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Sri Vijaya and Madjapahit

LOURDES RAUSA-GOMEZ

ALL nations are interested in their historical and cultural heritage. This interest persists in part because of the conviction that knowledge of a country's past is an indispensable aid to the evaluation and understanding of its present policies and aspirations. It persists also because citizens derive a feeling of pride and unity from knowledge of their traditions and of the historic events their nation has experienced. This is especially true in Southeast Asia, where most of the newly independent nations are trying to reconstruct their historic past *before* the impact of colonialism upon their countries.

The leaders of modern Indonesia have openly praised the grandeur of her two past empires. Indonesia's recent and unsuccessful Confrontation Policy against Malaysia was somewhat geared to the Indonesian dream of reviving the past glories of her empires.

In the Philippines, there are some who still expect to find, in a dense, dank Philippine jungle, a Hindu temple or a Buddhist stupa. To them sound history speaks sobering words about six centuries spent on the outer rims of two mighty and successive Indonesian empires.

This paper will examine how two great states in Indonesia's past, Sri Vijaya and Madjapahit, took advantage of their central location between the Indian and Pacific Oceans to become vital links in the international and inter-Asian trade of India,

China, the Malay peninsula, and Europe. I will attempt to show that from existing historical sources there is no evidence to substantiate the hypothesis held by some Filipino historians that the Philippines was a part of both the Sri Vijayan and the Madjapahit empires.

EARLY INDONESIAN STATES

To some extent, the historical patterns of any country are determined by its geography. Indonesia, because it is such a vast and scattered circum-marine state, has been notably so.¹ Its location, its archipelagic nature, the deep seas, the mountainous terrain, and the volcanic fertility of its soils—all have had lasting effects on its historical and economic evolution (Kahin 1961:155). In particular, these factors bear upon the political context in which her past states have evolved and been eclipsed by succeeding and more powerful states.

When using the term "state" to describe Indonesia's early states, one employs the term *not* in its modern sense.² Rather the word here refers only to the existence of rulers exerting some kind of personal authority over a vaguely defined area and a number of inhabited locations (Vlekke 1960:19).

Two kinds of states in pre-European Indonesia

According to the Dutch scholar Van Leur (1955:27-28; see also Wertheim 1956:2-5, 52-3), we can assume that before the arrival of Europeans, two types of state structures existed in early Indonesian society: the inland state and the harbor principality. An understanding of the essential differences in the political and economic structures, the amount of political

¹The Indonesian archipelago has a land area of 735,000 square miles. From the western part of Sumatra to the eastern Australian border of New Guinea, the distance is nearly 300 miles. From north to south this land and sea surface measures about 1300 miles. The total land and sea area of the archipelago amounts to nearly four million square miles. (Vlekke 1960:1).

²In its modern sense, "state" refers to a legal and political entity, comprised of a group of people living in a territory with defined boundaries, existing under one kind of political control, and sovereign from other states.

authority exercised by the rulers, and the degree of political stability within both states is highly relevant to this study. For Sri Vijaya is an example of a harbor principality, while Madjapahit represents the inland state. The intense rivalry which has always existed between Java's agriculturally-based empires and the more commercially-minded empires of Sumatra is well illustrated by these two kingdoms.

The inland state. Inland states were found in the central and eastern portions of Java. They were administered by a semi-hereditary bureaucracy exercising military and administrative functions.

Java's natural wealth came from her *sawah* (irrigated field) areas planted to rice. These plains were intensely cultivated and known even in early times for their high population density per cultivated area. Her fertile volcanic soil made Java capable of supporting not only her own population but also that of the other islands of Indonesia which suffered from periodic shortages of rice. In this early phase of Indonesia's history, Java was the rice granary of the archipelago, and a market for imports. Java had the additional advantage of location on the route between the Spice Islands (the Moluccas) and the Malacca Straits. Merchants considered Java a comfortable rest haven and as a consequence, the area's commercial agents and traders added to her wealth (Furnivall 1944:2-3).

Javanese village life was that of a closed economy, somewhat comparable to Europe's in feudal times. There was limited trading in the local markets of neighboring villages. The Javanese peasant was accustomed to a subsistence way of life, providing for the daily needs of his family from his land and household.

Contacts with outlying villages were negligible, since roads were poorly developed and not maintained. Dr. Wertheim, a Dutch expert on early Indonesia, comments (1956:309-10) on the fragmented nature of the society.

In early Indonesian society the sense of community did not generally extend beyond the borders of the genealogical or territorial group.

Despite similarities of origin, language and cultural background, there was no question of any general feeling of Indonesian unity.... The innumerable small *adat* communities could be linked together by an alliance of chiefs or by a princely authority.... The traditional bond uniting the people to their Prince or chiefs could serve as a basis for political units of some size.... These units, however, depended on the will not of the people but of their rulers.

Generally, the personal residences of the feudal chiefs or the palaces (*kraton*) of the princes (*radja*) were the focal center of Javanese life. The leisure class, with its retinue of court favorites, house slaves, and bodyguards, was pampered, entertained, clothed, and fed by various artisans and traders, usually of foreign origin.³ Court dances and court literature received the patronage of the prince.

The problem of feeding such court cities was solved by a system of forced deliveries of crops—a system long in use by Javanese princes before the Dutch adopted a similar one. Peasants were expected to contribute tithes or taxes in kind. In times of national emergency, the men were recruited into the prince's armies; in times of peace, they were liable for personal or corvée labor. Beautiful women were expected to accommodate the high and influential bureaucrats, or they were asked to join the select group of women serving their prince in his *kraton*; palace duty of this kind was considered a signal honor bestowed only upon the most beautiful women in the kingdom. These were some of the duties and obligations of the Javanese peasants.

In return they received very little protection or aid from their acknowledged ruler. The prince was attributed with magical and sacred powers—celebrated in Javanese court literature—which protected his subjects and the kingdom from any evil or harm, such as natural calamities or political acts designed to undermine the power of their acknowledged ruler (see Heine-Geldern 1956). Thus he was revered for magical powers which he possessed by virtue of being the legitimate ruler, and not for his political or administrative skills. In assessing the duties of the local rulers, Wertheim concludes

³ The artisans and traders were Chinese. Some of the court dancers were either Hindu-trained or imported from the courts of Siam.

(1956:3) that "the centralized upkeep of roads, construction of irrigation works, storing of grains, care of general security, all this was princely charity rather than public duty."

In short, the inland state derived its wealth from its sawah regions. When there was a strong administration, it was possible for these areas to become powerful and to build up their own sizeable armies. Under a strong central administration, Javanese peasants were required to construct roads and great irrigation works. Provided with greater economic security, the sawah areas were more intensively cultivated.

While the majority of early inland states played no major role in inter-Asian trade, some of the later kingdoms (e.g., Madjapahit) participated to some extent in the interinsular trade of the Indonesian archipelago.

The harbor principality. On the other hand, the prosperity of harbor principalities, located along the coasts of Java, Sumatra, and Malaya and parts of Borneo's rivers (Wertheim 1956:3-4), depended on their ability to maintain commercial supremacy. Commerce opened these states to outside influences, and their cultures were enriched by many foreign elements.

Rulers of the harbor principalities were assisted by a bureaucracy of aristocratic officials (usually related to them) and in certain cases by foreigners appointed to commercial posts or positions of confidence within the bureaucracy (Schrieke 1955:28-29).⁴ These foreign officials, since they understood the merchants' language and economic systems, were thought

⁴ Foreigners appointed to such commercial posts were called port attendants. In Burma, they were known as *Shahbundar* (Lord of the Haven); in other parts of Southeast Asia, they were called *Shahbandar*. Bantam had a Keling, Gujarati, or a Chinese shabandar; Tuban had a Portuguese, converted to Islam; Malay Malacca had a Javanese, Keling, and Gujarati (Cady 1964:68, 157). By the 14th century, Moslem foreigners known as *mantris* were sent as personal envoys of indigenous princes on tribute missions to China. Needless to say, these foreigners wielded much power as the official representatives of the Southeast Asian state and as intermediaries between the authorities of the emporia and the foreign traders (Schrieke 1955:28).

to be in a more advantageous position to deal directly with foreign traders. At the same time, there was less danger that the state might be cheated in its business undertakings, as the foreign official was assumed to be working in behalf of and not against the interests of the state.

Many harbor princes were either directly or indirectly engaged in the lucrative sea trade. They often owned ships or had a vested interest in ships' cargoes. The traders came mostly from the aristocratic classes, and not from the people (Schrieke 1955:28), although the actual trade was carried on by peddlers who swarmed over the ships and crowded wharfs of the local port cities.

Additional revenue for the harbor principalities came from customs and harbor dues, from tribute, from piracy, and even from extortion of fees from foreign ships for protection against pirates or privateers operating near the port cities. These pirates, on the other hand, compensated the state for a measure of tolerance of their activities.⁵

It was customary for most coastal powers to build up a strong navy. Schrieke points out (1957:139-140) that the task of the naval fleet was first, to blockade enemy ports so that no provisions or arms could be unloaded there, and second, to transport a landing force. The fleet was also used in certain instances to drive away pirates if foreign ships refused to dock at a port city because of the prevailing lawlessness. A strong navy was one means by which the balance of power could be maintained among maritime states.

