



Illustration 1. 'A Javan in the War Dress', William Daniell, ca. 1817.

## Letter from the Fugitive Pangeran Puger to the Supreme Government, 5 May 1704

### CONTENT

- 1 Introduction 2
- 2 Transcription of the Dutch text 5
- 3 English translation 8
- 4 Colophon 11
- 5 Folio images 12





## 1 Introduction

M. C. Ricklefs, "Letter from the Fugitive Pangeran Puger to the Supreme Government, 5 May 1704". In: *Harta Karun: Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta*, document 4. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013.

BY M. C. RICKLEFS

Pangeran Puger was one of the sons of Susuhunan Amangkurat I (r. 1646-77) and brother to Susuhunan Amangkurat II (r. 1677-1703) and thus, at the time this letter was written, he was uncle to the young ruler Amangkurat III (r. 1703-8) who had just succeeded on the death of his father. This letter was one of the crucial documents that led to the First Javanese War of Succession (1704-8), the first VOC military intervention in the Javanese kingdom for several decades, and the installation of Puger as Susuhunan Pakubuwana I (r. 1704-19). This changed the line of succession in the Mataram dynasty. All subsequent monarchs of Kartasura, Surakarta and Yogyakarta have been descendants of Puger/Pakubuwana I.

Puger was evidently born c. 1648. When Trunajaya took the court of Plered in late June 1677, Amangkurat I and his son the crown prince – shortly to succeed as Amangkurat II – fled westward. Amangkurat I died during the flight and was buried at Tegalwangi. There had already been conflict between Puger and the crown prince, who was about the same age. Indeed, there is some evidence that at the end of his life Amangkurat I preferred Puger over the crown prince. Whatever the case, it was Puger who led the final resistance to Trunajaya's conquest of the *kraton*.

Puger also fled westwards from the fallen court and declared himself king. In Javanese chronicles

he is given royal titles such as Senapati Ingala Sayidin Panatagama and is called Panembahan. In contemporary letters he used the title Susuhunan. With his princely brothers Martasana (who later adopted royal titles himself) and Singasari, Puger marched back into Mataram and reconquered the old *kraton* by mid-October 1677 at the latest.

Now commenced a long period of tension between Puger – who held the old court of Plered and reigned as a monarch in his own right – and Amangkurat II, who established his new court at Kartasura and whom the VOC supported. In November 1680, VOC and Kartasura forces drove Puger and his followers from Plered. Finally, the VOC gave Puger a guarantee of his safety and he then submitted to Amangkurat II in November 1681.

During Amangkurat II's reign down to his death in 1703 there were repeated episodes of difficulties between him self and Puger, and with Puger's family, just as there were many other conflicts, cliques and intrigues in the disintegrating court.

When Amangkurat II died, the chronicles say, supernatural events indicated that the divinely determined authority of kingship should pass to Puger rather than to the crown prince, whom the chronicles (reflecting perhaps the interests of Puger's descendants who ruled in the courts where they were written) depict as a crippled, degenerate and cruel man. Nevertheless, he succeeded to the throne as Amangkurat III.

Puger's son, Raden Suryakusuma, accompanied Amangkurat II's body to the royal graves at Imagiri but did not then return to Kartasura. Instead, he went westwards to Bagelen and declared himself to be king with the title Prabu Panatagama or – even more grandly – Susuhunan Waliollah Panatagama ('King, Friend of God, Regulator of



