

The Concept of Daulat and its Impact on Concubine (Gundik) in the Malacca Sultanate

Konsep Daulat dan Kesannya Terhadap Gundik di Kesultanan Melayu Melaka

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Abstract: This study intends to demonstrate how the *daulat* concept in the past permeates society through including the *gundik* in the Malacca Sultanate in determining their actions and behaviour behind the palace walls. In addition, this paper aims to describe the historical realities facing the *gundik* by reflecting on the significant account stated in Sulalatus Salatin. The analysis was conducted as library research, where the analysis derived from Malay magnum opus, Sulalatus Sulatin, is heavily studied. The findings that strong Malay *adat*, which is *daulat* of the sultan, is part and parcel, limit the movement of *gundik* to explore further their social and political roles. Furthermore, the Malays in the past tended to lead their social lives solely to *adat* and religious perceptions molded by traditional views where women's circulation was restricted than getting involved in social and political activities. Interestingly, most of the Sultan's *gundik* derived from the Bendahara lineage, where the most consistent people to uphold justice and honour the *daulat* is from Bendahara. Thus, it can be assumed that *daulat*, along with narrow-minded worldview, give away hints as to why the treatment of *gundik* was poor and their role was limited only behind the palace wall.

Keywords: Daulat, Gundik, Concubines, Political, Malacca Sultanate

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan bagaimana konsep daulat berakar umbi di dalam masyarakat Melayu dalam membentuk tingkah laku masyarakat, khususnya melalui peranan dan layanan terhadap gundik dalam Kesultanan Melaka. Kajian ini meneliti bagaimana daulat mempengaruhi tindakan serta tingkah laku individu di sebalik tembok istana. Selain itu, makalah ini turut mengupas realiti sejarah yang dihadapi oleh golongan gundik berdasarkan catatan penting dalam karya agung Melayu, Sulalatus Salatin. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan kepustakaan dengan analisis teks yang mendalam terhadap Sulalatus Salatin. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepatuhan yang kuat terhadap adat dan kesucian konsep daulat Sultan telah menghadkan keupayaan gundik untuk terlibat secara aktif dalam ruang sosial dan politik. Masyarakat Melayu yang berakar umbi dalam pandangan tradisional serta keagamaan telah menetapkan batasan yang ketat terhadap pergerakan wanita, lalu menghadkan peranan mereka kepada ruang domestik dan peribadi. Menariknya, kebanyakan gundik Sultan berasal daripada keturunan Bendahara—iaitu golongan yang kuat dalam menegakkan keadilan dan menghormati daulat Sultan. Hubungan ini memperlihatkan bahawa konsep daulat, yang digabungkan dengan pandangan dunia yang konservatif, telah menyumbang kepada peminggiran golongan gundik, sekali gus menghadkan peranan mereka kepada lingkungan istana dan menafikan penglibatan mereka dalam ranah sosial dan politik yang lebih luas.

Kata kunci: Daulat, Gundik, Gundik Diraja, Sosio Politik, Kesultanan Melaka

Introduction

The word concubine or gundik in Malay often connotes a negative remark among laymen. In historical perspectives, gundik represents an image of a female figure who brings an impact both in politics and socially, even though her position is quite insignificant behind the palace wall. The culture of concubinage existed during the reign of the Malacca Sultanate, as proved in the writings of Sulalatus Salatin. In reality, the position of gundik in Malacca was crucial to political executions. Firstly, the purpose of the gundik acts as royal reproduction. It is a crucial norm in palace court and kingdom since the monarch needs to reserve a place for his son in order to continue his legacy. Second, gundik was presented through a diplomatic relationship. Inter-marriage was encouraged as a way not only to enhance the relationship with other kingdoms but also to expand a kingdom's influence, secure protection from a stronger kingdom, or strengthen territories. (Ruzy Suliza, 85) In the Malay culture, gundik tends to be presented as a 'supreme gift' by the sultan to the high-ranking officials of foreign countries. Lastly, gundik was used as for economic purposes, that is, as a gift to present to foreign traders as a welcoming sign as they were going to operate the business and invest in Malacca. However, the core reason why gundik and concubinage culture is different from other Muslim kingdoms is because of a strong belief in adat and Daulat, which become sort of like shackles in the life of a Malay. This overview study will discuss historical realities and their treatment behind the palace walls as the Malay people are heavily influenced by the elements of daulat and adat..

