



Illustration 1. Pagaruyung Palace. George Schnee, 1984.

Thomas Dias' Journey to Central Sumatra in 1684

CONTENT

- 1 Introduction 2
- 2 Transcription of the Dutch text 6
- 3 English translation 20
- 4 Colophon 32
- 5 Folio images 33





1 Introduction

Timothy P. Barnard, “Thomas Dias’ Journey to Central Sumatra in 1684”. In: *Harta Karun: Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta*, document 1. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013.

BY TIMOTHY P. BARNARD

How does one describe a society which is vastly different from our own, and one which is contained in a blank space on a map? In the seventeenth century, when the United East India Company (VOC) first ventured into the vast Indonesian archipelago, this was a common problem. While the VOC was first and foremost a trading company, a business, its employees needed to understand the societies with which they interacted. When Thomas Dias travelled to the kingdom of Minangkabau in 1684 he reflected the possibilities for exploration and understanding of new societies, and his tale reflects the richness of the VOC archival materials.

The VOC gained control over Malacca in 1641. Malacca was one of the key ports in the region, as it oversaw shipping between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, linking vast empires of trade, peoples and cultures. Malacca had been the centre of a Malay polity until 1511, when the Portuguese captured the port and ruled it until the arrival of the VOC. The polity of Johor was assisting the VOC in the takeover of Malacca, where many of the Malay-Malaccan elite had fled following 1511. Johor and the VOC remained allies after 1641, although tensions often arose as Johor began to exert control over the vast forested resources of eastern Sumatra over the next few decades.

Central Sumatra became a place of interest to and rivalry for both Johor and the VOC follow-

ing the discovery of tin-mines at the headwaters of the Siak and Kampar Rivers in the 1670s. The region included a vast network of communities which traded goods between the interior and the Malacca Straits. Their leaders would pledge their allegiance to whichever state provided the most benefits. Beyond these riverine communities were the Minangkabau highlands, where a vibrant matrilineal society oversaw the production of rice and the panning of gold. Trade from these highlands, an almost mystical place in the early modern mind, flowed down the rivers to the Malacca Straits, making its origin a goal of any local merchant. Into this mixture of trade rivalries, cultural differences and misunderstandings stepped Tomas Dias, a ‘black Portuguese’ trader, who made a remarkable journey into the Minangkabau highlands and helped develop some of the early contacts between the VOC and states in the interior of Sumatra.

Very little is known about Tomas Dias. Beyond this account of his journey to Minangkabau in 1684, he appears occasionally in VOC records, which portray him as a trusted employee, often acting as a liaison with local rulers and traders. For example, in 1682 Dias delivered letters to the rulers of Indragiri, and the 1680 census of Malacca records that Dias was married and had eight children and two slaves. Under the category of race, Dias is described as dark (*zwarte*).

Despite these glimpses into Tomas Dias’ life in Malacca, almost everything we know about him comes from a report he wrote on the 25 September 1684 describing his journey to Minangkabau. The origins of this journey lay in the failed attempts of VOC officials to communicate with the leaders of the tin-mining areas in central Sumatra in 1683. Dias had been a member of an expedition to Pat-



INTRODUCTION



Illustration 2. Minangkabau Royal Seal. Rusli Amran.
Sumatra Barat hingga Plakat Panjang.
Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1981.

apahan in May 1683 under the leadership of Hendrik Temmer. The expedition accomplished little, but Dias remained in Patapahan after the others left, setting up a small trade post as a representative (*morador*) of the Company. While in this position, Dias fell foul of a Dutch representative, Hendrik van Roonhuyzen, who visited Patapahan later in the year. Van Roonhuyzen believed that many of the continuing trade problems in the region were due to Dias' incompetence. Dias was eventually able to defend himself before the Malacca authorities, but his position and trustworthiness as a middleman had been compromised. To re-establish his position with VOC officials, Dias made a bold proposal which would mark him in both the archives and Sumatran history. Since the Minangkabau ruler could possibly provide some order to this volatile region, Dias would travel to the Minangkabau capital and secure support for VOC trade interests in the region. VOC officials approved the idea. In May 1684, Tomas Dias sent a letter to the Minangkabau ruler in Pagar Ruyung ('Paggar Oejom' in the document) requesting approval for a visit, which received a positive response shortly thereafter. Dias quickly assembled all the necessary equipment and, along with thirty-seven other people, began the journey into the Minangkabau highlands which he describes in this document.

In the report which Dias describes the vari-

ous villages and the difficulties, he encountered between eastern Sumatra and the Minangkabau highlands. Dias left from the main staple post of Patapahan, but the VOC party continually encountered uncooperative leaders, eventually forcing them to travel into the highlands via the Kampar Kiri and the spiderweb of paths which connected the various rivers. While Dias emphasizes the difficulties in his journey in the report, it is also clear that he was constantly negotiating with various parties with regard to trade and diplomatic alliances. After several weeks of travel, the party reached a village near the Minangkabau capital of Pagar Ruyung. This location is most likely not where the modern village of Pagar Ruyung is currently situated, as it shifted in subsequent centuries under pressure of internal rivalries.

The Minangkabau ruler sent a Raja Malyo ("Raja Melayu"), who might have been an official who dealt with trade to the east or the Malay lands with 500 men to accompany Dias into the capital in the late afternoon. The next morning Dias entered the capital and an audience took place. According to Dias, the king's two sons met him at the edge of the royal district with 4,000 men and royal umbrellas unfurled. They were to escort the outsiders to meet the ruler. After a formal presentation of gifts and a letter from the Malacca Governor Cornelis van Qualbergen, Dias was invited inside the palace, where the ruler presented Dias in a traditional way with the betel quids. After chewing betel Dias took part in a polite diplomatic discussion concerning his journey. Among the topics discussed were the perils he had encountered and the fact that he was probably the first Christian to enter Minangkabau.

A few days later, the Minangkabau ruler invited Dias, to whom he gave the honorary title "Orang Kaya Saudagar Raja" (His Excellency the Royal Trade Representative), to open a Dutch post in Patapahan and to help him gain control of the trade on the Siak and Indragiri Rivers. When Dias mentioned that Johor controlled Siak, the



INTRODUCTION



Illustration 3. Contemporary image of Siak River, Sumatra.

Minangkabau ruler simply replied that the area, “from Pulau Gontong [an island in the mouth of the Siak River] up to Patapahan is mine.”

After receiving these various honours, Dias began to prepare for his return journey. When he was about to leave, he was presented with various letters and seals to prove that he had indeed made the journey and now possessed the authority bestowed upon him. He was also given a box full of “improper pictures”, which had apparently come as a present from a Dutch official who had sent them to the Minangkabau ruler. Dias then left Pagar Ruyung and proceeded to travel along the usual trade routes. Raja Malyo with 3,000 men accompanied the group as far as the staple post of Siluka, from whence Dias floated down the Kampar Kiri and then moved overland, reaching Patapahan in July 1684.

Very little was accomplished with the journey, however. A representative of the Johor sultan wrote to Malacca in 1684 warning that the Siak

River was Johor territory and off limits to Dutch traders. Although Patapahan had remained loyal to the authority of Minangkabau, Johor made great efforts to bring other upstream villages into its sphere of influence. By the time Dias returned from his trip in August 1684, Johor had already gained some control over the Kampar Kanan through agreements with leaders of the various trading posts. Although the VOC quickly opened a lodge in Patapahan, it eventually had to be abandoned. This was because of repeated attacks and the decision of local traders to funnel their tin and gold through villages on the Kampar River.

Dias’ report of his journey to Minangkabau gained a small measure of fame in the late nineteenth century when the former Batavian state archivist, Frederik de Haan, drew attention to its existence in a published account which appeared in the *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* in 1897. Since then, Dias has appeared in at least four other major accounts of the region,

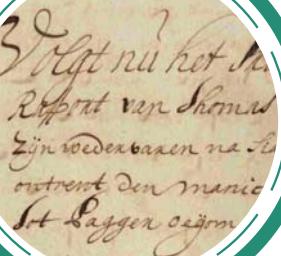


INTRODUCTION

including F. M. Schnitger's *Forgotten Kingdoms of Sumatra*, as well as works by Christine Dobbin (*Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy*), Leonard Andaya (*The Kingdom of Johor*) and Jane Drakard (*A Kingdom of Words*). Historians have often used this account as a rare opportunity to glance at the functioning of the Minangkabau court in the early modern period as well as the vibrant trade and diplomacy of upstream Sumatra in the late seventeenth century. Therefore, while it is an account which depicts an epic journey which brought little benefit to the VOC, it does allow later scholars an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the complex relationships between various communities in central Sumatra in the late seventeenth century.

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2 Transcription of the Dutch text¹

Timothy P. Barnard, “Thomas Dias’ Journey to Central Sumatra in 1684”.

UIT: DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, ANRI HR 2497, VANAF FOL. 1431.

Edele Heeren.²

Nadat Uw Ed. Agtb. mij op den 28en may hadden gelieven af te vaardigen, ben ik naar verloop van 13³ dagen aan ’t jagt Orangie (voor de bandaar in de Siacase revier [fol. 1432] geancert leggende) gecomem, van waar na twee dagen toevens mijn reyse naar Patapan vorderde alwaar nae 7 dagen⁴ terdeeringe, sijnde den zoen van geseyde maant⁵ behouden arriveerde, en gingh ook aanstonts UEd. Agtb. missive aan den Dato Bandara⁶ geprojecteert overhandigen, sijnde geseyde Dato Bandara volgens land gebruyk seer sterk geaccompagneert ende onder hare gebruyckelijcke courtosiën vroegh hij na den welstant van d’E. Heer Gouverneur, daarop hem diende, dat de Heer Gouverneur in goede dispositie op Malacca gelaeten hadde. Soo was zijn vragen nogh of de Heer Gouverneur hem wel soude gelieven te vergunnen, om⁷ zijn gontingh naa Aatchin te mogen senden, waarop hem weder dienende, ik vertrouwe van jae, ende dat seyde hij te sullen doen. Naardat drie dagen costly geweest ware bestelde⁸ ik de brieven van UE Agtbare, onder welcke een waare aan Paduca Tuan, sijnde den regent van Ajertiris.⁹ Desen heeft wel 10000 mannen en daeronder seer veele coopliden onder sijn gebiet, van welcke ik eenige dede roepen om des E. Compagnies genomene cleden om te setten gelijck ook door haare hulpe in den tijt van twee maanden gevolgts is, soodat nogh verscheydene naa beneden aan ’t jagt geweest zijn sonder yets te kunnen becoomen.

¹ Eerder gepubliceerd door F. de Haan als: “Naar midden Sumatra in 1684”, *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde uitgegeven door het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 39 (1897), 327-366. Dit is een gereviseerde versie van De Haan’s transcriptie. Indien relevant bevonden zijn hieronder de voetnoten van De Haan (eveneens geredigeerd en gecorrigeerd) overgenomen. In de Engelse en Indonesische vertalingen zijn Nederlandse woordverklaringen weggelaten.

² De Gouverneur en Politieke Raden te Malakka.

³ Er staat: ‘13e’.

