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## RÉSUMÉS – ABSTRACTS

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En couverture : Javanese regent (*bupati*) ca. 1810 in the official uniform designed by Marshal Herman Willem Daendels (1762-1818; in office as Governor-General, 1808-11). Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

JÉRÔME SAMUEL

## Pierre Labrousse (1939-2024), un homme de qualités

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Pierre Labrousse nous a quittés vendredi 15 mars 2024 en fin de journée, dans sa 84<sup>e</sup> année. On retiendra de sa carrière qu'il aura été l'homme de deux projets.

Le premier est la revue *Archipel*, créée en 1971 avec Denys Lombard et Christian Pelras. Cette revue à vocation aréale et pluridisciplinaire est devenue au fil de ses 53 années d'existence, une publication de référence sur le monde insulindien, en France comme dans tout le monde de la recherche de pays où ces études sont particulièrement développées (Indonésie, Pays-Bas, États-Unis, Australie, Grande Bretagne). Pierre Labrousse a consacré à cette revue et à l'association Archipel

qui la publie, bien plus que son temps et son énergie. Il a contribué à la porter, y compris financièrement, et l'accompagnait encore il y a peu.

Le second projet est lexicographique et porte sur l'indonésien contemporain. Engagé dès la seconde moitié des années 1960 avec son épouse Farida Soemargono<sup>1</sup>, alors que Pierre Labrousse était affecté à l'Universitas Padjadjaran et à l'Alliance Française de Bandung, ce projet a donné naissance à une thèse<sup>2</sup> puis

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1. *Kamus dasar Perantjis-Indonesia* (avec Farida Soemargono), Bandung : Ananta, 1969.

2. « Problèmes lexicographiques de l'indonésien », 2 vol., Paris : Langues et Civilisations

au *Dictionnaire général indonésien-français*<sup>3</sup>, dont il avait assuré lui-même la composition. Pierre Labrousse poursuivra ensuite ses recherches lexicographiques en vue d'une seconde édition de ce dictionnaire, et travaillait encore peu avant sa disparition, à un projet de publication en ligne du considérable matériau accumulé.

Les activités d'enseignement de Pierre Labrousse à l'INALCO (1975-2002), n'ont été que partiellement fondées sur ces travaux, mais elles y sont étroitement liées. Passant de la lexicographie à la didactique d'une langue « rare », il a été conduit à rédiger une méthode de langue qui fonde véritablement l'enseignement de l'indonésien en France<sup>4</sup>. Ainsi, il aura, par ses manuels et son activité de pédagogue, formé des dizaines d'étudiants à la maîtrise de l'indonésien et, plus largement, aux études indonésiennes.

Pierre Labrousse avait deux autres centres d'intérêt scientifique qui ne l'ont jamais quitté, tout d'abord les textes de voyageurs français en Insulinde et, plus largement, les publications en français, toutes formes confondues, sur le monde insulindien, dont il avait établi une immense bibliographie. Ensuite, la peinture moderne et contemporaine indonésienne, dont il avait découvert les peintres pendant son séjour à Bandung, avec lesquels il avait su nouer des liens personnels, étroits et pérennes.

Enfin, Pierre Labrousse était un homme d'une grande modestie, d'une remarquable constance dans les engagements, un homme de qualité et de qualités. Ses collègues et ses anciens étudiants savent tout ce qu'ils lui doivent : plus qu'on ne saurait le dire en ces quelques lignes.

### **Bibliographie partielle : articles de recherche de Pierre Labrousse parus dans la revue *Archipel***

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Orientales, 1975.

3. *Dictionnaire général indonésien-français* (en collaboration avec Farida Soemargono, Winarsih Arifin et Henri Chambert-Loir), Paris : Archipel, 1984.

4. *Méthode d'indonésien*, Paris : L'Asiathèque, 1997 (1<sup>e</sup> éd. : 2 vol., Paris : Archipel, 1978, Cahiers d'Archipel n° 3 et 4).



- 1982, n° 23, p. 177-200, « Le Tombeau de “Sitti Nurbaya”. Essai de lecture sociale ».
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- 2001, n° 62, p. 71-90, « Images de Timor en France (1812-1824) ».
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## ÉCHO DE LA RECHERCHE

### Cinquième SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference on Southeast Asian Archaeology and Fine Arts, Bangkok, 10-12 juin 2024

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La cinquième édition de *SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference on Southeast Asian Archaeology and Fine Arts* s'est déroulée à Bangkok (hôtel Amari) du 10 au 12 juin 2024. Cette première conférence *SEAMEO-SPAFA* en présentiel suite à la pandémie Covid-19 a réuni environ 350 participants venus de trente pays. Cette édition a été différente des précédentes dans la mesure où elle n'était pas limitée à l'archéologie de l'Asie du Sud-Est, mais ouverte également à des communications sur diverses formes artistiques, ainsi que sur le patrimoine culturel.

Outre les *country reports* ouvrant traditionnellement les éditions de ces conférences *SEAMEO-SPAFA*, les 250 communications au programme étaient regroupées en 42 sessions présentées dans un maximum de sept espaces différents sur deux étages de l'hôtel, une disposition permettant de se déplacer facilement d'un espace à l'autre, même en cours de session.

Pour la région qui nous concerne ici, Brunei, la Malaisie, les Philippines, ainsi que Singapour ont présenté des *country reports*. D'une manière générale, ces rapports ont combiné de brèves informations sur les recherches archéologiques récentes et en cours, sur les nouveaux musées récemment ouverts, ainsi que sur les problèmes liés à la protection, la conservation et la préservation des divers types de sites, qu'ils soient archéologiques ou architecturaux.

Nous avons relevé au programme 119 communications relatives à l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime (liste détaillée ci-dessous), livrées par des intervenants originaires de douze pays différents. Ceux venus des Philippines et d'Indonésie représentent, pratiquement à égalité, plus des trois-quarts des intervenants (cf. tableau 1). En ce qui concerne les thèmes abordés, les questions de gestion du patrimoine culturel viennent en tête pour le nombre de communications, celles relatives à l'archéologie représentant un peu plus du tiers des communications au programme pour ce qui concerne l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime (cf. tableau 2).

Cette cinquième conférence *SEAMEO-SPAF* s'est prolongée le 13 juin par une excursion optionnelle à Nakhon Pathom et au musée national de Ban Kao dans la province de Kanchanaburi. Un atelier intitulé *Archaeology Ethics in Southeast Asia* a été organisé le 14 juin.

**Tableau 1** – Communications sur l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime par nationalité des intervenants

Nationalités	Nombre de communications
Philippines	48
Indonésie	44
Malaisie	7
Singapour	5
Thaïlande	3
Vietnam	3
Taiwan	2
USA	2
Canada	1
France	1
Inde	1
Australie	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>119</b>

**Tableau 2** – Communications sur l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime par thèmes

Thèmes	Nombre de communications
Gestion du patrimoine culturel	28
Etudes de mobilier archéologique	22
Prospections et fouilles archéologiques terrestres	11
Musées et collections	6
Histoire sociale	6
Histoire architecturale	5
Histoire de l'art	4
Art rupestre	4
Arts du spectacle	4
Pratiques traditionnelles	3
Archéologie subaquatique	3

**Tableau 2** – Communications sur l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime par thèmes (suite)

Thèmes	Nombre de communications
Histoire des religions	3
Pratiques funéraires	3
Artisanat	2
Epigraphie	2
Histoire régionale	2
Conservation du mobilier archéologique	2
Pratiques et histoire de l'alimentation	2
Etude de films	1
Ethnoarchéologie	1
Histoire économique	1
Perspectives en archéologie	1
Toponymie	1
Conservation architecturale	1
Histoire des migrations	1

### Liste des communications au programme concernant l'Asie du Sud-Est maritime

- \* Bells, Bronze Drums and Gongs in Asia: Notes for a Comparative Study (Arsenio Nicolas, The Philippines)
- \* A Decade of Raising Makyung Performances in Various Channel Genres: An Approach in Preserving Art and Culture (Muhammad Affizy bin Shaari & Yusmilayati Yunos, Malaysia)
- \* Dance as Cultural Collaboration: the 2023 ASEAN Panji Festival (Chua Soo Pong, Singapore)
- \* Meaning Field of Tolerance Post-Incident Nine/Eleven Through Films in Indonesia (Muchammad Zaenal Al Ansory, Indonesia)
- \* Bohol Ceramics And Barter In Central Visayas, Philippines: An Ethnoarchaeological Study of Trade and Exchange (Rhayan Gatabonton Melendres, The Philippines)
- \* Painting the Town Red: An Experimental Archaeology Approach to the Application of Red Colors to Philippines Materials (Patricia Panganiban, The Philippines)
- \* Replicating a Past Behavior: An Initial Investigation on the Modified Human Bone Recovered from Palawan, Philippines (Salvador III Sambitan, The Philippines)

- \* New Narrative of the Bidong Shipwreck Trading Route Based on the Second Phase Excavation (Hasrizal Shaari, Malaysia)
- \* Inscriptions on La Maddusila Tomb Complex and We Tenri Olle Tomb Complex in Barru Regency (Hairum Anisa, Indonesia)
- \* Sketching the Post-Galleon Technological and Economic Landscape through 19th Century Shipwreck Sites in the Philippines (Christian Emmanuel A. Catahan, The Philippines)
- \* Identification of 9th -10th century AD textile from Liyangan Site, Central Java, Indonesia (Mahirta, Indonesia)
- \* Exploring the Legacy of Maritime Greatness in Southeast Asia: A Historical Study of Surabaya as a Major Port City and the Management of the Hinterland Area in 1900-1930 (Laras Setyaningsih, Indonesia)
- \* Port of Manado: Maritime Network and Trade (1824-1942) (Jhon Rivel Purba, Indonesia)
- \* The Presence of the Huñjēman People in the International Trade of Ancient Java during 10th–15th Centuries AD (Asri Hayati Nufus, Indonesia)
- \* Global Maritime Trade at Bongal Site on Sumatra’s West Coast: New Insights into the Historiography of Southeast Asia (Muhammad Faizurrahman, Indonesia)
- \* Re-Examining the Art of the 13th Century AD Maritime Southeast Asia through Amoghapasa Lokeshvara and His Retinues (Ahmad Kholdun Ibnu Sholah, Indonesia)
- \* Network of Compassion: The Transmission and Development of the Cult and Iconography of Cakravartīcintāmaṇi Avalokiteśvara in Java, China and Japan (Saran Suebsantiwongse, Thailand)
- \* Cham esoteric Buddhist art in the context of the socio-political relationships between the Campā kingdom(s) and the Khmer Angkorian Empire during the 12th–13th centuries CE (Trần Kỳ Phương, Vietnam)
- \* Dong Son Drums as the Key to decrypt Ptolemy’s Locations of Places existing in Eastern Coastal Zone of Thailand and Malaysia (Trongjai Hutangkura, Thailand)
- \* Throw Us a Bone, Won’t You? Exploring the feasibility of plant-based projectile impact mark identification on bone assemblages in the Philippines (Andrea Dominique Cosalan, The Philippines)
- \* Ikot-Ikot Lang: A Study on Philippine Textile Weaving Archaeology through Spindle Whorls (Almea Mely K. Abad, The Philippines)
- \* Mapping of Tangible Cultural Properties of Mariveles, Bataan: Basis for the Development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Materials (John Albert R. Dela Rosa, The Philippines)
- \* The Genesis of Acehnese Culture and Traditions Impacted by Indian Cultural Influence (An Ethnographic Study) (Yuni Saputri, Indonesia)

- \* Safeguarding Cultural Heritage: A Comparative Study of Conservation Practices in Indonesia and India (Anika Pallapothu, India)
- \* Attribute Analysis of Ceramics from Sitio Pungso, Barangay Ilihan, Burauen, Leyte, Philippines (Chelsea Kaye M. Mara, The Philippines)
- \* Updates on the study of Champa ceramics (Alex Do Truong Giang, Vietnam)
- \* Mercury Jars, Xiaokouping, Small-Mouth Jars: Exploring New Directions in Studying Ceramic Bottles in Southeast Asian Archaeology (Alasdair Chi Xin Ren, Singapore)
- \* The porcelain-inlaid earthenware in San Diego shipwreck, 1600 (Ellen Hsieh, Taiwan)
- \* Broken Pieces of History: Identification and Significance of Tradeware Ceramics Excavated in the Post Office Site, Manila, Philippines (John Marion M. Capunitan, The Philippines)
- \* Early Islamic Pottery on The West Coast of Sumatra: A Study of Bongal Archeological Site, Indonesia (Tori Nuariza Sutanto, Indonesia)
- \* The Glamorous Peacock Chair and its Origin in Philippine Prison (May Lyn L. Cruz, The Philippines)
- \* Thailand Ceramics and Peninsular Malaysia: The interaction of Old Kingdoms through the Evidence of the Bidong Wreck (Asyaari Bin Muhamad, Malaysia)
- \* Report on the 10th-13th Century Decorated Pottery from Mareku, Tidore Island, Indonesia (Chung-Ching Shiung, Taiwan)
- \* The use of the Bead Type Collection on the Bead Assemblage from Locality 4, Napa Site, Catanauan, Philippines (Pauline Basilia, The Philippines)
- \* Descriptive and Typological Analyses of Glass Beads from Burdeos and Catanauan Sites, Quezon Province, Philippines (Jada San Andres, The Philippines)
- \* Exploring Photogrammetry as a Tool for Conservation of UCH: the Case of Wooden Planks Recovered off Gujangan Island, Sulu, Philippines (Nero M. Austero, The Philippines)
- \* Examining the Status and Strategies for Archaeological Conservation and Management of Butuan Boats (Rachel Anne Geline P. Ureta, The Philippines)
- \* Malacca Coastal and Impact Assessment on Heritage: Project of 2020-2022 (Yasmin Amirah Binti Muhammad Edrus, Malaysia)
- \* Underwater Archaeology and the work of the United States Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) Partnership and Innovation in the Philippines. An overview (Alba Mazza, USA)
- \* Coastal Community Empowerment for Supporting Maritime Conservation Area Model of the Historic Shipwreck Sites in Sumbawa Island Waters, Indonesia (Ira Dillenia, Indonesia)

- \* Teeth are robust proxies for understanding past climate change in Southeast Asia (Tanya M. Smith, Australia)
- \* Preliminary Research On Human Skeleton Findings in Burrow Tatarayya Bira Village Bulukumba District (Rini Oktaviani Rakhman, Indonesia)
- \* Baringeng Site: Landscape Heritage and Cultural Identity of the Bugis Society in the Soppeng-Wajo-Bone Frontier, South Sulawesi (Syahrudin Mansyur, Indonesia)
- \* Valuing City of Palembang's Cultural Heritage: Social Model and its Urban Context (Ary Sulisty, Indonesia)
- \* Exploring Indigenous Rituals and Cultural Interactions in Early Modern Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Amontay Village, Anda, Bohol (Procopio Resabal Jr., The Philippines)
- \* Rethinking the function of Rock Inscriptions: From Northeast Africa to Southeast Asia (Iman Nagy, USA)
- \* Linking Archaeology, Heritage Management, and Community Engagement: Insights from Bicol Archaeological Project and Museo de Isarog Experiences (Earl John Hernandez, The Philippines)
- \* Applying Community-Based Archaeology Approach in Bio-archaeology: Insights and Prospects from the case of Bicol Archaeological Project (Anne Margaret Moll, The Philippines)
- \* Cebuano Popular Music Festivals and the Socio-Cultural History of Cebu, 1980-2020 (John Virgil B. Ouano, The Philippines)
- \* Gabii sa Kabilin (Heritage Night): Promoting the Cebuano Culture in the Digital Age (Heideliza Batausa, The Philippines)
- \* The Forgotten and Neglected Community Heritage (Lorylie Crisostomo, The Philippines)
- \* Preserving Cultural Identity in Antique Province: Community Engagement, Cultural Education, and Heritage Preservation Practices (Edbert Jay M. Cabrillos, The Philippines)
- \* Cultivating Heritage: The Buruyloganay Festival as a Strategy for Cultural Preservation and Community Development in Sibalom (Susan F. Atienza, The Philippines)
- \* MindWorks as a Social Critic (Mary Grace C. Compuesto, The Philippines)
- \* Jar Burial Traditions in the Karama Valley, West Sulawesi and its Regional Contexts (Anggraeni, Indonesia)
- \* The Paleo-Metal Burial Sites in Indonesian Archipelago (Lutfi Yondri, Indonesia)
- \* Human Interaction in Chambers Stone Decoration in the Megalithic Culture of Pasemah South Sumatra (Rr. Triwurjani, Indonesia)



- \* Evidence of Paleometallic Dwelling, Burial, and Worship at Tadulako Megalithic Site, Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi Province (Dwi Yani Yuniawati-Umar, Indonesia)
- \* Paleo-Metal Site in Situbondo Coastal Area in East Java, Indonesia (Putri Novita Taniardi, Indonesia)
- \* Wooden Coffin “Soronga” in Gua Tokandidi Site, Morowali, West Sulawesi, Indonesia (Dahniar Arsyad Kaluma, Indonesia)
- \* Teaching Cultural Appropriation on Entrepreneurship and Business College Students: A Sample Lesson on Contemporary World Course in NBS College (Marlon L. Silvoza, The Philippines)
- \* Women in the Eyes of Culture: Elucidating the Cultural Significance of Women in the Traditional Craftsmanship of Laguna Province, Philippines (Jame Monren T. Mercado, The Philippines)
- \* Empowering Indigenous Creative Enterprises: Unveiling Northern Mindanao’s Cultural Wealth, Challenges, and Pathways to Sustainable Development (Helen B. Ajon, The Philippines)
- \* Study the Intricacies of Yogyakarta’s Batik Nitik Tradition: Techniques, Characteristics, and Philosophical Significance (Aida Roihana Zuhro, Indonesia)
- \* The History and Cultural Context of Jawa Batik Hokokai in Indonesia (Sugeng Riyanto, Indonesia)
- \* Behind the Portico: The Conservation and Disaster Risk Protection of the Nuestra Señora de Caysasay Church in Taal, Batangas (Marvin M. Belgica & Marie Bernadette B. Balaguer, The Philippines)
- \* Lungon ng mga Ninuno: The Pre-Spanish Wooden Coffin Collection of the National Museum of the Philippines (Ivan B. Cultura, The Philippines)
- \* Resilience and Restoration: A Collaborative Approach to Cultural Heritage Recovery Post-Bohol Earthquake (Rachelle C. Lacea, The Philippines)
- \* Archaeological undertakings in an Indigenous Group Territory vis a vis NMP Mandate (Ame M. Garong, The Philippines)
- \* New Light on Old Sherds: Petrographic Analysis of Tempered Earthenware from the Parliament House Complex (PHC), Singapore (Alvin Sern Hao, Singapore)
- \* Guar Kepah B Shell Midden: Unearthing Archaeological Insights and Significance in Late Hoabinhian - Early Neolithic Adaptations in Peninsular Malaysia (Shaiful Shahidan, Malaysia)
- \* Re-Assessing Bujang Valley: Cultural Features, Chronology and Recent Discoveries (Nasha Rodziadi Khaw, Malaysia)
- \* Mapping the History of Pidie Jaya, a Significant City under the Sultanate of Aceh (Amir Husni, Indonesia)

- \* Islamic Sultanate Fortress on the Malay Peninsula (Isman Pratama Nasution, Indonesia)
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- \* Performative Preservation of Local Knowledge and Ritual in Waray's Prusisyun (Dennis D. Gupa, Canada)
- \* Hospitality's Cultural Philanthropy: Fostering Sustainability in Community-Based Traditional and Contemporary Art through SAKA Museum (Alisa Putri, Indonesia)
- \* Paraji Treatment (Muhamad Ari Nugraha, Indonesia)
- \* Ritual Communication of Tumpek Wariga as a Heritage of Austronesian Speakers (Andry Hikari Damai, Indonesia)
- \* Stories in 3D: Optimizing the Cultural Narratives of the Baclayon Parish Movable Heritage Collection for Integration to Cultural Education Initiatives (Athena G. Vitor, The Philippines)
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- \* Collaboration in Community-based Museum Nyah Lasem: Exchange of Knowledge between Museum and Visitors (Virliany Rizqia Putri, Indonesia)
- \* Collecting and Institutional Custodianship: The collections of Jorge B. Vargas and the PCGG (Presidential Commission for Good Government) (Tessa Maria Guazon, The Philippines)
- \* The Archaeology and History of the Rock Art of Maros-Pangkep and Bulu Sipong 4 (Yadi Mulyadi and Rustan Lebe, Indonesia)
- \* Assessing Impacts on the Rock Art of Maros-Pangkep Sulawesi (Matt Whincop, Australia)
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## History of the west coast of North Sumatra before Barus: Preliminary results of archaeological research at the Bongal settlement site

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### Introduction

Any discussion of the ancient history of the west coast of Sumatra necessarily addresses the question of two place names, namely Barus and Fansur (Pansur/Pancur). Archaeological research was carried out at Lobu Tua and Bukit Hasang, two major Barus area sites. Initiated at the end of the 1980s by the Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional, these investigations underwent a more intensive phase (1995-2000) at Lobu Tua, conducted by a joint-team Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique – CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research), and École française d'Extrême-Orient - EFEO (French School of Asian Studies), then

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  - d. Pusat Riset Arkeologi Lingkungan, Maritim, dan Budaya Berkelanjutan BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
  - e. Pusat Riset Arkeologi Prasejarah dan Sejarah BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
  - f. Pusat Riset Arkeometri BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
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  - h. Pusat Riset Biomassa dan Bioproduk BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
  - i. Pusat Riset Arkeometri BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
  - j. Pusat Riset Arkeologi Lingkungan, Maritim, dan Budaya Berkelanjutan BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional).
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at Bukit Hasang (2001-2005) as part of a cooperation program between Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional and EFEO.

This decade of archaeological research in Barus shed light on the history of a region of the Archipelago mentioned in various written sources since the beginning of the Christian era (Pl. 1, fig. 1). However, the oldest archaeological data provided by research conducted at Lobu Tua and Bukit Hasang are dated to the 9th century CE (Guillot et al. 2008, p. 32). According to a Batak chronicle, a settlement site prior to the Lobu Tua site was located at Aek Busuk/Air Busuk (ibid., pp. 33-36). But surveys carried out in 1995 around Aek (Sungai) Busuk did not reveal significant traces of ancient habitat there (ibid., pp. 14, 34).

According to the same Batak chronicle, the kingdom ruling over Aek Busuk and Lobu Tua was called Pansur (ibid., p. 36). Based on the results of surveys and analysis of this written source, Guillot (ibid., pp. 36-37) suggested that “Barus” was situated in a different region before Lobu Tua. Based in particular on Wolters and Ptak studies, in the same publication, he (ibid., p. 34) returned to the mentions possibly referring to Barus before the 9th century CE in foreign sources.

In this context, the recent discovery of the site of Bongal, some 60 km south of Barus, near Kota Pandan (administrative centre of Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah) in the bay of Tapanuli/Sibolga, takes on its full importance (Pl. 1, fig. 2). Bongal (Desa Jagojago, Kecamatan Badiri, Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah) is the name of a hill at an altitude of around 320 m (coord.: 01°35’30.9” N, 98°49’42.1” E). The Lumut River (Pinangsori) flows at the foot of Bongal Hill before flowing into the bay of Sibolga. The sediments deposited by the Lumut River towards its mouth form a flat area sensitive to tides. Today dominated by *nipah* (*Nypa fruticans*) vegetation, particularly close to the hill, this alluvial plain is occasionally cultivated (rubber and oil palm trees) by residents of the village of Jagojago.

Ancient remains were reported as early as 2001 in the Bongal area. At that time, a team from Balai Arkeologi Medan,<sup>1</sup> carrying out a survey and inventory of the historical and archaeological remains of the Kabupaten of Tapanuli Tengah and of the town of Sibolga, were informed by residents of Jagojago of the presence of a stone statue on the slopes of Bongal Hill. Guided by villagers, the team was able to examine the remains in situ, and thus identify an incomplete image (missing head) of Ganeśa made of andesite (Pl. 2, figs. 3a, 3b). At the same time, the Balai Arkeologi Medan team noticed that gold miners were active on the banks of the Lumut River, which flows at the foot of Bongal Hill (Koestoro et al. 2001, pp. 22-23).

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1. Renamed Balai Arkeologi Sumatera Utara in 2017, then *Co-Working Space* Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional/BRIN Medan since 2022.

Eighteen years later, precisely in November 2019, a team from Balai Arkeologi Sumatera Utara returned to the Bongal area to carry out an expertise following a report from Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah relating to the discovery of ancient remains likely eligible for protection in the village of Jagojago (Purnawibowo & Restiyadi, 2019). The discovery of archaeological remains at Bongal was directly linked to the activity of local gold washers in the same location as the observation made in 2001 at the foot of Bongal Hill (Pl. 2, fig. 4). While the search for gold was carried out using washing pans in 2001, since 2015, the method has been much more intensive with gold seekers using high-pressure sediment suckers.

In 2020, the Balai Arkeologi Sumatera Utara sent a team to document the archaeological remains of Bongal in the possession of Jagojago residents, as well as those preserved by the Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah (Soedewo & Manurung, 2020).

It has already been mentioned above that the initial publication relating to the discovery of archaeological remains in Bongal dates back more than 20 years. At that time, Koestoro stated that the presence of a Ganeśa image constituted proof of the presence of Hindu communities on the west coast of North Sumatra in ancient times (Koestoro et al. 2001, p. 49). The second publication relating to Bongal, which appeared exactly 20 years later, concerns remains of boats found in gold panning pits. It includes a radiocarbon dating (mid-7th-late 8th c. CE) obtained on a piece of wood bearing an incised inscription (Pl. 2, fig. 5) (Purnawibowo & Mochtar 2021, p. 105). The third publication is a study on finds of Arab coins dated from the Abbasid Dynasty, precisely coins dated between 143 AH/760-761 CE and 204 AH/819-820 CE (Soedewo & Ahmad 2022). The fourth publication introduces observations made by the Balai Arkeologi Sumatera Utara team in 2019, in particular regarding finds from gold panning pits kept by residents of Jagojago (Purnawibowo & Restiyadi 2022). The fifth publication concerns finds of Arab coins dated from the Umayyad Dynasty, including coins bearing years 79H/698-699 CE and 88H/706-707 CE (Arrumdani et al. 2022).

The aim of this article is firstly to present the main archaeological chance finds discovered in Bongal and its vicinity between 2001 and 2020, secondly to introduce the main categories of finds revealed through systematic excavations conducted in 2021 and 2022. This presentation is followed by provisional concluding remarks based on analyses and interpretations accumulated between 2019 and 2022, therefore opening perspectives for future archaeological research in the Jagojago area.

## **Geographical Context**

The Tapanuli/Sibolga Bay is a very suitable area to establish a port, as it is located behind a string of islands that protect the bay from the waves coming from the Indian Ocean. With a depth between 8 to 10 metres, it



can accommodate large ships in the port of Sibolga (topographic data from SIBATNAS 2018 and Jarvis et al. 2008). Our morphological description uses the Desaunettes system (Desaunettes 1977; Todd 1980, p. 560), based on the slope steepness and level differences at a given location. The research area is thus divided into four morphological units: a) the flat morphological unit with a slope steepness in the 0-2% range, which represents 10% of the total surface area; b) the slightly undulating morphological unit with a slope steepness comprised in the 2%-8% range, which represents 15% of the total surface area; c) the strongly undulating morphological unit with a slope steepness in the 8%-16% range, which represents 60% of the total surface area; d) the hilly morphological unit with a slope steepness greater than 16%, which represents 15% of the total surface area. From a general point of view on the morphology, it can therefore be observed that the Bongal site area shows a narrow flat area, which borders an undulating and hilly area culminating at an altitude of approximately 300 metres (Dolok Bonggal and Dolok Jambak Toba).

Considering the bay from north to south, the main rivers in the area are Aek Sibuluan, Aek Badiri, Aek Lumut, and Batang Toru. These rivers, which flow from east to west, have their mouth in the bay of Tapanuli and show various stages: youth river stadium, old-mature river stadium, and old stadium. As regards flow, they belong to the category of periodic/permanent rivers, with a maximum volume in the rainy season and a lower volume in the dry season (Lobeck 1939, p. 731; Thornbury 1969, p. 594).

Aek Lumut and Batang Toru, two of the rivers flowing into Tapanuli Bay, played an important role in communications between the interior and the coast, particularly between the camphor areas along their courses and the ports of the bay. Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries foreign written sources confirm older sources on the presence of camphor trees on the coast and in the interior of North Sumatra (Perret 2014, pp. 290-291). In 2021-2022, camphor trees (*Dryobalanops sumatrensis*) could still be observed on Bongal Hill above 200 metres, as well as meranti (*Shorea spp.*), benzoin trees (*Styrax spp.*), and gaharu (*Aquilaria spp.*).

Among the foreign written sources prior to the 18th century, an Armenian text dated from the turn of the 12th century CE should be mentioned here. It mentions that in Sumatra, camphor was available in two places only: Pant'chour and P'anes (Kévonian 2002, pp. 64-76, 86-90). P'anes/Ep'anes/ or Ep'anis/Ep'anēs could be the Pannai of the Cōḷa inscription from Thanjavur (first half of 11th c. CE) or the Pane mentioned in the *Deśavarṇana* (also known as *Nāgara-Kṛtāgama*) (mid-14th c. CE). As for Pant'chour, it could be the place name of the west coast of North Sumatra designated in other ancient sources as Fansur, Fansuri, Pansur, or Pancur.

Here we would like to add a new point to the debate on this last place name by suggesting to link it with Pinangsori, the name of a watercourse located at the foot of Bongal Hill. In Arabic, Pinangsori is rendered as فنصور, read as Fanshur or Fanshuri, p and ng being rendered respectively by f and n in Arabic.



## Chance finds

The documentation of archaeological finds from the Bongal site kept by Jagojago residents was carried out in 2019 and 2020 by Balai Arkeologi Medan, which produced a report describing nearly 200 artifacts, without taking into account the dozens of coins inscribed in Arabic, now preserved at the Museum Uang Sumatera and at the Museum Al-Qur'an Sumatera Utara. These archaeological chance finds belong to various categories (earthenware, stoneware and porcelain, stones, pieces of wood, various metals – gold, silver, tin, copper, copper alloys), and originate from various regions, especially the Archipelago, the Middle East, South Asia and China.

Metal finds from the Bongal site collected by gold washers include notably coins (Pl. 3, fig. 6),<sup>2</sup> a circular tripod (Pl. 3, fig. 7),<sup>3</sup> and an oil lamp (Pl. 3, fig. 8)<sup>4</sup>.

Finds made of wood include notably a rudder (Pl. 3, fig. 9),<sup>5</sup> a comb (Pl. 3, fig. 10),<sup>6</sup> and a writing instruments box (Pl. 3, fig. 11)<sup>7</sup> (Soedewo et al. 2021, 140-142).

A rather large number of sherds from glazed earthenware made in the Middle East have been recovered, including fragments of pots with internal and external turquoise green glaze decorated with a rope motif in relief around the neck (Pl. 3, fig. 12). Similar sherds were found at the Sharma site (before the 11th c. CE) in Yemen (Rougeulle 2005, pp. 226-27 in Priestman 2013, p. 555). Petrographic analyses of similar sherds collected at the Siraf site indicate a production in the Basra region in southern Iraq (Mason & Keall 1991, pp. 52-53, 57 in Priestman 2013, p. 556). This origin is confirmed by the analysis of sherds collected during surveys in the Deh Luran valley (Hill, Speakman & Glascock 2004, p. 597 in Priestman 2013, p. 556).

The finds also include Chinese ceramics shards: pots, bowls, basins and *kendis*. It is necessary to emphasize here the presence of ceramics from the Tang Dynasty period, in particular Changsha shards (Pl. 3, fig. 13), a production dating back to early 9th century CE at least (Yang 2004, p. 466).

Some of these chance finds (wood, fruit, cord, ivory) have been submitted to radiocarbon dating in various laboratories (see Table 1).

2. Dirham from the Middle-East (w. 4 g, diam. 2.5 cm). An XRF analysis indicates the presence of silver (89.58%) and copper (4.27%).

3. Diam. 85 mm, h. 57 mm. This type of tripod has been found in the Java Sea, precisely in the cargo of the Cirebon wreck (late 10th c. CE)(Utomo 2008, p. 69), and of the Intan wreck (10th c. CE) (Harkantiningsih 2013, p. 91).

4. L. 105 mm, w. 70 mm, h. 70 mm. This lamp consists of two parts: a heart-shaped container and a suspension element representing a prancing tricorn animal.

5. L. 400 cm, w. 47 cm, th. 4 cm.

6. L. 76 mm, w. 42 mm, th. 8 mm.

7. L. 30 cm, w. 7 cm, h. 6 cm.

Material	BRIN ident.	Laboratory	Lab. Ident.	Result (BP)	Cal. date CE (2 sigmas)	Probability
Inscribed wood pieces	-	<i>Beta Analytic Miami, Florida, USA</i>	Beta 570473	1260 ± 30 BP	668–779	>85%
Pinang ( <i>Areca catechu</i> )	BGL/TP2/P/Nt	<i>RDL, The University of Waikato, NZ</i>	Wk 52692	1317 ± 17 BP	658–711	95.4%
Pen box (wood)	BGL/PA/P/WT	<i>idem</i>	Wk 52700	1322 ± 17 BP	656–695	95.4%
Weaving tool (wood)	BGL/PA/P/KT	<i>idem</i>	Wk 52701	1306 ± 18 BP	660–710	95.4%
Small cord (palm fibres – <i>ijuk</i> )	BGL/PA/P/SF	<i>idem</i>	Wk 52702	1231 ± 16 BP	700–740	95.4%
Wood with drilled hole	BGL/PA/P/KB	<i>idem</i>	Wk 52703	1310 ± 17 BP	661–714	95.4%
Comb (wood)	BGL/PA/P/CW	<i>idem</i>	Wk 52704	1481 ± 17 BP	548–624	95.4%
Elephant tusk	BGL/PA/P/Gd	<i>idem</i>	Wk 57497	1734 ± 15 BP	314–382	95.4%
Rudder (wood)	BGL/PA/P/KK	<i>idem</i>	Wk 57498	1325 ± 14 BP	656–687	95.4%

Table 1 – Radiocarbon dates of Bongal site chance finds

## Surveys and Archaeological Excavations

The archaeological potential of the Bongal site has been assessed through observation of the ground surface around the gold panning pits on the one hand, and by carrying out an underwater survey on the other. Examination of the backfill from four pits yielded various fragments of objects (ceramics, earthenware, glass), while underwater survey provided disappointing results so far without managing to spot traces of ancient occupation.

It is therefore around the gold panning pits that the site shows the most obvious potential for excavations. It is a marshy tidal area, today partly cultivated with rubber and oil palm trees. Evidence of ancient occupation were also detected on the slopes of Bongal Hill, especially concentrations of stones, which may represent remains of old built structures.

Following this phase of survey, 30 trenches were opened during campaigns undertaken in 2021 and 2022 (Pl. 4, figs. 14, 15). Their dimensions vary: 2 m × 2 m, 2 m × 6 m, 4 m × 4 m, and 6 m × 4 m. Large variations also occur as regards their depth (0.75 m to 3.25 m) and their topographical context (slopes of the hill<sup>8</sup> and lowland zone<sup>9</sup>) (see Table 2).

8. TP-3, TP-9, TP-10, TP-11, TP-12, TP-13, TP-14, TP-15, TP-16, TP-17, TP-18, TP-19, TP-20, TP-21, TP-22, TP-23, TP-24, TP-25, TP-26, TP-27, TP-28.

9. TP-1, TP-2, TP-4, TP-5, TP-6, TP-7, TP-8, TP-29, TP-30.

Area	Number of trenches	Surface area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Excavated volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
Lowland	9	144	324
Hill	21	252	182.3
Total	30	396	506.3

**Table 2** – Excavation area and volumes excavated at Bongal (2021-2022 seasons)

The stratigraphy of trench TP-2 constitutes a good example of the lowland stratigraphy at Bongal site (Pl. 5, fig. 16). The deposits accumulated through a sedimentation process generated by the Batang Lumut and Pinangsori rivers upstream to the mouth of the Lumut River. This process, which lasted several centuries, covered the ancient traces of human occupation which are mainly found in layer no. 4 of this trench. This layer (10 YR 4/1 - dark gray), rich in organic materials, some of which have been submitted to radiocarbon dating, is therefore located in a humid alluvial zone sensitive to both the effects of fluvial sedimentation and tides.

The stratigraphy of the trenches located on the hilly part of Bongal differs from that of the alluvial zone. Trench TP-27, excavated on a hill known to locals as Bomban Hill, is a good example for this area (Pl. 5, fig. 17). Here, the anthropic levels appear from layer no. 2 (th. 30–60 cm), containing shards of glass, earthenware and ceramics dated 18th–20th centuries. The older archaeological remains appear in layer no. 3, which reveals a combination of andesitic and basaltic boulders together with greenish-yellow silt intrusions. The finds in this layer include Chinese ceramics dated to the 10th century CE (Yue, Five Dynasties), a dating corroborated by radiocarbon dates obtained on the slopes of Bongal Hill, precisely on charcoal found in a terracotta pot together with glass, stone, and earthenware beads (TP-11 trench, depth: 125 cm, dating: 918–962 CE) (see Table 3).

Material	Depth (cm)	BRIN ident.	Laboratory	Lab. Ident.	Result (BP)	Cal. date CE (2 sigmas)	Probability
Resin	300–325	BGL/TP2/13/Rs	<i>RDL, The University of Waikato, NZ</i>	WK-52693	1241 ± 17	687–754	95.4 %
Wood	300–325	BGL/TP2/13/Wd	<i>idem</i>	WK-52694	1299 ± 17	665–720	95.4 %
<i>Nibung (Oncosperma tigillarum)</i>	250–275	BGL/TP2/11/Nb	<i>idem</i>	WK-52695	1212 ± 18	768–882	95.4 %
Resin	250–275	BGL/TP2/11/Rn	<i>idem</i>	WK-52696	1205 ± 18	770–884	95.4 %

(Table 3, continued on next page)

Material	Depth (cm)	BRIN ident.	Laboratory	Lab. Ident.	Result (BP)	Cal. date CE (2 sigmas)	Probability
Candlenut shell ( <i>Aleurites moluccanus</i> )	175–200	BGL/TP5/8/CN	<i>idem</i>	WK-52698	1122 ± 17	889–974	95.4 %
Small cord fragt ( <i>Arenga pinnata</i> )	175–200	BGL/TP5/8/FS	<i>idem</i>	WK-52699	1137 ± 19	868–979	95.4 %
Wooden dowel	225–250	BGL/TP8/10/Pk	<i>idem</i>	WK-57499	1199 ± 14	798–883	95.4 %
Charcoal	100–125	BGL/TP11/5/Ar	<i>idem</i>	Wk-57500	1155 ± 13	918–962	95.4 %
Small cord (palm fibres – <i>ijuk</i> ) ( <i>Arenga pinnata</i> )	150–175	BGL/TP30/7/Fb	<i>idem</i>	Wk-57502	1162 ± 14	826–897	95.4 %

Table 3 – Radiocarbon dates of Bongal site excavation finds (2021–2022)

## Main Results

The quantity and diversity of archaeological material uncovered during the 2021–2022 excavations seasons reflect the participation of residents in ancient trade networks covering Eastern Asia, South Asia and the Middle East (see Table 4).

	Coarse earthenware sherds	Fine-tempered earthenware sherds/glazed sherds	Stoneware & porcelain sherds	Glassware shards	Glass beads	Stone beads	Semi-precious stones
<b>Nb.</b>	3.027	287	53	580	122	152	49
<b>W. (kg)</b>	24.47	4.68	6.40	3.93	0.03	0.09	0.01

Table 4 – Main categories of archaeological material from excavations at Bongal (2021–2022 seasons)

### a) Glassware

A selection of finds among the 580 glassware shards found in the Bongal excavations are described below:

1.— Fragment of oval bottle with an elongated neck (pl. 6, fig. 18). Found in the TP-8 trench, spit 11, depth 275 cm. Transparent dark blue. The remaining part includes mouth, neck and part of the body. Rim diam., 10 mm; h. 40 mm; th. 2 mm. No trace of decoration.

*Ref.*

– Cirebon Wreck, Java Sea (Needell 2018, pl. 4 p. 106, cat. 40–43; Utomo (ed.) 2008, p. 58). Shipwreck dated 10th c. CE based on the

presence of Tang stoneware and porcelain (Utomo (ed.) 2008, p. 82; Needell 2018, p. 99).

2. — Vial with square section and flattened bottom (Pl. 6, fig. 19). Found in TP-30 trench, spit 5, depth 125 cm. Transparent purple. Piece practically complete after reassembly. Rim diam., 10 mm; h. 48 mm; th. 3 mm. No trace of decoration. Date: same as above.

*Ref.*

– Cirebon Wreck, Java Sea (Needell 2018, fig. 11 p. 78, pl. 6 p. 108, cat. 64).

– White Mosque, Ramla site (Gorin-Rosen 2010, p. 230 pl. 10.5. no. 4 and 7).

3. — Fragment of bottle (Pl. 6, fig. 20). Found in TP-5 trench, spit 8, depth 200 cm. Light green. The remaining part includes mouth, neck and a small part of the body. Rim diam., 40 mm; h. 37 mm; th. 3 mm. No trace of decoration. Two radiocarbon dates obtained in the same context suggest a late 9th–late 10th century CE dating (cf. Table 3: candlenut shell, small cord frag.).

*Ref.*

– Barus – Lobu Tua (Guillot et al. 2008, fig. 15 pp. 232-233). Guillot dates this piece to the 10th–early 11th century CE by comparison with finds uncovered in Nishapur (Iran) and in the Serçe Limani shipwreck (Turkey).

4. — Fragment of base of beaker or cylindrical cup (pl. 6, fig. 21). Found in TP-2 trench, spit 8, depth 200 cm. Colorless transparent. Base diam., 61 mm; h. 42 mm; th. 4 mm. No trace of decoration.

*Ref.*

– Barus – Lobu Tua (Guillot & Wibisono 2014, fig. 3 pp. 223-224; Guillot et al. 2008, fig. 8 p. 226).

– Cirebon Wreck, Java Sea (Needell 2018, pl. 9 p. 111, cat. 90-92; Utomo 2008, p. 55, figs 58a-58b).

## **b) Beads**

The 2021-2022 Bongal excavations have yielded 276 beads, including 152 stone beads, 122 glass beads, and two earthenware beads.

1.— Among the glass beads, the presence of “gold-glass” beads (diam. 5-9 mm), composed of two layers of glass with gold foil between them, should be noted (Pl. 6, fig. 22). They were found in a terracotta pot in TP-11 trench (spit 5; depth 125 cm) together with stone beads, fragments of gold leaf, some semi-precious stones and charcoal (dated 918-962 CE, see Table 3).

*Ref.*

– Pangkung Paruk, Bali. First c.–4th c. CE (Calo et al. 2020, p. 115).

- Air Sugihan, South Sumatra (Tim Penelitian 2011, p. 35; Tim Penelitian 2013, ph. 27 p. 45).
- Ao Yai (south Myanmar), dated first c.–4th c. CE (Lankton & Gratuze 2019, fig. 3 p. 74).
- Berenike (Egypt). Dated first c.–6th c. CE (Then-Obluska 2015, p. 753).
- Saï (Soudan). Dated first century CE (Then-Obluska 2016, pp. 710–711, 715).
- Komani (Albania). The glass compositional analysis suggests a production in Mesopotamia (9th–10th c. CE) (Neri et al. 2018, p. 7).

2. — TP-11 trench (spit 5; depth 125 cm) also yielded “silver-glass” beads (diam. 3–9 mm), following the same technique as the “gold-glass” beads described above (Pl. 6, fig. 23). The suggested date (10th c. CE) for these beads is that of the charcoal found in the same context and mentioned above.

*Ref.*

- Komani (Albania). The glass compositional analysis suggests a production in Mesopotamia (9th–10th c. CE) (Neri et al. 2018, p. 7).
- Quseir Al-Qadim (Egypt). Dated first c.–3rd c. CE or 13th–14th c. CE (Then-Obluska & Dussubieux 2016, fig. 15 p. 98).

3. — The same terracotta pot mentioned above, found in TP-11 trench (spit 5; depth 125 cm), contained two polygonal Tuscan green earthenware beads (9 mm x 4 mm) (Pl. 6, fig. 24). The suggested date (10th c. CE) for these beads is that of the charcoal found in the same context and mentioned above.

*Ref.*

- Pangkung Paruk, Bali (Yuliati 2012, p. 16).
- Siraf and Nishapur (Persia). This type of bead has been found in large numbers on both sites during the Islamic period (respectively 11.6% and 20.3% of all the uncovered beads), continuing a tradition of production in ancient Persia (Francis Jr. 1987, p. 4).

### ***c) Gems and faience jewel***

The 2021–2022 Bongal excavations revealed 32 gems and one earthenware jewel in the TP-5 and TP-11 trenches. Gems include turquoise, amethysts, and rock crystals. As an example, we mention a transparent rock crystal (Pl. 6, fig. 25) (diam. 16 mm, th. 11 mm) found in TP-11, spit 6, depth 150 cm; a turquoise (Pl. 6, fig. 26) found in the same spit (diam. 6 mm, th. 3 mm), whose color suggests an origin in the vicinity of Nishapur (Persia) (See Cook & Kirk 2018, p. 195); an amethyst (Pl. 6, fig. 27) found in TP-11, spit 7, depth 175 cm (diam. 8 mm, th. 3 mm). The broken earthenware jewel (Pl. 6, fig. 28), found in the same spit as the previous find, shows an ash gray fabric covered with a Tuscan green glaze (diam. 8 mm, th. 4 mm).

#### d) Metal and alloy finds

The 2021-2022 seasons of excavation at Bongal yielded more than 30 metal finds, which have been submitted to XRF analysis. Two main categories could therefore be determined: monometallic artifacts (silver, copper, tin, lead) and artifacts made of copper alloys.

As an example, we mention:

1.— A mirror fragment (pl. 7, fig. 29), found in TP-8 trench, spit 10, depth 200 cm (Table 5). The XRF analysis indicates a copper alloy, while the presence of iron (21.64%) reflects to the strong corrosion of the object.

2. — A whole eyed needle (Pl. 7, fig. 30), found in TP-2 trench, spit 11, depth 225 cm (Table 5). Made of copper alloy, it is obviously a sewing instrument.

3. — Three gilded fragments of plates bearing an Arabic inscription in black colour (Pl. 7, fig. 31: upper left,  $7.7 \times 7.1 \times 0.2$  cm, 10 g; upper right,  $7.4 \times 3.2 \times 0.2$  cm, 2 g; bottom,  $9 \times 3.5 \times 0.2$  cm, 7 g), found in TP-8 trench, spit 11, depth 225 cm. The copper alloy of the body of the plates differs from that of the inscriptions (Table 5).

Find	Weight (g)	size	Cu (%)	Sn (%)	Zn (%)
Mirror frag.	21	5.2 x 3 cm	42.18	25.22	
Needle	2	length 6.7 cm	31.88	19.58	
3 inscribed frag. (body)	See text	See text	82.94		13.66
3 inscribed frag. (inscr.)	-	-	64.26	10.36	

**Table 5** — XRF analyses on five copper alloy artefacts from Bongal (2021-2022)

#### e) Earthenware

Pottery sherds constitute the most abundant archaeological material uncovered in the 2021-2022 Bongal excavations, precisely 3,027 sherds for a total weight close to 25 kg. The reassembly (at least partially) of several vessels sheds light on the variety of earthenware used on the site. Three partially reconstructed vessels are described below:

1.— Carinated cooking pot (Pl. 7, figs. 32a, 32b), found in TP-30 trench, spits 6 and 7 (mouth diam. 29 cm, h. 13 cm). Almost half of the container managed to be reassembled (w. 530 g). Externally projecting rim and rounded base. Rim and body decorated with concentric lines. The body of the pot is adorned with a concentric ring whose function was probably to hold the cooking pot on the stove.

2. — Carinated cooking pot (Pl. 7, fig. 33), found in TP-8 trench, spit 11 (mouth diam. 22 cm; body diam., ca. 25 cm). The base is missing but was probably rather shallow. Abundant traces of soot on the exterior. Decorated with parallel vertical lines all over the shoulder.

3. — Plate (Pl. 7, figs. 34a, 34b), found in TP-2 trench, spit 12 (diam. 28 cm, h. 5 cm, th. 13 mm). Approximately 70% of the vessel managed to be reassembled (w. 619 g). The interior of the plate is decorated with concentric lines on the rim and in the centre. This type of plate has been identified in Barus-Lobu Tua, also in South India, as well as in Sri Lanka (Guillot et al. 2008, p. 92).

### f) Chinese Stoneware & Porcelain

The 2021-2022 excavations at the Bongal site yielded 53 stoneware and porcelain shards for a total weight of 6.4 kg.<sup>10</sup> The major types identified (Yue, Xing, Changsa) are dated from the Tang Dynasty period to the Five Dynasties period. Several examples belonging to each of these major categories are described below:

1.— Two bowl fragments found in TP-8 trench, spit 11 (Pl. 8, figs. 35a, 35b), and in TP-25 (Pl. 8, figs. 36a, 36b). Gray body, olive glaze, spur marks on the interior of the base and on the foot ring. Yue kilns, Zhejiang Province, 10th c. CE. These Yue productions, especially from the Shanglinhu region, represent a link between the productions of the Tang period and those of the Five Dynasties period (Valenstein 1989, p. 79).

*Ref.*

– Barus – Lobu Tua, North Sumatra (Dupoizat 2008, pp. 104-106)

– Si Pamutung, North Sumatra (Dupoizat 2014, p. 284)

2. — Fragment of bowl with white fabric and white glaze (Pl. 8, figs. 37a, 37b), found in TP-2 trench, spit 10, depth 250 cm. Low foot ring, no decoration. Xing kilns. Dated first half of 9th c. CE.

*Ref.*

– Belitung Wreck (Krahl 2004, pp. 304-305).

3. — Mouth shard of bottle/*kendi*/ewer with white fabric and white glaze (Pl. 8, figs. 38a, 38b), found in TP-8 trench, spit 11, depth 275 cm. Xing kilns.

4. — Two fragments of bowls found in TP-7 trench, spit 8, depth 200 cm (Pl. 8, figs. 39a, 39b). The rim fragment (left) shows a decoration of petals (at least four) (Yang 2004, pp. 512-513). The interior of the base (right) shows a

<sup>10</sup> Trenches TP-1, TP-2, TP-3, TP-5, TP-7, TP-8.



decoration of leaves/foilage similar to that of vessels found in the cargo of the Belitung wreck (Yang 2004, pp. 510-511). Changsha kilns, dated 9th c. CE, Tang Dynasty.

### g) Middle Eastern glazed earthenware

The 2021-2022 excavations at the Bongal site yielded a number of Middle Eastern glazed earthenware sherds. Several examples are described below:

1.— Seven fragments, including three base fragments, found in TP-2 trench, spit 12 (Pl. 9, figs. 40a, 40b). Two radiocarbon datings carried out on finds from the same context (Table 3: *nibung* - WK-52695, and resin - WK-52696) yielded the same time bracket (mid-8th–late 9th c. CE). This type of vessel is similar to a production from southern Iran, although dated a little later (10th–12th c. CE).

*Ref.*

– Sirjan site, South Iran, 10th-11th c. CE (Priestman 2013, pp. 600–602, 700, pl. 104 SPW.YB).

2. — Three three-coloured (green, brown, yellow) wall fragments found in TP-2 trench, spit 12 (Pl. 9, figs. 41a, 41b). The suggested date (mid-8th–late 9th c. CE) is based on both radiocarbon dates mentioned above.

*Ref.*

– Priestman 2013, p. 695, Pl. 76 OPAQ.PS. These fragments, dated 9th–10th c. CE, are supposed to belong to bowls or jars produced in south Iraq (*ibid.* 565-566).

### h) Worked wood

The chance finds, as well as the material uncovered during the systematic excavations conducted on the Bongal site, come from an area formerly located on the bank of a bay (Pl. 9, fig. 42). Today this area constitutes an alluvial plain on both banks of the Lumut river. In this context, the former residents of Bongal occupied dwellings in a wetland located at the foot of the hill.

Remains of these dwellings are represented by fragments of worked *nibung*, whether trunks cut lengthwise or posts found in four trenches.<sup>11</sup>

In TP-2 trench, this type of remains appears at a depth of 210 cm (Pl. 10, fig. 43), in a dark reddish brown sediment (5 YR 3/3). Finds also include hardwoods with sharpened tips, fragments of hardwood posts (diam. 10–12 cm), *nibung* planks (width 12–16 cm), some of which still linked to *nibung* posts in the northeast corner. The same context yielded sherds of

<sup>11</sup>. TP-2 (6 × 2 m), TP-4 (4 × 4 m), TP-8 (4 × 4 m), TP-30 (6 × 4 m).

earthenware, shards of stoneware, porcelain, and glass, as well as small nut shells, palm fibres (*ijuk*), and coconut shells.

Excavations in TP-4 trench revealed *nibung* planks arranged horizontally and oriented east-west from a depth of some 150 cm. The same context yielded fragments of rotten bamboo. The excavation of the following spit revealed the presence of *nibung* in context with fragments of *ijuk* cords and candlenut shells.

In TP-8 trench, *nibung* posts appear at a depth of some 220 cm, together with fragments of *nibung* planks, fragments of *ijuk* cords, coconut shells, small nut shells and earthenware shards.