## INTRODUCTION

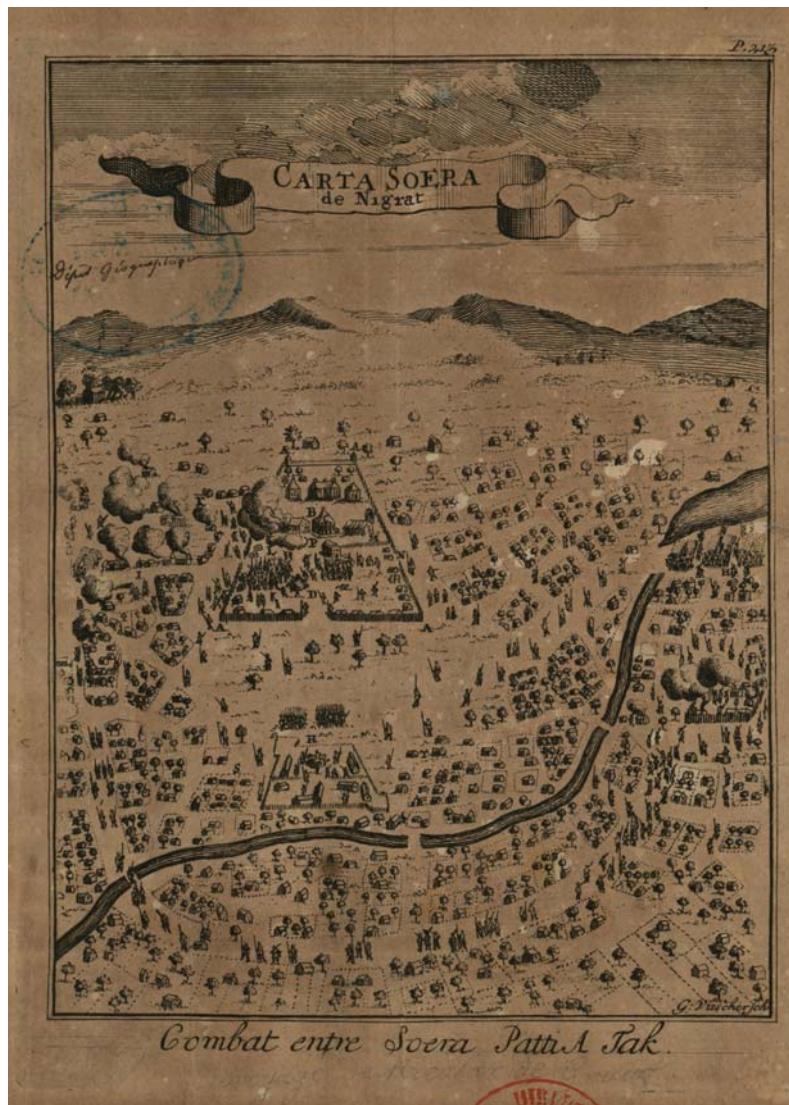


Illustration 2. 'Carta Soera de Nigrat : combat entre Soerapatti, A Tak', 1700-1799

Religion'). It seems that Suryakusuma was acting independently of his father, but nevertheless at court Puger was accused of having instigated his rebellion and was imprisoned, then placed under house arrest.

By early 1704, several other dignitaries also found themselves at odds with the new king. Among them were the powerful lord of Madura Pangeran Cakraningrat II (who was now in his eighties and one of whose wives was said to have been raped by Amangkurat III), the lord of Surabaya, Angabei Jangrana II, and the *bupati* of Sema-

rang (a VOC-controlled territory) Tumenggung Rongga Yudanagara. According to Javanese sources, these were among those pressing Puger to rebel. On 10 March, he fled Kartasura in the dead of night and headed for Semarang, thus launching his second attempt to become king.

Thus began what is commonly called the First Javanese War of Succession (1704-8).

It was from Semarang that he wrote the letter that follows below. It should be remembered that when he had surrendered in 1681 the Company had guaranteed his safety, so in a sense he already



## INTRODUCTION

thought of himself as something of a VOC protégé. Hence his reference to the favour the Company had previously shown him and his trust and hope in the VOC ‘along with God’. He complained of his treatment by the new king and denied the allegation that he was responsible for Suryakusuma’s rebellion.

His claims of widespread support from Cakraningrat II and others soon proved to be exaggerated for it proved difficult to put together a coalition to march on Kartasura. But at the time the letter was written, it seemed to hold great promise for the VOC. The Company’s long-standing distrust of the Kartasura *kraton*, its particular dislike of Amangkurat III – who was said to be in contact with the VOC’s most hated enemy, Surapati – and its view of Puger as someone with whom it had special connections, all inclined the Company to support his bid for the throne. Amangkurat III, meanwhile, wrote to the Company promising to pay off his royal debt. The VOC did not believe him.

On 7 July 1704, the VOC told Puger that it recognised him as the rightful king. Puger promised that he would accept a new contract, along the lines which Captain Tack

had been authorised to agree to before he was murdered at the court in 1686, although Puger admitted that he did not know what that amounted to. At first Puger used the title Susuhunan (or Susuhunan Ratu) Amangkurat, but in October 1704 he took the titles by which he was known thereafter, Susuhunan Pakubuwana (I), Senapati Ingala Ngabdulrahman Sayidin Panata-gama.