⁴ William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*. London: Thomas Payne, 1784, second edition, 357, zegt dat de reis naar Patapan een riviertocht per sloep van acht dagen vereiste.

⁵ Bedoeld wordt ‘Juni’.

⁶ Eind negentiende eeuw was te Patapan nog steeds een ‘Datoe Bandara’ het hoofd van de negorij, zie J. A. van Rijn van Alkemade, “Beschrijving eener Reis van Bengkalis langs de Rokan-rivier naar Rantau Binoewang”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 32 (1883), 21-48. R. Everwijn, “Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis in het rijk van Siak”, *Natuurkundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 29 (1867), 298, schat de bevolking op 350 zielen en noemt het laatst der vorige eeuw hadde uitvoer van goud uit de bovenlanden van Minangkabau plaats over Patapan en niet naar de Westkust. Zie ook Marsden, *Sumatra*, 355.

⁷ Er staat: ‘waut’.

⁸ Dit moet beduiden ‘ik zond op’.

⁹ Ten zuidwesten van Patapan aan de Kampar Kanan, J. W. IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra. Tocht van Padang naar Siak onder leiding van den hoofd-ingenieur der staats-spoorwegen J. W. IJzerman*. Haarlem: F. Bohn, 1895, 149, “geen Europeaan drong in deze streken door: orang V kota lawan Companie”.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

Ontrent desen tijt is mij een brief van Sultan Siry Pada Moeda Coningh van Paggar Oejom, van negen personoen geassocieert, ter hand gecoomen, daarin mij belaste, tot hem in Paggar Oejom alwaar resideerden, te comen. Versekert zijnde dat de missive van¹⁰ ditto Coningh quam, soo resolveerden ik dese roeping van gemelde Coningh te consequeren, also mij dagte d'E. Compagnie affaires daar aan besonder belang hadden, vindende seer haast 20 persoonen van de Patanpanse inwoonders bereytwillig om mij op dese reyse geselschap te houden.

Maar also dese reyse niet sonder swarigheyt ware te voltrecken, uyt oorsake dat verscheydene over de bergen¹¹ woonende radias dese noit gebeurte¹² correspondentie tus-schen haaren [fol. 1433] Opperconingh ende d'E. Compagnie suspect soude zijn, ende dierhalven niet souden nalaten om met mogelijck middel het effect van dien te obsten-ren, soo is generaliter goet gevonden dito reyse buyten de ordinary wegh¹³ en door het bos te nemen, also daar niet als struykrovers ende het wilt gedierte te vresen hadden, die aan soo sterck een geselschap niet ligtelijck zouden derven yets attenteeren.

Ende naardien ons om 't gearresteerde te voltrecken een ervaarne gidse nodigh was, soo heb ik belast die te becomen, stellende mij selven ondertusschen besig om nodige voorraden en behoeftigheden te versorgen, waartoe omtrent twee dagen bestaat hadde wanneren den admirael¹⁴ schipper Louw onder 't geblaas van de trompet de rivier van Patapan quam opsetten, ende voor mijn residentieplaats aanleggende, trad hij uyt de chialoup tot mij aan lant. Ende als ik hem naar verwellecominge vroegh naar de oorsaacke van sijn komste, seyde ordre te hebben om te visiteren ofte condschap te nemen van 'tgeene passeeerde. Ik versogte dat zulcke ordre gelieve te vertoonen, en daarop liet geseyde admirael mij een brief zien sonder eenige naam ofte onderteeckeninge, 'tgeene mij haast dede mercken dat maar een loosheyt van hem was, om sijne grootsheyden, daar van nogh beneden zijnde al condschap gecregen hadde, te excuse-ren,¹⁵ wes ook versogte dat sigh ten spoedigsten van daar geliefde te reitereren.

Dies niettegenstaande heeft hij sigh aldaer twee dagen onthouden, en als ik midde-lerwijle alle noodsakelijkheden tot mijn¹⁶ voorgenome reyse genegotieert hadde, soo hebbe ik voorgemelte 20 persoonen die mij op de reyse te vergeselschappen belooft hadde, versogt te coomen, maer zij hebben het mij ontzeyt, en soo geensints belof-ten gepresenteert. Ende dese alteratie had de commandeur [fol. 1434] Schriek met zijn praat gecauseert, hebbende volgens verclaringe van de Manancaben gesegt: "Wat zal Thomas Dias bij den Coningh doen?, dien handel kan nu niet voortgaen want den gou-verneur zal binnen 14 à 15 dagen naar Batavia vertrekken."¹⁷ Doen zond ik uyt tot bij-

¹⁰ Er staat: 'aan'.

¹¹ Er staat: 'ordere begin'.

¹² Er staat: 'gebeurt'.

¹³ Hoe die reis eind 19e eeuw het gemakkelijkst gedaan werd ziet men bij de IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 477.

¹⁴ Laurens Jansz. Schriek.

¹⁵ Er staat: 'Excuteren'.

¹⁶ Er staat: 'mij'.

¹⁷ Op 18 april 1684 werd Nicolaas Schaghen benoemd tot opvolger van gouverneur Cornelis van Qualbergen; enige maanden later vertrok de nieuwe gouverneur naar Malakka.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

kans in 50 plaatsen om een grooten der Manencaben mij wel bekent te roepen, welcke met 25 mannen tot mij quam, en vroegh wat ik begeerde.

Ik relateerde hem, alsdat ik van de heer Cornelis Van Quaalbergen Gouverneur van Malacca hier gesonden ware, om de groote van zijn land aan te dienen de goede inclinatie die de E. Compagnie hadde om met haar een onderlinge vrundschap, correspondentie,¹⁸ en commercie te houden, ende hoe dat ik nu dierwegen van den Coningh van Paggar Oejem geroopen waare, als in zijn Mayesteyts missive die ik hem daar op thooonde, konde beoogen, ende naardat die gelesen hadde, presenteerde hij mij met zijne bijhebbende mannen te vergeselschappen. En soo heeft onse reyse des anderdaags een aanvancq genomen, zijnde te samen 37 sterk, overmits ik nogh thien persoonen van (de) chialoup mede nam, die niet weygerden hare levens nevens het mijne ten dienste van de E. Compagnie te resiqueeren. Ende zijn met den avont in Ajertiris¹⁹ aangecomen, alwaar ons vroegen waarwaarts onse reyse streckte, die wij antwoordeden naar Pagger Odjom, maar zij replieerde opstonts: "Gij moogt daar niet gaen ende daar is noyt een Christen geweest, nogh noyt hebben wij zulx horen seggen."²⁰ Dese woorden deden mij haast harre sotte ende al te passieuse openie vermercken, dies om haar te vernoegen weder dienden: "Neen, wij gaan slechts twee dagh reysens verder, en dan comen wij wederom"; omdat wij vreesden dat hare brutale onkunde ende passie ons welligt een quaden trek mogte speelen. [fol. 1435]

Van daar zijn wij des anderen daags voort gereyst en hebben des avonts Belemb²¹ becomen. Aldaar hadden wij gelijcke ontmoetinge als voren in Ajertiris, en hebben haar ook op gelijke wijse vergenoegt, ende van daar vertrocken zijnde, quamen wij in een stat Ridan, daarmede al gelijcke ontmoetinge hadde. En zijn soo met den avont in Cata Padan²² geraakt, en als deselver inwoonders gewaar wierden dat ons voornehmen na Paggar Oejoem was strekende, zoo weygerden sij ons huysvestinge, soodat wij genootsaakt waren met goede wagthoudinge en het geweer in de handen onder²³ eenen boom te vernagten. En den dagh doorbreeckende vervorderden²⁴ wij onse reyse, ende ontmoeten doen een rivier daar wij over swommen, en quam soo voort tot de stadt Pacu,²⁵ en daar bestonden zij al mede te vragen waarheen ons voornemen strek-

¹⁸ Er staat: 'correspondente'.

¹⁹ Everwijn, "Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis", 299: "Van Patapahan loopt Zuidwaarts een weg naar Ajer Tiris. Dit is de voornaamste en kortste handelsweg naar Sumatra's Westkust, meer bepaald naar de L kota's".

²⁰ Er staat: al te passieuse.

²¹ Everwijn, "Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis", 352 vermeldt: "Het landschap Sibelinging dat op de grenzen van het gebied der V Kota's ligt". De weg van Air Tiris liep daarheen.

²² Everwijn, "Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis", 352 noemt Kotapadang en Paku als gelegen in het rijkje Kampar Kiri.

²³ Er staat: 'over'.

²⁴ Er staat: 'vervoerde'.

²⁵ Pakoe ligt volgens de kaart van Everwijn in het *Jaarboek van het Mijnwezen*, 1874, I^e deel, aan de linkeroever van de Kampar Kiri, op de plaats waar een ongenoemde bijstroom daarin uitloopt. Uit het reisverhaal van Tomas Dias blijkt dat het aan de rechteroever moet liggen; mogelijk is het dezelfde plaats die op de schetskaart van IJzerman 'Goenoeng Sahilan' heet, waar het voetpad van Air Tiria de Kamper Kiri bereikt, zie IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 39.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

ten, en als haar gesegt wierden naar Paggar Oejom, soo repliceerden sij dat wij, zoo wij sulx seeckerlijk voorhadden, niet met leven daar comen souden. En als ik haar militeusen aart aldaar mede vermerkte, seyde ik haar, dat wij maar weynigh verder hadden te gaen, en ligt wel morgen wederom zouden²⁶ comen, waarmede haar grotelijx contenteerden, seggende dat sulx seer goet zoude zijn.

Van hier hebben onsen wegh verandert, en deselve door de bosschen, en over bergen genomen, hoewel onse gidse ons diverse swarigheden buyten de eerste gemelde van moordenaren en wilt gedierte voorstelde, als van steyle gebergten, moerassen, doornen, en diergelejcke.

't Geene onsen Manencabese compagnions al seer dede afschicken, die ik nogtans door groote aanmoedigingh onse resolutie dede accepteeren, dies wij voor den dagh, aleer des stats inwoonders ontwaakten, dese wegh aannamen, eenlijk om [fol. 1436] gemelde inwoonders van onse wegh geen condschap te geven, en hebben seven dagen het bosch gemarchieert sonder een eenige hutten te ontmoeten. Dan ten eynde van dito dagen quamen wij aan een dorpje daar wij 3 à 4 huysen ter zijden en afgesondert vonden staan, in welcke wij ons retret namen, en rusteden aldaar een geheelen dagh.

En des volgenden daags met het aanligten van den dageraat hernamen wij onse reyse wederom door het bosch, en quamen bij eenen seer hoogen bergh, bij die van den lande Pima genaamt, en belandeden na een thiendaagse marchieeringe in de stad Nugam,²⁷ leggende ontrent vier mijlen van Pagger Oejem. Daar stelden wij ons wederom tot rusten, naardat negen²⁸ personen had uytgesonden om onse aancomste, die ter ordre van d'E. Compagnie en bevel van ambassade door last van de heer Cornelis van Qualbergen gouverneur van Malakka was, te adviseeren, en te vragen ofte het de Mayesteyt geliefde van hier condschap wegens onse comste te nemen, dan ofte gedient ware met onse naderinge²⁹ tot zijn mayesteyts stadt en hof.

