

Illustration 1. Map of Southeast Asia: Singapore, Thailand (Siam), Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo, 1710.

Report of Three Residents of Jambi about the Threat of Johorese War Vessels in the Batang Hari River, 11 September 1714

CONTENT

- 1 Introduction 2
- 2 Transcription of the Dutch text 4
- 3 English translation 6
- 4 Colophon 8
- 5 Folio images 9



sejarah
nusantara



1 Introduction

Barbara Watson Andaya, “Report of Three Residents of Jambi about the Threat of Johorese War Vessels in the Batang Hari River, 11 September 1714”. In: *Harta Karun. Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta*, document 10. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013.

BY BARBARA WATSON ANDAYA

Like other Malay kingdoms along the Straits of Melaka, such as Indragiri, Palembang and Johor, Jambi claimed authority over groups of “sea-people” (Orang Laut) who made their living from fishing and collecting sea products. In Jambi the main Orang Laut settlement was Simpang at the mouth (*kuala*) of the Nior River, a tributary of the Batang Hari that led out to the Straits of Melaka. From this base the Orang Laut relayed news of maritime activities, guided ships upriver and patrolled the surrounding sea-lanes. They mobilized fleets in times of invasion, attacked enemy vessels, and under the ruler’s orders often harassed ships sailing to other ports in order to damage a rival’s trade. The Orang Laut were thus a key element in the Jambi economy and were essential for its security. In return, the ruler gave Orang Laut leaders prestigious titles and gifts (including women) and allowed them to keep part of any booty acquired during raiding expeditions. A traditional feature of all Orang Laut communities was their personal loyalty to the ruler they served.

During the sixteenth century, Jambi had become famous for the pepper grown in its highlands, and in 1615 both the Dutch and English East India Companies established posts there. At this time, Jambi was allied to Johor, but disputes occurred because both claimed control of Tungkal, a district

on the border of Jambi and Inderagiri that gave access to interior pepper-growing areas. Between 1671 and 1674, ongoing quarrels led to outright conflict. Orang Laut, who served the ruler of Jambi, raided ships in Johor waters, while Orang Laut from Johor did the same in Jambi. Johor fleets even came right up the Batang Hari River and threatened the Jambi capital. Subsequently, relations improved and in 1681 the rulers of Jambi and Johor were still willing to form an alliance against their common rival Palembang. Orang Laut from both kingdoms attacked trading ships in Palembang waters and raided the coast.

In the late seventeenth century, the loyalty of Orang Laut in both places was tested. Jambi’s economy declined drastically because of falling pepper prices, and unrest was so widespread that in 1687 the Dutch banished the ruler and installed his son, Kiai Gede, as ruler. However, a number of Orang Laut refused to transfer their allegiance to the unpopular new sultan, especially since the poor economy meant he could not reward them as previous rulers had done. Some even left Jambi to place themselves under the ruler of Inderagiri. Others remained because they believed that Kiai Gede was the rightful king and deserved their loyalty despite his shortcomings.

Meanwhile, Johor also faced problems. In 1699, when the ruler was assassinated by his nobles, several Orang Laut groups would not serve the new sultan (a leader in the regicide), saying they would rather be under the Sultan of Palembang. Yet large numbers of Orang Laut did stay with the new dynasty because they were able to benefit from Johor’s flourishing trade. This prosperity attracted ships to the new Johor capital on Bintan Island (near Singapore), which meant profits in VOC-controlled Melaka continue to decline. The sultan’s brother, the powerful Raja Muda, also



INTRODUCTION



Illustration 2. Pepper plant, *Piper nigrum*.

used the Orang Laut to dissuade or prevent ships from patronizing other ports along the Melaka Straits. These tactics led to considerable hostility between Johor and Dutch Melaka.

Conflict between Johor and Jambi erupted again in September 1714 when Kiai Gede tried to prevent the smuggling of Jambi pepper from the highlands down the Tungkal River to Johor because this deprived him of much-needed revenue. Although the court nobles did not like Kiai Gede, they and the Dutch resident Isaac Panhuys were concerned to hear reports of Johor boats downstream. Temenggong Mangkubumi, a leading noble, Pangeran Nattadiningrat (Kiai Gede's son-in-law) and the Resident then sent five armed vessels downriver to investigate. It was discovered that Johor ships had reached the Batang Hari River via Kuala Nior and also through a narrow river known as the "mosquito's gap". The Johorese tried to persuade the Jambi Orang Laut to desert with their families, telling them they would have a better life under the Johor ruler. When they were unsuccessful, they burnt Simpang, and captured a number of Orang Laut. They also attacked four Javanese ships and killed some of those aboard,

sending a lesson that trading ships should patronize Johor, not Jambi.