In TP-30 trench, *nibung* posts appear at a depth of some 150 cm, together with fragments of *nibung* planks (width, 12—15 cm) (Pl. 10, fig. 44), concentrated in the northwest part of the trench. The remaining part of the trench is devoid of *nibung* posts in this spit. The same trench also yielded earthenware sherds, stoneware and porcelain shards, glass shards, as well as small nut shells.

### **i) Resins**

The various activities of the former residents of Bongal were mainly related to access to various commodities available in the immediate environment of the site, or brought from other islands. Four trenches<sup>12</sup> yielded fragments of resins of various colors (yellowish, brown, gray, orange, reddish, even golden) belonging to commodities available in the vicinity of Bongal.

Three resin samples have been submitted to GC-MS (Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry) analysis for identification. Results show that the samples from trenches TP-2 and TP-8 are camphor (*Dryobalanops sumatranensis*), while the sample from TP-10 trench is meranti resin (*Shorea spp.*).

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**12.** TP-2, TP-7, TP-8, TP-10.

No.	Trench	Spit (Depth)	Identif.	Qty	weight (g)	Dating
1	TP-2	11 (275 cm)	-	1	1	770-890 EC cal (95.4%)
2	TP-2	12 (300 cm)	Camphor	1	25	-
3	TP-7	5 (125 cm)	-	1	6	-
4	TP-7	6 (150 cm)	-	1	2	-
5	TP-7	6 (150 cm)	-	1	72	-
6	TP-7	7 (175 cm)	-	4	6	-
7	TP-7	8 (200 cm)	-	6	124	-
8	TP-7	8 (200 cm)	-	7	23	-
9	TP-8	11 (275 cm)	Camphor	34	334	-
10	TP-10	2 (50 cm)	-	14	40	-
11	TP-10	3 (75 cm)	Meranti	1	<1	-
<b>Total</b>				<b>71</b>	<b>633</b>	

Table 6 — Resin fragments uncovered in the Bongal excavations (2021-2022)

## j) Nuts and seeds

Nuts and seeds figure also among the finds from the 2021-2022 Bongal excavations. These remains include spices leftover: nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*),<sup>13</sup> candlenuts (*Aleurites moluccanus*),<sup>14</sup> cardamom (*Amomum compactum*)<sup>15</sup> (Pl. 10, figs. 45a, 45b, 45c), and the locally named *keluwak/kepahyang/pucung* (*Pangium edule*)<sup>16</sup> (Pl. 10, figs. 46a, 46b). Candlenut remains have been reported from several terrestrial archaeological sites (cf. Loyang Mendale in Central Aceh (Wiradnyana & Setiawan 2011, p. 62)), as well as in the cargo of the Intan Wreck in the Java Sea (Harkantiningsih 2013, p. 94; Flecker 2002, p. 92).

Based on the various datings of chance finds made by locals, we suggest that the occupation of the Bongal site could have started in the 4th century CE<sup>17</sup> and continued until the 10th century CE. During these six centuries, Bongal was a port visited by sailors and traders from the Archipelago and from more distant regions in Asia. The site was then on the shore of a small bay which formed the mouth of the Lumut (PinangSORI) river and was connected to Tapanuli Bay on the west coast of North Sumatra, the same coastal region as the ancient settlement sites of Barus.

13. Found in TP-6, spit 6, depth 150 cm.

14. Found in TP-2, spit 8, depth 200 cm.

15. Found in TP-7, spit 8, depth 200 cm.

16. Found in TP-5, spit 8, depth 200 cm.

17. See Table 1, radiocarbon date for the elephant tusk providing the earliest date.

These sailors and traders visited the bay of Tapanuli, and Bongal especially, in order to obtain commodities available there. Gold must be mentioned first, since the island was known as Suvarnadvipa in ancient Indian sources. In Bongal, it was alluvial gold obtained by panning in the small rivers flowing at the foot of Bongal Hill before to reach the Lumut river. Aromatic resins were another type of commodity important at the time and available locally, particularly camphor. At the time of the ancient occupation of Bongal, camphor trees (*Dryobalanops Sumatranensis*) did not only grow in the hinterland upstream of Barus, but were also found near the coast. As proof, until today, such trees can be observed on the slopes of the hills in the Bongal area.

The port of Bongal also interested sailors and traders for another reason. Indeed the excavations revealed not only the presence of Sumatran spices (candlenut, cardamom, *keluwak/kepahyang/pucung*), but also spices from other islands in the Archipelago (especially nutmeg from the Banda Archipelago in the Mollucas). Therefore the presence of nutmeg at this site on the west coast of Sumatra represents the oldest evidence in the Archipelago of its interoceanic trade.

The means of transport used in Bongal are represented by boat timbers found by gold washers (Pl. 10, fig. 47), boats showing protruding lugs carved out of the inner side of the planks (*tambuku*) for the frames to be lashed to the planks, following the ancient Southeast Asian tradition (Purnawibowo & Mochtar 2021, p. 109).

Sailors and traders brought various types of manufactured products from outside the Archipelago (Middle East, South Asia, China) to Bongal between the 6th and 10th centuries CE. Remains of these products provide indications regarding the integration of Bongal into Asian merchant networks.

Assuming that the occupation of Bongal started in the 4th century CE, its activity would therefore precede by five centuries the activity of Barus – Lobu Tua, the beginnings of which are attested in the 9th century CE. It is therefore possible to suggest that the discovery of the Bongal site answers Guillot's quest concerning the location of Pansur in the Batak chronicle, which presents Pansur as the settlement site prior to Lobu Tua (Guillot et al. 2008, p. 36). This Pansur or Fansur could therefore be found in the bay of Tapanuli, precisely in the current alluvial plain at the foot of the Bongal hills.

### **Tentative conclusion and perspectives**

Surveys and excavations carried out at the Bongal site in 2021-2022 revealed the existence of an ancient settlement site in the bay of Sibolga/Tapanuli to be added to the Barus settlement sites as regards the west coast of North Sumatra. The archaeological data collected at Bongal so far suggest the existence of a settlement site taking part in global trade between the 4th and 10th c. CE. The end of the occupation of Bongal would coincide with the beginnings of the occupation of Barus on the site of Lobu Tua, which flourished later.

On a general level, the Bongal site benefited from a privileged geographical position, being located in a bay suitable for the establishment of a natural port. The settlement occupied a wetland sensitive to the tides occurring in the bay. Dwellings were therefore built on *nibung* stilts. Apart from the settlement and the port areas at the foot of the hills, remains of stone structures on the slopes suggest the existence of an ancient place of worship. This general description of the Bongal site recalls that of the Berenike site (Egypt) in a bay on the western shore of the Red Sea.

So far, the absence of archaeological remains dated later than the 10th c. CE raises the question of the cause of the abandonment of the site. At this stage, it is possible to put forward two hypotheses: siltation due to heavy sedimentation or a natural disaster such as a tsunami. But attempting to find a definitive answer to this question will require more intensive research over a larger area. The Bongal sector, which was the subject of research until 2022 represents only a small part of a site whose estimated surface area exceeds 200 hectares, covering part of the Bongal hills as well as the alluvial plain which extends toward the Lumut river. Furthermore, according to people living in the village of Jagojago, the opposite bank of the Lumut River also yields sherds of pottery and ceramics.

Based on the amount of archaeological finds collected so far, the alluvial plain would have been occupied more intensively than the hill slopes, functioning as both a settlement and a port. This port activity is reflected through the discovery of boat timbers in the gold panning pits exploited by locals. In situ data on this aspect were still lacking by the end of the last campaign (November 2022), with gold washers explaining that they rebury the boat timbers they find. These indications lead us to believe that the vicinity of gold washing areas shelters remains of ancient port activities. Hopefully, future research will provide the opportunity to open trenches near these areas.

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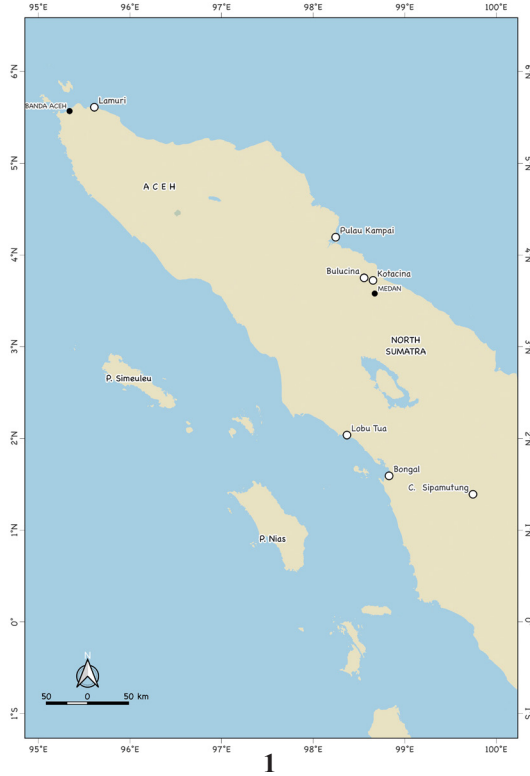
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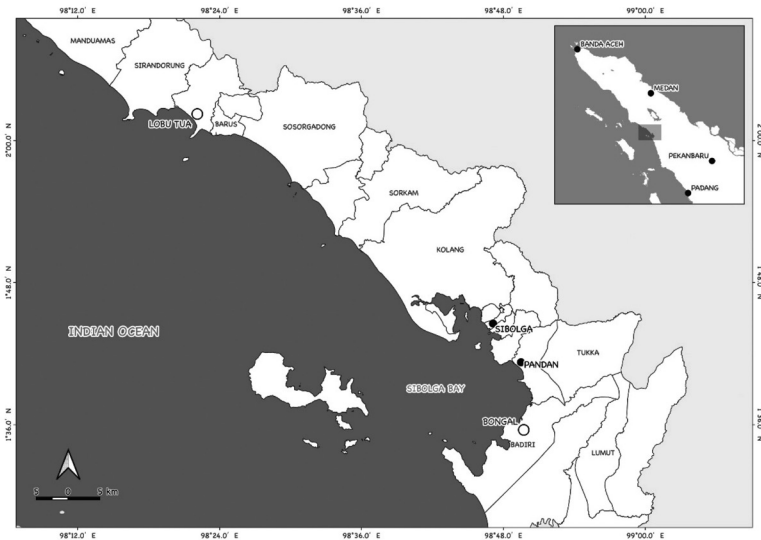
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Plate 1



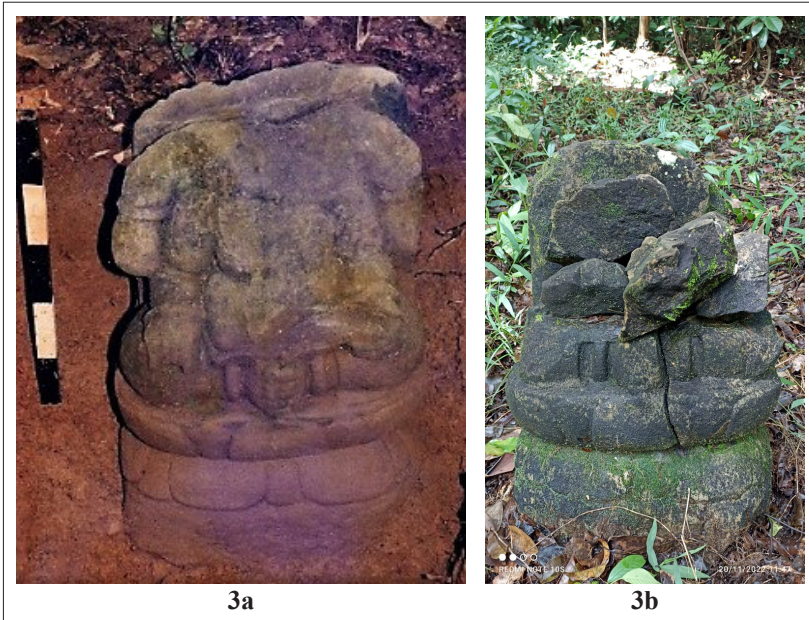
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Fig. 1 – Settlements sites prior to 12th c. CE in the northern half of Sumatra (Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2023)  
Fig. 2 – Settlement sites prior to 12th c. CE on the west coast of North Sumatra (Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2022)

## Plate 2



4



5

**Figs. 3a & 3b** – Condition of the Ganeśa statue found on Bongal Hill (2001, ph. L.P. Koestoro; 2021, ph. E. Soedewo) ; **Fig. 4** – Remains of wooden structures, gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2020) ; **Fig. 5** – Inscribed timber, Bongal (ph. Shinatria Adhityatama, 2022)

Plate 3



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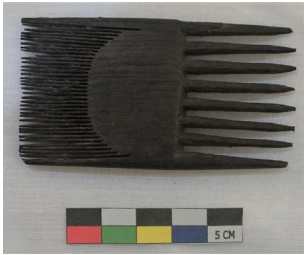
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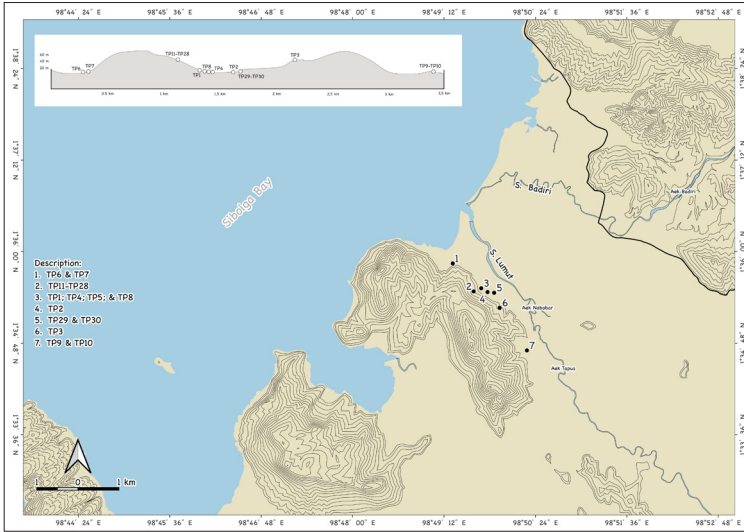


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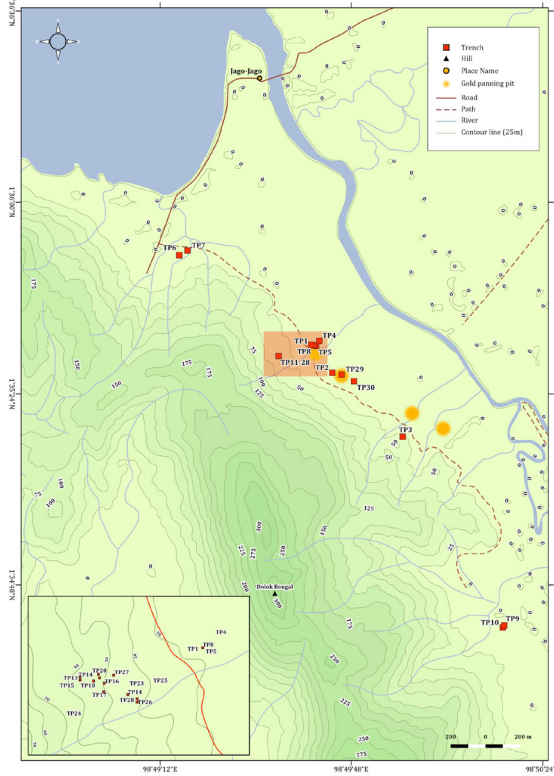
**Fig. 6** – Arab coin from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2022) ; **Fig. 7** – Circular tripod from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2020) ; **Fig. 8** – Oil lamp from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2020) ; **Fig. 9** – Rudder from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Shinatria Adhityatama, 2022) ; **Fig. 10** – Comb from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2021) ; **Fig. 11** – Writing instruments box from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2021) ; **Fig. 12** – Glazed earthenware from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2020) ; **Fig. 13** – Changsha ware from gold panning pit, Bongal (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2020)



### Plate 4



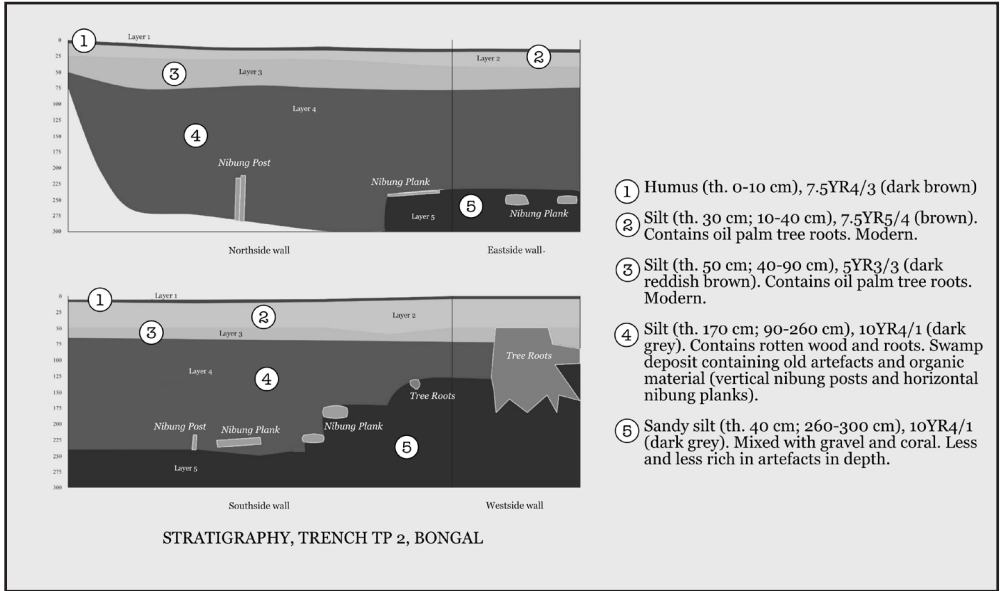
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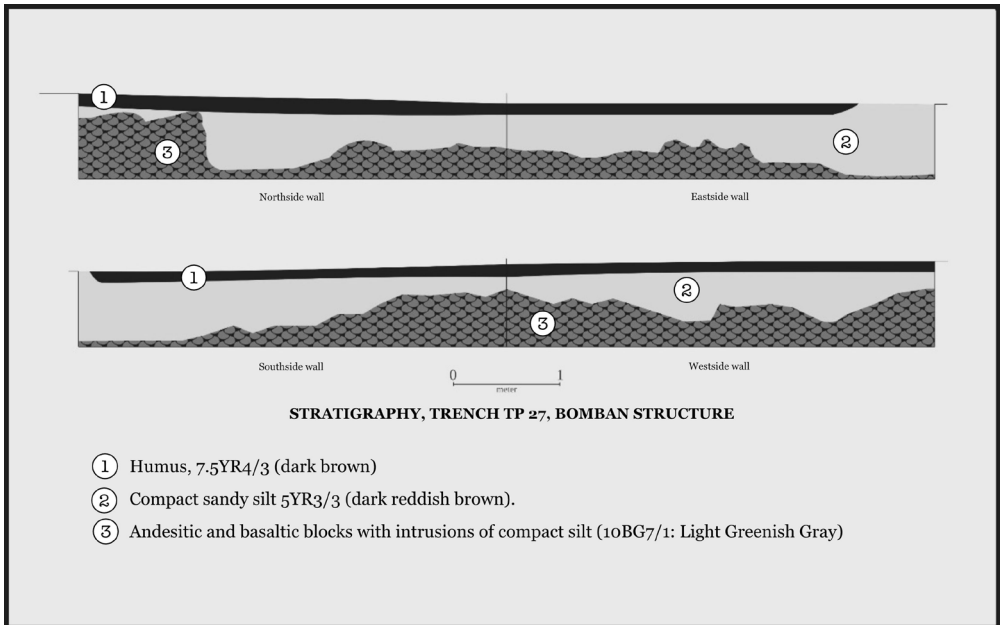
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Fig. 14 – Survey and excavation area (2021-2022), Bongal (Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2022)  
Fig. 15 – Excavated trenches and gold panning pits, Bongal (Andri Restiyadi, 2022)

Plate 5



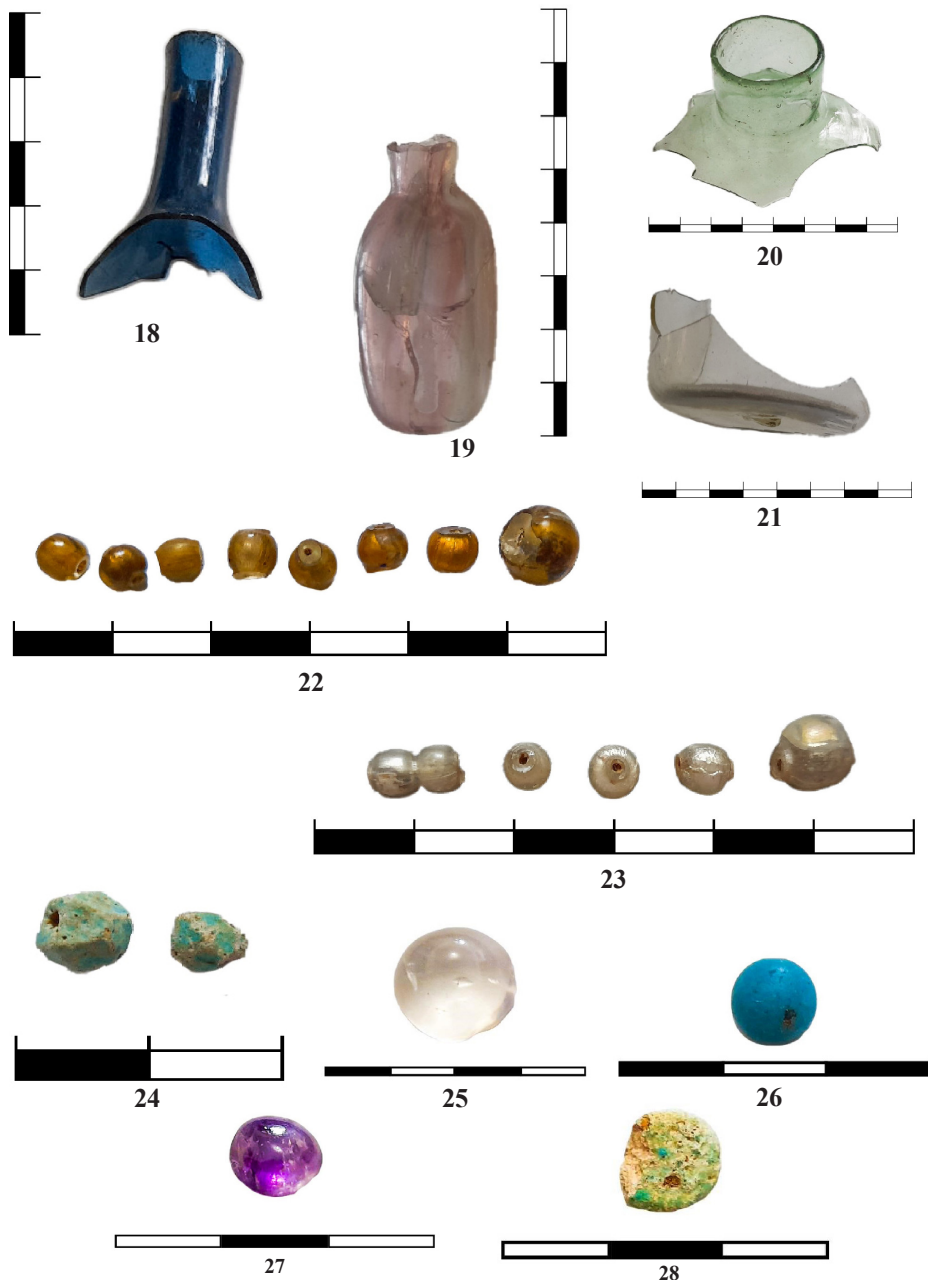
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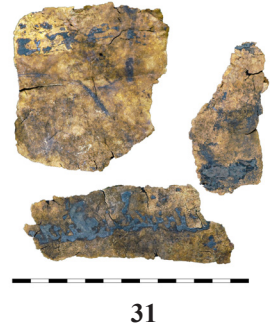
Fig. 16 – Stratigraphy of TP-2 trench, Bongal (Andri Restiyadi & Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2021, 2023)  
 Fig. 17 – Stratigraphy of TP-27 trench, Bongal (Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2023)

## Plate 6



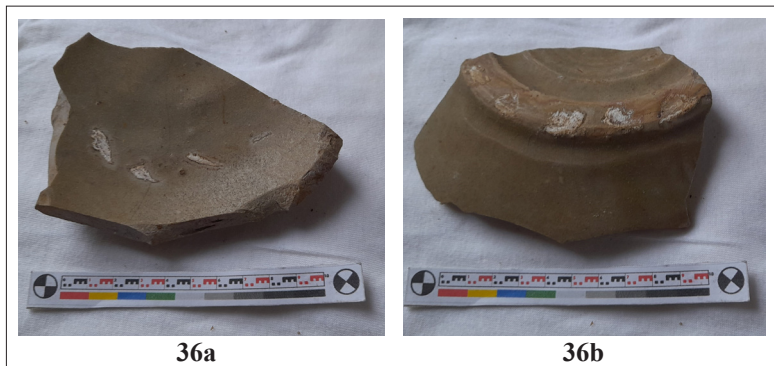
**Fig. 18** – Fragment of oval bottle, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 19** – Fragment of vial with square section, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 20** – Fragment of bottle, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 21** – Fragment of base of beaker or cylindrical cup, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 22** – “Gold-glass” beads, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 23** – “Silver-glass” beads, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 24** – Earthenware beads, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 25** – Rock crystal, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 26** – Turquoise, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 27** – Amethyst, Bongan excavations ; **Fig. 28** – Earthenware jewel, Bongan excavations (All photographs by Ery Soedewo & Amin Mualim, 2022)

Plate 7



**Fig. 29** – Mirror fragment, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo & Amin Mualim, 2022) ; **Fig. 30** – Whole eyed needle, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo & Amin Mualim, 2022) ; **Fig. 31** – Inscribed gilded fragments of plates, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo & Amin Mualim, 2022) ; **Figs. 32a & 32b** – Carinated cooking pot, Bongal excavations (ph. Fauzi Hendrawan & Lolita R.L. Tobing, 2022) ; **Fig. 33** – Carinated cooking pot, Bongal excavations (ph. Repelita Wahyu Oetomo, 2022) ; **Figs. 34a & 34b** – Plate, Bongal excavations (Ph. Ery Soedewo, 2022)

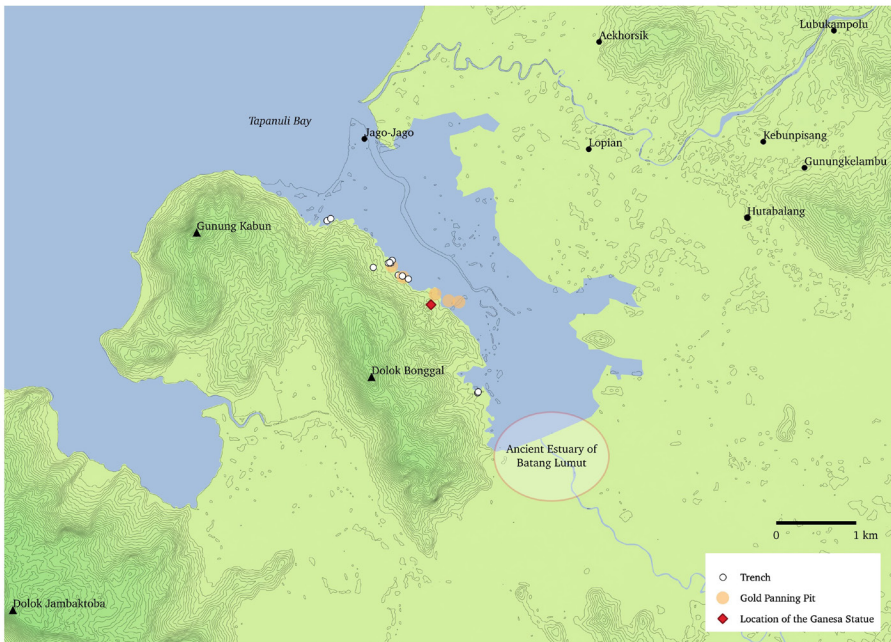
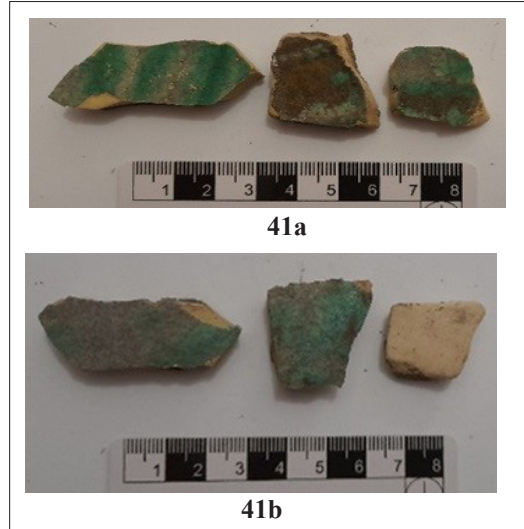
## Plate 8



**Figs. 35a-35b, 36a-36b** – Frag. of Yue bowls, Bongal excavations ; **Figs. 37a & 37b** – Frag. of Xing bowl, Bongal excavations ; **Figs. 38a & 38b** – Frag. of Xing bottle/*kendi*/ewer, Bongal excavations ; **Figs. 39a-39b** – Frag. of Changsha bowls (all photographs by Ery Soedewo, 2022)



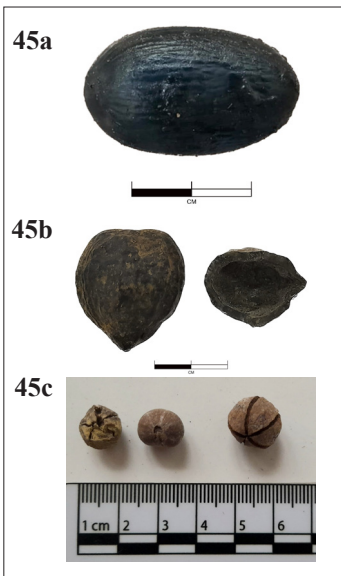
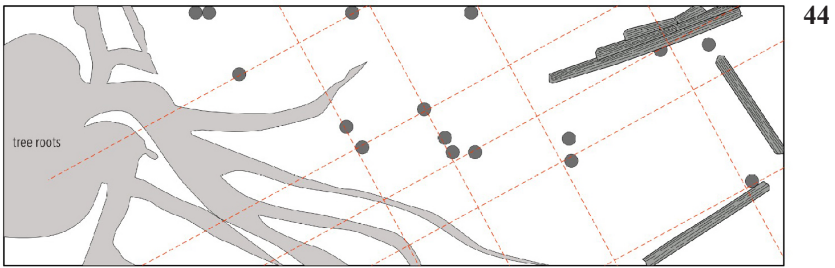
Plate 9



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Figs. 40a & 40b, 41a & 41b – Middle Eastern glazed earthenware, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2022) ; Fig. 42 – Schematic reconstruction of the Lumut Bay (7th c. CE), with positions of the archaeological trenches and gold panning pits (Taufiqurrahman Setiawan, 2022).

## Plate 10



**Fig. 43** – TP-2: Remains of *nibung* posts and planks, Bongal excavations (ph. Andri Restiyadi, 2021) ; **Fig. 44** – TP-2: Map of remains of *nibung* posts and planks, Bongal excavations (Andri Restiyadi, 2022) ; **Figs. 45a, 45b & 45c** – Remains of nutmeg, candlenut, cardamom, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2022) ; **Figs. 46a & 46b** – Remains of *keluwak/kepahyang/pucung*, Bongal excavations (ph. Ery Soedewo, 2022) ; **Fig. 47** – Boat timbers and rudder found by gold washers, Bongal (ph. Shinatria Adhityatama, 2022)

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YOHAN CHABOT<sup>d</sup>*

## The Ongoing Sungai Jaong Archaeological Project (2018-2024), Sarawak, Malaysia: Preliminary Results

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### Introduction

The ancient history of the northern coast of the Borneo Island remains largely unknown, especially for the period spanning the middle of the first to the middle of the second millennium CE. Two core areas have particularly attracted the attention of historians, archaeologists and epigraphists since the 1950s.

The first core area is the present Sultanate of Brunei, about which research has focused in particular on the analysis of Chinese sources,<sup>1</sup> the excavations

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**1.** For recent publications on this topic, see in particular Kurz (2011, 2013, 2014, 2014-2015).

of several archaeological sites,<sup>2</sup> a corpus of Islamic tombstones,<sup>3</sup> and local literature of a historical nature.<sup>4</sup>

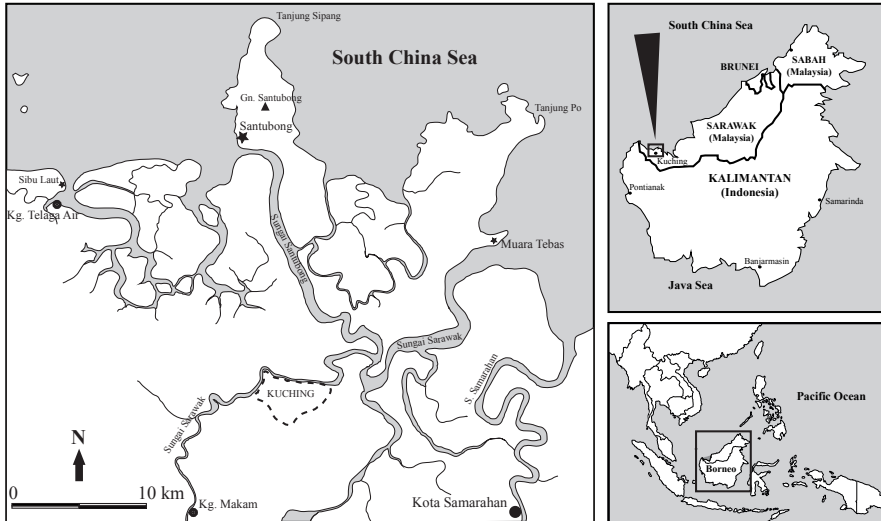


Fig. 1 – Sarawak River Delta map (D. Perret & Y. Chabot)

The second core area is the Sarawak River Delta (fig. 1). If chance finds have been reported there since the second half of the 19th century, it was actually from the 1950s that archaeological research revealed the existence of several sites of great historical value. Since the beginning of the 20th century, publications have referred to local literature, which could contribute to clarifying the ancient settlement history of the region.<sup>5</sup> It is this second pole which is the subject of this article, especially the Sungai Jaong site, where a

2. Here must be mentioned the very interesting site of Sungai Limau Manis excavated in 2002 (Karim bin Pengiran Haji Osman, ed., 2004). Without going into detail, it is appropriate to recall the articles relating to surveys and excavations published in the *Brunei Museum Journal* (launched in 1969), and in the *Sarawak Museum Journal*.

3. Regarding the tombstones of the period which interests us here, cf. notably Kalus & Guillot (2003-2004, 2006), Franke & Ch'en Tieh-Fan (1973), Chen Dasheng (1991), Kurz (2016).

4. Especially the texts *Syair Awang Semaun* (cf. Siti Hawa Haji Salleh 1994), *Silsilah Raja-Raja Berunai* (cf. Sweeney, ed., 1968), or *Batu Tarsilah*, which also concerns epigraphy (cf. M. Shariffuddin & Abdul Latiff bin Haji Ibrahim 1974).

5. The easiest sources to access being Everett & Hewit (1909), Harrisson (1949), Hill (1955), Harrisson (1970). Versions of the history of Datuk Merpati, a famous hero in the region, were first published in the 1980s: Abdul Razak Abang Medaan (1986), Mohammad Tahir Abdul Ghani (1989).

new phase of archaeological research has been undertaken recently. Here is offered a brief presentation of the fieldwork carried out between 2018 and 2023, as well as our main interim conclusions and prospects.

### **The main archaeological sites in the vicinity of the Santubong River mouth**

The region described as the Sarawak River Delta, which borders the South China Sea, stretches as the crow flies some 40 kilometres between Kampung Telaga Air in the west and the mouth of the Samarahan River in the east. Still as the crow flies, from the northwest to the northeast, this coastline is about fifteen to thirty kilometres of Kuching, the current capital of the State of Sarawak. About 120 kilometers long, the Sarawak River, which gives its name to the delta, has its source in the Upper Kapuas range and spreads over a basin of some 2,500 km<sup>2</sup>. The deltaic plain, covered with mangroves and *nipah* swamps, is criss-crossed by a network of rivers including seven mouths, among them that of the Sarawak River to the east of Kuching, and that of the Santubong River to its north, which flows into the South China Sea in front of the village of the same name. The hinterland is accessible through a relatively easy southern passage towards other watersheds on Borneo, including towards the Java Sea.

On the coastline, the mouth of the Santubong River hosts several sites, some of which have been surveyed and excavated intermittently between 1947 and 1966. They are located at the foot of Gunung Santubong (fig. 2). Culminating at an altitude of 810 m, this steep and rocky ancient sandstone massif dated to the Tertiary period, was certainly an important landmark for navigators in ancient times.



**Fig. 2** – Gunung Santubong (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2023)



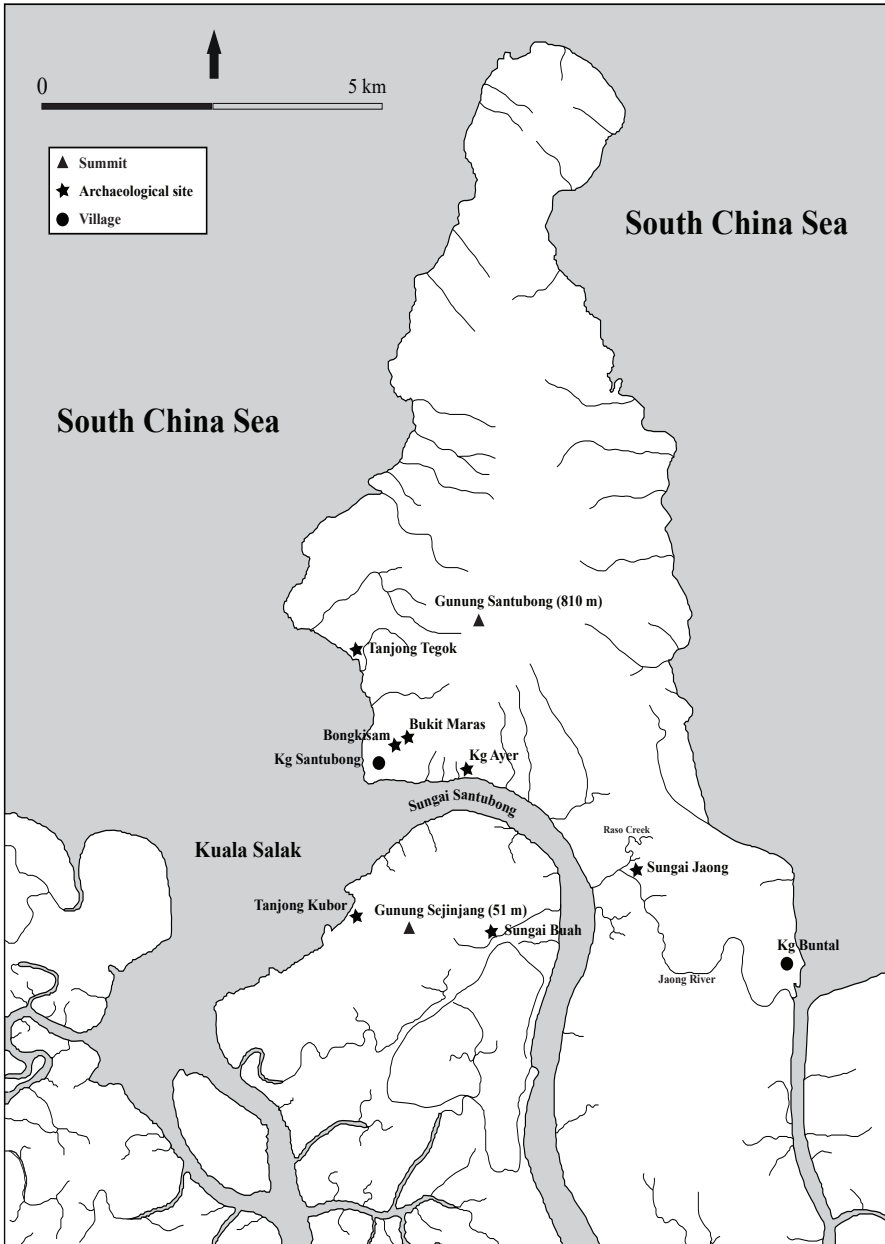


Fig. 3 – Sarawak River Delta map - archaeological sites (D. Perret)

On the right bank of the Santubong River, from upstream to downstream, these sites (fig. 3) are: Sungai Jaong (N 01° 43.015'; E 110° 20.688'), the site discussed in this article; Kampong Ayer (N 01° 43' 6.2"; E 110° 19' 30.8"),<sup>6</sup> Bongkisam (N 01° 43.150'; E 110° 19.398'), today situated within the village of Santubong; Bukit Maras (N 01° 43.142'; E 110° 20.688'), on the hillside above Bongkisam; the coastal cemetery of Tanjong Tegok to the northwest of Santubong. The sites are less numerous on the left bank: Sungai Buah and the coastal cemetery of Tanjong Kubor.

### **Tom Harrisson and the Sungai Jaong site**

The name associated with pioneering archaeological research in the Sarawak River Delta is that of Tom Harrisson. Born in Argentina in 1911,<sup>7</sup> Tom Harrisson began to make a name for himself in England in the late 1930s, first as an adventurer who had lived among cannibals, then as the founder of Mass-Observation, an organization that pioneered doing social surveys in England. During that decade, he also often appeared in the press and on the BBC radio and television on various subjects, including ornithology and ecology. Tom Harrisson was inducted into the British Army in 1942 and became involved in weekly broadcasting.

Joining Special Operations Executive (SOE) in 1944, he dropped by parachute in the middle of Borneo in March the following year. He had already organized a four-month expedition to explore Sarawak's inland flora and fauna in 1932, but this time the objective was entirely different. His mission was to set up an intelligence network to fight the Japanese with a few Australian officers and men, and prepare the invasion of the coast of northwest Borneo by an Australian Division. He went beyond his instructions by raising a thousand-man army of blowpiping *orang ulu* to join the fight.<sup>8</sup> In December 1945, when the war was effectively over in the middle of Borneo, Tom Harrisson moved back to the highlands to serve with the British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit (BBCAU). Back in England in September 1946, he was nominated by the colonial office to be curator of the Sarawak Museum and government ethnologist. He reached Kuching in June 1947.

From the start of this new position, Harrisson set himself among his objectives to shrink the gaps in knowledge about various fields regarding northern Borneo, including history and prehistory, despite having no training

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6. Considering that this is the site surveyed by Doherty et al. in March 2006 (cf. Doherty et al. 2007). While Doherty et al. do not mention the name of Kampong Ayer, just 40 years earlier Tom Harrisson conducted excavations there and provided indications on its location which fit with the information given by Doherty et al. (cf. Harrisson & O'Connor 1969a, pp. 8, 14, 30).

7. The following biographical elements are taken from Heimann (1997).

8. An experience recounted by Tom Harrisson himself in the fascinating *World within: a Borneo story* (1959).

in both fields. Criss-crossing Sarawak on foot, by boat, and from the air, he noticed that the Santubong area, in the Sarawak River Delta, looked promising, with the advantage of being relatively easily accessible from Kuching. Santubong is located some 22 kilometres away from Kuching, following the river, at the time within an hour by speedboat.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, the initially chance discovery of archaeological remains in the Santubong region, then their systematic search by locals, looking for gold ornaments in particular (mostly beads), attracted the attention of Europeans from the middle of the 19th century. This is how Rajah James Brooke is said to have gathered a real treasure, which disappeared when his palace was sacked by Chinese in 1857.



**Fig. 4** – The Batu Gambar rock-carving at Sungai Jaong (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2023)

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9. Harrisson 1970, p. 22.



Pottery and ceramic sherds, “broken crucibles”, “large quantities of black iron slag”, stone, glass and iron beads, glass bangles, silver ornaments, Chinese coins, and one small “Hindu image made of clay” figured among these “fragmentary relics”.<sup>10</sup> Harrison could not ignore the existence of these finds. Moreover, it is on the site of Sungai Jaong that, in 1886, a local rediscovered a unique relief carving of human type, almost life size, with hands and arms stretched out, on a dome-shaped sandstone boulder.<sup>11</sup>

It is in this context that at Sungai Jaong, Tom Harrison’s attention was first attracted by this sculpture, known as Batu Gambar (fig. 4), as well as by the high concentration of “iron slag and crucibles” nearby.<sup>12</sup>

A first trial trench was excavated in 1950, at the foot of this sculpture, which yielded notably stoneware and earthenware sherds, glass beads, and iron slag.<sup>13</sup> The discovery of iron slag led Harrison to carry out systematic pedestrian surveys using army mine detectors.<sup>14</sup> An arc of iron slag scatters, approximately three kilometres long, was thus uncovered between the village of Santubong and the Buntal Bay, on the opposite side of the island.<sup>15</sup> However, it was in Sungai Jaong, uninhabited at the time, that Harrison decided, in 1952, to carry out the first intensive excavation season in the delta.<sup>16</sup> It was followed by three other seasons of excavations on this same site in 1955, 1957, and 1966.

Harrison’s relatively numerous publications on his excavations in the Sarawak River Delta are devoided of plans of his Sungai Jaong excavations. It is by observing the current topography of the site that it is possible to figure out that these excavations (an area estimated at some 550 m<sup>2</sup>) were mainly concentrated on a single sector near the confluence of the Jaong River and the Raso Creek. As regards stratigraphy, he quickly dismissed the question: [stratigraphy] “heavily disturbed by ironworking related activities, by agricultural activities, by the root factor [...] slight, non-existent, or highly

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10. Everett & Hewit 1909, pp. 5-12.

11. Published for the first time in 1896 (Ling Roth 1896, vol. 2, p 280).

12. Harrison 1949, pp. 87-88.

13. Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, p. 5; Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, p. 277; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, p. 8.

The precise year of this first excavation is not specified in Harrison’s publications, but photographs of this fieldwork bearing the year 1950 are currently kept in the archives of the Sarawak Museum Department (Many thanks to Mrs Angelina Anak Barau, Exhibition Section, for having facilitated access to these documents).

14. In the 1950s, as Commandant of the Sarawak Special Constabulary, Harrison was therefore able to have local personnel trained in the use of such equipment (Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, p. 32).

15. Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 10, 28-30.

16. Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 5, 10, 27-29, 37-40.

complex through disturbance.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, no comprehensive inventory of the archaeological finds was published. Harrisson had no previous training or experience in archaeology and, according to Alastair Lamb (1977, p. 9), “he was willing to turn hand, spade and labour force to any archaeological goal, yet he gave relatively scant thought to the longer term problems of recording and publication.”<sup>18</sup> The three-volume final report (1969 and 1970), co-authored with Stanley J. O’Connor, is disconcerting, to say the least, being a mixture of partial statistics, typologies and thoughts written in a disorderly manner.<sup>19</sup>

These publications nevertheless have the merit of existing, and a very careful reading enable to extract a lot of interesting information and thoughts on the Sungai Jaong excavations in particular. Harrisson estimated the surface area of the iron slag distribution at around 36,000 m<sup>2</sup><sup>20</sup> and interpreted iron slag as residues from smelting process. He also suggested that the usable raw metal was broken up into small lumps for insertion into crucibles, crucibles then smashed to release refined “steel”. Iron ore crushing operations, hammering of the “bloom” extracted from the furnace, smashing of the crucibles, as well as metal shaping would have been done using stone tools found on the site (“hammerstones”, “waisted stones”).<sup>21</sup> But whole iron tools were seldom found in Sungai Jaong site in particular, and in the Sarawak River Delta sites in general.<sup>22</sup> What intrigued Harrisson the most was not having detected any remains of furnace or semi-finished product in his excavations. Moreover, he stated that no ancient written source (Chinese in particular) mentions such activity in the region at that time, and there was no general belief that there had been a past and extensive population in Sungai Jaong.<sup>23</sup>

This iron slag was mixed with fragments of clay cylinders, which Harrisson was inclined to interpret as crucibles, to which were added earthenware and

17. Harrisson & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 17, 34.

18. It was only during the last excavation season, that of 1966, that he invited Stanley O’Connor to join, a scholar in fact better known as an art historian than as an archaeologist (Harrisson 1967, p. 141; Harrisson & O’Connor 1969a, p. 6).

19. “This strange work, inflated and colloquial almost beyond the endurance of cis-Atlantic man, threatens to bring the craft of prehistoric archaeology into disrepute.” This is the reaction of William Watson (1971) in his review of the two volumes published in 1969. About the volume published in 1970, Ian Glover (1972) wrote: “[...] the organization appears to have developed out of random thought associations. Consequently, it is difficult to be certain what the authors’ main thesis is, and which data they think relevant to, or supporting such a thesis.”

20. Harrisson & O’Connor 1969a, p. 51; Harrisson & O’Connor 1970, p. 8.

21. Harrisson & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 26, 164, 167, 202; Harrisson & O’Connor 1969b, pp. 225, 238-240, 247, 330.

22. Harrisson & O’Connor 1969b, p. 225; Harrisson & O’Connor 1970, p. 140.

23. Harrisson 1967, p. 143; Harrisson & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 23, 68, 98; Harrisson & O’Connor 1969b, p. 225.

ceramic sherds, stone tools, fragments of iron tools, glass and stone beads, bangles, and gold objects.<sup>24</sup>

Based on the Chinese ceramics, that he identified as mostly “Tang Dynasty wares” (9th c., perhaps 8th c., or even 7th c.), Harrison interpreted Sungai Jaong as the oldest smelting site in the Sarawak River Delta.<sup>25</sup> He also suggested the existence of a burial area (600 m<sup>2</sup>), characterised in particular by gold objects, including breach-cut gold leaves, numerous glass beads, and whole small Chinese stoneware vessels.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, the clearing of the site revealed numerous rock carvings, including human figures, incised forms, geometrical shapes chipped out in relief, as well as “mostly fairly well-shaped parallelograms”.<sup>27</sup> For Harrison, this “extensive system of rock-carvings” was related to ironworking, the “burial sector”, and the small artefacts.<sup>28</sup>

Harrison was convinced that Sungai Jaong was occupied by indigenous peoples, and that ironworking activities, rock carvings, burials and small finds were all contemporaneous. For him, no doubt Sungai Jaong together with the other coastal sites in the Sarawak River Delta formed a major trade entrepôt over centuries.<sup>29</sup>

It would take more than half a century before new archaeological research was carried out at Sungai Jaong.

## **New Archaeological Research at Sungai Jaong (2018-2023)**

### ***Preliminary survey***

The outlines of a new archaeological project devoted to the Sarawak River Delta were defined in 2017, through a cooperation between the École française d’Extrême-Orient and the Sarawak Museum Department. At the same time, the Sarawak Museum Department was in the final preparation stages of its Santubong Archaeological Park project, of which the Sungai Jaong site was

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24. Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 5, 98, 106; Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, pp. 262-275; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, pp. 3, 140, 145.

25. Harrison 1967, p. 141; Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, pp. 20, 140. In 1970, Harrison stated: “Jaong can be safely put “around and before 1000 AD”, running stoneware-wise through the Tang dynasty into the early Sung” (Harrison & O’Connor 1970, p. 8).

26. Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, pp. 251, 262, 266; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, pp. 8, 53.

27. Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, pp. 278-279; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, pp. 56, 111.

28. Harrison & O’Connor 1969a, p. 10; Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, p. 278; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, p. 54, 117.

29. Harrison 1967, p. 143; Harrison & O’Connor 1969b, p. 278; Harrison & O’Connor 1970, pp. 3-5, 117, 137, 197.

one component. The following year (2018), authorization was given to carry out a survey at Sungai Jaong in a mosaic of private plots.

The main purpose of this survey was to carry out bore holes using a hand-operated auger in order to try to obtain a large number of soil samples, the results of which would guide the choice of sectors to be excavated. Sixty-seven bore holes were thus augered at altitudes varying between 2.50 m and 12 m under difficult conditions (dense forest cover with many roots of various sizes, high density of large sandstone boulders both on the surface and at various depths, high density of iron slag). While 19 bore holes did not reveal any iron slag, all the others yielded slag, the thickness of the deposit varying between a few centimeters to one meter, a purely indicative figure, since the deepest figure was linked to the limits of use of the hand-operated auger in this context. Despite the difficulties, this first fieldwork made it possible to delimit an area yielding traces of metallurgical activities and ancient artefacts, namely the slope of the hillock facing the Jaong River, which represents an area estimated between 7,000 and 9,000 m<sup>2</sup> (area in brown on fig. 5). Several areas dense with iron slag to be favored for future excavations were identified. The acquisition of the site land by the State of Sarawak in the months following this survey paved the way for the conduct of excavations in 2019, resumed in 2022 after an interruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic (fig. 5).