Korts daaraan sond³⁰ den Koningh eenen Radia Malyo nevens 500 mannen met gele coninklijke vaandelen (om) mij verwelkomen,³¹ ende uyt den naam van zijn heere en Coningh aandienen, alsdat zijn Mayesteyt over mijnen³² behouden arrivement te hoogsten verblijt ware, ende d'besendinge met volle genegentheyt accepteerde, versoekende vorders dat het mij geliefde naarder en in de stadt te comen, 'tgeen ik beleefdelyck excuseerde, seggende dat het onmannelijk soude sijn, eenige besendinge ofte missive van de E. Heer Gouverneur aan den Mayesteyt zijn Coningh gesonden bij nagt te ontfangen, maar zoo den Coningh aan de E. Compagnie ofte d'Heer Gouverneur van Malacca weldaat en vrunschap geliefde te bewijsen, dat versogte zulx morgen [fol. 1437] bij dage mogte geschieden. En na desen antwoorde belaste de gemelde Radja

²⁶ Er staat: 'zoude'.

²⁷ Waarschijnlijk Ngoengoeno: zie noot 56.

²⁸ Is dit getal door de etiquette voorgescrewen? Boven komen ook negen personen de brief van de Sultan bestellen.

²⁹ Er staat: 'nedrингe'.

³⁰ Er staat: 'soude'.

³¹ Er staat: 'verwelkomende'.

³² Er staat: 'mij'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

Malyo 400 man bij mij te blijven en goede wagt te houden, en daarnaar de inwoorden geboden hebbende mij alle goet onthael te doen en te beschicken alles wat ik mogte begeeren, soo (is) hij met den anderen hondert man wederom na den Coningh gegaan.

Van waar met den dageraat wederom tot mij quam, met last om den brief van de E. Compagnie en de Heer Gouverneur nevens besendinge te ontfangen, doen hebbe ik hem andermael versogt dat hem geliefde zijn Mayesteyt den Conink te versoeken, dat ons voor dien dagh bij zijn Mayesteyt geliefde te excuseeren om³³ 'tselve tot den volgenden uyt te stellen, zoo wij, nu tot ruste geraakt waren, buyten vermoede seer vermoeyt bevonden, gelijk wij ook in waarheyt tot stilte en ruste gecomen zijnde ons bevonden, zoodat alle onse leden met stijvigheyt en vol pijn beseth gevoelden. Met dit antwoort is gedagte Radja Malyo wederom na den Coningh vertrocken.

Op den volgende dagh zijn des Coningshs twee soonen, den prins ende zijn broeder, verselt met omtrent 4000 mannen en coninklijcke statie van instrumenten nevens seer veele caitoquas quitasollen³⁴ met gout beslagen ende andere coninklijke teycken, als goudene schotels tot ons gecomen, om de brieven en geschenken te halen. Den prince aanvaarden den brief en leyde se in een goudene schotel ende droeg se met eygene handen gelijk ook zijne groten met de geschenken in de silvere schotels deden, gaande soo onder 't lossen van hare schietgeweiren met mij verselt na het paleys, treden den prince met den brieff tot zijn vader, blijvende ik beneden onder de groten. Den coningh dede den brief lessen, en naar leesinge dede den Mayesteyt [fol. 1438] mij betels in een grote silvere schotel geven, seggende tot mij dat ik geluckigh ende grootmoedigh was omme soo grooten reyse aan te nemen, en mijn te durven resiquerend onder soo veele gevaren door de bosschen, die niettemin sonder hinder gepasseert ware, ende hij noyt gehoort hadde dat eenigh Christen oyt tot daar genadert ware als dese reys. [Hij] vroegh mij vorder wat drift ofte nieuwigheyt mij daertoe bewogen hadde. Daarop [ik] diende niet anders, dan dat mij d'E. heere Cornelis van Qualbergen, regeerende Gouverneur op Malacca ende mijn³⁵ gebiedende heer, mij belast hadde om na zijn Mayesteyts welstant te vernemen. Daarop [hij] mij weder seyde, zulx is mij ten hoogsten aangenaem en ik houde mij aan geseyde Heer Gouverneur verpligt, en sal nu voortaen als een goet vrund tot zijn E. dienste bereytwilligh zijn.

Eyndelinge zeyde den Coningh dat sijn gesigte swart was over Paducca Radja en al zijn doen, ende daeraan belastede hij Radja Malyo een woonige voor mij claer te maacken, en met alle noodsaackelijckheden te voorsien, jaa al wat ik quame te begeeren mij te doen toecomien, seggende mij met dito radja te willen gaen, 'tgeene na eerbiedigh afscheyt genomen te hebben naarquam, en wierde alsoo tot in mijn geordonnerde residentieplaats geleyt.

Na verloop van 2 à 3 dagen gingh bij eenige van de groten, hun vragende of ik den Coningh niet weder soude mogen spreken, die mij antwoordeden dat zulx niet konde zijn, ende dat het genoegh was met den Coningh ter eerster instantie gesproocken te

³³ Er staat: 'ons'.

³⁴ Quitasol of kippersol, verbasterd Portugees voor zonnescherm. Het woord 'caitoquas' is onbekend.

³⁵ Er staat: 'mij'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

hebben, jaa dat het een buytengewoonlijkheyt, eere en weldaat was.

Dit voorval bij mij wel overwogen zijnde, dede mij besluyten dat dito weygeringe meer uyt een suspisieuse ofte malitieuse opinie der groten ontstonde, dan wel uyt 's Conings [fol. 1439] beveelen ofte begeeren, dewijle de Mayesteyt in eerste ontmoetinge seer affabel en spraaksaam bevonden hadde, dies resolveerden ik haar het volgende te repliceeren, ende seyde: Ik magh ende hebbe ook met den grooten Turck mogen spreken, dat soo grooten vorst is, waaromme magh ik met dese Mayesteyt niet spreken, dewijle dito Turck volgens des Coninx seggen zijn broeder in wapenen is? Hierop swegen dito groten ende dissimuleerden hunne quade inclinatie.

Ondertusschen considereerde ik wat in dat geval om tot (mijn) voorneme te geraken best te doen waare, dogh geen bequamer uytcomste siende dan door de eene ofte andre vont³⁶ daartoe te moeten geraacken, soo is mij dese volgende in den sin gecomen die ook, gelijck UE. Agtbare in vervolgh zullen vernemen, seer goede uytslagh tot het intendit gaf. Ik hadde in den tijt van mijn verblijff al vernomen alsdat de moeder van veelgedagte Radia Malyo in 't hof en voornamentlijck bij de coninginne seer groote en vrije toegangh hadde, dies tot haar gingh en versogte of 't haar geliefde aan de coninginne mijnenwegen een boodschap te doen, en hare Mayesteyt aandienen, hoe dat ik van soo verre onder veele en verscheydene levenspericulen aldaar ware gecomen, zijnde gesonden van de E. Heer Gouverneur van Malacca als een gesant nevens zijn E. brief, dat ik seer geerne nogmaals met den Coning haar Mayesteyts man spreken soude, 'tgeene mij door een antwoort eeniger grooten, van mij dieshalven aangesproken en versogt, in 't³⁷ geheel en als onmogelijck ontsegt ware geworden, 'twelcke mij niet alleen wonder maar ook ongelooflijck scheen, dies haere Mayesteyt eerbiedigh versogt mij daarvan een seecker berigt geliefde [fol. 1440] te doen hebben, opdat mij dienaangaande, zoo 't niet mogte nogh konde geschieden voortaan gerust konde stellen.

De uytkomste hiervan was soo geluckigh als selfs nauwlijx hadde durven hopen, want de Coninginne sond mij wat betels en areecq in een silver schotel met een geel cleet overdekt, die mij vorders bootschapte dat ik over drie dagen van den Coning soude geroepen worden, waardoor mij hooglijck verheugde en wenste den stont al doenmalen geboren geweest.

Onder dit groot verlangen drie dagen overbragt hebbende, zoo is den veelgenoemde Radja Maleyo verselt met 12 personen onder 't dragen van coninklijke vaandelen tot mijn gecomen, mij te kenne gevende dat mij den Coningh dede roopen, en ben soo opstonts met hem na 't paleys gegaan. Ende comende aan de eerste poorte soo zagh ik daar wel³⁸ 100 peroonen met haar zijdgeweir blood in hare handen. Aan de tweede poorte zagh ik vier en aan de derde ingangh maar twee, alle in gelijke postuer met d'eerste. Daar aan zagh den Coningh met sijn Raat sitten, nevens nogh eenige van zijne hagys. En soo haast als ik binnen gecoome waare, dede ik de gewoonelijke eerbewijsinge, waarin den Coningh groot behagen scheen te nemen, also opstonts tot sijne bijheb-

³⁶ Dit betekent 'vondst', 'list'. Er staat: 'voort'.

³⁷ Er staat: 'uyt'.

³⁸ Er staat: 'veel'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

bende grooten seyde: "Ghijlieden hebt mij gesegt dat de Christenen brutale mensen waren die van geenige cortesiën wisten, en ik bevinde dat ghijlieden mij misleyt hebt, also het nu [in] Uliedens en mijne tegenwoordigheyt is gebleecken, dat se behoorlijk cortesiën weten te doen en also geschiet als yemant ander Uliedens...³⁹

Naerdat den coningh zijne redenen hadde geëyndigt, soo versogte ik den Mayesteyt om met zijn gelieven te mogen spreken, waarop tot antwoort gaf: "Gesanten hebben vrijheyt om te spreken". Doen seyde ik: "UE Mayesteyts volcq hebben den Mayesteyt d'ogen als met cleden bedekt, en d'ooren met wax toegestopt, waardoor U Mayesteyt tot nog toe niet gehoort heeft wat in de werelt ommegaat, derhalven 't goede ende 't⁴⁰ quade [fol. 1441] derselver voor sijn Mayesteyts gesigte als nogh verborgen is gebleven," 'tgeene den coningh mij antwoordende⁴¹ toestemde met bijvoeginge van volgende woorden: "Heden zijn mij mijne oogen geopent, om goet⁴² te sien ende noyt sal ik mijns volcqs woorden meer vertrouwen. Wanneer zij sullen spreecken van saacken daarin sij bij gebrek van ondervindinge, soo van niet gesien ofte gehoort⁴³ te hebben, onkundigh sijn." En sprak nogh vorder tot zijne grooten: "Weet ghijlieden wel dat noyt bij mijne regerende voorvaderen in eenige schriften⁴⁴ blijkt dat alhier in dit rijk eenigh Christen geweest is, soodat dese de eerste reys is, dat de heer gouverneur van Malacca Thomas Dias herwaarts heeft gelieven te senden, welckers besoeckinge mij ten hoogsten aangenaam is. Derhalven sal ik ook in mijn gedenckboek doen aanteeken, met specifie meldinge des namen van de heer gouverneur en ambassadeur, omdat voordesen noyt [een] gesant van Malacca in dit rijk van Paggar Oejom is geweest." Ende hem tot mij keerende, beval mij te eysschen wat ik begeerde. Ik antwoorde dat ik wegens d'E. Compagnie nogte mijnenthalve niets begeerde dan de gesontheyt van sijn Mayesteyt te weten, met aanbiedinge van de goede genegentheyt en dienst dergeener, die mij bij gebrek van beter dese besoekinghe en sijn Mayesteyts voeten te kussen bevolen hadde.

