IMPRESSIONS OF THE MALAY PENINSULA IN ANCIENT TIMES

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PLATES

(inserted between Notes and References and Index)

DRAWINGS AND MAPS

Chapter 1

PROLEGOMENA

THE Malay Peninsula is a forested, club-shaped tongue of land stretching for a thousand miles from the south-eastern angle of the continent of Asia towards the equator. It thus separates the South China Sea from the Bay of Bengal or, in grosser terms, the realm of China from the realm of India, and thereby intrudes itself into the western waters of the Malaysian* Archipelago. In this statement we come to grips at once with the generative factor in peninsular history, and an exposition of this theme will be the gravamen of the following pages. The intrinsic resources of the peninsula have always failed to match these exceptional strategic advantages. The starkness of a tectonic skeleton of coulisses arranged *en échelon* is peripherally mitigated by a mantle of alluvium, so that relief is subdued and not especially inimical to trans-peninsular travel, particularly in the isthmian tract where a succession of low corridors set obliquely to the grain of the country in early times encouraged communication between well-defined coastal foci. Deriving from this structural context are deposits of one base metal, tin, and one precious metal, gold, both of which were in demand in the ancient world. Climatically Malaya can be described as equatorial, and lower T'ailand as tropical. Temperatures everywhere are high and rainfall invariably adequate to maintain a forest climax. The salient characteristic of the landscape is its

* Recent political developments make it necessary to explain that in this book the term *Malaysia* is used with its traditional connotation of "the Malay world", that is the Indonesian Archipelago, the southern half of the Malay Peninsula and, perhaps, at least the southern Philippines.

uniformity, a uniformity of terrain, climate and soil which throughout ancient times threw the onus of regional differentiation on to external factors. These factors derived from Malaya's position: in the prehistoric period relative to the mainland of Asia in the north; during the early centuries of the Christian era relative to the Indian subcontinent; and at a later period relative to the Spice Islands and Mělaka Strait.

For at least ninety-nine per cent. of its history the Malay Peninsula yields no written records. Indeed the first inscription found on Malayan soil, a Buddhist invocation, dates only from the fifth century A.D. at the earliest. Yet for the unimaginably long period of 3,000 centuries before that men had roamed the forests of the peninsula, men who left nothing to the modern world save, very occasionally, their bones and a selection of their artifacts entombed in the more superficial deposits of the earth's surface. Only a pedant would deny that these long centuries witnessed a large measure of progress, for it was during this time that man devised the rudiments of technology, evolved a social system, and explored the resources of his own nature the better to exploit those of his environment. For our knowledge of these tremendous happenings we are dependent on the archaeologist. In this respect Malaya has been fortunate, for although the Government has not hitherto been liberal in its support of prehistoric research, a succession of able and enthusiastic investigators have devoted their energies to eliciting the story of Malayan prehistory. As early as 1860 Mr. G. W. Earl explored the shell-mounds of Province Wellesley. In the eighteen-eighties and -nineties Mr. Leonard Wray began collecting for the Perak Museum. In the earlier years of this century Mr. I. H. N. Evans undertook the first serious excavations in Malaya, since when the tempo of exploration has quickened. During the nineteen-twenties and -thirties, Dr. P. V. van Stein Callenfels, whose half-legendary exploits bid fair to make him a Malayan folk-

hero, brought great learning to bear on the archaeological problems of the peninsula. At the same time Mr. H. D. Noone was investigating rock-shelters in the north of the then Malay States. Subsequently this work was continued by the late Major P. D. R. Williams-Hunt, and finally brought to fruition in 1954 by Dr. and Mrs. G. de G. Sieveking. Somewhat earlier, from his base in Singapore, Mr. H. D. Collings, Curator of the Raffles Museum archaeological collections for sixteen years, discovered the earliest Malayan culture deep in the Perak forest. His successor, the scholarly and meticulous Mr. Michael Tweedie, besides carrying out important excavations in various parts of the country, gave us our first comprehensive survey of the Malayan Stone Age. Recently Prince John Loewenstein, also of Raffles Museum, has added to this the first analytical account of the early Metal Age in Malaya. By comparison historic archaeology has been a comparatively neglected field. Formerly the most important contribution was that of Dr. and Mrs. H. G. Quaritch Wales, who excavated the sites of upwards of forty shrines, which they dated from the fourth to the thirteenth century, in Kĕdah and Province Wellesley, but recently Dr. Alastair Lamb has made important new discoveries in the upper reaches of the Sungei Batu Pahat.

Nor must we forget those who explored the T'ai territory on the peninsula. Foremost among these was H.R.H Prince Damrong, the father of T'ai archaeology, who expended great efforts in establishing the discipline in his country, and to whom we owe the first archaeological exploration of the trans-isthmian routes. The earliest inventory of archaeological remains in this district was compiled by E. Lunet de Lajonquiere in the early years of this century. In 1931 J. Y. Claeys re-assessed a great deal of the evidence in his book, *L'Archéologie du Siam,* and in 1935 Dr. Wales excavated archaeological sites in the vicinity of Tăkua-pa on the west coast. Very recently Dr. Alastair Lamb has extended his investigations into T'ai territory.