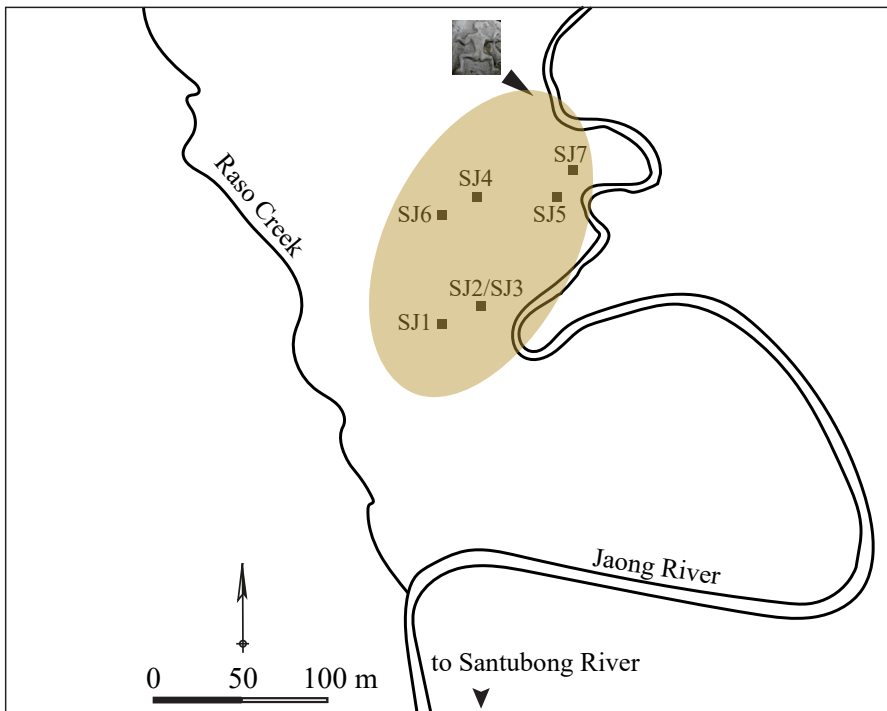


Fig. 5 – Sketch map of Sungai Jaong and the 2019-2023 trenches (D. Perret)

### The low lying sectors (fig. 6)

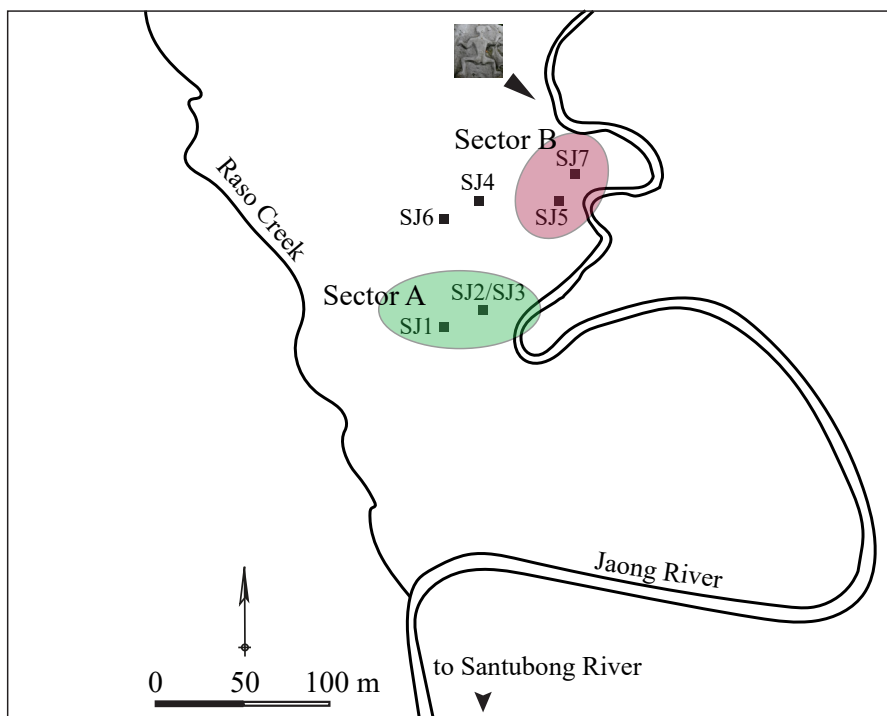


Fig. 6 – Sungai Jaong: sectors A and B (D. Perret)

Two sectors (A, B) were excavated in the low-lying area of the site, near the tidal Jaong River.<sup>30</sup> Sector A includes three trenches situated near the area excavated by Harrison some 80 metres from the confluence between the Jaong River and the Raso rivulet. Today, this confluence is a little more than 700 metres away from the Santubong River. Thanks to Harrison's work, we knew that this sector was very probably rich in various finds. The precise choice of both locations to be excavated in this sector A was also based on the results of the 2018 survey, with two promising core samples from the point of view of iron slag density. Trench SJ1 (N 01° 43.016'; E 110° 20.694'), 3 m×3 m, was therefore opened at the southwest edge of the Harrison's excavations (fig. 7).

<sup>30</sup>. The width of its course varies from a few metres at low tide, outside the rainy season, to possibly more than 20 metres at high tide in the rainy season.





**Fig. 7** – Trench SJ1 in front of the large sector excavated by T. Harrison (ph. D. Perret, June 2019)



**Fig. 8** – Concentration of stones in SJ1 (ph. D. Perret, June 2019)



**Fig. 9** – A working floor in SJ1 (ph. D. Perret, July 2019)

Trench SJ2 (N 01° 43.020'; E 110° 20.707'), 4 m×2.5 m, was opened some 40 m to the northeast of SJ1, and later extended to the west through trench SJ3 (1.50 m×1 m). The excavated surface area in this sector A is therefore 20.6 m<sup>2</sup>.

In SJ1, iron slag appeared a few centimetres below the present ground surface. At a depth of ten centimetres, the excavation uncovered a shallow oval pit (90×70 cm) filled with two layers of stones. Two of these stones have been cut forming a waist running round their approximate centerline (fig. 8).

Such stones are described as “waisted stones” by Harrison, who thought that the waist was pecked for securing with some sort of lashing or haft, to use these hard igneous stones as hammers for ironworking.<sup>31</sup> Scattered reddish soil fragments appearing from a depth of 15 cm indicated the proximity of a first workshop floor made of compact burnt clay mixed with metallurgical wastes. In fact, the excavations revealed three sufficiently well preserved floors (fig. 9) with more or less undulating profiles at depths between 20 and 55 cm.<sup>32</sup> They are related to iron industry activities.

Radiocarbon dating of a charcoal fragment sampled from the floor closest to the current ground surface (-32 cm, alt. ca. 4.30 m), yielded a 13th century

**31.** Harrison & O'Connor 1969b, p. 240.

**32.** In the eastern section of the test-pit carried out in SJ1 in 2022.



CE calibrated dating<sup>33</sup>, whereas a charcoal fragment sampled from the lowest floor (-53 cm, alt. ca. 4.09 m), yielded a very late 10th-mid12th century CE calibrated dating<sup>34</sup>. The basal sterile layer, made up of sandstone in balls and very fine beige/whitish sand, was reached at a depth of about 80 cm<sup>35</sup>.

In SJ2, areas dense in iron slag already appeared a few centimetres below the present ground surface and occurred down to a depth of some 60 cm. Contrary to SJ1, where sandstone boulders appeared near the bottom of the excavation, in SJ2 the tip of a large boulder was noticed less than 10 cm below the present ground surface. This sandstone boulder buried in iron slag turned out to show cutting traces to extract blocks (fig. 10).



**Fig. 10** – Block-cut sandstone boulder in SJ2 (ph. D. Perret, July 2019)

Other boulders showing such cutting traces were found among iron slag in the same trench. A concentration of worked whitish and reddish stones, including a large rectangular parallelepiped block (50 cm long), appeared in the southwest part of the trench at a depth of 20-30 cm. The presence of this

**33.** Sample SJ1-2022-FL1, DirectAMS 049019 (Dec. 2022), 787±27 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1220-1278 AD.

**34.** Sample SJ1-2024-FL3, Beta Analytic 697091 (May 2024), 990±30 BP, Cal 95.4%: 993-1155 AD.

**35.** Radiocarbon dating of a charcoal fragment sampled from the upper limit of the sand (-79 cm, alt. ca. 3.83 m), yielded a 11th-mid12th century CE calibrated dating (sample SJ1-2024-BOT, Beta Analytic 693900 (April 2024), 960±30 BP, Cal 95.4%: 1025-1159 AD).



concentration led to extend the excavation to the west, in trench SJ3. Stones combining whitish and reddish colours, as well as a line of whitish stones were uncovered in SJ3. At the end of the first phase of excavation in SJ2/SJ3 in 2019, two hypotheses started to take shape. Firstly, the worked blocks of sandstone probably originated from the block-cut boulders identified in SJ2. Secondly, these worked stones exposed to high temperature were probably the remains of one or several structures related to metallurgical activities.



**Fig. 11** – Remains of furnace base and working floor in SJ3 (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2023)

After two further phases of excavations in SJ2/SJ3 to reach the sterile layer, the existence of metallurgical activities conducted *in situ* was confirmed. In fact, it was during the 2023 season of excavations that parts of a rounded furnace base were uncovered in SJ3, down to a depth of some 30 cm. This furnace base comprises several layers of clay (lining) attesting to the reuse of the furnace several times. Interestingly, this furnace leans against a sandstone boulder probably cut to fit the rounded shape of the furnace bottom (fig. 11).

Moreover, the excavations revealed the remains of a working floor under and in the vicinity of the furnace. Radiocarbon dating of a charcoal fragment extracted from a rather dark silt layer (depth: 47 cm), below the level of the working floor, yielded a calibrated dating between the mid-11th and early 13th century CE.<sup>36</sup> The excavation in trench SJ2 did not reveal the existence of

**36.** Sample SJ3-3008-1, DirectAMS 053287 (Dec. 2023), 892±23 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1046-1220 AD.

compact working floors like in trench SJ1, but the sporadic presence of burnt clay fragments has been noticed, especially near the bottom of the trench.

The excavations in sector A yielded more than four tons of iron slag and some five kilograms of tuyeres (table 1), representing respectively 61% of the iron slag and 9% of the tuyeres found in the 2019-2023 excavations.

Trench	Surf. area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Vol. of excavated sediment (litres)	Iron slag (kg)	Density (g/l)	Tuyeres (g)	Density (g/l)
SJ1	9	4,419	1,507	341	2,902	0.66
SJ2-SJ3	11.6	5,849	2,884	493	2,172	0.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>10,268</b>	<b>4,391</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>5,074</b>	<b>0.49</b>

**Table 1** – Sector A: Densities in residues of metallurgical activities (2019-2023)

The majority of the other artefacts found in sector A include earthenware and ceramic sherds (table 2), as well as worked stones. Regarding earthenware in particular, sector A yielded around 3% in number and 2% in weight of the sherds found in the 2019-2023 excavations. Regarding ceramics, sector A yielded around 7% in number and 6% in weight of the sherds found in these excavations.

Trench	Earthenware (sherds/weight- g)	Density (per litre)	Stoneware (sherds/weight - g)	Density (per litre)
SJ1	71/384	0.016/0.086	108/760	0.024/0.171
SJ2-SJ3	157/554	0.026/0.094	66/900	0.011/0.153
<b>Total</b>	<b>228/938</b>	<b>0.022/0.091</b>	<b>174/1,660</b>	<b>0.016/0.161</b>

**Table 2** – Sector A. Densities in earthenware and stoneware (2019-2023)

Sector B comprises two trenches (SJ5, SJ7) located about a hundred metres to the northeast of SJ2. The choice of their locations took into account the iron slag density observed in the core samples collected in 2018 and 2023. The excavation in this sector had two main objectives: on the one hand to verify the possible existence of dwellings and/or the presence of in situ traces of ancient metallurgical activities on the banks of the Jaong River, on the other hand to collect a wide range of artefacts which would have been washed down the eastern slope of the hillock by rainwater for centuries.

At an estimated altitude of 5 m, trench SJ5 (N 01° 43.060'; E 110° 20.739') measures 5 m×2.5 m. Excavated in 2022, this trench did not yield any conclusive evidence concerning the presence there of dwelling or metallurgical activities. But one of the objectives of the excavation was achieved, that is to bring together a larger quantity of various finds supposed to be more representative of all the phases of ancient occupation of the site than in the other trenches. Compared to the whole sector A, figures are about ten times higher as regards

the number and weight of earthenware sherds, and three times higher for ceramic sherds. This encouraging result led to the opening of a second trench in this sector B in 2023.

The SJ7 trench (N 01° 43.072'; E 110° 20.747'; est. alt., 4.5 m) was initially excavated over an area of 5 m×2.5 m, then extended to the north (2 m×1.5 m). The first half of the excavation process uncovered a stratigraphy and finds similar to trench SJ5. But the second half revealed features similar to features encountered in SJ1 and SJ2: boulders showing cutting traces to extract blocks, and sections of working floors related to metallurgical activities (fig. 12).



**Fig. 12** – Traces of working floor at the bottom of SJ7, east section (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2023)

Radiocarbon dating of a charcoal fragment sampled from one of these floors (-78 cm; alt. ca. 3.50 m), yielded a mid-11th-mid-12th century CE calibrated dating.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, what is probably the unique post-hole identified so far in the Sungai Jaong site was uncovered at a depth of some 50 cm.

The excavations in sector B yielded almost 1.5 tons of iron slag and almost 24 kilograms of tuyeres (table 3), representing respectively 20% of the iron slag and 41% of the tuyeres found in the 2019-2023 excavations.

<sup>37</sup>. Sample SJ7-7032-1, DirectAMS 053290 (Dec. 2023), 945±19 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1035-1158 AD.



Trench	Surf. area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Vol. of excavated sediment (litres)	Iron slag (kg)	Density (g/l)	Tuyeres (g)	Density (g/l)
SJ5	12.5	8,384	381	45	9,600	1.14
SJ7	15.5	11,754	1,061	90	14,376	1.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20,138</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>23,976</b>	<b>1.19</b>

**Table 3** – Sector B: Densities in residues of metallurgical activities (2019-2023)

Like in sector A, the majority of the other artefacts found in sector B include earthenware and ceramic sherds (table 4), as well as worked stones. Regarding earthenware in particular, sector B yielded 85% in number and 86% in weight of the sherds found in the 2019-2023 excavations. Regarding ceramics, sector B yielded 73% in number and 66% in weight of the sherds found in these excavations.

Trench	Earthenware (sherds/weight- g)	Density (per litre)	Stoneware (sherds/weight - g)	Density (per litre)
SJ5	2,104/11,485	0.25/1.37	548/5,227	0.065/0.623
SJ7	3,541/21,625	0.30/1.84	1,260/13,927	0.107/1.184
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,645/33,110</b>	<b>0.28/1.64</b>	<b>1,808/19,154</b>	<b>0.09/0.95</b>

**Table 4** – Sector B. Densities in earthenware and stoneware (2019-2023)

### ***The sector on the top of the hillock (fig. 13)***

In 2022, a trench was opened for the first time on the top of the hillock, at an estimated altitude of 12.5m. Here again, the survey conducted in 2018 provided results interesting enough to open at least one trench in this sector identified here as sector C.

Some 70 meters to the northeast of SJ1, trench SJ4 (N 01° 43.061'; E 110° 20.710') measures 5 m×2 m. A compact layer of mixed material made of burnt clay with metallurgical wastes was revealed in the northeast corner of the trench, about 20 cm below the current ground surface. This first section of working floor (SJ4-FL1, alt. ca. 12.34 m) is approximately 3 cm thick. The continuation of the excavation in SJ4 in fact revealed four other successive vestiges of working floors, at the following approximative depths: 26 cm (SJ4-FL2, alt. ca. 12.28 m), 51 cm (SJ4-FL3, alt. ca. 12 m), 67 cm (SJ4-FL4, alt. ca. 11.84 m), and 84 cm (SJ4-FL5, alt. ca. 11.62 m). Radiocarbon dating of charcoal fragments extracted from floors FL2, FL3 and FL5, yielded the following respective calibrated dates: late 12th-13th century CE,<sup>38</sup> mid-11th-

**38.** Sample SJ4-2022-FL2, DirectAMS 049023 (Dec. 2022), 819±22 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1179-1270 AD.

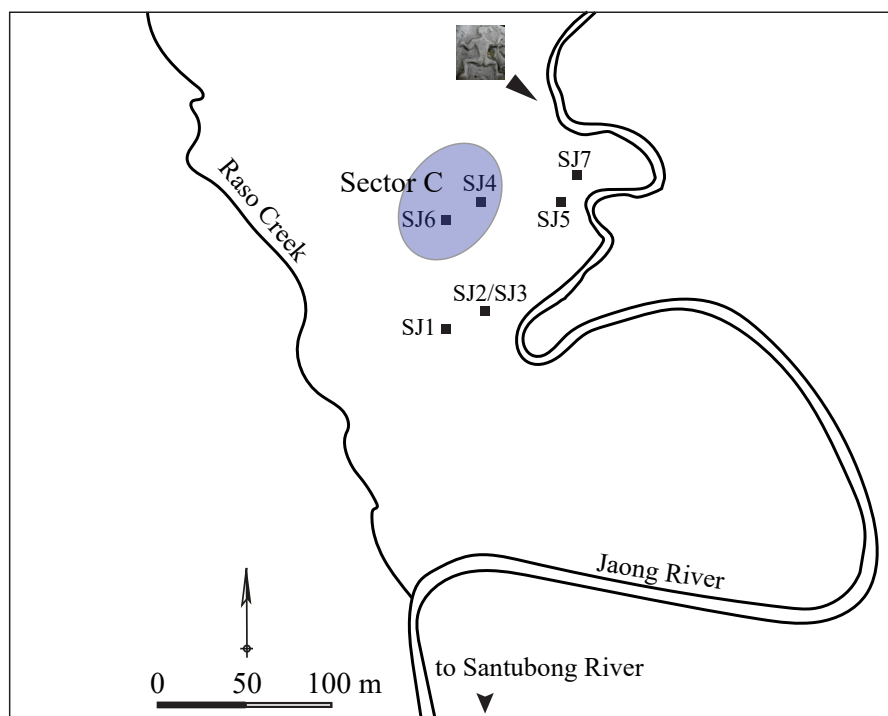


Fig. 13 – Sungai Jaong: sector C (D. Perret)

late 12th century CE,<sup>39</sup> mid-11th-mid-12th century CE.<sup>40</sup> In SJ4 the sterile layer (fine beige/whitish sand) was reached at a depth of about 90 cm.

In the same trench, remains of a circular structure made of stones appeared about twenty centimetres below the current ground surface. The size and shape of this structure, partially set in a pit some 25 cm deep, allow it to be linked with high probability to the base of an iron ore reduction furnace consisting of a circular stone layout (about 80 cm in diameter) partially covered with a clay coating on the inner side (fig. 14).

<sup>39</sup>. Sample SJ4-2022-FL3, DirectAMS 049024 (Dec. 2022), 920±23 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1038-1203 AD.

<sup>40</sup>. Sample SJ4-2022-FL5, DirectAMS 049026 (Dec. 2022), 946±23 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1034-1158 AD.



Fig. 14 – Base of an iron reduction furnace, SJ4 (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2022)

It turned out that the second working floor (FL2) partially covers the wall of the pit housing the base of this furnace. This working floor is therefore contemporaneous with the furnace, and the radiocarbon dating mentioned above, that is late 12th-13th century CE, is also relevant for this structure. The base of the stone wall is covered with a clay coating or lining about 5 mm thick on its concave internal part. These stones include both roughly cut blocks of sandstone showing traces of heating and large oblong pebbles in hard material.<sup>41</sup> At least three of these pebbles show a groove round the approximate centerline of the stone. These “waisted stones”, according to Harrison’s terminology, have very clearly been reused to build (or rebuild) the furnace. The state of the remains does not allow to easily deduce, at this stage of the research, the details of the smelting operation and the related technical elements, such as the supply air mechanism used and the elevation of the superstructure. The heterogeneity of the remaining technical elements as well as the absence of the superstructure might suggest the dismantling of the walls after each smelting process to pull out the raw metallic mass.

The drawing of the stratigraphy in this trench SJ4, carried out at the end of the 2022 season, yielded a number of indications remaining to be clarified at the bottom of its south section. A new cleaning of this south section during the

41. In the Santubong region, these materials are igneous rocks, mostly of gabbros and dolerites types, as well as hardened (hornfelsed) shale (Doherty et al. 2007, p. 67).

2023 season revealed the remains of another furnace base, very probably still in situ, almost at the bottom of the excavation (fig. 15).



**Fig. 15** – Base of iron reduction furnace, bottom of SJ4 excavation (ph. D. Perret, Oct. 2023)

Radiocarbon dating of a charcoal fragment collected near the southwest corner of the trench, at the bottom of the excavation just above the sterile soil, between a fragment of tuyere and a reddish stone (depth: 89 cm), yielded a calibrated dating between mid-11th and mid-12th century CE.<sup>42</sup> This result is the same as the dating of the lowest floor (FL5) mentioned above. It is therefore clear that the remains of the furnace bottom identified in 2023 cannot be dated earlier than this time bracket.

Located approximately 10 m south of SJ4, the trench SJ6 was opened to try to uncover better preserved remains of furnaces. At an altitude of some 11m above sea level, SJ6 (N 01° 43.055'; E 110° 20.697') was initially opened over an area of 5 m×2.5 m, subsequently completed by a west extension (2.5 m×2.5 m), then an east extension (2 m×2 m). Rather unexpectedly, the excavation of SJ6 revealed a context very different from that in SJ4, although distant of only some ten meters to the north. In SJ6, there are no remains of working floors in situ, nor remains of iron ore reduction or blacksmithing structures in situ. The layer of metallurgical wastes, whose uniform thickness

42. Sample SJ4-2023-2, DirectAMS 053288 (Dec. 2023), 931±19 BP, OxCal 95.4%: 1039-1162 AD.



was observed in the initial trench, then in both its extensions, as well as the frequency, in a horizontal position, of plate-shaped iron slag, as well as ceramic and earthenware sherds (including sherds belonging to the same vessel), allow us to suggest the hypothesis of a circulation area set up near an area of furnaces destined for the reduction of iron ore and possibly for blacksmithing (fig. 16).



Fig. 16 – Circulation area in SJ6 (ph. D. Perret, Sept. 2023)

The excavations in sector C yielded almost 1.5 tons of iron slag and some 29 kilograms of tuyeres (table 5), representing respectively 19% of the iron slag and 50% of the tuyeres found in the 2019-2023 excavations.

Trench	Surf. area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Vol. of excavated sediment (litres)	Iron slag (kg)	Density (g/l)	Tuyeres (g)	Density (g/l)
SJ4	10	6,224	234	38	3,468	0.56
SJ6	22.75	7,754	1,155	149	25,529	3.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.75</b>	<b>13,978</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>28,997</b>	<b>2.07</b>

Table 5 – Sector C: Densities in residues of metallurgical activities (2019-2023)

Like in sectors A and B, the majority of the other artefacts found in sector C include earthenware and ceramic sherds (table 6), as well as worked stones. Regarding earthenware in particular, sector C yielded 12% in number and weight of the sherds found in the 2019-2023 excavations. Regarding ceramics, sector C yielded 20% in number and 28% in weight of the sherds found in these excavations.



Trench	Earthenware (sherds/weight- g)	Density (per litre)	Stoneware (sherds/weight - g)	Density (per litre)
SJ4	380/1,610	0.06/0.26	85/776	0.013/0.124
SJ6	409/3,011	0.05/0.39	400/7,424	0.051/0.957
Total	<b>789/4,621</b>	<b>0.056/0.33</b>	<b>485/8,200</b>	<b>0.034/0.586</b>

**Table 6** – Sector C. Densities in earthenware and stoneware (2019-2023)

### **Interim conclusion and prospects**

The survey conducted in 2018 at Sungai Jaong led to the identification of the most promising area to conduct excavations, between the top of the hillock (alt. 12 m) structuring the site along a northeast-southwest axis, and the western bank of the Jaong River. This area is limited to the south by the confluence of the Jaong River and the Raso Creek, and some three hundred meters to the north, by the anthropomorphic sculpture in high relief called Batu Gambar.

Despite an excavated surface area limited to seven trenches covering some 81 m<sup>2</sup> in the Sungai Jaong site, the conduct of metallurgical activities in ancient times has been recognised and attested without any doubt for the first time in the Sarawak River Delta. On the top of the hillock, the 2022 excavation in trench SJ4 uncovered, at about twenty centimetres below the current ground surface, the whole base of a circular iron smelting furnace partially buried, laid out using heterogeneous stones. The use of stones to build the furnace walls explains why sandstone boulders were cut into rough rectangular parallelepipeds on the site. This furnace is associated with a more or less compact layer of burnt clay a few centimeters thick, mixed with metallurgical wastes dated late 12th-13th century CE. In the same trench, part of another iron smelting furnace base was identified in 2023 at the bottom of the excavation. It can be safely dated between mid-11th and late 12th century CE. The presence of a third remain of iron smelting furnace base was confirmed in 2023 in trench SJ3. A radiocarbon analysis leads to suggest also an early second millennium CE dating. These three remains could therefore represent the first iron smelting furnaces, dated to early second millennium CE, reported so far on the whole island of Borneo.

At least fifteen working floors related to metallurgical activities have been identified, both at the foot of the hillock and on its ridge. Radiocarbon dates obtained on eight of these floors place metallurgical activities at Sungai Jaong between the very end of the 10th and late 13th centuries.

The 2019-2023 excavations produced more than seven tons of very irregularly distributed iron slag over the site, leading to think that the metallurgical activities were probably most intensively conducted at the foot of the hillock, near the confluence of the Jaong River and Raso Creek (see table 7). It is unfortunately in this area that Harrison concentrated his extensive excavations between 1952 and 1966. Still in connection with the metallurgical activities, the recent excavations yielded more than 3,200 fragments of tuyeres whose distribution on the site as well as their typo-morphology vary widely (table 7). From the

rapid investigation of the finds during the drying and cataloguing stages, the identification as tuyères is confirmed, an observation that at the same time provides some clues regarding the air supply mechanism related to the furnaces. The fact that complete specimens are absent could be related to the dismantling or cleaning phases of the furnaces, which do not allow the reuse of the tuyères in their original state. Grooved stones found in three trenches (SJ1, SJ4, SJ6) may have been used as hammering or crushing tools.

Other finds include earthenware sherds, also very irregularly distributed over the site (table 7). Most of them belong to the fine paste category, a feature which distinguishes Sungai Jaong (and probably the neighboring sites of the delta), from contemporaneous settlement sites elsewhere in Maritime Southeast Asia, whether in Peninsular Malaysia, Java, or Sumatra. Stoneware shards are also very irregularly distributed over the site (table 7). The preliminary observations on these shards by Bing Zhao<sup>43</sup> indicates vessels contemporaneous with the metallurgical activities on the site.

Sector	Iron slag (w.)	Tuyeres (w.)	Earthenware (n/w.)	Stoneware (n/w.)
A	61	9	3/2	7/6
B	20	41	85/86	73/66
C	19	50	12/12	20/28
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%/100%</b>	<b>100%/100%</b>

**Table 7** – Relative representativity of finds according to sectors

As fieldwork was completed by late 2023, work is now devoted to the analyses of the various finds. As regards iron slag in particular, the huge quantity of finds has been sorted out to select samples of tap slag for compositional analysis. The majority of these samples originate from the 2019-2023 excavations in Sungai Jaong, but samples collected during surveys conducted previously in two other delta sites (Bongkizam and Sibu Laut) are also added to the analysis for comparative purpose. Overall 100 samples will be submitted to a compositional analysis. Its objective is to get some clues about the characteristics of the technical processes implemented locally, as well as to determine the chemical fingerprint of the raw materials, such as the iron ore(s) used for the reduction. Measurements of elemental concentrations (trace and major elements) for compositional analyses will be conducted through Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) and Atomic Emission Spectroscopy (ICP-AES). Comparative analysis of slag samples by studying chemical variations will enable us to study the differences, evolution and/or possible changes in time and space, of metallurgical practices. It will also help us to hypothesize the nature of the metal (iron or steel) locally

**43.** CNRS, UMR 8155 (Centre de recherche sur les civilisations de l'Asie orientale). Assisted by Tang Hui in 2019.

produced. On a more general level, these data will feed a reference database in order to improve current knowledge on the iron production and exchange or distribution of iron products in the region but also more widely in Southeast Asia for this period.

Archaeological research at Sungai Jaong also includes a geomorphological study to shed light on the interactions between the ancient occupation of the site and the environment over the *longue durée*. It is to this end that sediment and phytolith samples have been collected at Sungai Jaong in 2019 and 2023. Analyses are currently carried out at the Laboratory of Physical Geography (Thiais) in order to (1) define the geomorphological contexts of the site and (2) to document the evolution of the vegetation and the impact of human activities (e.g. land clearings, burnings, cultivations).

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HUSNUL FAHIMAH ILYAS\* AND ANNABEL TEH GALLOP\*\*

## A prolific 19th-century Bugis scribe: Syaikh Zainal Abidin and his personal catalogue of 52 Qur'an manuscripts copied

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### Introduction: writing traditions of South Sulawesi

Writing is a marker of societal development, which also serves to express the identity of a community. While not all language or ethnic groups are associated with writing, in Indonesia one area with a strong tradition of writing is the Bugis and Makasar region of South Sulawesi (Ilyas 2022: 4-5). This area is home to three historic scripts: the Indic-derived *jangang-jangang* and *lontara'* scripts, and the Arabic-based *sérang* (Ilyas: 2011: 14-15), in addition to the Latin script widely used today. Writing is believed to have been present in South Sulawesi from about the 14th century (Macknight 2023: 1). The form of the Indic-derived scripts and the way they were written originally on palm leaf strips, and then on paper, is distinctive, but the exact derivation of this tradition of writing is not yet established. The use of *lontara'*, in particular, continues in some contexts to the present day.

The *sérang* script is the adapted form of Arabic script used to write the Bugis or Makasar languages (Mattulada 1985: 10). It is one of a number of extended forms of the Arabic alphabet used by different vernacular languages of Southeast Asia, including Jawi for Malay and *pégon* for Javanese. The use of the *sérang* script may possibly be dated to as early as the 16th century

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when the Makasar kingdom of Gowa opened its doors to Malay Muslim traders following the fall of Melaka to the Portuguese in 1511. It would have complemented the use of Arabic following the formal adoption of Islam in states across the peninsula in the early 17th century (Cho 2012). Conventional words and phrases in Arabic, written in Arabic script, occur in many manuscripts otherwise written in the *lontara*’ script.

### **Qur’an manuscripts from Southeast Asia: Sulawesi connections**

Over the past few decades great progress has been made in mapping the location and distribution of Qur’an manuscripts throughout the Nusantara archipelago, and in describing and defining regional styles of art.<sup>1</sup> Yet while the spatial ecology of the art of the Qur’an in Southeast Asia swam into focus reasonably swiftly, the chronological contours of the landscape remained submerged in mists. It has gradually become clear though that the great majority of Southeast Asian Qur’an manuscripts extant – perhaps around 90% – were produced in the 19th century, with far fewer manuscripts from earlier periods.

A recent study of the earlier wave of Qur’an production has highlighted a prominent Sulawesi connection in a distinct subset of Qur’an manuscripts dating from the late 17th and long 18th centuries. The corpus, comprising around 13 manuscripts, is characterised by the strongly geometrical profile of illuminated frames, with straight lines or circles, rather than undulating curves common in so many other regional artistic styles. This group is linked not just by artistic criteria but also by textual features: the manuscripts often have detailed variant canonical readings (*qira’at*) annotated in the margins, and copious other paratexts at the beginning and end of the volume. Most characteristically many of these Qur’ans have lengthy colophons in Arabic, giving full details of the name and origin of the scribe and sometimes of the patron, and when and where the manuscript was copied. As these manuscripts are found all over the archipelago and not just in Sulawesi itself, this school of art has been termed ‘the Sulawesi diaspora geometric style’ of Qur’anic illumination (Gallop 2010, 2024).

The 19th century appears to have seen a substantial increase in the production of Qur’an manuscripts in the Bugis and Makasar regions of South Sulawesi, perhaps linked to easier and cheaper access to high-quality European paper. While there is now greater variety in artistic styles, with rich floral ornamentation, curvilinear outlines and a wider palette, certain of the internal textual features mentioned above associated with the Sulawesi diaspora geometric style of Qur’ans persist, such as the frequent presence of *qira’at* annotations in the margins, and of detailed colophons in Arabic.

1. See Bafadhal & Anwar 2005, and also the website of Indonesian Qur’an manuscripts from the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag): <https://seamushaf.kemenag.go.id//telusuri/category/naskah/mushaf>.

This last feature is highly unusual within Southeast Asia, as most Qur'an manuscripts – whether from Aceh, the Malay peninsula or Java – give no information at all about the circumstances of their production. It is also exceedingly valuable in documenting the names of certain Qur'an scribes from Sulawesi, and the manuscripts they copied. This article focusses on one of the most prolific Bugis Qur'anic scribes of the 19th century: Syaikh Zainal Abidin ibn al-Khatib Umar, from Pammana in Wajo, South Sulawesi.

### **Bugis Qur'an scribes of the 19th century**

Today almost every single Muslim household in Indonesia will own one or more copies of the Qur'an, and technological innovations mean that there are countless choices of ways to access and study the Holy Word, both in print and digital forms. Before the age of print, the situation was very different. Fadly Ibrahim estimated that throughout the area of the Bugis kingdoms of Bone, Soppeng and Wajo, known as Tellumpoccoé, there were probably no more than 50 copies of the Qur'an prior to the mid 19th century in the whole of this extensive and populous region.<sup>2</sup>

In those days, the copying and teaching of the Qur'an was very dependent on the diligence and dedication of religious scholars and teachers (*ulama*) in writing and advancing knowledge. Some Qur'an manuscripts copied by Bugis scribes were in fact written in Mecca, where local ulama spent extended periods of time immersed in the Islamic intellectual centres of the Haramayn. They later returned home to their villages in Sulawesi to set up study groups (*halaqah*) and religious schools, which developed into centres for Islamic knowledge. This, then, was the pedagogical structure which underpinned religious life amongst the Bugis in the 19th century.

On the basis of published sources, and thanks to the presence of detailed colophons in Qur'an manuscripts, at least nine prominent Bugis ulama of the 19th century can be identified, most of whom are known to have spent many years in Mecca. These manuscripts are held today in museums or in private collections, including in the homes of descendants of the scribes. Of the Bugis Qur'anic scribes listed below, six come from just two neighbouring districts, namely Pompanua in Bone and Pammana in Wajo, both located in central South Sulawesi, and derive from a single extended family. According to the genealogy compiled by the late AGH Yusuf Surur, on the maternal side they are related to La Orowane, Arung (Lord) of Timurung, and through the paternal line they are linked to La Sikati, To Palettei Ranreng Bettempola of Wajo. Despite their aristocratic connections, these men all chose to join the ranks of the religious brethren, and to dedicate their lives to spreading and strengthening Islam amongst the Bugis in the 19th century.

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2. This section draws heavily on Fadly Ibrahim (2021); see also his Facebook post, 'Ulama Bugis penulis mushaf abad ke-19', 30 April 2021.

A very productive Qur'an scribe was Haji Ahmad Umar bin Syaikh Abdul Hayyi al-Bugisi, who came from Pompanua in Bone.<sup>3</sup> Two of his Qur'an manuscripts are known, both copied in 1841. One is in the AGH Ahmad Yusuf Surur collection in Sengkang, Wajo,<sup>4</sup> while the other, completed in Mecca, is in the Museum Balla Lompoa in Gowa.<sup>5</sup> Haji Ahmad Umar's younger brother, Syaikh Abdul Majid bin Syaikh Abdul Hayyi al-Bugisi, was also a scribe. He is known to have copied a Qur'an in 1845 now held in Sinjai,<sup>6</sup> and another copied in Pompanua in 1878.<sup>7</sup> Puangta Abdul Majid was a prolific Bugis ulama who produced many works on Islamic law, as well as many copies of works by his teachers (cf. Maulani 2023: 607-609).

Among the Bugis ulama each known from a single manuscript are a scribe from Pammana, Wajo, named *guru Kannu* (?), who copied a Qur'an in 1836 which is now held in Tolitoli, in Central Sulawesi. Another scribe from Pammana was Haji Abdul Salam al-Bugisi al-Pammani, who copied a Qur'an dated 1846 which is now held in Bone. A scribe named Ismail bin Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bugisi copied a Qur'an in 1844, now held in Bali in Masjid al-Mahdi, Kampung Muslim Kusamba, Karang Asam.<sup>8</sup> An imam who was also a Qur'anic scribe was Haji Mu'izzuddin bin Haji Hasanuddin, imam of Tancung, whose Qur'an dated 1849 is in the Museum Batara Tua in Palopo.<sup>9</sup> Two Qur'ans are known to have been copied by an imam of Bone named Haji Sufyan al-Suri al-Imam al-Buni. One, dated 1872, is now held in the Museum La Galigo in Makassar,<sup>10</sup> while an earlier Qur'an dated 1864, produced in two volumes and known to have been owned by the Raja of Bone, is now held in a museum in Leiden.<sup>11</sup>

3. On this scribe see the Facebook post by Fadly Ibrahim, 'Penulis mushaf kuno Balla Lompoa', 2 October 2021.

4. Dated 16 Jumadilakhir 1257 (5 August 1841) in Mecca; see Yusuf S. 2005: 243, 255; Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 12-13; digitised by DREAMSEA as DS 145 00001.

5. See M. Musadad in Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 14-15; however the information on the date may have been copied over from the previous page.

6. Dated 10 Safar 1261 (18 February 1845); see M. Musadad in Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 10-11.

7. See Facebook post by Fadly Ibrahim, 26 November 2023.

8. Dated Zulkaidah 1260 (November/December 1844), Iswanto 2021: 123-4.

9. Dated 7 Syakban 1265 (28 June 1849); see Yusuf S. 2005: 240, 251-252.

10. Dated 28 Syakban 1289 (31 October 1872); see Zarkasi in Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 2-3.

11. Wereldmuseum Leiden 3600-453, Qur'an, second volume only, from Surat al-Kahf until the end, dated 5 Rabiulakhir 1281 (7 September 1864). This manuscript was seized from the collection of the Raja of Bone, La Pawawoi Karaeng Sigeri (r. 1895-1905), in the Dutch attack of 1905, by First Lieutenant Adrianus Hackstroh (1878-1915), who donated it to the museum (Shatanawi 2022: 64).



The oldest manuscript amongst the dated Qur'ans copied by Bugis scribes still held in Sulawesi is found in Majene, West Sulawesi, and was written and checked (*tashih*) in Mecca in 1832 by Haji Ahmad bin Syaikh al-Khatib Umar al-Bugisi al-Pammani, who came from Pammana in Wajo, South Sulawesi.<sup>12</sup> Haji Ahmad was a very active Bugis ulama who produced many copies of the Qur'an and other books. However it is his younger brother who is the final scribe to be introduced in this group, and is also the main subject of our study: Syaikh Zainal Abidin, who is probably the most productive known Bugis Qur'anic scribe. Seven of his Qur'ans have been documented so far, dated 1846, 1855, 1863, 1865, 1867, 1870 and 1888, and these will be described in more detail below.

### Syaikh Zainal Abidin and his manuscripts

Syaikh Zainal Abidin – who consistently described himself in colophons as *Al-Haj Zainal Abidin bin al-marhum al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Bugisi al-Wajui al-Fammani* – was born around 1809 and died in 1890. As indicated by the *nisba* appended to his name, he was a Bugis scholar from Pammana in Wajo, and is also known as Gurutta Zainal Abidin, Puangta Paleppang and Puang Guru Senong. Like many other Bugis ulama, Syaikh Zainal Abidin stayed many years studying in Mecca, and was probably there around 1841; on his return to Southeast Asia in the 1840s he spent time in Johor and Singapore for religious propagation (*dakwah*), and also in Pontianak, home to a substantial Bugis community.<sup>13</sup> Back in Sulawesi he lived in Pompanua in Bone as well as in Pammana, and became a local head or *mursyid* of the Naksyabandiah Sufi order or *tarekat*, a role inherited from his father. Towards the end of his life Syaikh Zainal Abidin served as Kadi of Pammana from 1886 to 1889, and also as the Kadi of Soppeng, and is thus also referred to as Petta Kali Pammana and Petta Kali Mario.

Syaikh Zainal Abidin had aristocratic ancestry, for his father was descended from the ruler of Soppeng. On his mother's side he shared in the illustrious genealogy mentioned above, with links to the Datu of Pammana, Ranreng Bettempola, and the Arung of Timurung. A short manuscript has also been found outlining Syaikh Zainal Abidin's direct ancestors on his mother's side to five generations, descended from a brother of the Arung of Liu in Wajo. The document is written in Bugis in *lontara*' script, except for the letter heading at the top and his name at the end, which are in Arabic script; the full text is given

12. See description by Ali Akbar in Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 38-39.

13. The Bugis were firmly established throughout West Kalimantan from the 18th century onwards. Two of the famous five Bugis Opu brothers married into the ruling houses of Sambas and Mempawah, and the first sultan of Pontianak married a sister of the ruler of Mempawah, who was the daughter of Daeng Menambun (Heidhuis 1998: 273-280).

in Appendix I, along with an image.<sup>14</sup> This *silsilah* manuscript is currently in the possession of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's great-great-grandson and namesake H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, in Pompanua, Bone, who is the son of Siti Tasniah, daughter of Abdullah, son of Abu Bakareng, son of H. Muhammad Nur, the son of Syaikh Zainal Abidin.

As mentioned above, seven Qur'an manuscripts have been documented copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin, spanning a period of over forty years, and these will be described briefly in chronological order below.

#### *Q.1846*

The earliest, with elaborate floral double decorated frames at beginning and end, was copied by al-Haj Zainal Abidin bin al-marhum al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi al-Wajui al-Fammani, in 1846 in Pontianak, in the house of Encik Robiah in Kampung Tambu' during the reign of Sultan Syarif Uthman (r. 1819-1855) (Figs. 1, 2). The process of copying commenced on 4 Rejab 1262 (28 June 1846) and ended on 14 Syakban 1262 (7 August 1846), thus taking forty days. The manuscript was described by Hakim Syukrie (2023), and is now held as a charitable endowment (*wakaf*) in Surau Jami'atul Quro' in Pontianak Timur, Kalimantan Barat.

#### *Q.1855*

The next Qur'an, which has illuminated double frames and marginal ornaments, was completed on 12 Rabiulakhir 1272 (22 December 1855) in Pompanua in Bone by Zainal Abidin bin al-Syaikh al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi al-Wajui al-Fammani. It is now held in the Museum Batara Tua in Palopo in Luwu, after having been deposited there by descendants of the ruling family of Luwu.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Q.1863*

From nearly a decade later is a Qur'an dated 27 Muharam 1280 (14 July 1863), copied in Pammana by Zainal Abidin bin al-Syaikh Umar al-Jawi al-Bugisi al-Wajui (Fig. 3). The Qur'an is held in the family house of Helmi, son of *Anregurutta* K. H. Ali Yafie, in Jampue, Pinrang.<sup>16</sup>

14. This manuscript has been digitised by DREAMSEA as DS 0146 00004.

15. Described in Yusuf S. 2005: 238-239, illustrated on p. 250.

16. This Qur'an was documented during the Rihlah Budaya (Cultural Tour) organised by the Merial Institute, Ngariksa, and Mahesty (Makassar Heritage Society), 13-15 September 2024, Sulawesi Selatan; see Facebook post by Oman Fathurahman, 13 September 2024.

*Q.1865*

This is a Qur'an with fine illuminated double frames, dated 19 Safar 1282 (14 July 1865) and copied by al-Haj Zainal Abidin ibn al-marhum al-Syaikh al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi al-Wajui al-Fammani (Figs. 4, 5).<sup>17</sup> The Qur'an is currently held in Sinjai, south of Bone in South Sulawesi, in the possession of Haji Puang Arif, who is a descendant of Syaikh Abdurrahman Cambang, Imam of Timurung.<sup>18</sup>

*Q.1867*

This Qur'an is recorded in the catalogue of South Sulawesi manuscripts in the possession of Drs Djalaluddin Sanusi of Belawa, Wajo, and it was microfilmed in 1992.<sup>19</sup> It is dated 23 Safar 1284 (26 June 1867), and was copied in Wajo (*bi al-mahall al-ma'rūf bi al-qurṣah al-mubārahah shaṭṭ al-nahr al-mutawajjih min arḍ Wājū*, 'in the edifice known as the "blessed place" by the river flowing from the land of Wajo') by al-Haj Zainal Abidin ibn al-marhum al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi al-Wajui al-Fammani, of the Khalwatiyah order (Figs. 6, 7). The manuscript is damaged, lacking the first page with *Surat al-Fatihah*. The volume measures 31.3 x 21.9 cm, and was written on paper with the 'man in the moon' watermark.

*Q.1870*

Another Qur'an, without illuminated frames but with attractive marginal ornaments, copied by al-Haj Zainal Abidin ibn al-marhum al-Syaikh al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi al-Wajui al-Fammani, is dated 20 Muharam 1287 (22 April 1870) (Figs. 8, 9, 10). This Qur'an is now in the possession of Ilham Yasin, brother of H. Zainal Abidin and thus also a great-great-grandson of Syaikh Zainal Abidin, in Makassar, and was received from his uncle Lukman, of Pammana in Wajo.

*Q.1888*

The last Qur'an documented, also without illuminated frames but with marginal ornaments, was completed on 2 Zulkaidah 1305 (11 July 1888) by al-Haj Zainal Abidin ibn Syaikh al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi Waju in Paleppang in Lagosi, in Pammana (Figs. 11, 12, 13).<sup>20</sup> It is now in the possession of H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin in Pompanua, Bone, and was inherited in 2019 on the death of his mother Siti Tasniah, great-great-granddaughter of Syaikh Zainal Abidin through her father Abdullah.

17. Zarkasi in Syatri & Mustopa 2018: 8-9.

18. Ibrahim 2021.

19. No.01/MKH/2/Unhas/UP and ANRI Rol 37 no.2 in PaEni (2003: 311).

20. Yusuf S. 2005: 241, 253. This manuscript has been digitised by DREAMSEA as DS 0146 00002.



**Fig. 1** – Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in Pontianak in 1846, now held in Surau Jami’atul Quro in Pontianak. Surau Jami’atul Quro, Pontianak; Q.1846. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



**Fig. 2** – Colophon of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in the house of Encik Robiah in Kampung Tambu’ in Pontianak, over 40 days from 4 Rejab 1262 (28 June 1846) to 14 Syakban 1262 (7 August 1846). With calligraphic inscriptions above, *Yā ‘Azīm al-Minnah*, ‘Oh Most Supreme One full of Grace’, and below, *Hab li kātibihā al-jannah*, ‘Grant paradise to the scribe’. Surau Jami’atul Quro, Pontianak; Q.1846. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



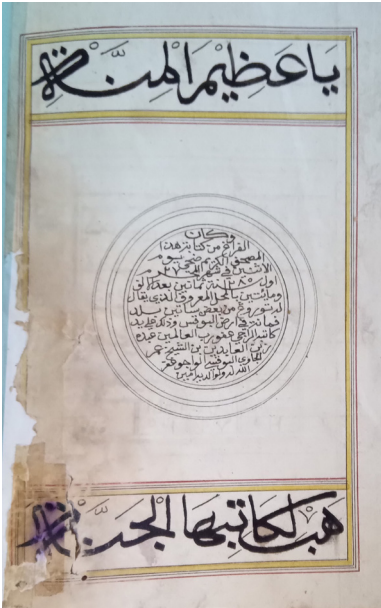


Fig. 3 – Colophon of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1863. Collection Helmi Ali Yafie, Jampue, Pinrang; Q.1863. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 13 September 2024.

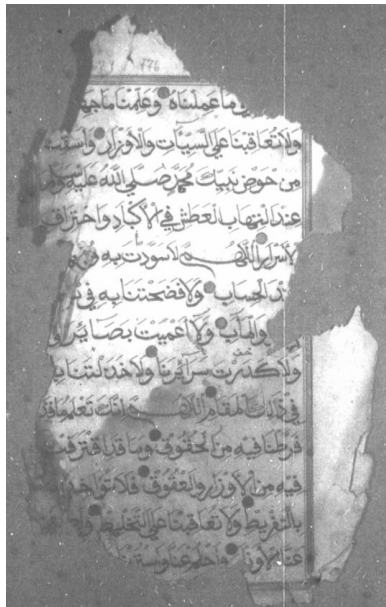


Fig. 4 – Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1865. Collection Haji Puang Arif, Sinjai; Q.1865. Photograph from Syatri & Mustopa (2018: 8).





**Fig. 5** – Colophon of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1865. Collection H. Puang Arif, Sinjai; Q.1865. Photograph from Syatri & Mustopa (2018: 9).



**Fig. 6** – Text page from the Qur’an copied in Wajo by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1867. Collection Djalaluddin Sanusi, Belawa, Wajo; Q.1867. Image from microfilm; ANRI, Rol 37 No. 2.



**Fig. 7** – Colophon of the Qur’an copied in Wajo by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1867. Collection Djalaluddin Sanusi, Belawa, Wajo; Q.1867. Image from microfilm; ANRI, Rol 37 No. 2.



**Fig. 8** – Opening pages of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1870. Collection Ilham Yasin, Makassar; Q.1870. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 9 – Colophon of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1870. Collection Ilham Yasin, Makassar; Q.1870. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 10 – Detail of the beginning of Juz’ 4 (Q. 3:93), with marginal ornament, in the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1870. Collection Ilham Yasin, Makassar; Q.1870. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.





Fig. 11 – Opening pages of Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1888. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone; Q.1888. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 12 – Colophon of the Qur’an copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1888 (with a note in *lontara* script misreading the date of AH 1305 as 1304). Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone; Q.1888. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 13 – Detail of beginning of Juz' 2 (Q. 2:142), with marginal ornament, in the Qur'an of 1888. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone; Q.1888. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.

Syaikh Zainal Abidin naturally also wrote many other non-Qur'anic Islamic manuscripts, such as two copies of the *Kitab Mawlid* of al-Barzanji, one undated but which bears a seal described further below (Figs. 14, 15), and another in the possession of Muh. Arsyad dated 25 Zulkaidah 1282 (11 April 1866) (PaEni 2003: 163). He also wrote a copy of *Dala'il al-khayrat* now in the Abdul Rahman Falugha collection (AF.111) in Pontianak (Figs. 16, 17), which is dated 5 Safar 1269 (18 November 1852) and was written in Sungai Ti, Pontianak, by al-Haj Zainal Abidin bin al-marhum al-Khatib Umar al-Jawi al-Buqisi.<sup>21</sup> Particularly impressive is a beautifully written manuscript held by H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin in Pompanua, Bone, inherited from his mother Tasniah.<sup>22</sup> The manuscript contains four texts, the first three in verse (*nazam*) form (Fig. 18). The first is *Matan al-Syatibiyah fi al-Qiraah al-Sab'ah*, and the colophon on f. 97r states the date of completion of writing as Friday 6 Safar 1303 (14 November 1885) in Pompanua (Fig. 19). The second text is a copy of the *Qasidah al-Burdah*, and the colophon on f. 110r is dated Sunday, 8th of the month (i.e. Safar) 1303 (16 November 1885) (Fig. 20). The third text is the *Qasidah al-Hamazyah fi Madhi Nabi*; the colophon on f. 145v is dated Friday 20 Safar 1303 (28 November 1885) (Fig. 21). The final text, *Salawat al-Mudhariyah*, is not dated.

There is also a small undated volume of supplications (*doa*) and repeated Qur'anic verses (*wirid*), for various specific purposes such as marital harmony and to overcome problems, and including texts by other scribes, held in the Astana Pangeran Mangkubumi, Pangkalan Bun, in Kotawaringin, Central

21. Pudjiastuti 2020: 153-154.

22. This manuscript has been digitised by DREAMSEA as DS 0146 00001.

Kalimantan (Fig. 22).<sup>23</sup> The colophon note at the beginning reads: *bahwa ini surat ayat al-Qahri dari al-fakir al-Haj Zainal Abidin Bugis Wajo 'ghafur Allah lahu amin*, 'This is a copy of all-powerful verses, by the mendicant al-Haj Zainal Abidin, a Bugis from Wajo, may God have pity on him, amen'. However, this manuscript is calligraphically of a very different calibre from all the other manuscripts described above, is possibly much earlier than the others.

It is easy to understand why Syaikh Zainal Abidin's manuscripts were so sought after in court circles in Sulawesi: his handwriting is not only disciplined, clear and legible, but is also stylish, sometimes writing *mim* with the tail flicked to the right (see Figs. 6, 11, 14, 16). One especially notable aspect of his manuscripts is the recurring presence of a striking calligraphic inscription. All the colophon pages in the Qur'ans and also the other manuscripts (except for the more pedestrian small volume with *doa* and *wirid*) contain an impressive two-part inscription written in bold ink with a very wide nib: *Yā 'Azīm al-Minnah*, 'Oh Most Supreme One full of Grace', and *Hab li kātibihā al-jannah*, 'Grant paradise to the scribe' (Figs. 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, 21).<sup>24</sup> This inscription is usually placed within two rectangular panels at the top and bottom of the final page flanking the colophon statement in the middle set in a circular or rectangular cartouche. Sometimes there are slight variations in the inscription, for example in the Qur'an of 1865 the panel above reads, *Yā Rabb Yā 'Azīm al-Minnah*, 'Oh Lord, Oh Most Supreme One full of Grace', and below, *Hab li kātibihā wa mālikihā al-jannah*, 'Grant paradise to the scribe and the owner' (Fig. 5), while the Qur'an of 1867 includes two lines in *lontara* script giving the translation of this supplication into Bugis: at the top ... *appuwangeng masero rajaé / pappényamenna / nye...*, and at the bottom: *éréng lalloni / to mokiéngngi ritu / suru [ga]* (Fig. 7). In fact, neither feature – the *mim* with tail to the right,<sup>25</sup> and this colophon inscription<sup>26</sup> – is unique, as they have also been noted in a few other Bugis Islamic manuscripts of the period, but they are certainly characteristic of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's calligraphic style.

23. Reference: Balai Pelestarian Kebudayaan Wilayah XIII Kalimantan Tengah dan Kalimantan Selatan. Kode: 327/APM/BPK XIII/2023.