Hierop geliefde den Coningh mij wederom te vragen of ik die man was, dewelke zijn Cousijn Radja Ytam op Malacca gehuysvest hadde gehad. "Want in een van sijn missive aan mijn gesonden, segt hij, dat eenen nachoda Thomas Dias hem op Malacca huysvestingh verleent hadde." Toen keerde ik mij tot dito Mayesteyt ende versogte dat mij wegens 't slechte onthael aan dito Cousijn geliefde te excuseeren, want soo doenmaals kondschap gehat hadde,⁴⁵ want geseyde Radja Ytam zijn Mayesteyts Cousijn te zijn, dat mijn pligt seer geerne na vermogen weder aan hem soude gethoont hebben.

Daer liet den Coningh zijne grooten gaan, soodat eenelijck bleve Radja Maleyo, sijn secretaris met drie hagys. Doen quam [fol. 1442] den Conink van zijne theroon aftre-

³⁹ Deze zin is onvolledig.

⁴⁰ Er staat: 'en ten'.

⁴¹ Er staat: 'antwoorden'.

⁴² Er staat: 'godt'.

⁴³ Er staat: 'gehadt'.

⁴⁴ Er staat: 'christen'.

⁴⁵ Hierna volgt: 'want'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

den, ende gingh bij mij op een alcatyf nedersitten, ende vernieuwde sijn eerste vra-ge van wat ik begeerde. Ik antwoorde den Mayesteyt wederom op deselve wijse als voren gedaen hadde van niets te begeeren, maar de Coningh keerde sigh t'mijnnewaerts: "Omdat ghij, nogte geen Christen hier noyt geweest zijt, zoo zult ghij titul van Orang-caya Sudagar⁴⁶ Radja gelieven aantenemen, 'twelcke is te seggen, mijn coopman." En voegde daar nogh bij: "Orangh die dalam Astana", seggende mij morgen ten drie uyren daarvan een bevestiging zoude doen langen, gelijk ook des anderen daags ter geseyder uyren nae het paleys ben gegaen, en binnen tredende sagh ik den Coningh nevens zij-ne grooten op den rigtstoel sitten, en soo haast mijne groetinge gedaen waare, gelief-det den Coning mij te vereeren, dies met verheven stemme uytried: "O Oranghcaya sudagar⁴⁷ Radja, orangh die dalam astana." Icq keerde uyt tot den Coningh, ende⁴⁸ met alle eerbiedighheyt antwoorde: "Doulath tuancu."

Daaraan wierde mij in een silver schotel, nevens een geel vaandel, een met silver beslagen geweir informa gelijck een hellebaart toegebragt met nogh een ringh van tambago suasa⁴⁹ die mij als een teycken van sijn Mayesteyt voor geheel mijn leven vereert wierde. Daarenboven nogh een geschrifte van authoriteyt met sijn opgedrukt zegel, seggende dat mij drie havens gaf ten insigte van den titul aan mij gegeven, als te weten: Siaco, Patapan en Andragiry omme aldaar d'E. Compagnies en mijnen handel te drijven waarover in teecken van acceptatie den Mayesteyt beleefdelijck bedankte,⁵⁰ en als hem vorder om verlof⁵¹ tot spreken versogte, seyde hij zulk niet meer behoef-de te versoeken: "Want zoo yemant eenmalen van [fol. 1443] mij onder mijn volcq van 't paleys aangenomen is, gelijk ik u voor mijn coopman aangenomen hebbe, alsul-cke is geoerloft in en uyt te gaen, en na wille te spreken, gelijck andere van mijn hof doen." Op dit sijn seggen thoonde ik onder eerbewijsinge dankbaarheyt, en seyde: "Sijn Mayesteyt is buyten twijffel wel kundigh, alsdat den Coningh van Johoor sigh Siaco toeeygent, en ook heeft Andragiry een eygen Coning. Den conink antwoorde mij: "Siaca hebbe ik des Johoorsen Conincx kinderen weleer tot een vertreet en speel-plaatse toegestaen, maar vergunne het haar nu niet langer om de boosheyt en verraderije van Paducca Radja bedreven aan mijn cousin Radja Ytam, en zoo den Coningh van Johoor segt dat Siaca hem behoort, ik versoek dat hij bewijst wanneer hem die eygdom toegecome is. Ende Andragiry is mijn vazael⁵² dogh heeft sig opgeworpen

⁴⁶ Er staat: 'sudara'.

⁴⁷ Er staat: 'soedaga'.

⁴⁸ Er staat: 'die'.

⁴⁹ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, 173, sprekende over koper: 'the Malays are fond of mixing this metal with gold in equal quantities and using the composition which they name *swasa*, in the manufacture of buttons, boxes and heads of kries'.

⁵⁰ Er staat: 'bedankt'.

⁵¹ Er staat: 'verlost'.

⁵² Volgens inheeme overlevering bij Netscher, *Indisch archief*, 33, 111, is Indragiri Minangkabaus. Doch reeds in het begin van de 15e eeuw was het een leen van de vorsten van Malakka die later naar Johor uitweken, zie P. A. Tiele, "De Europeers in den Maleischen Archipel", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, deel 1 (1877), 67. Het *Daghregister van Batavia* vermeldt op 20 Juni 1685 dat 'den coning van Andragiry' te Riau is gekomen 'om aan dat hof de gewoonlijke eerbewijsingen af te leggen'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

en rebelligh gestelt, want Andragiry is 't mijne tot aan de zee toe, en heeft gemeldens Coningh nu weynigh tijs geleden mijn vergevenis doen versoecken, 'twelcke ick hem niet hebbe willen vergunnen, nogh ook geen tribuyt van hem willen aannemen, niet alleen om 't misdrijff tegen mij begaan, maar ook omdat hij met buyten lieden heeft raad gepleegt en toegestaen des E. Compagnies volcq in hare logie verradelijck te dooden en te berooven.⁵³ Ende bij aldien d'E. Compagnie goet vind dat ik met mijn volcq daarover wraacke doen, zij gelieve het mij maer aan te kondigen en slechts twee scheepen senden, zoo sullen wij se alle van daar jaegen, ende bij goetvindinge kan d'E. Compagnie aldaar een fortificatie naar eygen believen maacken, en ik zal haar de coopluyden om den handel alsvoren [fol. 1444] te drijven toebeschicken⁵⁴ want Andragiry heeft van sigh selve niets, ja moet selfs hare nodige viandes meest van boven uyt mijn rijk verwagten."

Daarenboven heeft gemelde Conink mij met volle magt gelieven te authoriseeren om in geseyde drie havens ofte handelplaatsen te doen ofte ontdoen, te condemneren en te straffen al wie straffe verdiende, ja selfs bij aldien yemand zigh den dood schuldigh maakte, met den doodt te doen straffen, met confiscatie, en alles in amplissima forma. En bijaldien ymand van sijn volcq voor slaven vercogt mogte worden, dat ik die tot mij nemen soude.

Wijders seyde dito Conink dat hij geresloveert was om aan d'E. Heer Gouverneur antwoort te doen schrijven, en vroegh mij wat hij best soude kunnen tot erkentenis van het gesondene wedersenden, of 't mij goet dagte wat te senden. Ik antwoordde: "UE Mayesteyt wete dat in des E. Compagnies pakhuyzen en mijn heer des Gouverneurs huys quantiteyt van gout is, en dat ik niet herwaarts gesonden was om meerder te halen, maar eenlijck om na zijn Mayesteyts welstant te vernemen, en aanbiedinge van goede genegentheyt als van zijn goede vriend te doen." En mij weder dienende⁵⁵ seyde [hij], dat hij ten hoogsten verpligt was om in besonder een vrind van d'E. Heer Gouverneur te sijn, ende dat hij om te bethoonen hoeser sigh verpligt agtede, eenen van sijn twee paarden van staat⁵⁶ aan d'E. heer gouverneur tot een teycken van 'tselve zoude stieren. Maar ik zeyde niets anders te begeeren ofte versoecken dan dat plaatse in zijn rijck geliefde te vergunnen tot onderlinge handeldrijvingh, 't ware dan in Siaca ofte in Patapan. "Dat", seyde [hij], "zal niet ontbreken zoo wanneer ghij in een derselver wilt adsisteren." Ende als ik nader versogte welcke van de drie [fol. 1445] gemelde plaatsen sijn Mayesteyt voor eerst besonderlijck daartoe geliefde te nomineren, en dat mij diesaangaande een geschrifte geliefde toe te staen en doen overhandigen, ten eynde 't volcq van die plaats zoude kunnen daarvan adviseeren, ofwel [ik] selfs persoonlijck tot haar [zou] gaen en 'tselve haar aankundigen, soo seyde den Coningh dat ik 's anderen daegs soude comen om den brief en antwoort te ontfangen. En na afscheyt

⁵³ Dit doelt op de overval van de Bantammers, anno 1679.

⁵⁴ Er staat: 'toe te schieken'.

⁵⁵ Er staat: 'diende'.

⁵⁶ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, 342 zegt over de Sultan van Minangkabau: 'His usual present on sending an em-bassy is a pair of white horses'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

genomen te hebben, vertrock ik datmael na mijn logys.

's Volgenden daags ben ick tot den Coningh gecomen, en doen wierd mij een brief in antwoord geschreven ter handt gestelt, nevens noogh twee schoone bladen papiers, daar 's Coninx zegel op gedrukt stonde, opdat de Heer Gouverneur en ick ons van d'ee-ne soude dienen om naar Rombou⁵⁷ te schrijven, ende de andere te gebruycken tot andere gelegentheyt ofte plaatse daar het d'E. Heer Gouverneur en mij goet duncken soude, daar ick op diende dat zulk wel ligtelijck op Malacca niet gelooft soude wor-den. Doen heeft zijn Mayesteyt den brief die al verzagelt was weder doen openen ende 'tselve door zijn secretaries, 't geseyde van de chartes blanches⁵⁸ daar doen in schrij-ven. Daarna vroegh mij dito Coningh dat soo hem van mij eenigh missive toequame waarbij hij versekert konde wesent dat dien van mij quam, soo thoondie ik mijn⁵⁹ signet ringh, ende seyde dat deselve met dese toegezagelt soude zijn. Doen belaste hij dito mij mijn signet op een planck binnen in 't paleys te drucken, om als een voorbeelte tot het kennen van eenigh comende brief te bewaren.

Daaraan gaf mij de Coningh met eygen handen zijn betel bladen met⁶⁰ 2 areecas voor-sien, en gaf mij ook een casje daarin ongeschickte beeldenis besloten waren, seggen-de: "Dit is mij van de Commandeur ofte Cdmiraal met Panglima Radja toegesonden, dewelcke hetselve seer bedecktelyck heeft gebragt en [fol. 1446] mij als een bijsondere waardigheyt overhandigt en versogte hij⁶¹ Panglima seer ernstigh dat ik u niet soude toelaten tot mij te geraacken. Neemt het mede en thoont het aan d'E. Heer Gou-verneur opdat dito Heer oordeele van dies Admiraels bescheydentheyt van aan mij soo schandelijck geschenck toe te schicken." Ik hebbe dito casje onder belofte van zijn Mayesteyts begeerte te sullen voltrecken aangevaard, en wierde mij opstonts ook den brief overhandigt, en kortaan nam ik met mogelijke eerbiedigheyt mijn afscheyt van den Coningh en vertrock uyt het paleys, en schickte mij voort om te vertrecken.