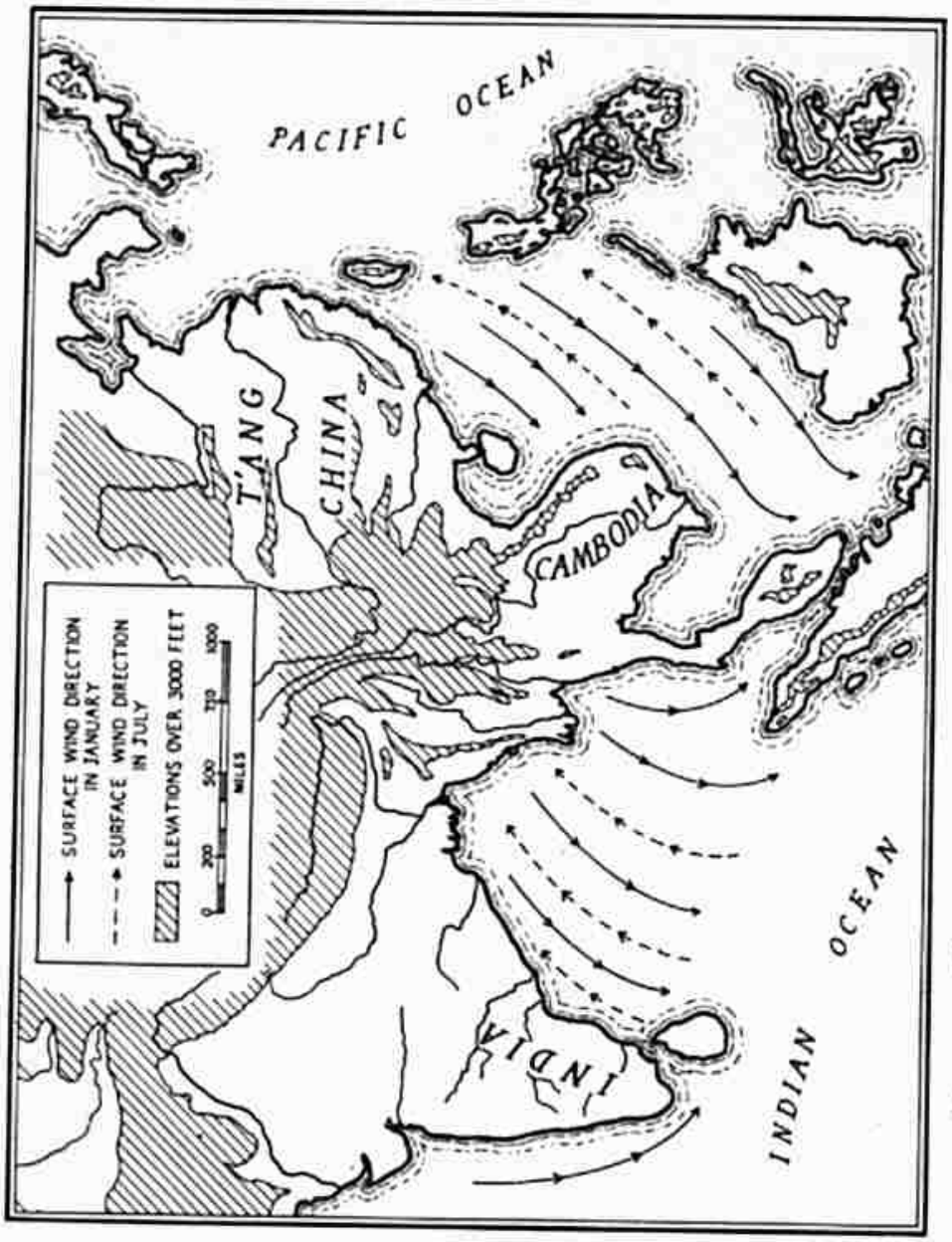

Figure 1 The position of the Malay Peninsula in relation to (i) India and China, and (ii) the seasonal wind systems of South-East Asia.

Yet, despite the efforts of these scholars, the study of prehistory in Malaya is still in its infancy. Excavation, even archaeological exploration, has been sporadic both in time and place and the map of finds probably reflects twentieth-century interest and accessibility rather than actual prehistoric distributions. Michael Tweedie was careful, as recently as 1953, to introduce his synthesis of the Malayan Stone Ages with the caveat that prehistory on the peninsula had not advanced appreciably beyond the stage of demonstrating that a long succession of stone cultures was represented by rich and varied remains. "The chronology of the various cultures," he added, "their relations with each other and the ethnography of the people they represent present problems which have, in the main, yet to be solved." To the study of the important protohistoric period of the Early Metal Age, and for the historic pre-Muslim centuries in general, archaeology has made but little contribution. Only recently have Dr. Lamb's researches begun to probe the fundamental but vastly complex problem of the relative contributions of autochthonous and foreign cultures to the fabric of Malayan life in the crucial first millenium of the Christian era. The radical transformation wrought in the Malayan landscape by planters and miners during the last century has erased far too many relics of the country's ancient past, but the Government's present concern for the restoration of an early temple on the Sungei Batu Pahat affords some guarantee of a change in policy. Future historians may well have reason to record this action as marking a transition from a period of indifference and destruction to one of vigilance and conservation.

Scholarly works directed specifically towards the early historic period have been no more numerous than those relating to the prehistoric era, but an adventitious factor has played an important role in stimulating research. As there are no indigenous literary sources available before the mid-sixteenth century, the Malayan historian is constrained to rely

on foreign records, mainly Chinese, Arab and Indian, and it is indeed fortunate that many of these have received the attention of scholars eminent in the relevant disciplines. As early as the eighteenth century Arabists began to publish annotated editions and translations of texts relating in part to South-East Asia, and in the nineteenth century they were joined by Indianists, Sinologists and Classical scholars, whose cumulative labours have now provided a corpus of reliable textual material on which historians of Malaya can draw with confidence.

Among those historians who have concerned themselves specifically with the Malay Peninsula, Dato' Sir Roland Braddell has made the most significant contribution. His magistral series of papers, which appeared over nearly a quarter of a century in the pages of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, laid the foundation of our present knowledge of early Malaya. During the same period Professor Hsü Yün-ts'iaō concerned himself with an analysis of Chinese texts relating to the peninsula. His work was presented mainly in Chinese in the *Journal of the South Seas Society (Nan-yang Hsüeh-pao)*, which he edited for over twenty years, before deciding to devote his time wholly to a new publication, the *Bulletin of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Nan-yang Yen-chiu)*. Other scholars who helped to elucidate the formidable complexities of this early period include Sir Richard Winstedt and Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill (who both, in fact, wrote on all periods of Malayan history), Mr. Han Wai-toon, Mr. G. R. Tibbetts, who provided us with a meticulous, annotated English translation of early Arab descriptions of the Malay Peninsula, Dr. P. E. de Josselin de Jong to whom we are indebted for a map of place-names from classical Malay literature, Dr. Wang Gungwu and Dato' F. W. Douglas, whose *Notes on the Historical Geography of Malaya* appeared in 1949. As a result of the labours of these scholars it is now possible to

sketch in outline the history of the peninsula in pre-European times. But the drawing is a cartoon rather than a finished picture. Only the broadest sweeps of historical development can be discerned and, before the period of the Mělaka Sultanate, the subtle interplay of personalities has almost always been obscured. As we peer back through the murk of textual corruption the conclusion seems inescapable that much of the early history of the Malay Peninsula has been lost irretrievably, some engulfed in a green sea of vegetation, swept away by flood-water, entombed by alluvium, corroded by soil acids or devoured by insects, some destroyed by the intemperate zeal of religious fanaticism in ancient days or expunged by the blind spade of ignorance in modern times, a great deal simply allowed through government apathy to suffer disintegration or misappropriation during this very century. The History Departments of the Universities of Singapore and Malaya will surely solve many of the problems which now render interpretation of the early period so speculative a process; the Museums Department will certainly recover secrets from the corrosive soils of the peninsula and reclaim relics from the enveloping forest; but it is more than doubtful if the story will ever be in any sense complete.

In these circumstances I have deemed it inappropriate to call the fragments which follow a history. Although they are strung together in what I believe to be their chronological order, they are no more than impressions obtained from fairly protracted wanderings among the texts of ancient times. By daily recourse to these sources I believe that I have gained some insight—albeit sometimes incommunicable—into the realities underlying their ambiguities and uncertainties, I have become resigned to their all too frequent lacunae and, above all, I feel that I have come to know the authors of some of them as craftsmen, officials and warriors rather than as anonymous hands grasping chisel, brush or spear. The forming of these vicarious friendships across the centuries has been

an exhilarating experience.

The basis of all historical reconstruction must be an accurate identification of place-names, but in early Malaya this can be a matter of extreme difficulty. In a complete absence of indigenous literary sources prior to the second half of the sixteenth century, the historian must rely on foreign records, which even then are seldom at first hand. Descriptive names coined by foreign sailors are often recognized comparatively easily, as are translations of local toponyms, but transcriptions of indigenous words are not infrequently heavily disguised. The success with which such names were reproduced varied with the language concerned and with the linguistic ability of the traveller. On the whole Indian and Arab voyagers transcribed Malay sounds much more accurately than did Chinese visitors to the peninsula. Sometimes it is possible to trace an error through the successive stages of inadvertent initiation, careless repetition and uncritical acceptance. Here, for example, is how Chinese authors treated the place-name known in the Occident as Kole.