This document demonstrates not only the importance of the Orang Laut in the economic competition between Malay states, but also shows that the Orang Laut of Johor, like their rulers, felt able to challenge Dutch Melaka and even Batavia. On this occasion Johor's threatened invasion of Jambi did not eventuate, and the rivalry between the two kingdoms faded following the Minangkabau conquest of Johor in 1718 and the death of Kiai Gede in 1719. Though the Orang Laut continued to be economically important through the eighteenth century, their ties to the rulers of both Johor and Jambi declined because their role in security and defense was assumed by the Bugis and Makassar migrants to the Malay world.

Reference

- Barbara Watson Andaya, *To Live as Brothers. Southeast Sumatra in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1993.



2 Transcription of the Dutch text

Barbara Watson Andaya, “Report of Three Residents of Jambi about the Threat of Johorese War Vessels in the Batang Hari River, 11 September 1714”.

UIT: DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, 11 SEPTEMBER 1714 [BEGINNEND BIJ FOL. 1148.]

Relaas gedaen door de inwoonders alhier Intje Nonnit, Intje Restant, en Kiewerie Sarana aen den onderkoopman en resident Isaac Panhuys op den 11en september 1714 nopende het gedoente der Johoresen binnen dese Jambyse rivier.

Dat zij op den 8en deser met en benevens vier vaertuygen door de pangerans rijx-bestierders Tommagon Mancoeboemy [fol. 1149] en Natta Ningrat afgevaerdigd, ter ordre van den resident almede met een welbemande vaertuyg op bekomen berigt dat de Johoresen binnen dese revier gevallen waren etc., naer omlaag zijn gesonden, ten eynde op het gedoente van voorsz. Johoresen te letten, mitsgaders ordre dat wanneer vijandelijk mogte werden aangetast, alsdan geweld met geweld tegen te gaen, en deselve des doenlijk met den anderen uyt dese rivier te verdrijven.

Dat zij ingevolge van dien des anderen daags aen de qual Njor gekomen zijnde van de Orang-Laouts daer om her woonende, verstaen hadden dat voorsz. Johoresen met 18 à 19 vaertuygen, soo door het musquite gat, als de qual Njor voorsz. binnen dese rivier gekomen waren, en den inwoonder met soete woorden hebben tragten te disponeeren, om haren koning Sultan Kiay Gedee te abandonneeren, en haer onder de gehoorsaemheyte van haren heer en koning Djang Depertuan te begeven, onder het seggen zij het aldaer, te weten Johor, beter souden hebben dan onder haren vorst Kiay Gedee te blijven, met aanbiedinge van deselve met vrouwen en kinderen te sullen overvoeren, dog dat gedagte inwoonders sulx niet hadden willen naerkomen.

Dat voorsz. Johoresen uyt dien hoofde hun negorije aldaer, gelijk de relateurs verklaren gesien te hebben, geheel afgebrand en partije dier inwoonders gevangen mede genomen en daer alomme gerooft en gestroopt hadden.

Dat se wijders van gem. Orang-Laouts verstaan hadden, dat gem. Johoresen vervolgens vier stux handeltaertuygen van Java gekomen, en die bereets een goed stux weegs binnen dese rivier geadvanceerd waren en met zout, rijs en partije Javaense kleeden geladen waren, niettegenstaende de anachodas van dien hunne Compagnies pascedullen aen deselve hebben verdoond, vijandelijk aengetast, overrompelt, partije van de daer op geweest zijnde manschap dood geslagen en drie van deselve vaertuygen voor goede buyt mede genomen hadden, onder het seggen wij hebben af voeren soewel den oorlog tegens de E. Compagnie als tegens de Jambynesen, en wij geven om d'E. Compagnie niet, en sijn ook van meening om Malacca te veroveren, want dat hoort ons Johoresen toe etc. en vervolgens dat meteenen



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

een preuve met Batavia wilden doen etc.