Dogh al eer wij daarin vorder gaan, dunkt mij nodigh alhier te insereren seeker voor-val van een Moorese matroos die aldaar in 't habijt in schijn van een hagie ten hof was gecomen, also desulcke onder de Mahumetanen als geoorloft is sonder versoek van verlof ten hoove te gaen. Dies daar stilletjes aangecomen ende tot den Coningh gegaen is, voorgevende heyligh man te zijn en van Micca, de grafbewaarster van haar heylig-sten prophet Mahumet, onlangs gescheiden⁶² te sijn. En also daer in des Conings land gecomen was, om den Mayesteyt te groeten en vordere pligt te presteren, soo hadde hij buyten vermoede dat in zijn Mayesteyts rijck Christenen, en lieden die hoeden droe-

⁵⁷ Er staat: 'Rombon'. Bedoeld wordt het staatje op het schiereiland Malakka 'whose sultan and all the principal offi-cers of state hold authority immediately from Menangkabau [sic] and have written commissions for their respec-tive offices' zoals Marsden zegt (*History of Sumatra*, 332); zie ook T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca, viz. Pinang, Malacca, and Singapore; with a History of the Malayan States on the Peninsula of Malacca*, Vol. II. London: John Murray, 1839, 70-81, 224.

⁵⁸ Er staat: 'blanis'.

⁵⁹ Er staat: 'mij'.

⁶⁰ Er staat: 'en'.

⁶¹ Er staat: 'bij'.

⁶² Er staat: 'gescheiden'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

gen waren, en voegde⁶³ daartoe, als dat dito Mayesteyt te groot en te heyligen Coningh was, om sulcke vervloeckte menschen in zijn rijk te dulden, en soo voort, dies wel soude doen met haar van daar te doen vertrekken en diergelejcke redenen meer. Eene der princen, 'k wete niet uit⁶⁴ wat kragt, dede mij daarvan condtschap hebben, dies ik met mogelijcke spoet nevens eenige van mijnen⁶⁵ gevulgh mij ten hoove begaf.

Dogh also bij 't paleys quamen, ontmoete ons dese heyligen hagie van 't hof uytgaande, en eenige van [fol. 1447] de mijne, hem wat nauw besiende, kende dus hagie ten eersten, en seyde dat hij een droncken Moorse matroos was, en over schult⁶⁶ van Malacca naar Riouw gevlugt, 'twelcke wij binnen comende niet verswegen, maar den Coningh bekent maakte, die na eenige verdere woorden wisselinge, te lange om hier te repeteren, zeyde: "Heeft hij wijn gedroncken en is hij droncken geweest, soo is hij een geen hagie maar een bedrieger, door deser ofte geener list alhier gesonden. Gaat, volgt hem, en slaat hem dood." Op dit bevel sagen wij terstont 3 à 400 mannen uytstuyven om 'tselve te executeren, en soo heeft dit bedriegelyk obstacul ook een eynde gehad, latende dan dien heyligen hagie, soo zullen wij ons gelaten verhael van onse wederreyse hervatten.

Die wij na voorgemelde afscheytneminghe ondernamen, wordende verselt van veel-gemelde Radja Malyo, met een witte quitasol met veele quasten versien, nevens suite van 3000 soldaten die gestadigh hare schietgeweiren losbranden, totdat wij 's avonds digte bij de stad Luca⁶⁷ aangenomen waren, vanwaar dese Radja Malyo de boven gemelde 3000 mannen wederom na het hof dede keere. Terwijle volgde wij doen sonder vreeese den wegh nae 't gemelde Luca, en voorbij Luca liep een rivier Quantam genaamt. Van daar reysde ik voort tot een plaats Maranty⁶⁸ geheeten, en van hier naa de stad Sunipo.⁶⁹ Van hier quamen wij aan de stad Ungam,⁷⁰ en van Ungam gescheyden sijnde geraakte wij na een gebergte van dien landaart Madiangem⁷¹ genaamt, ende van 't eerste gemelde Luca af tot desen bergh toe is land daar gout valt, dat van zelfs daer groeit.

Van hier sijn wij in een ander stad Ajer Tanam⁷² gehieten geraakt, van daar tot een andere stadt geheeten Pancalan Serre⁷³ en soo vorder tot Turusan,⁷⁴ en van Turusan sijn wij gegaen nae Catobaro, en hier hebbe [fol. 1448] ick met het volcq wegens des E.

⁶³ Er staat: 'vroege'.

⁶⁴ Er staat: 'in 't'.

⁶⁵ Er staat: 'mij'.

⁶⁶ Er staat: 'schilt'.

⁶⁷ Siloeka, vermeld bij IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 99, 103 enz.

⁶⁸ Menganti, N. W. van Siloeka.

⁶⁹ Beneden heet deze stadt Sumpo, d. i. Soempo, noordwest van Menganti.

⁷⁰ Oengan, ten N. van Soempoer.

⁷¹ Mandi Angin.

⁷² Air Tanang bij IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, bij de grens der Padangsche bovenlanden.

⁷³ Pangkalan Sarasi. Hier wordt (IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 37) de Batang Sibajang voor grotere vaartuigen geschikt.

⁷⁴ Taroesan.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

Compagnies negotie gesprocken, haar verseeckerende dat sij in 't minste geen vrese voor Paducca Radja behoeven te hebben. Van hier gingen wij tot de stad Merorum⁷⁵ en van daar tot de stad Merobiaan, en van hier ontmoetende wij de stad Tanjong Bale,⁷⁶ van daar de stad Passar Lama,⁷⁷ van daar scheydende sijn aan de stadt Oedjom Boket⁷⁸ gecomen, en van hier tot de stad Damo,⁷⁹ van Damo tot de stad Sava,⁸⁰ van Sava tot de stad Cuncto,⁸¹ en van Cuncto tot de stad Lagumo, van Lagumo aan Liepa Cain,⁸² van hier tot de stad Pacu, van daar tot de stad Calubee. Van hier hebben wij ons begeven naar Padan, en van Catapadan zijn wij gecomen aan Belenbun, en van hier zijn wij in Ajer Tiris aangecomen.

In alle dese steden heb ik het volcq tot de negotie van de E. Compagnie aangemoedigt, hun verseekerende,⁸³ dat sij Paducca Radja niet behoeven te ontsien nogte vreesen, dat sij maar souden comen in Patapan of op Malacca, waer dat zij mij mogten vinden ('tgeene ook alle beloofden te zullen doen ten dienste van d'E. Compagnie) en ook souden kunnen handelen. En van hier gescheyden zijnde ben ik, nadat alles gelijck hier relateerde verrigt hadde, behouden in Patapan weder gekeert, alwaar een missive van UE mij in handen quam, welkers inhout mij dede resloveeren, UE bevel ten spoedigsten te gehoorsamen, dies ook ten eersten met veel gemelde Radja Malyo, den mede gecomene coninklijke gesant, na Malacca ben wedergekeert ende godlof behouden aangelandt.

Naardat UE Agbare met alle mogelijcke kortheyt van 't voorgevallene hebbe berigt, agte ik U Edele ook niet qualijck sullen nemen, dat van de steden in 't reysen aangedaaen een korte verclaringe hier bij gevoegt werden, volgens hare inwoonders en derselver hanteeringen. En sullen ons begin nemen⁸⁴ met het hof van Paggar Odjem alwaar 't laatste aangecomen, [fol. 1449] en van waar 't eerste wederom gescheiden⁸⁵ zijn, ende seggen, dat aan 't hof wel 8000 mannen resideert, buyten den ommetrek, daarvan niet kan spreecken alsoo 't niet gesien hebbe, en daarnaar te vernemen zoude mij ongetwijffelt suspect hebben gemaackt.

Luca, het naaste daarvan, besit ontrent 400 mannen. Haare voornaamste handteringen zijn met den landbouw en het goudt te soeken, dat sij seer ligt becomen, want graven ofte nemen van de aarde, en doen 'tselve in vlacke houtenne backen, die sij aan 't water en in 't water zoo lange drayen⁸⁶ en dompelen, totdat zij het minerael van de

⁷⁵ Mariring.

⁷⁶ Tandjong.

⁷⁷ Pasar Ramoh.

⁷⁸ Oedjoeng Boekit.

⁷⁹ Domo.

⁸⁰ Padang Sawah.

⁸¹ Koentoe.

⁸² Lipat Kain.

⁸³ Er staat: 'verseekerde'.

⁸⁴ Er staat: 'UE: men'.

⁸⁵ Er staat: 'geschieden'.

⁸⁶ Er staat: 'dragen'.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

aarde hebben uytgesondert, 'tgeene daar uytnehmen en bewaren.

Maranty is een goudrijk land, dog wort van den Coningh den inwoonderen, die van veel grooter getal zijn dan van 't voorgemelde steetje, verboden 'tselve te graven of te soecken, en moeten haar ten principalen met den landbouw erneren, dan heeft ontrent 2 à 300 negotianten.

Sumpo wort ontrent van 8000 borgeren bewoont, is mede goutrijk, maar wort om voorgemelde reden al mede niet gesogt, dies haar almede op voorige maniere sustenteren; heeft ontrent 200 coopluyden.

Ungaan heeft ontrent 800 borgeren en is met voorige van eene constitutie, dan heeft na advenand van ingestenen meer negotianten alsoo die daar ook het getal van 200 ontrent bereycken.

Den bergh Mandy Argam is mede goudrijck maer word niet bewoont.

Ajer Taman heeft omtrent 200 mannen alle landbouwers.

Pacalan Sirre⁸⁷ besit ontrent 1000 inwoonderen, die uitgesondert 200 negotianten alle landbouwers zijn.

Turusan ontrent 700 ingesetenen daaronder 100 negotianten en de rest al bouwlieden. [fol. 1450]

In Costa Bato 200 inwoonderen waarvan de helft haar met landbouw, en d'andere helft met negatie erneren.

Mererin heeft ontrent 1000 mannen daaronder 300 traffiquanten.

Merobia 400 alle landbouwers.

Tanjongh Bale besit 2000 borgeren, alle mede landbouwers uytgenomen 500 coopluyden.

Passer Rama 1000 daaronder 400 negotianten.

Oedjom Buqueet 400 alle landbouwers.

Dama heeft wel duysent, daarvan ontrent 100 handelaars.

Padan Savan 500 daarvan 200 trafycq doen.

Cuncto⁸⁸ 2000, daarvan ontrent 500 coopluyden.

Liepa Cain ontrent 100 alle bouwlieden.

Paccu 500 landbouwers.

Catapadan ontrent gelijck getal, alle bouwlieden.

Ridam slechts 50 ackerlieden.

Ajer Tiris besit wel 10000 inwoonders,⁸⁹ onder welcke ontrent 500 handel drijvende.