24. Yusuf S. 2005: 242.

25. The *mim* with tail to the right is also seen in a Qur'an manuscript copied by Syaikh Abdul Majid dated 1878 (see Facebook post by Fadly Ibrahim, 27 November 2023).

26. See a copy of *Dala'il al-khayrat* copied by Abdullah al-Bugisi al-Wajui dated Syawal 1284 (January/February 1868) held in the New York Public Library, Arabic Ms. No. 256, f. 152v (with many thanks to Farouk Yahya for sharing his images of this manuscript).





Fig. 14 – Opening pages of the *Kitab Mawlid al-Barzanji*, copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection Abdul Muqaddim, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Fadly Ibrahim, 27 January 2024.



Fig. 15 – Ending of the *Kitab Mawlid al-Barzanji*, with Syaikh Zainal Abidin's distinctive 'signature' inscription. Collection Abdul Muqaddim, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Fadly Ibrahim, 27 January 2024.



Fig. 16 – *Dala'il al-khayrat*, copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1852 in Pontianak. Note the stylish way that the tail of *mim* in *Allahumma* is pulled to the right. Collection Abdul Rahman Falugha (AF.111), Pontianak. Photograph by A.T. Gallop, 2015.



Fig. 17 – Colophon of *Dala'il al-khayrat*, copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1852 and written in Sungai Ti, Pontianak. Collection Abdul Rahman Falugha (AF.111), Pontianak. Photograph by A.T. Gallop, 2015.



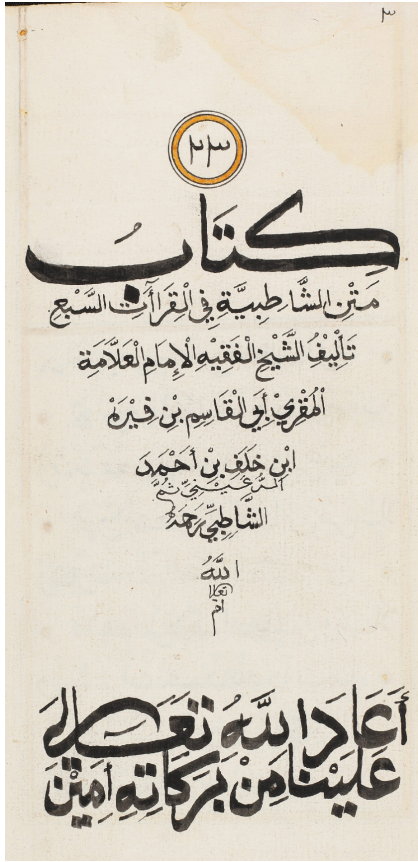


Fig. 18 – Title page of a volume of four texts, commencing with *Matan al-Syatibiyah fi al-Qiraah al-Sab'ah*, copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in 1885. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.

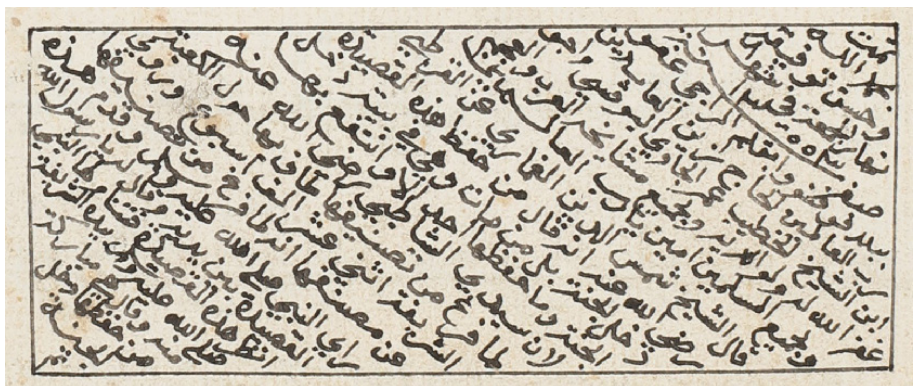


Fig. 19 – Colophon of *Matan al-Syatibiyah fi al-Qiraah al-Sab'ah*, dated 6 Safar 1303 (14 November 1885) in Pompanua, first text in a volume copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 20 – Colophon of the *Qasidah al-Burdah*, dated 8 Safar 1303 (16 November 1885), second text in a volume copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.



Fig. 21 – Colophon of the third text, *Qasidah al-Hamaziyah fi Madhi Nabi*, dated 20 Safar 1303 (28 November 1885), and the final text, *Salawat al-Mudhariyah*, in a volume copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.

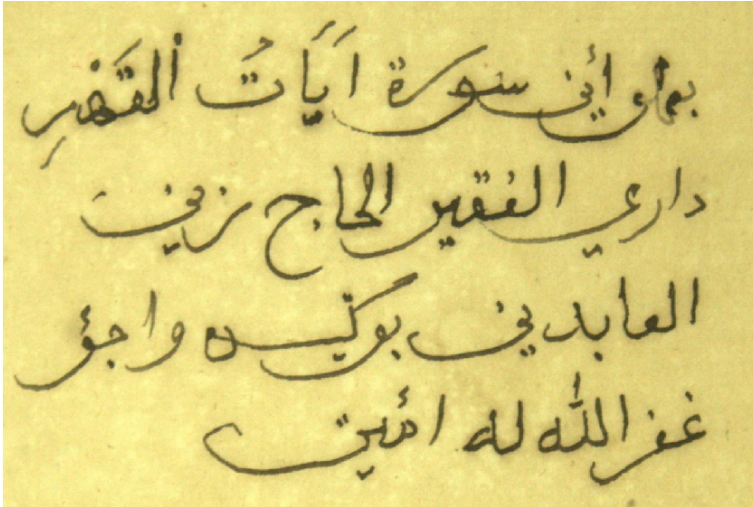


Fig. 22 – Volume of *doa* and *wirid* with name of Syaikh Zainal Abidin, undated. Astana Pangeran Mangkubumi, Pangkalan Bun, Kotawaringin. Photograph courtesy of Balai Pelestarian Kebudayaan Wilayah XIII Kalimantan Tengah dan Kalimantan Selatan. Kode: 327/APM/BPK XIII/2023.

### A personal catalogue of 52 Qur'an manuscripts copied

On 8 April 2023, Fadly Ibrahim paid a visit to the house of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's descendants in the village of Kanjilo, *kecamatan* Barombong, in the *kabupaten* of Gowa. He was shown by Haji Andi Walinono an extraordinary manuscript which he had inherited from his father Puang Sufu, from Pammana, Wajo: Syaikh Zainal Abidin's personal record of 52 Qur'an manuscripts he had copied, with the names of each of the owners or patrons (Fig. 23).<sup>27</sup> The full text of the manuscript is presented in Appendix II below.

The manuscript is in the form of a long scroll of paper. It is stored rolled up within a brass tube (*timpo gassa*) (Fig. 24) measuring 13 cm long and with a diameter of 9 cm, the top of which is engraved with a floral motif (Fig. 25). The paper scroll comprises three pieces of European laid paper which were originally glued together, and together measure 110.5 x 16 cm, but the top piece (Fig. 26) has now become detached from the other two, which are still joined together. The top piece of paper has ruled black-thick yellow-black-black ink frames on the two outer vertical sides and along the bottom. In the middle of the top half of the sheet is impressed a round seal in lampblack, inscribed: *Zayn al-'Abidīn Ṭāhīr Wājū 1257* (1841/2). Below the seal is a rectangular panel with the same black and yellow ruled frames, containing the *Bismillah* positioned centrally. This is followed by Syaikh Zainal Abidin's

27. See Facebook post by Fadly Ibrahim, 8 April 2023.



explanation that this list of all the Qur'ans he has copied has been compiled with scrupulous care and precise attention to detail in the names of the customers. These five lines of text are written in *lontara*' script, with some religious phrases in Arabic.

The main part of the manuscript – comprising the two pieces of paper still glued together – consists of three columns of circles, each framed with the same sequence of colours as in the ruled frames of the top piece: black-thick yellow-black-black. There are 19 rows on the scroll, yielding 57 circles, 52 of which have been filled in with writing in both *sérang* (Arabic) script and *lontara*' script. The top part of each circle gives the name of the customer in *sérang* script, followed by a description of who they are and where they are located in *lontara*' script. From the evidence of line 18, where only the right-hand circle has been filled in, and also thanks to mentions of repeat customers, it is clear that Syaikh Zainal Abidin filled in his chart from right to left in accordance with the direction of Arabic *sérang* script (although Bugis *lontara*' script is written left to right). Therefore in the edition in Appendix II, the entries have been numbered 1 to 52 starting at the top right, and proceeding line by line. In view of the neat and clean appearance of this chart, and the consistency of his handwriting in every circle, it is likely that it was written on a single occasion, perhaps on the basis of other records of all his customers.

Although this catalogue is undated, analysis of the paper can help to establish the date of writing. Photographs show two watermarks, evidently from the same sheet of Italian paper. At the top of the scroll is a (cropped) image of an oval medallion surrounded by a foliate wreath, with the initials 'B G' (Fig. 27). At the bottom of the scroll is a cropped 'moon face in shield' facing to the right, and the words 'Benedetto Gentile / Vittorio' (Fig. 28). According to Biddle (2017: 31), Benedetto Gentile was a papermaker with mills in the Ceneda/Serravalle region of the Veneto in northern Italy who was active from 1830 to 1908. Benedetto Gentile was a major exporter to the 'Levant' (i.e. the Middle East), but almost nothing is known about this papermaker because Ceneda/Serravalle was heavily bombed during the Battle of Vittorio Veneto in 1918, destroying much of the archival record of the region. Crucial for dating the paper of the Syaikh Zainal Abidin catalogue is the use of the toponym *Vittorio*, which was only adopted in 1866 when the neighbouring Ceneda and Serravalle *comuni* were joined into one municipality named after the king of Italy, Vittorio Emmanuele II.<sup>28</sup> This means that the catalogue certainly post-dates 1866, and most likely dates from the 1870s or early 1880s.<sup>29</sup>

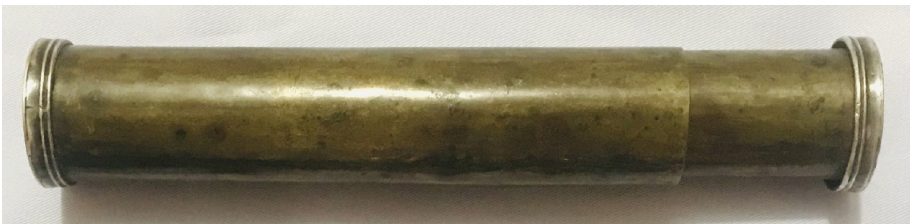
28. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vittorio\\_Veneto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vittorio_Veneto); accessed 8.9.2024.

29. Russell Jones found this watermark in several Malay manuscripts, including two dated 1877 and one dated 1882 (Jones 2021: 246, 248).





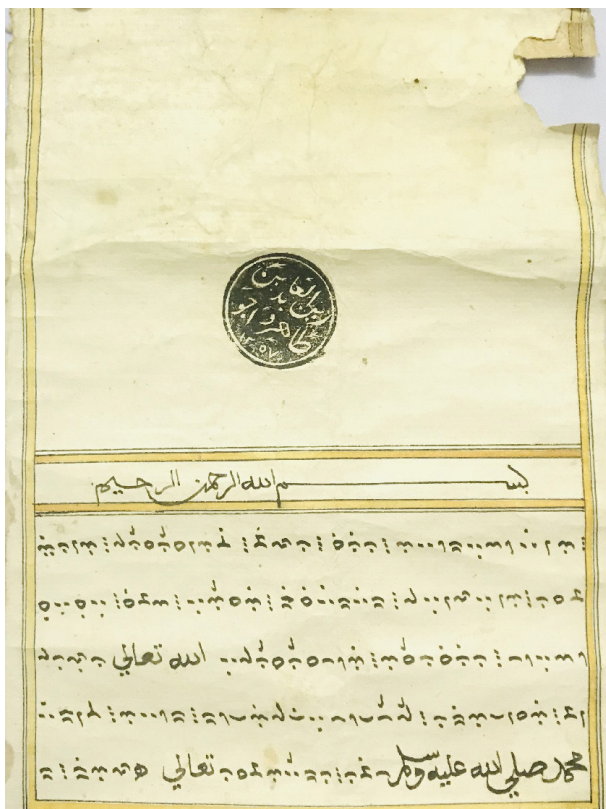
**Fig. 23** – Fadly Ibrahim holding the manuscript scroll of Syaikh Zainal Abidin, listing 52 Qur’an manuscripts he had copied, and the names of each customer. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Fadly Ibrahim, 8 April 2023.



**Fig. 24** – The brass tube (*timpo gassa*) in which manuscript catalogue is stored. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.



**Fig. 25** – The cap of the brass tube (*timpo gassa*) engraved with a floral motif. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.



**Fig. 26** – The opening page of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's catalogue, with his seal. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.



**Fig. 27** – Watermark with the initials ‘B G’ on the catalogue of Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.



**Fig. 28** – Watermark with a cropped ‘moon face in shield’ and the words ‘Benedetto Gentile / Vittorio’, on the catalogue of Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.



It is difficult to emphasize sufficiently the exceptional significance of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's catalogue for the study of Indonesian manuscripts in general, and of Qur'an manuscripts from maritime Southeast Asia in particular. Most studies of writing traditions of Indonesia and the Malay world are hampered by a dearth of 'primary secondary sources': information from within the writing culture itself about how books were made, who wrote them, who commissioned them, and how long they took to write, as well as knowledge of the appropriate terminology. The absence of colophons in so many Indonesian manuscripts – and particularly in Qur'an manuscripts – means that many of these questions are never answered for a particular region. Bugis and Makasar writing cultures are however renowned for their historicity: these are the only communities in Southeast Asia to have developed a tradition of daily court registers from the 17th century onwards; secular manuscripts may not infrequently include information on their creation; and, as noted above, Qur'an manuscripts copied by Sulawesi scribes are notable for their full colophons. Yet even within the South Sulawesi context, Syaikh Zainal Abidin's listing of all the Qur'ans he copied appears to be unique, with no similar manuscript records known from any of the other, similarly productive, Bugis scribes, let alone one manifested in such a polished and artistic presentation.

An analysis of the range of customers listed in Syaikh Zainal Abidin's manuscript leads to some interesting observations. The social range extends to the highest echelons, and includes the sultans of Pontianak (39) and Kutai (40), and the ruler of Luwu (20), as well as royal offspring from the courts of Pontianak and Pammana (10, 14, 50). Many customers have the Bugis noble titles *Petta* and *Daeng*. At least five patrons are female (34, 35, 38, 42, 50), and one of the most personal entries is a Qur'an made for La Disang, son of I Jappa, whose daughter had been Syaikh Zainal Abidin's wet-nurse (7).

There are also five repeat customers (12, 15, 34, 45, 48), including, intriguingly, Syaikh Ahmad Umar bin Syaikh Abdul Hayyi, who as mentioned above was himself a prolific Qur'an copyist. He is listed in the record as *Al-Haj Ahmad kakana Ali Majid re Pompanua*, 'Al-Haj Ahmad, older brother of Ali Majid in Pompanua' (47-48).<sup>30</sup> Why would Syaikh Ahmad Umar order copies of the Qur'an from another scribe? Was he perhaps passing on orders which he could not himself fulfill, or was he acting as a middleman for supplying fine manuscript copies of the Qur'an to customers?

Although most of the patrons are local to Pompanua and Pammana, Syaikh Zainal Abidin's Qur'ans were delivered to destinations as far away as Lampung in south Sumatra, Sumbawa and Sumenep in Madura. Four customers were *Nakhoda*, ship's captains. Fadly Ibrahim has suggested that *Nakhoda* may have played a crucial role in enabling the distribution of Qur'ans copied by Bugis scribes in Sulawesi to customers elsewhere. In 1854,

30. Identified by Fadly Ibrahim, pers.comm., 3 Jan. 2024.

one Bugis Nakhoda was known to ply the route Pompanua-Pallime-Jepara-Lampung-Riau-Malaka, which may have facilitated the deliveries to Syaikh Umar in Sumenep in Madura (5), and to Uwa' Pola in Lampung (23).<sup>31</sup> By far the most prominent 'foreign' location for customers was Pontianak, where nine Qur'ans were commissioned.

### **Linking the catalogue of Syaikh Zainal Abidin and his Qur'an manuscripts**

The key question that arises is whether it is possible to link up the seven Qur'an manuscripts described above with the customers listed in Syaikh Zainal Abidin's catalogue. With the assistance of some biographical data, as well as temporal markers such as reign dates – for example, Qur'ans were commissioned by Abdul Karim of Luwu (r. 1854-1880) (20), Sultan Hamid of Pontianak (r. 1855-1872) (39) and Sultan Sulaiman of Kutai (r. 1845-1899) (40) – we can be reasonably confident that this meticulous catalogue was arranged chronologically.

The earliest dated Qur'an known to have been copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin was in 1846 when he copied a Qur'an in 40 days in Pontianak, in the house of Encik Robiah in Kampung Tambu', during the reign of Sultan Syarif Uthman al-Kadri (r. 1819-1855). This is probably one of the nine Qur'ans written for Pontianak customers in Syaikh Zainal Abidin's catalogue (4, 6, 8-13, 39), most at a time when he was evidently resident there around 1846. The last numbered (39) can be eliminated as it was copied at a later date for Sultan Syarif Uthman's successor, Sultan Syarif Hamid al-Kadri (r. 1855-1872). Six of the Pontianak Qur'ans in the catalogue were copied for Bugis residents of Pontianak, and according to Fadly Ibrahim, for these commissions it would be most likely that the patrons would have hoped and expected Syaikh Zainal Abidin to carry out the sacred task of copying the Holy Word in their own houses. As Encik Robiah is a Malay name, it is more likely that the 1846 Qur'an can be linked to two on the list copied for respected Malay patrons: (4) for Muhammad Taib, son of the Datuk Kaya of Pontianak, or (9) for Pangeran Muda, son of Sultan Syarif Kasim al-Kadri (r. 1808-1819), the late brother and predecessor of Sultan Syarif Uthman. In view of the mention of the reigning sultan in the colophon, Fadly Ibrahim believes that it is most likely that the 1846 Qur'an was copied for the royal patron, Pangeran Muda, nephew of the sultan, and hence can be equated with no. 9 in the catalogue.

The second Qur'an, dated 1855 and copied in Pompanua is currently held in the Museum Batara Tua in Palopo in Luwu. There are three customers from Luwu listed in the catalogue: Wa Séng (21), Abdul Karim, Pajungngé of Luwu (20), and his son Daeng Masisi (46). Abdul Karim was the ruler of Luwu (r. 1854-1880), also known as Patipatau or Abdul Karim Toapanyompa

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31. Pers. comm., 3 Jan. 2024.



and entitled *Petta Matinroé ri Limpomajang*. The Qur'an is said to have been deposited in the Museum by descendants of the ruling family of Luwu, suggesting it is either (20) or (46). However, as the catalogue is ordered chronologically, no. 46 is one of the last Qur'ans copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin, probably in the late 1870s or early 1880s, and so the 1855 Qur'an is almost certainly that listed as no. 20 in the catalogue, copied for Abdul Karim.

The Qur'an of 1863 is held in Jampue, Pinrang. If we assume a certain regularity of production, then it can most likely be equated with one of two Qur'ans copied for ship's captains – either no. 27, copied for Nakhoda Ismail, or no. 28, copied for his cousin Nakhoda Abu – especially as Jampue is located on the coast.

The Qur'an dated 1865 is currently in the possession of Haji Puang Arif in Sinjai, a descendant of Syaikh Abdurrahman Cambang, Imam of Timurung, which is located in northern Bone not far from Pompanua. Syaikh Abdurrahman (d. 1928), like many Bugis ulama, spent time studying in Mecca but was back in Pompanua by 1868, and served as Imam of Timurung from 1871 to 1895. During this time Syaikh Abdurrahman appears to have been based mainly in Pompanua (where his wife and children are buried), and had very close family ties with Syaikh Zainal Abidin, with marriages between their children and great-grandchildren. Thus of the five Qur'ans copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin for Pompanua patrons (19, 24, 30, 47, 48), due to these family connections Fadly Ibrahim believes the most likely candidate to be equated with the Qur'an of 1865 is no. 30, copied for Syaikh Zainal Abidin's own uncle Uwa' Husain, and that this Qur'an subsequently passed into the family of Syaikh Abdurrahman. Further supporting evidence is the chronological location of no. 30 in the catalogue, coming after no. 20 which has been identified as being copied in 1855, while nos. 47 and 48, supplied to the fellow Qur'anic scribe Al-Haj Ahmad, can probably best be regarded as professional commissions.

The Qur'an dated 1867 was held in Belawa in Wajo. Fadly Ibrahim believes this is most likely no. 33, copied for Uwa' Habibah, Matowaé in Pammana, and that it later passed into the hands of Hajjah Fatimah, Syaikh Zainal Abidin's *besan* (mother-in-law of one of his children), who was from Belawa.

The 1870 Qur'an came into the possession of its current owner, Syaikh Zainal Abidin's descendant Ilham Yasin in Makassar, from his uncle Lukman in Pammana in Wajo. In the catalogue there are at least ten Qur'an manuscripts copied for people in Pammana: five in Pammana (14, 16, 33, 34, 50), four in Lagosi (18, 19, 31, 36), the seat of the *kedatuan* of Pammana, and one in Olangeng (35). As the Qur'an has been passed down through family descendants, it is clearly not one of the three copied for the ruling family of Pammana (14, 16, 50), and as the Qur'an of 1865 has been tentatively identified as no. 30, the most likely candidates for the Qur'an of 1870 are

those numbered in the mid-thirties. According to Fadly Ibrahim, the most likely matches are no. 35, ordered by Uwa' Rabbiah in Olengleng, or no. 36, by La Minu'.

Lastly is the Qur'an dated 1888, which was copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin in Paleppang in Lagosi at a time when he was Kadi of Pammana. It is a family heirloom now owned by Haji Zainal Abidin in Pompanua, Bone, inherited from his mother Siti Tasniah (d. 2019), who was the daughter of Abdullah, son of Abu Bakareng, son of H. Muhammad Nur, son of Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Fadly Ibrahim believes that 'La Dollah', owner of the last Qur'an on the list, no. 52, may refer to Abdullah, Syaikh Zainal Abidin's own great-grandson, and father of Siti Tasniah. As Syaikh Zainal Abidin was 79 years old in 1888 and died in 1890, it is likely that this Qur'an is both the last entry in his catalogue, and the last Qur'an he wrote in his long and productive life.

Another question is whether Syaikh Zainal Abidin was also responsible for the illuminated elements in his Qur'an manuscripts. Only the first three Qur'ans of 1846, 1855 and 1865 have double decorated frames, but five have illuminated marginal ornaments marking the start of *juz'* and other textual divisions. Both the 1846 Qur'an and that of 1865 have a similar palette in the illuminated frames, which have sections in blue and white, and in red and yellow. As the 1846 Qur'an was copied in Pontianak and that of 1865 almost certainly in south Sulawesi, it seems likely that the frames were executed by the writer himself, rather than a separate artist. The absence of illuminated frames in the two later Qur'ans might also be related to Syaikh Zainal Abidin's increasing age, although the fact that these two manuscripts stayed in family hands might also explain the absence of undoubtedly more costly full double decorated frames. Yet precisely because the two later Qur'ans do not have illuminated frames, it is highly likely that Syaikh Zainal Abidin himself was responsible for drawing the marginal ornaments in his Qur'an manuscripts (Figs. 10 and 13). Syaikh Zainal Abidin's aesthetic sensibilities are also evident in the artistic presentation of his catalogue, with the circles displaying the same thin black-thick yellow-thin black-thin black borders as found in the page frames of his Qur'an manuscripts.

We end with a note on Syaikh Zainal Abidin's two seals. The seal impressed on the scroll catalogue is a small round seal inscribed *Zayn al-'Abidīn Ṭāhīr Wājū 1257*, 'Zainal Abidin Tahir, Wajo, 1257' (1841/2) (Fig. 29). It is interesting that the seal includes the name *Tahir*, as this is not included in any of the colophons seen in manuscripts copied by Syaikh Zainal Abidin cited above. The calligraphy is more accomplished than generally found on Sulawesi seals, and the numeral '5' is written as a small circle, 'o', which is typically Middle Eastern. This is very different from the standard form of the numeral '5' in Southeast Asia, until about 1900, which was like a backwards 'B', as can be seen in the statistics of letters, words and verses in Qur'ans

(Figs. 8, 11) and in a colophon (Fig. 12). Therefore it is most likely that this Ottoman-style seal was made for Syaikh Zainal Abidin in the Hijaz, for indeed many ulama and pilgrims from Nusantara performing the Hajj had seals made on arrival in the Haramayn.

As noted above, a manuscript of the *Mawlid* of al-Barzanji in the collection of Abdul Muqaddim in Pompanua (Figs. 14, 15) bears another seal of Syaikh Zainal Abidin facing the title page (Figs. 30, 31). The seal bears exactly the same inscription as on that impressed on the scroll catalogue, *Zayn al-'Abidīn Ṭāhīr Wājū 1257*, but the slightly irregular petalled outline and less refined calligraphy suggests that this one was made locally, but as a faithful copy of the earlier seal, and with the same date and indeed the same form of the numeral '5'. Perhaps it was made as a spare, or to replace the original seal which had become lost.



Fig. 29 – Seal of Syaikh Zainal Abidin inscribed *Zayn al-'Abidīn Ṭāhīr Wājū 1257* (1841/2), probably produced in the Hijaz.



Fig. 30 – Seal with the same inscription and date, probably produced in Sulawesi at a later date.



**Fig. 31** – Title page of *Kitab Mawlid* of al-Barzanji, with the seal of Syaikh Zainal Abidin. Collection Abdul Muqaddim, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Fadly Ibrahim, 27 January 2024.

With the help of some of the colophons, we can begin to make an estimate of Syaikh Zainal Abidin's rate of copying at certain times. Most Sulawesi Qur'an manuscripts of the 19th century comprise about 600 pages, and since the 1846 Qur'an took 40 days to copy, Syaikh Zainal Abidin was able to copy 15 pages of Qur'anic text per day at that period. In the smaller format volume of *nazam* written nearly forty years later in 1885, the second text, comprising 13 folios or 26 pages took 2 days to copy, written at a rate of 13 pages a day, while the third text of 35 folios or 70 pages was completed 12 days later, thus averaging 6 pages a day. Fadly Ibrahim has suggested that in the 1840s Syaikh Zainal Abidin may have been able to copy about three Qur'ans a year, with the frequency lessening perhaps to one a year in later decades, bearing in mind of course that non-Qur'anic manuscripts were also copied throughout this period. In the last Qur'an of 1888, it is not surprising that the handwriting is rather shaky in ductus (speed and fluency of pen strokes) compared to nearly two decades earlier in 1870 (compare Figs. 10 and 13). Even so, despite Syaikh Zainal Abidin's great age at this time, the full manuscript is still perfectly competently and legibly written, and his distinctive calligraphic 'signature' of the two religious inscriptions at the end is as dashing as ever.

Two years after completing the Qur'an of 1888, Syaikh Zainal Abidin died in 1890, and was buried at Tadangpalie in Wajo in South Sulawesi (Fig. 32).





**Fig. 32** – The tombstone (*batu nisan*) of Syaikh Zainal Abidin ibn al-Khatib Umar, at Tadangpalie, Wajo, inscribed with the date of his death (*hijrat al-nabi sanat 1308* (1890/1)). Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 13 April 2024.

## Conclusion

In surveys of Qur’anic and other Islamic manuscripts from South Sulawesi, the name of Syaikh Zainal Abidin bin al-Khatib Umar is familiar as that of one of the most prolific members of a very accomplished family of religious scholars and scribes (Ibrahim 2024). Like many other Bugis *ulama* he spent an extended period of study in the Hijaz, and after his return to Southeast Asia was known to have copied several Qur’an manuscripts and other religious works in Arabic. The discovery in 2023 of his personal catalogue of 52 Qur’an manuscripts that he had copied, identifying the patron who had commissioned each copy and their location, showed that the evidence hitherto gathered represented only the proverbial tip of the iceberg of Syaikh Zainal Abidin’s scribal production, and underlined the limitations of our knowledge of the manuscript ecology of Nusantara and its networks.

This exceptional manuscript also has a symbolic significance. The rich diversity of South Sulawesi writing traditions is well reflected in the catalogue of over four thousand manuscripts documented and microfilmed (PaEni 2003), which includes at least twenty copies of the Qur’an, and numerous other manuscripts either wholly or partly in Arabic or Malay. Sometimes these are combined within a single volume with Bugis/Makasar works written in either *lontara*’ or *sérang* scripts, while texts in *lontara*’ script will commonly employ Arabic script for conventional Islamic phrases such as *bismillah* and *tamat*. Yet it is often the case that South Sulawesi manuscripts primarily in Arabic script are analysed through the lens of Islamic studies, while texts in *lontara*’ are often prioritised for their historical and literary contents.<sup>32</sup> Syaikh

<sup>32</sup>. For example, Roger Tol’s important survey of writings of South Sulawesi specifically excludes manuscripts in Arabic script (Tol 1996: 214).



Zainal Abidin's catalogue, which combines in each entry both *lontara'* and Arabic *sérang* script, reflects the integration of both script traditions within Bugis/Makasar society and culture, and serves as an important corrective for a clearer understanding of the writing traditions of South Sulawesi.

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors wish to express their profound appreciation to Fadly Ibrahim for his deep knowledge of Bugis history and scholarly networks in the 19th century, and valuable information and advice generously given, without which this article could not have been written. They are also most grateful to Campbell Macknight for all his help, insightful comments and suggestions, and also to the anonymous peer reviewers. Any remaining errors are entirely the responsibility of the authors.

## Appendix: Texts and Translations

The Bugis texts are given firstly in bold italics in transliteration from Bugis (*lontara*') and Arabic (*sérang*) script, and secondly in italics in Indonesian translations, both by Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, and lastly in English translations by Gallop. In the transliteration of the Bugis text full diacritics and accents are used for titles and toponyms (eg. Daéng, Boné, Pontiana'), but in the Indonesian and English translations the standard Indonesian forms are used (eg. Daeng, Bone, Pontianak).

### I: Syaikh Zainal Abidin's genealogy

The manuscript (see Fig. 33) is damaged in the bottom left corner, but the lacunae have been read with the assistance of a modern romanised copy of the silsilah. It is not known who copied this manuscript, whether Syaikh Zainal Abidin himself, or another scribe.

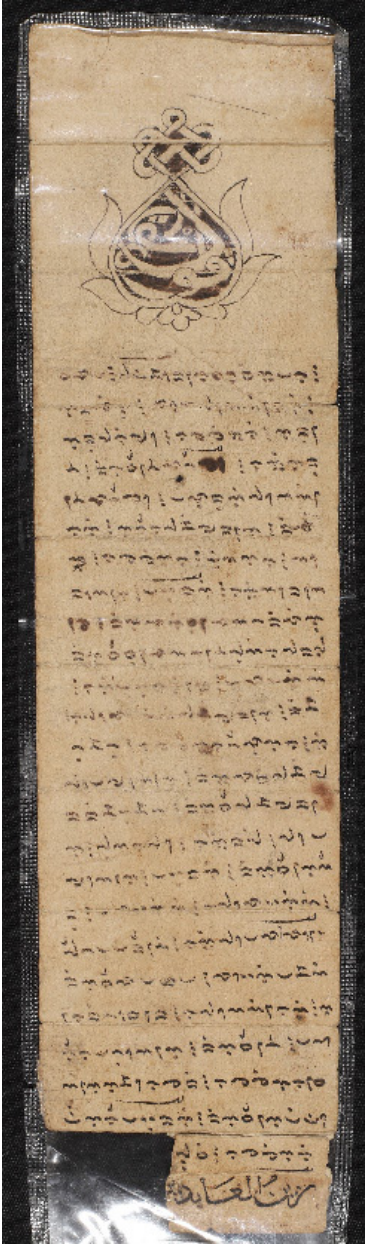
#### *Qawluhu al-Haqq*

***Salama'/Padaborané sanasiamanna/Arung Liu/lokka pobawinéi/Arung Panincong/ najajianni/ Arungngé/ riasengngé/ La Tejjo/ naia Arungngé/ La Tejjo/ mallurui powawinéi/ ane'na Pabbicaraé/ riLiu/ najajianna/ dua ana'/ worowané/ makkunrai/ naia woroané/ rialai Suléwatang riLiu riaseng Suléwatangngé Puwanna Paraga/ naia makkunraié/ mallakkaiwi/ napollakkaiwi Pabbicaraé/ riBatu-Batu/ najajianna tellu ana'/ iapomacowaé/ rialasi Pabbicara riBatu-Batu/ riaseng Pabbicaraé/ Puwang Appo/ naia rappi/ pomacowaé/ makkunrai/ riasengngé Werru/ mallakkaiwi/ napollakkaiwi/ Petta Maddanrengngé/ naia pomalolongngé riaseng La Muhama/ lokkai mabawiné riTosora/ napowawinéi/ ane'na Matowaé/ riasengngé/ Matowaé Ambo'na Jarri/ najajianna séddi ane' makkunrai/ riasengngé Middo [/ mallakkai ri La]gusi/ najajianni [Zainal Abidin].***

#### *KataNya adalah Kebenaran*

*Selamat, Padaborané (istilah untuk saudara laki-laki dengan laki-laki) dari ayah yang sama / Arung Liu memperistrikan / Arung Panincong. Kemudian melahirkan Arungngé / yang bernama La Tejjo. Dan Arungngé / La Tejjo mendatangi anak Pabbicaraé (hakim kerajaan) Liu / untuk diperistrikan dan melahirkan dua anak / laki-laki dan perempuan. Anak laki-laknya / dijadikan Suléwatang (petugas yang sewaktu-waktu dapat bertindak menggantikan tugas raja) ri Liu, / bernama Suléwatangé Puanna Paraga. / Anak perempuannya bersuami, / mempersuamikan Pabbicaraé ri Batu-Batu / dan melahirkan tiga orang anak. Anak / sulungnya dijadikan Pabbicara / ri Batu-Batu bernama Pabbicara / Puang Appo, dan anak / keduanya seorang perempuan yang bernama Werru / yang mempersuamikan / Petta Maddarengé, sedangkan anak bungsunya / bernama Muhammad, pergi ke Tosora / memperistrikan anaknya*

/ Matoaé Tosora, Matoa itu yang bernama / Ambona Jarri (Bapaknya Jarri), dan melahirkan seorang / anak perempuan yang bernama Middo / bersuami di Lagosi dan melahirkan / [Zainal Abidin].



‘His Word is the Truth

Greetings. A half brother with the same father of Arung Liu (in Wajo) went and married Arung Panincong (in Soppeng), and they had [a son] the Arung named La Tejjo. Then the Arung La Tejjo made approaches to marry the daughter of the Pabbicara (court spokesman) of Liu, and they had two children, a boy and a girl. Then the son became Suléwatang (deputy ruler) of Liu, and was named the Suléwatang Puanna Paraga. Then the daughter married and her husband was the Pabbicara of Batu-Batu (in Soppeng) and they had three children. The eldest became Pabbicara of Batu-Batu and was named the Pabbicara Puang Appo; then the second child, a girl named Werru, married and her husband was Petta (our lord) the Maddanreng (the minister for foreign affairs in Bone); then the youngest was named Muhammad. He went to find a wife in Tosora (in Wajo) and his wife was the daughter of the Matoa who was named the Matoa Ambo’na Jarri (the father of Jarri), and they had one child, a daughter who was named Middo. [She married] in Lagosi (in Pammana, Wajo) and had [Zainal Abidin].

**Fig. 33** – Genealogy (*silsilah*) showing Syaikh Zainal Abidin’s descent through his mother from the brother of the Arung of Liu. Collection H. Zainal Abidin bin Muhammad Jasin, Pompanua, Bone. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas.

## II: Syaikh Zainal Abidin's personal catalogue of 52 Qur'ans copied

### *Introduction to the catalogue*

See Fig. 26 for this piece of paper, which has become separated from the catalogue.

Seal: *Zayn al-'Abidīn Ṭāhīr Wājū 1257*, 'Zainal Abidin Tahir, Wajo, 1257' (1841/2)

### *Bismi-llāhi ar-rahmāni ar-rahīm*

*Iyanaé pannelsa-nessaéngngi bilanna sininna Akorang kuwokié sukku-sukku sibawa kupaassai risikira-kira pakkullékkué. Sibawa patulunna Allah Taala kupannelsa-nessatoi asenna sininna to kuwokirangngé Akorang romai pada kutomateppe' nariamasei baré' ri Allah Taala nasaba' akeranna nabitta Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam.*

*Dengan nama Allah yang Maha Pengasih lagi Maha Penyayang.*

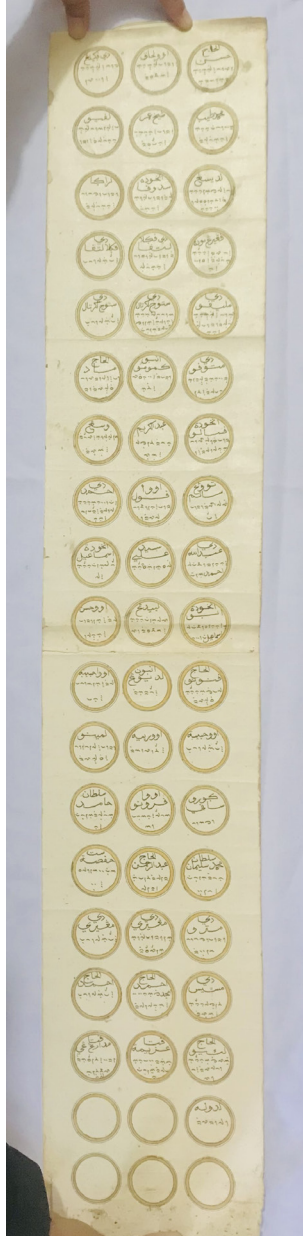
*Inilah yang menjelaskan jumlah keseluruhan al-Qur'an yang saya tulis, sangat sempurna dan saya jelaskan semaksimal mungkin sesuai kemampuanku dengan pertolongan dari Allah Taala, dan saya jelaskan dengan sejelastelastnya, semua nama orang-orang yang pernah saya tuliskan al-Qur'an, agar mereka yakin dan diRahmati oleh Allah Taala sebab karena Nabi kita Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam.*

'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

This is a listing of all the Qur'ans that I have written, in a very accurate form. I have been as exact as possible, with the help of God Almighty, and I have recorded as precisely as possible, to the best of my ability, the names of all the people for whom I have copied the Qur'an, so that they may be assured of receiving the Mercy of God Almighty, for the sake of our Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him.'




### *The catalogue*



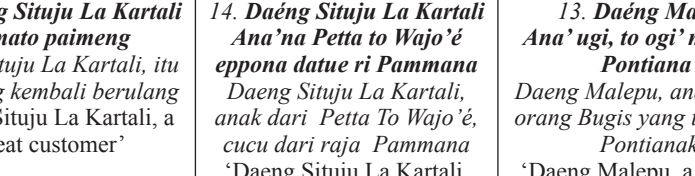
See Fig. 34 for the full catalogue. In the Table below, photographic reproductions of each line containing three circles are followed by the readings within each circle presented in the same position as in the manuscript, and hence should be read from right to left in each row. For ease of reference, the entries have been numbered from 1 to 52, and these are the numbers cited in the article.








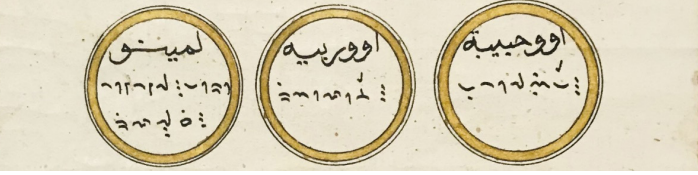
**Fig. 34** – Syaikh Zainal Abidin's catalogue of 52 Qur'an manuscripts copied, 1870s-1880s. Collection Andi Walinono, Gowa. Photograph courtesy of Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, 30 August 2024.

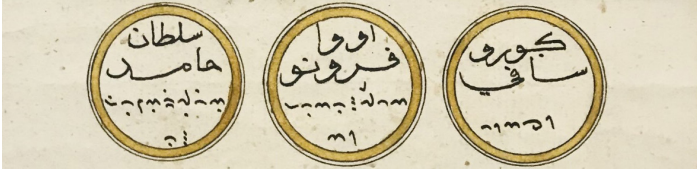




		
<p><b>3. Daéng Fakilang Ana' Ugi Topalléko</b> Daeng Fakilang, anak Bugis Topalleko 'Daeng Fakilang A Bugis from Topalleko'</p>	<p><b>2. Uwa Haq Ana' Ugi monro ri Sambawa</b> Uwa Haq, anak Bugis yang tinggal di Sambawa 'Uwa Haq, a Bugis who lives in Sambawa'</p>	<p><b>1. Al-Haj Husain Ana' Ugi Tolaé ri wanuwanna</b> Al-Haj Husain, anak Bugis, Tolae kampung halamannya 'Al-Haj Husain, a Bugis, his home village is Tolae'</p>
		
<p><b>6. La Puyu Ugi to Wagé monro ri Pontiana'</b> La Puyu, orang Bugis Wage yang tinggal di Pontianak 'La Puyu, a Bugis from Wage who lives in Pontianak'</p>	<p><b>5. Syaikh Umar Tuang-tuang monro ri Sumene'</b> Syaikh Umar, tuan-tuan yang tinggal di Sumenep 'Syaikh Umar, a respected man who lives in Sumenep'</p>	<p><b>4. Muhammad Thayyib Ana'na Datu' Kaya ri Pontiana'</b> Muhammad Thayyib, anak dari Datuk Kaya di Pontianak 'Muhammad Thayyib, son of the Datuk Kaya of Pontianak'</p>
		
<p><b>9. La Raga Towajo monro ri Pontiana'</b> La Raga, orang Wajo yang tinggal di Pontianak 'La Raga, a Wajo who lives in Pontianak'</p>	<p><b>8. Anakhodah Siduppa Ugi' monro ri Pontiana'</b> Nakhoda Siduppa, anak Bugis yang tinggal di Pontianak 'Nakhoda Siduppa, a Bugis who lives in Pontianak'</p>	<p><b>7. La Disang Ana'na I Jappa to pasuésngnga riana'na</b> La Disang, anak dari I Jappa yang menjadikan anaknyanya ibu susuanku 'La Disang, son of I Jappa, who made his daughter my wet nurse'</p>




	<p><b>12. Daéng Pagala Latappa matopimeng</b>  <i>Daeng Pagala Latappa, itu juga yang kembali berulang 'Daeng Pagala Latappa, a repeat customer'</i></p>	<p><b>11. Daéng Pagala Latappa tosogi' monro ri Pontiana'</b>  <i>Daeng Pagala Latappa, orang kaya yang tinggal di Pontianak</i>  <i>'Daeng Pagala Latappa, a wealthy man who lives in Pontianak'</i></p>	<p><b>10. Pangerang Mudah Ane'na Sultan Kasima ri Pontiana'</b>  <i>Pangeran Muda, anak dari Sultan Kasim di Pontianak</i>  <i>'Pangeran Muda, son of Sultan Kasim of Pontianak'</i></p>
	<p><b>15. Daéng Situju La Kartali Iyamato paimeng</b>  <i>Daeng Situju La Kartali, itu juga yang kembali berulang 'Daeng Situju La Kartali, a repeat customer'</i></p>	<p><b>14. Daéng Situju La Kartali Ana'na Petta to Wajo'é eppona datue ri Pammana</b>  <i>Daeng Situju La Kartali, anak dari Petta To Wajo'é, cucu dari raja Pammana</i>  <i>'Daeng Situju La Kartali, son of Petta To Wajo'é, grandson of the ruler of Pammana'</i></p>	<p><b>13. Daéng Malepu Ana' ugi, to ogi' monro ri Pontiana'</b>  <i>Daeng Malepu, anak Bugis, orang Bugis yang tinggal di Pontianak</i>  <i>'Daeng Malepu, a Bugis, a Bugis person who lives in Pontianak'</i></p>
	<p><b>18. Al-Haj Mada to Larompong monro ri Lagosi</b>  <i>Al-Haj Mada, orang Larompong yang tinggal di Lagosi</i>  <i>'Haji Mada, a person from Larompong who lives in Lagosi'</i></p>	<p><b>17. Ambo' Opu Kamummu Lasina ri Marowanging</b>  <i>Ambo' Opu Kamummu, Lasina di Marowanging</i>  <i>'Ambo' Opu Kamummu, Lasina in Marowanging'</i></p>	<p><b>16. Daéng Mattuppu Anréguru ana'karungngéri Pammana</b>  <i>Daéng Mattuppu, Anreguru ana' karungnge di Pammana</i>  <i>'Daeng Mattuppu, Anreguru ana' karungnge in Pammana'</i></p>

	<p>21. <i>Wa Séng ritella Opu Gaté ri Luwu</i>  <i>Wa Séng, bernama Opu Gaté di Luwu</i>                      ‘Wa Séng, called Opu Gaté in Luwu’</p>	<p>20. <i>Abdul Karim Pajunggé ri Tana Luwu</i>  <i>Abdul Karim, Pajunggé di Tanah Luwu</i>                      ‘Abdul Karim, Pajunggé in Luwu’</p>	<p>19. <i>Anakhodah Pasalo to Lagosi monro ri Pompanua</i>  <i>Nakhoda Pasalo, orang Lagosi yang tinggal di Pompanua</i>                      ‘Nakhoda Pasalo, a person from Lagosi who lives in Pompanua’</p>
	<p>24. <i>Daéng Ahmad ana'na anakoda Wa Mere' ri Pompanua</i>  <i>Daeng Ahmad, anaknya nakhoda Wa Mere' di Pompanua</i>                      ‘Daeng Ahmad, son of Nakhoda Wa Mere’ of Pompanua’</p>	<p>23. <i>Uwa' Pola to Boné monro ri Lampung</i>  <i>Uwa' Pola, orang Bone yang tinggal di Lampung</i>                      ‘Uwa’ Pola, a Bone person who lives in Lampung’</p>	<p>22. <i>Tuang Salim Monro ri Pallime'</i>  <i>Tuan Salim yang tinggal di Pallime'</i>                      ‘Tuan Salim, who lives in Palime’</p>
	<p>27. <i>Anakhodah Ismail ana'na Daéng Pateppa</i>  <i>Nakhoda Ismail, anaknya Daeng Pateppa</i>                      ‘Nakhoda Ismail, son of Daeng Pateppa’</p>	<p>26. <i>Sayyid Ali ana'na Sayye' Sapi'</i>  <i>Sayid Ali, anaknya Sayid Safi</i>                      ‘Sayid Ali, son of Sayid Safi’</p>	<p>25. <i>Daéng Abdullah padaboranéna Daéng Ahmad</i>  <i>Daeng Abdullah, saudara laki-lakinya Daeng Ahmad</i>                      ‘Daeng Abdullah, male cousin of Daeng Ahmad’</p>

		
<p>30. <b><i>Awuwa Husain monroé ri Pompanua</i></b>  <i>Uwa' Husain, yang tinggal di Pompanua</i>            'Uwa' Husain, who lives in Pompanua'</p>	<p>29. <b><i>La Biding ana'na Daéng Palallo ri Sambawa</i></b>  <i>La Biding, anaknya Daeng Palallo di Sumbawa</i>            'La Biding, son of Daeng Palallo in Sumbawa'</p>	<p>28. <b><i>Anakhoda Abu padaorowanéna nakoda Ismail</i></b>  <i>Nakhoda Abu, saudara laki-lakinya Nakhoda Ismail</i>            'Nakhoda Abu, male cousin of Nakhoda Ismail'</p>
		
<p>33. <b><i>Uwa' Habibah Matowaé ri Pammana</i></b>  <i>Uwa' Habibah, Matowaé di Pammana</i>            'Uwa' Habibah, Matowaé in Pammana'</p>	<p>32. <b><i>Ambo'na La Dongi ri Araté</i></b>  <i>Anaknya La Dongi di Arate</i>            'Son of La Dongi in Arate'</p>	<p>31. <b><i>Al-Haj Panono ane'na Aji Mappa ri Lagosi</i></b>  <i>Al-Haj Panono, anaknya Aji Mappa di Lagosi</i>            'Al-Haj Panono, son of Aji Mappa in Lagosi'</p>
		
<p>36. <b><i>La Minu' to Témpé monro ri Lagosi</i></b>  <i>La Minu', orang Tempe yang tinggal di Lagosi</i>            'La Minu', a person from Tempe who lives in Lagosi'</p>	<p>35. <b><i>Uwa' Rabiah ri Olongeng</i></b>  <i>Uwa' Rabiah, di Olongeng</i>            'Uwa' Rabiah, of Olongeng'</p>	<p>34. <b><i>Uwa' Habibah mutopaimeng</i></b>  <i>Uwa' Habibah, itu juga yang kembali berulang</i>            'Uwa' Habibah, a repeat customer'</p>

		
<p><b>39. Sultan Hamid Datué ri Pontiana'</b> <i>Sultan Hamid, Raja di Pontianak</i> 'Sultan Hamid, ruler of Pontianak'</p>	<p><b>38. Uwa' Parunu' matuwanna Petta Wawo</b> <i>Uwa' Parunu', mertuanya Petta Wawo</i> 'Uwa' Parunu', mother-in-law of Petta Wawo'</p>	<p><b>37. Guru Sapi' to Wajo</b> <i>Guru Sapi', orang Wajo</i> 'Teacher Sapi', from Wajo'</p>
		
<p><b>42. Sitti Hafsa Sappo wékkaduwakku</b> <i>Sitti Hafsa, sepupu duakaliku</i> 'Sitti Hafsa, my second cousin'</p>	<p><b>41. Al-haj Abdu Rahman Imangngé ri Paréparé</b> <i>Al-Haj Abdul Rahman, Imam di Parepare</i> 'Al-Haj Abdul Rahman, Imam of Parepare'</p>	<p><b>40. Sultan Muhammad Sulaiman Datue ri Tana Kute</b> <i>Sultan Muhammad Sulaiman, Raja di Tanah Kutai</i> 'Sultan Muhammad Sulaiman, ruler in the land of Kutai'</p>
		
<p><b>45. Daéng Mangénre' iyamato paimeng</b> <i>Daeng Mangerne', itu juga yang kembali berulang</i> 'Daeng Mangerne', a repeat customer'</p>	<p><b>44. Daéng Mangénre' Ogi' monroé ri Selle'é</b> <i>Daeng Mangerne', orang Bugis yang tinggal di Selle'e</i> 'Daeng Mangerne', a Bugis who lives in Selle'e'</p>	<p><b>43. Daéng Materu to Wajo monro ri Kute</b> <i>Daeng Materu, orang Wajo yang tinggal di Kutai</i> 'Daeng Materu, a person from Wajo who lives in Kutai'</p>



		
<p>48. <b>Al-haj Ahmad iyamato paimeng</b> Al-Haj Ahmad, itu juga yang kembali berulang 'Al-Haj Ahmad, a repeat customer'</p>	<p>47. <b>Al-haj Ahmad Kakana Aji Majid ri Pompanua</b> Al-Haj Ahmad, kakaknya Aji Majid di Pompanua 'Al-Haj Ahmad, older brother of Aji Majid in Pompanua'</p>	<p>46. <b>Daéng Masisi Ane'na pajunggé ri Luwu</b> Daeng Masisi, anaknya Pajungge di Luwu 'Daeng Masisi, the son of the Pajungge of Luwu'</p>
		
<p>51. <b>Petta Madaringgé riasenggé Karaénggé Ballatingi</b> Petta Madaringnge, bernama Karaengge Ballatingi 'Petta Madaringnge, named Karaengge Ballatingi'</p>	<p>50. <b>Petta Azimat Ana' makkunraina Datué ri Pammana</b> Petta Azimat, anak perempuannya raja di Pammana 'Petta Azimat, daughter of the ruler of Pammana'</p>	<p>49. <b>Al-Haj La'yu Ane'na aji laittaa ri Lapattolo</b> Al-Haj La'yu, anaknya Aji Laittaa di Lapattolo 'Al-Haj La'yu, son of Aji Laittaa in Lapattolo'</p>
		
		<p>52. <b>La Dollah ri Larompong</b> La Dollah, di Larompong 'La Dollah, in Larompong'</p>

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*AGLAIA IANKOVSKAIA* \*

## On ‘hanging meaning’ and its transmission. Tracing a didactic poem from Aceh

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### **Introduction**

In manuscripts from the Indonesian-Malay world, translations are sometimes found on the same page with the source text, accommodated between the lines of the latter and often arranged in inclined fragments. Among the terms used to describe such a layout are *makna gandhul* (‘hanging meaning’) and *terjemahan gandhul* (‘hanging translation’): indeed, hooked to the corresponding parts of the original text, these translations hang in the interlinear space as if threaded on the string of the source text line. However, a closer look at such translations reveals that they tend to be hanging, or rather pending, in terms of not only shape, but also content. Unlike the more static source texts (*matn*), which are attempted to be reproduced intact—to the best of a scribe’s abilities, interlinear translations seem to manifest themselves as dynamic and open to modification—‘open’ indeed being a key word here, as has been pointed out by Johns (2009: 54–55).