Literature Review

Some studies conducted by researchers related to the topic have been reviewed, among them is (Mahani Musa, 2017) article "Kaum Wanita di Zaman Melayu Melaka: Antara Batasan Tradisi dan Realiti" in which the court chronicles silenced the images of women, which considered them insignificant and irrelevant figures to be written in Malacca historical discourse. This paper mostly depicted the condition of women, with limited touches on the concubine section. Another paper from Mahani Musa (2017) is "Aristocratic Women in the Political and Economic Spheres in Malaya before 1941." This paper is described through the lens of imperialism perspectives. Hugh Clifford and Gullick, describe one account regarding the action of Tengku Indut, who kidnapped four palace dancers who were his father's favourite concubine, angering Tengku Aminah. It shows meddling with the palace household was not a trivial matter. In addition, this literature described the position of the concubine as an entertainer to the sultan. William Gervase Clarence-Smith (2007), "Eunuchs and Concubines in the History of Islamic Southeast Asia." The ulama' believes that concubinage discouraged excesses, protesting at abuses, and forbidding the holding of free concubines. Furthermore, it stressed the keeping of concubine culture in two different Malay worlds, Indonesia and Malaya. One of the major concerns is that Southeast Asian people are bowing to their 'adat' where sexual practices are considered a private matter to discuss thus, a veil of silence covers them. Hence, the author aims to shed a light on the treatment of gundik within the palace to fill the gap in women's history.

Cheah Boon Kheng (1993) "Power Behind the Throne: The Role of Queens and Court Ladies in Malay History" described that women could be powerful factions when it comes to politics by plotting revenge with manipulation, guile, and ruthlessness. Few stories were analysed as case studies where women once committed to politics and proven to become powerful successors. Starting from the status of women during the Malacca sultanate, the queens in Patani, Johor and Aceh, court women, and the controversial concubine of Sultan Mahmud, Cik Pong. This article is considered relevant as evidence that a concubine's son can overthrow the sultan himself.

"The Power of the Concubine in Selected Traditional Malay Historiographical Literary Works" Wan Roshazli and Mohamad Luthfi (2019), emphasizes the concubine but in few selected manuscripts. This article stressed concubine characters that seldom give attention or are considered insignificant. It covers the court's maneuvers in treating concubines behind closed doors in the palace. Concubines' power and influence were viewed with dismay, and any attempts by concubines to exercise influence or power would consequently lead to agitation in the whole kingdom due to the accepted societal norm allowing mistreatment of concubines. This article describes how power could flourish as a huge influence on a concubine.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and inductive method of historical research. The type of research design used is content

analysis. This research utilized both primary and secondary sources. The most eminent Malay text called *Sulalatus Salatin* was heavily studied. It was written by Tun Sri Lanang in 1612, and the chronicle describes the reign of the Malacca Sultanate in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Apart from that, *Undang-undang Melaka* was also used in this study to identify the law implemented in Malacca Sultanate for the ruler and the subject to adhere to. The investigation is based on textual analysis, where data related to Malay concubines/*gundik* were extracted from the primary source. To support the data, the author used most important books such as 'Out of the Shadow' (Ruzy Suliza, 2003), *The Malay Sultanate of Malacca: A Study of Various Aspects of Malacca in 15th and 16th Centuries in Malaysian History* (Muhammad Yusuf Hashim, 1992) and other books. Meanwhile, numerous journal articles were involved in order to strengthen the data and findings.