Alle dese hebbé ick na gissingh opgestelt, om UE daarmede te dienen, want 'tselve te

⁸⁷ Vergelijk met de volgende cijfers die bij IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 38 volgens opgaven van een controleur bestaat thans het aantal huizen van Pangkalan Sarei uit 15, van Taroesan uit 8, Meriring 10, Tandjoeng Balit 20, Pasar Ramoh 4, Oedjoeng Boekit 3, Koentoe 30, Lipat Kain 10, de bevolking is dus wel erg gedund. Verschillende schrijvers [meldt De Haan] spreken van grote verhuizing uit deze streken op het eind van de 19e eeuw.

⁸⁸ Dit was volgens IJzerman nog de belangrijkste plaats, het aantal werkbare mannen was 300.

⁸⁹ Everwijn, "Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis", 351, schat de gehele bevolking der V kota's waarin Ajer-tiris lag op 10.000 zielen.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

ondervragen hebbe ik om⁹⁰ geen quaed vermoede [te] verwecken⁹¹ niet durven onderstaen, also Paducca Radja genoegh heeft gepoogt om die landaard in ergwaen te brennen. Alle voorgemelde plaatsen zijn naar 's landts maniere met paggers gefortificeert, dies⁹² onder de naam van steden gestelt hebbe, maar op de tusschenleggende dorpen en gehugten heb ik om haaren menigte niet memorie kunnen behouden.

Onderstont UE trouwschuldige en gehoorsame dienaar, en geteekent Thomas Dias,
in margine Malacca den 18en September 1684.

⁹⁰ Er staat: 'van'.

⁹¹ Er staat: 'verrecken'.

⁹² Er staat: 'diest'.



3 English translation¹

Timothy P. Barnard, “Thomas Dias’ Journey to Central Sumatra in 1684”.

FROM: DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA CASTLE, ANRI HR 2497, BEGINNING WITH FOL. 1431.

Honourable Sirs.²

After Your Excellencies had graciously commissioned me on 28 May [1684], following a voyage of thirteen³ days I arrived on board the yacht the *Orangie* (lying at anchor off the harbour in the Siacase [Siak] River), from where, having tarried there two days, I continued my journey to Patapan, where [I] arrived safely on the 20th of the said month⁴ after seven days⁵ delay, and immediately handed over Your Excellencies’ letter to the *Dato Bandara*.⁶ As is the custom of the country, this *Dato Bandara* was accompanied by a very large entourage and, observing the customary courtesies, he enquired after the health of His Excellency the Lord Governor, to which I replied that [I] had left the Governor in Malacca in good spirits. He also enquired if the Lord Governor would grant him permission to dispatch his *gonting* to Aceh. I replied to him [that] I trusted in an affirmative answer, and he said that he would go ahead as planned. After three days [spent] on the coast, I had sent the letters from Your Excellencies, including that to Paduca Tuan who is the regent of Air Tiris, delivered.⁷ He has some 10,000 people in his territory, among whom are many merchants, and I commissioned some of them to sell the textiles of the Honourable Company, which was indeed done in the space of two months. Consequently some who came down to the yacht in search of them were unable to procure any.

Around this time a letter reached me from Sultan Siry Pada Moeda, King of Paggar Oejom, accompanied by an escort of nine persons, in which he summoned me to come to Paggar Oejom where he resided. Having made sure that the letter really did

¹ First published by F. de Haan: “Naar midden Sumatra in 1684”, *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 39 (1897), 327-366. This is a revised and collated version of De Haan’s transcription. This English translation excludes comments on the correct transcription of the old Dutch words.

² The Governor and Political Council in Malacca.

³ In the manuscript ‘13th’.

⁴ June.

⁵ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*. London: Thomas Payne, 1784, second edition, 357 says that the voyage to Patapan took eight days.

⁶ A *Datu Bendara* was still in charge of the district (*negorij*) of Patapan at the end of the 19th century, see J. A. van Rijn van Alkemade, “Beschrijving eenen Reis van Bengkalis langs de Rokan-rivier naar Rantau Binoewang”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 32 (1883), 21-48. R. Everwijn, “Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis in het rijk van Siak”, *Natuurkundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 29 (1867), 298, estimated the population to be 350 people and called it ‘the principal trading place in the Siak Highlands’. In the 19th century, gold exports from Minangkabau still took place via Patapan not via the west coast, see Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, 355.

⁷ Southwest of Patapan on the Kampar Kanan, J. W. IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra. Tocht van Padang naar Siak onder leiding van den hoofd-ingenieur der staats-spoorwegen J. W. IJzerman*. Haarlem: F. Bohn, 1895, 149, ‘No European penetrated these regions because: orang V kota lawan Companie’.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

some from the said King, I decided to heed this summons from him, not least because I believed that the affairs of the Honourable Company are especially important there. I found almost twenty inhabitants of Patapan prepared to accompany me on this journey.

Because this expedition could not be accomplished without facing danger, for the reason that various *rajas* who live over the mountains in this region are suspicious of this correspondence between their chief ruler and the Honourable Company and consequently would not fail to seize the opportunity to obstruct it with every means at their disposal, hence, the general consensus was that this journey should not proceed along the well-trodden paths,⁸ but should take to the forest despite the danger posed by robbers and wild animals, which would not readily attack so strong a party.

At this point so as to put an end to the delay, it was necessary to find an experienced guide and I ordered that such a man be found while I occupied myself with obtaining the necessary provisions and requisites. I had just spent about two days doing this when the admiral,⁹ Captain Louw, came sailing up the Patapan River with trumpets blaring, and having moored in front of my residence he disembarked from his sloop to [meet] me on land. After I had welcomed him, when I enquired the reason for his arrival, he said he had orders to visit and investigate what had been happening. I asked him to produce this order, and thereupon the said admiral showed me a letter bearing neither name nor signature, which rapidly fed my suspicion that it was some ruse on his part to excuse his grandeur which completely exceeded the bounds of what was proper. Therefore I asked him to depart as soon as possible.

Despite this, he lingered there two days and, while I busied myself negotiating for all that I needed for my intended journey, I summoned the aforementioned twenty persons who were to accompany me. But they refused to present themselves and in no way honoured their promise. This change of heart was caused by Commander Schriek and his wagging tongue. According to the Minangkabau, he had asked: ‘What business has Thomas Dias with the King? [Plans for] trade could not be made because the Governor would depart for Batavia within fourteen or fifteen days.’¹⁰ I thereupon dispatched a [message] to almost fifty places to summon the great men of the Minankabau among my acquaintance to come [to visit] me and twenty-five gave heed to this [summons] and came to ask what I wanted.

I declared to them that I had been sent there by Mr Cornelis van Quaalbergen, Governor of Malacca, to inform the great men of that land of the upright intention of the Honourable Company to establish reciprocal [bonds of] friendship, correspondence and trade, and why for that reason I had been summoned by the King of Paggaruyung. I could produce proof of this by showing them His Majesty’s missive and, when they had read it, they presented me with the men who had escorted them to accompany me.

⁸ The easiest way to make the journey in the late 19th century can be found in IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 477.

⁹ Laurens Jansz Schriek.

¹⁰ On 18 April 1684, Nicolaas Schaghen was appointed Cornelis van Quaalbergh’s successor. However, the new governor only sailed to Malacca a few months later.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hence our journey began the next day. Altogether we were thirty-seven men strong as I also took ten crew members of the sloop who were prepared to risk their lives alongside mine in the service of the Honourable Company. By evening we had reached Air Tiris,¹¹ where we were asked what our destination was. When we answered Pagarruyung, they immediately replied: ‘You must not venture thither for no Christian has ever been there. Such a thing is unheard of.’ These words advised me of their foolish and too readily intemperate opinion, and to humour them [I replied]: ‘No, we are only going to journey another couple of days and then we shall return’, because we feared that brutal ignorance and intemperance might cause them to do us some harm.

The next day we journeyed onwards from there and made Belembay;¹² there we immediately had a similar confrontation to that we had had in Air Tiris and we allayed their qualms in a similar fashion. Having departed from there, we came to the town of Ridan, where we were met in the same way, and so by evening we reached Cata [Kota] Padan.¹³ However, when the inhabitants were told that our intended goal was Pagarruyung, they refused us shelter so that we were forced to spend the night under a tree, keeping careful watch [and] clutching our weapons in our hands. At break of day we journeyed on and came to a river which we swam across and reached the town of Pacu,¹⁴ and there they stood ready again bursting with questions about the goal of our journey. When they were informed it was Pagarruyung, they replied that if we had indeed spoken the truth we would not reach that place alive. As I had taken note of their bellicose nature, I said that we had almost reached our journey’s end, and would perhaps return by the morrow, which pleased them mightily and they said that this would be very good indeed.

Thenceforward we changed our route, and took that through the forest and over the mountains even though the guide told us of various dangers, quite apart from those posed by robbers and wild animals, including precipitous mountains, swamps, thorns and the like.

Terror seized the hearts of our Minangkabau companions. However, after a great deal of encouragement they accepted our decision. We set out before the inhabitants of the town awoke so that they might remain ignorant of our route, and we marched through the forest for seven days without coming across a single hamlet. Finally, at the end of the stated number of days, we came to a small hamlet consisting of three to four houses standing in complete isolation to which we retired and rested there a whole day.

¹¹ Everwijn, “Verslag van een onderzoekingsreis” 209, ‘From Patapahang the road to Air Tiris turns southwards. This is the principal and shortest trading route to the west coast of Sumatra, especially the L kotas.’ (The Limapuluh Kota).

¹² Everwijn, “Verslag”, 352 says: ‘The district of Sibelingbing which lies on the border of the V Kota’. The road from Air Tiris does pass through there.

¹³ Everwijn “Verslag”, 352 states that Kotapadang and Paku are situated in the small realm of Kampar Kiri.

¹⁴ According to Everwijn’s map in the *Jaarboek van het Mijnwezen*, 1874, Vol. 1, the town of Paku is situated on the left bank of the Kampar Kiri at a place where an unnamed tributary flows into it. From our travel account, it seems that it should be located on the right bank. Perhaps it is the same place marked Gunung Salihan on IJzerman’s sketch map, where the footpath from Air Tiris reaches the Kampar Kiri. see IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 39.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The next day at the crack of dawn we resumed our journey through the forest and came to a very high mountain called Pima¹⁵ by the local people. Finally, after a ten-day march, [we] ended up in the town of Nugam,¹⁶ about four miles from Pagarruyung. We rested there, having first dispatched nine¹⁷ persons to announce our arrival on the orders of the Company and [bearing] letter of credence from Cornelis van Quaalbergen, Governor of Malacca, and to enquire if it would please His Majesty to take cognizance of our arrival and if he would graciously permit our further approach to His Majesty's town and court. Shortly afterwards, the King sent a certain Raja Maliyo and 500 men carrying yellow royal standards to welcome me and to inform [me] that in the name of his Lord and King that His Majesty was delighted with my safe arrival, and [would] receive the embassy with great pleasure. To this he appended an invitation to me to enter into the town, which I politely declined, saying that it would extremely discourteous for any embassy or letter from His Excellency the Governor to be received by the King at night. Should the King wish to prove his friendship for the Honourable Company and the Governor of Malacca, this should take place on the morrow during the day. When he had received this reply, the said Raja Maliyo ordered 400 men to remain with me and keep good watch and, having commanded the inhabitants to welcome me wholeheartedly and to provide whatever I might desire, he returned to the King with the other hundred men.

