CHAPTER SIX

THE RAIDERS, TIDORE, AND NUKU

There are indications that at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century the Papuan raiding enterprises extended their areas of operation. As Andaya puts it, raiding was no longer limited to Ambon, Buru, and Seram but extended southwards to the Aru-Kei Islands, Tanimbar, Seram Laut, and westwards to the Sula, Banggai, and northern Sulawesi. This development challenged the *rust en orde* (peace and order), which the Company needed to foster its policies. Consequently, the Company forced Sultan Hamzah Fahrudin of Tidore (r.1689–1707), who had become Sultan by grace of Company intervention, to condemn this practice. In 1704, in an act especially shocking to the Papuans, he sent an envoy to Misool on a Dutch vessel, which also carried Dutch representatives. Eager to show his gratitude, he then delivered the leaders of one particular raid to the Company. This unpopular gesture of political correctness led to a crisis in the political relationship between the Tidore Sultanate and the Papuan–Halmaheran raiders.

Before the era of Sultan Hamzah Fahrudin, the co-operation between the Papuans, East Seramese, and Sultan Tidore had been deeply rooted. It had even been rumoured that Sultan Tidore provided the Misoolese raiders with gunpowder and that envoys of Sultan Tidore had been spotted in person in the Papuan raiding fleet. Unquestionably the raiding enterprises involved a mutual power contest between the parties but they were nevertheless prepared to work hand-in-glove to maintain the raiding and trading networks beyond the control of the VOC. For example, the Papuan Misoolese harvested sago in North Seram and sold it to the traders in the Bay of Seleman. To ready themselves for the raids, these people obtained some of their gunpowder from Sultan Tidore through the intermediation of middlemen from Hatuwe and Rarakit. In return, the Misoolese paid tribute to the Sultan. By complying with the Dutch demand, Sultan Hamzah Fahrudin undermined the existing mutual cooperation between Tidore and the raiding parties.

The disappointment of Gamrange persisted during the reign of Sultan Hasanudin (r.1708–28). As a consequence of this smouldering discontent, the first open act of defiance was perpetrated in 1716 by the people of Maba, Weda, and Patani. They blatantly refused to deliver an annual tribute any longer to Tidore. The Patanese complained bitterly that their
submission to Sultan Tidore had been rewarded by seizure and punishment, instead of the expected support and protection. The conflict was aggravated when in 1725 Sangaji Patani led a fleet of seventeen *kora-kora* and six other smaller vessels, and 700 men of the Papuan Islands, Maba and Patani, to Sultan Saifuddin of Ternate to express their loyalty and to foreswear their previous subordination to Tidore. The Sultan formally welcomed Sangaji Patani and the other Papuan and Gamrange leaders, and exchanged gifts in recognition of their new bonds. Participation by Tidore subjects in this symbolic act deeply offended Sultan Tidore and eventually led to a crisis between Tidore and Ternate.

Sultan Malikilmanan (r.1728–56) restored the broken relationship with Gamrange and the Pauans. He granted a general pardon to the rebels and rehabilitated Sangaji Patani who had led the rebellion. The reconciliation was sealed by a treaty agreed upon by both Tidore and Patani. It was a step in the right direction but it did not completely assuage the relationship between Tidore and the Pauans. In 1729 a combined fleet of Tidoran and Dutch vessels, which sailed to Gamrange and the Raja Ampat in order to collect tribute and to check on the continuing presence of any spice trees, met with resistance from the Pauans. The people of Waigeo refused to submit tribute and consequently the Tidorans and the Dutch attacked their villages. A number of skirmishes also occurred in Waigama and Misool. In Salawati a fight almost broke out but could be appeased in time when the parties talked to each other and found out that the resistance had been incited by one local head. In 1730, it was again reported that Kapiten Laut Madjela of Waigama and Raja Soemaple of Misool had led a raiding fleet to the coast of Seram, where villages were destroyed and burned.

In 1732, another punitive expedition was launched to locate the leaders who were involved in the 1730 Seram raiding expedition and their Papuan followers—a virtually fruitless exercise as the perpetrators had prudently fled to other islands. On 6 April, the Tidoran envoy and the Dutch were informed by people of Gebe who had just returned from the Raja Ampat that the plan hatched by Sultan Tidore and the Dutch to punish the raiders had been betrayed to them. It was discovered that the secretary of Sultan Tidore, Abdul Kadir, and a Tidoran called Swodja had journeyed to the Raja Ampat. Kadir and Swodja had warned Raja Waigeo, his Kapiten Laut, Kapiten Laut Waigama, Raja Misool and other heads who had been involved in the previous raiding, advising them to escape to the island of Monfoor, because Sangaji Patani, who was seeking for ways to reconcile himself with Sultan Tidore and the Dutch, was poised to descend on their areas to arrest them. The same news was also passed to Raja Salawati and Waigama. To make matters worse, in these areas, six Bajau and Makassarese vessels were found trading with the