In 1705, with the support of VOC armed forces and a coalition of Javanese supporters, Pakubuwana I gained control of Kartasura which Amangkurat III had abandoned without attempting to defend it. During the subsequent campaign of 1706, Surapati was wounded in fighting at Bangil and died in Pasuruan. The First Javanese War of Succession ended in 1708 with the surrender of Amangkurat III and his exile to Sri Lanka.

## Reference

- M. C. Ricklefs. *War, Culture and Economy in Java, 1677–1726: Asian and European Imperialism in the Early Kartasura Period*. Sydney: Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen and Unwin, 1993.



## 2 Transcription of the Dutch text

M. C. Ricklefs, "Letter from the Fugitive Pangeran Puger to the Supreme Government, 5 May 1704".

UIT: DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, 5 MEI 1704 [BEGINNEND BIJ FOL. 215.]

Translaat Javaanse missive door den Pangerang Poegar, gegenwoordig tot Samarang, aan Haar Edele de Hoge Regeringe tot Batavia geschreven.

Desen brief uyt een suyver, rijn harte van den Pangarang Adypatty Poegar in handen van de gesanten de twee mantries genaamt Ingabey Djawriya, Demang Soerantaka en drie mindere hoofden genaamt Nalla Diewangsa, Marta Soeta, en Naya Wangsa, komt nevens groetenisse van mijn vrouw Radeen Ajoe Katje en verdere mal[ie?], mitsgaders toewensinge van lang leven en gesontheyt op deser aarde aan mijn vader den Heere Gouverneur Generael ende Raden van India residerende tot Batavia dewelcke etc.

Wijders kome ick aan U. E. Ho. Agtb. bij desen, mijn staat en gelegenheyt, alsook om wat reden ick van Cartasoura na Samarang afgekomen ben, bekent te maaken, als eerstelijck de schande en affronten die ick hebbe moeten lijden na het overlijden van U. Ed. soon mijn ouder broeder den Souhoehoenang Aman Koerat ter oorsake dat ick beschuldigt wierd handadigt te sijn [fol. 216] aan de quade bedrijven van Soeria Casoema, hetgeene ick wel beandwoorde met te seggen daaraan geen deel te hebben. Alschoon het mijn soon is, hij oud genoeg was het goede van 't quade te onderscheyden en 'tselve doende voor sijn reeckeninge was. Dog mijn woorden, door den tegenwoordigen Sousouhoenang, wierden niet gelooft, maar [hij] mij verders opdrong daar schuldig aan te wesen, weshalven ick met mijn geheele familie in verseeckering wierd genomen, ende alle de Cartasourase mantries geordonneert, op ons goede agtinge te geven. Wijders wierd mijn opgelegt en bevolen, Soeria Casoema wederom op te soeken, sonder dat mijn gepermitteert was een kris te mogen dragen.

Sijnde dit hetgene ick aan Uw Hoog Ed. hebbe te adverteeren, benevens nog dat ick tot Samarang ben afgekomen, en in mijn vrunds huys den Tommagon Jouda Nagara verblijf houde, aan dewelcke ik voorheen tot twee diversse reyse sijn hulpe hebben laten versoecken, dat hy mij niet heeft geweygert, alsoo hij geern sag dat ik tot Samarang quam te verschijnen 'twelck oorsaack was, dat ick niet ontsag mijn leven te waagen om de genegenthuyt die ick gevoelde, dat mijn door mijn vrund den Tommagon Jouda Nagara bethoont wierd, temeer mijn nog in geheugen was U. Ed. Ho. Agtb. gunste en genegenthuyt dien aan mijn voorheen door Uw. Ho. Ed. bewesen sijn, op welcke ick nevens God mijn hoop en vertrouwen stelle. Want ick U. Ed. Ho. Agtb. in plaatse van mijn overleden vader den Sousouhoenang die op Tagal bergraven leyt als mijn vaders houde, dierhalven versoecke U. Ed. gunste en hulpe.



## TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

Voorts make aan U. Ed. Ho. Agtb. bekent, dat wanneer ik van Cartasoura ben afgetrocken, hetselve met voorkennisse en raadgevinge van de zeestrantsche en binnelandtsche mantries is geschiet, want anders soude ick naar mijn gedagtenis, indien het de mantries niet geaccoerdeert hadden, Samarang niet kunnen bereykt hebben, maar soude integendeel onderwegen wel agterhaalt sijn geworden, welke onder te noemene mantries degene zijn die mijn tot het vlugten behulpsaam sijn geweest.

Eerstelijk de hoofden van de zeestranden genaamt Radeen Poerwa Nagara, soon van mijn broeder den Pangerang Adie Patty Tsjacraningrat van Madura, dewelcke van sijn vader last en ordre hadde om mijn te helpen.

Ingabey Jangrana van Sourabaya, Ingabey Nalla Ditta van Grissee, Tommagong Soura Wiekrama van Tsjedajoe, Tommagong Marta Poura van Japara, Rangadj Mangala van Kaliewoegol, Ingabey Wiera Sraya van Kandal, Aria Wiera Nagara van Pamelang, en met die van Damack, daar hebbe ick niets mede ondernomen.

Op welcke alle hierboven [genoemd] Zeestrantsche regenten ick geen vaster vertrouwen kan stellen als [op] mijn broeder den Pangerangh Adie Patty Tsjacraningrat, die mijn van sijne genegenthelyt, goede raadgevinge en getrouwigheyt ten vollen boven ander[e] versekert heeft.

Ten tweeden de hooftregenten der Bovenlanden namentlijk: Tommagong Mangendoeda, Ingabey Tjetra Mangala, Demang Soura Djaya, Ingabey Djaga Patty, Ingabey Wangsa Diepa, Tommagong Malaya en den nu in weesen zijnde Radeen Aria Sindouradja [fol. 217] alsmede van mijn oude vrunden mijn oom Adiepatty Natta Cousoema, mijn jonger[e] broeders Aria Mataram, Aria Pamoeler, Raden Ingabey Wirsarie, en Aria Soera Tanie, die alle met mijn in 't aanwesen tot Carta Soera altijd in een onderlinge vrundschap en overeenkomste hebben geleeft, en nu niet twijffelen of deselve sullen verder daerbij blijven volharden, alhoewel nu op de mantries van de stranden een wakent oog werd gehouden, en dat mijn afgesondene, dewelcke mij gesamentlijk wilde volgen en die nog in haar huysen, ja alle degeene die van Poegars volkeren waren, gevangen ende gebonden wierden.

Ook kan [ick] niet nalaten U. Ho. Ed. bekent te maken, dat mijn broeder den Sousouhoenang Amankoerat naar vijf daagen sieck geweest te sijn, overleden is, en gedurende sijn sieckte tot drie verscheyde reyse naar mijn gevraagt heeft gehad, met intentie om mijn te laten roepen, daarop aan hem telkens berigt wierd, dat ick niet op Carta Soura, maar na Jagaraga om eenige wegloopers op te soeken getrocken was, alhoewel ick niet van Carta Soura ben geweest, maar integendeel bij dag en nagt op de passebaan wagt hebbe gehouden, zijnde in 't hoff en bij het overlijden van den Sousouhoenang geen andere geweest als den Pangarang Adie Patty Anum, Kiay Pangoeloe, en Kiay Sarip, mitsgaders de vrouwe Ratoe Amangkoerat, nevens hare bloedverwanten, van dewelcke naar mijn berigt is, den eerstgenoemde Pangarang Adie Patty Anum soude geweest sijn, die telkens sijde als den Sousouhoenang naar mijn vraagde, dat ick van Carta Soura vertrocken was, 'tgeen mijn van harten heeft doen bedroeven, alsoo aan mijn van mijn broeders sieckte geen de minste kennisse wierd gegeven voordat hij overleden was.



## TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

Waarop ick ten eersten ordonneerde het doode lighaan na Magirie te brengen om het aldaar bij onse verdere vrunden te begraven, gelijk geschiede, want de volkeren waren al vooruyt met het lijck soodat ick deselue agterna reet, en 's namiddags eerst agterhaalde op de negorije Pakak en soo met deselue voort reet, totdat wij ter plaatse quamen daar ick bevolen hadde het doode lichaam te brengen. Inmiddens wierd geordonneert dat het lijck niet in 't graf soude gelegt werden van de gemeene hoffdienaars die deselue gedragen hadde, maar van onse daarbij present sijnde vrunden, namentlijck mijn jonger broeder Aria Mattaram, Aria Semininingrat, den Pangarang Lammongan, Kiay Ingabey, Radja Mangala, en de hooftpriesters, mitsgaders de vrouw van den overleden Amankoerat.