At the break of dawn he returned to me carrying orders to receive both the letter of the Honourable Company and the Lord Governor and the embassy. Again I asked him to beseech His Majesty the King graciously to excuse us again that day and to postpone the same until the following day, because now that we had rested, we had discovered that we were exhausted, which indeed was the truth. Once our tranquillity and repose had been restored, our limbs felt stiff and ached cruelly. With this reply, the said Raja Maliyo returned to the King.

The next day, the King's two sons, the [crown] prince and his brother, accompanied by around 4,000 men and the royal splendour of music instruments, plus very many *caitoquas* [and] parasols¹⁸ trimmed with gold and silver and other royal emblems, came to us to fetch the letters and gifts. The prince accepted the letter and laid it in a golden dish which he bore in his own hands. The great ones of the realm carried the gifts on silver dishes, while salutes were loosed from their firearms, and [they] escorted me to the palace staircase. Here the prince bore the letter to his father while I waited below with the great men. The King had the letter read, and after this had been done His Majesty presented me with the requisites for betel quids on a large silver salver, informing me that I was fortunate and courageous to undertake such a great journey, daring to brave such great dangers passing through the forest and in spite of all had arrived without hindrance. And he had never heard of any Christian who had come as far as

¹⁵ Not found. Possibly Mount Sinnoh on the border of NEI Government territory.

¹⁶ Probably Ngungun, see below note 25.

¹⁷ This number was probably prescribed by etiquette. More than nine persons had accompanied the Sultan's letter.

¹⁸ *Quitasol* or *kippersol*, bastard Portuguese for a sunshade or parasol. It is not clear what *caitoquas* means.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

[I] had on this journey. He enquired what sort of passion or curiosity had driven me to undertake it. I replied, nothing else other than that the Honourable Mr Cornelis van Quaalbergen, incumbent Governor of Malacca, who was my superior, had ordered me to enquire after His Majesty's well-being. To which he replied that he was very happy to hear this and he was obliged to the Lord Governor. In future as a good friend he would be at His Excellency's service.

Finally, the King said that he had been ashamed by Paduka Raja and his machinations, and thereupon he ordered Raja Maliyo to prepare a dwelling for me and to provide me with anything I might require, yea indeed, everything that I desired should be given me, saying to me I should go with the aforesaid Raja, which I did after taking my respectful leave and I was escorted to the place of residence ordained for me.

After two or three days had elapsed, I went to some of the great men, asking them if I could speak to the King again. They answered me that this would not be possible and that it was enough to have spoken with the King on the first occasion. Indeed, this had been an extraordinary honour and act of beneficence.

Having weighed up the situation, I reached the conclusion that this refusal had been caused more by the suspicious and malicious opinions held by the nobles than by any command or desire of the King as I had found His Majesty very affable and talkative. Hence I resolved to reply to them¹⁹ in this fashion and said: "I could and had indeed spoken with the Great Turk, who is such a great ruler, therefore why should I not speak to His Majesty again, since the King himself claims that this Turk is his brother in arms?" This silenced the said great men and disarmed their evil intentions.

In the meantime, I mulled over what would be the best course for me to take to attain [what I wanted], but could come to no better solution than to resort to some ruse or other to achieve it. Hence, I devised a scheme which, as Your Excellency will read hereinafter, did produce an extremely good result. During my time there I had already heard that the mother of oft-mentioned Raja Maliyo had great and ready access to the court, especially to the Queen. Therefore, I approached her and asked her if she would graciously hand over a message of mine to the Queen and draw Her Majesty's attention to the fact that I had come so far, risking many and varied perils to my life as I had been sent by His Excellency the Governor of Malacca as an envoy bearing His Excellency's letter. [Saying] that I very greatly desired to speak to the King, Her Majesty's husband, again. The reply I had received from some of the great men to whom I had spoken on this matter and requested the same was that this was absolutely impossible. Hence they refused. This seemed strange to me not to mention trumped up. Hence, I respectfully begged Her Majesty to send an affirmative message, so that, if it stated that this would not be possible, my mind would be put at rest.

The result of this was more auspicious than I could have possibly dared hope for because the Queen sent me some betel nuts or arecas on a silver salver covered with a yellow cloth with the message that I would be summoned by the King in three days' time. This pleased me immensely and immediately joy and expectation that this would

¹⁹ The aforesaid nobles.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

indeed happen were born within me.

Having spent three days [nurturing] this great hope, the oft-mentioned Raja Maliyo came to me with twelve persons carrying royal standards to announce to me that the King had summoned me. I immediately accompanied him to the palace and on arrival at the first gate I saw there at least a hundred people with their unsheathed swords in their hands. At the second gate I saw four and at the third gate just two, all in the same stance as those at the first. There I saw the King sitting with his Council and just a few of his *hajis*. As soon as I entered, I hastened to perform the appropriate courtesies to which the King seemed to attach great importance as he said at once to the great men who were present: ‘You told me that the Christians were crude people, utterly ignorant of any courtesies. I find that you have misled me, and now it has been shown in my presence and yours that they are pretty well-versed in the same courtesies you possess.’²⁰

After the King had finished, I requested leave to speak to His Majesty, to which he answered: ‘The Envoy has leave to speak.’ I said: ‘Your Majesty’s people have pulled the wool over your eyes, and plugged your ears with wax, consequently Your Majesty has not yet heard what is going on in the world, and, whether this good or bad, it is kept hidden from Your Majesty’s sight.’ To this the King replied to me in the affirmative, adding the following words: ‘Today my eyes have been opened so that now I can see clearly and never again shall I trust the words of my people whenever they speak of matters of which they are ignorant, either because they have not investigated them or because they have neither observed or heard of of them.’ He then addressed his great men: ‘Are you aware no text records that any Christian has ever visited any of my ruling ancestors, so, when it has pleased the Lord Governor of Malacca to send Thomas Dias hither, this is the first such visit here and I am greatly delighted with his arrival. Therefore write this down in my chronicle, specifically mentioning the names of the Lord Governor and of the Ambassador, because never before this has an envoy from Malacca ventured to the realm of Pagarryung.’ He then turned to me and commanded me to request whatever I desired. I replied in the name of the Honourable Company that I desired no other than to be assured of His Majesty’s good health affirming its affection and service, which for lack of anything better had given me orders to kiss His Majesty’s feet.

Hereafter it pleased the King to enquire of me whether I was the man who had offered his cousin Raja Hitam accommodation in Malacca: ‘Because in one of the letters he sent me he mentioned that one *nachoda* Thomas Dias had offered him shelter in Malacca.’ Thereupon I turned to His Majesty and begged that he would graciously overlook the paltry reception of his cousin in Malacca because, had I known that the said Raja Hitam was His Majesty’s cousin, I would once more right heartily have shown my duty to him.

The King then dismissed his nobles, so all who remained were Raja Maliyo, his secretary and three *hajis*; the King descended from his throne and seated himself along-

²⁰ Here there is clearly a break.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

side me on an Al-Qatif carpet, and once again repeated to me his first question, asking what I wanted. I again answered His Majesty the King in the same manner I had done before, saying that there was nothing I desired, but the King plied me with it once more. He said, ‘As I have never had a Christian here before, I would be honoured if I would accept the title of *Orang Kaya Saudagar Raja*, in other words “my merchant”,’ and he went on to say, “*orang di dalam istana* (courtier)” and said that ‘he would send me confirmation of this at ten o’clock tomorrow morning’. The following day I went to the palace at that same hour and when I entered I saw the King and his notables sitting in judgement, but hardly had I paid my respects to honour the King but he raised his voice and called: ‘Oh, *Orang Kaya Saudagar Raja*, [my] courtier.’ I turned to the King and replied with the greatest respect: ‘Daulat Tuan.’

Then a silver dish, a yellow standard and a weapon inlaid with silver resembling a halberd were brought to me as well as a ring of *tembaga suasa*,²¹ which I shall cherish as a token from His Majesty as long as I shall live. This was accompanied by an official document to which his seal was affixed, announcing as the deed showed he had granted me three harbours, to wit: Siak, Patapan and Indragiri in which I could pursue the trade of the Honourable Company and that of my own. As a token of acceptance, I thanked His Majesty courteously and begged him leave to speak and he said on such an occasion nothing more needed to be said: ‘Because, once I have accepted such a person among my courtiers, as you have been appointed my merchant, he is permitted to come and go at will and to speak when he chooses just as other members of my court do’. When he said this, I displayed my respectful gratitude and said: ‘His Majesty is undoubtedly aware of the fact that the King of Johor has appropriated Siak as his own and that Indragiri has its own ruler’, to which he answered: ‘Earlier I granted Siak to the Johor royal children as a place of rest and relaxation, but because of the anger and treachery of Paduka Raja against my cousin Raja Hitam, I have withdrawn my permission, and if the King of Johor claims that Siak belongs to him, I demand that he produce evidence of when it passed into his hands. Moreover, Indragiri is my vassal²² as far as the sea coast and, according to reports but a short while ago, the King had sought my forgiveness which I was not prepared to grant him or to receive any tribute from him, not just because of his personal iniquity against me, but because he had consulted outsiders and consented to allow the servants of the Honourable Company there to be treacherously slain in their lodge, to be killed and robbed.²³ Should the Honourable Company approve that I avenge this with my army, all it has to do is to inform me of this and to send just two ships. In this manner, we should be able to expel them from

²¹ With reference to copper, Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, 173, reports that, the Malays were fond of mixing this metal with gold in equal quantities and using the composition, which they called *swasa*, in the manufacture of buttons, boxes and the hilts of krises.

²² According to indigenous tradition in Netscher, *Indisch Archief*, 33, 111, Indragiri was Minangkabau. Nevertheless, as early as the beginning of the 16th century it was held in fief by the rulers of Malacca, who later fled to Johor (Tiele, “Europeers”, 1, 67). On 20 June 1685, the *Daily Journals of Batavia Castle* records that ‘the King of Indragiri’ had come to Riau ‘to pay his customary obeisance at the court’.

²³ This refers to the attack by the people of Bantam in 1679.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

there and [with my] assent the Honourable Company can build a fort there according to its own specifications and I shall arrange for it to have the merchants there to trade as before, because Indragiri produces nothing itself, yea even has to wait for its bare essentials [to be brought] from my kingdom'.

The King added that it pleased him to authorize me full powers of jurisdiction over the three ports or trading places, to condemn and to punish all who deserved punishment, yea I could even execute he who had committed a capital crime and confiscate his estate, all this in the widest sense. Should a person sell his people as slaves, I should be able to claim them.