Thus while the harbor principalities did not exert extensive control over large land areas, they concentrated all the state's energies on commerce. Wherever possible, they attempted to control the extensive royal and patrician trade by exploiting their strategic location between the principal trading routes of the Malay and Indonesian archipelagos. For this reason political geography intensified the rivalry between Java and Sumatra (Furnivall 1944:3-4).

⁵ The port city of Malacca was known throughout the Malay peninsula as a haven for pirates and privateers engaged in illegal commercial activities such as piracy and smuggling.

The key to commercial supremacy was held by whatever power controlled the Malacca and Sunda Straits. The Strait of Malacca was considered the shortest route by which the Moluccas' spices could reach India and Europe. It was also the shortest sea route between China and the West. The other entrance into the Malay-Indonesian archipelago was through the Sunda Straits. As Furnivall points out (*ibid.*):

The obvious policy of the power holding the Straits of Malacca was to extend its territory over both sides, so that it could close the channel to others. But this still left a side-entrance into the archipelago through the Sunda Straits; a commercial empire in Sumatra would therefore try to annex the west of Java and, similarly, a strong power in Java would try to extend over South Sumatra. The tract along both sides of the Sunda Straits has therefore a common history as a political unit maintaining a precarious independence.

In brief, a state of either type (inland or harbor principality) could temporarily exert some degree of authority over territories of the other kind; but each state structure kept its own characteristics. We may now turn our attention to the empires of Sri Vijaya and Madjapahit.

SRI VIJAYA: EMPIRE AND DEPENDENCIES

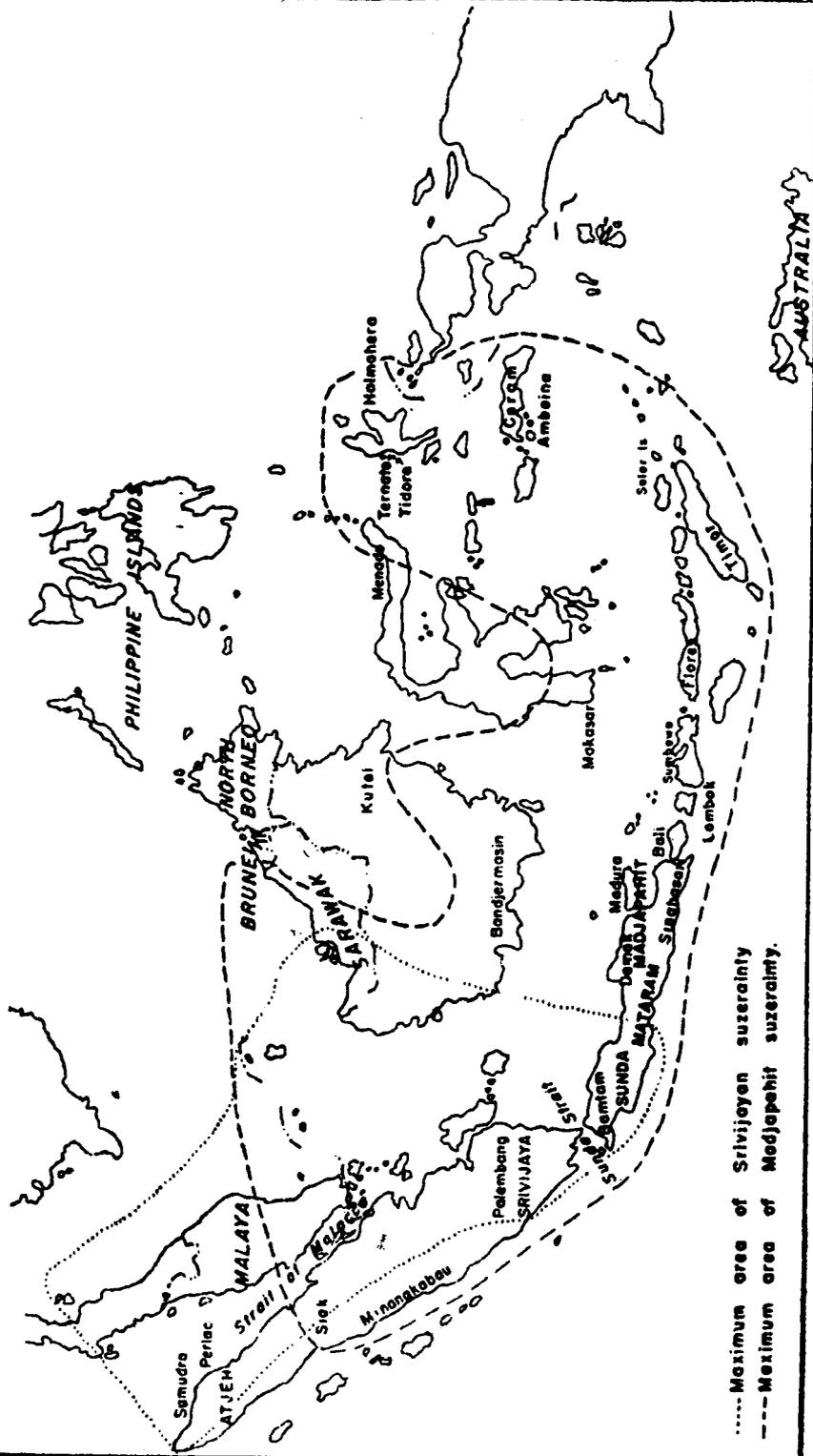
In 1948 the French scholar Georges Coedes published his celebrated volume on the Hinduized kingdoms of Southeast Asia. Since the appearance of this pioneer work, French, Dutch, and Indian scholars have further pursued the investigation of the early Hinduized states of Indonesia.⁶

Evidence for Sri Vijaya's existence. The earliest evidence we have for the existence of Sri Vijaya is found in the Chinese annals of the fifth century A.D. According to the Ming Annals (Groeneveldt 1960:68):

San-bo-tsai, formerly called Kandali, for the first time sent envoys with tribute in the reign of the emperor Hsiau-wu of the former Sung dynasty (454-464 A.D.); during the reign of the emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (502-549 A.D.) they came repeatedly, and in the time of the second Sung (960-1279 A.D.) they brought tribute without interruption. . .

⁶ Coedes' theory of Sri Vijaya has been disputed by many scholars. Their works are cited in the bibliography.

INDONESIAN - KINGDOMS, 800-1600



..... Maximum area of Srivijayan suzerainty
 - - - - - Maximum area of Majapahit suzerainty.

Source: U.S. Army, *The Indonesian Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1958), p. 24.

From the geographical description of this kingdom of San-bo-tsai, most scholars agree that San-bo-tsai is the equivalent of the Sumatran state of Sri Vijaya.

Gabriel Ferrand has transcribed (1922:163) the various names in Western, Javanese, and Chinese languages for this kingdom:

Cri Vijaya	Self-designation, in Indonesian
Cri Visaya	inscriptions
Sri Buja	Arabic designation (also Sarbaza,
Sri Buza	Sarbuza, and Zabag ⁷)
San fo tsi	Chinese designation (also Fo che, and
Che li fo che	Fo tsi, as short forms)

For further confirmation of the existence of this Hinduized state of Sri Vijaya, we turn to archeology. A group of four stone inscriptions dating from the seventh century identify Sri Vijaya as a powerful state: the *Kedukan Bukit* (April 13, 683 A.D.) and the *Talang Tuwo* (684) were both found in Sumatra, west of Palembang; the *Karong Brahi* (686) was found on a tributary of the Jambi River (Batang Hari); the *Kota Kapur* inscription (686) was found on the island of Bangka (See Coedes 1948:142, and 1930; Ferrand 1932; Sastri 1940; Casparis 1956:6-7, 16, 20-21, 29-32).

Additional information pertaining to Sri Vijaya is found in the *Ligor Stele* (775) which was excavated south of the Bay of Bandon on the Malay Peninsula. The inscriptions in Java—the *Kalasan* (778) and the *Kelurak* (782), the *Nalanda Copper Plate* (850-860) and the *Kedoe Copper Plate* (907)—furnish us with information connecting the Sailendra dynasty of Java with Sri Vijaya.

The inscriptions are written in Old Malay, a mixture of Sanskrit and Malay, and in a South Indian script, Pre-Negari (Harrison 1957:24).

Rise and expansion. According to Coedes (1948:142-3) Sri Vijaya became a powerful state because another kingdom—

⁷ To the Arabs, Sarbaza or Sarbuza meant the island of Sumatra and the seat of the Sri Vijayan empire. The term Zabag had reference to the entire Empire of Sri Vijaya.

Funan, a sea power—had been defeated by the Khmer kingdom of Chen-la, a continental power. Funan's decline as a commercial power (ca. 539 A.D.) favored the commercial interests of Sri Vijaya. The shift in commercial leadership from Funan to lower Sumatra was partly dictated by political geography. In 618 China had become united under a dynasty noted for its interest in foreign trade. At the same time her industrial productivity in pottery, bronze, and silk gave an added stimulus to trade and travel along the overland and overseas routes. Once the Tangs established control over southern China in 628, the harbor principalities located along the southeastern coast of Sumatra became the most convenient way stations for ships plying the Arab, Indian, and Chinese trade routes. An increased flow of traffic and communication between Giao Chi, Canton, Amoy and insular southeast Asia followed (Cady 1964:65-7).

