increasing the strength of the Johor-Riau Kingdom's fleet to overthrow Raja Kecil.

Collaboration between Malays and Bugis through the marriage between Tengku Tengah and one of the Bugis opus, namely Dahing Parani, has created changes in the new power structure. can be seen after the death of Sultan Abdul Jalil, his son Sultan Sulaiman occupied the throne with the title Yang Dipertuan Besar while Opu Bugis had the title *Yang Dipertuan Muda* ²⁴. At the beginning, it was explained that in the writing of the *Tuhfatun Nafis* Raja Ali Haji script he paid attention to the true facts, this proves that the character of Tengku Tengah as told in the script does not cover the role of women.

In this text, Tengku Tengah appears as a brave figure who fights against Raja Kecil, not a passive figure, a label that is often associated with women. Tengku Tengah's bravery can be seen in the text after the death of his father Sultan Abdul Jalil, Tengku Tengah took one page and then assigned it to the Minangkabau soldiers. From the author's search regarding "tetakkan" it starts from "menetak" which means cutting sharp objects, slashing, slashing. So in this case a hypothesis can be drawn that Tengku Tengah pointed a sharp weapon at the Minangkabau soldier.

Then his courage was also seen when he forcibly took his sister, Tengku Kamariah, who had become Raja Kecil's wife. This incident coincided with the slander that occurred in the Kingdom of Johor because it had two kings. As stated in *Tuhfatun Nafis* as follows:

"So in that case, Tengku Tengah walked to Raja Kecil's palace, then he took Tengku Kamariah to his house when the king The little girl was praying ²⁵".

The Influence of Women on Power and Gender in *Tuhfat al-Nafis*

In Malay customs, women's contributions are less than men. In previous historical works, their role was only to meet the needs of those in power ²⁶. However, in Malay countries, women also have a very valuable value because they have reproductive powers that will provide magical powers and rituals and this is difficult for men to match. therefore the dowry to marry women in Southeast Asia is very high.

Southeast Asian women have been offered by their parents to the King since childhood to be their wives. This offer has its own purpose, as a tribute, as an act of respect, and loyalty. It is common for a King to have many wives as a diplomatic weapon. Western literature explains that

²² Matheson.

²³ Jek Amidos Pardede, "Konsep Ketidakberdayaan," November 11, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/hd3g6>.

²⁴ Saepuddin Saepuddin, "Pengaruh Bugis Di Tanah Melayu Dalam Perspektif Sejarah Sosial Politik," *Rihlah: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan* 8, no. 1 (June 25, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.24252/rihlah.v8i1.11498>.

²⁵ Matheson, "The *Tuhfat Al-Nafis*: Structure and Sources."

²⁶ Arba'iyah Mohd Noor, "The Transition Of Malay Women's Role And Contribution In The Early 20th Century," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 15 (June 15, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.22452/jat.vol15no1.5>.

Southeast Asian men generally like experienced women. Therefore, female virginity is the main factor in marriage and it is seen as a deficiency.

The Philippines, Burma, and Siam have rituals of taking women's virginity. They are sold as prostitute slaves to foreign traders to accompany them. This is a Thai tradition to increase state income through prostitution. Knowing the strong position of women in sex brought about changes in traditions in the leeward country, with the influence of Islam, the city elite in the 17th century made rules by strictly guarding their daughters before they entered marriageable age. Finally, the Malacca Law was issued to regulate sexual relations outside marriage.

According to several European accounts, women in Southeast Asia contributed to trade. In the 1820s in Minangkabau there was a poem that advised mothers to teach their daughters to "observe the rise and fall of prices". Asian women were expected to be more intelligent and thrifty than men in the commercial field. Court women also took advantage of their connections and position to bargain. When it comes to trade, women are as persistent as men. As Sultan Hasanuddin's wife did in the 1660s, she owned a ship and traded it to Johor and it was very profitable

Then, the role of women is also needed in state affairs. Women are used as intermediaries in diplomacy because they have a gentle attitude, polite compared to men who have the opposite attitude, as a result the people who are visited are not happy about it. This statement is clarified by the notes of Edmun Scott in 1606 who settled in Banten "If the King sends a man to pick up someone, the person visited may refuse; however, if the King sends a woman, the person visited cannot refuse or find an excuse. In addition, people usually send a woman if they do not come themselves". The role of women in creating peace is very important, they have better negotiation skills than men²⁷.

Conflicts over women's rights have also been inherited since ancient Greek times. Before the arrival of Islam, women's rights were not recognized in Arabia, even in the archipelago, women's rights experienced a similar fate, one of which was after marriage, the practice of polygamy was very widespread. Women at that time could not voice their rights to refuse, forms of tyranny against women have occurred throughout human history. Cases of violence against women such as forced marriage, polygamy, divorce that do not consider justice for women have not become serious problems. It was only in Indonesia itself after the May 1998 incident that they began to notice that violence against women was a serious problem. Until women from various regions began to testify about violence committed by the authorities. Then the National Committee for Anti-Violence Against Women was established. However, in other parts of the region, precisely in the Wajo Kingdom of South Sulawesi in terms of politics, women did not experience discrimination. This is stated in the Lontara Attorioloang ri Wajo manuscript found in Sambas, explaining that during the Wajo Kingdom was led by Arung Matoa Puang Rimaggalatung (Arung Matoa Wajo 4th) who ruled from 1491-1521. At that time, the requirements for a leader to become Arung Matoa were to have honest, intelligent, generous, and brave abilities, regardless of gender.

According to Brooke's article, quoted by Christian Pelras "all royal positions, including Arung Matoa, were open to women; and they did fill important positions in government, four of the six main Wajo princes (arung ennung-e, namely the six kings who formed the Wajo kingdom government) were women." They rode horses, ruled, and visited foreigners without their husbands' knowledge or permission. They appeared in public like men. In the Aceh kingdom, figures such as Cut Nya Dien and Cut Mutia demonstrated equal political rights between men

²⁷ Anthony Reid, *Asia Tenggara Dalam Kurun Niaga 1450-1680*. (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2011).

and women. They played an important role in leading troops in the war against the invaders. However, they only entered politics after the death of their partners²⁸.

CONCLUSION

The author concludes that the bias of women who are physically weak and emotionally unstable is caused by the factor of women's hormonal cycles during menstruation which has implications for women's unstable emotions so that this stereotype is developed by society that women are weak and emotionally unstable (Eti Nurhayati, n.d.). However, here it has been proven that Tengku Tengah's actions in making every decision make her a female figure who is worthy of consideration. Unlike what is trumpeted that women are always wrong in making decisions. This also breaks the Malay patriarchal culture, in this manuscript there are many facts about Malay noble women being able to influence the political turmoil in the Malay government at that time.

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