Chü-li	拘 利	(*Liang Shu*, chap. 54; *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 788)
Chiu-li	九 離	(*T'ai-p'ing Huan-yü Chi*, chap. 177)
Chiu-ya	九 雅	(*T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 788)
Chiu-chih	九 稚	(*Liang Shu*, chap. 54)
Chü-chih	句 稚	(*T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 790)
Kou-chih	勾 稚	(*Lo-yang Ch'ieh-lan Chi*, chap. 4)

In this table it is easy to see the progressive development of errors both in orthography and phonology. And here are the several forms under which the Malayan kingdom of Langkasuka featured in early Asian literature: Lang-ya-hsiu or Lang-ya-hsü, Ling-ya-ssŭ-chia, Lung-ya-hsi-chio, Leng-ch'ieh-hsiu, Lang-chia-shu, Lang-hsi-chia, Lungashukā (Arabic) and Ilangāśōkam (Tamil). The island of Tioman, too—a final

example — appeared under various orthographies in Arab literature, of which Tiyumah, Tanūmah, Betūmah and Sūmah were the commonest. In one or other of the existing versions most place-names are readily identifiable, but isolated corrupt forms require considerable skill for their elucidation. One difficulty is the virtual impossibility of formulating rules of general application, for the historian is here dealing not with philological laws of change so much as with names imperfectly heard, and subsequently mispronounced, by members of widely varying social classes. At worst mispronunciations might even be rationalized, as when Langkawi (Island) was rendered into Chinese as Dragon-Tooth Armchair. The formidable difficulties of identification presented by this process are well illustrated by examples from later times. St. John's Island, for instance, was a British sailors' rationalization of Pulau Sĕkijang, and Ujong Salang became the curious Junk Ceylon on early charts. In the following pages I have seldom argued the location of a place-name at length. Such minutiae of scholarship as this requires make tedious reading for the general public, and those specialists who may wish to query an interpretation can easily turn to my volume entitled *The Golden Khersonese,* where I have dealt at length with the historical geography of ancient Malaya.

In the following pages I have tried to write as accurately as possible, but many topics are still so controversial that I have often had to rely ultimately on my own judgement. Usually I have adopted what at the moment seems to me to be the most probable interpretation of events, but an adequate representation of alternative views would have required a great deal more space than I could have reasonably expected, and would in addition have severely taxed the patience of the general reader. When writing of Śrī Vijaya I have, for example, followed what may be regarded as the orthodox interpretation, which is essentially a slightly modified version of that presented by Professors George Coedès and Nilakanta

Sastri. With the views of Professor Majumdar, Dr. Moens and Dr. Wales I do not agree, and Professor Casparis's recent re-evaluations do not affect the role of Śrī Vijaya on the Malay Peninsula. However, in such instances I have appended references to alternative opinions. These notes, which have been collected together at the end of the book, have been kept as brief as possible but are, I believe, sufficient to explain obscure terms, to enable an interested reader to follow up a particular point, and to permit a scholar to ascertain the basis of my opinions.

I am aware that dating by the Christian era is anomalous in South-East Asia, and may be resented by Malayans and T'ais alike, but it is simple and at least understood by all who are likely to read this book. For those who prefer an Oriental reckoning, the Śaka (Prome) era began in A.D. 78, the Muslim in A.D. 622, the Maha Sakărat in 691 B.C., and P'ră Putta Sakărat in 543 B.C., and the Khaccapañcha in A.D. 638.

In the matter of transliteration from Asian languages into English I have tended towards conservatism. Chinese names have been rendered in the Wade-Giles system as modified slightly in the *National Language Dictionary*. Arabic and Sanskrit names have been transliterated according to the system recommended by the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (*Journal*, 1935, and *Handbook of Oriental History*). For T'ai names I have followed in the main the proposals of Professor George Coedès (*Bulletin de l'Ecole française*, 1931), with such modifications as seemed to be required by the peculiar genius of the English language, and with tonal symbols omitted. I have, for example, written Śrī in lieu of the Çrí of M. Coedès. For Malay words I have used the standard British transliterations of Wilkinson's *Dictionary*. In this connection I must confess that, after some hesitation, I have capitulated to the consistency which is said to inhibit small minds. Makkah and Qubilai may seem obfuscations to some readers, but where should the line

between recondite and familiar be drawn? In despair at the impossibility of trying to please everyone, I have reluctantly sought to placate the experts. Translations from the Chinese are my own, except for a single passage where it would have been presumptuous of me to have meddled with the scholarly elegances of the late Professor J. J. L. Duyvendak. Several of my quotations have of necessity been abstracted from their contexts, in which instances I have occasionally taken some liberties with the original phrasing so as to render the exact purport more readily intelligible to the general reader who may be unfamiliar with the complete texts. Translations from the Sanskrit are mainly adopted from the published works of Professors George Coedès and Nilakanta Sastri, those from the Arabic are by Mr. G. R. Tibbetts of Khartoum. Finally why have I included so many panegyrics and exordia *in extenso* when they contribute nothing to our knowledge of actual events? The answer is, as a record of what the ancient Indians, Chinese and South-East Asians would have liked their history to be, and consequently of what they came to believe it had really been. In this pattern of relationships, rather than in a chronology of events, is implicit the system of values and legitimations which the historian is seeking to elucidate. It was this romanticized history which, in preserving and transmitting the traditions of a half-legendary *élite*, moulded the mores of the peninsular Malays through succeeding centuries. Grandiloquent *praśasti* and the mythical exploits of Hang Tuah were things that stirred the souls of men who knew not one word of history as it had in fact happened. Any account of ancient Malaya would be incomplete without these few pages of otherwise meaningless hyperbole.

Berkeley,
California.
June, 1960.

Chapter 2

THE FORGING OF A CULTURE

SOME 250,000 years ago, in the middle of that desolate Palaeolithic epoch when ice sheets still covered much of North-West Europe and North America, men of a sort had made their home on the Malay Peninsula. They had not attained the stature of *Homo sapiens*, they were not even in the line of succession, but they were clearly differentiated from the brute creation around them. They carried themselves comparatively erect, and in spite of small brains and muzzle-like faces, they were probably capable of rudimentary speech, or at least of mutually intelligible oral communication. Although theirs was a species which left no heritage to the modern world, which in fact never rose above the very lowest level of savagery, yet to them belongs one inalienable honour, that of having begun the slow and arduous process by which man has created his own environment. For these brutish palaeanthrops, incessantly preoccupied with the quest for food, the victims without doubt of malnutrition and deficiency diseases, and facing the hazards of the forest with nothing but their own strength, had acquired a skill denied to all their forebears: they had learnt to fashion large choppers by striking flakes off one end of a pebble. The crudely fractured tools which they manufactured in this way in the vast majority of instances would never be recognized as artifacts were they recovered in isolation: only when they occur in quantity is their human workmanship discernible to the trained eye of the archaeologist. But simple though they were, these hand-axes were valuable aids to the forest hominids in grubbing up plant food, in stunning and hacking the flesh

from trapped animals, and in raiding the hearths of their own kind in search of the sweetest of all flesh. Better even than marrow sucked from splintered bone was human brain, sacramentally savoured from the natural bowl of a fractured skull. It is not impossible too, that the choppers may have been of some use in primitive wood-working, though the ravages of climate, insects and moulds have long since conspired to erase all material evidence of this.

In any hunting and collecting culture, not only is population sparse, but the social unit is of necessity small. In Palaeolithic Malaya the largest social group was almost certainly that of the family. It is, therefore, not altogether surprising that very few remains of this culture have come to light in Malaya. In fact, they have been found in quantity only on Kota Tampan Estate in the upper Perak River valley, where a series of gravel-capped terraces afforded well-drained flood-free sites close to the river. In later days, the terraces where lay the discarded tools were buried under a blanket of fine pumice dust, brought on the wind from Sumatra at a time when a catastrophic volcanic eruption formed the present caldera of Lake Toba. For a quarter of a million years the tools lay buried until they were unearthed by Mr. H. D. Collings in 1938. Other relics have been reported from as far up the Perak valley as Grik, as well as from the Raub district in Pahang and from Jĕlĕbu in Negri Sĕmbilan, but no site has yielded either animal or human remains. The description above is based on anthropological inferences drawn from more or less contemporary human skeletons excavated in other parts of Asia, notably at Chou-k'ou-tien in North China.[1] But savagery permits of only limited degrees of individuality, and there is no reason to suppose that the earliest Malayans differed significantly from their near contemporaries in neighbouring territories.