By the 670's the commercial entrepôt of Sri Vijaya shunted traffic back and forth via the Malacca Straits to the Sassanid Persian empire in the west or to China in the east (Cady 1964:66). In China, the foreign community residing in Canton was called 'Posse' or *Possu* (Persia) as that was the home country of the majority of alien traders (Harrison 1957:23; Cady 1964:24). In the region of insular Southeast Asia the traffic was mainly Indian and Sumatran in character, with what Hall refers to as Indian Buddhism constituting the main source of cultural inspiration (Hall 1955:35-36). Ships from North India increased the frequency of their cultural contacts with the various ports of southeastern, central, and western Java (Cady 1964:62).

One can get an idea of the commercial activity of the region from the lists of commodities traded. All Asia and Europe clamored for Indo-Malaysian tin, Malaysian gold, spices (used in the pharmacopoeia and kitchens of Europe), perfumed woods, and camphor. Rhinoceros horns were very much in demand by the Chinese merchants for their supposed medicinal quality. Sumatran parrots were given as gifts to Emperors of China (Vlekke 1960:41). Destined for the ports of India were the mainland Southeast Asian products of sugar, cooking

oils, cotton, petroleum,⁸ stic-lac, lead, manufactured umbrellas, lacquered jewelry boxes, salt, silver, dried fish, and betel nuts. From India came such products as cotton cloth, yarn, and opium (Cady 1958:45-6). The Malay archipelago traded its sandalwood, Chinese porcelains, Borneo camphor, and pepper from Sumatran Achin. From China, traders brought to the archipelago gold leaf, paper, raw silk and floss, woven satins, velvets, cordage, arsenic, tea, spirits, honey, dried fruits, walnuts, and some Chinese preserves. They brought back amber, ivory, precious stones (the rubies, sapphires, pearls, and emeralds of Burma's Shan and Arakan regions), edible birdnests, and some opium (Cady 1958:46).

Undoubtedly Sri Vijaya was forced to embark upon her expansionist policies by the seventh and eighth centuries if she was to protect the commercial interests of the aristocracy. It would have been next to impossible for any state to retain a monopoly over the region's widely-sought commodities and over the brisk trade in slaves captured from the primitive tribes of East Africa and the Malay Archipelago (Devahuti 1965: 42-3), unless the state took steps to align itself with or to control the important ports in the area.

Scholars studying the inscriptions of the period (Kedukan Bukit, Karong Brahi, and Kota Kapur) note that around 683 A.D. Sri Vijaya's king left a garrison in Palembang to insure the security of his kingdom and launched a military expedition against his southern foe (probably Malayu) (Sastri 1940:243-4; Ferrand 1922:36).⁹ Devahuti notes that the subjugation of Malayu ensured the supremacy of Palembang (the seat of Sri Vijaya's empire) on the mainland while the conquest of Bangka and Taruma gave her control over the southern part of the Malacca and Sunda Straits. By controlling these two vital trade routes, as well as a third one of which Kedah was the port, Sri Vijaya sought the allegiance of northern Malaya to

⁸ Petroleum was used in the preserving of wood, mats, and palm-leaf manuscripts.

⁹ Not all scholars are in agreement as to the origins of the early capital of Sri Vijaya. J. L. Moens advanced the theory (1940) that Sri Vijaya evolved somewhere in the Malay peninsula.

ensure her domination over the northern part of the Malacca Straits (Devahuti 1965:42).

The Ligor Stele indicates that at the time of its erection (775 A.D.), Sri Vijaya's domination reached as far as the Isthmus of Kra, down to parts of western Java, and out to some of the islands adjacent to Sumatra in the Malay Archipelago. It may be assumed that by the end of the eighth century, Sri Vijaya could count among her dependencies those coastal states located between Ligor on the Malay Peninsula and Palembang on the southeastern side of Sumatra. Thus the prosperity and expansion of Sri Vijaya followed her control over the two straits and over northern Malaya. Winstedt notes (1958:30) that until the 12th century, Sri Vijaya retained control over her Malay dependencies.

The Karong Brahi and Kota Kapur inscriptions reveal that magical curses were directed against many Sri Vijayan enemies and subjects who dared to commit treason against their king (Sastri 1940:243-4; Ferrand 1922:36; Casparis 1956:6-7, 16, 20-21, 29-32). The loyalty of distant chiefs and princes was assured by the exaction of awesome ritual oaths. High-ranking officials were forced to drink imprecation water allegedly saturated with a curse which would take effect if they committed any of the litany of crimes enumerated during the oath-taking ceremony. It was said that some curses caused men to go insane; others bewitched the victim. All the curses carried dire threats of misfortune (Cady 1964: 63-4). On the other hand, rewards and prosperity were promised to the loyal and faithful (Sastri 1940:243-4).

In the ninth century, intermarriage between the royal families of the Sri Vijayans and the Sailendras of central Java was responsible for a Sailendra king ascending the Sri Vijayan throne.¹⁰ The Java inscriptions (Kalasan, Kelurak, Nalanda, and Kedoe) do not reveal whether the Sailendras continued to rule Java separately, established a separate

¹⁰ The title Sailendras meaning "King of the Mountains" might have been used by the Javan rulers to signify their claims as the successors of Funan's kings in Southeast Asia. Then in the 9th century the Sailendras staked their claim to Sri Vijaya (Harrison 1957:22).

branch in Sri Vijaya, or consolidated the two houses. There is no evidence that this marriage arrangement resulted in a union of two dynastic holdings. It appears, rather, that the two kingdoms were separate, though they shared cultural and religious ties (U.S. Army 1958:24-27).

Under the combined dynasty of Sailendra-Sri Vijaya, the Sailendras' imperial power is said to have reached Champa and Cambodia.¹¹ However, by the early 9th century, Cambodia became independent (Sastri 1940:268). In religion, a synthesis of Sri Vijayan Mahayana Buddhism and Javanese Saivism developed.¹² While Mahayana Buddhism remained the religion of central Java, the Sailendras were the nominal rulers. It was only after the revival of Saivism in Java that Javan rulers dropped the Sailendra dynastic name. Only the succeeding Sri Vijayan kings continued to be called "Maharaja," a traditional title of the Sailendras (Sastri 1940:259). Perhaps the Sailendras maintained two branches of the dynasty. The Chinese Annals of the period record the sending of tribute missions by the Sailendras of both Java and Sumatra to the Imperial Court.

Tribute missions sent by Sri Vijaya to the Imperial Court are frequently recorded in the Chinese Annals from the seventh and eighth centuries onward. Vlekke expressed the opinion (1960:40):

It is unlikely that the envoys made the long voyage north to the Imperial Court; they probably were received by the Governor of Canton, who then reported to His Imperial Majesty... They may have brought messages from their kings and the contents of these messages may have been political, but, again, of this we know little.

In Ferrand's translations (1922) of the Chinese annals, we learn of gifts and titles of honor exchanged between the representatives of Sri Vijaya and the Emperor:¹³

¹¹ The Dinaja inscription of East Java records Javanese raids into Champa and Cambodia in 767-787 A.D. (Sastri 1940:267).

¹² Traces of this religious synthesis are seen in manuscripts of the time which show Indian Tantric, Buddhist, and Sanskrit influence upon Javanese writers (Sastri 1940:268; compare also Coedes 1948:152-61).

¹³ An English translation of Ferrand's excerpts is found in Hassel 1953:10-11.

In 724, in the seventh month of the Chinese year, "the king of the kingdom of Che-li-fo-che sent an envoy Kiu-mo-lo (perhaps Kumara, or "heir apparent") to offer two dwarfs, a seng-ki' girl (east African Negress), a troupe of musicians and parrots of five colors; the emperor conferred upon (kiu) Mo-lo (the title) of Tch'tch'ong (general). He gave him a hundred pieces of silk, and sent him back to his own country." (*Ts'o fou yuan kouei*) In the eighth month of the same year, the emperor conferred upon Che-li-fo-che, the title of Tso-wei-ta-tsiang-kium. (*Ts'o fou yuan kouei*)

In the twelfth month of the 29th year of K'ai-yuan (about 742), "the king of Fo-che sent his son to the court of China to offer tribute." (*Ts'o fou yuan kouei*) It was doubtless upon this occasion in the year 742 that the king of Fo-che, called Leiou-t'eng-wei-kong, was named Prince Pin-yi and received the title of Tso-kin-wou-wei-ta-tsiang-kium [*sic*]. (*Ts'o fou yuan kouei*)

In return for the gifts or tribute brought by the various envoys of Sri Vijaya, the Emperor ordered his *Kuan* (court officials) to give them a copy of the imperial calendar (*ta-t'ung-li*) or a certain quantity of silk according to their rank. The offering of the imperial calendar to the foreigners was the traditional gift to a nation offering its tribute or allegiance to China; coming "under the calendar" was one way of acknowledging Chinese authority (Hassell 1953:30; Jen 1964:2). Jen lists eleven countries which received the Imperial Calendar, and San-fu-ch'i received hers in 1370 (Ming-shih, chuan, 324, p. 25a). Significantly, Jen further notes (1964:4) that according to the advice of Confucius, the purpose of traditional Chinese foreign policy was to "revive states that have been extinguished, to reduce to order states that are in confusion and support those which are in peril."

Indian influence on Sri Vijaya. Although some scholars believe that the early Indonesian states were ruled by Indians who had come to Indonesia and intermarried with the indigenous aristocracy, Hall believes (1955:19) that it was through the Indian advisors at the court of the petty rulers that Hindic culture penetrated Indonesian culture.