In this article, I attempt to demonstrate the fluidity of interlinear translation, as practiced in the Malay-speaking and writing world, through a case study of two copies of an anonymous didactic Arabic poem from Aceh, Sumatra. The copies, both provided with translations to Malay between the lines, are found in two manuscripts: ML 341 stored at the National Library of Indonesia in Jakarta, and EAP329/1/11 (cf. Figs 1-5) from a private collection in Pidie Regency, Aceh, that has been digitised under the British Library’s Endangered Archives

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Programme. The former manuscript, along with its direct copy from Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje's collection preserved in Leiden (Or. 7075), has been discussed in my article published in the previous issue of *Archipel* (see Iankovskaia 2023). Addressing the poem and its interlinear translation as presented in the manuscripts Or. 7075 and ML 341 (hereafter referred to as the Leiden and Jakarta copies respectively), this earlier article had been written without regard to some other copies of the text that I came across later. Being one of these recently identified copies, the Endangered Archives manuscript EAP329/1/11 (hereafter the Pidie copy) is the focal point of the present follow-up article, as it appears to provide interesting material for comparison with the Jakarta/Leiden version.

An *urjūzah* in form (type of Arabic verse written in *rajaz* metre), the poem in question deals with the ethics of learning and offers guidelines for a good Muslim student.<sup>1</sup> The text appears to have been circulating in the wider Islamic world for at least two or three centuries, but its origins and authorship remain uncertain. In the Indonesian-Malay world, the poem seems to have gained a limited popularity, as it occurs in a few manuscripts and printed *kitab kuning*<sup>2</sup> (e.g. *Nazm al-maṭlab* 1998). One of the handwritten copies is found in the Leiden University Libraries in the collection of Snouck Hurgronje<sup>3</sup> (Or. 7075, pp. 1–7) and is superscribed in Dutch as the 'Poem of the student',<sup>4</sup> while another one is stored in the National Library of Indonesia in Jakarta (ML 341, pp. 208–211).<sup>5</sup> These two manuscripts, both of them coming from Aceh, date back to the turn of the 20th century and are directly related to each other—the former being a copy of the latter (for more detail see Iankovskaia 2023:

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1. The message of the poem could become a topic for a separate discussion. On the surface, the learning principles described in it appear to correspond to the mainstream set of pedagogical ideas dating back to the thirteenth-century scholar al-Zarnūjī (see az-Zarnūjī 2001). At the same time, the text possibly contains hints at a Sufi influence: for example, the somewhat confusing line 30 ('Ask [your mentor's] advice, even if he is a grocer') might relate to a postclassical ideal of illiterate Sufi master whose knowledge comes not from bookish learning but from divine revelation (Shamsy 2020: 47).

2. *Kitab kuning* ('yellow books') are texts on the principles of Islamic faith, jurisprudence, and ethics traditionally used for teaching in Indonesia's Islamic schools. The poem under discussion does not appear to be among the most popular texts of this category (for example, it is not represented in the collection of some 900 *kitab kuning* by Martin van Bruinessen (1989)); however, today it is still found in the curriculums of some Islamic schools of Java and Sumatra where it appears with the title *Nazm al-maṭlab* or *Nazmul maṭlab* (see Amrizal 2016: 78, 84; Anshori, Wardana 2022: 297).

3. At the turn of the 20th century, the renowned Dutch Orientalist Snouck Hurgronje (1857–1936) was advisor to the Governor of Aceh.

4. See a digital copy at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:3128072> (accessed on 17.09.2024).

5. I thank the staff of the National Library of Indonesia for granting me access to a digital copy of the manuscript.



92–95). This article brings to scholarly attention one more, apparently earlier, copy of the same text that might shed some light if not on the age or origins of the poem, then at least on the history of its transmission in the region. Same as the above-mentioned two copies, the manuscript under discussion originates from Aceh. Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme and dated to the 18th century, it can be found on the British Library website with the number EAP329/1/11 (for the poem see pp. 7–11 of the digital copy).<sup>6</sup>

Besides these three Acehnese copies of the poem, I have been recently able to identify five more manuscripts containing the text—four of them coming from Aceh and one from West Sumatra (for a full list of the known copies and more detail see the Appendix). The Acehnese manuscripts are housed in Banda Aceh in the Aceh State Museum (07\_515, which contains two copies of the poem, and 07\_784) and Pedir Museum (Ms.PM.034).<sup>7</sup> These four copies are undated, either significantly damaged or fragmented, and require further research.<sup>8</sup> Remarkably, 07\_515 comes from Pidie—same as EAP329/1/11 (*Katalog Naskah Museum Aceh* 2013: 15). One more copy of the poem originates not from Aceh (the only such exemplar that I have come across so far) but from Surau Simaung, Sijunjung, in West Sumatra.<sup>9</sup> It is found on ff. 4v–7r of the manuscript DS 0043 00014 digitised by the DREAMSEA project, which is dated to 1790–1850.<sup>10</sup> Along with the Pidie copy, this manuscript seems to prove that the poem was known before the second half of the 19th century or even earlier.

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6. See <https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP329-1-11> (accessed on 17.09.2024). The manuscript is part of a collection owned by Teungku Mukhlis of Calue, Pidie Regency.

7. I thank the staff of the Aceh State Museum and Masykur Syafruddin from the Pedir Museum for their kind help and granting me access to catalogues and manuscript collections.

8. I was able to identify and access these four manuscripts at the last stages of working on this article. My recent knowledge of the manuscripts, as well as their fragmented state, are the reason why I address them here mostly for the purpose of comparison. Looking for copies of such a text is a never ending process: scattered in manuscripts and printed editions from the Indonesian-Malay world and beyond, the 'Poem of the student' occurs under different titles or with no title at all, and is often hidden between other unrelated texts compiled in a manuscript. Some copies are catalogued as *Adab al-muta'allim*; in printed editions the poem is found under such titles as *Nazm al-maṭlab* and *Fath al-qayyūm fī ādāb tālib al-'ulūm* (the latter occurring outside of the Indonesian-Malay world). Varying between different copies, such 'titles', along with opening and concluding blessings and colophons—and interlinear translations—seem to manifest themselves as paratexts, which are not constant but rather open to change. Only the core text remains mostly unaltered, being identifiable by accident and through juxtaposing with the known versions.

9. I thank Fadhli Lukman for bringing this manuscript to my attention.

10. The digital copy is accessible on the DREAMSEA website at: <https://www.hmmlcloud.org/dreamsea/detail.php?msid=1403> (accessed on 17.09.2024).

If the dating of the Pidie manuscript is correct,<sup>11</sup> it appears to confirm that the poem cannot be attributed to any late 19th-century authors.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, it demonstrates that the text might have been known, read, and reproduced in Aceh since at least the 18th century. Most likely, the poem circulated in Islamic educational contexts, since it is still found in such contexts nowadays (i.e. in reprinted *kitab kuning* editions published by or for Islamic schools) and its very content targets students of Islamic sciences. Editors of later reprints of the poem seem to have had little to zero knowledge of its origins, as they do not indicate their sources and attribute the authorship to a certain sheikh Muntakhab ibn al-Muwaffaq—a name derived from the text of the poem, where it is mentioned in an unclearly phrased line that can be interpreted as referring to the poet (see Iankovskaia 2023: 97). In all the known full copies, the poem is untitled and anonymous, while colophons in some manuscripts (Surau Simaung copy, Ms.PM.034) refer to it as *Adab al-muta'allim* ('Ethics of the learner'). The Pidie copy does not add any clarity, as in it the first page is missing. As for the remaining Arabic text, it is almost identical with that in the Leiden and Jakarta copies—except for some spelling variations. To a much lesser extent is this true of the interlinear translations to Malay, which appear in all the three manuscripts: the translation in EAP329/1/11 differs from its later counterparts both in terms of line arrangement and content.

Juxtaposing interlinear translations in the three manuscripts—possibly divided by more than a century—reveals an interesting correlation between the two versions of the Malay text (Jakarta/Leiden and Pidie): they are too different and too similar at the same time. This ambiguity brings up questions around the practices of transmitting interlinear translations, which appear to have differed from those of reproducing the *matn*. Comparing interlinear translations in the above-mentioned manuscripts, I argue that their transmission is likely to have included oral elements. This speculation appears to be in line with the prominent role of orality in Malay manuscript culture,<sup>13</sup> where texts were thought of as being instantiated by performance (Proudfoot 2002: 123). Except the Leiden copy that was made for Snouck Hurgronje, a foreign collector, and thus removed from its cultural homeland and performative contexts, the other two manuscripts were apparently created in Islamic educational milieu. In this latter, studying

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11. The manuscript is undated. Its attribution to the 18th century appearing in the catalogue seems to be a codicological speculation.

12. On such speculations, or more specifically an unsubstantiated attribution of the poem to a certain al-Mukhtār al-Sālim ibn 'Abbās al-'Alawī (1857–1943), an Islamic scholar and teacher from Chinguetti, Mauritania, see: Iankovskaia 2023: 100–101.

13. On the oral orientation of Malay culture, see: Sweeney 1987. Orality was also an important element of Islamic written culture (see Shamsy 2020: 42) and Islamic education—not only in the Indonesian-Malay world, but also in the wider world of Islam where 'key treatises existed in written form but were conveyed orally, to be written down and memorized by students' (Eickelman 1978: 487).

texts in Arabic with a teacher involved reading them aloud, usually in unison, listening to the mentor's oral translations and remarks, and scribbling those between the lines and on the margins of one's copy—such practices still persist in modern *pasantren*, Indonesia's Islamic boarding schools, and are reported to have existed in the 20th and 19th centuries (van Bruinessen 1990: 235; Snouck Hurgronje 1906: 29–30). As I attempt to demonstrate in what follows, such entanglements between oral and written transmission might have shaped the texts under discussion.

This article is a contribution to the existing scholarship dealing with interlinear translation in the Indonesian-Malay world (see van Ronkel 1899; Azra 2009; Ricci 2010, 2016, 2020, 2023ab; Maftuhin 2024) and explores one of the aspects of this practice, i.e. the ways and methods of transmitting such texts. Drawing on the example of the Pidie manuscript, it attempts to participate in the discussion on the interplay between oral and written elements in Malay manuscript culture, and in the practice of interlinear translation in particular. The overlaps and discrepancies between the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden translations of the poem appear to epitomise this interplay, while the version found in the West Sumatran manuscript DS 0043 00014 (hereafter referred to as the Surau copy) speaks for the relationship between the two. Not only does this latter come from a different region, but the interlinear translation in it appears to be unrelated to those in the Acehnese copies. This dissimilarity highlights the similarities between the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden versions, therefore I will occasionally address this manuscript for comparison.

Below, I discuss some questions that arise around the interlinear translation found in the Pidie manuscript EAP329/1/11: in the first section, I address the translation's visual aspects and spatial arrangement, while the second section deals with its content.

### **Hanging the lines, negotiating the interlinear space**

The Pidie manuscript contains two different texts, the 'Poem of the student' being the second in order and occupying five pages of the manuscript. The text of the poem starts abruptly with what is line 8 or 7 in the later copies:<sup>14</sup> 'Abide by the right of parents...', and continues with other instructions in proper behavior and principles of learning, each line beginning with an imperative verb. The text is written in black ink on European paper; wide spaces are obviously left between the lines for interlinear notes, making the *matn* 'a skeleton to be fleshed out with glosses and exegesis' (Proudfoot 2002: 120)—or translation. The Arabic text of

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14. What is line 7 ('Respect the right of the sheikh and teacher; If you do not do it, you will regret') in Leiden and Jakarta manuscripts appears only in these two copies, while in the Surau copy, manuscripts from the Aceh State Museum, and Kediri edition (*Nazm al-maṭlab* 1998: 3)—as well as in other non-Indonesian versions of the poem—this line is missing.

the poem is almost identical with that in the Leiden and Jakarta copies, except for a few rather insignificant discrepancies. However, the concluding blessings after line 30/37<sup>15</sup> ('This is my message for every student...') differ completely from those in the later manuscripts, which, in their turn, are different from the final lines in the Surau copy, 1998 printed edition (*Nazm al-maṭlab* 1998: 10), and other copies. Apparently, these closing blessings were considered paratext, not part of the poem, and thus open to modification.

The Arabic text in the Pidie copy is vocalised, and the diacritics make much more sense than in the Leiden and Jakarta manuscripts, where they appear to have been added rather randomly. The Pidie manuscript also seems to contain fewer misspellings, shedding light on some words that look unclear in the later copies: for example, line 16 in it confirms that السواد (*al-sawād*, 'blackness, crowd') is misspelled as السود in the Jakarta and Leiden copies (line 23); similarly, المرء (*al-mirā*, 'doubt, disputing') is misspelled as المرء (line 27/34). Such omissions of *alif* by the later copyists might have been due to either slips of pen or inability of non-native Arabic speakers to distinguish between long and short vowels by ear—the latter being a recurring mistake in Malay manuscripts (Gallop 2015: 29). The Pidie copy, however, contains its own misspellings, which seem to be mostly of graphical nature, such as confusing the number and location of dots. This, along with the scribe's exercise in fine handwriting, seems to indicate that the Arabic text was likely copied from a written source. The interlinear Malay translation, on the other hand, does not seem to have been copied at an easy pace at the same time with the source text: not only is the handwriting less neat, but also the arrangement of the lines appears messy and inconsistent.

Interlinear translations found in Islamic manuscripts from the Indonesian-Malay world vary in layout. One of the most common patterns of their spatial arrangement can be described as follows: translation appears under the line of the source, broken into units placed at an angle of up to 45° towards the corresponding parts of the Arabic text. Both the Leiden and Jakarta copies of the poem (as well as the Surau one and other four copies from Aceh) follow this pattern, phrase-by-phrase Malay translations being arranged in diagonal lines under the source. Their fragmentation, however, does not seem to have been perceived as fixed, since in the Leiden manuscript Snouck Hurgronje's copyist feels free to redivide the text and rearrange it in the interlinear space. This fragmentation also does not deconstruct the text into incoherent words: if put together in one line, the translation reads independently of the Arabic original. The spatial flexibility of this interlinear translation is proved by the

<sup>15</sup> Hereafter the lines of the poem are numerated starting from the first extant page of a manuscript and according to the following pattern: line number as in the Pidie copy / line number as in Jakarta/Leiden. For line numeration and transliteration of the text from Leiden Or. 7075 see: Iankovskaia 2023: 113–124 (Appendix).

Pidie copy, where it is arranged in parallel horizontal lines between the source text lines—two lines of Malay text for one line of the Arabic poem.

The scribe of the Pidie manuscript demonstrates casual inconsistency in accommodating interlinear translation on the page: while most of the Malay text floats horizontally between the Arabic lines, translations for lines 5, 6, 29, and 30 are for some reason arranged according to the diagonal pattern. Was this exercise in deconstructing the translation into fragments and suspending those from the respective parts of the source text an attempt to note a proper reading order? In modern pesantrens, such bilingual texts are read in class phrase by phrase, the Arabic text alternating with its translation (Maftuhin 2024: 297). If so, the scribe does not appear to have succeeded: in lines 29 and 30, the hanging translation units are not properly aligned with the source text, while in lines 5 and 6 they even find themselves above the line—as a result of inattention on the part of the scribe, who missed the translation for line 11 and had to insert it in the margin as a footnote. If not an attempt to facilitate reading, were these inconsistent switches to a different pattern of line arrangement<sup>16</sup> an esthetic choice, a tribute to the tradition, or an exercise in making a better use of the interlinear space? Or were they just part of the scribe's general sloppiness and freedom in engaging with interlinear and marginal spaces? This is hard to tell, as well as who the scribe might have been.

The person who scribbled this interlinear text must have not been a hired copyist, of whom a little more thoroughness would be expected. The messiness of the paratext rather points to a learner making notes for their personal use. It could have been an autodidact, who copied the translation right after the source text from a similar bilingual manuscript—as the practice of copying manuscripts in which the major text alternates with interlinear translations and glosses replicated the experience of studying the text under a teacher (Proudfoot 2002: 120). Another possibility is that the translation was written down in the class by a student, whose inability to keep up with the teacher's oral explanations or dictation might explain the sloppiness and omissions. As Ian Proudfoot puts it, 'as texts were continually negotiated through the processes of copying, reading, and listening, there is often an appearance of nonchalance or carelessness to modern eyes' (2002: 129). Appearing as an imperfection to a modern reader, this sloppiness of the interlinear translation embodies its dynamic and inconclusive nature, manifesting the interlinear space as that of a certain freedom of learning, practising, and revisiting.

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16. A question also might arise whether the scribes differentiated the two patterns. Some of the early manuscripts from the region demonstrate an ability of interlinear translation to reconfigure from one pattern to another and back: within one handwritten text, the angle between the *matn* and translation can fluctuate from quite a considerable one up to horizontal fragments linking up and forming a parallel line—like a louvre shutter being closed (see, for instance, al-Attas 1988: 99–148).



### Copying or writing from dictation?

Same as in the Leiden and Jakarta manuscripts, the interlinear Malay text in the Pidie copy is neither a literal, word-by-word translation nor a loose rendering. At first sight, this ‘translation’ follows the source text rather closely, reproducing its word order and struggling to convey Arabic grammatical categories (such as tenses, plurals, or definite articles) in Malay. At the same time, here and there it allows itself explications and departures from the original, pushing the borders between translation and commentary. Combining literality with elements of exegetic nature, such interlinear translations epitomise ‘a wish to impart to readers the salient features of the sacred language of revelation as well as the theological content of the original text’ (Riddell 2002: 23) and appear to demonstrate their dual didactic function of teaching both the Arabic language, on the one hand, and Islamic faith and ethics, on the other (see also Iankovskaia 2024).

Juxtaposing interlinear translation in the Pidie manuscript with that in the Jakarta (and hence Leiden) copies of the poem reveals that the two are very similar, but not identical. Here are some examples from the first page of the manuscript (lines 1–3 in Pidie and 8–10 in Jakarta/Leiden)—the fragments diverging between the two translations are underlined. I also include corresponding lines from the Surau copy, which offers a contrast to these two, apparently related, versions:

Arabic	wa-ir‘a ḥatman ḥaqq wālidayn wa-kull ḥaqq huwa mithla dayn <i>and abide ultimately by the right of [two] parents; and every right is similar to debt</i>
EAP329/1/11 (Pidie)	dan peliharakan olehmu akan sebagai pelihara yang wajib akan hak <u>dua ibu-bapakmu dan</u> tiap-tiap hak itu <u>yaitu seupama utang atasmu</u> <i>and take all the necessary care of the right of your two parents; and every right is like a debt that is on you</i>
ML 341 / Or. 7075 (Jakarta/ Leiden)	dan peliharakan olehmu akan sebagai pelihara yang wajib akan hak <u>ibu-bapak bermula</u> tiap-tiap hak itu <u>wajib utang maka utang itu wajib dibayar akan dia</u> <i>and take all the necessary care of the right of parents; every right is an obligatory debt, and every debt is obligatory to be paid</i>
DS 0043 00014 (Surau)	dan peliharakan olehmu sempurna hak dua ibu-bapakmu padahal segala hak ini upama utang <i>and take care perfectly of the right of your two parents; whereas all these rights are similar to debt</i>

(continued on next page)

Arabic	wa-waqqir al-‘ilm wa-‘azzim sha’ nahu wa-ijtanib al-fisq fa-dhāka shānahu
	<i>and respect knowledge and glorify its cause; and avoid transgression, as this defiles it</i>
EAP329/1/11 (Pidie)	dan besarkan olehmu <u>alilmu</u> dan besarkan kehendaknya dan <u>jauh</u> olehmu akan fasik maka yang demikian itulah kehendaknya
	<i>and increase knowledge and magnify its will; and avoid transgression, so this is its will</i>
ML 341 / Or. 7075 (Jakarta/Leiden)	dan besarkan olehmu <u>akan ilmu</u> dan besarkan <u>olehmu akan</u> kehendaknya dan <u>jauhkan</u> olehmu akan fasik maka yang demikianlah <u>itulah</u> kehendaknya
	<i>and increase knowledge and magnify its will; and avoid transgression, so this is its will</i>
DS 0043 00014 (Surau)	dan muliakan akan ilmu dan besarkan olehmu akan pekerjaannya dan jauh olehmu pekerjaan maksiat maka demikian itu hamba kejahatan
	<i>glorify knowledge and magnify its work; and avoid immoral work, as this is the way of a servant of evil</i>
Arabic	wa-iṣrif lahu darāhim wa-dhahab fa-mā siwāhu kull shay’ dhahaba
	<i>and pay for it money and gold; as everything besides it is transient</i>
EAP329/1/11 (Pidie)	dan belanjakan olehmu baginya akan <u>segala</u> dirham dan emas <u>maka barang yang lain daripadanya setiap-tiap suatu hilang ia</u>
	<i>and spend on it dirhams and gold; as anything else besides it, everything, disappears</i>
ML 341 / Or. 7075 (Jakarta/Leiden)	dan belanjakan olehmu baginya akan <u>beberapa</u> dirham (dan emas) <sup>17</sup> <u>karena menuntut ilmu (itu) maka tiap-tiap yang dibelanjakan lain daripadanya hilang ia</u>
	<i>and spend on it dirhams and gold, on pursuing knowledge; as everything else that you pay for, besides it, disappears</i>
DS 0043 00014 (Surau)	dan beri akan olehmu karena menuntut ilmu akan segala dirham dan emas maka barang yang daripada ilmu tiap-tiap sesuatu lagi akan hilang
	<i>and pay for pursuing knowledge dirhams and gold; as things besides knowledge, everything else, will disappear</i>

17. The words in parentheses appear in the Jakarta manuscript but are omitted in the Leiden copy.

Substantial overlaps between the two Acehese versions of interlinear text (Jakarta/Leiden and Pidie) appear to indicate that they are unlikely to be unrelated and apparently originate from the same unknown written source. At the same time, divergences between them are too significant to result from corruption in the process of recopying. These divergences can be classified into three categories: (1) employing different function words and grammatical markers, such as conveying a plural through either *segala* or *beberapa*, using or omitting the preposition *akan* or suffix *-kan*; (2) rephrasing, as it happens in line 3/10 (*barang yang lain daripadanya setiap-tiap suatu / tiap-tiap yang dibelanjakan lain daripadanya*); and (3) explications, which appear mostly in the later version: *maka utang itu wajib dibayar akan dia* (line 1/8), *karena menuntut ilmu* (line 3/10). A general observation can be also made that the earlier translation (Pidie version) is a little shorter, while the later one has more additional function words and explications added.

Other known Acehese copies of the poem also seem to demonstrate significant overlaps with the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden manuscripts in their interlinear translations. In what is line 9 in Jakarta/Leiden, for example, they all opt for the word *kehendak* ('will') as an erroneous translation of the homographic *sha'n* ('matter', 'cause') and *shāna* ('to dishonour'). This line is almost identical in the three copies from the Aceh State Museum (in Ms.PM.034 from the Pedir Museum line 9 is missing) and largely overlaps with the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden versions.<sup>18</sup> This is likely due to all these manuscripts from Aceh belonging to a same regional tradition of translating and teaching; however, such a speculation would require further research. At the same time, even though sharing many translation choices with the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden copies, the other Acehese manuscripts do not always reproduce these choices literally—as we will see later below.

In line 13/20, the Jakarta/Leiden version of translation first follows the Pidie one word for word, but then opts for translating the word *al-faqīr* ('poor man', 'beggar', also 'Sufi ascetic') as *orang yang meminta* ('a person who begs') instead of retaining it as a loanword. Also, as both the source and the translation are Arabographic, it is often not possible indeed to distinguish whether an Arabic word is simply reproduced in the original form or used as an established loanword. In my transliteration, I put the word *fakir* in its modern Indonesian spelling; meanwhile in the manuscript it is spelled same as in Arabic, i.e. *faqīr*:

18. Cf. the following three translations of line 9: 07\_515 (1): *dan besarkan olehmu akan ilmu dan besarkan olehmu akan kehendaknya dan jauh olehmu akan pekerjaan fasik maka yang demikian itulah kehendaknya*; 07\_515 (2): *dan besarkan olehmu akan ilmu dan besarkan olehmu akan kehendaknya dan jauh olehmu akan pekerjaan yang fasik maka itulah kehendaknya*; 07\_784: *dan besarkan olehmu akan ilmu dan besarkan olehmu [fragment missing] dan jauhkan [fragment missing] akan pekerjaan yang fasik maka yaitulah kehendaknya*.

Arabic	wa-waddi‘ al-awṭān wa-al-aḥbāb wa-dar kamā al-faqīr bāban bāban <i>and abandon homelands and loved ones; and wander as a beggar from door to door</i>
EAP329/1/11 (Pidie)	dan tinggal olehmu akan kampung lamanmu dan segala kekasihmu dan <u>edarkan seperti fakir</u> <i>and abandon your home village and all the loved ones; and make yourself wandering like a fakir:</i>
ML 341 / Or. 7075 (Jakarta/Leiden)	dan tinggalkan olehmu akan kampung lamanmu dan segala kekasihmu dan <u>peredarkan olehmu akan dirimu seperti orang yang meminta ia akan satu pintu kepada suatu pintu</u> <i>and abandon your home village and all the loved ones; and make yourself wandering like a person who begs from one door to another.</i>

Some of the other translation lines diverge between the two versions quite significantly in terms of rephrasing and usage of not only function words but also lexical ones—to the extent that one might consider the similarities between the two translations a mere coincidence. However, the apparent interrelation between them manifests itself also in another aspect, that is in similar liberal interpretations of a number of Arabic words or passages. For example:

– In line 15/22, the Arabic word *al-maṣāliḥ* (‘material interests’) is interpreted as *berbaik pakaian* (‘refining clothes’—in Pidie) and *berbaik-baik pakaian dan tubuh* (‘refining clothes and body’—in Jakarta/Leiden). In contrast, the Surau manuscript has *masalahat dunia* (‘earthly interest’).

– In line 17/24, *ṣādiran wāridan* (‘question and answer’, or ‘outgoing and incoming’) is interpreted as *masalah yang terbit daripada paham atau yang datang daripada orang* (‘question that arises from understanding or one that comes from people’—in Pidie) and *masalah yang terbit daripada bicara akal atau masalah yang datang daripada orang* (‘question that arises from the inner conversation or question that comes from people’—in Jakarta/Leiden). The Surau copy, unlike the Acehese ones, provides a shorter translation: *yang terbit daripadamu* (‘what arises from you’).

Of the other four copies of the poem, only three contain lines 22–24, i.e. Ms.PM.034 from the Pedir Museum, and 07\_515 (2) and 07\_784 from the Aceh State Museum (the latter lacking fragments of text). The word *al-maṣāliḥ* in line 22 is translated as *berbaik diri itu berbaik tubuh* (‘refining yourself, refining body’) in Ms.PM.034 and as *berbaik-baik akan pakaian* (‘refining clothes’) in 07\_784, but simply as *segala yang baik* (‘everything good’) in 07\_515 (2). As for the interpretative translation of line 24 found in the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden manuscripts, it does not appear in any other copies.<sup>19</sup> Even though stemming out

19. Ms.PM.034 translates *ṣādiran wāridan* as *yang terbit daripada paham*, while 07\_515 (2) puts it simply as *ilmu*. In 07\_784 this part of the line is missing.

of the same educational tradition and milieu as the other Acehnese interlinear translations of the ‘Poem of the student’, translations in the Pidie and Jakarta/Leiden copies seem to be more related to each other than to any other versions. Their similarity is distinctive, but they are far from being identical.

How can two texts be this much different but still related? There seems to be no answer within the framework of written reproduction (recopying). A possible explanation is that the interlinear text might have gone through different stages of both written and oral transmission, which could involve a teacher dictating the translation looking into a copy made from a written source, but feeling free to slightly modify or complement it during the dictation—possibly adjusting to the students’ level and anticipated need for additional elucidation. This freedom of modification, however, must have had certain constraints, since we do not observe much departure from pre-existing interpretations of dubious passages. Frozen on the page of a manuscript, the interlinear text might be capturing the translation as it was performed in the classroom, where the latent written notes were activated by being said aloud, converging with a similarly latent knowledge of the text in the teacher’s memory—as ‘the sense of the Arabic texts was largely carried in vernacular languages by the oral tradition’ (Johns 1996: 44). From this perspective, the interlinear translation can be indeed described as a crystallization of the relationship between teacher and student, while the classroom represents a performative context, where ‘the text did not speak directly to the reader, but was conveyed through a teacher to his pupils’ (Proudfoot 2002: 120, 130).

What might have also contributed to the fluidity and flexibility of interlinear translation is an unarticulated idea of ultimate untranslatability of any Arabic text. Dismissing the very feasibility of a perfect, faithful translation could predispose translators to leave their endeavour open to correction and reinterpretation, allowing the reader to capture the meaning that might have been missed (Basalamah 1994: 65). The sacred status and magical powers attributed to the Arabic language in the Indonesian-Malay region<sup>20</sup> (and non-Arabic-speaking Islamic world in general) apparently facilitated this approach, along with the practical struggles of transferring the meaning between two very different languages. If the translation is never perfect, it is also never complete, therefore being open to change and improvement. In the interlinear space, the audiences, be it readers or students in the class, seem to have been not only allowed but also encouraged to participate in this never concluding process.

## **Conclusion**

Separated by approximately a century, the two versions of interlinear Malay translation of the same Arabic text, i.e. Jakarta/Leiden and Pidie, demonstrate

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<sup>20</sup> These ideas being deeply rooted in pre-Islamic beliefs of Southeast Asians (see Cummings 2001).



one of the many ways in which orality and literacy were entangled within Malay manuscript culture. Juxtaposing these two interlinear texts against the background of other existing versions reveals both significant differences and similarities, which raises the question of the modes of their reproduction. The circumstance that the divergences between two certainly related texts cannot be attributed to corruption in the course of direct recopying points to apparent involvement of oral practices in the translation's transmission. In the educational milieu which the manuscripts under discussion belonged to, such practices likely occurred in the classroom where both the Arabic source text and its Malay translation were read aloud in a certain and ritualised way—performed by the teacher in front of the class, the *matn* was repeated by the students orally in unison, while the translation was written down between the lines of their copies.

Just like in other performative contexts found in the Indonesian-Malay world, this ritual of knowledge transmission apparently engendered solidarity 'among the gathered audience of listeners, arising from their sense of shared common experience,' while the 'dynamic mutual responses of reciter and audience as the reciter adapts his presentation to audience reactions' (Proudfoot 2002: 132)—or rather to the students' perceived needs, in this case—shaped the interlinear text as it was scribbled on paper. Consumed and reproduced by the audience within the same act of learning, translation from the teacher's copy settled in the students' manuscripts in slightly modified and thus unique versions—the modifications resulting both from the teacher's interventions and the students' measure of understanding and thoroughness in writing from dictation. From this perspective, interlinear translations found in the extant didactic manuscripts from the Indonesian-Malay world capture unique moments of transaction between the teacher and the student.

In Malay culture with its strong oral orientation, involvement of oral practices in teaching, learning, and text transmission appears by no means unusual. However, in case of interlinear translation the very modes of interplay between literacy and orality in a text's presentation, consumption, and reproduction, all the three processes occurring at the same time, seem to be rather peculiar. As Amin Sweeney suggests distinguishing not only between oral and written composition, but also between aural and visual consumption (1987: 8), a traditional class engaging with an interlinear text represents an interesting pattern of mixed written and oral transmission: while the source text is consumed visually and instantiated through recitation, in an attempt to be transferred from the page to the students' memory, the translation, on the opposite, transits from the teacher's oral presentation to the audience's written notes. The students thus consume the translation aurally, with all the implications of such consumption, and put it back into writing to the best of their skills. Moving from script to sound and back, such a text is reshaped and negotiated in the process of its reception and reproduction, which results in its fluidity as compared to the

matn. Unlike the latter, which tends to be corrupted only unintentionally, due to a scribe’s mistake or misunderstanding, interlinear translation appears to be open to voluntary and creative modification. The manuscripts discussed in this case study capture results of such modification, epitomising the complexity and flexibility of bilingual texts in Malay manuscript culture.

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**Figures Source:** Mau’izah and Adab al-Muta’allim [18th century], British Library, EAP329/1/11, <https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP329-1-11>.



Fig. 1 – EAP329/1/11, p. 7.



Fig. 2 – EAP329/1/11, p. 8.

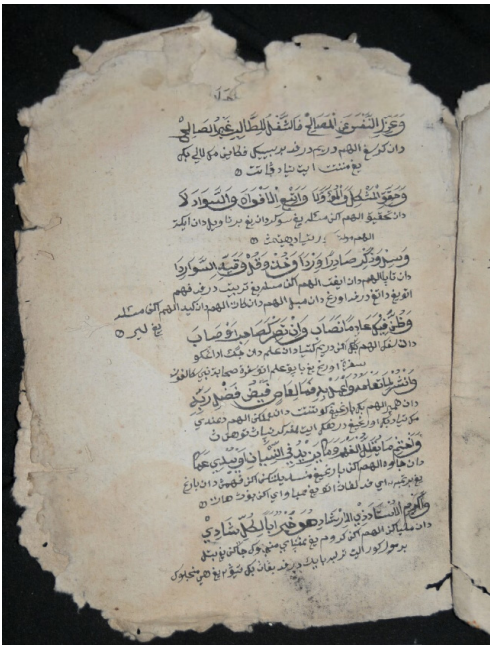


Fig. 3 – EAP329/1/11, p. 9.



Fig. 4 – EAP329/1/11, p. 10.

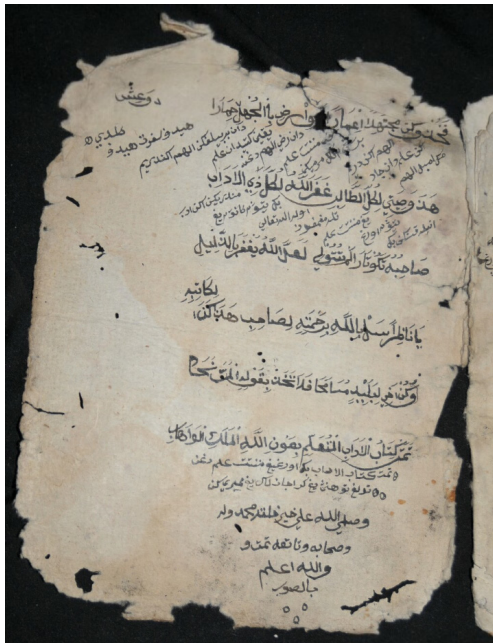


Fig. 5 – EAP329/1/11, p. 11.

### Appendix

Manuscript copies of the 'Poem of the student' / *Adab al-muta'allim* known to me to this date (07\_515 contains two different copies of the text, conventional numeration (1, 2) is by me):

MS No	Location	Provenance	Arabic text	Malay translation
ML 341	National Library of Indonesia, Jakarta	Undated, brought by G.C.E. van Daalen (1863–1930) from Gayo lands (Karang Ampar) in 1903	Full text	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally
Or. 7075	Leiden University Libraries, Leiden	Undated, copied from ML 341 for C. Snouck Hurgronje (1857–1936) in around 1903–4	Full text	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally
EAP329/1/11	Teungku Mukhlis private collection, Calue, Pidie Regency	Undated, attributed to the 18th century in the Endangered Archives online catalogue	First page(s) missing: starts from line 8 <sup>21</sup>	Line by line, arranged under the line horizontally or diagonally (for some lines only)
DS 0043 00014	Surau Simaung, Sijunjung	Undated, attributed to 1790–1850 in the DREAMSEA online catalogue	Full text	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally
Ms.PM.034	Pedir Museum, Banda Aceh	Undated	First page(s) missing: starts from line 14	Line by line, but not full; arranged under the line diagonally

*(continued on next page)*

**21.** Throughout the table, line numbers are indicated according to the Leiden copy (see Appendix in Iankovskaia 2023).



<b>MS No</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Provenance</b>	<b>Arabic text</b>	<b>Malay translation</b>
07_515 (1)	Aceh State Museum, Banda Aceh	Undated	First and last page(s) missing: lines 5–19 remain	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally
07_515 (2)	Aceh State Museum, Banda Aceh	Undated, copied in Meulaboh (according to the colophon)	First page(s) missing: starts from line 6; missing fragments of paper	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally, fragments missing
07_784	Aceh State Museum, Banda Aceh	Undated	Full text, but missing large fragments of paper	Line by line, arranged under the line diagonally, fragments missing

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- DS 0043 00014, DREAMSEA Repository, <https://www.hmmcloud.org/dreamsea/detail.php?msid=1403>
- Kumpulan Teks, 07\_515, Aceh State Museum, Banda Aceh
- Kumpulan Teks, 07\_784, Aceh State Museum, Banda Aceh
- Mau'izah and Adab al-Muta'allim, British Library, EAP329/1/11, <https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP329-1-11>
- Mawaiz al-Badiah Waghairiha, ML 341, National Library of Indonesia, Jakarta
- Ms.PM.034, Pedir Museum, Banda Aceh

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*RODERICH PTAK\**

## Pulau Aur and Some Nearby Islands in Chinese Nautical Sources of the Ming Period

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### I. Introduction

In recent years, geographers, historians, and politicians became involved in several debates concerning the names and segmentation of the sea that extends from Taiwan, Fujian, Guangdong, and Hainan “down” to the coasts of Bangka and Billiton. In the Anglophone world one often finds the name South China Sea for the entire space. Chinese scholars usually call the northern part of that area Nanhai 南海, while referring to the southern section as Natuna hai 纳土纳海. The latter is a translation of the name Laut Natuna, or Natuna Sea. The dividing line between both spaces is made of the Natuna Islands, or Natuna qundao 纳土纳群岛 in Chinese.

Of course, today there are many more names for individual sections of these and other spaces, but this is of no concern in the present article. Instead of dealing with such issues, we shall look at the Laut Natuna, or, more precisely, at the northwestern periphery of that sea and its island world, namely the Seribuat Archipelago. No doubt, the best-known island in that archipelago is Pulau Tioman, but the present article will focus on the one now called Pulau Aur.<sup>1</sup> Both these places as indeed the entire Seribuat Archipelago belong to

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1. One of the early English descriptions of these islands is in Thomson 1851. Later nautical works, certain travel guides, and modern studies on the geology, flora, and fauna of the Seribuat world are useful as well. Examples are the *China Sea Pilot*

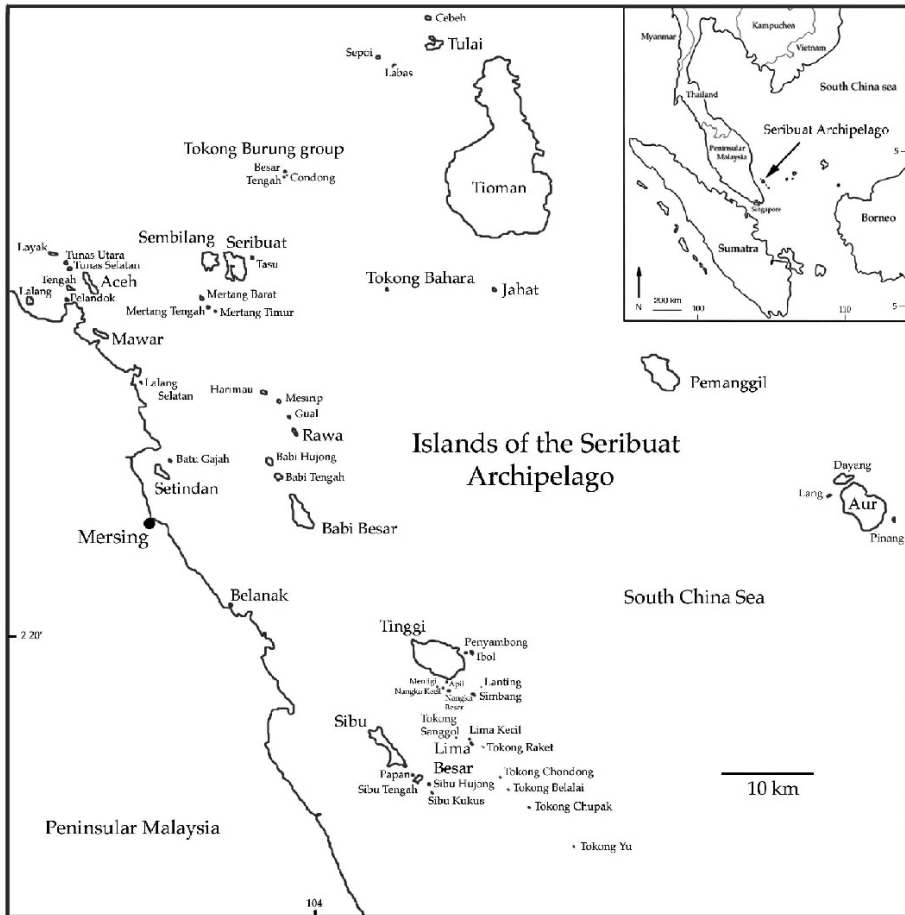


Fig. 1 – The Seribuat Archipelago. Sources: L. Lee Grismer et al. 2006, 157, and Malaysian Nature Society: <https://www.mns.my/seribuat-archipelago/>

Malaysia, while the Natuna and Tambelan groups, as well as the many islands south of modern Singapore, form part of Indonesia. Early references to some of them appear in Arabic, Chinese, Malay, Portuguese, and other sources of the Medieval and Early Modern periods. Scholarly studies discuss many of the relevant toponyms, but there is much dissent on the “identity” of certain

1987, 86-87 (Pulau Aur and adjacent islands), 87-89 (Pulau Pemanggil, etc.); National Imagery 2002, esp. sector 6, 143-145 (there are later versions, such as the one prepared by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in 2020; see there, 229-231); Ledesma et al. 2003, esp. 373-387; Lee et al. 1977. – A technical note: I do not use the term *kepulauan* for “archipelago,” but I retain the term *pulau* for (small) islands.



places, as well as on the trade routes linking or passing them.<sup>2</sup> The present note will mainly deal with Chinese nautical records datable to the period from circa 1550 to circa 1650. I shall not look at sources in other languages, and I shall also leave aside early European maps.

The aim of these notes is very simple: One can define the Natuna Sea as an exchange zone in the Braudelian sense, but until now it is not clear which phenomena related to trade and traffic through this area may qualify as *longue durée* elements. Of course, one essential part of a presumed *longue durée* setting is navigational routes. In an earlier study, I have tried to reconstruct the possible north-south routes along the west side of Kalimantan, especially in the times of Zheng He 鄭和 and the mid-Ming period; a second paper analyses various toponyms related to Pulau Aur and the Seribuat zone and thereby to Chinese sailing corridors in this region from the twelfth to the early sixteenth centuries.<sup>3</sup> In a sense, the present study is a continuation of the second article. It thus wishes to provide information that other scholars may need, one day, to reconstruct the exchange history of the Natuna Sea, as suggested above.

Such a limited aim sounds clear and simple. However, the discussion below will lead to many questions that remain unanswered, due to the ambiguity of data found in the sources, and the persistent problem of place names. In other words, the present study follows a very traditional “philological” approach, without pretending to develop new theories or verifying extant models. It starts with a summary of earlier findings related to the sources of the period before circa 1550 (chapter I), including the so-called “Zheng He Map” (chapter 2); thereafter it turns to the nautical works of the Ming period (chapters 3 to 6). The final part rounds off the conclusions one can draw from these sources by embedding the results in a greater chronological context. This will also take us back to some of the ideas addressed here, in the introduction.

## II. Pulau Aur and the Seribuat Islands in Chinese Texts, circa 1200–1550

Pre-Ming textual sources refer to several toponyms which some scholars have linked to Pulau Aur, the easternmost island of the Seribuat Archipelago. This includes the following names (among others): Shangxiazhu 上下竺, Zhuyu 竺嶼, Tianzhushan 天竺山, and Dongxizhu 東西竺. They appear in

2. Among the many scholars who looked at the matter are the following names: Gerini 1909; Wheatley 1961; Mills, esp. 1970 and 1974; Han Zhenhua, esp. collections of 1999 and 2003; Lin Woling 1999; Zhou Yunzhong 2013; articles in Chen Dasheng and Li Pengfei 2022. – Here one may also consider archaeological research (beyond the scope of my notes). Some studies suggest that Pulau Natuna Besar and other locations served as bridges between different seafaring nations and cultures. Chinese ceramics of the medieval period are important in such contexts. See, for ex., Harkantiningasih and Wibisono 2016, esp. 17 (map of sites), 22-25 (ceramics), partly based on Wibisono 2014.

3. Ptak 2021; Ptak 2024.

important texts such as the *Lingwai dai da* 嶺外代答 (1178), Zhao Rukuo's 趙汝适 (*jinshi* degree 1196; last character different transcriptions in the literature) preface to his *Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志 (1225), in chapter 489 of the *Song shi* 宋史, and in the received version of the *Daoyi zhilüe* 島夷誌略 (prefaces and postscript 1349/50).<sup>4</sup> According to other scholars, only one or several of the above toponyms, but not all of them, represented Pulau Aur, while the other names marked different locations, for example the Anambas and Natuna Islands.<sup>5</sup> Here one should mention the studies of Han Zhenhua. Han linked such names as Shangxiazhu to Pulau Natuna Besar (Pulau Bunguran Besar), the largest island of the Natunas. However, a careful reading of his many works reveals that he modified some of his suggestions in later articles. Besides that, he connected his discussion to the question of border zones and the areas now forming part of or being adjacent to the Spratly Islands, or Nansha qundao 南沙群島. This involved two major reefs in the western section of that region. Although Han's proposals as well as those of many other authors bear much weight, not everyone accepted them, and it is virtually impossible to determine what all the names listed above really stood for, how and when they came into being, and how they were related to each other.<sup>6</sup>

Especially the brief description of Dongxizhu in the *Daoyi zhilüe* has led to tantalizing questions. This text conveys the impression that Dongxizhu was a local hub, while it relied on food imports.<sup>7</sup> There is no second source from the same period that confirms such a view. Simply put, the geographical setting of both Pulau Aur and Natuna Besar seems incompatible with the description in *Daoyi zhilüe*. Pulau Aur is too small; it is unlikely to have been a major place for commercial exchange. By contrast, Natuna Besar is quite large and was certainly able to rely on its own resources to feed the few people then living on it. Yet, as Pulau Aur, it probably was not a vibrant market. Besides

4. See *Lingwai dai da jiaozhu*, j. 3, 126, 127 n. 3, 130 n. 8; Netolitzky 1977, 55, 241 n. 3.14(6); Almonte 2020, 185, 185 n. 349, 186, 186 n. 353; *Zhufan zhi zhubu*, iv; Hirth and Rockhill 1970, 23-24, 23 n. 3; Kolnin 2018, 54 and n. 25, 26; *Song shi*, j. 489, 14098; Kulke et al. 2009, appendix II, esp. 298-299; *Daoyi zhilüe jiaoshi* (henceforth *DYZLJS*), 218, 219 n. 2, 221 n. 2, 227-230. – For a modern work referring to many Chinese texts dealing with the Malay world, see Zhou Weimin and Tang Lingling 2008.

5. Details in Ptak 2024. – Another location described in *Daoyi zhilüe*, namely Jianshan 尖山, was also linked to the Natunas and even the Tambelan Islands. However, most historians put these proposals in doubt. See, for ex., Su Jiqing's long comment in *DYZLJS*, 136-137 n. 1; Chen Jiarong 陳佳榮 et al. 1986 (henceforth *GDNH*), 388-389, 1035-1036.

6. The Hong Kong University published a large collection of Han Zhenhua's studies in five volumes. Here I mainly used the articles in the volumes of 1999 and 2003. For detailed references to Han's remarks on the toponyms mentioned above, see Ptak 2024, chapter IV.

7. *DYZLJS*, 227-230, including comments; *Daoyi zhilüe jiaozhu*, 67b-68a; *Daoyi zhilüe guangzheng*, xia, 2a-b (595-596).

that, Han Zhenhua's suggestion that we ought to link the name element *zhu* 竺 to the toponym (Tanjung) Datu, from which it would be possible to derive the form Natuna, sounds very courageous, but somewhat artificial.<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is a problem with the editorial history of the *Daoyi zhilüe*. Several scholars pointed out that earlier versions of this text had existed as separate parts included in local chronicles now lost. This leaves room for additional speculation: Perhaps the Dongxizhu segment in the received version of that text goes back to descriptions current in Song times.<sup>9</sup>

It is not necessary to repeat all these issues here. Nor is it necessary to re-investigate the Dongxizhu segment in Fei Xin's 費信 *Xingcha shenglan* 星槎勝覽 (usually dated 1436) and the reference to this location in Huang Xingzeng's 黃省曾 (different readings of the second character) *Xiyang chaogong dianlu* 西洋朝貢典錄 (1520; henceforth *XYCGDL*). There are several editions of the first text, which makes it difficult to determine the original wording, but it seems likely that the author, who accompanied Zheng He on several expeditions, never came through Dongxizhu himself. Indeed, much of his description of that place is copied from the *Daoyi zhilüe*, or one of its lost predecessors. Furthermore, the modifications entered by Fei into his text suggest that he was not sure about the precise location of Dongxizhu.<sup>10</sup>

The *XYCGDL* refers to Dongxizhu zhi shan 東西竺之山. It then splits up this entity into Dongzhu 東竺 and Xizhu 西竺. Besides that, it also mentions Kunlun zhi shan 崑崙之山 (Con Son, Côn Sơn, Pulau Condore, Kunlun[dao] 昆侖 / 崑崙[島], etc.), the Kunlunyang 崑崙洋 (the sea in that area), and Gongxie zhi yu 弓鞋之嶼.<sup>11</sup> The element *xie* in the last toponym means shoe. The Portuguese word for shoe is *sapato*. Old Portuguese sources refer to several locations under the name Pulau Sapato (Sapate, etc.), literally "Shoe Island." One such place belongs to the archipelago called Wanshan qundao 萬山群島, south of modern Hong Kong, a second Pulau Sapate (not -o) is close to Con Son.<sup>12</sup> Most likely the *XYCGDL* means the second location.

8. Han Zhenhua 2003, esp. 199-200, 294-295, 304. Li Woteng 2016 heavily attacked Han Zhenhua; one certainly should not go that far. Also see Ptak 2024, chapter IV.

9. For the editorial history of the *Daoyi zhilüe*, see, for ex., Liao Dake 2001, Xiong Cheng and Xia Ronglin 2015; Ptak 2016; Yang Xiaochun 2022.

10. Here I used the modern edition called *Xingcha shenglan jiaozhu*. See there, *hou ji*, 2-3. Early translations are in Groeneveldt 1876, 140; Rockhill 1915, 124-125. A more recent translation is in Mills and Ptak 1996, 83-84. – Also see Tai Yew Seng 2022, esp. 50, 55, 56, and Ptak 2024, chapter V.

11. *XYCGDL*, j. shang, 10-11. A copiously annotated translation is in Sonnendecker 2005, 15-17.

12. For the location south of Hong Kong, see Ptak 2025.

Be that as it may, it is beyond doubt that several textual elements in Huang's book derive from the *Xingcha shenglan* and / or the *Daoyi zhilüe*, while other parts seem to come from lost nautical work(s). The author calls this nautical material *Zhenwei* 鍼位.<sup>13</sup> Its origin is unknown, and the combination *Zhenwei* could imply one or several records. However, the most important and unexpected aspect associated with Huang's references to Dongxizhu and the other names lies in the fact that they all occur in the Champa section of his book. This seems to suggest that Dongxizhu / Dongzhu / Xizhu had nothing to do with Pulau Aur but did in fact represent one (or several) location(s) near the coast of modern Vietnam.

Most modern authors did not accept that view and made very different proposals. They thought that Huang committed an error by assigning the three names with the element *zhu* to the Champa part of his account.<sup>14</sup> Dongzhu and Xizhu, they argued, would stand either for the two major elevations on Pulau Aur (Dongxizhu), or for this island and another nearby location, for example Pulau Dalang. Needless to point out, such an argument has one weak point: It provides no answer to our earlier concern, namely of how one can reconcile the alleged characteristics of a small place like Pulau Aur with the descriptive elements taken from the earlier *Daoyi zhilüe* and / or the *Xingcha shenglan*, both of which had suggested that Dongxizhu was an important trading place.

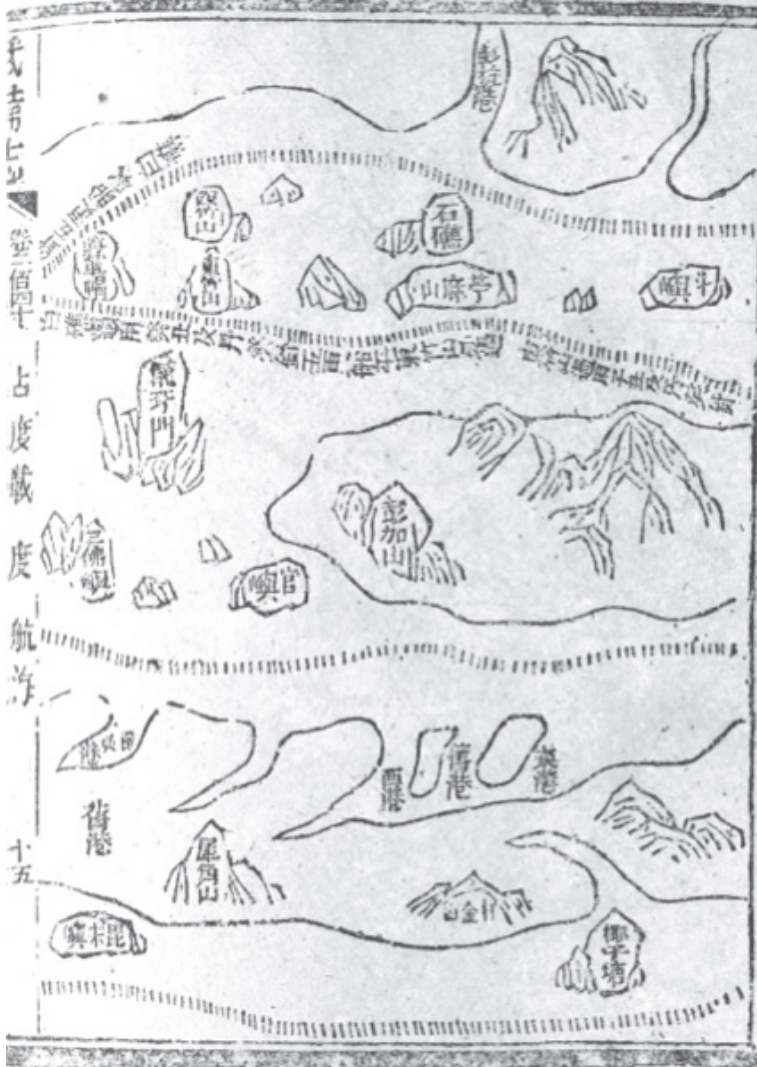
### III. The Seribuat Islands on the “Zheng He Map”

Another early Ming source is the so-called “Zheng He Map,” often called *Zheng He hanghai tu* 鄭和航海圖 in modern Chinese work. There are two old editions of this map with minor differences between them; in our case these differences are irrelevant. Moreover, most scholars use the version included in the late Ming collection called *Wubei zhi* 武備志 (1621). The origin of the *Zheng He hanghai tu* remains unknown, but probably it was based on cartographic and other material available in Zheng He's time. Whether Zheng He himself knew the map, we cannot tell. Here the important point is that it could predate both the extant versions of the *Xingcha shenglan* and the *XYCGDL*.<sup>15</sup>

13. See *XYCGDL*, Xie Fang's modern preface, 3; Huang's preface, 8.

14. Xie Fang, in his preface to *XYCGDL*, 5, tried to solve the puzzle by suggesting that Dongxizhu would be in the Strait of Singapore! For a translation of the relevant part in Xie's preface, see Sonnendecker 2005, 239.