As long as man remained in a state of savagery, his oppor-

1. Superior numerals in the text refer to the *Notes and References* at the end of this volume.

tunities for cultural advancement were extremely limited. And as long as he laboured under the biological incubus of incipient humanity, he was forced into acquiescence with, and oppressive dependence on, his environment. Of the fate of the palaeanthrops who waged this unrecorded struggle with the Malayan forest for at least a quarter of a million years we have no knowledge, but it is certain that they left no issue to the modern world. When we next encounter man in the archaeological record, some 10,000–4,000 years ago, he is of our own species, *Homo sapiens*. He was still a savage in the sense that he was mainly dependent on hunting and collecting, but because of his greater brain power, matched with a more adaptable physique, he encompassed the contingency of his own civilization. There is a tragic yet magnificently ennobling aspect to this concept of early man, endowed with all the sensory apparatus of us moderns, yet condemned to acquiesce in the caprices of terrain and climate until, by a myriad essays in trial and error, he should have achieved some degree of mastery over his environment.

The first representatives of the human race who have left evidence of their existence in Malaya are known as Hoabinhians, a name derived from the province of Hoa-binh in the People's Republic of Vietnam, where their culture was first recognized.[2] They seem to have been of commanding stature, six feet or so tall, heavy boned, and possessed of large skulls with massive jaws and marked brow ridges. Most anthropologists who have examined skeletons of these folk have remarked on their similarity to present-day Melanesians,[3] such people as those of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands, which raises the important question as to whether the Malay Peninsula was the bridge over which these groups migrated from some Asian culture-hearth to the fringes of the great Pacific Ocean.

During at least part of the year Hoabinhian man sought shelter in caves in the limestone hills which diversified the

centre and north of the Malay Peninsula. The dark interior he avoided, and performed his household chores in the shaded but open entrance, where the smoke from his fire could easily escape, yet where he was sheltered from sun and rain. Today almost every such cave and rock-shelter large enough to be habitable, yet high enough to be immune from flooding, yields signs of Hoabinhian habitation. Not infrequently this evidence has been damaged by Malayan farmers who have mined the cave earths for the sake of their bat guano, an important source of phosphate, and for their lime, a valuable corrective to the prevailing acidity of Malaya's granitic soils.

The Hoabinhians buried their dead—those who escaped a violent death—in a contracted position, lying on their sides with knees drawn up to the stomach and the hands under the chin. Presumably the corpse had to be placed in this position before rigor mortis set in, which implies some degree of forethought and the seeds of ritual. Why this position was adopted is uncertain, but some archaeologists have suggested that it was intended to prevent the spirit of the dead from haunting the land of the living. Against this it must be admitted that no grave furniture has been found to accompany these burials. The presence in the Gua Cha excavations of apparently informal, dismembered burials, some with artificially broken and burnt bones, has been held to indicate some form of cannibalism, presumably not for ritual purposes.

Hoabinhian man's superiority over his predecessors, the Tampanian hominids, is evidenced by his tools. Coarsely flaked though they are, they yet mark 250,000 years of progress. Quartzites, igneous and metamorphic rocks, and cherts were all used in the fashioning of implements, and when no other rock was available, the Hoabinhian would use a schist, though this was less satisfactory as it permitted little control over the flaking. Side by side with these cutting tools have been found various pounding and grinding stones, as well as

pieces of red haematite. The use to which these last were put is a matter for speculation but, judging by the practice of the Andaman Islanders and Australian aborigines, it is not unlikely that the haematite was powdered and mixed with water, plant juices or animal fat to make a red paint for ritualistic purposes.

These Hoabinhians were primarily dependent for their livelihood on gathering and hunting, and there is some stratigraphical evidence that the emphasis in their economy shifted from the former to the latter during the long millenia when they occupied the peninsula. The animals of the period were those which exist today, and Hoabinhian man left abundant evidence of his skill as a hunter, though we can only speculate as to the methods he employed. Bones of oxen, goats, antelope, deer, pigs, monkeys, bears, rodents and fish have been excavated in considerable quantities from middens at the entrance to Hoabinhian caves, together with scutes of the mud turtle. Frequent charring of the bones indicates that the Hoabinhians preferred their joints roasted, but that they were not otherwise too particular in their preparation of food is indicated by the fact that most skeletons show teeth ground down to the quick, a feature which has been ascribed to the amount of grit they ate. In addition, most groups of Hoabinhians were especially fond of river snails. The tests of these creatures, cemented into a solid mound of shell by the solvent action of percolating rainwater, form a large part of many Hoabinhian middens. At Guak Kĕpah, on the south bank of the Muda River in Province Wellesley, an apparently late group of Hoabinhians consumed such quantities of molluscs that the discarded shells formed consolidated mounds twenty feet high.[4] These shell heaps were the first prehistoric relics to be investigated in Malaya, and an account of them as they still existed in 1860 is included in George Windsor Earl's book *Topography and Itinerary of*

*Province Wellesley.** Unfortunately they have since been quarried by Chinese lime-burners so effectively that only low mounds of earth and shells now remain. Finally, we can be sure that these early inhabitants of the peninsula did not fail to utilize the wealth of Malayan plant life available to them, both as a source of food and in the fashioning of utensils and receptacles, but of this there can, in the Malayan climate, be no material remains.

At some time about 2000 B.C.[3] a new people migrated into Malaya, probably from a culture-hearth in South-West China. Most anthropologists agree that it was these folk who brought the Malay language to South-East Asia, as a result of which they are sometimes called *Uraustronesier* (Original Southern Islanders). They were of shorter stature than the Hoabinhians, with finer features and, in particular, smaller jaws. But there were differences between these progenitors of the present Malays and their predecessors more profound than any variation in their physique. Whereas all previous inhabitants of the peninsula had been in a state of stultifying *savagery*, these folk had attained to a *barbarism* which offered boundless opportunities of advancement. No longer were they directly dependent on the chance abundance of the forest for their livelihood, for they had acquired the rudiments of farming. As Grahame Clark has so aptly phrased it, they could draw dividends from the cycle of animal life, they could discriminate between capital and income by consuming the increase of their animals while yet retaining in perpetuity their seed and stock. Their crops can only be inferred, but it is almost certain that they included yams and, at a later date, *padi*. Vernacular names for yams constitute a basic stratum in all the languages of Malaysia, which implies that they were cultivated during

* Published at Penang in 1861. In the previous year the author had contributed a paper, "On the shell-mounds of Province Wellesley in the Malay Peninsula", to the *Transactions of the Ethnographical Society*, new series, Vol. XI, p. 119 *et seq.*

an early formative period of the language.[6] The case for *padi* is a little more complex. Grains of this cereal have allegedly been found imprinted on pottery sherds from a Neolithic site in North China.[7] As *padi* was almost certainly brought into cultivation in India or South-East Asia, it is extremely unlikely that it failed to feature among the crops of the Malayan Late Neolithic farmers. Professor Carl Sauer has argued that the cradle of agriculture should be located in South-East Asia.[8] If this interpretation be correct, we need not be surprised that these Malayan Neolithic men had already developed a comparatively advanced farming technique.