Indian influence (which appealed to the ruling nobility, not the peasants) apparently introduced cultural and political ideas as well as both religious systems—Hinduism and Buddhism—of India. In particular, the elaborate court rituals

of Sri Vijaya were derived from Hindu cosmology (See Heine-Geldern 1956).

Sri Vijaya became a stronghold of Mahayana Buddhism and a center for the propagation of that faith throughout Southeast Asia, and it remained so until its decline. The religious pilgrim and scholar, I-tsing, noted that as early as the seventh century Sri Vijaya was famous as a religious center where Buddhist pilgrims and scholars could study the Buddhist texts written in the Sanskrit language (Coedes 1948: 141-2; also Harrison 1957:24-45; Cady 1964:71). Patrician wealth was often spent in the patronizing and constructing of Buddhist monasteries located both within and outside the kingdom—in northern Malaya, and even in eastern India, where Sri Vijaya-Sailendra kings maintained close relations with the Palas of Bengal. King Devapala reciprocated one such gesture by donating a revenue of five villages for the maintenance of a monastery built with Sri Vijayan money (Devahuti 1965: 46-7). Devahuti is of the opinion (1965:48) that the construction of monasteries served two purposes: it not only promoted Buddhist learning and the pursuit of religion but also strengthened political relations in an unsuspected manner.

Philippine hypothesis. Several eminent Filipino historians allude to a "Sri Vijayan Period" in Philippine history. The consensus seems to be that there was either a cultural or a political relationship between Sri Vijaya and the Philippines and that the Philippines formed an integral part of Sri Vijaya's dependencies.

Where did this Philippine "theory" originate? Certainly one wonders why such a theory seems to have been accepted as fact by some historians.

The hypothesis of the ancient Philippines' association with the Sri Vijayan empire was first formulated by the University of the Philippines' H. Otley Beyer in 1921. In attempting to reconstruct the ancient past of the Islands, he suggested that it might have been possible for an empire of the magnitude of Sri Vijaya to have had some contact with the Philippines. According to Beyer (as cited in Francisco 1961:90):

It is evident that before the end of the tenth century both the west and south coasts of that island (Borneo) had been colonized and were in fairly frequent communication with Sumatra. The number of colonies is unknown, but at least four were of considerable importance: Bandjarmasin, Sukadana, a place in Southern Sarawak and Bruni. The first and last named places sent off-shoots into the Philippines.

In *A History of the Orient*, Beyer further stated (Steiger, Beyer, and Benitez 1926:123):

It seems evident from a study of various facts that the Visayans in Borneo and those in the Philippines are not only of common origin, but also are closely allied to the peoples of south-central Sumatra. This term is almost certainly a direct survival of the spread of colonies from the pre-Buddhist Sri Vishaya state into western Borneo and from there into the central Philippines...

From personal conversations with Beyer, Hassell in her monograph (1953:40) stated that "Professor Beyer seems to think that there is enough evidence of an archaeological and anthropological nature to warrant the use of the term 'Sri Vijayan Period' in Philippine history." He concluded that cultural influences from Sri Vijaya variously affected several areas of the Philippine archipelago, but that the Empire did not necessarily maintain political relations with any section of the archipelago (Hassell 1953:35).

Later historians took Beyer's suppositions as historical fact, as the following excerpts show.

The first great Malay empire was the Sri-Vishayan Empire. It arose in Sumatra about the 8th century following the decline of Hindu power in Malaysia. It reached the height of its power in the 12th century. It ruled over Ceylon, Malay Peninsula, Java, Celebes, Borneo, Moluccas, and the Philippines (Zaide 1957:36).

The empire of Sri-Vishaya emerged from the ashes of Pallava's maritime colonialism and dominated Malaysia from the 8th century to 1377 A.D.... The empire was so named after its capital, Sri-Vishaya, Sumatra. At the height of its power under the Sailendra dynasty, it included Malaya, Ceylon, Borneo, Celebes, the Philippines, and part of Formosa, and probably exercised suzerainty over Cambodia and Champa (Annam).... The two main centers of Sri-Vishayan influences in the Philippines were Sulu and the Visayas.... (Zaide *ibid.*)

From the third century A.D., parts of the Philippines were successively dominated by the colourful Indo-Malayan empire of Sri Vishaya, with its seat of power in Sumatra... (Malcolm 1951:64).

It is obvious that these statements contain errors of fact and chronology. If, as the authors maintain, Sri Vijaya did amass such an extensive domain, what do the archeological and historical sources say? This is the only way the historian can check the accuracy of such statements.

The inscriptions unearthed by archeologists indicate that Sri Vijaya extended her political control over most of Sumatra, Bangka, portions of Java, the Kra Isthmus, and the Malay Peninsula (Coedes 1948:142-3). So much for the archeological evidence.

For historical evidence, in view of the dearth of primary materials, we must turn to contemporary references to the empire. For our sources, we rely on the observations and comments of travelers and traders who visited the insular world of Southeast Asia.

Traders could either choose the sea route which passed through the Malacca or Sunda Straits, or they could use the overland route through Champa, Chenla, and China, which cut across northern Malaya. It was this region, with its ports of Kedah and Patani, linked by rivers and elephant tracks leading into the inland tin and gold producing areas, which became the emporium for traders from the East and the West (Devahuti 1965:42). Some toponyms for the region under Indian cultural influence were Dvipantara ("the group of islands beyond") or Suvarnabhumi or Suvarnadvipa ("the land or the islands of gold"). The latter referred mainly to Sumatra, but at times it was also used to refer to the other islands of Malaysia—*e.g.*, Malaya and west Borneo, when they formed parts of Sri Vijaya (*ibid*:13).

Arab traders and chroniclers refer to Arab ships loading and unloading at the ports of Sri Vijaya. It appears from their comments that they were truly impressed by the richness of the Sri Vijayan-Sailendra kings. The Arab merchant, Sulayman (ca. 851) left an account of Zabag, the Arab name for the Sailendra kingdom and capital. He mentioned that the Maharaja enjoyed his overlordship over a large number of islands, such as Sri Buza (Sri Vijaya), Rami (Acheh) and Kalah (Kedah) (Devahuti 1965:48; Hassell 1953:18-23). An-

other Arab, Abu Zayd Hasan (ca. 916) gave rough Arabic estimates of Sri Vijaya's domains:

They say that the surface (of the territory of which this city [Zabag] is the capital) is 900 square *parasangs*.¹⁴ The king is also sovereign over a great number of islands which extend over an area some 1,000 *parasangs* in radius, or more (from Zabag). Among the states over which he rules is the island of Sribuza, the area of which, they say, covers some 400 (square) *parasangs*. . . . Also a part of the possessions of the Maharaja, is the maritime country of Kalah which is situated halfway between China and Arabia. The area of the country of Kalah is, they say, about 80 (square) *parasangs*. . . . It is in this port (towards the beginning of the 10th century) that the ships from Oman (SE Arabia) gather, and it is from this port that ships destined for Oman depart. . . . (Hassell 1953:19).

Hsu Yu-Hu's research reveals that Cheng Ho's navigation chart included the names and sailing directions of countries located on the South Sea or Indian Sea. The list included those Southeast Asian states that were formerly tributary states of the San Fu Tsi kingdom of Sri Vijaya (1964:3).

Our chief source, however, is the Chinese geographer Chao Ju-Kua, writing about 1225 A.D., who listed in his *Chufan-tshi* the dependencies which Sri Vijaya was known to have had by the end of the eighth century (Hirth and Rockhill 1912:65). Much of Chao Ju-Kua's information was based on facts compiled by Chou Ku-fei, as a result of his talks with merchants and travelers; this would account for any errors committed by Chao in his work. Hassell writes (1953:25) that "...it may be assumed with some confidence that the list of dependencies Chao Ju-Kua gives is not deficient for his times—rather more likely to be too large than too small an enumeration."

Chao Ju-Kua's list is given in Appendix A. To this we have added the dependencies named in other sources. Although our present knowledge of the domains of Sri Vijaya is neither adequate nor final, there seems to be no evidence at all to

¹⁴ A *parasang* is an ancient Persian measure of length equal to about 3½ miles. One *parasang* equals 30 old Roman stadia. One stadium equals 625 feet; thus one *parasang* is about 18,750 feet or 3½ miles.

substantiate the claim of some Filipino historians that Sri Vijaya's imperial domains reached the Sulu and Visayas portions of the Philippines.

Apart from archeological and historical records, Beyer's theory was partly based on his etymology of the Philippine term "Visayas." According to him (Steiger *et al.* 1926:123, quoted above) the term has an ethnic connotation linking the Philippines' Visayan peoples with those of Sumatra. This etymology is dubious, however. For one thing, all the Spanish and European works cited by Blair and Robertson associate the term Visayas or Bisayas with the Pintados Islands, "the Islands of painted men," so called because the inhabitants covered themselves with tattoos.

The etymological meaning of the term Visayas has been widely debated, without any conclusive results. Various scholars' views are summarized in Francisco's article (1961). Francisco himself develops the hypothesis that the term Visayas is of Sanskrit origin and means "sphere, dominion, territory, country, kingdom" (1961:101-2). The Philippines, then, was a *visaya* ("remnant") of the Indonesian empires. Accordingly, the Chinese designation of the Islands should have been *Mayi Visaya* (Ma-yi, "territory" of Sri Vijaya or Madjapahit); in time the Ma-yi or Ma-i portion dropped out and only the Sanskrit portion remained. Visayas thus became the name of one of the geographical regions of the Philippines.