Discussion

Catagories of Concubines in Malay Culture

According to (Ismail Azman, 166) concubines in Malay culture can be categorized into three groups; secondary wives, royal concubines, and the ordinary concubine. Secondary wives are women who do not belong to royalty but are married to the king or sultan. For instance, Sultan Mahmud Syah of Malacca Sultanate tied a knot with Laksamana Hang Tuah's youngest daughter, Tun Sabariah. Tun Sabariah was considered a concubine since she did not belong to the royal bloodline because her father, Hang Tuah, was a commoner. (Ismail Azman, 166). Because of this circumstance, Tun Sabariah had no chance to neither become a 'Permaisuri Besar' nor 'Raja Perempuan'. In the royal culture of Malacca, Raja Perempuan implies that the Sultan's wife is a ruler's daughter from other kingdoms, while the title of Permaisuri Besar is rendered to a daughter of Bendahara of royal blood who is married to the sultan (Ismail Azman, 181). Hence, for a daughter of Bendahara from non-royal blood who married to the sultan, both honorary titles are deemed unsuitable. However, if the second wife successfully bore a son, the status of the son rises to 'anak gahara' which means he is eligible to become the successor of the sultan (Ismail Azman, 163) Thus, the position of secondary wives remained exclusive since her son can be recognized as the king's legitimate offspring and bestowed with the honorary titles 'tengku' (prince), raja (prince), and puteri (princess). (Roshazli & Luthfi, 3) Unfortunately, she cannot become a lawful queen but remains forever as the second wife or concubine of the sultan.

Meanwhile, the second type of concubine is known as a royal concubine, or 'bini gelap' in Malay. It is a common definition in Malay concubinage custom where women who are not legally married to the sultan are kept in the palace to entertain or serve the sultan. (Ismail Azman, 183). Most of the court ladies are considered concubines, who serve the sultan and his family members, preparing meals, and if desired by the sultan, becoming his sexual companions. (Roshazli & Luthfi, 9). It is mentioned in the *Sulalatus Salatin* that Sultan Mansur Syah had a countless of concubines for whom he was infamously known as a womanizer. Most of his concubines were court ladies whom he could have served him whenever he desired. (Roshazli & Luthfi, 164-165). Sultan Muzaffar Syah and Sultan Mahmud Syah were also noted to have a similar practice of having many concubines. It was a norm for sultans and nobles to keep concubines along with their wives under the same roof in the past (Mahani Musa, 4)

Lastly, an ordinary concubine is neither owned nor maintained by the king, and she lives under her own roof. Furthermore, an ordinary concubine consists of widows and married women who are free and untied to the king or known as entertainers. (Roshazli & Luthfi, 4). This type of concubine usually sits in their home and waits for her partner in desolate and discreet places. For instance, Tun Biajit's wife received Sultan Mahmud's Syah visit without her husband's consent. Besides that, a widow is also willing to accept other men inside her house, such as Tun Dewi, who entertained Tun Ali Sandang. The entertainer consists of widows and married women, this sort of trend occurred during Sultan Mahmud Syah's reign.

The Concept of Daulat

A prominent sociology thinker, Syed Hussein Al-Attas (1928-2007) concocted the term 'psychology feudalism' where he argued that the loyalty and blind following of the Malays towards their kings are rooted in the behaviour of Malay themselves since a long time ago until today. Obedience, ignorance, and not having the courage to express their own opinion are common values that characterized the Malays. The tendency to be rebellious or criticize the ruler does not run in the veins of Malays, instead, following orders without hesitation characterized the relationship

between high- ranking and low-class society or between the weak and strong groups. (Azmi Arifin, 23) In the traditional Malay society, there existed a certain system that made the people act in a certain way. As described by Syed Hussein Al-Attas:

“... a static society, which has reached a certain balance, there will be some classes of leading groups (elites) the standards of which will be silently accepted even by those groups which are subjugated and essentially frustrated by these valuations” (Syed Hussein Al-Attas, 1968;583)

Such a scenario can be seen in the story of Sang Rajuna Tapa, a hopeless father whose daughter was murdered by the sultan, the story of Hang Tuah who received the death penalty, and Tun Biajit’s marriage that was torn apart by the promiscuity of the sultan. A similar situation also occurred involving women of a particular group, namely gundik, who were sometimes victimized because of the sultan’s pleasure.