With an assured and regular food supply, the fruit of their own foresight and labours, these farmers could associate together in larger numbers than was ever possible for hunters. Moreover, one man could, under favourable circumstances, coax from the earth considerably more sustenance than he himself needed, so that with the development of autocratic authority within the community, some members could be released from the hitherto continual search for food and allowed to devote their time to developing new skills for the betterment of the group as a whole. In addition, the farmer could utilize the slack seasons in the farming calendar to try his hand at making new types of tools. At the same time there were improved opportunities for contact with other groups, and consequently for the transmission of ideas. Such farming communities, in contrast to hunters, formed attachments to particular localities, to fields and caves, streams and hills. Successive generations passed their lives in the same vicinity, so that they developed a continuity of tradition. At this point the Malay people were not far removed from the beginnings of history.

The economic specialization attendant on these circumstances resulted in a much wider range of implements. Judged even by those which have survived the rigours of an equatorial climate, and which must exclude all tools, contrivances and

containers of wood, bamboo or fibre, the Malayan Neolithic craftsman's achievements are impressive. Polished stone adzes and chisels of very diverse forms, together with skilfully fashioned axes, form the bulk of the collections in our museums, and it is apparent that these are the tools of a carpentering people. Other stone implements include bark-cloth beaters[9] (which imply that the people went at least partially clothed) and curious rhomboid tools which have been construed by some authors as reaping knives. These knives have been discovered only in the upper reaches of the Pahang drainage basin, particularly in the Tĕmbĕling valley, whence they are sometimes referred to as Tĕmbĕling knives.[10] The preferred material for the manufacture of stone artifacts was black hornfels, a fine-grained rock from the metamorphic aureoles surrounding granitic intrusions in the central mountains of Malaya. Failing this, brownish cherts were sometimes used, while a single adze from Ulu Tĕlom is made of honey-coloured, translucent chert. This cannot be ascribed to a local provenance and may, therefore, be the earliest witness to foreign trade in Malaya. It is noticeable that, of the many implements recovered, only three have been interpreted as spear-heads. This, of course, does not mean that these farmers did not have wooden spears or bamboo blowpipes.

It seems that some of these Neolithic Malayans frequented gravel terraces and alluvial flood plains[11] in the middle courses of the major rivers. From the archaeological point of view these are not propitious sites. They are at all times exposed to the hazards of flooding and burial under alluvial sediment, and when abandoned they are quickly overwhelmed by forest, which renders it virtually impossible to locate them. Subsequent clearing of the regenerated forest for any purpose at all nearly always results in disturbance of the soil and destruction of archaeological evidence. Another factor which militates against the preservation of such material is the corrosive action of acidic Malayan soils. In the light of these remarks,

it is not surprising that there have been only two full-scale excavations of Neolithic habitation sites in Malaya. Notwithstanding this lack of scientific investigation, Neolithic stone implements have long played a role in the folk-lore of Malaya. Washed out of river-banks during floods, they are often prized by the villagers as instruments of supernatural power. To the peasant they become *batu lintar* (thunderbolts), teeth of the thunder demons spat out over the country as they rage among themselves.

As long as man was a nomad, bound to follow the spoor of wild animals, he had little use for such easily broken articles as pots. The settled life of the Neolithic Malayans,* on the other hand, multiplied the need for domestic containers, and induced the emergence of a pottery industry of high calibre. The quality of the bowls, platters, beakers and jars is one of the best guarantees of the advanced state of this culture. Not only were the utensils serviceable and strongly made, but they were also elegantly proportioned. The best of them exhibited that marriage of form and function which distinguishes only the higher types of pottery. Although there were hardly any two vessels alike, each was supremely fit for its purpose. A proportion of this pottery was turned on a slow wheel, but some vessels employing abrupt angles not proper to ceramic forms may have been produced in imitation of metallic prototypes. In keeping with this high standard of technical achievement, decoration was severely restricted. A majority of vessels displayed a simple cord-marking, others employed comb-decorations, and a proportion were entirely plain. The design and execution of this

* I do not, of course, intend to imply that the settlements of the Malayan Neolithic were permanent in the sense in which the term can be applied to the medieval villages of North-West Europe, but merely that they normally existed on one site for a period of years. Even in the nineteenth century Malay settlements were relatively impermanent, for flight was the peasant's only refuge from disease, famine and invasion, his only sanction against tyranny.

pottery reveals that its authors had an acute awareness of form which raised them to the rank of artists. If pottery is an index of culture, then these proto-Malays were as highly cultivated as man ever was before he discovered the uses of metal in the taming of his environment.

Other achievements with which Professor R. von Heine-Geldern has on general grounds credited the men of the South-East Asian Neolithic are the brewing of beer from rice or millet, the keeping of pigs, the raising of cattle or buffalo for sacrificial purposes, the building of rectangular houses on piles, a propensity for head-hunting, the custom of erecting megaliths as memorials of sacrificial feasts or as monuments to the dead, and a distinctive style of art based on simple geometrical designs, carved heads and symbolic representations of the sun and moon.[12] Professor Heine-Geldern also considers that these same Neolithic men invented the outrigger canoe while they were still living beside the great rivers of Burma and Indo-China. Whether this be so or not, there is some indirect confirmation that the Neolithic farmers of Malaya were also boat-builders. In 1947 Michael Tweedie found specimens of a marine gastropod (*Iravadia trochlearis*) amid the debris thrown out from a Neolithic cave at Kota Tongkat in Central Pahang.[13] The simplest explanation for the occurrence of these anomalous animals is that they were brought inland in clay destined for pot-making. This, in fact, accords with some experiments carried out by the late Mr. G. Burgess,[14] who determined empirically that the clays producing pottery most closely resembling that of the Neolithic were those obtained from the sea coast. But in Neolithic times clay could have been transported in quantity only by means of boats. That these folk, inhabiting river valleys and possessed of a splendid array of wood-working tools, should have thus utilized the country's main highways is after all not so surprising.