Another theory is that the term Visaya means "El Victorioso"—"victory" or "victorious"—and refers to the successful subjugation of the Visayas by Sri Vijaya (Santamaria 1960: 344-50).

According to John Carroll (1961:499-541), the term Visaya might be the Sanskrit *Vaisya*, denoting the third caste of the Hindu caste system. The Philippine term Bisaya as found in Malay writings meant "slave" or "the country of slaves" and referred to a geographical area of the Philippines where slaves were formerly found and captured.

Conclusion. To sum up, the kingdom of Sri Vijaya is first noted through the inscriptions and trading contacts which

she made during the seventh century. It is most likely, however, that she existed earlier. In time she became a prosperous commercial power by virtue of her command over the Malacca and Sunda Straits and her easy access to the Java Sea and the Moluccas.

Throughout the period of her dominance as a transshipment center for Asian and Southwest Asian products, Sri Vijaya remained a typical harbor principality, enjoying a parasitic existence off the ladang cultivated areas, which produced no food surpluses. In fact the city had to import rice from Java to feed its population (Cady 1964:68-9). The principality's revenue, aside from commerce, came from such services as refitting ships, providing supplies, or accommodating merchants while they waited out the monsoon season.

The profits of commerce in the port city were enjoyed chiefly by her harbor princes. Other less favored straits rulers took the role of pirates or extortionists. Sri Vijaya was not successful in routing out all the pirate lairs situated in islands along the Straits, nor did her naval dominance extend over the entire coastline of Sumatra (*ibid*). To protect the interests of her bureaucrats, the principality pursued an oppressive policy of curtailing or ruthlessly eliminating the activities of these rivals. A Chinese source of 1175 A.D., records that "if some foreign ship passing this place should not enter here, an armed party would certainly come out and kill them to the last." Chao Ju-Kua states, "if a merchant ship passes by without entering, their boats go forth to make a combined attack and all are ready to die. This is the reason why this country is a great shipping center." With such a policy, the Sailendras made many enemies. As a result, some traders gradually shifted their base of operations to the ports of eastern Java, e.g. Kadiri (Devahuti 1965-52).

From Chinese and other sources, we know that the kingdom of Sri Vijaya was not destroyed by a more powerful kingdom. But a gradual weakening of this Sumatran state may be deduced from the infrequency of her mention in additional inscriptions and in the Chinese Annals (Vlekke 1960:44). The empire's decline was noted by the Chinese:

"San-fo-tsi formerly was a rich country, but since the conquest by Java it has gradually become poorer, and few trading vessels go there" (Hassell 1953:32). In 992, Sri Vijaya was attacked by Java, but in 1006 she retaliated. A series of raids from the Chola empire of southeast India followed, but the attack of 1025, led by Rajendrachola I, lasted only briefly and Sri Vijaya was able to regain her position of power (Harrison 1957:31).¹⁵ The kingdom survived as a power until it was weakened by the attacks of the Madjapahit kingdom of central Java, around the end of the 14th century. Sri Vijaya also had to face the encroachment on her lands by the Thai under Sukhothai's Rama Khamheng, especially in the area north of the Malay peninsula. Further, Buddhist religious influence was weakened by Muslim missionaries entering the Malay and Indonesian archipelagos (Winstedt 1958: 30; Cady 1964:144-5). Thus the glory and power of the Sri Vijaya kingdom came to an end.

MADJAPAHIT: KINGDOM AND DEPENDENCIES

For our sources on the Madjapahit kingdom, we must turn to the "traditional" histories of Java—for example, the works of Sir Stamford Raffles, what is found in the Malay Annals (*Sejarah Melayu*), the Chronicles of Pasei (*Hikdyat Radja Pasey*), and the Javanese historical legends of the Pararaton and the Nagarakrtagama (Hassell 1953:4,41, *passim*). In addition, we have some inscriptions studied by European and Indian scholars, the references of Arabian travelers and geographers, and those references found in the Chinese Annals.

Prelude to Madjapahit. After 900 A.D., the center of Javanese cultural and political life shifted from central to eastern Java. This was accompanied by a transfer of population to the eastern area. The ensuing period (900-1292 A.D.) was one of political uncertainty and chaos, marked by rebellions and counter-rebellions, attempts by new rulers to

¹⁵ Although the Maharajas of Sri Vijaya had for a time to "worship their conquerors' ankletted feet," Sri Vijaya and the Malayan countries were too far away for the Cholas to hold (Winstedt 1958:30).

legitimize their claims to the throne and the threat of attack by China's Yuan Emperor, Kublai Khan (Vlekke 1960:43).

In 1292 Kertanagara's kingdom of Singhasari was attacked by the combined military forces of Kublai Khan. The justification for the Mongol attack was that the Khan's representatives had allegedly been ill-treated during their "visit" to the kingdom of Kertanagara and that the Khan was himself insulted by Kertanagara's refusal to send his usual tribute (Vlekke 1960:64-5).

But when the forces of the Khan landed in Singhasari, the king had been murdered. A member of the ruling house, Prince Vijaya, pretended to the vacant throne; in the face of the Khan's attack, Prince Vijaya offered his submission to the next most powerful Javanese prince, the ruler of Kadiri, Jaya-Katong. Jaya-Katong in return offered Vijaya a tract of land located along the lower reaches of the Brantas river, and there he built his home (Vlekke 1960:65).

There is a Javanese legend that accounts for the name of Vijaya's new home. A Madurese person, working his land, picked up a fruit and started to eat it. Finding the fruit bitter, he did not eat it but threw it on the ground, saying that it was "too bitter" for his taste. In this manner, the kingdom was given the name "bitter fruit"—*Madjapahit*.

Founding, consolidation, and expansion. Vijaya was able to plot successfully against Jaya-Katong, the murderer of Kertanagara, by switching his alliance to the Khan's troops for an expedition against Kadiri. He later escaped the second alliance, and in 1293 founded his kingdom of Madjapahit. As king, he took the reign name of Kertarajasa Jayavardhara (Devahuti 1965:55). It is said that after he had legitimized his claim to the throne of Madjapahit, all of Java submitted to King Vijaya's rule.¹⁶

¹⁶ To "legitimize" his claim to a vacant or usurped throne, the Southeast Asian pretender could do two things. First he could trace his lineage back to some Hindu deity through the various royal marriages of his father, or he could seek the vassalage of the emperor of China.

It was the primary objective of Peking's foreign policy to build up a protective system of loyal buffer states that would accept vassalage

King Vijaya, or Kertarajasa (1293-1309), sought to consolidate his kingdom through a series of dynastic marriage alliances with princesses from Bali, Borneo, Champa, and Malayu. His reign was disturbed by rebellion, however, because of disputes over royal succession; the disunity within his royal family led eventually to civil war. The seat of rebellion was in eastern Java. After King Vijaya abducted the wife of one of his military aides, Gajah-Mada, the latter instigated the plot which ended in the king's death (Cady 1964:141).

The new ruler, Queen Tribhuvana, appointed Gajah-Mada *Mapatih* (Chief Minister) in 1330. As *Mapatih* and later as regent for the queen's heir Hayam Wuruk, Gajah-Mada was the actual ruler of Madjapahit from 1330 until his death in 1364 (Hall 1955:72-6). Under his leadership, Madjapahit began her policy of aggression and conquest. After eliminating the Javanese rebels, Gajah-Mada tried to reunite *Nusantara*—all the islands of archipelago—under the crown of Madjapahit (Devahuti 1965:57). As a result of his military campaigns the *Mapatih* claimed suzerainty over Bali, Macassar, portions of Borneo, Tumasik (Singapore), Pahang, all of lower Sumatra, and the Sundanese part of western Java. The *Mapatih's* political control, however, as Cady points out (1964:141), amounted merely to receipt of vassal tribute.

The chroniclers and court poets alluding to the Gajah-Mada imperialist era boast of the dominions of Madjapahit and the achievements of the *Mapatih's* career. Prapanca's contemporary poem, the *Pararaton*, relates the story of Gajah-Mada's career. The poem also contains descriptions of the royal capital, court life, and the modifications of Hindu-Bud-

and engage in trade on China's terms (Lach and Flaumenhaft 1965:12-13). As a vassal state of China, the Southeast Asian state could send her embassies and tribute missions. In exchange, the vassal state received her gifts of silk, mandarin seal, the imperial calendar as well as titles of honor for her officials. China's vassalage served as a warning to over-ambitious neighbors that the vassal state enjoyed the protection of Imperial China. This measure served effectively to maintain the balance of power among the more ambitious Southeast Asian states.

dhist cultural traits with Java's indigenous customs (Cady 1964:142).¹⁷

Modern Southeast Asian scholars have raised doubts that the Mapatih made such vast conquests for Madjapahit. According to Devahuti (1965:58-63): "It may be assumed that Majapahit did not directly administer all the territories claimed for it by Prapancha (Prapanca), but there is a good deal of evidence indicating that its power was recognized and its influences spread in the places enumerated in the Javanese work."

During the fourteenth century, when west Java was allied to Sri Vijaya, war broke out between Sri Vijaya and the eastern Madjapahit state for the supremacy of the archipelago. By 1377 Sri Vijaya was defeated and all the islands, including the lower portion of the Malay peninsula, recognized Madjapahit as the dominant power (Le May 1956:108).¹⁸ At this time the chief king of Madjapahit was Rajasanagara (1350-1389). He was also known as Ayam Wuruk or Hayam Wuruk, the grandson of Vijaya (Harrison 1957:48; Vlekke 1960:69).