Definition Of Daulat

Daulat is an important element for a sultan to gain as it legitimizes his authority and power to rule. According to Cambridge online dictionary 2022 version, daulat or sovereignty means having the highest power or being completely independent. According to Muhammad Yusof Hashim:

Daulat derived from Arabic term, daulatun, which means something is related to power, government, empire, dynasty, ruling and kingdom. According to governing context, it meant for an individual or group who involve to govern a kingdom. When it is related to politics, daulat become an acknowledgement in terms of oral, belief or documentation (in constitution or charter) for the individual or group to perform and act as an affirmation towards the govern community in a kingdom. (Yusuf Hashim, 215)

In the meantime, Byungkuk Soh quoted Moy’s concept of daulat described as follows:

..daulat, as concept of general Malay tradition, comprised several related ideas. Daulat was the supreme expression of the quality of the ‘majesty’ and its possession of a ruler constituted divine sanction of his reign. It was a stable, impersonal quality, beyond the influence of its holder’s character or abilities. It could act arbitrarily and offensively to protect the ruler, his command and his dignity, and enabled him to accomplish acts of great magic. In short, daulat was a foundation of the ideology of legitimation. (Byungkuk Soh, 171)

Both the ruler and the ruled need to obtain a few qualities of legitimacy. The qualities required from the ruled are such as honorable behaviour, abides by the commands of the ruler, even if the ruler is a tyrant, and seeks blessing from his Lord or ruler. Whereas, it is necessary for a ruler to comprise these four qualities, which are merciful, generous, courageous, and being able to give his verdict decisively. (Soh, 172). In the case of the gundik who belonged to the group of ‘the ruled’, the sultan’s treatment towards them lacked compassion and was unjust in decision- making, hence, they were devoid of the qualities needed as good rulers.

In achieving daulat, there are three core principles that sultan should follow, which are his position in politics, his relationship with his royal court officials, and his relationship as a ruler with his subjects. These three principles are interrelated to each other with the political administration controlled by the king known as ‘kerajaan’. Malay concept of government (Kerajaan) has unique definition in relation to sultan’s Daulat. Yusuf Hashim emphasized that:

When Daulat was given to the Sultan, the kingdom or government automatically be sovereign. This signifies the Sultan and his government are free from foreign power. Furthermore, Daulat gives a king an immunity in implementing his own laws and government. The King has a full freedom and accessibility to shape his own system, his statecraft and state constitution (Yusuf Hashim, 218).

The unique concept of Daulat practiced among the Malays has become one of the signs to portray obedience towards the ruler. By submitting wholeheartedly to the king, you will provide an immense feeling of royalty and devoted subjects. However, the Malay conservative political system brings uneasiness to the British colonial officers where individual rights are absent among the subjects with the implementation of the daulat concept. Most

British colonial officials who served in Malaya, such as Frank Swettenham and Hugh Clifford, were of the view that Malays do not have an exact political institution like in other countries. Clifford also believes that Malay people do not have individual rights and property rights. (Anthony Milner, 16) He added that a Malay does not have 'any kind of initiative' and merely relying on 'Apa titah Raja?' (What are the sultan's commands?). Based on their observations, they argued that Malay society as late as the late 19th century had a different government system where the Malays were living in cynical and absolute autocracy. (Milner, 16-17). This view is similar to what Syed Hussein Al-Attas argued on the Malay mindset with social and political schemes emphasizing true obedience as a loyal subject and submissive clan. The ruled are obligated to acknowledge the daulat, where the royal officials, ministers, and the common people alike are responsible for honoring the sultan with loyalty. A daulat gives a sultan the right to rule the kingdom with full legitimacy and makes him immune from laws. Daulat is derived from the Arab term dawlatun. On epistemology, dawlatun means government and administration. In Malay traditional politics, sovereignty is held by Sultan who ruled the kingdom, especially in the Malacca Sultanate.

However, Daulat is perceived differently after the advent of Islam in the Malay world, where previously the concept was like Hinduism and Buddhism. According to Hinduism, a king symbolizes the Earth God stated in Hindu's holy book. However, from Islamic perspectives, the concept of Daulat can be referred to as people's reliance, trust, and obedience to Allah S.W.T. Furthermore, sultan is ascribed as a 'shadow of God' where a sacred relationship is established between him and the Almighty, which contributes a sanctified aura to sultan's position. (Ariffin Omar, 3). Even though the sultan may commit crimes, he cannot be charged or punished since his position was considered sacred and holy, as reflected in the idea that he was 'the shadow of God on earth'.