Eyndelijck sende hiernevens aan Syn Hoog Ed. in geschenk:

1 bruyn en 1 swart genaamt bahoe dingda paarden.

1 krist genaamt Noepos en 1 pieck genaamt Jakong Patsjan.

Dog alle hetgene een weynig en van geen waarde is, hope evenwel dat het als een teecken van vrundschap van Sijn Hoog Edelheyts geaccepteert mag werden.

Alle hetgene vooralsnú te seggen hebbe, staat in desen brief vervat.



### 3 English translation

M. C. Ricklefs, "Letter from the Fugitive Pangeman Puger to the Supreme Government, 5 May 1704".

FROM: DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA CASTLE, 5 MEI 1704 [BEGINNING WITH FOL. 215.]

Translation of the Letter in Javanese from the *Pangéran*, now in Semarang, addressed to the Honourable Supreme Government.

This letter from a pure and unblemished heart of *Pangéran Adipati Poegar* delivered by the hands of envoys, namely two *mantri* (ministers) named *Ingabey Djawriya*, [and] *Demang Soerantaka*, as well as three lesser chiefs named *Nalla Diewangsa*, *Marta Soeta* and *Naya Wangsa*, also bears greetings from my consort, *Raden Ayoe Katje*, and other wives, as well as wishes for a long life and [good] health on this Earth for my father, the Lord Governor-General and the Councillors of Asia residing in Batavia the which and etc.

In this I again approach Your Excellent Most Noble Lords to inform you about how I am situated and my way of life, as well as the reason I have come to Samarang from Cartasoura. The principal [reason] is the shame and affronts I had to suffer after the decease of Your Excellency's son, my elder brother *Souhoehoenang Aman Kurat*, as I have been accused of having a hand in [fol. 216] the evil wrought by *Soeria Casoema*, the which I answer by saying I had no part in it. Although he is my son, he is old and wise enough to distinguish good from evil and to act entirely on his own account. Nevertheless, the present *Sousouhoenang* chose to believe that my words were further proof of my guilt, for the which I and my whole family were taken into custody, and all the Cartasoura *mantris* were ordered to keep a close watch on us. Moreover, I was forced and commanded to revisit *Soeria Casoema*, but I was not permitted to wear a *kris*. This is that of which I must notify Your Honours, plus the fact that I have arrived in Semarang, and lodge in the house of my friend *Tommagon Jouda Nagar*. Earlier, on two separate journeys, I have called upon his assistance and he has not refused me, besides he looks forward to my visits to Semarang with pleasure. Therefore, because of the affection shown me by my friend *Tommagon Jouda Nagar*, I did not hesitate to risk my life, [helped] all the more so because Your Excellencies' esteemed favour and affection, proved to me previously by Your Excellencies, on which I constantly place my hope and trust, has dwelt in my memory. Because I regard Your Excellencies as my fathers, in the place of my late father the *Soesouhoenang* who lies buried in Tagal, I beseech Your Excellencies' benevolence and help.

Furthermore, I should like to inform Your Excellencies that, when I left Cartasoura, this was done with the foreknowledge and advice of the coastal and the inland regents, otherwise I think that I could never have reached Samarang, but instead would have



## ENGLISH TRANSLATION

been caught up with on the road. First among the said *mantri* who have assisted my flight are the chiefs of the sea coasts by the name of *Raden Poerwa Nagara*, son of my brother *Pangérang Adie Patty Tsjackraningrat* of Madura, who had been commanded and ordered by his father to assist me.

[I also enjoyed the support of] *Ingabey* *Jangrana* of Surabaya, *Ingabey* *Nalla Ditta* of *Grissee*, *Tommagong* *Soura Wie Krama* of *Tsjedajoe*, *Tommagong* *Marta Poura* of *Japara*, *Rangadi Mangala* of *Kaliewoegol*, *Ingabey* *Wiera Sraya* of *Kendal*, *Aria Wiera Nagara* of *Pamelang*. I have had nothing to do with [the man] in *Damack*.