15. For early editions and suggestions regarding the date of the map, see, for ex., Zhou Yunzhong 2007, and Zhou Yunzhong 2013, 69-86, 318-330. Recently in English on the map, Lin Meicun 2015; Ptak 2019. – One of the first “Western” studies dealing with the map is Phillips 1885–1886. An early comprehensive work in Chinese is Fan Wentao 1943. Other “classics” are Xu Yuhu 1973–1975 and 1976, and Zhou Yusen 1959. For recent and more general appreciations in English, also see the relevant parts in Ptak 2018 and Lin Meicun 2019.



**Fig. 2** – Segment of the Zheng He hanghai tu. Page from the *Zheng He hanghaitu* (Wubei zhi 武備志 ed., j. 240, 15a). The upper part shows Jiangjunmao (Pulau Tinggi), Xizhushan, Dongzhushan (Pulau Aur), Shijiao (Pulau Seribuat), and Zhumashan (Pulau Tioman). To understand the arrangement, one may turn the image counterclockwise, by 90 degrees. Then Pulau Tinggi is in the south, and Pulau Tioman appears in the north. Longyamen, below Dongzhushan, is likely to represent the Lingga region. The inlet along the east coast of the Malayan Peninsula, near the upper margin, bears the name Penghanggang (Pekan). The map also records Pengjiashan (Bangka) and Jiugang (Palembang).

The “Zheng He Map” is the earliest extant cartographic work that depicts the system of sailing courses connecting China to parts of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean in a very coherent manner. In other words, it shows much of



the so-called “Maritime Silk Road.” The routes in question are presented in the form of dashed lines. In many cases, there is written information placed near them. Essentially this type of information records the compass directions a ship had to follow when proceeded from one location to the next. From modern research we can tell that the data provided by the map are quite accurate and systematic.

Regarding the east side of the Malay Peninsula, we find several names on the map that clearly represent different locations in the Seribuat Archipelago:<sup>16</sup> (1) On the map, the northernmost segment of the archipelago consists of two islands. The larger one bears the name Shijiao 石礁. This should be Pulau Seribuat (Seri Buat). The smaller one, without name, must stand for Pulau Sembilang (Sembilan). To the west of this twin set, on the mainland of the Malay Peninsula, there is a coastal inlet called Penghanggang 彭杭港; this should point to Pekan or another location near the Pahang River mouth. (2) To the east of Pulau Seribuat one sees Zhumashan 苧麻山 (the first character is sometimes transcribed as *chu*), evidently Pulau Tioman. (3) Dongzhushan 東竹山, further to the south, represents Pulau Aur. Readers may note, the second character in the Chinese name is 竹, not 竺. (4) The unnamed island between Pulau Aur and Pulau Tioman must be Pulau Pemanggil. (5) Jiangjunmao 將軍帽, at the southern end of the Seribuat Islands, marks Pulau Tinggi. (6) Xizhushan 西竹山, north of it, near the mainland shore, could be Pulau Babi Besar. Again, *zhu* is written 竹. (7) The two unnamed locations placed between Xizhushan and Shijiao must be a lumpsum reference to the chain of small islands stretching from Pulau Harimau “down” to Pulau Rawa, and to the islands near the northwestern end of Pulau Babi Besar, i.e., Pulau Hujung and Pulau Babi Tengah.<sup>17</sup>

The map shows two sailing routes running north-south. One course is close to the mainland; it passes the twin set of Shijiao and the island called Xizhushan on their west side. The other course passes the outer island chain

16. Here, I used the modern edition *Xinbian Zheng He hanghai tu ji* 新編鄭和航海圖集 (based on the map in *Wubei zhi*). See esp. 52 (names), 57 (original map), 58 (modern map), 88-89 (table 6: sailing instructions). Facsimilized versions of the map are available in many modern works. See, for ex., *Zheng He hanghai tu* (ed. by Xiang Da); *Zhongguo lidai hailu zhenjing* 中國歷代海路針經 (henceforth *LDHL*), I, 154-198; Fang Kun et al. 2016 (*zongjuan* 總卷 part); *Ming chaoben “Yingya shenglan” jiaozhu*, folding map, appended. – For details regarding the segment discussed here, also see Ptak 2024, chapter VII.

17. For some of the names, see, for ex., Zhou Yunzhong 2013, 180-182; earlier *GDNH*, 242 (Shijiao), 480-481, 1062 (Zhumashan, Tioman), 607, 1061-1062 (Jiangjunmao, Tinggi), 264, 336, 903 (Dongzhushan, Pulau Aur, and Xizhushan; the editors set various names equal with Pulau Aur); Han Zhenhua 1999, esp. 428-429, 457-458 (some names identified differently). – For Pahang’s history and Chinese references to this area, including Pekan and the Pahang River, one may still find it useful to look up the relevant parts in the old work by Linehan 1973 (originally 1936).

– Pulau Tioman and Pulau Aur – on the east side. Both corridors merge south of Pulau Tinggi, whence the dashed line continues towards Baijiao 白礁, i.e., Pedra Branca, a rock at some distance from the eastern entry of what is now called the Strait of Singapore. As is well known this rock was a disputed area and there are many studies on its role in traditional navigation. What interests here is a different point: On the map the distance between the junction of the two routes and Baijiao is much smaller than the distance between Jiangjunmao and the islands in the northern parts of the Seribuat Archipelago; this suggests that the junction could be near the islet called Tokong Yu. One may add, near the outer sailing course the authors / editors of the map have placed brief instructions for northbound vessels, i.e., for ships going from Pedra Branca via Pulau Aur towards Con Son (Kunlunshan). The instructions for the segment Pedra Branca to Pulau Aur are these: Steering  $22.5^\circ$  and  $15^\circ$ , one will reach the latter after 5 *geng* 更 and can pass the island on its eastern side.<sup>18</sup> This marks a very fast passage. Below, in chapter V, we shall see that other sources provide more conservative data. Finally, as mentioned, the map shows an outer and an inner course, but it does not tell us whether sailing *through* the area between Xizhushan and Pulau Aur was possible as well.

The above identifications pose no problems, with only one exception. This is the name Xizhushan. Zhou Yunzhong pointed out that the character 竹 in that name and the character 猪 (豬, 潴) sound similar; in both cases the modern pinyin transcription is *zhu*. More importantly, the latter means “pig.” *Babi* in the Malay name Pulau Babi Besar also carries that meaning. Therefore, according to Zhou, Xizhushan should stand for Pulau Babi Besar. Also, Zhou suggested that Xizhu 西竺 and Dongzhu 東竺 in the *XYCGDL* should be the same as Xizhu 西竹 and Dongzhu 東竹 on the map. This follows earlier opinions.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, these explanations involve several weak points. First, modern travel guides and internet pages often claim that in the olden days Pulau Babi Besar had many wild pigs, hence the island’s name; but early texts do not confirm the presence of a major pig population on Pulau Babi Besar or another island in the archipelago. Second, if one assumes that 竹 and 猪 (and 豬, 潴) were “interchangeable,” then why doesn’t one encounter the names Xizhushan 西猪山 and Dongzhushan 東猪山 in the literature? Third, both 竹 and 竺 stand for bamboo. This has led to another assumption, namely that

18. *Geng*, as is well known, is a measure that combines time and distance; regarding such measurements, one finds different explanations in written sources. For a recent summary, see Liu Yijie 2017, 317-331. – Several authors dealt with the sailing instructions placed near this route on the map. The instructions also include the onward voyage towards the coast of modern Vietnam. See, for ex., Manguin 1972, 59-60, and notes there.

19. Zhou Yunzhong 2013, 180-182. Discussion in Ptak 2024, final part of chapter VI, also chapter VII.

Pulau Aur, or other nearby islands (?), were once covered with many bamboo plants. Again, there is no clear evidence for such an assumption. Fourth, if one argues that Dongzhu and Xizhu would form one compound or set, namely Dongxizhu 東西竺 (竹 or 猪), then both elements, the eastern and the western island, should be in close vicinity to each other; clearly, this does not apply to the “pair” Pulau Babi Besar + Pulau Aur. In fact, both places are separated by a larger space of water. Moreover, the first island belongs to the “inner” chain of the Seribuat Archipelago, near the mainland, while the second island forms part of the outer chain.<sup>20</sup>

Here we may summarize the above: From the geographical arrangement shown on the *Zheng He hanghai tu* we can be sure that Dongzhushan 東竹山 must be Pulau Aur. Indeed, if the map was made early in the fifteenth century, then this should be the first clear evidence for such an identification. Of course, it is also possible that Xizhushan 西竹山 stood for Pulau Babi Besar, and that the assumption concerning the “pig part” is correct as well, but then the overall setting associated with the “Zheng He Map” would not necessarily match earlier descriptions of or references to the places whose names contain the character 竺. Also, the map could be the *earliest* extant document which presents both names, Dongzhushan and Xizhushan, with the character 竹. If so, then one wonders why Huang Xingzeng, whose text dates from the sixteenth century, used the “old” form 竺. Above, it was argued that he probably did not understand the geographical setting; this could explain his decision. Besides that, several other possibilities come to mind: (1) Perhaps he had no access to the received version of the “Zheng He Map.” (2) Perhaps an earlier cartographic work now lost, referred to both locations under the names Dongzhu 東竺 and Xizhu 西竺. (3) Or, contrary to what was stated above, Huang was correct in using the old forms, because he noticed that they stood for different entities, and not for two of the Seribuat Islands. – Be that as it may, currently there seems no way out to solve the problem. Nor can we embed the lost *Zhenwei* text(s) into the possible transmission of topographical knowledge from one period to the next. In other words, one can think of some relation between the “Zheng He Map” and the *Zhenwei*, but that would take us to the realm of pure speculation.

#### IV. Dongzhu 東竹, Xizhu 西竹 and other Seribuat Locations: Descriptive Details in the *Shunfeng xiangsong* and *Zhinan zhengfa*

In his discussion of geographical names related to the Seribuat Archipelago, Zhou Yunzhong also cites several entries from the *Shunfeng xiangsong* 順風相送 (henceforth *SFXS*) and *Zhinan zhengfa* 指南正法 (now *ZNZF*). The dates of these nautical works are unclear. Various parts in the first text mirror

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion, see Ptak 2024, chapter VII.

the situation in the early or mid-Ming period, other parts suggest later dates. There are good reasons to assume that the *SFXS* is a *mixtum compositum* of material based on hearsay and / or collected from different manuscripts. Here we shall look at only one part of the text. This concerns a long list of toponyms with brief references to the physical features of the places in question and with some information pertaining to the adjacent sea spaces.<sup>21</sup> The following details are relevant for the present study: (1) Seen from afar, Dongzhushan 東竹山 looks like a “(horse) saddle”; the eastern part is high, the western part is low. Near the east side, the water depth is 30 *tuo* 托. (2) Xizhushan 西竹山 also has the appearance of a saddle. “Inside the gate, the depth is 30 *tuo*” (門中三十托水). (3) From there, one can see Jiangjunmao 將軍帽, i.e. Pulau Tinggi. The latter resembles a helmet, and there is (are) one or (several) small island(s) nearby. (4) Those to the south of Pulau Tinggi include Huoshaoshan 火燒山 and Haishan 海山. From a short distance, Huoshaoshan seems flat; furthermore, it is linked to a location called Zhumushan 豬母山.<sup>22</sup>

The second text, *ZNZF*, is an anonymous work as well, and again, there are different views regarding its date and origin. According to Xiang Da, one may associate the extant version with the early eighteenth century or, more generally, with the Kangxi period (1662–1722).<sup>23</sup> As in the case of *SFXS*, there are some important points that one ought to consider here. (5) One part in the final entry of that work contains information comparable to the descriptive elements found in the *SFXS*. Among other things, the *ZNZF* tells us that by sailing from Dongxizhu 東西竹, in the direction of 322.5° and 352.5°, one

21. General remarks on all this are in Liu Yijie 2017, 1-44 (editions, possible authors, dates), 120-122. Several articles by the same author provide additional information on the *SFXS*. Liu Yijie 2015 lists earlier studies on that text. – For the date of the *SFXS*, in connection with the entries cited below, one may also consult Lim Keow Wah 2022, 108-109. – Throughout the present article, I used the following editions: *SFXS* in Xiang Da’s *Liang zhong haidao zhenjing*, and the edition in *LDHL*, I. Furthermore, to verify certain points, it was necessary to look up the facsimilized text in Liu Yijie 2017 and Jiao Tianlong et al. 2015, vol. 2.

22. *SFXS*, 36-37; Lin Woling 1999, 76; *LDHL*, 286; Liu Yijie 2017, 284; Lim Keow Wah 2022, 109. Mills proposed to identify Zhumushan with Pulau Lima Kec(h)il, Huoshaoshan with Pulau Lima Besar, and Haishan with Pulau Sibiu. See esp. Mills 1974, 447, 448. For further references see notes 30 and 31, below. – The proposals for Huoshaoshan and Zhumushan are risky, as will also be shown below. Additional suggestions are in Ptak 2024. – Earlier, Lin Woling 1999, 76, equated Huoshaoshan with Pulau Apil, a small islet south of Pulau Tinggi, and Zhumushan with Pulau Babi Besar. One may perhaps accept the first proposal, but the second suggestion is not compatible with Zhou Yunzhong’s identification of Xizhushan with Pulau Babi Besar (see above). – For the water depth, measured in *tuo*, similar to fathoms, see, for ex. Didier 2020, 160. Needless to add, *tuo* measurements in traditional works rarely help us to identify specific locations. The reasons are obvious: Normally, there is no information on when and where exactly a measurement was taken.

23. See *ZNZF*, preface by Xiang Da, 4. The text of the *ZNZF* is also in *LDHL*, I, 396-432.

will reach Pulau Tioman. Supposedly, here the compound Dongxizhu points to Pulau Aur. (6) Thereafter the text refers to the form and shape of Dongzhu (without *shan*) and Xizhushan. As in *SFXS*, both locations are written with 竹 (not 竺), and both are said to resemble horse saddles. Furthermore, according to the *ZNZF* the water depth near the “inner” and “outer” side of Dongzhu reaches 25 *tuo*, and there are two small islands at the west side. Regarding Xizhushan, this island is low on its west side and “[on the] inside is Jiangjunmao (Pulau Tinggi)” (内有將軍帽). (7) Finally, the *ZNZF* entry mentions Huoshaota 火燒塔 and Zhumu jiazi 猪母甲子. Presumably, these two names are the same as Huoshaoshan and Zhumushan in the earlier source.<sup>24</sup>

The textual passages cited above lead to various questions and suggestions. First, one is inclined to identify Dongzhushan with Pulau Aur, as on the “Zheng He Map.” However, the enlarged name Dongxizhu also seems to represent that island. If so, then we have two toponyms for the same location. Did the authors of the two texts commit an error by accepting such an arrangement, or is our interpretation wrong? Second, the descriptive elements starting with “inside” (*nei* 内), in (2) and (6), should point to the sea between Pulau Aur and Xizhushan – based on the assumption that Xizhushan may represent Pulau Babi Besar or another island in the western sections of the Seribuat Archipelago. In that case we may also link the “inside” area to sailing through the space (or *men* 門) between Pulau Babi Besar and Pulau Aur. Third, sailing along the east side of the latter would then imply passing that island along its “outer side” (*wai* 外). Fourth, from Pulau Babi Besar one can certainly see Pulau Tinggi. Fifth, the toponyms mentioned in (4) and (7) stand for some islands to the southeast of Pulau Tinggi and the east of Pulau Sibiu. Above, in chapter III, Tokong Yu was identified as a possible reference point for the two merging sailing routes depicted on the “Zheng He Map.” Sixth, the two small islands to the west of Dongzhu (in 6) could represent Pulau Dayang and Pulau Lang.<sup>25</sup> Seventh, measurements regarding the depth of the sea are not too far apart in both sources. This could mean that they were taken in the same area under similar circumstances.

Elsewhere, I suggested that one can relate the characters *zhu* (pig) and *jiazi* in the name of the southernmost island(s) to two different directions. *Jiazi* 甲子 marks the first entry in the cycle of sixty cyclical combinations. The last combination in that cycle is *guihai* 癸亥. *Hai* stands for the pig and is associated with the northwest (330° on the Chinese compass). *Gui* may symbolize waves and points to the northeast / north northeast (15°). *Zhumu* means “pig mother.” Thus, when approaching the “pig mother,” i.e.,

24. See *ZNZF*, 194-195; *LDHL*, I, 432. Other entries in *SFXS* and *ZNZF* also mention places starting with Huoshan. See esp. *SFXS*, 55, 61-62; *ZNZF*, 192; *LDHL*, I, 294, 297, 431; chapter V, below.

25. See, for ex., Zhou Yunzhong 2013, 181.



the southern end or the “beginning” of the two Seribuat “chains,” captains had to decide whether their ship should follow the “inner” route towards Pulau Tinggi (330°), or the “outer” course towards Pulau Aur (15°). Such an interpretation could imply two things: a hidden message contained in the name *Zhumu* (*jiazi*) which told sailors where to go, and the implicit idea that all or several islands north of the starting point – presumably the Tokong Yu region – were closely related to each other. In that sense, we may argue that sailors associated all or many of the Seribuat islands with the element *zhu*, or “pig,” which they sometimes replaced by the character for “bamboo” (or, vice versa). This in turn could be a strong argument for the assumption that *Xizhushan* stood for Pulau *Babi* Besar. However, one must be careful. From other Chinese toponyms we know that the element *zhu* (pig) was sometimes replaced by *zhou* 州 (洲; “island”). A systematic study of such changes would be necessary to verify the proposals suggested above. Notwithstanding, the “pig” issue does not solve the problem of two co-existing names for Pulau Aur: *Dongzhushan* 東竹山 and *Dongxizhu* 東西竹.<sup>26</sup>

One final point may be added here to round off the above observations: Both the *SFXS* and the *ZNZF* record a second location whose names start with the characters *zhumu*. This place is located on the way from Bangka to Pedra Branca. According to the last entry in the *ZNZF*, taking such a route involved passing *Qixingyu* 七星嶼 (the *Tujuh* / *Tudjuh* Islands, north of Bangka), *Mantouyu* 饅頭嶼, *Zhumushan* 猪母山 (also called *Zhumu chua* 猪母焮), *Longya dashan* 龍牙大山 (*Gunung Lingga* / *Pulau Lingga*) and *Changyaoyu* 長腰嶼. Different identifications have been proposed for several of these toponyms; here, I only placed some options in brackets. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt – all the Chinese appellations refer to locations in or near the *Lingga-Singkep* region.<sup>27</sup>

26. Ptak 2024, chapter VII. For *zhu* and *zhou* in a different island context (*Tinhosa*), see Ptak 2022.

27. For *Qixing*, also *Qiyu* 七嶼, see, for ex., *GDNH*, 107; Mills 1970, 188 no. 66. For *Mantouyu* see, for ex., *GDNH*, 831 (there: *Pulau Singkep*); Lin Woling 1999, 107 (*Pulau Sunsa* near *Tanjung Jang*); Mills 1970, 206 no. 373 (*Pulau Saja*). For names with *Zhumu*, see, for ex., *GDNH*, 708-709 (there: *Pulau Selayar*). For locations called *Changyaoyu*, see, for ex., Mills 1970, 185-186 esp. nos. 28 and 30; *GDNH*, 107-108 (under *Dingjiyi* 丁機宜), 206-207. – For several of these islands, also see Ptak, 2023, 205, 205 n. 50, 208-211 (and some notes, there), as well as the next chapter in the present study. – The second *Zhumu* location also appears in *ZNZF*; see 183, 186, 187. For a further *Zhumu* place see there 139, 142, 161. The reference to *Zhumutou* 猪母頭 in *SFXS*, 63, is obscure and possible misplaced. *Zhumushan* 猪母山 in *SFXS*, 62, is the location near *Pulau Tinggi*. – Also, more broadly for several of the names in question, see Lin Woling 1999, 105-107, 113-114, maps on 108, 115, 119. Finally, see my references to Mills 1974, below in note 30.

## V. Further Entries in the *Shunfeng xiangsong* Involving Pulau Aur

This chapter deals with sea routes from and to the Seribuat Islands, and especially Pulau Aur, during the Ming period. From the “Zheng He Map” we learned that two major waterways passed the Seribuat region in a north-south direction. One route was close to the mainland; it passed Shijiao (Pulau Seribuat) and Xizhushan (perhaps Pulau Babi Besar) on the west side. The other corridor ran along the east side of Zhumashan (Pulau Tioman), Dongzhushan (Pulau Aur), and Jiangjunmao (Pulau Tinggi). Both routes came together south of Jiangjunmao, presumably somewhere near Tokong Yu.

Surprisingly, the “Zheng He Map” does not record a direct sailing course from this junction, or from Pedra Branca, which is further south, “down” to Bangka and Billiton. Such a direct route would bypass the Lingga-Singkep world along its eastern side. Also, the map does not specify a route through the space between Xizhushan and Dongzhushan, i.e., to the west side of the latter, or the east side of Xizhushan. Whether all this means that Zheng He’s ships never sailed through this “intra-island” area, we cannot tell. Probably most of the early Ming vessels – especially the large-size “treasure ships” – used the “outer” sailing corridor to the east of Pulau Aur, but this is not more than a “wild guess.”

The entries in *SFXS* and *ZNZF* discussed above, in chapter IV, provide an enlarged picture. The references to a *men* 門 and an area “inside” the archipelago – see items (2) and (6) in that chapter – suggest that sailing between Xizhushan and Dongzhushan was possible as well. Below we shall encounter further evidence for such an option. Of course, most likely information of this type belongs to the period of private Chinese trade under the late Ming; we cannot automatically relate it to Zheng He’s expeditions in the early fifteenth century. Furthermore, to repeat, the previously cited entries confirm that two names, Dongzhushan and Dongxizhu, represented Pulau Aur. One wonders why two different toponyms came into use for the same location, or group of islands (given that several small islets and rocks are next to Pulau Aur).

Keeping these findings in mind, we can now turn to the other entries in Chinese nautical records of the Ming period. The first text to deal with, once again is the *SFXS*. There are more than ten entries in that source which contain the compound name Dongxizhu. It is always written with the character 竹, and it always refers to Pulau Aur. I shall present the relevant information in a condensed form, along with some comments.<sup>28</sup> Here is an abstract sample of how I shall “transcribe” the relevant entries in the text: “Location A → direction (distance in *geng*) → location B: Dongxizhu → direction (distance in *geng*) → location C.” In this abstract example, point A is the place which

<sup>28</sup>. Behind each entry, I shall refer to the page numbers in Xiang Da’s edition of the *SFXS*, and the text in *LDHL*. In many cases I also refer to the relevant English parts in Mills 1974, and to some recent citations / comments in Lin Woling 1999, Liu Yijie 2017, and the articles in Chen Dasheng and Li Peifeng.

a ship passes before reaching Dongxizhu. Point C stands for the location to which it proceeds after leaving Dongxizhu. In several cases the text refers to further islands between A and C, in other cases there are brief remarks inserted in the text. Only the relevant passages will be mentioned. Chinese compass bearings will appear in the form of numbers. Here, then, is the first cluster of entries which tells us something about the position of Dongxizhu and the nearby waterways.

(1) Route from Guangdong to Melaka (廣東往磨六甲針路)

Con Son (Kunlunshan) → 202.5° (20 *geng*), 210° (25 *geng*) → Pulau Tioman, *Dongxizhu*, Pulau Tinggi (from afar one sees Huoshaoshan inside [the area near] Pulau Tinggi 遠看見將軍帽內及火燒山) → 202.5° (15 *geng*) → Pedra Branca. (*SFXS*, 55-56; *LDHL*, I, 294; Mills 1974, 448 (entry 11); Liu Yijie 2017, 212-213; Lim Keow Wah 2022, 109).

(2) Route from Melaka back to Guangdong 滿喇咖回廣東針路

Pedra Branca → 22.5° (10 *geng*) → Pulau Tioman, passed on the outside ([en route to that island:] *Dongxizhu* appears on the east side, one passes it at the [inner side] 東西竹在東邊, 內過) → 7.5° and 15° (45 *geng*) → Con Son. (*SFXS*, 56; *LDHL*, I, 294; Mills 1974, 448-449 (12); Liu Yijie 2017, 213; Tai Yew Seng 2022, 60).

(3) From Ayuthaya to Patani, Pahang, and Melaka 暹羅往大泥、彭亨、磨六甲

Pengheng gangkou 彭亨港口 (Pahang River mouth, or Pekan) → 180° (5 *geng*) → Pulau Tioman (small ships pass along the inner side [of the island], large ships pass along the outer side 小船可從內過, 大船在外過) → going ahead, one sees *Dongxizhu* and Pulau Tinggi, Huoshaoshan, Zhumushan, all at the outer side (前去見東西竹及將軍帽、火燒山、豬母山俱在外。) → further instructions to reach Pulau Branca. (*SFXS*, 61-62; *LDHL*, I, 297; Mills 1974, 441 (13, 16); Liu Yijie 2017, 241-242; Tai Yew Seng 2022, 59).

The three entries above require some comments. First, in entry 1, the phrase with Huoshaoshan is ambiguous. One can also translate it as “from afar one sees [the area] inside Pulau Tinggi and [then] Huoshaoshan.” But the difference between both versions may not be important.<sup>29</sup> The sailing directions suggest a course between Pulau Tioman and Pulau Pemanggil “down” towards the

29. Another entry specifies a northern access route to the west side of Pulau Tioman. See *SFXS*, 82; *LDHL*, I, 307; Liu Yijie 2015, 233-234; Mills 1974, 449-450 (entry 22). From there, steering 225°, one reaches Pulau Tinggi 將軍帽. “Inside the hat (=Tinggi) is a hatband that opens, finely branched” (帽內有帽帶生開仔細). One should follow this tail of land (*kunshen* 崑崙 is a frequent term for long, flat landmarks), steering 195°. The compass bearings are puzzling; indeed, they could be wrong. However, the “hatband” – this refers to the islands in question – is “inside” the Pulau Tinggi region.

east side of Pulau Tinggi. Second, the reference to the position of Pulau Aur in route 2 is very explicit: Once again, it implies a sailing course through the area between that island and the western sections of the Seribuat Archipelago. One may add, the western sections include Pulau Babi Besar and Pulau Tinggi. However, as in all the entries, there is no reference to Pulau Pemanggil, in the east. Nevertheless, from the compass bearings we can tell that sailors heading for Con Son and China must have seen Pulau Pemanggil either on starboard or port. Regarding Pulau Tioman, they passed that island on the east side. Third, route 3 alludes to the existence of two sailing corridors: one along the west coast of Pulau Tioman, the other along the east coast of that island. Evidently, the second route was more suitable for large ships. Furthermore, the text suggests that a crew whose vessel went south, still steering  $180^\circ$ , sighted all islands from Dongxizhu “down” to Zhumushan at the “outer” side, i.e., in the east. This must refer to the small ships which had approached the west side of Pulau Tioman. Clearly, their onward journey implies a sailing course through the area between Pulau Babi Besar and Pulau Tinggi. Furthermore, after reaching the area near the northern tip of the latter, sailors had to decide whether to enter the space between this island and Pulau Sibiu, or whether they wished to follow the west side of Pulau Sibiu. In each case, it was necessary to adjust the sailing direction. The text does not mention that. Strictly speaking, only after a correct adjustment would the remaining islands appear in the east. In short, the route alluded to in entry 3 was complicated and probably took more time than a smooth passage through the central section of the Seribuat Archipelago, i.e., through the area east of Pulau Tinggi.<sup>30</sup> The second problem with entry 3 is the northern access route to Pulau Tioman. Probably it implied sailing along the east side of the small Tokong Burung group, but we shall get back to the issue and the unexpected compass bearing associated with it (namely  $180^\circ$ ) in our comment to the next entry. Here a different point is more important. This concerns the “identity” of Dongxizhu. The sailing instructions in entries 2 and 3 make it very clear that Dongxizhu should be Pulau Aur. It is impossible to split up the name into Dongzhu (Pulau Aur) + Xizhu (Pulau Babi Besar). However, it is possible to consider Dongxizhu as a compound standing for Pulau Aur + one or several nearby island(s). We shall also get back to this issue in an instant.

**30.** As mentioned above, in an earlier note, Mills proposed to identify Huashaoshan with Pulau Lima Besar and Zhumushan with Pulau Lima Kec(h)il. These islands are south of Pulau Tinggi. See Mills 1974, esp. 440 (3), 441 (13), 447, 449 (16), 453, 454. However, Mills does not really state that an adjustment of the sailing course was necessary after a ship had reached the northern end of Pulau Tinggi. Evidently, his proposed identifications of Huashaoshan and Zhumushan implies that one would sail through the space between Pulau Tinggi and Pulau Sibiu. – Tai Yew Seng 2022, 59 quotes entry 3, but fails to give detailed explanations.

The entries that follow underline the importance of Dongxizhu in the context of further routes.

(4) From Melaka back to Ayuthaya 磨六甲回暹羅

Pedra Branca → 7.5° and 15° (3 *geng*) → Huoshaoshan, Pulau Tinggi; one sees *Dongxizhu*; then proceed to Pulau Tioman → 360° (5 *geng*) → Pengheng gangkou. (*SFXS*, 62, *LDHL*, I, 297; Mills 1974, 440 (3); Liu Yijie 2017, 242-243; Tai Yew Seng 2022, 59-60).

The entry above may remind readers of the coastal route shown on the “Zheng He Map.” On the map, this route passes Pulau Tinggi and the “twin set” Pulau Seribuat / Pulau Sembilan on its west side; it then continues towards the Pahang River mouth, and it seems to end near the Terengganu coast. In the entry cited here, it is not clear whether Huoshaoshan and Pulau Tinggi appeared on starboard or port. If on starboard, then all locations were in the east, as in the case of the map. However, the verb *qu* 取 in front of Huoshaoshan and Pulau Tinggi suggests that the ship was close to these two islands, while the verb *jian* 見 in front of Pulau Aur implies that one saw that island from afar. Nevertheless, passing Pulau Tinggi on the west side made it very difficult to “discover” Pulau Aur in the east, especially if the sky was not clear. This seems to exclude a route to the west of Pulau Tinggi and Pulau Sembilan. In short, the description is more likely to imply a course through the central section of the Seribuat Archipelago, as in the previous entries. Such a route passed Pulau Babi Besar on its east side. Therefore, in this case, the reference to Dongxizhu could mean that one sees Dongzhu (Pulau Aur) in the east and Xizhu (Pulau Babi Besar) in the west. If so, that would not necessarily be compatible with the equation *Dongxizhu* = Pulau Aur (+ some nearby island[s]), suggested in the context of entries 2 and 3. On the other hand, we may as well argue that in 4 *Dongxizhu* represents Pulau Aur (and some nearby islets), while the text ignores Pulau Babi Besar.

Another observation concerns the segment from Pulau Tioman to the Pahang River mouth; such a segment does not appear on the “Zheng He Map.” Besides that, there is a further problem. How can one explain the compass direction for that passage (straight north: 360°)? A course towards the north northwest (circa 330°) would be more appropriate. The same applies to the onward voyage, from the Pahang area towards the region of modern Pattani. Again, the direction is *danzi* 單子. Entry 3, cited above, contains a related problem. It specifies a southward course of 180° towards the Pahang River mouth and from there to Pulau Tioman. Can one relate these “vertical” directions to wind factors, waves, or local currents? Does the *SFXS* contain errors? Unfortunately, these questions remain open.

Here, then, we may turn to a different set of data and pass on to entries 5 to 11. They all refer to a route segment which connected Pulau Tioman / Dongxizhu to Changyu / Changyaoyu. As we shall see, the last name resists a clear identification, and there are other problems as well.



(5) Route from Pulau Tioman to Palembang and Sunda 亭盤往舊港並順塔針路

Pulau Tioman → 172.5° → *Dongxizhu* → 172.5° (10 *geng*) → Changyu 長嶼 → 187.5° (10 *geng*) → Longyamen shan 龍牙門山 (that island appears on the *mahubian* 馬戶邊 side). (*SFXS*, 56-57; *LDHL*, I, 294-295; Mills 1974, 449 (13); Liu Yijie 2017, 228-230; Lim Keow Wah 2022, 120).

(6) Route from Pulau Tioman to Dingjiyi 亭盤往丁機宜針

Pulau Tioman → 172.5° (5 *geng*) → pass *Dongxizhu*, Pulau Tinggi, Maodai Reef 帽帶礁 → 172.5° (4 *geng*) → one sees Miandan shan 緬丹山 and passes 長腰嶼. (*SFXS*, 63; Lin Woling 1999, 74; *LDHL*, I, 298; Mills 1974, 449 (17)).

In the above entries 5 and 6, the direction for the passage from Pulau Tioman towards *Dongxizhu* (172.5°) is different from the “vertical” directions given in the earlier entries. Also, the direction from *Dongxizhu* and the islands further south, including Maodai Reef which is not clearly identifiable, towards Chang(yao)yu still is the same (172.5°).<sup>31</sup> Moreover, entry 5 puts Changyu at an equidistance between *Dongxizhu* and Longyamen shan. The latter must refer to Pulau Lingga, or perhaps to the main peak on Lingga, known as the Gunung Lingga, or perhaps to the eastern entrance of the Lima Strait.<sup>32</sup> Since sailing from Changyu to that location follows the direction south southwest (and no longer south southeast), we may identify Changyu either with the region around Pulau Mapur or with some location on the large island called Pulau Bintan.<sup>33</sup>

Entry 6 complicates this situation. There are different proposals for Dingjiyi, but that is irrelevant for us.<sup>34</sup> Regarding Miandanshan, some scholars identified this place with Pulau Bintan. Is that an argument for equating Changyaoyu with Pulau Mapur? Alternatively, should one identify Miandanshan with a major elevation on Pulau Bintan, or perhaps with the Berakit area in the northeast of the island? Another toponym possibly related to Pulau Bintan is Ma'anshan 馬鞍山 (not to be confused with other places that have the same

31. The *SFXS* entry cited above, in chapter IV, tells us that the “helmet-shaped” island called Pulau Tinggi has a “hatband” to its south (*maodai* means “hatband”); these are the islands known as Huoshaoyu and Haishan (*SFXS*, 36-37). That is certainly correct, there are many small islands and rocks to the south and southeast of Pulau Tinggi. However, the combination *maodai* does not help us to identify the exact location(s) of the “hatband” reef or islet(s). To repeat: The identifications proposed by Mills (see note 22 above) bear risks.

32. See, for ex., Lin Woling 1999, esp. 105, 106, map on 119; Ptak 2023, 202.

33. Mills 1974, 449 (13), identified Changyu with Pulau Mapur. For Chang(yao)yu, see also notes 27 and 38, as well as the many entries and explanations in Mills 1974, 438-446, some of which would need a fresh interpretation.

34. See, for ex., Mills 1970, 222 no. 643; *GDNH*, 107-108; Lin Woling 1999, 74.

name). It appears on the “Zheng He Map” and could point to the northern or northwestern section of Bintan.<sup>35</sup> Finally, after mentioning Changyaoyu, entry 6 continues by stating that, “[sailing] in the direction 217.5° and 225°, one enters the second island of Changyu and comes level with it” (用坤未及單坤，入長腰第二嶼齊). Could this refer to Pulau Poto or Pulau Gin Besar?

(7) Return voyage 回針 (to Pulau Tioman)

Changyaoyu 352.5° and 345° (10 *geng*) → Shili Ma’an yushan 失力 馬鞍嶼山 → 352.5° and 337.5° (2 *geng*) → *Dongxizhu*; when proceeding, one reaches Pulau Tioman. (*SFXS* 63-64; *LDHL*, I, 298; Mills 1974, 449 (18)).

Route 7 introduces a new name: Shili Ma’an yushan. The distance between this location and Changyaoyu corresponds to the distance between Changyaoyu and *Dongxizhu* in entries 5, 8, and 9. Also, the text suggests a position of Shili Ma’an yushan to the southeast of the *Dongxizhu*, at a short distance of only two *geng* from the latter. As there is no island in such a position, the following assumption may help us to solve the riddle: A ship approaches some of the small islets such as Tokong Yu from the south southeast. When proceeding in the same direction, towards the north northwest, *Dongxizhu* (Pulau Aur) comes in sight on starboard, at quite some distance. Still following the same course, one comes close to Pulau Tioman. – Once again, such an interpretation suggests a sailing course through the area between Pulau Aur and Pulau Tinggi / Pulau Babi Besar. Technically, the compound *Dongxizhu* must not necessarily be limited to the region of Pulau Aur; it could be a vague reference to two islands on an east-west axis, separated by each other through a larger distance.

The name Shili Ma’an yushan is a different issue. One may be tempted to see a phonetical link between the initial syllables *shili* and *Sri / Seri* and between the sequence Ma’an yushan, literally “Horse Saddle Island(s),” and the saddle-like shape of *Xizhushan* and / or *Dongzhushan* (mentioned in the previous chapter). However, here Ma’an yushan is unlikely to stand for Pulau Aur because one expects that island to be represented by the name *Dongxizhu*. We can also exclude *Xizhushan* as a candidate for Shili Ma’an yushan as the text specifies a sailing route from the latter via *Dongxizhu* to Pulau Tioman along a southeast-northwest axis (*Xizhushan* should be to the south southwest of Pulau Tioman). Perhaps, then, Shili Ma’an yushan is an early compound name for the entire Seribuat Archipelago that combines a phonetical element with an allusion to the physical appearance of two or three islands in that group. Also, the Hokkien reading of the character 馬 starts with a b-consonant. Does this point to the element “*buat*”? Clearly, these suggestions rest on unsafe grounds. A thorough study of different Southeast Asian locations with the name element *ma’an*

35. See, for ex., Lin Woling 1999, 77, and maps on pp. 87, 91. For Miandan, see also Mills 1974, 454; Mills equated Miandan with Ma’an; also see the next note. For a very different and doubtful interpretation of entry 6, see Liu Yijie 2017, 244.

would be needed, just as one would also need a special investigation dealing with Chang(yao)yu to gain a better understanding of the names in question.<sup>36</sup>

Entries 8 to 10, below, present the itinerary along or through the Seribuat Archipelago within the context of longer voyages between the coast of modern Vietnam and various locations in modern Indonesia. These descriptions provide very few details related to Pulau Tioman, Dongxizhu and the other nearby islands, but based on what we know from the entries above, one can decipher the relevant parts without running into major problems. Thus, Chikan 赤坎 in route 8 stands for Ké Ga.<sup>37</sup> From there, via Con Son, one can sail nonstop to the Seribuat Islands. The onward journey, via Changyaoyu – Bintan or Pulau Mapur? – leads to the Palembang region and other locations (as in entry 5, above). The connection between Palembang and Sunda, or Banten on Java, is through the sea strait south of Bangka. Here are the relevant entries:<sup>38</sup>

(8) From Chikan to Palembang and Sunda 赤坎往舊港、順塔  
Con Son → 202.5° (45 *geng*) → Pulau Tioman → 157.5° → Dongxizhu → 172.5° (10 *geng*) → Changyaoyu 長腰嶼. (*SFXS*, 64; *LDHL*, I, 298; Mills 1974, 449 (19); Liu Yijie 2017, 245-246).

(9) Return voyage 回針  
Changyaoyu → 360° (10 *geng*) → Dongxizhu and Pulau Tioman → 22.5° (45 *geng*) → Con Son. (*SFXS*, 65; *LDHL*, I, 299).

(10) Sunda Strait 順塔外峽  
Bangka → several locations → 345° (20 *geng*), 337.5° (20 *geng*) → one sees Dongxizhu and Pulau Tioman.<sup>39</sup> (*SFXS*, 65; *LDHL*, I, 299; Liu Yijie 2017, 247).

Admittedly, I have simplified the presentation of entry 10. It contains several unclear points, including the *geng* measurements, but the directions towards Dongxizhu and Pulau Tioman are acceptable; therefore, it is not necessary to discuss the other elements in that entry. Instead, we can turn to

36. Mills 1974, 449 (18), 454, equated Shili with the honorific “Sri” and the full name Shili Ma’an yushan with the “Bintan Great Hill” (Gunung Bintan Besar), on Pulau Bintan (also see there 437). This is incompatible with the distances given in the entry, unless we argue that they are wrong. – There are further Chinese toponyms with the characters Ma’an. See, for ex., Mills 1970, 205 nos. 348-351, Mills 1974, esp. 446; *GDNH*, 169-170; Ptak 2021, 95-99.

37. For Chikan, see *GDNH*, 409-410; Manguin 1972, esp. 54, 59-60, 60 n. 1, appendix map 2.

38. Here Mills suggests Mapur for Changyaoyu. – For Sunda see, for ex., Mills 1970, 217 no. 564; *GDNH*, esp. 600, 1050.

39. I take the sequence *waixia* 外峽, behind Sunda, literally “outer strait,” to simply mean *haixia* 海峽, or “sea strait.”

the next entry, number 11, which provides fresh information, as it specifies a sailing course towards Sukadana near modern Pontianak on Kalimantan.

(11) From Wuyu to Sukadana 浯嶼取諸葛擔籃

Taiwu 太武 → Pulau Tioman and *Dongxizhu* → 112.5° (4 *geng*), 112.5°, 105° (4 *geng*), 105°, 97.5° (4 *geng*) → a single island called Siyangyan 巴養顏. (*SFXS*, 72; *LDHL*, I, 302; Liu Yijie 2017, 218-219).

The starting point for this sailing course is the island of Jinmen 金門 in Fujian.<sup>40</sup> Having passed Pulau Tioman and *Dongxizhu* the ship would continue its voyage towards the east southeast. To reach the island called Siyangyan, one had to adjust the sailing direction more than once. The sequence of these adjustments suggests that this was a trip through the waters south of the Anambas Islands, while the Tambelan Islands probably appeared on starboard. Nevertheless, Siyangyan remains unidentified. Also, the destination, Sukadana, may not be fully compatible with the sailing directions; to reach that area, a ship had to sail more towards the southeast. This suggests that one should perhaps alter the initial segment of the route from *Dongxizhu* to Siyangyan to a course that led towards the Tambelan Islands and then from there to east southeast.<sup>41</sup>

Be that as it may, the interesting point is that a “diagonal” route from the Seribuat Islands to the Kalimantan coast does not appear on the “Zheng He Map.” The *SFXS* seems to contain the earliest extant reference to such a route. We may of course amplify this panorama by adding another sailing course to it: the itinerary from Pulau Tioman to the Brunei area (Wenlai 文萊, and many other names), which passed the Anambas Islands on their south side.<sup>42</sup>

Considering all entries in the *SFXS*, we may now draw a brief conclusion of the findings described above. First, *Xizhushan* does not appear as a separate entity. Second, the *SFXS* does not seem to specify a north-south route near the shore of the Malay Peninsula, i.e., along the west side of Pulau Babi Besar, Pulau Sibul, etc. Third, entries 8 to 10 remain vague: probably they imply that north-south traffic passed Pulau Tioman and Pulau Aur on the east side. This would then correspond to the “outer” route on the “Zheng He Map.” Fourth, the *SFXS* suggests that sailing through the space between Pulau Aur and the islands further west was possible. Fifth, it alludes to the fact that small and large vessels opted for different routes. Sixth, in most cases, *Dongxizhu* must refer to Pulau Aur (+ a nearby location); the name is unlikely to include

40. See esp. *Liang zhong haidao zhenjing*, index 215-216, 244.

41. For Sukadana and Siyangyan, see, for ex., Ptak 2021, 111 n. 57, 115, 119, 119 n. 79. For a different interpretation of the entry, see Liu Yijie 2017, 219.

42. *SFXS*, 84-85; *LDHL*, I, 308; Liu Yijie 2017, 238-239; Mills 1974, 458 (4, 5). Also see *GDNH*, 496-497 (under Linnanuo 林哪喏 and Linlaonuo 林嘮喏). – The reference to Shangxiazhu in *Lingwai dai da* could imply sailing between Java and Pulau Aur, but this is not confirmed. See references in note 4 above.

Pulau Babi Besar. Seventh, Pulau Pemanggil appears on the “Zheng He Map” as an unnamed island, while it does not seem to be mentioned in the *SFXS*. Theoretically, this opens the possibility for arguing that Dongxizhu could be a compound for Pulau Aur + Pulau Pemanggil.

Pulau Pemanggil is a mystery, indeed. This leads to a further point. The modern Chinese name of that island is Bomangji 柏芒吉; the English translation of *pemanggil* means “the caller.” Probably sailors associated a magical dimension with the Malay name and linked it to a huge coastal rock, which local people considered as a sacred site. The boulder, named Batu Buau, is visible from afar, but sources of the sixteenth century provide no details. Nevertheless, it is possible that early sailors linked the Batu Buau to various dangers and legends which advised them to avoid the island; if so, this might explain why Pulau Pemanggil is not explicitly mentioned in the *SFXS*.

What else can one say? A careful reading of the entries cited above reveals certain errors and doubtful passages. For instance, the direction  $157.5^\circ$  (*bingsi* 丙巳) in entry 8 seems unusual when one compares it to the instructions given in the other entries. Yet, considering all observations presented in the previous paragraphs, we may say that Chinese sailing through and near the Seribuat Islands must have changed from the early fifteenth to the sixteenth century. Clearly, the network of Chinese sailing avenues through the Laut Natuna expanded in the course of time, unless we argue that the “Zheng He Map” does not provide a full picture of what was going on in earlier days.

Finally, the entries cited in chapter IV made a distinction between Xizhu and Dongzhu; this is different from the entries discussed in the present section. Such differences may be used as an argument to confirm that the *SFXS* is based on various (written and / or oral) sources, or navigational traditions. Perhaps the parts which list Xizhu and Dongzhu are older than the entries analysed in the present chapter. Yet, whether minor differences regarding sailing directions and other details may serve as additional arguments for dividing the received text of the *SFXS* into different textual clusters with separate origins, remains another open issue.

## VI. *Siyi guangji*, *Dongxiyang kao*, and the “Selden Map”

Among the few extant late Ming works with nautical data is the *Siyi guangji* 四夷廣記 (henceforth *SYGJ*), a text of the early seventeenth century, possibly completed between 1601 and 1603.<sup>43</sup> The segments on sailing routes

<sup>43</sup> For the editorial history, author, and contents of the *SYGJ*, see, for ex., Papelitzky 2020, 30-31, 41-42, 177-183. Also see her earlier article: Papelitzky 2015. – The facsimilized text of the *SYGJ* is available in the Xuanlantang collection. Punctuated versions of the segments with nautical information are in *LDHL*, I, and *Zheng He xia Xiyang ziliao huibian* 鄭和下西洋資料彙編 (henceforth *ZHZLHB*), 306-327. In several cases, the punctuation differs; here I mostly followed the first version.



contained in this huge work on foreign countries are partly identical with those included in the *SFXS*, but there are some differences as well. Here I shall present the entries with navigational details in a very condensed form. In all cases Dongxizhu appears as 東西竹. However, the *SYGJ* also contains a description of Dongxizhu 東西竺. This description is based on the *Daoyi zhilüe* and / or *Xingcha shenglan*.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, it requires no special attention here. Moreover, the very fact that both toponyms – one written with 竹, the other with 竺 – appear in different sections of the same source, suggests that the author was not inclined to link them to one and the same location.

We shall now turn to the entries on sea routes which mention Dongxizhu 東西竹 and some nearby places. The relevant information is found in the following segments:<sup>45</sup>

(12) From Pulau Tioman to Palembang, [which is the route to] the location Java 地滿往舊港針路乃爪哇地方 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 883a; *LDHL*, I, 329; *ZHZLHB*, 315).<sup>46</sup>

(13) Route from Palembang back to Pulau Tioman 舊港收回地滿山針路 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 883b; *LDHL*, I, 329; *ZHZLHB*, 315).

(14) Sailing directions [for the route] from Con Son to Java 崑崙往爪哇針位 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 885a; *LDHL*, I, 330; *ZHZLHB*, 316).

(15) Sailing directions [for the route] from Java back to Con Son 爪哇回崑崙針位 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 886a; *LDHL*, I, 330; *ZHZLHB*, 317).

(16) Route from Anminzhen in Fujian to Melaka 福建安民鎮往滿喇咖國針路 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 889b; *LDHL*, I, 331; *ZHZLHB*, 318).

(17) Route from Melaka back to Wuhumen in Fujian 滿喇咖國回福建五虎門針路 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 900b; *LDHL*, I, 331; *ZHZLHB*, 318).

(18) Sailing directions [for the routes] from Con Son to Ayuthaya [and] Ayuthaya to Melaka 崑崙往暹羅、暹羅往滿喇咖針位 (*SYGJ*, ce 101,

44. *SYGJ*, ce 102, 915b. The segment on Dongxizhu in that book follows the segments on Sanfoqi 三佛齊 (usually identified with Srivijaya) and Longyamen 龍牙門 (various identifications). This vaguely reminds of the arrangement in the earlier sources. Also, the entry in *SYGJ* ends with a brief phrase, which tells us that the “treasure ships” (*baochuan* 寶船) of the Ming fleets had reached this “state” / “kingdom” (*guo* 國) in the 7th year of the Yongle reign (1409). The date is questionable. Zheng He started his third voyage in late 1409. Having reached Fujian, his ships set sail again during the 12th lunar month of the same year (i.e., early in 1410). It is unlikely that they made it to the Seribu Islands during that month. For the itinerary, see, for ex., Mills 1970, 12, and the sources cited there.

45. Papelitzky analysed several routes recorded in *SYGJ*. This includes references to Pulau Tioman and some nearby locations. See Papelitzky 2020, 122-125, 150.

46. The entry describes the route to Palembang, but it does not mention Java. This explains the translation of *nai* 乃, but of course my interpretation could be wrong.

902b; *LDHL*, I, 332; *ZHZLHB*, 319)

(19) Route from Melaka back to Ayuthaya 滿喇咖回暹羅針路 (*SYGJ*, ce 101, 903b; *LDHL*, I, 332; *ZHZLHB*, 319)

The description in entry 12 is almost identical with the one in entry 5. However, the *SFXS* records the existence of one or several cape(s)/ peak(s) and one or several unspecified island(s) along the southern shore of Pulau Tioman (亭盤山南邊生角尖有山嶼), while the *SYGJ* associates these locations with the southeastern part of Pulau Tioman.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the compass bearings given in *SYGJ* seem to imply an adjustment of the sailing direction from 172.5° to 180° on the way to Pulau Aur. Apparently, the latter was approached from the “inner” or western side. The journey from there to Changyu is identical in both sources: one reaches that island after 10 *geng*, when steering in the *bingwu* direction (172.5°).

Entry 17 refers to the “inner” side of Pulau Tinggi, Pulau Aur and Pulau Tioman. Entry 16 tells us that Huoshaoshan would be at the “inner side” of Pulau Tinggi (將軍帽內有火燒山), but there are no further specifications. We had encountered a related problem in entry 1 (*SFXS*).

Entries 18 and 19 raise questions comparable to those encountered in the context of entry 3. For instance, according to entry 18 “one comes level with Pulau Tioman and [then] with Dongxizhu and Pulau Tinggi, all being at the outer side, while Huoshaoshan and Zhumushan all are at the inner gate” (平地盤山及東西竹、將軍帽，俱在外，火燒山及豬母山俱放在內門也。). Presumably this refers to sailing through the central parts of the Seribuat Archipelago. “At the outer side” must point to the islands seen in the east, while the “inner gate” should be the corridor to and through the Seribuat area, with Pulau Aur at its eastern rim, and Pulau Babi Besar in the west, as mentioned above, in chapter IV. However, in that case the position of Pulau Tinggi is wrong. By contrast, if the “inner gate” marks the space to the west of Pulau Tinggi, then Huoshaoshan and Zhumushan should be near Pulau Sibul and not to the southeast of Pulau Tinggi. As one can see, the arrangement is not clear; there could be some error.

47. The islands: Pulau Gut and / or Pulau Tokong Bahara and / or Pulau Jahat? – “Southeastern section”: For the *eastern* vs. *southern* shore, see Liu Yijie 2017, 228-229. There are steep hills and mountains all around the island. The Gunung Kajang is the highest elevation. It rises to more than 1000 meters. Seen from afar, it forms part of a spectacular twin structure with two peaks. English descriptions of the island are in National Imagery, sector 6 (and in the edition of 2020, also sector 6, p. 230, to mention just one more example). – Also note: The sequence (生)角尖 does not seem to be a name; modern text editions do not mark it as such; see, for ex., *SFXS*, 36, 56; *LDHL*, I, 286, 294.