Unable to comply with daulat will lead to derhaka. Derhaka is derived from the Sanskrit term drhoka, which means to betray the promise or disobey to the authority. In the Malacca Sultanate, being disobedient to the sultan is the major criminal offense in the political system. When a sultan is in rage or murka, it is difficult for the subject to obtain forgiveness or avoid punishment. Thus, the Malays were afraid of the saying 'pantang anak melayu menderhaka kepada rajanya'. For those who derhaka to the king and his government will be offended with tulah. Tulah is a catastrophe or unpleasant curse resulted from the criminal offense. This curse was also tormented by the Malays for them to do good and remain obedient.

Historical Realities of Gundik in Malacca Sultanate

A historical account existed regarding the relationship of daulat and gundik written in Sulalatus Salatin. For instance, the case scenario of Hang Tuah, who was willing to obey his master, the sultan, even though he was sentenced for death because he was flirting with the sultan's gundik. Hang Tuah was even willing to kill his own companion, Hang Jebat, for being a traitor or derhaka to the Sultan. This indicates that Malay people, as enjoined by the Malay tradition, should remain obedient no matter what happens and how the concept is viewed as significant in the Malay society. Furthermore, few Malay proverbs emphasizing a strong conviction of adat, such as 'yang lama dikelek, yang baru didukung' which means even though time changes, adat should not be forgotten, 'hidup dikandung adat, mati dikandung tanah' meaning that we should always follow adat from early life till death, and 'biar mati anak jangan mati adat' which means to sacrifice everything rather than abandoning adat, are considered controversial proverbs if used in modern days. These proverbs indicate the importance of adat in making sure that it will not disappear. A child symbolizes a soul that a person normally loves the most, yet as the third proverb goes, it is acceptable if he is dead but not adat, thus indicating that adat is something valuable that Malays should always always prioritize and make relevant.

As mentioned in the previous subtopic, the daulat concept has a repercussion on the immunity of the sultan, where the ruler is not punishable for their crimes. Instead, the victims will likely receive punishment or suffer mistreatment caused by the misconduct committed by the sultan. This is the fate facing the gundik to remain obedient, where they have no voice to express themselves and do otherwise than what has been told, even though the sultan's action is wrong and cruel. Interestingly, most of the gundik mentioned in the Sulalatus Salatin originated from the Bendahara's lineage. In fact, Bendahara and Sultan tend to have a significant relationship since Bendahara is the powerful person next to the sultan. It was believed that the most consistent person to uphold justice and honor the daulat is Bendahara. He should oblige or be expected to sacrifice his soul for the daulat even though the sultan is being unjust. (Mohammad Yusof Ibrahim, 223) described the special relationship between the sultan and his royal court officials as 'fire and tree who complemented each other'. As he puts it: And yet there will be no peace of his

kingdom, as the kings is like a fire, and the minister is like a tree. If there is no tree, how can a fire spark? Thus, the sense of indebtedness and being connected to one another, although at times ended with devastating results, always existed in this respected relationship. For instance, the tragic stories of Tun Kudu and Tun Fatimah, where both are Bendahara's daughters. Tun Kudu was victimized as she was passed over to the other Bendahara, Seri Nara Al-Diraja, while Tun Fatimah was forced to marry the sultan after her father's assassination. In the first instance, Sultan Muzaffar Syah was being sympathetic towards Bendahara Sri Nara al Diraja as he was no longer capable of serving which raised the tension between him and Tun Kudu's brother, Tun Perak. The sultan's action in suggesting a few female names for Seri Nara al Diraja indicates the future wife as a reward since Sultan Muzaffar Syah does not want to fire him directly instead to soothe his heart that he was even ready to give away his own wife as a collateral. Meanwhile, on Tun Kudu's side of the story, the mention of Tun Kudu's beauty fading away after she was divorced by Sultan Muzaffar Syah is not considered a *tulah*.