Around 1400 A.D. the inland state of Madjapahit made its bid as a commercial power. In its absorption with regional trade it entered into overseas commerce and in the process gained control of neighboring harbor principalities. Through Chinese records we learn that Madjapahit was able to amass an "empire" almost as large as the area of the Netherlands Indies. In all the ports tapping the rice plains along northern Java—Japara, Tuban, Grisse, Ampel (Surabaya)—there was an interest in shipping, and local markets were established

¹⁷ It was during the Gajah-Mada era that Brahmanism was introduced. Thus the fusion of three cultures was felt in Java's court religion and ceremonies.

¹⁸ According to Devahuti (1965:59) the Ming Annals record the fact that in 1377 the ruler of Malayu (the general name for Sumatra at this period), the Maharajah obtained China's recognition of his old title "King of San-fo-t'si" (Sri Vijaya) even though San-fo-t'si had already been captured by Java. Upon hearing of China's interference Madjapahit's king retaliated by executing the Chinese envoys, without any comment from China. Did this tacitly imply that China recognized Madjapahit's influence over the area?

everywhere. In a brief time span, Madjapahit was dealing in the sale of products from the rest of Java and nearby areas. She sold pepper from Bantam, salt from Madura, and coconut oil from Balambangan. From the Moluccas she received spices—cloves, mace, and nutmeg; from the Lesser Sundas, sandalwood; from Sumbawa and Bali, cotton goods. Borneo supplied her with diamonds from Kutei and dried fish from Banjarmasin; honey and beeswax came from places as far off as Timor and Palembang; rhinoceros horn and ivory, from Sumatra; tin and lead, from Kedah and Perak on the mainland; and iron, from the Karimata Island (Furnivall 1944:9). From such a list of saleable commodities we learn of the areas which traded with Madjapahit.

In overseas commerce, Madjapahit received porcelains, jade, and silks from China. Ships coming from the ports of Arabia brought the muslins and calicos of India as well as turquoise and other precious stones of Persia. Although money was scarce, rice served as a medium of exchange. Consequently merchants and vendors were not frightened away by low prices consequent on the scarcity of money (*ibid.*).

The Javanese people did more than wait at home for trade to come to them. They became "ship-builders, seafarers, and colonizers. . . dominating not only the trade of the entire archipelago, but also the trade of the Malay Peninsula" (*ibid.*). We know that when the Portuguese landed in Malacca, they found a large colony of Javanese merchants living in the city. They even had their own cannons, which they regarded as indispensable as sails for their merchant ships. Gradually in the villages and cities traditions of craftsmanship were encouraged and the Javanese became builders, plasterworkers, smiths, and carpenters who received the protection of their king. The people of Madjapahit lived fuller lives.

But as an inland state, Madjapahit's main economic activity was wet agriculture. The population helped to build additional irrigation works, and these in turn assured the state an increase in its rice yields, hence a larger surplus of rice for export. The state experimented with the growing of other crops such as sesamum, beans, various fruits, sugar cane,

and various plants for which they found a market in the surrounding states (Furnivall 1944:10).

The growth of Madjapahit's economic activity can be attributed in part to the state's supervision and initiative. For example, markets were public buildings where all business transactions were regulated by public officials. This gives some indication of the centralized administrative system which existed in the kingdom. Although various dynasties collapsed, the administrative system of Madjapahit gradually became well organized on departmental lines and concerned itself with administration of justice, collection of state revenue, regulation of the state's ecclesiastical affairs, and its agricultural and commercial policies with other regions. Madjapahit developed its own standing army, used for defense and the maintenance of authority throughout the empire. The king was the center of political and social life, but he based his authority on personal ties and ruled through his princes, each with his minor bureaucracy going all the way down to the local headman (Furnivall 1944:10-11).

In his *Ruler and realm in early Java* (1957), Schrieke points out that even though a kingdom has been consolidated and is well administered by the ruler and his immediate family, it seems inevitable that the realm will fall apart. The danger arises from the fact that many palace revolts occur as a result of disputes over royal succession, and that regional heads, although vassals of the ruler, make attempts to regain their independence. This is possible under a political system where the landed aristocracy are largely left alone to manage their district's affairs (Schrieke 1957:217-18).

To counteract the possibility of the kingdom's fragmentation, Madjapahit rulers placed their most important regions—*e.g.*, Tumapel, Kadiri, Pahang—under the authority of their most trusted royal relatives and kept the landed nobility under political surveillance through the encouragement of dynastic marriages. Yet even these measures proved to be ineffectual (Schrieke 1957:218). Rebellions against Madjapahit suzerainty were especially noticeable towards the last decades of the Empire. The various branches of the family were in

a constant state of discord which hastened the disintegration of the Madjapahit state. Following the death of Gajah-Mada in 1364, Madjapahit rulers abolished the Mapatihship and divided it into the offices of the *Demung*, the *Kanuruhan*, *Rangga*, and the *Tumenggung* (Schrieke 1957:207-11).

The death of Ayam Wuruk in 1389 marked the beginning of the decline in power of the Madjapahit state. Civil wars broke out regarding the royal succession, and Malacca began to challenge the power of Madjapahit over the Malay Peninsula and the rest of Java. Islamic activity from Malacca was also beginning to penetrate the island of Java, and it would eventually replace Brahmanism (Vlekke 1960:79). As time passed, the various Hindu religious cults sought refuge in the hills, eventually confining themselves to Bali and, as the Javanese chronicles say, "the prosperity of the island vanished" (Le May 1956:108).

At the height of her political power, Madjapahit held sway over Java, Bali, Madura, and parts of Sumatra, Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi (Celebes), and the Moluccas. But her power was comparatively short lived. Madjapahit finally disintegrated, as Kahin puts it, because geography asserted its dominance over technology and administration, and a plurality of minor states were gradually to reappear on the scene.

The fall of Madjapahit occurred in the early sixteenth century. Decline has been attributed to the entrance of Islam into Java's politics. Through the communities of Muslims from the Arabian countries and India, who traded with the Indonesians, Islam was adopted by the Indonesians, especially the merchants and princes. Islam spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago partly because of its value in legitimizing the political power and aspirations of the new leaders who embraced it.

Philippine hypothesis. Some Philippine historians have assumed that what are apparently Hindic traits in Philippine culture originated from Java's Madjapahit. They have found their "facts" in sources which many modern Southeast Asian specialists regard as unreliable or questionable. The following

samples have been excerpted from widely-read Philippine sources.

The Madhapahit, heir to Sri Vishaya's grandeur, flashed like a red comet in oriental skies for about two centuries... From its capital at Madjapahit, Java, the new empire extended its sovereignty over the former colonies of Sri Vishaya and other territories such as Formosa, Siam, Cambodia, Indo-China, South Burma, and New Guinea... The regions in the Philippines where its power was strongly felt were (1) the Manila Bay district in Luzon, (2) the Sulu archipelago, and (3) the Lanao district in Mindanao (Zaide 1957:37).

Another historian wrote the following:

For some forty years, after the destruction of Kediri (1293), the power of Madjapahit was confined to the island of Java. About 1331, however, the Javanese kingdom began to extend its authority over some parts of the Malay world. By 1364 Madjapahit had subjugated its neighbors to the east as far as the western portion of New Guinea, was in control of Borneo and the greater part of the Philippines on the northeast, and ruled over all Sumatra except the ancient capital of Sri-Vishaya. In 1377 the city of Sri-Vishaya was finally conquered, and about the same time Madjapahit succeeded in establishing its power over the southern part of the Malay Peninsula (Steiger *et al.* 1926:331).

These excerpts contain several questionable assertions. First, the two authors have greatly extended the latitude of the Madjapahit empire. Recent researches have cast doubt on the expansion of Madjapahit beyond the Indonesian archipelago. Second, the dates given for the expansion of the empire are too early. If, as the two authors presume, the expansion began in 1293, this was during the reign of King Vijaya or Kertarajasa; this reign, however, was noted for its series of rebellions. Many Southeast Asian scholars date the expansion of the Madjapahit state from the ascendancy of Gajah Mada in 1330. Finally, we must question whether Madjapahit's influence penetrated the Philippine archipelago. There are several historical allusions to some kind of relationship between Madjapahit and the Philippines. Each will be duly examined.

In Raffles' *Traditional histories of Java*, one passage tells that King Angka Wijaya of Majapahit sent his military commander, Ratu Peng-ging, to conquer places "overseas" (*sabrang*). Among the Rajas whom he subdued were those of

“Sulu” and “Manila”. According to Raffles (quoted in Hassell 1963:65):

Everytime the Prince of Majapahit received accounts of the success of Ratu Peng-ging his alarms and uneasiness increased; for in these accounts it was stated that he wanted no further assistance, as he met with but little opposition, all the Rajas of Sabrang submitting to him, among whom were those of Makasar, Goa, Banda, Sembawa, Ende, Timor, Ternate, Sulu, Siram, Manila, and Bruni, in short, he and his followers conquered wherever he went, being themselves invulnerable.

According to this, two areas of the Philippines were under Madjapahit, “Sulu” and “Manila.” But it must be remembered that Raffles wrote his account during the second decade of the 19th century, almost four centuries *after* the events in question. One scholar has dismissed the Raffles work as an unreliable source, a compilation of half remembered events and folk tales.