Dat voorsz. gevangene Orang-Laouts wanneer gemelte Johoresen besig waren om een der hiervoren gemelte handeltaertuygen te overrompelen, hun kans waernemende, over boort gesprongen en dus de handen dier rovers excepto 3 â 4 personen ontkomen zijn, en het vorenstaende aen de relateurs verhaeld hebben. [fol. 1150]

Dat zij relateurs, eyndelijk van den evengemelte gevangen geweest zijnde Orang-Laouts, wijders verstaan hadden dat Djang Dipertuan Moeda, jongen Coning tot Johor drie â vier dagen naer het ingaen van hunne pouassa, selfs in persoon binnen dese rivier meenden te komen om nog een verdere invasie, ja geheel tot hierboven aen 's Compagnies logie te willen doen, mitsgaders dat voorsz. Djang Dipertuan Moede bereets aen Poelo Farel met 60 welbemande oorlogsvaertuygen lag.

Eyndelijk dat zij relateurs niettegenstaende tot voorbij de qual Njor geweest te zijn, geeneene dier roofvaertuygen gesien hebben, maer alle het vorenstaende van voorsz. Orang-Laouts en die gedagte Johoresen van verre met een kleene prauw hebben laten naerspeuren. Verders te hebben verstaen dat deselve bereets buyten dese rivier en in zee geraekt waren, mitsgaders dat aldaer lustig hadden hooren schieten.

Jamby in 's Compagnies logie den 11en september 1714. (was geteekent) Jacobus Panhuys.



3 English translation

Barbara Watson Andaya, “Report of Three Residents of Jambi about the Threat of Johorese War Vessels in the Batang Hari River, 11 September 1714”.

FROM : DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA CASTLE, 11 SEPTEMBER 1714 [BEGINNING WITH FOL. 1148.]
Report submitted by the three local inhabitants, Encik Nonnit, Encik Restant and Kiewerie Sarana, to Junior Merchant and Resident Isaac Panhuys on 11 September 1714 about the activities of the Johorese inside the mouth of this Jambi River.

That on the eighth four vessels were dispatched downstream by the ministers Temengung Mancoeboemy (Mangkubumi) [fol. 1149] and Nata[di]ningrat, on the orders of the Resident, accompanied by another well-armed vessel, after a report arrived that the Johorese had entered this river etc, for the purpose of observing the actions of the aforesaid Johorese, carrying orders that should there be any inimical action this force should be countered with force, and hence driving these same [Johorese] out of the river.

Consequently, when they arrived the next day at qual Njor (Kuala Niur), they learned from the Orang Laout (Laut) who live around here that the Johorese had descended upon the river with eighteen or nineteen vessels, both through the Musquite Gat (Mosquito Gap) and through Kuala Niur, and that they had tried to woo the inhabitants with honeyed words, [asking] them to forswear their king, Sultan Kiai Gede, and transfer their fealty to their lord and king, the Yang Dipertuan, asserting that they would be better off under Johor than they would be if they remained under their own ruler Kiay (Kiai) Gede. They offered to transport the inhabitants with their wives and children, but that said inhabitants were opposed to the idea.

That for this reason, the aforesaid Johorese had, as the reporters declared they had seen with their own eyes, burnt out the whole *negorij* and had taken a group of inhabitants prisoner and had pillaged and plundered the whole area.

That they had again understood from the said Orang Laut that the Johorese had carried out a hostile attack on four Javanese trading vessels, which had already advanced a considerable distance into the river carrying salt, rice and Javanese cloths, despite the fact that their captains had shown them their Company passes. They caught them by surprise and battered some of the crew to death and took three of the vessels prize, claiming that that we [they] had sailed with warlike intent against both the Honourable Company and against the people of Jambi. They did not give a fig for the Honourable Company, and also fostered plans to capture Malacca (Malaka), because it belonged to us [them] Johorese etc. and immediately thereafter would test Batavia’s mettle.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While the aforesaid Johorese were occupied taking the above-mentioned trading vessels, seeing their chance, the said captured Orang Laut jumped overboard and with the exception of three or four persons escaped the hands of the robbers and recounted the above to those making the report [fol. 1150].

That finally the reporters understood from said captured Orang Laut that, three or four days before the beginning of Ramadan, the Yang Dipertuan Muda, the crown prince of Johor, intended to enter the river in person to pursue the invasion more thoroughly, yea indeed wanted to advance as far as the Company lodge (headquarters), and moreover that the aforesaid Yang Dipertuan Muda lay ready at Pulau Farel with sixty well-armed warships.