Nevertheless, mentioning someone's defect clearly shows signs of mystery, i.e., why her beauty started to disappear after she became a divorcee. The scribe stressed the sultan's partner being someone without flaws in terms of physical appearance since the status of the sultan is regarded as perfect in every way. Her feeling towards the divorce remains uncertain, yet, from her action, it can be assumed her obedience which was in response to the Sultan's *daulat* and her duty as a wife towards her husband prevailed even though the action of her husband can be considered treacherous for giving her away to someone else. This is because, in Malay adat, a wife should obey her husband's commands, which is one of the responsibilities as a wife in Sharia law too. Meanwhile, the stories of Tun Fatimah and another *gundik* from non-aristocratic origin, Dang Anum, are quite similar since their fathers had committed or charged with *derhaka* towards the sultan. Consequently, both men received the death penalty due to the sultan's hasty and foolish decision, which in turn brought destruction to both his kingdom and marriage. Tun Fatimah was a daughter of Bendahara Tun Mutahir. Ruzy Suzila mentioned that Tun Mutahir was not noble enough to marry into a royalty. Furthermore, Tun Mutahir knew Sultan Mahmud's illicit behavior as he desired several women, such as Tun Biajid's wife, Sultan of Pahang's fiancée, Tun Teja, and Princess Gunung Ledang, and thus decided not to sacrifice her daughter to marry Sultan Mahmud Syah. (Ruzy Suliza Hashim, 229) Muhammad Yusof Hashim explained the historical realities that happened, which led to the death of Tun Mutahir after having been accused as *derhaka* towards the Sultan:

...the Bendahara Seri Maharaja himself ought to be blamed for the incident too. He had contravened the traditions and social norms of Melaka. It was the custom then that if Melaka did not have a queen, the daughter of Bendahara should be given in marriage to the ruler as his consort. Yet, although the Bendahara Seri Maharaja was aware of this, and despite being reminded by the Raja di-Baroh about this, he chose to be stubborn and ignored the advice. It was inevitable that he incurred the sultan's wrath. (Yusof Hashim, 35)

In the past Malay society, *adat* was everything to the people, and an individual who breached the *adat* would face a harsh punishment. The emphasis on the idea that in the absence of the queen, Bendahara's daughter should be married to the sultan shows an important and significant relationship between the sultan and the Bendahara. Tun Mutahir's decision to wed his daughter to Tun Ali caused Sultan Mahmud's wrath because Tun Mutahir had been secretly hiding her beautiful daughter from him. Besides that, the slander made up by Raja Mendaliar towards Tun Mutahir spread inside the palace, leading to the Sultan Mahmud's insecurity. Raja Mendaliar, Nina Sura Dewana, and Si Kitul bribed Khoja Hassan with a mountain of gold and silver with one condition: to convey a false alarm to Sultan Mahmud Syah that Bendahara Tun Mutahir was on his way to plot a coup to overthrow the ruler and make himself sultan. Filled by rage, the death penalty was sentenced by Sultan Mahmud Syah to the entire family except for Tun Fatimah because Tun Mutahir was viewed as *derhaka* for violating the *adat*.

However, from the actions of Tun Fatimah, she was able to outdo Sultan Mahmud's *daulat* when she was smart enough to protest against her husband by threatening to kill her unborn babies. Hence, inflicting pain onto Sultan Mahmud Syah, who was powerless to harm Tun Fatimah. Her silence was loud enough to send the message to her husband that she was feeling miserable. In this case, the *daulat* did not affect Tun Fatimah in that although she displayed protest towards Sultan Mahmud by threatening to abort her babies, the sultan did not do anything harmful to her, nor did there exist *tulah* or curse befallen on Tun Fatimah. Instead, Sultan Mahmud had to concede to her demand, i.e., to appoint her son as the heir of the throne, as a condition to stop her attempt for abortion. On the contrary, in the case of *gundik* Dang Anum, found in *Sulalatus Salatin*, involved *tulah* where her parents were struck by a curse or *tulah* and consequently turned into stone. This followed the breach of sultan's *daulat* by his father,

Sang Rajuna Tapa, who avenged his daughter's death by committing a deed that caused the end of a Malay monarchy in Singapore, or Temasik.