More important perhaps is the fact that at the time Raffles wrote his work, the places we now call Manila and Sulu were spelled by Europeans as “Maynila,” “Manilla” and “Manille,” or “Suluk,” “Solot,” “Su’ug,” “Soeloe”—*not* as “Manila” and “Sulu.” It is possible that the two areas Raffles refers to might have been located not in the Philippine archipelago but rather in insular Southeast Asia, perhaps near eastern Java or among the Lesser Sundas.

If “Sulu” or “Manila” were indeed part of Madjapahit’s dependencies, they would have been mentioned by these spellings in the lists of the Hikdyat Radja Pasey or the Nagarakrtagama (see Appendix B). Thus it is likely that the Philippines’ Sulu was not the “Solots” mentioned in Appendix B.

More convincing evidence is found in certain Philippine sources. Saleeby in his *History of Sulu* (1963:43) refers to Raja Baginda’s emigration to Sulu from Menangkabaw, “a rich, high region in central Sumatra, from which many Malayan dynasties seem to have come.” He adds that the *tarsilahs* (genealogical records of Sulu) record that Raja Baginda received a gift of elephants from the king of Java. This explains the existence in Jolo of elephants at the arrival of the Spanish expeditions (Saleeby 1963:45).

Raja Baginda must have been an important personage or else he must have initiated contacts with his Muslim counterparts in the Malay-Indonesian areas. In any event, this brief record is the only direct evidence that the Philippines ever made direct contact with Java. But that the contact was Madjapahit needs substantiation.

Other scholars point out the possibility that there might have been some relationship with the Philippines' Sulu through Brunei or Borneo, former vassal states of Madjapahit. Hassell's monograph quotes (1953:70) two sources following this line of thought.

...According to Javanese records a Javanese force expelled Sulu marauders from Brunei during the reign of Angka Wijaya who was the last king to reign over Majapahit...

The inhabitants of the Soeloe Islands (in the present Philippines) made an attack against Broeni (in order to obtain camphor), in keeping with their (piratical) nature, but they were driven off by the Javanese soldiers.

The *tarsilah* of Mindanao mentions the voyage to Mindanao by the first Muslim ruler of that region. According to that account, Kabungsuwan and his followers, on their way from Johore, were caught in a storm which dispersed their fleet to different places: Balimbang (Palembang), Bunugjar (Bandjar Masin), and Bruney (Brunei)—all of which were dependencies of Madjapahit at one time or another (Saleeby: 1905:54). The value of this evidence is doubtful, however, inasmuch as Philippine historians point out that Kabungsuwan reached Mindanao towards the latter part of the 15th century, after the fall of Madjapahit.

In 1842, an American naval commander, Charles Wilkes, visited the Sulu region. In his report on Sulu he referred to an oral tradition linking the Sulu sultanate with that of Banjarmasin (quoted in Hassell 1953:71-2):

The fame of the submarine reaches of this archipelago reached Banjar or Borneo, the people of which were induced to resort there, and finding it to equal their expectation, they sent a large colony, and made endeavors to win over the inhabitants, and obtain thereby the possession of their rich isle. In order to confirm the alliance, a female of Banjar-

massing, of great beauty, was sent, and married to the principal chief; and from this alliance the sovereigns of Sulu claim their descent. The treaty of marriage made Sulu tributary to the Banjarmassing empire.

Bandjarmasin is listed in Appendix B. It is possible that at the time the marriage alliance between Bandjarmasin-Sulu was effected, Bandjarmasin was still a vassal state of Madjapahit, a supposition that requires documentation. As for the soundness of folk tradition as historical evidence, Hassell cautions: "Oral traditions very frequently hint at the truths in history, but they seldom provide either a complete or an accurate account of exactly what happened on a given occasion. Commander Wilkes' account . . . is included here, not because it is a historical source, but because it might be" (*ibid.*).

The last Philippine source alluding to some interconnection between the Philippines and Borneo is the *Maragtas* of Panay. The Panay *datus* were allegedly the descendants of the ten Bornean *datus* who emigrated to Panay. Some historians point out the slim possibility that the Bornean *datus* fled Borneo when it was still under the influence of Madjapahit. This hypothesis has yet to be proved.

To conclude, there are several historical fragments which allude to some relationship between the Philippines and Java, Brunei, and Borneo. However, not all scholars agree that Brunei and Borneo were truly vassal states of Madjapahit; no substantive historical and archeological findings have yet ascertained this fact. Regional histories of Borneo and Brunei are quite scarce, as are inscriptions. Until these gaps in Southeast Asian history have been bridged, the Philippine hypothesis remains a historical uncertainty.

CONCLUSION

Inadequacy of the evidence. We have traced the rise and fall of two of the greatest empires in Indonesian history. But as Wertheim points out (1954:51):

Our knowledge of the political history of Indonesia . . . is far from reliable. Attempts to reconstruct a coherent picture of early Indonesian history from bits of archeological remains and fragmentary descriptions by Chinese and Arab travellers are rather hazardous, owing

in particular to the difficulty of correctly identifying the islands and places mentioned.

With continued research, we may learn more about these early island empires. Until the 1950's, for example, it was believed by most scholars that the Madjapahit empire had extended her rule, at the pinnacle of her glory, over a large portion of the Indonesian archipelago. Yet the recent researches of C. C. Berg indicate that much of the material written about this Javanese empire may be based largely on mythical and not historical facts. Dr. Berg doubts that the empire of Madjapahit ever achieved supremacy over islands other than Java, Madura, and Bali (see Wertheim 1956:51).

Dobby (1956:382-85) has summarized many of the factors causing the dearth of primary materials for Southeast Asian historiography. In the first place, the indigenous peoples of Southeast Asia did not develop a strong literary or historical tradition to record their past in a form other than myth. Consequently, the modern historian has the vexing problem of extricating the historical from the mythical. The tradition of the people is oral. Their literature is essentially Indian rather than indigenous. The so-called literary-minded people were mostly religious persons, trained in or oriented toward the Indian tradition, and for the most part disinterested in the keeping of mundane records.

The Southeast Asians had the tendency to diffuse themselves geographically, even within particular states. This was especially true of those migratory ethnic groups who practiced shifting or fire agriculture. The absence of a common focus of interest is seen in the fact that no great depositories of learning were maintained in the area to gather and conserve the record of its historical past.

Second, what records do exist are problematic. Singularly noticeable in the reading of early Southeast Asian history is the avoidance of personal names. Monarchs are usually mentioned by their temple-names (Indian or Chinese) and not by their personal names; the bureaucrats, by their rank and titles of office. Anonymity, confusion over nomenclature, or obscurity make the reading of extant historical records difficult.

Third, if there were any local records inscribed in palm-leaf manuscripts, they most likely have been destroyed by the humid tropical climate, insects, and molds which quickly destroy anything impressed on wood, paper, cloth, or vellum.

The area's physical environment is not conducive to the preservation of monuments and artifacts. Many of the early kingdoms were situated in swamps and forests, where the most accessible and available material was wood. The artistic inclination of the peoples was therefore most naturally expressed in wooden carvings, buildings, or tools. The passage of time and the effects of climate and insects cause wooden objects to disintegrate or be eaten away, leaving little or no evidence for the history of the region.

In Southeast Asia there exists little monumental evidence other than religious complexes like the Borobudur complex in central Java or that of Angkor Wat in Cambodia. The interest in religious buildings arose from the belief that the kings were the descendants of gods. Wherever possible, the Hinduized kings sought to perpetuate their memory by building either Hindu or Buddhist temples which were later converted to private mausoleums. The artistic skills required for these monuments were not native but rather introduced by foreigners (usually Indian) or war captives, who brought with them styles and techniques of sculpturing developed in their homelands.

Generally, the extant monuments are located in the drier areas of Southeast Asia, where building stone is more readily available. An Indian innovation was the building of brick structures on the clay lands. But they too were unsuited to stand the passage of time and the effects of weathering, which rapidly reduced such structures to nothing. At Angkor, one sees the power of the quick-growing tropical trees, such as giant fig trees, as they shatter and crumble the palaces and temples built from stone and laterite blocks.

The fourth factor is the effect of natural calamities and diseases upon the peoples of the region. In Java, small kingdoms, such as the city of Dharmavamsa, have been reduced to ashes by the eruption and lava outflow of the island's vol-

canos. In east Sumatra, riverine settlements have been wiped out by the mud-flows sweeping down unexpectedly from the highlands. Coastal settlements have been abandoned as rivers changed their natural courses or as the high rate of sedimentation made headlands inaccessible to the sea. The latter occurred in Cambodia as the lower Mekong built up mud-flats which isolated Tonle Sap from her contact with the South China Sea.¹⁹

Plagues and such endemic diseases as cholera, malaria, and dysentery have depopulated many historic kingdoms. Fleeing populations spread the diseases throughout Southeast Asia. Sometimes kings relocated their capitals in areas distantly located from those cities associated with pain, suffering, and disasters, in an effort to placate the malevolent spirits (*nats*, or *phi*) responsible. As shifts of population occurred from the forested inland areas to the coastal towns, the ensuing overcrowding of towns, improper sewage disposal systems and the absence of public sanitation practices proved to be menaces to the populace. Climatologists have shown that there is a direct relationship between the outbreak of endemic diseases and the climatic seasons. In Southeast Asia, the area's humid climate has the effect of encouraging a high rate of bacterial reproduction.