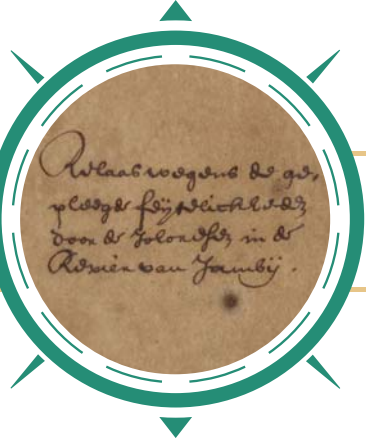
Finally, notwithstanding those who reported this ventured past Kuala Niur, saw not one single pirate vessel, but had spied the suspect Johorese mentioned above from a distance in a small prau with the aforesaid Orang Laut . Had also understood that they were then outside this river and on the high seas, as [they] had heard vigorous shooting from that direction.

Jambi, in the Company lodge 11 September 1714 (was signed) Jacobus Panhuys.



4 Colophon

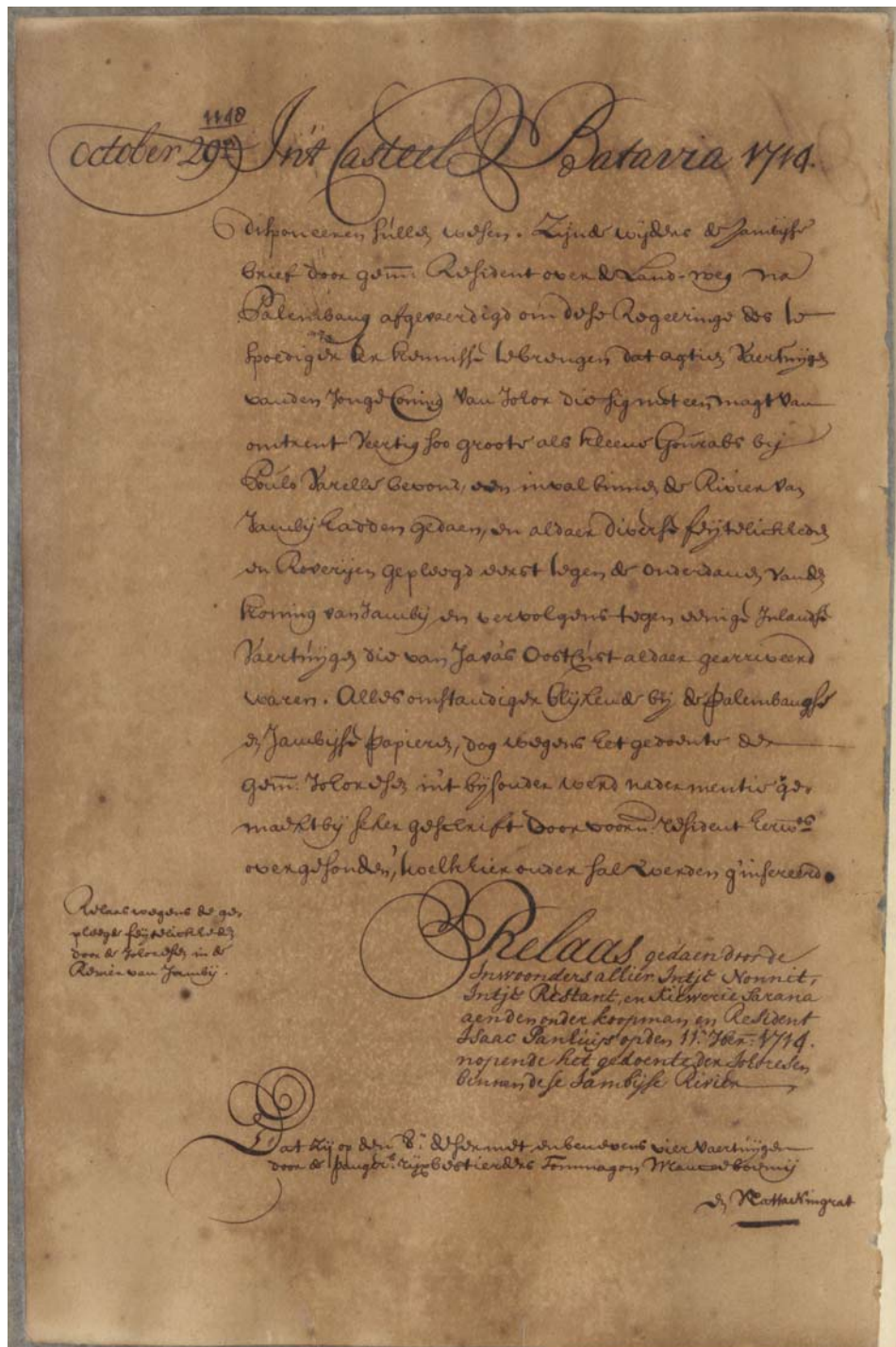
Title	Barbara Watson Andaya, “Report of Three Residents of Jambi about the Threat of Johorese War Vessels in the Batang Hari River, 11 September 1714”. In: <i>Harta Karun. Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta</i> , document 10. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013.
Editor-in-chief	Hendrik E. Niemeijer
Project coordination	Yerry Wirawan, Muhammad Haris Budiawan
Document selection	Hendrik E. Niemeijer
Archival Source	ANRI HR 2541 fols. 1148-1150
Illustration selection	Muhammad Haris Budiawan
Illustration sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Map of Southeast Asia: Singapore, Thailand (Siam), Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo, 1710. http://www.geographicus.com/P/RareMaps/SOUTHEAST-ASIA-MAPS&sort=price.desc#st-hash.6LIYxgBy.dpuf2. Pepper plant, <i>Piper nigrum</i>. http://biologi-plh.blogspot.com/2012/03/persebaran-flora-dan-fauna-di-indonesia.html
Transcription	Risma Manurung
Indonesian translation	Tjandra Mualim
English translation	Rosemary Robson
Introduction	Barbara Watson Andaya
Final editing	Peter Carey, Hendrik E. Niemeijer
Layout	Beny Oktavianto
Release Date	September 2013
Harta Karun Category	I.1 The Maritime World
ISBN	xxx-12345678910
Copyright	Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia and The Corts Foundation