Although the event did not happen in Malacca it gives some ideas about the treatment received by gundik and the people around her in relation to the daulat concept. The incident began with a slander that swept among the gundik in the court, saying Dang Anum was being unfaithful to the sultan. Consequently, she was ordered to be killed. Fueled with revenge and determined to uphold her daughter's dignity, her father caused the fall of the kingdom by opening the gates for Majapahit forces to attack. This indicates that in Malay society, even though a person was not guilty or his action is justified for instance to uphold the dignity of his family, going against the sultan is strictly prohibited as transpired in the Sang Rajuna Tapa's curse. He was considered a derhaka even though his action was to redeem the unjustified death of his daughter caused in the first place by the sultan's own foolishness and blind jealousy. While daulat is instrumental in deriving legitimacy, the concept also has a few shortcomings, the most notable being that sultan was treated above the law, hence free from punishments even though he committed crimes or inflicted unjustified harm onto his subjects. In a way, this led to the destruction of the daulat itself in the eyes of some people and tarnished the image of Islam as a fair and just religion when the sultan cannot be judged and punished for his mistakes. In such a situation, power corruption and injustice consequently set in the politics. Apart from the women who become the victims of the sultan having been forced to become gundik, with daulat, the sultan uses it to victimize women of other men for his own pleasures. For instance, the story of Tun Biajit's wife, who was having an affair with the Sultan.

Obviously, it was written in Undang-Undang Melaka that taking someone's other wife, seducing other people's wife are unacceptable however, with sultan's daulat such actions if committed by the sultan himself appear to be acceptable. Thus, the sultan can do whatever he wants even though it destroys countless numbers of individuals and families. The concept of daulat complemented by religion further makes the subjects fully loyal to the sultan that even though their family members might have been wronged by the sultan, they need to remain silent and obey the command, otherwise, *tulah* will befall onto them. As mentioned before, if the subject rebels against the sultan it means they are being rebellious against the God.

This also contributed to the constraint imposed on the freedom of women in court, including the gundik in seeking knowledge, having full responsibilities on their own, and being politically involved, which stunted the growth of women's intellect. Aforementioned are the qualities of the ruler: he must respect his own subjects and rule over them fairly to obtain loyalty from his subjects. However, in reality, sometimes the subjects were loyal and obedient, yet the sultan was being disrespectful and unjust towards his subjects because of the misuse of the daulat. In such a case, it can destroy one's relationship with another, i.e., in between the sultan or the ruler and the subjects or the ruled, instead of symbolizing the legitimized power and superiority of the sultan and the full obedience of the subjects. That said, it should be pointed out here that, as in other cultures and histories of other societies, there are always exceptions i.e., not all past Malay rulers or sultans were cruel towards their gundik or tyrant towards those who got entangled with court gundik. Thus, the stories mentioned above on the bad treatment towards the gundik are not to be seen as a representation of Malay sultans in general but rather of a certain percentage of those who comprised Malay ruling elite or sultans.

Conclusion

While daulat provides legitimacy and power to the Malay kings, the position of gundik in relation to daulat is sometimes very damaging where they were traumatized by the assassination of the family members, causing some of them to react with the situation in an unpleasant and unappealing way. This can be seen for example, in the case of Tun Fatimah who rather killed her babies inside her womb, and Dang Anum who was killed because of slander. In some other instances, the women were forced to serve the sultan as gundik as the case of Tun Biajit's wife and be forced to marry the Sultan and become his gundik as in the case of Tun Fatimah. Despite being the victims, these women generally, cannot have their concerns be heard or interests protected because of the male dominance in the Malay society which tend to downplay women, and the daulat possessed by the sultan which caused the society to perceive gundik regardless of the truth behind some incidents which involved them, as malicious and wicked. Even the high-ranking officials such as Bendahara cannot transgress the daulat let alone the gundik who were at the lowest position in the Malay court. This repercussion imposed on the circulation of women in court where the gundik were not exposed in educational consciousness, limits the freedom of expression, and and being politically involved, which stunted the growth of women's intellect and her position.

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