Moreover, the King announced that he was planning to write a reply to His Excellency the Governor and enquired of me what would be the most suitable presents he could send back so as the acknowledge what had been sent and if I thought that such reciprocation was a good idea. I replied: 'Your Most Excellent Majesty is aware that in the Honourable Company's warehouses and in those of My Lord Governor's lies a quantity of gold, and that I had not been sent hither to collect more, but only to learn of His Majesty's good health and to offer affection as a good friend should do.' To which he replied that he was mightily obliged to be such a friend of His Excellency the Governor and to display this he felt obliged to send one of his state horses²⁴ to the Lord Governor as a token of this. I said that nothing else was desired and to beg that it would please him grant a place in his kingdom for reciprocal trade whether that be Siak or Patapan. 'That', [he] said, I 'will certainly take place if you will assist in [achieving] the same'. And when I questioned more closely about which of the three aforementioned places His Majesty would especially care to nominate, and if he would graciously present me with a document confirming this and hand it over to me so that the local people could be advised of this, or whether [I should] personally approach them to announce it to them myself, the King replied that I should come to him next day to receive the letter and the answer. Hereafter, I took my leave and returned to my lodgings.

The next day I went to the King and a written letter of reply was put into my hands as well as two clean sheets of paper onto which the King's seal had been affixed so that the Lord Governor and I could use one of these to write to Rombou,²⁵ the other to be used by either the Lord Governor or me on another occasion or in another place whenever the Lord Governor and I should think this fitting. Whereupon I said that that it was very likely that such [papers] would not be believed in Malacca. Whereupon His Majesty re-opened the letter which had been sealed and his secretaries inscribed on that same [letters] stating that they were *cartes blanches*. The King then asked me how he could be assured that a letter really came from me. Thereupon I showed him my signet

²⁴ Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, 342, speaking of the Sultan of Minangkabau states that 'his usual present on sending an embassy is a pair of white horses.'

²⁵ *Rombou*, here: Rombon. It refers to the small state on the Malay Peninsula 'whose sultan and all the principal officers of state hold authority immediately from Minangkabau and have written commissions for their respective officers', see Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, p. 332. See also T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca, viz. Pinang, Malacca, and Singapore; with a History of the Malayan States on the Peninsula of Malacca*, Vol. II. London: John Murray, 1839, 70, 81, 224.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

ring and said that such would be sealed with the same. Thereupon he ordered me to impress my signet ring onto a plank in the palace, where it would be kept as an example to be compared with any incoming letter.

After this the King personally presented me with his betel quid, filled with two areca nuts and also gave me a small coffer in which there were two inappropriate images, saying: ‘This was sent me from by commander or Admiral with the Panglima Raja, who conveyed it in the greatest secrecy and presented to me as something of uncommon value and he had entreated the *Panglima* very earnestly that I should not allow you to reach me. Take it with you and show it to His Excellency the Governor for his Lordship’s judgement of this Admiral’s discretion in presenting me with such a scandalous gift.’ I accepted this coffer and promised that I would execute His Majesty’s wishes and I was also straightway handed the letter. Shortly thereafter I took my leave with the greatest respect and left the palace and prepared for my departure.

However, at this point, before proceeding any further, I think it necessary to insert here what happened to a Moorish sailor who appeared to be in the habit of coming here to the court in the guise of a *haji*, conduct allowed among Muslims without having to request permission. It seems that he had recently come covertly and went to the King professing to be a holy man recently departed from Mekka, the custodian of the grave of their most holy saint the Prophet Muhammad. He had come to His Majesty’s realm to greet the King and offer his duties but was without any suspicion that in His Majesty’s country there were Christians and people who wore hats, adding that His Majesty was too great and sacred a King to suffer such accursed people in his kingdom *et cetera*, saying that it would be best to expel them and other suchlike reasoning. One of the princes, I do not know by whose orders, informed me of this and I and some of my entourage hastened to the court as quickly as possible.

As we reached the palace, we met this holy *haji* exiting from the building and, getting a better look at him, one of my men recognized this *haji*, saying that he was a drunken Moorish sailor who had fled to Riau from Malacca because of his debts. When we entered we did not keep this news to ourselves, but told the King who, after some exchange of words, too long to repeat here, said: ‘He has drunk wine and has been inebriated, hence he is no longer a *haji* but an imposter, sent here for some trickery or other. Go after him and strike him dead.’ Upon this order, we immediately saw some three to 400 men dash out to execute him and so this deceitful hindrance met his end. Passing on from this holy *haji*, we shall once more take up our account.

After we attended the aforesaid farewell ceremony, we were escorted by the oft-mentioned Raja Maliyo with a white parasol adorned with many tassels and a suite of 3,000 soldiers who fired their weapons at regular intervals until we reached the vicinity of the town Luca²⁶ as evening fell. Here Raja Maliyo and the aforesaid 3,000 soldiers returned to the court while we followed the road to Luca unafraid. Just past Luca flows a river called the Kuantan. From there I came to the place called Maranty²⁷

²⁶ Siluka, mentioned by IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 99, 103 etc.

²⁷ Manganti, northwest of Siluka.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

and from there the town Sunipo.²⁸ Thereafter we reached the township Ungam²⁹ and, upon leaving Ungam, we came to a mountain which is marked as Madiangem³⁰ on the map. From the aforementioned Luca to this mountain is the area where gold, which occurs there naturally, is found.

From there we came to another township called Air Tanam,³¹ from there to another township called Pancalan Serre,³² and thence proceeded to Turusan³³ from where we went to Kotabaru.³⁴ Here I spoke with the people about trade in the name of the Honourable Company, assuring them they had nothing to fear from Paduka Raja. From here we journeyed to the township Merorum³⁵ and from there to Merobiaan.³⁶ After this we came across the township of Tanjung Bale³⁷ and then the township of Pasar Lama.³⁸ Departing from there, we came to the township Oedjom Boket,³⁹ and from here to the township Damo,⁴⁰ and from Damo to the township Sava,⁴¹ and from Sava to the township Cuncto,⁴² from Cuncto to the township Lagumo⁴³ and from Lagumo to Lipa Cain,⁴⁴ and from here to the township Pacu, whence to Calubee⁴⁵ and from there on to Padan,⁴⁶ and from Kota Pandan we arrived in Belenbun [Sibelimbang] from where we reached Air Tiris.

In all these townships I encouraged the people to engage in trade with the Honourable Company, assuring them they had nothing to fear from it or needed to be afraid of it. All they had to do was to come to Patapan or Malacca where they might find me (and they all promised to do this and be of service to the Honourable Company) and they would be able to ply their trade. Departing from here, after I had done everything mentioned above, I arrived back in Patapan safe and sound, where I took delivery of Your Excellency's letter and its contents resolved me to obey Your Excellency's command as soon as possible first and foremost to return to Malacca with the oft-mentioned Raja

²⁸ Later this township is called Sumpo, that is Sumpur, northwest of Menganti.

²⁹ Uungan, north of Sumpur.

³⁰ Mandi Angin.

³¹ Called Air Tanang by IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, situated on the border of the Padang Highlands.

³² Pangkalan Sarai. IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 37 states that the Batang Sibayang is navigable for larger vessels.

³³ Tarusan.

³⁴ Not recorded on sketch map.

³⁵ Mariring.

³⁶ Not recorded on sketch map.

³⁷ Tanjung.

³⁸ Pasar Ramoh.

³⁹ Ujung Bukit.

⁴⁰ Domo.

⁴¹ Padang Sawah.

⁴² Kuntu.

⁴³ Not recorded on sketch map.

⁴⁴ Lipat Kain.

⁴⁵ Not found.

⁴⁶ For this place and the next see above.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Maliyo, who had come along as royal envoy, and, Praise be to God, landed there safely.

After your Excellency has been informed of all which had befallen as concisely as possible, I thought that Your Excellency would not take it amiss if a succinct elucidation of all the townships was appended to this, describing their inhabitants and their doings. We shall commence with the court of Pagarriuyung, where we arrived last and from which we departed first and say of the court that 8,000 [armed] men reside there, but I cannot speak of its environs as I did not see these. And to have made enquiries into this would indubitably have aroused suspicion against me.

Luca which comes next has around 400 men under arms and its main pursuits are agriculture and seeking gold which is there for the picking up. They dig it up and take it out of the ground, using shallow wooden troughs which they either float on the water or dip into the water and swirl around until⁴⁷ they have separated the mineral from the soil, after which they take it out and keep it.

Maranty is a district rich in gold, but its inhabitants, whose number is far more numerous than the previous small district, are forbidden by the King to excavate it or search for it and are supposed to earn their livelihood principally from agriculture. It has 2 to 300 traders.

Sumpo, inhabited by some 8,000 citizens, is also rich in gold, but this is not mined for the reasons just mentioned and they earn their living in the same way as the preceding people. Has around 200 merchants.

Ungaan has some 800 citizens and its geography is the same as the preceding district, but has more traders in proportion to its citizens as their number also hovers around 200.

Mount Mandy Argam yields also gold but is not inhabited.

Air Taman counts around 200 men, all of them farmers.

Pacalan Sirre⁴⁸ has around 1,000 residents, all of whom, with the exception of 200 traders, work in agriculture.

Turusan [has] some 700 residents, of whom 100 are merchants and the rest farmers.

In Costa Bato there are 200 residents, half of them farmers, the other half earn an income from trade.

Mererin contains around 1,000 men, of whom 300 are traders.

Merobia 400, all farmers.

Tanjung Bale has 2,000 inhabitants, all farmers with the exception of 500 merchants.

Pasar Rama 1,000, among them 400 traders.

Ujung Bukit 400, all farmers.

Dama has 1,000, of whom 100 are merchants.

⁴⁷ Although the word *dragen* (carry) is used, they swirl them as I have seen at Montrade. Washing gold they swirl a wooden dish, whose rim is at water level, around quickly.

⁴⁸ Compare the following figures with those in IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, 38. According to a 19th-century report by a district officer (*controleur*), the number of houses at Pangkalan Sirre is now 15, at Tarusan 8, Mariring 10, Tanjung Balit 20, Pasar Ramoh 4, Ujung Bukit 3, Domo 5, Kuntu 30, Lipat Kain 10. In other words, the population has shrunk considerably. As a matter of fact, various writers in have spoken of a large-scale emigration out of these regions at the end of the 19th century.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Padan Savan 500, 200 of whom engage in trade.

Cuncto⁴⁹ 2,000, of whom around 500 are merchants.

Lipa Caen around 100, all farmers.

Catapadan (Kota Padan) has a similar number, all farmers.

Ridam has only fifty peasants.

Air Tiris has some 10,000 inhabitants,⁵⁰ of whom around 500 are merchants.

I have made an estimate of all these in order to be of service to Your Excellency because I did not dare to ask [specific numbers] in order not to arouse any pernicious suspicions, not least because Paduka Raja has already tried to cast suspicion on those nations. As in the custom of the country, all the aforesaid places, which I have designated by the term ‘township’ are fortified with palisades, but I have not been able to recall the names of the villages and hamlets lying in between because these are too numerous.

Signed by Your Excellency’s faithful and obedient servant, [...] Thomas Dias. In the margin: Malacca 18th September 1684.

⁴⁹ IJzerman, *Dwars door Sumatra*, writes it is still the most important settlement, with 300 able-bodied men.

⁵⁰ Everwijn, “Verslag van een onderzoeksreis”, 351, estimates the total population of the V kotas in which Air Tiris is situated at 10,000.



4 Colophon

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