In this manner, the occurrence of natural calamities, and the outbreak of endemic diseases have had the effect of killing off or debilitating the population. As the populace fled, nature gradually reclaimed the abandoned town sites and covered them with jungles and wild vegetation, leaving no trace of human settlement.

Philippine historiography. In recent years, Philippine scholars have been studying the impact of Hinduization upon various elements of Philippine culture. In this connection, the work of the late Dr. Beyer has been studied and held in dispute by many. Dr. Beyer's death has removed from the Phil-

¹⁹ The evolution of new transportation routes caused old centers of power to fade into obscure fishing villages—e.g. Takhola and Bandon, after the sea route through the Malacca Straits became more favored than that across the Kra portage route.

ippine scene an individual truly devoted to the study of the Philippines and its peoples. At the time of his death, Beyer left a large body of unpublished works and unclassified Philippine artifacts. Here lies the value of Beyer's legacy. His collection of manuscripts and artifacts will be valuable if his successors can question, sift through, and build upon those theories which he patiently accumulated throughout his lifetime. Such research can be the starting point for further and deeper studies of different aspects of Philippine history and civilization.

One noted Fil-Hispanic scholar has devoted his work to correcting the errors made in the recording of our history as a people. As a result of his researches, Dr. Abella laments (1966) what he refers to as the "sad state of Philippine historiography." Instead of consulting the actual historical and archeological records, many "Filipino historians prefer to quote the works of other Filipino authors to suit their own biases or preferences." This has caused what Dr. Abella refers to as a "profusion of errors in Philippine history, which need to be rectified," since "many reputable foreign scholars and our own students, have been led astray on some facts of Philippine history." If this is true, there seem to be few scholars of the caliber of the Jesuit historian Horacio de la Costa. According to Dr. Abella, "we need more of the latter than of the former."

Question of historical interpretations. The understanding of modern Southeast Asian developments must be sought to some extent in a study of the past. It is necessary to see the problems of the present-day Southeast Asian states, the varied nationalist revolutions, in a wider historical context.

Once scholars become fluent in the various writings and language systems of the area, there must be more of an exchange in the communication of historical ideas. As it is, the lingua franca used by most scholars dedicated to this task is either English or some other European language. This accounts for the predominance of the so-called "Europe-centric" approach in the writings of present-day Southeast Asian historiography. Especially in the modern period of Southeast Asian history, there is a danger of bias in one direction or the other when it comes to the assessment of European imperialism in

the area. The bulk of readily assessible materials are those of the European colonizers themselves; this increases the danger that the historic events of the period will be seen only in terms of Western values. Or else a Western historian's bias might affect his assessment of which factors have been significant in shaping the course of events. Thus, if Southeast Asian history is seen from the viewpoint of the European there will be a natural tendency to judge the events of the period in terms of Western standards, and also to view the influence of Europeans as having been the decisive factors in determining the historic course of events.

Many modern histories of Southeast Asia have been written by ex-European colonial administrators—D. G. E. Hall, Furnivall, Tregonning, and Winstedt, to name but a few. Yet these individuals have shown a sympathy and understanding of the peoples of whom they write. Has their sensitivity to the Southeast Asian been increased by their awareness that the Southeast Asian evolved his own distinct history and civilization, one which has been as rich and varied as various aspects of European civilization? In such case, how should their writings be classified? As Europe-centric? or Asian-centric?

The problem of historical perspective is not confined to Western historians alone. Asian historians themselves, in their treatment of regional or area histories of Southeast Asia, tend to accept Western categories of historical judgments, while they reject the value judgments of their Western colleagues. For the most part, many view the modern colonial period in terms of European challenge and Asian response. The dilemma lies in whether or not the individual historian can be freed of the label "Europe-centric" or "Asian-centric" in his historical writings.

Because of the difficulty in tracing the actual political power of these great Southeast Asian empires, we learn few facts with certainty: above all, that they exerted control over distant territories through the periodic sending of emissaries who carried gifts and brought back tribute from the vassal state to the suzerain. But it is difficult to state with accuracy the real extent of the ancient Indonesian empires (Wertheim

1956:52). An empire would rise and fall depending upon its ability to wrest control from neighboring petty rulers. Once conquest had been accomplished, the new ruler would in turn exact tribute or some form of obedience from local rulers by dint of repeated punitive expeditions against them. His empire would fail as he failed, either militarily or by failing to keep the local rulers' loyalties (*ibid.*).

The final answer will probably have to wait until further research discloses additional explanatory inscriptions or new historical, linguistic, or archeological evidence linking the Philippines' past to that of Southeast Asia or vice versa. As McGenthou so correctly stated in his introduction to Darling (1965:3):

Scholarship... must perform the function of a collective memory. It must remind statesmen and public of the historic roots of contemporary propositions and alignments. By doing this, it serves not only historic truth but also the political interests of the nation.

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APPENDIX A

DEPENDENCIES OF THE SRI-VIJAYAN EMPIRE

1. List of Chao Ju-Kua, 1225 A.D. (Coedes 1948:308-9; Hassell 1953:84-5; and Devahuti 1965:53):

Tsien-Mai-Mai, Malay Peninsula
 Pong-fong-Pahang, Malay Peninsula
 Tong-ya-nong-Trengganu, Malay Peninsula
 Ling-ya-ssi-kia-Lengkasuka, Malay Peninsula
 Ki-lan-tan-Kelantan, Malay Peninsula
 Fo-lo-an-Beranang, Malay Peninsula
 Ji-lo-t'ng-Jelutong, Malay Peninsula
 Tan-ma-ling-Tam (b) ralinga, Malay Peninsula
 Kia-lo-his-Grahi, Malay Peninsula
 Pat'a-Batak region, Northern Sumatra
 Pa-lin-fong-Palembang, Southern Sumatra
 Sin-t'o-Sunda region, Western Java
 Kien-pi-Champa or Indo-China
 Lan-wu-li-Lamuri (Achen), Northern Sumatra
 Si-lan-Ceylon, off Southern India, or Junk Ceylon near the Isthmus of Kra on the Malay Peninsula

2. Additions from the Arabo-Persian list (Hassel 1953; 22-30, *passim*):

Kalah-bar-Kra, Isthmus of Kra, Malay Peninsula
 Kedan-Kedan, Malay Peninsula

3. Other additions:

- a. From the Ligor Stele inscription quoted in Hassel (1953:12):
 Ligor-Ligor, Malay Peninsula
- b. From the Malay Annals, oral traditions quoted in Hassell (1953:85):
 Bandjar Masin, Borneo
 Sukadana, Borneo
 Pontianak, Borneo
- c. From the list of Devahuti (1965:55):
 South Selangor, Malay Peninsula
 P'at'-a-lung, South of Ligor, Malaya Peninsula
 Semang, Sumatra
 Kampar, Sumatra
 Malayu (Jambi), Sumatra

APPENDIX B
DEPENDENCIES OF THE MADJAPAHIT EMPIRE

1. List taken from *Nagarakrtagama* (Hassel 1953:85-6):
- | (Sumatra) | (Borneo) | (Malay Peninsula) | (East of Java) |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Barat | Baritu | Dungun | Ambon |
| Barus | Burune | Hujung Tanah | Bali |
| Batan | Kadangdangan | Jere | Banggawi |
| Dharmacrya | Kalkasaludung | Kalanten | Bantayan |
| Haru | Kapuas | Kanjapiniran | Bima |
| Jambi | Katingan | Keda | Butun |
| Kahwas | Kuta Lingga | Kelang | Dompo |
| Kampe | Kuta Waringin | Lengka-suka | Galiyao |
| Kandis | Landa | Nagor | Gurun |
| Kampar | Lawai | Pahang | Hutan Kadali |
| Lampung | Malano | Pakamuar | Kunir |
| Lamuri | Pasir | Sang hyang | Lombok |
| Lwas | Sambas | Hujung | Makassar |
| Manangkabo | Samedang | Semong | Maloko |
| Mandahiling | Sampit | Tringgano | Muar |
| Palembang | Sawaku | Tumasik | Salaya |
| Pane | Sedu | | Sakcak |
| Parlak | Solot | | Sapi |
| Rekan | Tabalung | | Sang hyang Api |
| Samudra | Tirem | | Seran |
| Siyak | Tunjungute | | Solot |
| Teba | | | Sumba |
| Tumihang | | | Taliwang |
| | | | Timor |
| | | | Udamakatraya |
| | | | Wandan |
| | | | Wanin |
2. List in *Hikdyat radja Pasey* (Hassel 1953:86):
- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Tambalan | Poulo Ringgi | Bandjar Masin |
| Siyatan | Pemanggilan | Soukadana |
| Djamadj | Karimata | Kontei |
| Bangoran | Bilitong | Beroumak |
| Sardsar | Lingga | Karantouk |
| Souwabi | Riou | Balambangan |
| Poulo Laout | Bintan | |
| Bandan | Boulang | |
| Bima | Mampawa | |
3. List of countries which maintained friendly relations with Madjapahit (Devahuti 1965:58):
- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| Syangkayodhyapura—Siam with Ayuthia | Simhanagari—(?) |
| Dharmanagari—Ligor (Nakhon Srithammarat) | Champa |
| Marutma—Martaban | Kambuja |
| Rajapura—(?) | Yavana (Annam) |