In none of the aforementioned coastal regents do I place greater faith than in my brother *Pangerang Adie Patty Tsjacraningrat*, who, above all others, has assured me of his affection, good advice and complete trust.

Secondly, [I must mention] the chief regents of the Highlands, namely: *Tommaggong* *Mangoendjoeda*, *Ingabey* *Tjetra Mangala*, *Demang Soura Djaya*, *Ingabey* *Djaga Patthy*, *Ingabey* *Wangsa Diepa*, *Tommagong* *Malaya* and the one who is now *Radeen Aria Sindouradja* [fol. 217], as well as my old friend and uncle *Adiepatthy Natta Cousoema*, my younger brothers *Aria Mataram*, *Aria Pamoeler*, *Raden Ingabey Wirsarie*, and *Aria Soera Tanie*, who all lived in reciprocal friendship and accord with me when I was in *Carta Soura*, and now do not doubt but that they should continue to persevere in that same, even though a watchful eye is being kept on the coastal *mantri* and that, with the exception of myself, those who wanted to follow me, yea all those of *Poegar*'s people were captured and held fast in their houses.

I must not be remiss about informing Your Excellencies that, after five days' illness, my brother the *Soesouhoenang* *Amang Koerat*, has died and during his sufferings had three different people journey to me for the purpose of summoning me, and he was told that I was not in *Carta Soura*, but had left for *Jagaraga* to hunt for runaways, even though I did not stir from *Carta Soura*, but on the contrary kept watch day and night at the *paséban*, being at court. At the deathbed of the *Soesoehoenang* no others were present except the *Pangérang Adi Patih Anom*, *Kiay Pangaeloe*, and *Kiay Sarip*, as well as his consort, *Ratoe Amangkoerat*, and some of her blood relatives [among whom], as I have been informed, were the previously mentioned *Pangérang Adie Patty Anum*, who repeatedly told the *Soesoehoenang* when I was asked for that I was not in *Carta Soura*, which has pierced my heart, especially because I was not informed of my brother's illness until he had passed away. Whereupon I was ordered to escort his dead body to *Imagiri* to be laid with our ancestors, which I had to do immediately because the people had gone on ahead with the body so that I had to pursue them, and caught up with them in the afternoon in the *negerije* *Pakak*, and from there accompanied it, until we reached the place to which I had been commanded to bring the remains. In the meantime, orders had been given that the body should not be laid in the grave by the usual court servants who had brought it thither, but by we relatives who were present, namely my younger brother *Aria Mattaram*, *Aria Seminingrat*, *Pangérang Lammongan*, *Kiay Ingabey*, *Radja Manggala*, and the chiefs of the clergy, as well as the widow of the



## ENGLISH TRANSLATION

late Amangkoerat.

Finally with this I send His Excellency as a gift:

1 brown and 1 white *bahoe dingda* horses.

1 *kris* called Noepoes and 1 pike called Jakong Patsan.

Although these are of trifling value, I hope that Your Excellency will accept them as tokens of friendship.

All that I have to say for the present is in this letter.



## 4 Colophon

Title	M. C. Ricklefs, “Letter from the Fugitive Pangeran Puger to the Supreme Government, 5 May 1704”. In: <i>Harta Karun. Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta</i> , document 4. 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 2525, fols 215-217
Illustration selection	Muhammad Haris Budiawan
Illustration sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A Javan in the War Dress, William Daniell, ca. 1817, from pl. 5 Vol I of <i>The History of Java</i> by Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1817</li><li>2. Carta Soera de Nigrat : combat entre Soerapatti, A Tak 1700-1799. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département Cartes et Plans, CPL GE DD-2987 (7665). <a href="http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btvib5963384z">http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btvib5963384z</a></li></ol>
Transcription	Risma Manurung
Indonesian translation	Tjandra Mualim
English translation	Rosemary Robson
Introduction	M. C. Ricklefs, Professor Emeritus, The Australian National University
Final editing	Peter Carey, Hendrik E. Niemeijer
Layout	Beny Oktavianto
Release Date	September 2013
Harta Karun Category	1.4 States, Territories, Rulers and Middlemen
ISBN	xxx-12345678910
Copyright	Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia and The Corts Foundation



## 5 Folio image

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Archival Source, ANRI, HR 2525, fols 215-217.