Entry 19 refers to sailing from Pedra Branca northbound. It mentions Hongshaoshan first, then Dongxizhu and Pulau Tinggi. This sequence makes no sense. The position of all these locations is poorly defined.

While the *SYGJ* does not help us to precisely locate the cluster Huoshaoshan / Zhumushan, other elements in the entries quoted above pose no major problems. Here is just one example: Entries 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, and 17 calculate the distance between Pulau Aur / Pulau Tioman and Con Son at 45 *geng*. Entry 17 says, one passes Pulau Tioman at the “inner side,” which seems unlikely, but perhaps that does not matter very much. Entry 16 provides a new aspect: It calculates the distance between Con Son and Pulau Tioman as 43 *geng*. This means that sailing between Pulau Tioman and Pulau Aur took 2 *geng*. The relevant entries do not explicitly confirm the latter, because they lump both islands together, but the *ZNZF* provides the missing information: Going from Pulau Aur to Pulau Tioman takes three *geng*, and one must steer 323.5° and 352.5° respectively. It is not clear whether this means that a ship had to adjust its direction midway to Pulau Tioman, or whether pilots had the liberty to choose a course between 323.5° and 352.5°. In the first case this could mean that a ship would approach Pulau Tioman after passing Pulau Pemanggil on its west side. Besides that, one wonders why Pulau Pemanggil is not mentioned in that entry.

Other small aspects concern the name Pulau Tioman. It appears as Diman 地滿 (entries 12, 13), Zhuma 苧麻 (14-17), and Dipan 地盤 (18, 19), while the *SFXS* mostly gives Zhupan 苧盤. These are just some of the extant name versions. Perhaps in this case different names point to different sources and / or naming traditions, but there may be other reasons as well. To solve the issue would require a thorough investigation of many more toponyms in navigational records.

Here we can pass on to the next source, Zhang Xie's 張燮 *Dongxiyang kao* 東西洋攷 (prefaces 1617 and 1618). This book mentions the name Dongxizhu 東西竺 in its entry on Johor (Roufo 柔佛); there it quotes the relevant part from the *Xingcha shenglan* without giving further explanations. The text resembles the one in the Jilu huibian 紀錄彙編 version of Fei Xin's account, and it also lists the products of Johor, among which are fine mats, reminiscent of the ones mentioned in *Xingcha shenglan* and the earlier *Daoyi zhilüe*.<sup>48</sup> Elsewhere the *Dongxiyang kao* provides a list of locations on the way from the Vietnam coast to Melaka. This sequence refers to Pahang, then to Pulau Tioman, and then to Dongxizhu. Sailing from the first to the second place, straight south (180°), took 5 *geng*. Near the east side of Pulau Tioman the water depth reached 28 *tuo*, on the west side it measured 44 *tuo*. This is somewhat different from the data given in *SFXS* (see chapter IV, above). The passage from Pulau Tioman to Dongxizhu took 3 *geng*, which comes close to the distance of 2 *geng*, calculated from entry 16. Also, according to the

48. See *DHYK*, j. 4, 80-81; *Xingcha shenglan jiaozhu*, houji, 3; *DYZLJS*, 230 n. 3.

*Dongxiyang kao*, Dongxizhu constituted the border of Johor (柔佛地界), but there are no further details. From the island one could reach Luohanyu 羅漢嶼, the “anchorage” (港口) of Johor, usually identified with Pulau Lima near the peninsula (and not to be confused with Pulau Lima Besar / Kecil in the southern section of the Seribuat Islands). The *Dongxiyang kao* states that one should avoid this location because of its flat waters and proceed to Pedra Branca instead. Finally, a different entry tells us that, steering 180°, one can sail from Dongxizhu to Changyaoyu; this takes 10 *geng*.<sup>49</sup>

The unexpected detail in Zhang Xie’s book concerns the name Dongxizhu. Zhang uses the form with 竺, and not the version 東西竹 which we had encountered in the other nautical works. There could be a simple explanation for this: Like the author of the *SYGJ*, he had read the *Daoyi zhilüe* and / or *Xingcha shanglan*, but while the former kept both toponyms apart, Zhang Xie adjusted the name found in nautical sources to the name in earlier works.



**Fig. 3** – Segment of the Selden Map with four sea routes leading to Pulau Tioman and Pulau Aur, in the centre.

The last work to be considered here is the so-called “Selden Map.” Much has been written on this unique cartographic document which combines Chinese and European geographic traditions. Its macro-layout is European, but many details, the toponyms, and the nautical information follow Chinese conventions. The most comprehensive study on this anonymous map is a voluminous book by Chen Tsung-jen 陳宗仁. However, up until now, the question of the map’s origin, date and authorship has not been solved. Most

<sup>49</sup>. See *Dongxiyang kao*, j. 9, 176-177. For Luohanyu, see, for ex., *GDNH*, 515; Mills 1970, 203 no. 328; Mills 1974, esp. 437, 439 map, 440-441, 444, 446, 454; Lim Keow Wah 2022, 120.

scholars think that it is a work of the early seventeenth century. If indeed so, then it belongs to the period during which the *Dongxiyang kao* and many parts of the *SFXS* and *SYGJ* were written or collected. Of course, it may also be a work of the mid-seventeenth century, but probably that would not matter very much for the context of the present study.<sup>50</sup>

The “Selden Map” shows the sailing routes known to the Chinese in the late Ming period. The routes are drawn as thin lines. Several of these routes converge near the east side of a large island in front of the Pahang-Johor coast. However, this part of the map is not well preserved, and I was unable to find legible traces of the island’s name. Nevertheless, one gets the impression that it is drawn as a twin structure. If so, then it may represent Dongxizhu (i.e., Dongzhu + Xizhu), but of course I may be wrong – probably the authors of the map intended to show Pulau Tioman.<sup>51</sup>

Be that as it may, on the east side of the peninsula, we can clearly identify the name for Pahang. At the peninsula’s southern tip, one finds the name Wudingjiaolin 烏丁礁林 (possible modern Minnan reading: *Oteng/deng tana*). The latter also appears in one entry of the *SFXS*, in the Johor part of *Dongxiyang kao*, and in the nautical section of that book (as Wuding qiaolin 烏丁礁林).<sup>52</sup> It was explained as *hujung tanah* (“land’s end”), and one also finds it on several old European maps in various orthographic forms.<sup>53</sup> Phonetically, the Malay sequence comes close to the Minnan reading indicated above.

As was just mentioned, the “Selden Map” records no names in the Seribuat region, but it provides various compass directions near important sailing routes. One of the routes converging near Pulau Aur / Pulau Tioman, links this island to Jiugang 舊港, i.e., to the Palembang region. Naturally, the route passes the Lingga-Singkep region. The direction marked near that area is *dingwu* 丁午 (187.5°), which should be acceptable from a navigational point

**50.** Chen Tsung-jen 2022, esp. 81, 480-493. This book combines the results of several articles by the same author. See the list there, 497-498. – The “Selden Map” is available online, through the Bodleian Library (<https://seldenmap.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>; accessed 07.03.2024) and in the form of a large-size print prepared by the same institution, Oxford University Press, 2012, which I used here.

**51.** *LDHL*, I, 357 (toponyms and sailing instructions: the list seems to imply that the island on the map is Zhupan 苧盤 / Pulau Tioman); 375 (list of toponyms: Pulau Tioman does not appear). Also see Chen Tsung-jen 2022, esp. folded maps after p. XVI, p. 373 (table).

**52.** *SFXS*, 82; Liu Yijie 2017, 233-234; Mills 1974, 449-450 (22); *Dongxiyang kao*, j. 4, 80, j. 9, 176; *LDHL*, I, 307, 351, 375. For the names Wudingjiao(qiao)lin and other forms, see also *GDNH*, 218; Mills 1970, 226 no. 698.

**53.** For the Malay name, its old European “derivatives,” and a further name for the southeastern end of the peninsula – “Point Romania” (Tanjung Ramunia; again different forms) – see, for ex., Borschberg 2010, esp. 36-37, 263-264 n. 48, 344; Borschberg 2025, in the press.



of view. Yet, the Lingga region is not drawn clearly, and Bangka and Billiton are not visible at all.<sup>54</sup>

Inside the Laut Natuna, one sees a cluster of unnamed islands, all in the form of small mountains. A second sailing route leads from Pulau Aur / Pulau Tioman towards that area, i.e., in a southeastern direction. It passes the cluster at its southern side, but there are also some islands further south. Moreover, at some point the route splits up into two lanes that appear to run in a parallel fashion. Apparently, the main part of the cluster, to the north / northeast of these two lanes, marks the Anambas and Tambelan Islands. If one agrees with that, then the southern islands – these can be grouped into seven “mountains” – must point to some of the islets north of Bangka. Here the Tujuh Islands, or Qixingyu 七星嶼 (*tujuh* means “seven”), come to mind; we had already encountered them at the end of chapter IV. Finally, the “diagonal” (southeastern) course on the “Selden Map” is different from the one described in entry 11 above.<sup>55</sup> The one on the map leads through the Karimata Strait towards the Java Sea, the one in *SFXS* leads to Sukadana.

A third sailing course on the “Selden Map” connects Pulau Aur / Pulau Tioman to the east, evidently to the northwestern section of modern Sarawak. This route bypasses the large cluster of unnamed islands along its northern side. Since the cluster presents several archipelagos, one is tempted to argue that the route rounded the Natuna Islands at their north side. However, that would make no sense. The most direct route from Pulau Aur / Pulau Tioman to the northwestern section of Borneo runs south of the Natuna and Anambas Islands. Probably one should compare this “horizontal” axis to the Pulau Tioman-Brunei (Wenlai) route recorded in *SFXS* (see chapter V, above).

A fourth route, which does not touch the Seribuat Archipelago runs from the Vietnam coast straight to the south. It passes the unnamed cluster on its eastern side. Projected on a modern map, this must imply a north-south itinerary along the west side of Pulau Natuna Besar, and then along the east side of the Anambas and Tambelan Islands, towards Karimata and the Java Sea. A fifth route, again from north to south, passes through Xishelong 西蛇龍 and Dongshelong 東蛇龍 (in the Natuna Islands) at its eastern side and then follows the west coast of Kalimantan.<sup>56</sup> However, both these sailing courses do not touch the Seribuat Islands, so we do not consider them here.

<sup>54</sup>. For the sailing directions placed along the routes, see the convenient arrangement in *LDHL*, I, 374 (the entry in brackets called “Zhang[zhou], Quan[zhou] to Jiugang and Batavia”).

<sup>55</sup>. See the course listed in *LDHL*, I, 357 (the entry in brackets called “Pulau Tioman to Banjarmasin / Machen 馬辰”).

<sup>56</sup>. For a discussion of Dongshelong and Xishelong, see Ptak 2021, part III. – For the names on the “Selden Map,” also see *LDHL*, I, 357, 375.

## VII. Final Remarks

Besides the *ZNZF*, quoted above, many more texts and some maps of the Qing period record the Seribuat Islands, especially Pulau Tioman, Pulau Aur, and Pulau Tinggi.<sup>57</sup> No doubt, it would be possible to continue the analysis by discussing these later works, but in the beginning of this article it was made clear that my narration will end in the mid-seventeenth century. One may add, mid and late Ming accounts of the *lishi dili* 歷史地理 category – i.e., texts dealing with historical geography, trade, ethnic, social, and other phenomena – provide nothing on the Seribuat world that goes beyond the findings presented in the previous chapters.

By contrast, medieval Arabic sources, as well as Portuguese records of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, including maps, offer further information.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, it would be a rewarding task to compare the Lusitanian material with the data one can collect from Chinese sources, but that would certainly lead to a separate monograph. Therefore, I shall limit myself to a few general remarks. Portuguese *roteiros*, or “rutters,” describe a “diagonal” axis from Pulau Aur to Pulau Karimata; this sailing corridor is very similar to the routes shown on the “Selden Map” and partly also to the itinerary described in entry 11 of the *SFXS*. Moreover, after passing through the Karimata Strait, Portuguese ships continued their voyage along the south coast of Borneo towards Makassar, where they picked up sandalwood and other goods for the markets in Macau, Guangzhou, and India. Most remarkably, one point of orientation along that route was Pulau Serutu, an island near Karimata. Archaeological evidence suggests that this island was already important in the late thirteenth century, because some vessels of the Yuan navy called there – not on the way to Sulawesi, but on their voyage to Java.<sup>59</sup>

Another sailing route mentioned in Portuguese sources tied Pulau Tioman and Pulau Aur to the western exit of the Bangka Strait. This north-south corridor passed Pulau Bintan, Pulau Mapur, Pulau Saja, and the Tujuh Islands. In other words, it was partly identical with several of the itineraries described

57. Two maps may be cited as examples: the “Dongyang Nanyang haidao tu” 東洋南洋海道圖 by Shi Shipiao 施世驃 (1667–1721) and the “Xi’ nanyang ge fan zhenlu fangxiang tu” 西南洋各番針路方向圖 by Jueluo Manbao 覺羅滿保 (Gioro Mamboo, 1673–1725). Among other names, they record Dongxizhu 東西竹 and Dipan 地盤. See, for ex., *LDHL*, I, esp. 503, 504; *Zhongguo di zhi lishi dang’anguan* 中國第一歷史檔案館 and *Aomen yiguo liangzhi yanjiu zhongxin* 澳門一國兩制研究中心 (eds.), *Aomen lishi ditu jingxuan* 澳門歷史地圖精選 (Beijing: Huawen chubanshe, 2000), plates 15, 18; Papelitzky 2024.

58. For the Arabic material one can consult Tibbetts 1970 (esp. under the index entries Tinggi, Tioman, and Tiyūma). For Portuguese nautical texts, see Matos 2018. Early Portuguese authors – Francisco Rodrigues, Fernão Mendes Pinto, and many others – also mention some of the Seribuat Islands, especially Pulau Tioman.

59. Matos 2018, esp. 119–123, 127–128; Hung Hsiao-chun et al. 2022.

in *SFXS* and *SYGJ* (see especially entries 5-9 and 12-15, above).<sup>60</sup> Finally, there was also a direct route from Pedra Branca to the northwestern section of Borneo. This sailing corridor formed part of a long itinerary that led via the Sarawak coast to the Celebes Sea and from there to the North Moluccan Islands, where the Portuguese bought cloves.<sup>61</sup>

Combining the above findings with the observations derived from the “Zheng He Map,” we may assume that the structure of commercial routes through the Laut Natuna expanded from the fifteenth to seventeenth century. Of course, it is very likely that the so-called Orang Laut, or native “sea nomads,” as well as other local groups were acquainted with many of these traffic lanes from very early times onwards, but the details remain largely unknown as there are no or very few early records that might help us to fill the gaps. Presumably different Malay and other Southeast Asian networks were mostly involved in local and regional business. If one considers the Laut Natuna as an exchange zone in the Braudelian sense, crisscrossed by both international and local routes, then the findings described above suggest that long distance traffic, mainly managed by “outside” groups, grew in importance from one period to the next, while textual sources provide little about local routes run by coastal people. Naturally, to draw a more complete picture, it would be necessary to also consider the role of trading groups from West and South Asia, which were active in the region, and the role of other European powers which moved on the stage only a few decades after the arrival of the Portuguese.

Finally, as was repeatedly mentioned, there are several open problems: What do the early Chinese names Shangxiazhu, Zhuyu, Tianzhushan, etc. stand for? Some or all of them could represent Pulau Aur, but they may as well point to very different locations. Also, we should not mix up the combinations Dongxizhu 東西竺 and Dongxizhu 東西竹. Navigational works of the Ming period, when referring to the latter (or to Dongzhu[shan] 東竹[山]), usually mean Pulau Aur, or perhaps Pulau Aur plus one or two small islets adjacent to it, while the sequence with the character 竺 remains a disputed issue. Whether Xizhu(shan) 西竹(山) always stood for Pulau Babi Besar, is another unclear point. In some cases, authors seem to have confounded different islands and names; this explains many uncertainties.

Such uncertainties also take us to the last paragraph. Modern descriptions of individual Seribuat locations suggest that the easternmost islands of the archipelago – Pulau Tioman, Pulau Pemanggil, Pulau Aur – share similar features. They have steep hills, there is dense vegetation, ships should avoid certain coastal areas because of rocks and reefs, while there are some fine anchorages as well. It may thus be asked: Are there cases where we should relate the compound Dongxizhu 東西竹 to Pulau Aur (in the southeast) *and* Pulau Pemanggil (in the

60. Matos 2018, esp. 112-115.

61. Matos 2018, esp. 98-102 (Pedra Branca to Borneo).

northwest)? Without doubt, the “Zheng He Map” shows Pulau Pemanggil, but it records no name for that place; regarding Xizhushan, it puts this island in a position that could be the position of Pulau Babi Besar. However, later works used the names in question more liberally. Therefore, should we categorically reject the possibility of including Pulau Pemanggil in some of the references to Dongxizhu in Ming nautical texts? Were both islands confused? It seems to me that certain “lumpsum” references to the joint set “Pulau Tioman / Pulau Aur” and several compass directions related to sailing near these islands do not allow us to radically exclude Pulau Pemanggil from the orbit of Dongxizhu. Well then, is this the reason for the fact that our sources provide no special name for Pulau Pemanggil? – The matter may need further treatment; the Batu Buau, wrapped in mystery, “calls for” additional research on the issue.

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*E. EDWARDS MCKINNON (†)\* AND PETER CAREY\*\**

*(original text by Ed McKinnon, edited and rewritten by Peter Carey)*

The Scots in Java, 1811-1816. An Episode from the History of the 78th Regiment of Foot (Ross-shire Buffs): The Storming of the Yogyakarta Court, 20 June 1812, and its aftermath \*\*\*

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### **Introduction by Peter Carey**

Edmund Edwards McKinnon (1936-2023) —known to all his friends as “Ed McKinnon”— died unexpectedly from a heart attack on Friday, 23 June 2023, at his home “Jayanti” in Sentul, Bogor, Indonesia. Known worldwide for his 1984 PhD in art history at Cornell University on the medieval harbour site of Kota Cina near Belawan, Deli, East Sumatra, entitled *Kota Cina: Its context and meaning in the trade of Southeast Asia in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries*, Ed McKinnon published widely on early inter-regional commerce between the Middle East, Southeast Asia and China; the trading activities of the Tamil guilds in west Sumatra; medieval trade ceramics in Sumatra; the location of the historic Sumatran ports of Lamuri and Fansur, and on Batak material imagery. Less well known is his previous life as an NCO in the Seaforth Highlanders in the late 1950s when he was conscripted to serve his 18-month National Service tour of duty in

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\* Art historian and expert on pre-colonial inter-regional Southeast Asian commerce from the 12th to 15th centuries. Former NCO of the Seaforth Highlanders (1956-1958).

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\*\*\* With special thanks to Dr Annabel Teh Gallop FBA, Head of the Southeast Asia Section at the British Library, London, for her help in identifying and scanning the relevant pages from Major Henry Davidson’s history of the 78th Highland Regiment (Ross-shire Buffs), Davidson 1901, and to my research assistant, Feureau Himawan Sutanto (Bandung), for his help with upscaling the images.





**Plate 1** – Colours (regimental standards) of the 78th Highland Regiment (Ross-shire Buffs) with their 1811-1816 service in Java clearly displayed on the extreme right together with the regiment's elephant symbol (Plate 19). In 1881, the 78th was amalgamated with the 72nd Highland Regiment (Duke of Albany's Own) and renamed the Seaforth Highlanders, after Lieutenant-General Francis Humberston Mackenzie, Chief of the Clan Mackenzie and post-1797 Lord Seaforth (1754-1815), who originally raised the 78th in the Scottish Highlands in 1793. The flag now hangs in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, UK.

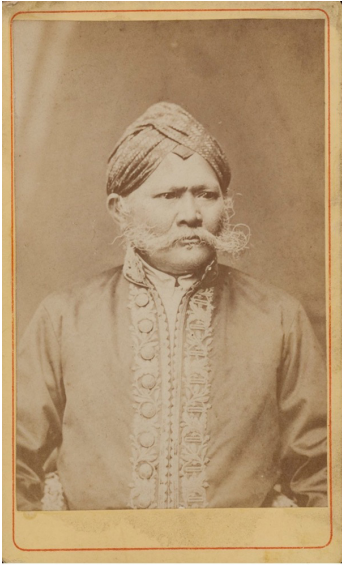
Germany and Gibraltar. A famous Scots regiment, the Seaforths (Plate 1) were formed in 1881 by the amalgamation of two previous units from north of the Border, the 72nd Highland Regiment (Duke of Albany's Own) and 78th Highland Regiment of Foot (Ross-shire Buffs), with the latter having seen extensive service in Java during the five-year British interregnum (1811-1816).

In 2018, five years before his death, Ed McKinnon allowed me to edit his history of the Ross-shire Buffs in Java for publication by adding material which I drew from the main Javanese sources such as Pangeran Arya Panular's (c. 1772-1826), account of the British attack on the Yogyakarta *kraton* (court) on 20 June 1812.<sup>1</sup> In this fashion, Ed McKinnon's original text was extended to include aspects of the specifically Javanese view of the events surrounding the British operations in Yogyakarta from 17 June to 13 July 1812 when the last units of the 1,000-strong expeditionary force were withdrawn from the sultan's capital. Likewise, I consulted the Ross-shire Buffs' regimental history compiled by Major Henry Davidson,<sup>2</sup> and Major William Thorn's *Memoir of the Conquest of Java*<sup>3</sup> to amplify the information given by Ed McKinnon on the

1. Carey 1992.

2. Davidson 1901.

3. Thorn 1815.



**Plate 2** – Albumen silver print photograph of KGPAA Pakualam II (1786-1858; r. 1830-58, pre-22 June 1812, Raden Tumenggung Notodiningrat, post-22 June 1812, Pangeran Suryoningrat), in extreme old age just before his death on 23 July 1858 aged 72. Photograph courtesy of the Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden (UBL).

regiment's military operations in Java. I also took the opportunity to republish in this article high-resolution photographs of some of the images (Plates 3-6, 8, 11-12), which have already appeared in my other works,<sup>4</sup> and new ones which have not appeared in any of my previous publications (1-2, 7, 9-10, 13-20).

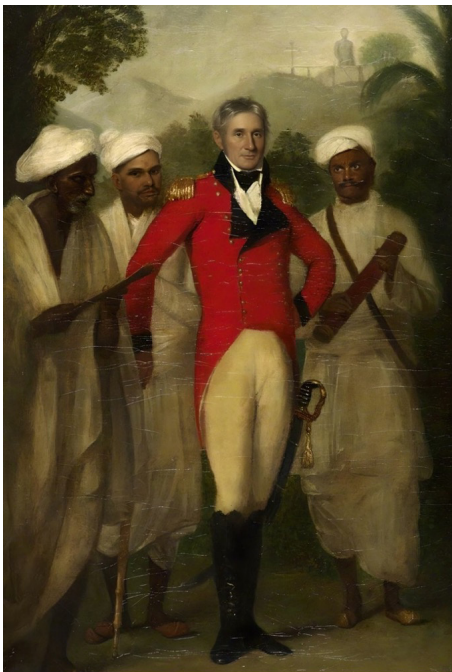
Serendipitously, while this article was being edited, an initiative taken by the Yogya-based artist, Agung Kurniawan (born Jember 1968), the head of the Yayasan Seni Cemeti Yogyakarta, inspired by his reading of Panular's chronicle, has recently resulted in a week-long festival (23-28 July 2023), namely the AMUK (Amanat Mulia Usaha Kampung)-1812. This took place in the selfsame Ngadinegaran-Danunegaran urban communities (*kampung*), to the south of the Yogya *kraton* where the residence of the pre-1812 Yogya army commander, Raden Tumenggung Sumodiningrat (circa 1760-1812), was once situated until it was burnt to the ground by the British following the fall of the *kraton*. The mutilation of the army commander's body by the Scots Assistant-Resident/Secretary of the Yogyakarta Residency, John Deans (1786-1868; see Plate 13), also served as a spur for the local community to learn more about their past and to reclaim Panular's specifically Javanese version of their history as their own.<sup>5</sup> In this fashion, just over 200 years after the turbulent events of the British Interregnum, the wheel of history has come full circle and Raffles and the British seen for what they really were —men of blood and ruthless colonial aggressors.

4. Carey 1992, 2008.

5. Kartyadi 2023.



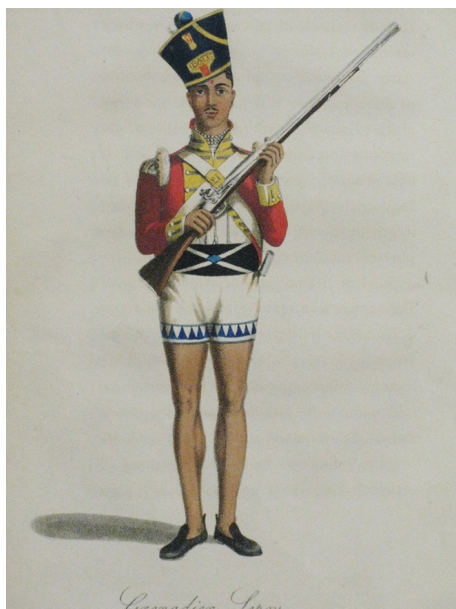
**Plate 3** – Officer and private of the 14th Regiment of Foot (Buckinghamshires) in the regimental uniforms of 1815, from O'Donnell 1894:104 facing.



**Plate 4** – Colonel Colin Mackenzie (ca.1754-1821), Chief Engineer Officer to the British Forces in Java (1811-13), and Surveyor-General of India based in Madras (Chennai) (1815-21), in the red uniform of the English East India Company (EIC), accompanied (left) by his two pandits (teacher-translators: Dhurmia, a Jain pandit holding a palm-leaf manuscript; and Cavelli Ventaka Lechmiah, a Telugu Brahmin pandit) and to the right Kistnaji, a peon holding a telescope. Portrait by the Irish painter, Thomas Hickey (1741-1824), done in Kolkata in 1816. Photograph courtesy of the Indian Office Library & Records (now British Library), London.



**Plate 5** – Colonel (post-January 1812, Major-General; post-1 January 1815 —posthumously— Knight Commander of the Bath) Robert Rollo Gillespie (1766-1814), who commanded the British forces at the time of the assault on Yogyakarta, in the dress uniform of his Irish regiment, 25th Light Dragoons, from an engraving (dated 31 December 1814) by the famous English engraver, Samuel Freeman (1773-1857), based on a miniature by George Chinnery (1774-1852), painted in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata) in ca. 1814. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



**Plate 6** – Grenadier Sepoy, a member of one of the Bengal Infantry Volunteer Battalions which took part in the invasion of Java (August-September 1811) and the assault on Yogyakarta, Saturday, 20 June 1812. Aquatint by William Daniell (1769-1837), from John Williams, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Native Infantry* (London: John Murray, 1817), p.171 facing.

### **The British in South-Central Java: The Military and Political Background**

The establishment of cordial relationships with the Javanese rulers of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, as well as the Sultan of Palembang in southern Sumatra, was an urgent priority for Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826), the new Lieutenant-Governor of Java (in office, 1811-1816). The pacification

of the Javanese kingdoms was of the utmost importance. Without the cooperation and support of the native rulers, the establishment of British authority throughout the whole island of Java could not be achieved.

Following the defeat of Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens (1762-1838), the last Franco-Dutch governor-general (in office, 16 May-18 Sept 1811) at Jati Ngaleh (Serondol) just above Semarang on 16 September 1811, the British commander-in-chief, Sir Samuel Auchmuty (1756-1822), had dispatched a certain Captain William Robison (ca.1775-1823) of the 24th Regiment of Foot (2nd Warwickshires) as emissary to the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta. He was tasked with advising them of the unconditional Franco-Dutch surrender at Kali Tuntang between Ungaran and Salatiga on 18 September 1811, and to inform them that Lord Minto (Governor of Bengal, 1807-1813), who had accompanied the British expedition against Java, desired to maintain the same relationships as had existed formerly with the Franco-Dutch Government. At the same time, he gave them every assurance of the Governor-General's favour and protection.<sup>6</sup>

Originally, the kingdoms of Surakarta and Yogyakarta were ruled by a single ruler, known as the Susuhunan or "Emperor" of Java [ie the Sultan of Mataram], who ruled the central and eastern parts of Java. These areas were distinct from the western or Sundanese-speaking part which had been under Dutch control since the late seventeenth century. During the mid-eighteenth century, leading members of the royal family, such as the fifteen-year-old Raden Mas Said (1726-95) and his senior, Pangeran Mangkubumi (1717-92; r. 1749-1792), had rebelled. After nearly a decade of warfare (1746-55), the Dutch in the person of the Governor of Java's Northeast Coast, Nicolaas Hartingh (1718-66; in office, 1754-1761), a fluent Javanese speaker and senior official of the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie/VOC*, 1602-1799), had brokered a peace treaty.<sup>7</sup> Aimed at weakening the power of the Susuhunan, this political agreement, known as the Treaty of Giyanti (13 February 1755), created a new kingdom and recognised the rebel prince Mangkubumi as the first Sultan of Yogyakarta. Two years later, at Salatiga (16 March 1757), Raden Mas Said's political claims were also recognised by the Dutch when he swore allegiance to the new Susuhunan of Surakarta, Pakubuwono III (r. 1749-1788), and became ruler of the quasi-independent Mangkunegaran royal house in Surakarta reigning until his death on 28 December 1795.<sup>8</sup>

6. Carey 2008:290-92. On Robison, his death at sea within sight of the Cornish coast, and the theft of his personal papers critical of the EIC (English East India Company), see Hannigan 2012:287 fn.18.

7. Ricklefs 2018:167-72.

8. On Raden Mas Said (Mangkunegoro I) and the founding of the Mangkunegaran, see Ricklefs 2018:173-200.



During the period that Marshal Herman Willem Daendels had governed Java (1808-1811), Mangkubumi's successor, Sultan Hamengkubuwono II of Yogyakarta (r. 1792-1810/1811-12/1826-8), had proven a feisty adversary of the colonial government. After Daendels' military expedition to Yogyakarta in late December 1810, he was replaced by his eldest son, who was installed as Prince Regent. At the same time, the second sultan's brother, Prince Notokusumo (the future Prince Pakualam I, r. 1812-1829), and his son, Raden Tumenggung Notodiningrat (the future Prince Pakualam II, r. 1830-58) (Plate 2), were removed first to Batavia (Jan-March 1811) and then to Cirebon (April-August 1811) on the north coast of Java as hostages for his good conduct —Daendels secretly ordered their death by poisoning in late April 1811, but the local *Landdrost* (chief magistrate/head of the local government), Matthijs Waterloo (1769-1812; in office, 1809-1811), successfully deflected this by pretending that Notokusumo and his son were already at death's door from tropical malaria.<sup>9</sup> Following the Dutch defeat in September 1811, these two princes were sent back to Yogyakarta on Raffles' orders as part of a move to establish the credibility of the new British government with the Javanese and to insert pro-British allies at the Yogya court.<sup>10</sup>

Captain Robison, during his negotiations with the two south-central Javanese courts (Surakarta and Yogyakarta) in late September 1811, had apparently given them certain promises regarding their status under the new British interim administration. But Raffles refused to discuss these further until he had been able to obtain more precise information and clarification of the former relationships which had existed between themselves and the Dutch.<sup>11</sup>

The new British administration was extremely short of trained civilian officials to undertake the responsibilities of government. Many of those that were available were seconded from the British-Indian army or had come out from India. One of these officers was Colonel Alexander Adams (ca. 1775-1835) of the 78th Regiment of Foot (Ross-shire Buffs) (Plate 7), who had earlier commanded the left-flank brigade during the August 1811 invasion of Java. He was appointed Resident of Surakarta on 25 October 1811. Adams left Batavia (post-1942, Jakarta) by sea for Semarang in late October. Sailing with him was the newly appointed Resident of Yogyakarta, John Crawford (1783-1868; in office, 1811-14/1816), whom Raffles had earlier met in Pulau Pinang where Crawford had served as Assistant Surgeon (1808-11). Like Adams, Crawford was a Scot and had a great proficiency for languages: commissioned in India as Assistant Surgeon to the Honourable East India Company's 3rd Regiment of Native Cavalry, he was transferred to Pinang in 1808 where he

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9. Carey 2008:277-8.

10. Carey 2008:305, 313.

11. Carey 2008:290-91.



**Plate 7** – Three NCOs (from left to right: Noble, Dawson and Harper) of the 72nd Highland Regiment of Foot (Duke of Albany’s Own), the regiment with which the 78th amalgamated in 1881 to form the Seaforth Highlanders. From an albumen silver print photograph from the “Crimean Heroes” series taken by Robert Howlett (1831-58) and the printer-publisher, Joseph Cundall (1818-95), in Aldershot, Surrey, England, in July 1856 at the end of the Crimean War (1854-56) when the regiment had returned to participate in the London victory parade. Photograph courtesy of the National Army Museum, London, file no: NAM.1964-12-154-6-14.

became extremely proficient in Malay (he would later learn to speak High Javanese in under six months).<sup>12</sup> Both Adams and Crawford’s appointments were to be key political positions in the new British administration.

Before leaving Batavia, Raffles had stressed to the new appointees that Residents were no longer permitted to appropriate to their own benefit the principal revenues of the country as they had been under the Dutch. Instead, they were to receive an annual salary payment in silver (Maria-Theresa) dollars equivalent to £1,800 sterling (£130,000 in present-day [2023] money)<sup>13</sup> in full settlement of all emoluments (including entertainment allowance) attaching to the post of Resident. It was also made very clear to the new Residents that if cordial and happy relations were not promptly established with both Surakarta and Yogyakarta, the very existence of British power in Java might be in jeopardy. They were empowered to dismiss the previous Dutch incumbents of their posts—in fact the Dutch Resident in Yogya, Pieter Engelhard (1766-1812; in office 1808, 1810-1811), had already requested to be relieved of his post on health grounds as he was suffering from advanced TB (tuberculosis) which would soon kill him (January 1812)—and instructed not to discuss the requests from the rulers forwarded by Captain

12. Carey 2008:109.

13. Calculation based on the relative value of Dutch Indies coins in 1811 in contemporary British currency, which gives 4/6d (four shillings and six pence) per rixdollar/*rijksdaalder* in sterling value, see Carey 1980:200; and for Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), see the application “MeasuringWorth (Purchasing Power of the Pound)” (<https://www.measuringworth.com>).

Robison until such time as the situation had been fully clarified.<sup>14</sup> In the meantime, however, a political crisis was brewing at the Yogya court.

### **The Political Crisis in Yogyakarta, December 1811-June 1812**

In December 1811, Raffles himself deemed it necessary to visit Yogyakarta to obtain the sultan's agreement to a treaty establishing formal relations between the British Government and his court, which the soldier-turned-writer, Major William Thorn (1781-1843), later commented, "it was vaingloriously imagined would prove as binding on one side as it would be strictly observed on the other".<sup>15</sup> Accompanied by a small escort of the 14th Regiment of Foot (Buckinghamshires), a troop of the 22nd Light Dragoon Regiment and a detachment of Bengal Sepoys from the Bengal Light Infantry Volunteer Battalion, Raffles arrived at the court of Yogya on 27 December. During the lieutenant-governor's official reception along the main thoroughfare (Jalan Malioboro) of Yogyakarta, the sultan, Hamengkubuwono II, deployed upwards of 10,000 armed troops.<sup>16</sup>

At the time of the meeting in the throne room of the British Residency, a potentially fatal incident occurred when one of Raffles' adjutants kicked away the low wooden bench placed under the sultan's throne chair so that he would be forced to sit at the same level as the lieutenant-governor (the fact that Raffles was only a lieutenant-governor and not a full governor-general also weighed with the Javanese sense of protocol). Raffles would have none of it. Krisis were unsheathed (Plate 14) and the British officer escort drew their side-arms. For a moment it seemed that mayhem would break loose and the British party murdered on the spot. Luckily, the sultan's eldest son, the future third sultan (then Crown Prince), stepped between his father and Raffles and the men came to their senses. The second sultan decided he could wait. There would be another occasion to deal with the British.<sup>17</sup>

The treaty was duly drawn up and signed in terms which at the time were considered to be equally advantageous to the British as it was beneficial to the interests of the Javanese inhabitants of Yogya who remained under the administration of the sultan. The sultan acknowledged British sovereignty over the whole island of Java and confirmed to the Honourable East India Company all the privileges and prerogatives formerly accorded to the pre-1808 VOC regime and the post-1808 Franco-Dutch government of Daendels and Janssens. There were also additional terms advantageous to the British for the sole regulation of commercial duties and the collection of market and

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14. Carey 2008:274 fn.62.

15. Thorn 1815:189.

16. Carey 2008:7, 309.

17. Carey 2008:309 fn.174. See also Carey and Marizar (forthcoming).

toll monopolies within the dominions of the sultan. At the same time, the administration of justice in cases where British interests might be involved were transferred to the Government. But the sultan had no intention of adhering to the terms and conditions which had been forced upon him and simply waited for an opportunity when he would be able to oust the new colonial power from his territories.<sup>18</sup>

About the same time as the treaty was being drawn up, a small force comprising detachments of the 59th Regiment of Foot (Second Notts), Bengal sepoy and members of the Mangkunegaran Legion attacked and dispersed a group of rebels commanded by Bagus Rangin, an Islamic religious leader who had been preaching *jihad* (holy war) in the hills near Indramayu on the north coast. Rangin had caused the previous Dutch government considerable trouble over the previous six years but had proved a master of evasion and it had been impossible to corner him. The decisive action fought in late 1811 near Indramayu broke his power and Rangin himself was captured in early 1812.<sup>19</sup>

In March 1812, it proved necessary to send another small force comprising elements of the 59th (2nd Notts), 89th (Royal Irish), Madras Horse Artillery, Bengal Artillery and locally recruited Ambonese under Colonel (post-January 1812, Major-General) Robert Rollo Gillespie (1766-1814) (Plate 5) to subdue Palembang where the sultan had murdered the local Dutch population, in part urged on Raffles' own letters to Indonesian rulers from Melaka sent on 20 December 1810 urging that the Dutch be "thrown out and completely finished" (*buwang habiskan s(e)kali-kali*) had declared his complete independence of any colonial authority.<sup>20</sup> Gillespie's mission was accomplished against considerable odds, and the Colonel himself immediately returned to Java to prepare to take command of the expedition against Yogya. In the meantime, the island of Bangka, the archipelago's major source of tin, had been ceded to the new British administration and renamed Duke of York's island after the British commander-in-chief, Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany, George III's second son (1763-1827).<sup>21</sup>

On his return from Palembang, Gillespie, accompanied by just one company (100 men) of the 59th (2nd Notts) was able to sail directly for Java. Due to adverse winds, all the remainder of the expedition were forced to sail north of

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18. Carey 2008:311-312.

19. Carey 2008:185.

20. Bastin 1953:300-302, 1954:64-65. See also Wurtzburg 1949:38-52.

21. Wurtzburg 1954:202-12. Belitung, Bangka's immediately adjacent island and rich in tin ore, was the one part of the former Dutch East Indies/Indonesia which the British maintained after the 19 August 1816 handover. It was only returned following the 1824 Treaty of London, which divided Dutch areas in Central and South Sumatra from the British controlled parts of the Malay peninsula and Singapore (Tarling 1962:82; Heidhues 1991:2 fn.8).

Pulau Bangka and then circle round the south coast of Kalimantan (Borneo) before sailing southwards to the north coast of Java and landing at Batavia, a voyage that took over a month.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Crisis of May-June 1812 and the British Attack on Yogyakarta, 20 June 1812**

Gillespie arrived in the colonial capital on 30 May and found that Raffles had already departed for Semarang as the crisis with Yogya was rapidly coming to a head.<sup>23</sup> The sultan had tried to induce the Susuhunan (Pakubuwono IV) of Surakarta (r. 1788-1820) to join him in rebellion, and he had also sent emissaries to other princes and rulers throughout Java and the eastern archipelago to join with him in armed revolt against the British. Colonel Adams in Surakarta found the Susuhunan (PB IV) to be increasingly evasive. By then the Sultan of Yogya's actions had become openly aggressive: not only had he ordered the murders of opponents within palace circles but he "had for several months [...] engaged in adding to the defences by constructing new batteries, training [new] bands of troops and latterly there arose serious apprehension with regard to the safety of the Resident [John Crawfurd] and the Sepoy garrison".<sup>24</sup>

On 4 June, Raffles, his wife, Olivia, and the principal civilian and military officers in Java celebrated the birthday of King George III at the official residence of the Civil Commissioner of Java's Northeast Coast in Bojong, Semarang. The celebration ball was opened by the Civil Commissioner, Hugh Hope, and Olivia Raffles to a then popular tune set to the music of a nautical song — "The Saucy Arethusa" (1796) — entitled "The Fall of Cornelis," a reference to the British capture of Daendels' great fortified redoubt at Meester Cornelis — now Jatinegara — to the south of Batavia on 26 August 1811.<sup>25</sup> The intrigue amongst the native princes continued to deepen spurred by the second sultan's secret correspondence with local rulers.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile, Colonel Gillespie arrived overland (by the great posting road) from Batavia and, together with Raffles, departed for Yogya with small force comprising elements of the 14th Regiment of Foot, Bengal Light Infantry, Third Sepoy Volunteer Battalion, some gunners of the Royal Artillery and troops of the 22nd Dragoons. The main force under Lieutenant-colonel Alexander MacLeod of the 59th was to follow with the Madras Horse Artillery as soon as possible.<sup>27</sup>

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22. Hannigan 2012:172.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Wurtzburg 1954:213.

25. Davidson 1901, I:80-82; Carey 2021:57.

26. Carey 1980:53-70; 2008:316-319.

27. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3.



At the beginning of June, the Grenadiers, Light Infantry and Rifle companies of the 78th Regiment stationed in Surabaya (Denoyo barracks) had been ordered to hold themselves in readiness for immediate service.<sup>28</sup> They embarked and sailed for Semarang where they landed on 8 June and immediately marched inland to Ungaran where Gillespie was now assembling the main attack force for the Yogya expedition. This force comprised the Grenadiers of the 59th Regiment, who had recently returned from Palembang, the two flank Companies and Rifle Company of the 78th, a small party of Java Hussars and a detachment of the Madras Horse Artillery. For the purposes of the expedition, the Grenadiers of the 59th and three companies of the 78th were joined together to form a single battalion.<sup>29</sup>

In the meantime, Gillespie with an advance party went ahead of the main force to join Raffles in Yogyakarta on 17 June 1812 leaving the column and its artillery support under command of Lieutenant-colonel Alexander MacLeod of the 59th Regiment to follow on.<sup>30</sup>

On 10 June, MacLeod's column proceeded to Salatiga where they were joined by Major (post-1846, Major-General) David Forbes (1772-1849) of the 78th Highlanders. After five days' rest, they left Salatiga on 16 June and in the early hours of 17 June were approaching Yogya from the east after covering some 60 kilometres in a single march. After a short rest, they resumed their onward march to within eight kilometres of sultan's capital when on the 18 June, the advance guard observed a party of the 22nd Dragoons approaching at a gallop and seemingly in a state of great agitation. The 25-strong Dragoon party, sent by Gillespie with instructions for MacLeod, had been attacked and dismounted from their horses by Javanese spearmen with immensely long lances in the ravine of a local river (Gajahwong) at Papringan: the squadron lost five killed and thirteen wounded including their commanding officer, Lieutenant Hale. MacLeod order the Rifle company of the 78th Regiment to advance, which they did with great rapidity, saving the dragoons from further attack.<sup>31</sup>

The Javanese had given no quarter to those cavalymen who had fallen: they were found where they fell with their throats cut and all were badly mutilated "mangled most shockingly" in the words of a Royal Artillery officer (Captain William MacBean George Colebrooke RA, 1787-1870) who later witnessed the scene.<sup>32</sup> Large bodies of the sultan's spearmen now approached

28. Davidson 1901, I:83-84.

29. Davidson 1901, I:86-87; *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3.

30. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p.3.

31. Gillespie report to Raffles, 25 June 1812, in *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3 no. 2. See also Wakeham 1937:207; Carey 1992:427 note 138; 2008:333.

32. Carey 2008:333, quoting Captain W.M.G. Colebrooke RA (? Semarang) to his father, Colonel Paulet Welbore Colebrooke RA (Charlton, Kent), 8 July 1812. Letter in Royal Artillery Institution, London, MD/143. See further *Java Government Gazette*,

the little relieving column but were driven off by a few rounds by a couple of the Artillery's howitzers which accompanied them. Unfortunately, during its action, one man of the 78th (Ross-shire Buffs) was killed by an accidentally exploding shell. The approach of night, which falls rapidly in the tropics, obliged MacLeod to make camp on the road and in an adjoining ricefield (*sawah*). During the hours of darkness, the enemy prowled around but were driven off by the Rifle and Light Infantry companies of the 78th who were obliged to stand to all night long. At about four o'clock in the morning of 19 June, a party of the Royal Artillery under Captain John S. Byers of the Royal Artillery, who had been left behind with the baggage party, joined the main body of the column.<sup>33</sup> In the darkness before dawn the order was given to proceed and they began moving forwards towards the Residency House and Fort (Vredeburg) in Yogyakarta.

In the meantime, the advance party under Colonel Gillespie had reached the Yogya Residency on the morning of 17 June. They found that the sultan was not at all disposed to submit to the force of arms. He had mobilized thousands of his armed followers and assembled plenty of cannon (Plate 20). Immediately after the arrival of the advance party, the sultan sent out a strong body of horse and placed a part of his forces behind the Residency effectively cutting it off from retreat to the coast and the advancing support force. Gillespie and Crawford and a group of fifty dragoons went out to reconnoitre but due to the large numbers of mounted Javanese in the vicinity they had difficulty getting back to the safety of the Residency. There was a brief incident towards evening when they encountered a group of Javanese horse who threw their spears at them. They suffered some casualties: a sergeant and four troopers were wounded. At the same time, the Javanese were destroying bridges and breaking up the roads in an attempt to impede the advance of Lieutenant-Colonel MacLeod's column.<sup>34</sup>

On 18 June, Raffles again sent a messenger to the sultan requesting that their differences be settled amicably. But it was not to be. The messenger was abruptly dismissed. By then the sultan was quite sure that he had Raffles and the small British force completely in his power. On the return of the messenger, the guns in the fort (Vredeburg) were ordered to open fire on the *kraton*, the sultan's palace. Their fire was soon returned by the answering artillery on the *kraton* battlements.<sup>35</sup>

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4 July 1812, p. 3; Carey 1992:429 fn.145.

33. Carey 1992:433 note 164, quoting *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3 nos 1-3.

34. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3; Raffles 1830:126; Carey 1992:427 note 138.

35. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3; Carey 2008:335.



**Plate 8** – A Javanese commander in battle dress (*prajuritan*), aquatint by William Daniell (1769-1834), from T.S. Raffles, *History of Java* (London: Black, Parbury & Allen, 1817), vol.I, p.90 facing.

The *kraton* itself was described by Major Thorn as being “about three miles in circumference surrounded by a broad wet ditch with drawbridges; a strong thick high rampart with bastions and defended by near 100 pieces of cannon [Plate 20]. In the interior there are numerous squares and courtyards, enclosed within high walls, all very strong within themselves and defensible.”<sup>36</sup> Thorn continues, “At this time, the principal entrance or square [*alun-alun*] in front, had a double row of cannon facing the entrance, besides which it was flanked with newly erected batteries to the right and left. Seventeen thousand (sic! At the most 6,000) troops manned the works, whilst an armed population of more than one hundred thousand (sic), surrounded the exterior Campongs [*kampung*] for many miles around, and also occupying the walls and fastnesses along the sides of the different roads leading to the Crattan [*kraton*].”<sup>37</sup>

Crawfurd, who served as Resident at the court of Yogyakarta for most of the British period, describes it “as a new settlement founded in 1755 [sic, 1756] following a rebellion which resulted in the partition of the territories of the Susuhunan [...] [It is] a town situated in [a] plain which extends from the volcanic mountain of Merapi to the southern coast, from which it is distant about twelve [sic, twenty-five] miles. It consists of the Kraton [*kraton*], or

36. Thorn 1815:185.

37. Thorn 1815:186.



**Plate 9** - Grave of the commander of the Yogyakarta forces, Raden Tumenggung Sumodiningrat (ca.1760-1812), at Jejeran, Wonokromo, Bantul (DIY), who was killed in his mosque in his residence to the south of the Yogya *kraton* on the early morning of 20 June 1812, and whose body was disfigured (head half severed from body) by the Malay-speaking secretary to the British Residency, John Deans (Plate 13).

walled palace of the prince, which is in itself a considerable town, and of several quarters or closes, being an aggregate, in short, of large villages with wide streets or rather roads dividing them from each other.”<sup>38</sup> In 1816, of the town’s estimated 85,000 population, “[most] consist[ed] of retainers and followers of the court and chieftains.”<sup>39</sup> According to Raffles, there were some 10-15,000 inhabitants of the *kraton* proper in 1815.<sup>40</sup>

Being completely surrounded, it became extremely difficult for Raffles to communicate with MacLeod and his column. Eventually, however, a private, Trooper John O’Brien of the Madras Horse Artillery, managed to break through the encirclement and make contact with the approaching column then advancing along the road from Kalasan – having set out from Salatiga 18 hours earlier.<sup>41</sup>

The Residency, which was a fortified building put up by the Dutch on the foundations of a previous wooden structure under the supervision of a Dutch military architect, Frans Haak, between 1767-1787, was located 750 metres from the nearest face of the *kraton*. Though referred to as a “fort” —initially named Rustenburg (fortress of repose) then (post-1796) Vredenburg (fortress of peace), Thorn assessed it as bring useful as a place for military stores and having little or no use for any other purpose. Even the supplies of Dutch gunpowder found there were very old and of poor quality, so poor in fact that “our firing was only intended to amuse the enemy while our little force was concentrating.”<sup>42</sup> Soon after the bombardment began at three o’clock in the afternoon on Friday, 19 June, an ammunition store in the Fort exploded.<sup>43</sup> This seems to have been

38. Crawford 1856:456.

39. Ibid.

40. Raffles 1817, I:84; Carey 2008:4.

41. Carey 1992:427 note138.

42. Thorn 1815:192.

43. Carey 2008:335 fn.267.



**Plate 10** - Javanese regent (*bupati*) ca. 1810 in the official uniform designed by Marshal Herman Willem Daendels (1762-1818; in office as Governor-General, 1808-11). Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

an accident rather than a direct hit from an enemy cannon. A similar explosion took place in the Residency and wounded several officers, but this appears to have been ignited by a sabotage party sent by the sultan from the court commanded by a *bupati* (senior court official), Raden Tumenggung Sumodiwiryo (Plate 10), a former member of the Bugis Regiment.<sup>44</sup>

Several actions took place around the beleaguered Residency and in the adjacent Dutch town where Major Dennis Harman Dalton (1771-1828), CO of the

<sup>44</sup>. This account of an explosion in the Yogyakarta Residency (now Gedung Agung) given by Ed McKinnon is not corroborated in any of the extant sources. It seems that the sabotage party sent from the court successfully fired the powder magazine (*gedhong ubat*) in the fort (Vredeburg) and did not enter the Residency, which had no separate powder magazine on its premises. It is confusing that in the main Javanese source, Panular's *Babad Bedhah ing Ngayogyakarta* (1812/1816), the Javanese term "Loji" from the Dutch *logie* (residence), refers to both the fort (Vredeburg) and the Residency House, Rustenburg, the latter usually distinguished as the *Loji Kebun* or *Loji Kilèn* ("garden" or "western" Residence), see Carey 1992:211-212, 405 note 31; 2008:337.





**Plate 11** - Portrait of Mangkunegoro II (pre-1821 Prince Prangwedono; 1768-1835; r. 1796-1835), in his dress uniform as Colonel-in-Chief of the Mangkunegaran Legion, which participated in the British assault on the Yogyakarta *kraton* on 20 June 1812. Painted in ca.1833, and showing the prince with his two Dutch medals, the *Militaire Willems-Orde Derde klasse* (Military William's Order, 3rd Class) (right) and the *Orde van de Nederlandsch Leeuw* (Order of the Netherlands Lion) (left). From Pringgodigdo 1950:20 facing.

Bengal Light Infantry Volunteer Battalion, was “spiritedly attacked during the night several times.”<sup>45</sup> The 22nd Light Dragoons were also involved in frequent skirmishes with parties of the enemy. A messenger from Lieutenant-Colonel MacLeod was murdered on the road. But eventually a private of the Madras Horse Artillery, as we have seen, broke through the surrounding cordon and eventually returned safely to his unit.

The main body of troops under Lieutenant-Colonel MacLeod arrived at the Residency on the morning of the 19 June considerably fatigued from their long 60-kilometer forced march from Salatiga and from exposure to the heat of the sun. In the meantime, the firing from the Fort continued and the *kampung* (urban quarters) adjacent to the Residency were set on fire. That evening, all troops were ordered back inside the Residency and fort, an action which “produced the desired effect of lulling the enemy into a fatal security.”<sup>46</sup>

Cannon in the fort continued to be fired at intervals until three o'clock in the morning when “a perfect silence ensued, which lulled the greater part [of the enemy] to sleep—but it was the sleep of death.”<sup>47</sup> Between three and four o'clock, two hours before the dawn on Saturday, 20 June, orders for the attack were issued to the various column commanders.