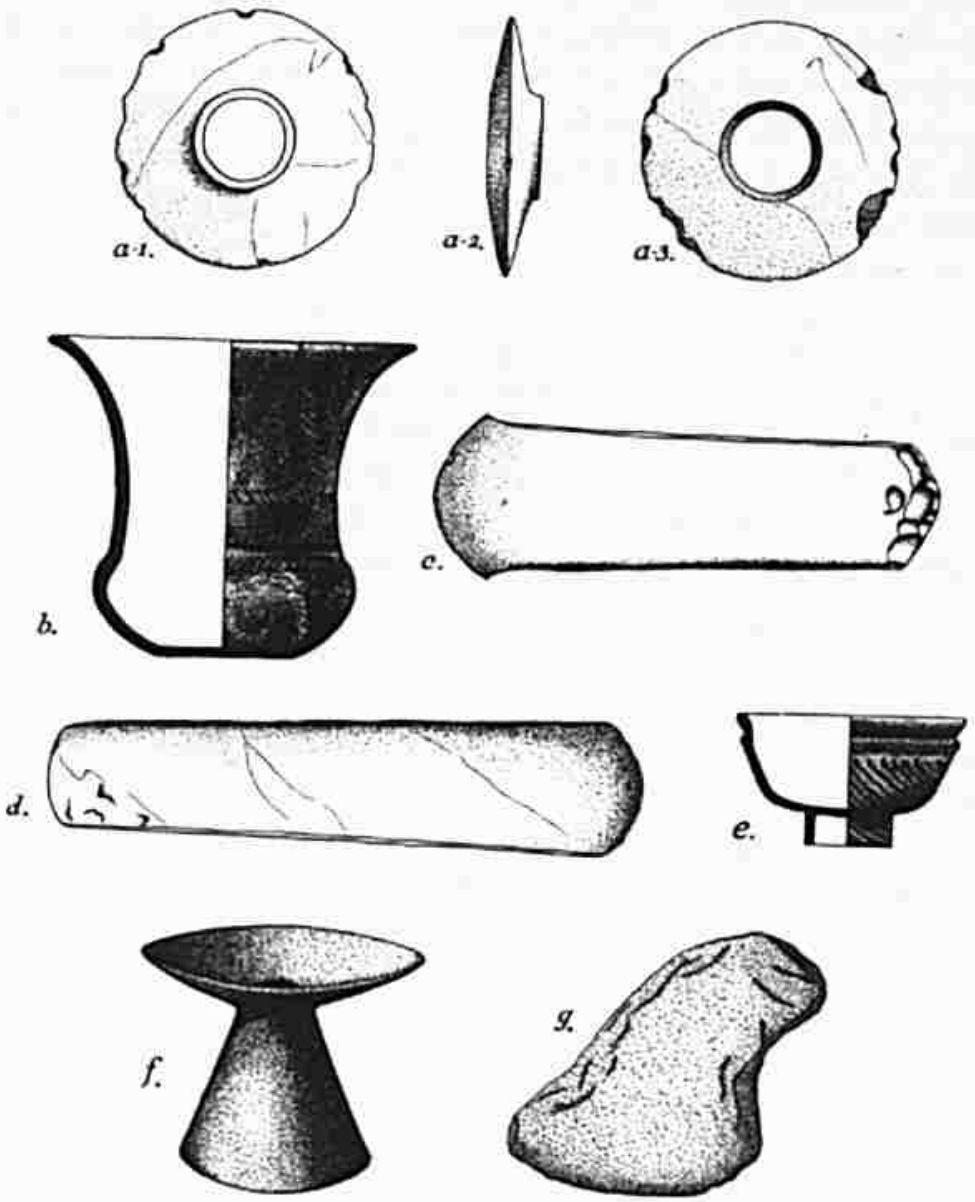

Figure 2 Some Neolithic remains: (a) Perforated stone disc from the Kuala Kangsar district; (b) Beaker with spiral and comb-impressed decoration from Gua Cha; (c) Adze of yellow chert probably made in imitation of a metal tool, from the head-waters of the Pahang river; (d) Adze from the Těmběling river; (e) Cord-impressed bowl from Gua Cha; (f) Footed and perforated vessel of redware from Gua Musang; (g) The Těmběling knife (see text, p. 19).

The farming regimen is conducive to, even dependent upon, close observation of natural phenomena, and a more regular life, perhaps with a little more leisure at certain seasons, led man to speculate more deeply on his relation to his environment. It seems fairly clear that the farmer's dependence on the productivity of the soil led him to the recognition of an Earth-Mother, at the same time as his sedentary life called his attention to a new significance attaching to natural features of the landscape, namely the environmental spirits which required propitiation. Probably the most efficacious agents for such propitiation would be the tribal ancestors, particularly chieftains, who, after acting as intermediaries between men and the earth deity during their lifetimes, had eventually returned to the bosom of the earth. These ideas have been worked out at considerable length by Professor Heine-Geldern and Dr. Quaritch Wales in a series of controversial publications,[13] but whether or not their views ultimately prove acceptable, it is difficult to deny that the South-East Asians of the Neolithic period had evolved a "co-ordinated system of customs and beliefs, a philosophy of life and nature".* Certainly this involved some concept of a future existence, for which the Neolithic Malayan prepared his dead. Decked in its finery of stone-bead and shell necklaces, and with stone bracelets on its arms, the corpse was laid in a supine position in a shallow grave. As provision for the after-life, bowls of food were placed beside it, together with stone adzes and sometimes a spoon of mussel shell. It is unlikely that the funerary provisions were conceived as self-renewing, so that we are forced to conclude that they implied an extended journey to be undertaken by the deceased. At Gua Cha the burials were placed parallel to the Nĕnggiri River, with the heads upstream, an arrangement which Dr. Sieveking, their excavator, is inclined to interpret as preparation for a voyage

* C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *Man in India,* Vol. 25 (1945), p. 74.

downstream to the sea, possibly back to an idealized existence in the culture-hearth of the race.[16] Fragmentary human remains, predominantly artificially fractured skulls and leg bones, have been interpreted as evidence of possible ritual cannibalism. It is noteworthy, though, that in the majority of these burials grave goods were provided, which would seem to indicate that the subtle essence of the corpse was believed to persist even after dismemberment.

There is evidence that the Malayan Stone Age was drawing to a close in the later centuries of the pre-Christian era, but this presages no lifting of the mists of obscurity. In fact, the darkness intensifies, but it is the darkness which precedes the dawn, for from the fifth century onwards epigraphic materials begin to facilitate a transition from proto-history into the full light of history. Middens, flints and grave furniture are superseded by reliefs, manuscripts and dynastic chronicles as the main media of the historian.

The people who introduced the use of metals into South-East Asia seem to have been those who some two millenia earlier had brought a knowledge of farming, of pottery and of sophisticated stone-polishing. These so-called Deutero-Malays were workers in bronze and iron, but remains of both are rare on the peninsula. This is particularly true of bronze artifacts, partly because Malaya has no copper accessible to primitive mining techniques, and partly because the metal-users no longer frequented caves to any extent. This means that their habitation sites can be discovered only by chance, and such relics as we do possess have either been exposed by natural processes such as erosion or are casual finds during constructional work. The only bronze remains so far discovered in Malaya are fragments of two large, bronze kettledrums of a genre common to many parts of South-East Asia at this period, three bells, and five axe-heads of distinctive design.[17] The drums, from the Těmbĕling valley and Klang respectively, are handsome instru-

ments. Each consists of—or rather did consist of, for now only fragments remain—a circular tympanum with a cylindrical mantle which is cushion-shaped above and conical below. It has been suggested that this shape perpetuates in bronze the form of a low skin drum mounted on a basketwork pedestal, such as may have been in use in earlier times. The tympana of the Malayan examples exhibit central, ten-rayed suns and stylized hornbills surrounded by concentric bands of ornament in relief. They can be dated fairly accurately to the penultimate century of the pre-Christian era. The bronze bells, also dug up in the vicinity of Klang, are considered to have been cast at a slightly earlier period. The bronze axeheads cannot be dated with any degree of precision.

This culture has been given the name of Dong-So'n after the village in Tongking where it was first identified. In its classic development material well-being was based on the cultivation of irrigated *padi* with the help of oxen and buffalo, and on some skill in metallurgy. Reliance on irrigation, with its need for co-operation at crucial seasons of the year, had already induced distinctive traits in the structure of society, which was further characterized by a matrilineal organization.[18] These Dong-So'n people were also expert sailors whose vessels, according to one of the Jātaka stories,* were seen off the coasts of western India.

The unit of settlement was the *kampong*, a collection of stilted houses set amid gardens and multi-storied groves of fruit trees. The higher storey comprised mainly coconut crowns and the spreading, pinnate fronds of areca. At successively lower levels rambutans, mangosteens, bananas, bamboo, sugar-cane,† *kĕladi*, yams, and numerous zingiberaceous plants formed a jungle-like agglomeration of vegetation.[19] This association of *padi* with so-called mixed gardening

* *Suppāraka-Jātaka*: *Jātakamālā*, no. 14.

† Probably only for chewing, as the terms for sugar-making are Sanskritic.

was a typically South Asian farming technique. Whereas *padi* provided the staple grain, the *kampong* plants yielded fruits, tubers and vegetables throughout the year and, moreover, made very few demands on the time or labour of the peasant. This was substantially the subsistence economy which still existed over most of Malaya at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and which persists with but little change in many parts even today.