HARTA KARUN. HIDDEN TREASURES ON INDONESIAN AND ASIAN-EUROPEAN HISTORY FROM THE VOC ARCHIVES IN JAKARTA

5 Folio image

This is the first page of the original document. All folios may be viewed on the website via the Tab 'Images' in the Harta Karun section or in the Digital Archive Collections. Archival Source, ANRI HR 2541 fols. 1148-1150.



¹¹⁴⁸
October 20^{de} Int' casteel Batavia 1714.

Wij onderen, Pieter, wester, Zijnde wijder de Jambij
Brief door gem. Resident over de Land-roeg na
Palembang afgevaardigd om desse Rogeringe des
spoediger de konnische bebrongen dat agter, Kerthing
vanden Jonge Coning Van Soloer die sijndt een, magt Van
ontrent Kerthij soo groot als kleine Gonnab's bij
Couto Xacell's Gewond, van, inhaal konink, de Rivier van
Jambij Ladden gedaen, en aldare diverse sijn d'licke
in Reserijen, geplowd avest ligen, de Onderdaen, vande
Koning vandaenly, en vervolgins tegen, vringt Julaide
Kerthing, die van Jarab Oostgint aldare gearrewe
waren. Alles onstaandige blykend bij de Palembang
de Jambij's papier, dog abogins het gedoente de
gem. Soloer's int bysonder werd nadermentie g'dr
markt by s'ker g'f'chrift door v'oon. W'f'raut Louw
overg'fonden, hoelk'ken onder sal werden g'insereerd.

Wlaac roogens de ge,
p'loogt s'rij, p'licke l'v'ez,
don de Soloer's, in de
Rivier van Jambij.

Pelaas gedaend door de
Invoorders allien Int'je Nonnet,
Int'je Redtant, en d'licke Jaxana
aenden onder koopman, en Resident
Haac Panlijs op den 11. Maen 1714.
n'opende het gedoente der soldaten
Schmidtse Jambij's Rivier

dat hij op d'ne 8. d'f'riant v'bebrong vier Kerthing
door de Jambij's v'rij v'ot l'ende Tomnagon, Maen v'otmij
de Kerthingrat