Simultaneously with the rebellion in Yogyakarta, revolts had been organised in Banten, Cirebon, Surabaya and other places. At Surabaya due

45. Raffles 1830:126; *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p.3 section no.1.

46. Thorn 1815:196.

47. Thorn 1815:197.

to the vigilance of the Ross-shire Buffs regimental commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser (1766-1813), the remaining companies of the 78th were immediately put under arms and quelled the disturbance, nipping any further thoughts of insurrection in the bud.<sup>48</sup>

The attack on the *kraton* was to be formed of three columns (Plate 12). The first under Lieutenant-Colonel James Dewar, CO of the 3rd Bengal Volunteer Battalion, was the smallest contingent, comprising troops from this battalion and Prince Prangwedono's corps (ie the 500-strong Mangkunegaran Legion) (Plate 11). It proceeded out of the fort at four o'clock and was directed by the Residency Secretary, John Deans (Plate 13), to the south gate of the *kraton* by a detour. There it was ordered to engage a large body of the enemy reportedly lodged outside the gate. They were thereafter to force an entrance through the south gate. A second column under Major Peter Grant, CO of the 4th Bengal Volunteer Battalion, was to make a diversionary attack with his battalion and units of the Madras Horse Artillery on the North Gate, the principal entrance to the *kraton*.<sup>49</sup>

The main attack was to be carried out by a column led by Lieutenant-Colonel James Watson (post-1837, Lieutenant-General, 1772-1862), CO of the 14th Regiment of Foot (Bucks). This column contained part of the 14th Regiment (Bucks), a detachment of the Bengal Light Infantry Volunteer Battalion, the grenadiers of the 59th Regiment (2nd Notts), and the flank and rifle companies of the 78th, who were dressed in their tropical battle whites rather than kilts or tartan trews (Plates 7 and 18).<sup>50</sup> They moved around the northeast bastion, silently and undiscovered in the pre-dawn darkness until they reached a predetermined point on the east wall where scaling ladders were to be raised. At this point the alarm was raised by a sentry on the northeast bastion and the column was inundated with heavy fire of grapeshot from the *kraton* battlements, killing some and wounding several of the small force including Lieutenant Charles Robertson, the acting Adjutant. A number of men from the rifle companies of the 14th and 78th immediately extended themselves along the counterscarp of the wet ditch and firing into the embrasures of the *kraton* wall, gave them such hot stuff that it soon prevented the Javanese from working their guns. Captain Johnstone with the grenadiers of the 14th crossed the deep wet ditch, scaled the ramparts and soon succeeded in gaining a foothold on the berm.<sup>51</sup>

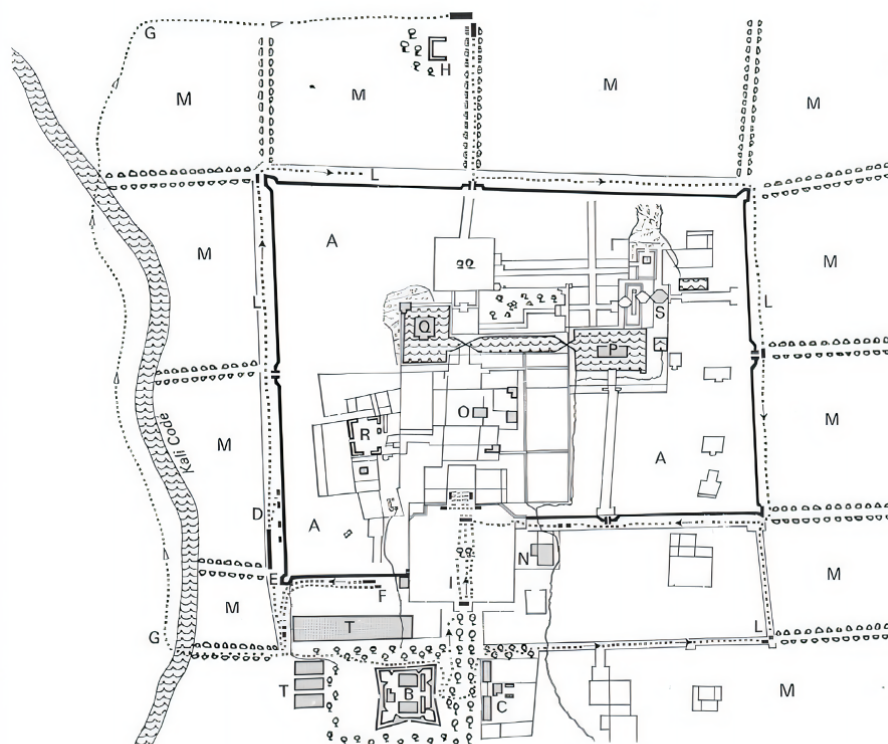
Lieutenant-Colonel Watson and his men of the 14th Regiment pushed along the top of the rampart towards the prince's gate (ie the gate to the Crown Prince's establishment or *Kadipaten*), the Plengkung Trunosuro (alias Poncosuro), on the northern face of the *kraton*. At the same time, following

48. Davidson 1901, I:88.

49. Carey 1992:400 note 7.

50. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3.

51. *Ibid.*



- A The kraton  
 B The European fort (Fort Vredenburg)  
 C The Residency house  
 D The principal attack by the 14th Regiment of Foot (Buckinghamshires) led by Lt. Col. James Watson  
 E The N.E. bastion (Tanjung Anom) where the Sultan's powder magazine was blown up  
 F The main gate (Pintu Pancasura) of the *Kadipatèn* (R) which was forced by Lt. Col. Alexander Macleod's column  
 G The track of Lt. Col. J. Dewar's column which proceeded by a detour (H) to attack the south of the kraton  
 H Radèn Tumenggung, Sumadiningrat's residence destroyed by Lt. Col. J. Dewar's column before it entered the southern *alun alun* by the Pintu Gadhing (Nirbaya) gate

- I The northern *alun alun*, scene of diversionary attack by Major P. Grant against the principal entrance (*Pagolaran*) of the kraton  
 L British horse artillery and cavalry cutting off the Javanese retreat along the high roads surrounding the kraton  
 M Extensive Javanese walled *kampungs*  
 N The Great Mosque (Mesjid Ageng)  
 O The audience halls and private apartments of the Sultan in the heart of the kraton  
 P The Water Palace (Taman Sari) with subaquatic entrances  
 Q The Gedhong Pulo Arga (Pulo Gedhong), a tower surrounded by an artificial lake (*Segaran*) which was connected to the Taman Sari (P)  
 R The Crown Prince's residence (*Kadipatèn*)  
 S The Sultan's armaments foundry  
 T The European quarter of Yogyakarta

**Plate 12** - Map of the Yogyakarta *Kraton* at the time of the British attack in the early hours of the morning of Saturday, 20 June 1812, taken from Major William Thorn, *Memoir of the Conquest of Java with the Subsequent Operation of the British forces in the Oriental Archipelago* (London: Egerton, 1815), p.185.

an explosion which destroyed the magazine in the northeast bastion, present-day Plengkung Tarunasura Wijilan, a party of sepoys crossed the ditch at the angle of the bastion and passed along the berm towards the same gate where they were able to let down the drawbridge to allow the admission of the rest of the column under Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander MacLeod. Having cleared the drawbridge over the ditch, the sepoys climbed on one another's shoulders and entered through the gun embrasures where they reinforced Lieutenant-



**Plate 13** - John Deans (post-1828, Deans Campbell, born Shetland Isles 1786-died Logie, East Fife, Scotland, 1868) from an albumen silver print taken by the French photographer, Camille Silvy (1834-1910) on 10 June 1861 when Deans was aged 75. For the people of Yogya, Deans is forever associated with his mutilation of the corpse of the slain Yogya army commander, Raden Tumenggung Sumodiningrat (c. 1760-1812), in the commander's private mosque to the south of the Yogyakarta court (*kraton*). On 23-28 July 2023, a street Festival, AMUK (Amanat Mulia Usaha Kampung)-1812, conceived by the Yogya artist, Agung Kurniawan, and inspired by Pangeran Arya Panular's chronicle (*babad*) of the fall of Yogyakarta, was held in the present-day Kampung Ngadinegaran and its surroundings (inter alia Kampung Danunegaran), site of the commander's former residence, to commemorate the events surrounding the 20 June 1812 British attack and Deans' gruesome action (Kartyadi 2023). Photo courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG Ax54288.

Colonel Watson's column. The gate was strongly barricaded and was only blown open with great difficulty.<sup>52</sup> Whilst this was going on, the main artillery pieces in the fort, manned by officers and men of the Royal Artillery (Major Edward William Butler RA and Captain William Colebrooke RA) and Royal Navy (Captain Archibald Tisdale RN of HM Frigate *Rinaldo*) continued a brisk fire of shot and canister shells into the interior of the *kraton*.<sup>53</sup>

The column of troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Dewar advanced under heavy fire. The troops forced the southeast bastion, and after a desperate struggle cleared the place of large numbers of the sultan's men. They succeeded in opening the south gate just as Lieutenant-Colonel Dewar's column arrived, having defeated the forces of the Yogya army commander, Raden Tumenggung Sumodiningrat (ca 1760-1812), a close advisor and friend of the sultan, on the way. The Tumenggung was killed in his private mosque in his own residence (Plate 12 "H") and his body disfigured by the Residency Secretary, the Malay-

52. Carey 1992:214, 403 note 23.

53. Carey 1992:405 note 31.

speaking Scotsman, John Deans (1786-1868) (Plate 13).<sup>54</sup> His residence was subsequently plundered on Deans' orders and burnt to the ground. The whole column then made for the West gate, occasionally turning the enemy's own guns set up on the fortifications against him. This movement allowed the small force to be concentrated to good effect. Having used these pieces with devastating results, they were thrown off their carriages or tumbled into the ditch.<sup>55</sup>

During the attack, the cavalry and the horse artillery were disposed in mutually supporting parties to scour the roads surrounding the *kraton*, cutting off fugitives and effectively preventing the escape of the sultan. The sultan, eventually perceiving that further resistance was hopeless, decided to surrender to the commander of the 78th's Light [Rifle] Company when he entered the inner court or *kedhaton* at just before eight o'clock in the morning.<sup>56</sup> The enemy continued to hold out in the northwest bastion for a while longer but were soon driven out.

Although by this time the ramparts had been cleared of defenders, a mosque—the Suranatan mosque—outside the walls of the inner court (*kedhaton*) was taken over and obstinately defended, from which a brisk fire was delivered over the walls and through the embrasures. Here, Colonel Gillespie, accompanied by a small detachment of sepoys and two guns of the Madras Horse Artillery, was wounded in the left arm by a shot from a blunderbuss when a Javanese suddenly appeared at the opening.<sup>57</sup> Following the capture of the *kraton*, Lieutenant Hector Maclean (circa 1790-1812), of the 14th Regiment of Foot (Plate 3) was stabbed in the neck by one of the ladies of the court whom he was unwisely in the course of carrying off. He later (22 June) died of his wounds, the only British officer casualty of the entire operation, and was buried in the Christian graveyard near the northern *alun-alun*.<sup>58</sup>

Meanwhile, within the inner court (*kedhaton*), where everyone was dressed in white with even the chairs covered by strips of white cloth as a symbol of surrender,<sup>59</sup> the person of the sultan and his immediate entourage were secured by First Lieutenant (post-1837, Lieutenant-Colonel) Henry N. Douglas (1787-1860) and his riflemen of the Ross-shire Buffs Light Flank Company.<sup>60</sup> Although the Yogya ruler was not forced immediately to surrender his personal *kris*, his request to bring his *pusaka* (heirloom) weapons from the *kraton* was refused

54. Carey 1992:242-243, 418-419 note 94.

55. Thorn 1815:185; Davidson 1901, I:87-88; Carey 1992:72, 214, 2008:339.

56. Carey 1992:85, 412 note 69a; 2008:341.

57. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p.3; Carey 2008:340.

58. *The Military Panorama, Or, Officers' Companion* (London: n. p. 1813), Volume 2:391; Thorn 1815:191; O'Donnell 1893:100; Carey 1992:414 note 78.

59. Carey 1992:234, 412 note 69, 2008:340-41.

60. Davidson 1901, I:88.





**Plate 14:** Personal heirloom *kris* (dagger), Kangjeng Kiai Nogosiluman (His Highness the Invisible King of the Snakes), taken from the second Sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengkubuwono II (r. 1792-1810/1811-12/1826-28), by Raffles on the morning of 20 June 1812, and presented to the Prince Regent (later George IV, r. 1820-30) in May 1817, and now in the Royal Armoury Collection in Windsor, UK <https://www.rct.uk/collection/67495/kris-and-scabbard> (Kris and scabbard, iron, gold, rubies, diamonds and wood, RCIN 67495).

and they were taken into safekeeping by Gillespie. Under these humiliating circumstances, the sultan and his relations were marched to the Residency between a row of British and sepoy soldiers with drawn swords and fixed bayonets. As the party entered the Residency House, the “Chronicle of the fall of Yogyakarta” a Javanese chronicle of the events of the British occupation of Yogya written by the sultan’s younger brother, Pangeran Arya Panular (ca. 1772-1826), describes how Raffles noticed with pleasure that only a couple of the Javanese princes of the blood (*pangéran*) tried to get down from their chairs to pay the sultan their customary respects. He motioned these to remain seated.<sup>61</sup> The Crown Prince himself hid his feelings, although he felt acutely the pathos of the moment. In tears, the sultan and his followers were now forced to give up their personal *kris* and gold ornaments,<sup>62</sup> the sultan’s sword and stabbing dagger (Plate 14) later being sent by Raffles to Lord Minto in Calcutta as a symbol of “the entire submission” of the Yogya court to the British.<sup>63</sup>

Total losses of the British forces in this action, which lasted less than three hours, were twenty-three killed and seventy-six wounded. Several men of the 14th Regiment were killed during the assault when the northeast bastion exploded. One man of the 78th was killed in this action and one officer, the regimental adjutant, Lieutenant Charles Robertson, and six or seven men, were wounded.<sup>64</sup> These losses “were certainly far below what could reasonably have been expected considering the desperate nature of the service and the disparity of the force which was throughout actually engaged.”<sup>65</sup> Despite the small number of troops engaged in this action they were “sufficient.” Enemy losses were considerable for in addition to those lying on the rampart, prodigious numbers of dead were to be seen lying in heaps under every gateway, particularly under the main gate.<sup>66</sup>

61. Carey 2008:341.

62. Carey 1992:86, 236.

63. Carey 2008:341.

64. *Java Government Gazette*, 4 July 1812, p. 3 no. 2.

65. Thorn 1815:189; Davidson 1901, I:87.

66. Carey 1992:419 note 95; 2021:56.



**Plate 15** - Silver soup tureens of French manufacture dating from the late 18th century (Louis XV, r. 1715-74) taken from the Yogyakarta *kraton* and subsequently used in the officer's mess of the 78th Highland Regiment (Ross-shire Buffs; post-1881, Seaforth Highlanders). Davidson 1901:89 facing.

### The Aftermath: The 78th Regiment of Foot in Java and Outer Islands, 1812-1816, and their Return to Scotland (1818)

The outcome of the action was that the sultan, Hamengkubuwono II, was exiled to Prince of Wales Island (Pulau Pinang) (1812-1815) and his son placed on the Yogya throne as Hamengkubuwono III (r.1812-1814). Following this decisive defeat, the Susuhunan of Surakarta (PB IV), rapidly acceded to the terms offered him and caused no further trouble. Sometime later, Raffles's loyal Dutch assistant, Harman Warner Muntinghe (1773-1827),<sup>67</sup> who took British citizenship, offered this assessment:

“[...] all the actions of that [British] administration had the [long-term] aim of strengthening and extending European rule. With the casting aside of all the dangerous and disadvantageous influences of the [local] Mohammedan governments, the administration was [now] brought into immediate contact with the mass of the population. Considered from this point of view, we aver, no steps had more efficacious and fortunate results than those which were taken against the then recalcitrant court of Yogyakarta. The accomplishments of the fall of Yogyakarta, in our view, can be compared, as regards its consequences for Java and its dependencies, with that of the Battle of Plassey [23 June 1757] for British-India.”<sup>68</sup>

The significance of the victory was not lost on Raffles, who wrote to his patron, Lord Minto, the Governor-General of Bengal (in office, 1807-1813), from Semarang on 25 June 1812, saying “the European power is for the first time paramount in Java.”<sup>69</sup> On the same day, 25 June, a party of the sultan's

**67.** This is the Groningen Dutch spelling of Muntinghe's first names (usually spelt “Herman Werner”) which appears on his 28 April 1773 baptismal certificate from the Nieuwe Waalse Kerk (Walloon Reformed Church), Amsterdam, see [stadsarchief.amsterdam.nl/doopregisters](https://stadsarchief.amsterdam.nl/doopregisters) 135, p. 433. I am grateful to Dr Kees Briët, Rotterdam, sometime judge of the Joint High Court of Justice of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, for this reference, electronic communication, Rotterdam, 12 April 2020.

**68.** Carey 1992:60 note 102; 2008:342, quote from Muntinghe from his report on the land-rent system in Java, 14 July 1817, see Deventer 1865, I:279.

**69.** Carey 1992:61 note 103.



**Plate 16:** The Scottish broadsword dance performed by members of a Highland Regiment of Foot (? Black Watch) in the early 20th Century. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

troops under command of Naireem was decisively defeated and on 28 June, the rebel Bagus Rangin, who had long evaded capture by the Dutch, was taken along with his nephew Bagus Manoch and his uncle near Indramayu.

Following the capture of the sultan, wholesale and uncontrolled looting by the victorious troops produced a rich bounty for the army. The amount of treasure and jewels found in the *kraton* exceeded 850,000 rixdollars (*rijksdaalders*) (£250,000,000 sterling in present-day [2023] money).<sup>70</sup> The proceeds were shared out among the officers and men but this very act led to the first unfortunate disagreement between Raffles and his army commander, Gillespie, whose promotion to the rank of Major-General was gazetted in the *Java Government Gazette* of 8 August 1812 and backdated to 1 January 1812.

The companies of the 78th Regiment of Foot engaged in the assault remained in Yogyakarta almost a month until they returned to Ungaran on 22 July. In the meantime, they provided entertainment at the court, putting on displays of Highland dancing, including the sword dance and bagpipe music (Plates 16-17). The sword dance was interestingly adopted by both the junior Javanese courts in Surakarta and Yogyakarta —namely the Mangkunegaran and the Pakualaman.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup>. Carey 1992:415 note 80, 2008:347-8. On the sterling PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) calculation, see above note 13.

<sup>71</sup>. Carey 1992:460-61 note 297, quoting Anon [signed A.H.P.] 1854:88. See also Carey 2008:359, 2016:ix-xi.



**Plate 17** - John McDonald, piper of the 72nd Highland Regiment of Foot (Duke of Albany's Own), the regiment with which the 78th amalgamated in 1881 to form the Seaforth Highlanders (Plate 1). From an albumen silver print photograph from the 'Crimean Heroes' series taken by Robert Howlett (1831-58) and the printer-publisher, Joseph Cundall (1818-95), in Aldershot, Surrey, England, in July 1856 at the end of the Crimean War (1854-56) when the regiment had returned to participate in the London victory parade. Photograph courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, accession number PGP 140.1.

New treaties were drawn up and ratified with Surakarta and Yogyakarta on 1 August 1812.<sup>72</sup> Having secured the peace, Raffles suggested to the Governing Council on 27 July that in the interest of economy, the garrison in Java be reduced to two King's Regiments (the 59th and 78th) and five battalions of sepoy, which, in Raffles' view, were "fully equal to the service and as extensive as the resources of the country in money and provisions can conveniently afford".<sup>73</sup> The 89th (Royal Irish Fusiliers) were to be sent away "at once," and the 14th Foot, detachments of dragoons and Madras horse artillery "as soon as tonnage [merchant shipping] was available" according to the minutes of the

<sup>72</sup>. Carey 2008:377-89.

<sup>73</sup>. Carey 1977:296, 2008:303-4, 304 fn.157, quoting IOL Eur F148/23 (Raffles-Minto Collection vol. 23) Raffles (Salatiga) to Lord Minto (Calcutta), 6 August 1812.

self-same lieutenant-governor's council meeting.<sup>74</sup> Gillespie disagreed, giving rise to further unfortunate personality clashes with Raffles.<sup>75</sup> In December 1812, Minto agreed to Raffles' proposals. The 78th, however, were to remain on garrison duty in Java with fatal consequences for their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel James Fraser (1766-1813), who died along with his brother officer, Captain James MacPherson (circa 1775-1813), in an uprising near Probolinggo in the eastern salient of Java on 18 May 1813.<sup>76</sup>

Following the successful repression of this rebellion on 21-24 May, and the deceased Fraser's replacement by his deputy, Major (post-1846, Major-General) David Forbes (1772-1849), the regiment saw service during the British expedition against Bali Buleleng in May 1814 and Makassar in July.<sup>77</sup> Two years later, when it eventually embarked on two transports for Bengal on 9 September 1816 from Batavia after the formal return of the colony to the Dutch (19 August 1816), only 400 officers and men remained of the original 1,027 which had sailed with the original British expedition against Java from Madras (Chennai) in May 1811.<sup>78</sup> Most had died from fever and disease in their insanitary barracks in Denoyo (present-day Dinoyo, Surabaya), Weltevreden (Batavia) and Cimanggis (present-day district of Depok City), rather than on the field of battle. Finally, in 1818, in recognition of their lengthy campaign service, the regiment was awarded the battle honour "Java" for their regimental flag (Plate 1). This now hangs in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh.<sup>79</sup> Thus, ended this famous Highland Regiment's tour of duty in Java which saw it participate in nearly all the great battles and campaigns of the five-year British occupation (1811-16).

**74.** Raffles 1830:132-33 (referencing Raffles' January 1813 letter to William Brown Ramsay [1758-1817], Secretary to the EIC [1805-17], on his dispute with Gillespie); Thorn 1815:192-193, 200; De Haan 1935:553.

**75.** Glendinning 2012:119-121.

**76.** Thorn 1815:305-308; Henderson 1901, I:88-9; McKinnon 1996:53-54; Hannigan 2012:262-267; Sri Margana 2012:290-298.

**77.** Davidson 1901, I:89-91.

**78.** Davidson 1901, I:92. In 1817, Colonel David Forbes (1772-1849) returned to Scotland and settled in Aberdeen where he later died (1849). He was the only officer who returned out of the original forty-two who had left Scotland as part of the 78th Highland Regiment raised by Francis Humberston Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth (1754-1815), in March 1793, and bringing with him only thirty-six out of twelve hundred rank and file, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Forbes\\_\(British\\_Army\\_officer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Forbes_(British_Army_officer)) (accessed 17 April 2020).

**79.** McKinnon 1996:55.





**Plate 18:** The 74th Highland Regiment led by Major Samuel Swinton (1773-1839) (left) and under the overall command of Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington (1769-1852), in action at the Battle of Assaye (23 September 1803) during the Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1805) in the Western Ghats of India. The lithograph shows the regiment dressed in their tropical battle whites rather than kilts or tartan trews which they wore in European battles. The 78th Highland Regiment also participated in the battle and David Forbes, the regiment's future colonel (1814-17), then a recently promoted captain, took part in the decisive attack when the regiment retook the Maratha gun line. This action earned the 78th their third battle colours, awarded by the English East India Company (EIC), with the elephant symbol which was also worn as a regimental cap badge (Plate 19). Coloured lithograph by J.C. Stadler after a painting by William Heath (1794-1840). Source: Wikimedia Commons.



**Plate 19 -** The elephant symbol and cap badge of the 78th Highland Regiment (Infantry Regiment of the Line) awarded by the English East India after the regiment distinguished itself at the Battle of Assaye (23 September 1803) (Plate 18). The Scots Gaelic regimental motto "Guidich 'n Righ [Help the King]" dates to the regiment's initial foundation by Lieutenant-General Francis Humberston Mackenzie, later First Baron Seaforth (1754-1815), in 1793. Source: Wikimedia Commons



**Plate 20** - One of the 92 iron and brass cannon captured from the Yogyakarta *kraton* (court) by the British on 20 June 1812, including 8 eighteen-pounders and 7 twelve-pounders (like the above). This iron cannon bears the inscription in Javanese script (*aksara Jawa*): *yasa-Dalem mariyem Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat ing taun Wawu sengkalan suwarèng dahana sabdanèng ratu* [Yogyakarta cannon cast by royal command in the year Wawu (Anno Javanico 1737, AD 6-2-1810-25-1-1811) with the chronogram “the voice of fire is the word of the king” (numerical value [voice/*suwara*] 7- [fire/*dahana*] 3- [voice/*sabda*] 7- [king/*ratu*] 1)]. This may have been one of the cannon cast on the second Sultan’s orders at the Chinese and Arab-run cannon foundries in Gresik, East Java, in 1809-10, when he was strengthening the *kraton* fortifications during his confrontation with Marshal Herman Willem Daendels (in office, 1808-11), see Gomperts and Carey 1994:26 note 10; and Carey 2008:216 note 53. Photograph made in the Yogyakarta *kraton* courtesy of Dr Fiona Kerlogue, Horniman Museum, London (2016).

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## COMPTES RENDUS

(Qing 清) Li Jun zhuan 力鈞撰, *Binlangyu zhilüe jiaozhu* 檳榔嶼志略校注 (Annotated Records of Pulau Pinang), Nie Dening 聂德宁, Yon Weng Woe 阮湧俚 jiaozhu 校注, Xiamen 厦门, Xiamen daxue chubanshe 厦门大学出版社, Dang'an ziliao xilie zhi ba 档案资料系列之八, 2022, 174 +308 p. 10 plates, ISBN: 978-7-5615-8184-1.

This book is a reprint (in traditional Chinese characters) of Li Jun's monograph on Penang Island, punctuated and annotated by Nie Dening and Yon Weng Woe, and followed by a facsimile of the edition held by the Nanyang yanjiu suo Library, Xiamen University.

Li Jun (1852-1925) came from a family of literati in Yongtai 永泰 district, Fuzhou 福州 prefecture, Fujian. He studied Chinese medicine, and since 1877 practised on his own. He also passed the examination of the second degree or *juren* 举人 in 1889. In 1891, he was called to Singapore to treat the father of a local Chinese merchant. He took the opportunity to travel to the Malay Peninsula, and wrote several articles and travelogues about the region. They all remained in manuscript and are now lost.

Only the monograph on Penang has survived. The author, who tells us that he spent three months on the island, had plenty of time to carry out in-depth research. He met Chinese personalities, visited monuments, collected local texts, and investigated numerous Chinese works – some of which still in extent, others apparently lost – which shows his great curiosity. In the style of Chinese monographs, he divided his material into 10 chapters covering subjects such as astronomy, climate, calendar, geography, emissaries and local officials, exiles, monuments and famous places, buildings, customs, finance and economics, and a particularly rich bibliographical chapter. Li Jun, who fully understood the importance of Malay as a language of communication within Nusantara (he says: "If you don't learn Malay to travel in the South Seas, you are like a deaf and dumb man"), took the trouble "to edit" two texts written by a certain Wu Zengying 吴曾英, which he entitled *Wulaiyou fangyan* 巫来由方言 (Malay Dialects, in two volumes). Only Li's preface reproduced in the monograph has survived.



The first edition, which contains a preface by Li Jun dated 1891, is kept at Fuzhou Normal School Library. The second, undated, is in the Nanyang yanjiu suo. A meticulous study of the two editions has enabled Nie Dening to date this edition to 1892. An incomplete manuscript version (chap.7, 8 and 10 are missing) in a single volume, with the preface by Li Jun from 1891 and annotations by a certain Wang Yuanzhi (王元穉改批注本), has been acquired online more recently. The present editors relied on these three versions to create their own. They also used the account by the mandarin-capitalist Zhang Yunan (Chong Yit Nam) 张煜南 (1851-1911), who was at one time vice-consul in Penang, entitled *Haiguo gongyu yilu* 海国公余辑录 (The Leisure Compilation of Overseas Officials, First ed. 1898).

The edited text has been standardized, variants and popular characters eliminated, and explanatory notes added where appropriate. For ease of reading, proper nouns are underlined in the body of the text, while toponyms and foreign names are transcribed and commented in notes. The editors have added various supplements: extracts from 19th century English sources, lists of place names, persons and works arranged by number of strokes, and a bibliography.

In short, all the work done by the editors on this now-rare text has given it a new lease of life. In particular, it highlights the extraordinary cultural richness of this Chinese community in Penang.

Claudine Salmon

Magdalene.co, *Her story. Perempuan Nusantara di Tepi Sejarah (Her story. Indonesian Women on the edge of History)*, Ilustrasi oleh: Karina Tungari, Jakarta, Penerbit PT Elex Media Komputindo, Kompas Gramedia, 2020, 212 p. ISBN: 978-623-00-2063-6.

It is an original attempt to make the Indonesians aware of the fact that their women continue to be excluded from official history. The volume is constituted by a collection of 100 one-page biographies of Nusantaran women illustrated by Karina Tungari. Her full-page colour portraits, more or less realistic depending on the documentation, give the book its charm.

Magdalene.co is here represented by Devi Asmarani and Farah Rizki, who edit the bilingual Indonesian English web-magazine *Magdalene* ([www.magdalene.co](http://www.magdalene.co)) that was founded in 2013. Devi Asmarani, its founder and current editor-in-chief, is an old hand in journalism who “began at *The Jakarta Post*, followed by *The Straits Times of Singapore*, where she wrote news reports, in-depth articles and analyses on various issues including politics, conflicts, terrorism and natural disasters”. Her aim has been to produce “a women-focused publication that provides content and perspectives that are inclusive, critical, empowering and entertaining.”

As for the book reviewed here, its aim was to give as broad a panorama as possible of eminent Nusantaran women (*perempuan hebat*) from the earliest times to the present day. We don't know how this project was financed, but we may presume that its editors were faced with financial difficulties because they point out that there are many more than 100 extraordinary women who deserve a biography. They also do not say how they went about compiling their corpus, which, for reasons of documentation, is essentially

concerned with the present. They entrusted the study of the earliest times to a history student, who decided to present six well-known women sovereigns (Ratu Shima, Gayatri Rajapatni, Tribhuwana Wijayatunggadewi, Ratu Kalinyamat, Sultanah Nahrasyiya and Sultanah Safiatuddin). Contemporary women are presented in such a way as to show their presence in a wide range of activities, from revolutionaries to businesswomen, administrators, politicians, reformers, scientists, feminists, sportswomen, writers, journalists, artists ... The editors have also taken care to choose women from all regions of Indonesia and from communities of foreign origin, such as Chinese and Arabs (such as the late freelance journalist and translator Soh Lian Tjie/Nora Suryanti (1914-1995) and television presenter Njawa Shihab, both born in Makassar).

In short, this is a very successful attempt, which we hope will encourage other Indonesian women to pursue research in this area and encourage historians to reintroduce Nusantara women into official history.

Claudine Salmon



## RÉSUMÉS – ABSTRACTS

**Ery Soedewo** (BRIN), **Abu Bakar** (Sultanate Institute), **M. Fadhlan S. Intan** (BRIN), **Stanov Purnawibowo** (BRIN), **Andri Restiyadi** (BRIN), **Taufiqurrahman Setiawan** (BRIN), **Deddy Satria** (Ikatan Ahli Arkeologi Indonesia Komda Aceh dan Sumatera Utara), **Aswandi Anas** (BRIN), **Harry Octavianus Sofian** (BRIN), **Mochammad Fauzi Hendrawan** (BRIN), **Lolita R. L. Tobing** (BRIN), **Repelita Wahyu Oetomo** (BRIN), **Shinatria Adhityatama** (Griffith University)

### *History of the west coast of North Sumatra before Barus: Preliminary results of archaeological research at the Bongal settlement site*

The Bongal area, near Kota Pandan, in the Tapanuli/Sibolga Bay, has been known to archaeologists since 2001 through the identification of the remains of a Ganeśa stone image. Eighteen years later, archaeologists returned to the same area to examine a large number of chance finds uncovered by local gold washers. Their observations led to undertake systematic excavations in 2021 and 2022. The aim of this article is to introduce the main categories of finds revealed since 2019 and to suggest a number of hypotheses. The surface area of the settlement site exceeds 200 hectares, covering part of the Bongal hills as well as the alluvial plain which extends toward the Lumut river. Finds include dozens of coins inscribed in Arabic, glazed and unglazed earthenware, stoneware and porcelain, glassware, various metal and alloy objects, beads, gems and faience jewel, artefacts made of wood, resins, nuts, seeds, cords, as well as ivory. The quantity and diversity of archaeological material suggest the existence of a port site dated between the 4th and 10th c. CE, participating in trade networks covering Southeast Asia, China, South Asia and the Middle East. The end of the occupation of Bongal would coincide with the beginnings of the occupation of Barus on the site of Lobu Tua, which flourished later.

### *Histoire de la côte ouest de Sumatra-Nord avant Barus : résultats préliminaires des recherches archéologiques sur le site d'habitat de Bongal*

La région de Bongal, près de Kota Pandan, dans la baie de Tapanuli/Sibolga, est connue des archéologues depuis 2001 grâce à l'identification des vestiges d'une statue en pierre de Ganesh. C'est dix-huit ans plus tard, que des archéologues sont revenus dans la même zone afin d'examiner un grand nombre de découvertes fortuites mises au jour par des orpailleurs locaux. Leurs observations ont conduit à entreprendre des fouilles systématiques en 2021 et 2022. L'objectif de cet article est de présenter les principales catégories de trouvailles révélées depuis 2019 et de suggérer un certain nombre d'hypothèses. La superficie du site d'habitat dépasse 200 hectares, couvrant une partie des collines de Bongal ainsi que la plaine alluviale qui s'étend vers la rivière Lumut. Les trouvailles comprennent des dizaines de monnaies portant des inscriptions en arabe, de la poterie glaçurée et non glaçurée, des grès et porcelaines,

de la vaisselle de verre, divers objets en métal et en alliages, des perles, des pierres précieuses, des bijoux en faïence, des objets en bois, des résines, des noix, des graines, des cordelettes, ainsi que de l'ivoire. La quantité et la variété du matériel archéologique suggèrent l'existence d'un site portuaire daté entre le IV<sup>e</sup> et le X<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère, participant à des réseaux commerciaux couvrant l'Asie du Sud-Est, la Chine, l'Asie du Sud et le Moyen-Orient. La fin de l'occupation de Bongal coïnciderait avec les débuts de l'occupation de Barus sur le site de Lobu Tua, qui prospéra plus tard.

**Daniel Perret** (EFEO, CASE, University of Malaya), **Mohd. Sherman bin Sauffi** (Sarawak Museum Department), **Stéphanie Leroy** (CNRS), **Yohan Chabot** (GeoArchEon)

***The Ongoing Sungai Jaong Archaeological Project (2018-2024), Sarawak, Malaysia: Preliminary Results***

More than fifty years after the last excavations undertaken in the coastal area of the Sarawak River Delta, new archaeological excavations in the region started in 2019, through a cooperation between the École française d'Extrême-Orient and the Sarawak Museum Department. This article offers the preliminary results of researches conducted at the Sungai Jaong site, in the Santubong area, until late 2023. Despite a very limited excavated surface area, the conduct of metallurgical activities in ancient times has been recognised and attested without any doubt for the first time in the Sarawak River Delta. Several remains of iron smelting furnaces, dated between mid-11th and late 12th-13th century CE, have been uncovered. They could represent the first iron smelting furnaces, dated to early second millennium CE, reported so far on the whole island of Borneo. Other finds include notably more than seven tons of iron slag, some 3,200 fragments of tuyeres, 6,600 earthenware sherds, almost 2,500 stoneware shards, and several grooved stones. Various analyses of these finds are underway, including a compositional analysis of iron slag samples. Archaeological research at Sungai Jaong also includes a geomorphological study to shed light on the interactions between the ancient occupation of the site and the environment over the longue durée.

***Le programme archéologique de Sungai Jaong (2018-2024), Sarawak, Malaisie : résultats préliminaires***

Plus de cinquante ans après les dernières fouilles entreprises dans la zone côtière du delta du fleuve Sarawak, de nouvelles fouilles archéologiques dans la région ont débuté en 2019, grâce à une coopération entre l'École française d'Extrême-Orient et le Département des musées de Sarawak. Cet article présente les résultats préliminaires des recherches menées sur le site de Sungai Jaong, dans la région de Santubong, jusqu'à fin 2023. Malgré une surface fouillée très limitée, la conduite d'activités métallurgiques à époque ancienne a été identifiée et attestée avec certitude pour la première fois dans le delta du fleuve Sarawak. Plusieurs vestiges de fours de réduction du minerai de fer, datés entre le milieu du XI<sup>e</sup> et la fin du XII<sup>e</sup>-XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère, ont été mis au jour. Ils pourraient représenter les premiers fours de réduction du minerai de fer, datés du début du second millénaire de notre ère, signalés jusqu'à présent sur toute l'île de Bornéo. De plus, les fouilles ont livré en particulier plus



de sept tonnes de scories de fer, quelque 3 200 fragments de tuyères, 6 600 tessons de poterie, près de 2 500 tessons de grès, ainsi que des pierres rainurées. Diverses analyses de ces découvertes sont en cours, notamment une analyse compositionnelle d'échantillons de scories de fer. Les recherches archéologiques à Sungai Jaong comprennent également une étude géomorphologique visant à éclairer les interactions entre l'occupation ancienne du site et l'environnement sur la longue durée.

**Husnul Fahimah Ilyas** (BRIN, Indonesia) and **Annabel Teh Gallop** (British Library, UK)

***A prolific 19th-century Bugis scribe: Syaikh Zainal Abidin and his personal catalogue of 52 Qur'an manuscripts copied***

Syaikh Zainal Abidin bin al-Khatib Umar was an eminent 19th century Bugis religious scholar and Qur'anic scribe from Pammana, Wajo, in South Sulawesi. Exceptionally for Southeast Asia, Qur'an manuscripts by Bugis scribes often have full colophons, with details of when, where and by whom they were copied, and so far five Qur'an manuscripts as well as a number of other religious manuscripts by Syaikh Zainal Abidin have been documented. A recent important discovery is Syaikh Zainal Abidin's own catalogue of 52 Qur'an manuscripts he had copied, with details of each owner, located from Sumbawa to Lampung and Pontianak. This study attempts to link up the Syaikh Zainal Abidin's known Qur'an manuscripts with those listed in his catalogue, thereby shedding further light on his biography and networks of patronage.

***Un scribe bugis prolifique du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle : Syaikh Zainal Abidin et son catalogue personnel de 52 manuscrits copiés du Coran***

Syaikh Zainal Abidin bin al-Khatib Umar était un érudit religieux et scribe coranique bugis éminent du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, originaire de Pammana, Wajo, dans le sud de Sulawesi. De manière exceptionnelle pour l'Asie du Sud-Est, les manuscrits du Coran produits par des scribes bugis comportent souvent des colophons complets, avec des détails sur la date, le lieu et l'auteur de la copie. A ce jour, cinq manuscrits du Coran ainsi qu'un certain nombre d'autres manuscrits religieux produits par Syaikh Zainal Abidin ont été documentés. Une découverte importante récente est le catalogue de 52 manuscrits du Coran que Syaikh Zainal Abidin a lui-même copiés, avec des détails sur chaque propriétaire, résidents de Sumbawa à Lampung et Pontianak. Cette étude tente de relier les manuscrits du Coran connus de Syaikh Zainal Abidin avec ceux répertoriés dans son catalogue, apportant ainsi un éclairage supplémentaire sur sa biographie et ses réseaux de clientèle.

**Aglaia Iankovskaia** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

***On 'hanging meaning' and its transmission. Tracing a didactic poem from Aceh***

Drawing on a case study of an Arabic poem and two versions of its interlinear Malay translation, the paper speculates on the involvement of oral practices in the transmission of interlinear texts. The translations are found in two manuscripts from

Aceh (EAP329/1/11, Endangered Archives, 18th c., and ML 341, Jakarta, late 19th c.), between the lines of a didactic verse dealing with the duties of a good Muslim student. While the Arabic text of the poem seems to have been reproduced through copying from a written source, the transmission history of its Malay translations appears to be more complicated. Juxtaposing the two versions of interlinear translation reveals that they are too similar to be unrelated and, at the same time, too different for the differences to result from corruption in the process of recopying. The paper argues that the interlinear text in the manuscripts under discussion has gone through both written and oral transmission—likely in the classroom settings, with a teacher dictating the translation looking into a written copy, but feeling free to slightly modify or complement it during the dictation.

***Sur le « sens suspendu » et sa transmission. Sur les traces d'un poème didactique d'Aceh***

En s'appuyant sur une étude de cas d'un poème arabe et de deux versions de sa traduction interlinéaire en malais, l'article s'interroge sur l'implication des pratiques orales dans la transmission de textes interlinéaires. Les traductions proviennent de deux manuscrits d'Aceh (EAP329/1/11, Endangered Archives, XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, et ML 341, Jakarta, fin XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle), entre les lignes d'un vers didactique traitant des devoirs d'un bon étudiant musulman. Alors que le texte arabe du poème semble avoir été reproduit par copie d'une source écrite, l'histoire de la transmission de ses traductions en malais paraît plus compliquée. La juxtaposition des deux versions de traduction interlinéaire révèle qu'elles sont trop similaires pour être sans rapport et, en même temps, trop différentes pour que les différences résultent d'une corruption dans le processus de recopie. L'article suggère que le texte interlinéaire des manuscrits étudiés a connu une transmission à la fois écrite et orale, probablement dans le cadre d'une classe, avec un enseignant dictant la traduction en examinant une copie écrite, mais se sentant libre de la modifier ou de la compléter légèrement pendant la dictée.

**Roderich Ptak** (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich)

***Pulau Aur and Some Nearby Islands in Chinese Nautical Sources of the Ming Period***

Some scholars have proposed to identify the names Shangxiazhu 上下竺, Zhuyu 竺嶼, Tianzhushan 天竺山, and Dongxizhu 東西竺, recorded in Song and Yuan sources, with Pulau Aur, the easternmost island of the Seribuat Archipelago, but there is dissent on the issue. The present study briefly reviews that. It also summarizes references to the Seribuat Islands on the so-called “Zheng He Map”. However, the principal aim is to discuss and throw light on the presentation of Pulau Aur and various nearby islands in nautical works of the Ming period. This concerns several toponyms, especially Dongzhushan 東竹山, Xizhushan 西竹山, and Dongxizhu 東西竹. It also concerns sailing routes through the archipelago itself, and along its eastern rim. Although many entries in the relevant sources provide ambiguous information, the general impression is that the network of routes used by Chinese sailors in the northwestern section of the Natuna Sea expanded in the course

of time, i.e., from the days of Zheng He through to the early seventeenth century. The final part of the article suggests that one may also consider information found in Portuguese *roteiros* and other records to draw an improved panorama.

***Pulau Aur et quelques îles voisines dans les sources nautiques chinoises de la période Ming***

Certains chercheurs ont suggéré d'identifier les noms Shangxiashu 上下竺, Zhuyu 竺嶼, Tianzhushan 天竺山 et Dongxizhu 東西竺, mentionnés dans des sources Song et Yuan, avec Pulau Aur, l'île la plus orientale de l'archipel de Seribuât, mais les avis sont partagés sur la question. La présente étude passe brièvement en revue cette question. Elle évoque également les références aux îles Seribuât sur la carte dite « carte de Zheng He ». Cependant, l'objectif principal est de discuter et d'éclairer la présentation de Pulau Aur et de diverses îles voisines dans des sources nautiques de la période Ming. Il s'agit d'examiner plusieurs toponymes, en particulier Dongzhushan 東竹山, Xizhushan 西竹山, et Dongxizhu 東西竹. Cette étude analyse également les routes de navigation à travers l'archipel lui-même et le long de sa bordure orientale. Bien que de nombreuses entrées dans les sources pertinentes fournissent des informations ambiguës, l'impression générale est que le réseau de routes utilisées par les marins chinois dans la partie nord-ouest de la mer de Natuna s'est étendu au fil du temps, c'est-à-dire de l'époque de Zheng He jusqu'au début du dix-septième siècle. La dernière partie de l'article suggère que l'on peut également prendre en compte les informations contenues dans les *roteiros* portugais et d'autres documents pour enrichir le panorama.

**E. Edwards McKinnon** (†) (Art historian) and **Peter Carey** (Oxford (F. Em.); UI (Ad. Prof.))

***The Scots in Java, 1811-1816. An Episode from the History of the 78th Regiment of Foot (Ross-shire Buffs): The Storming of the Yogyakarta Court, 20 June 1812, and its aftermath***

During the short-lived British interregnum regime in Java (1811-1816), a battalion (1,000 soldiers) of the 78th Highland (Scottish) Regiment of Foot (Ross-shire Buffs) took part in the British invasion force. They participated in nearly all the major military engagements of this period, including the 20 June 1812 storming of the Yogyakarta *kraton*. The events of that bloody operation and the contribution of the 78th Highland Regiment to its success form the core of this article. This describes how sharpshooters of the regiment's two rifle companies overwhelmed the Javanese gunners on the *kraton* battlements, and how a junior officer, Lieutenant Henry N. Douglas (1787-1860), secured the person of the Sultan (Hamengku Buwono II) and escorted him to the Dutch fort, Vredeburg. The role of the Scots Assistant-Resident of Yogyakarta, John Deans (1786-1868), and his disfigurement of the body of the slain Yogyakarta army commander, Sumodiningrat (c. 1760-1812), in his private mosque in his residence to the south of the court is also mentioned. Following the close of

hostilities, the Scots troops were the last to leave Yogyakarta (13 July 1812) and used the time to teach local Javanese troops the Scottish broadsword dance, later adopted into the repertoire of the two minor courts (Pakualaman and Mangkunegaran). During their subsequent garrison duties in East Java, the regiment lost its commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel James Fraser (1766-1813), during a local uprising in Besuki in the Oosthoek (Eastern Saliënt), and later participated in the campaigns against Bali Buleleng (May 1814) and Bone in South Sulawesi (June 1814). By the time the regiment eventually returned to Scotland in late 1817, only 400 out of the 1,062 troops which had sailed from Madras (Chennai) in early May 1811 were still alive, most having succumbed to tropical diseases in their unhealthy barracks in Surabaya, Batavia (Weltevreden) and Cimanggis (Depok).

***Les Écossais à Java, 1811-1816. Un épisode de l'histoire du 78<sup>e</sup> régiment d'infanterie (Ross-shire Buffs): la prise du complexe palatin de Yogyakarta, 20 juin 1812, et ses conséquences***

Durant le bref interrègne britannique à Java (1811-1816), un bataillon (1 000 soldats) du 78<sup>e</sup> régiment d'infanterie écossais (Ross-shire Buffs) prit part à la force d'invasion britannique. Il participa à presque tous les engagements militaires majeurs de cette période, y compris la prise d'assaut du *kraton* de Yogyakarta le 20 juin 1812. Les événements de cette opération sanglante et la contribution du 78<sup>e</sup> régiment des Highlands à son succès constituent le cœur de cet article. Il décrit comment les tireurs d'élite des deux compagnies de fusiliers du régiment ont submergé les artilleurs javanais sur les remparts du *kraton*, et comment un officier subalterne, le lieutenant Henry N. Douglas (1787-1860), a arrêté le sultan (Hamengku Buwono II) et l'a escorté jusqu'au fort hollandais de Vredeburg. Le rôle de l'assistant-résident écossais de Yogyakarta, John Deans (1786-1868), et sa défiguration du corps du commandant de l'armée de Yogyakarta assassiné, Sumodiningrat (c. 1760-1812), dans sa mosquée privée située dans sa résidence au sud de la cour, est également évoqué. Les troupes écossaises furent les dernières à quitter Yogyakarta suite aux hostilités (13 juillet 1812) et en profitèrent pour enseigner aux troupes javanaises la danse du sabre écossais, adoptée plus tard dans le répertoire des deux cours mineures (Pakualaman et Mangkunegaran). Au cours de ses missions ultérieures en garnison à Java-Est, le régiment perdit son commandant, le lieutenant-colonel James Fraser (1766-1813), lors d'un soulèvement local à Besuki dans l'Oosthoek (pointe orientale), et participa plus tard aux campagnes contre Buleleng à Bali (mai 1814) et Bone dans le sud de Sulawesi (juin 1814). Lorsque le régiment revint finalement en Écosse fin 1817, seuls 400 des 1 062 soldats partis de Madras (Chennai) début mai 1811, étaient encore en vie, la plupart ayant succombé à des maladies tropicales dans leurs casernes insalubres de Surabaya, Batavia (Weltevreden) et Cimanggis (Depok).

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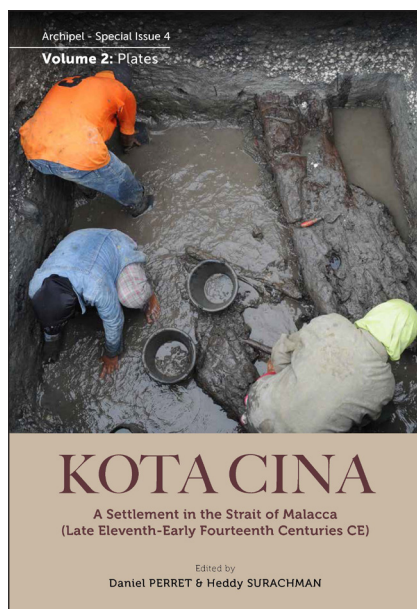
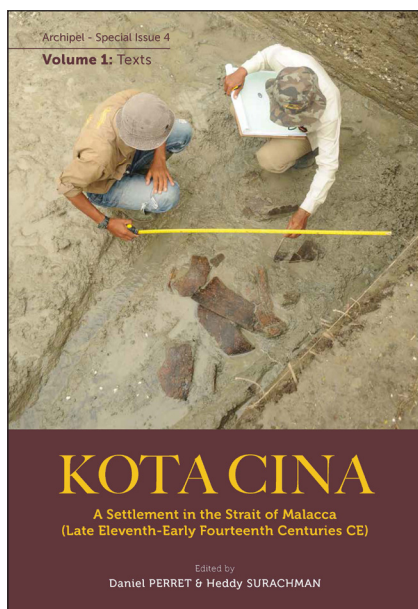
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Daniel Perret & Heddy Surachman (dir.), 2024, *Kota Cina : A Settlement in the Strait of Malacca (Fate XIe – Early XIVe Centuries CE)*, Jakarta, KPG(Gramedia), Association Archipel (Hors-Série 4), École française d'Extrême-Orient, BRIN, Volume 1 (Texts), 660 p.; volume 2 (Plates), 260 p. ISBN: 9786231342126.

From the time of its rediscovery in the early 1970s, the site of Kota Cina, on the shore of the Malacca Strait, in the present province of North Sumatra, Indonesia, appeared as one of the major old settlement sites in the region. This book represents the latest contribution to the accumulation of knowledge on the history of the site between the late eleventh and early fourteenth centuries CE.

A first set of eighteen studies offers the main results of the archaeological research programme conducted from 2011 until 2018 by the École française d'Extrême-Orient in cooperation with the Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional Indonesia. It includes a contribution on structures, features and stratigraphies; studies devoted to the 227,000 finds uncovered during these excavations (earthenware, Chinese ceramics, glassware, metal, Chinese coins, lithic material, faunal remains, wood, worked organic finds, fruits and seeds), as well as a geomorphological and paleo-environmental contribution.

A second set of studies presents the results of other surveys and excavations which shed additional light on the programme that constitutes the core of this book: two contributions devoted to Kota Cina itself, one devoted to the neighbouring site of Bulu Cina, and one devoted to recent excavations in the South Sumatra Province.

A third set includes two studies which constitute reappraisals of two corpora (Hindu-Buddhist statuary from Kota Cina, contemporary Chinese written sources) allowing to apprehend the history of relations between Kota Cina in particular, and the Straits of Malacca more generally, with South Asia on the one hand, and China on the other hand, in the light of the most recent knowledge.

The concluding chapter draws on all these contributions in an attempt to offer a synthesis of certain aspects related to the occupation of the Kota Cina site: morphology and spatial evolution of the settlement, dwelling features, space occupation, as well as domestic life and religious practices. Within this framework, an essay on the economic and political history of Kota Cina is proposed, from the emergence of the site until its abandonment, including its involvement in overseas trade routes, and hypotheses on its political status.

MÉMOIRES ARCHÉOLOGIQUES 30

Sultans-bâisseurs et innovations  
architecturales à Java au début de la  
période coloniale (XVI<sup>e</sup> - début XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)



Hélène Njoto



ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE D'EXTRÊME-ORIENT

Hélène Njoto, 2024, *Sultans-bâisseurs et innovations architecturales à Java au début de la période coloniale (XVI<sup>e</sup> - début XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Paris, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Coll. *Mémoires archéologiques*, 352 p., ISBN: 9782855394299.

Fondée sur de nombreux documents d'archives et sur d'importantes enquêtes de terrain, cette première histoire architecturale des sultanats de Java au début de la période coloniale (XVI<sup>e</sup>-début XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle) révèle une facette insoupçonnée des souverains javanais : leur ouverture aux innovations. Carrefour maritime, Java fut le théâtre d'un renouvellement des formes et des techniques, loin de l'idée souvent avancée d'une culture conservatrice, hermétique aux changements. À travers l'étude sur le temps long de projets urbains et palatins parmi les plus singuliers d'Asie du Sud-Est, cet ouvrage analyse le processus créatif d'invention d'une architecture javanaise hybride alliant traditions et innovations. Au contact des étrangers, tant asiatiques qu'européens, et de leurs savoir-faire, les sultans javanais surent repenser leur culture matérielle. Pendant deux siècles et demi, ces sultans-bâisseurs mirent en œuvre une architecture de prestige en maçonnerie, à la fois outil de légitimation et de résistance face à l'accélération de l'emprise coloniale.



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