In the absence of written records, Metal Age religion must remain largely a matter of speculation, but it has been inferred that the people were animists who accorded special honour to their ancestors and the god of the soil, and the archaeological record shows that they buried their dead in amphorae and dolmens.[20] They also located their shrines on hill tops, a custom stemming from a cosmological dualism of mountain and sea which permeated their mythology. We shall see that this dualism was a persistent element in South-East Asian culture for the next thousand years.

At the dawn of history, that is, at the beginning of the Christian era, metal-users were still confined to coastal districts of the Malay Peninsula and were a small group in a land predominantly in the Stone Age. Occasionally a stone adze is found with its cutting edge flared outwards in imitation of the forged edge of a bronze model,[21] and at least two stone spear-heads, from Kĕlantan and Pahang respectively, convey the impression that they, too, were copies of metal weapons.[22] At a still later date Chinese annalists remarked that both stone- and iron-tipped weapons were used in a kingdom situated on the Bay of Bandon.[23] It is not unlikely that all the bronze artifacts used in Malaya were imported from northern regions. In this connection it is interesting to note that an attempt had been made at some time to refurbish crudely the pattern on the tympanum of the Tĕmbĕling drum with a pointed instrument, suggesting that the people who

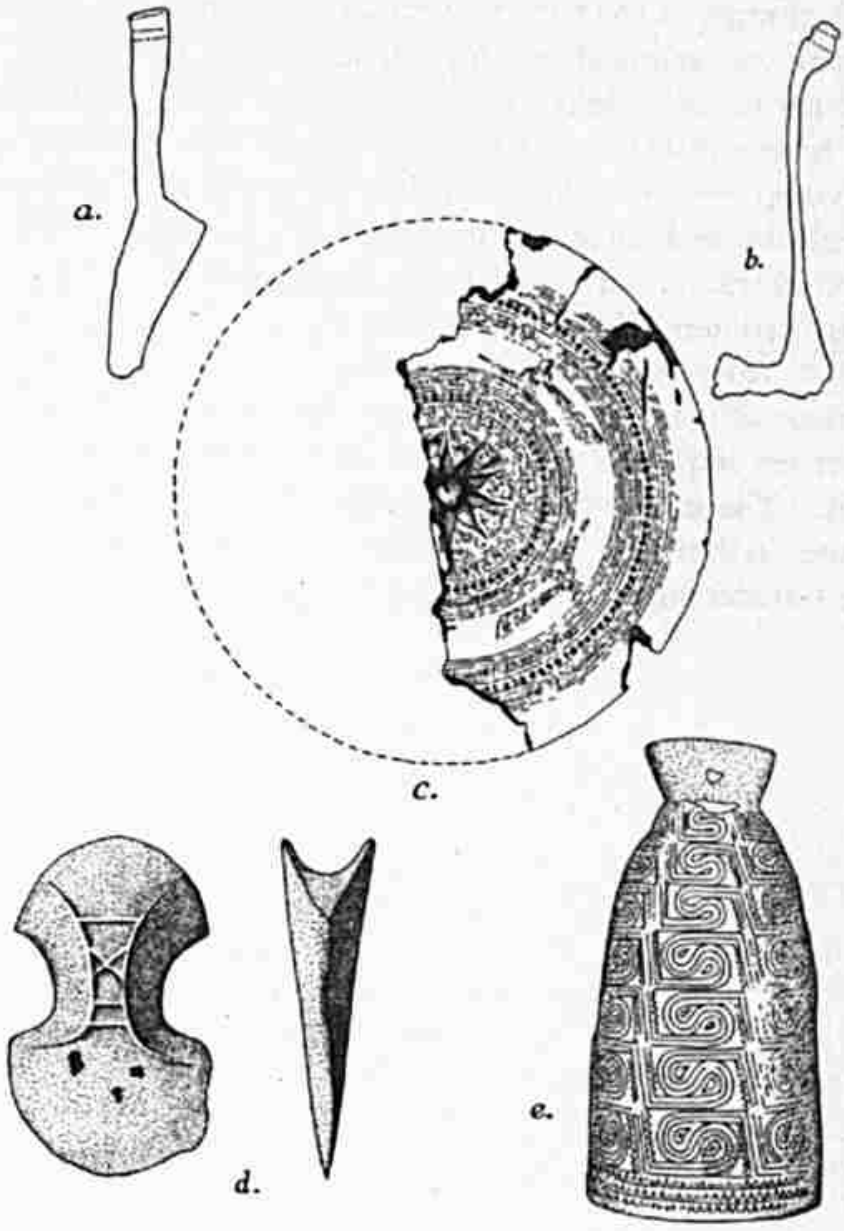

Figure 3 Some Metal Age remains: (a) and (b) *Tulang mawas* from Perak; (c) Fragment of the tympanum of a bronze drum from Klang; (d) Socketed bronze celt from Kĕlantan; (e) Bronze bell from Klang.

were then using it were themselves unversed in metal working.

Despite its technical accomplishments, the Dong-So'n culture seems to have lacked certain imaginative elements which would have entitled it to be called a civilization. It required a catalyst to release its latent creativity, to stimulate its artistic potentialities and augment its political structure. Although the concentration of population associated with wet-*padi* farming had tended to consolidate the power and authority of tribal chieftains over reasonably stable and sedentary settlements, it is more than doubtful if the larger political units had ever encompassed more than a group of regionally related villages. The catalyst took the form of selective borrowings from the civilizations of the Indian subcontinent, and to this culture-transference we shall turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

BUDDHIST AND BRĀHMAN ON THE MALAY PENINSULA

In a dim distant unrecorded age
we had met, thou and I —
When my speech became entangled in thine
and my life in thy life.

The East Wind had carried thy beckoning call
through an unseen path of the air
To a distant sun-lit shore
fanned by the coconut leaves.
It blended with the conch-shell sound
that rose in worship at the shrine
by the sacred waters of the Ganges.

The great god Vishnu spoke to me,
and spoke Uma, the ten-armed goddess:
'Make ready thy boat, carry the rites of our worship
across the unknown sea.'
The Ganges stretched her arm to the eastern ocean
in a flow of majestic gesture.
From the heavens spoke to me two mighty voices —
the one that had sung of Rama's glory and sorrow,
and the other of Arjuna's triumphant arm —
Urging me to bear along the waves
their epic lines to the eastern islands;
And the heart of my land murmured to me its hope
that it might build its nest of love
in a far-away land of its dream.

Rabindranath Tagore[1]

Just when Indian sailors first coasted the shore of the Bay of Bengal and reached the Malay Peninsula is unknown. It is unfortunate that the genius of Indian thought sought fulfil-

ment in realms other than historiography, so that information about these early voyages was never recorded with factual exactitude. Yet tales of these expeditions circulated widely in ancient India, and exotic names from the fabled lands of South-East Asia were used by writers of epic and romance alike as stereotyped samples of local colour. One of the earliest of these place-names which can be related to South-East Asia is Yavadvīpa, an isle of gold and silver mentioned in India's *ādikāvya* (first ornate poem), the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This epic, which celebrates the exploits of one Rāma, a king of the Solar race, was traditionally ascribed to the sage Vālmīki, but in fact is unlikely to have been compiled in the form in which we now have it much before the beginning of the Christian era. Scholarly opinion is divided as to whether the name Yavadvīpa refers to Java or Sumatra, or to both, or even to Borneo, but that it was a part of South-East Asia there can be no doubt. The same name occurs again in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, together with another word, Kaserudvipa,[2] which has been considered by some scholars to refer to the Malay Peninsula, but these matters are all highly speculative and probably the truth will never be known.

The Indian adventurers who explored the coasts of South-East Asia were pre-eminently merchants in search of gold and aromatics, so it is not surprising that a large proportion of the tales in which they feature should relate to maritime trading. So pronounced is this aspect that Professor R. C. Majumdar, a prominent Indian historian, was constrained to remark that, "If literature mirrors the interests of an age, then trade and commerce must have been a supreme passion in India in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era."* There is space here to mention only a

* R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvīpa*, Part 1 (Dacca, 1937), p. 61.

few of these allusions to South-East Asia which are sprinkled through early Indian literature. The toponym which was used most frequently, and which is well known to students of Indian history today, was Suvarṇadvīpa, a Sanskrit name with the meaning of Golden Island or, perhaps, Golden Peninsula. *Dvīpa* strictly means "land with water on two sides", but in ancient writing it was often used in a general sense to mean simply "land", so that we can translate Suvarṇadvīpa quite adequately as "the Land of Gold". In Pāli Buddhist scriptures the form Suvaṇṇabhūmi does occur with precisely this connotation. The *Jātaka*,[3] a collection of folk-tales adapted to Buddhist purposes, which were in existence in the late centuries of the pre-Christian era but which certainly incorporate material from an earlier period, picture an established trade between the ports of India and Suvaṇṇabhūmi. One well-known story tells how Prince Mahājanaka joined with a company of merchants seeking fortunes in this Eastern land,† and two other tales‡ recount voyages from Bhṛgukaccha, the modern Broach, to Suvaṇṇabhūmi.

Another early collection of tales some of which relate to this theme is the *Bṛhatkathā* (Great Story), compiled by Guṇāḍhya in the Paiśāchī language. Although this corpus is now irretrievably lost, it has supplied material for many later works. Perhaps the best known of these is the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* (Ocean of Story), compiled *c.* A.D.1070 by the Brāhmaṇ Somadeva for the amusement of a Kashmīri queen. C. H. Tawney, its translator, has this to say about the Ocean of Story. Somadeva "felt that his great work united in itself all stories as the ocean does all rivers. Every stream of myth and mystery flowing down from the snowy heights of sacred Himālaya would sooner or later reach the ocean, other streams from

† Vol. 6, p. 22.

‡ Vol. 3, p. 124 and Vol. 4, p. 86.

other mountains would do likewise, till at last fancy would create an ocean full of stories of every conceivable description."[4] Among several stories of Suvarṇadvīpa in this collection is that of the merchant Samudraśūra, who visited Kalaśapura, the capital of the realm. Equally famous are the tale of Princess Guṇavatī, who suffered shipwreck on a voyage from Suvarṇadvīpa to India, and the wanderings of the Brāhmaṇ Candrasvāmin among the islands of the archipelago in search of his lost son. In another work, the *Bṛhatkathā-śloka-saṁgraha,* also derived from the Ocean of Story, the adventures of one Sānudāsa on a journey into the interior of Suvarṇadvīpa are related. In the *Kathākoṣa* the king of Suvarṇadvīpa is described as rescuing Nāgadatta and his 500 ships from the hollow of a snake-encircled mountain, and Kauṭilya's *Arthaśastra,* a compendious account of the science of polity in ancient India, mentions gharuwood[5] from Suvarṇadvīpa. In the *Mahākarma-Vibhaṅga,* the experiences of merchants on the voyage from Tamluk to Suvaṇṇabhūmi are adduced in illustration of the calamities attendant on foreign travel (*deśāntara-vipāka*). Finally, there are a few scattered references concerned not with commercial but with missionary undertakings. The *Mahākarma-Vibhaṅga,* for example, attributes the conversion of Suvaṇṇabhūmi to Gavāmpati, and the *Mahāvaṁsa* (Great Chronicle) of Ceylon describes the mission of the Theras Uttara and Śoṇa in the same field, a theme taken up by Tibetan sources at a later date.

It seems that in this early period Indian writers sometimes used an alternative regional term for Malaysia, namely Dvīpāntara. This occurs first in a Sanskrit-Chinese lexicon compiled in the seventh century of the Christian era by Li Yen, a Central Asian monk. Subsequently it is found in several passages of the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* and in Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṃśa,* where breezes from Dvīpāntara are described

as wafting the scent of cloves over Kaliṅga. Finally a journey to Dvīpāntara is mentioned briefly in the life of Tirumangai Āḻvār as related in the *Guruparamparai, Arāyirappaḍi,* one of the earliest hagiologies of Tamil Vaiṣṇavism.

Thus far Indian literature has shown only a vague and generalized knowledge of South-East Asia. Suvarṇadvīpa, in particular, has featured in the *kathā* literature as an eastern El Dorado beckoning princely entrepreneur and professional trader alike. Some of the texts quoted above can be satisfactorily interpreted on the assumption that Suvarṇadvīpa was specifically Sumatra, but there seems to be little doubt that the majority of early writers applied the term to the whole of the archipelago and the Malay Peninsula. This, at any rate, was the interpretation which was later adopted by Arab authors, among whom we find Muḥammad ibn-Ahmad al-Bīrūni[6] writing: "The islands of Zābaj [that is, the empire of Śrī Vijaya*] are called by the Hindus Sūwarn dīb [i.e., Suvarṇadvīpa] or Gold Islands." As trading ventures became more frequent and the regional personalities of South-East Asia were explored, so new toponyms began to appear in Indian literature. As conceptions of the geography of the Eastern El Dorado beyond the ocean began to crystallize, nebulous territories within the realm of Suvarṇadvīpa itself became discernible. Prominent among these were Kaṭāha (the Sanskrit form whence is derived the modern name of Kĕdah) and Takola (the Land of Cardamoms, possibly the source of the name of the T'ai province of Tăkua-pa). Half-way across the Indian Ocean was Nārikeladvīpa (the Coconut Land), known today as the Nicobars, and at the farthest bounds of Indian eastward penetration was Karpūradvīpa (the Camphor Land), thought to have been present-day Borneo. The very names of these fabulous realms beyond the sunrise were invitations to

* See Chapters 6 and 7.

merchant-adventurers, whose voyages to the East became increasingly frequent.

When we seek the motivating force which turned the attention of Indian traders in this direction we are led far afield. It seems to have been events in the Mediterranean and in Central Asia, rather than Indian internal circumstances, which induced this expansion of trade. In the first place, the establishment of the Seleucid empire, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf and beyond, stimulated communication between India and the classical world of the West, and subsequently Rome was able to take advantage of this intermediary when her unification of the Mediterranean world inaugurated a demand for oriental luxury goods. Among these were spices, scented woods and resins obtained by Indian merchants from South-East Asia. But during these same centuries India was cut off from her Siberian gold supply by nomadic insurrections which closed the Bactrian trade-routes, and just over a century later the situation was aggravated when the Emperor Vespasian (A.D. 69–79) prohibited the export of gold from the Roman Empire. Under these circumstances, whither should Indian merchants turn but eastwards to Suvarṇadvīpa, the very Land of Gold?

Two developments tended to facilitate such voyages. In the first place the early centuries of the Christian era witnessed innovations in ship construction which, taking their origin in the Persian Gulf, spread rapidly round the shores of the Indian Ocean. Perhaps the most significant of these technical improvements was a rig which allowed vessels to sail nearer the wind. Ships were also built on a larger scale, though they were still tiny by modern standards. Pliny—who had fairly accurate information on such matters—mentions an Indian ship of seventy-five tons as being large. In A.D. 414 Fa-Hsien travelled from Ceylon to China by sea in a vessel carrying 200 souls. Paintings and sculptures from both India and South-East Asia tend to confirm this impres-

sion that Indian ships were small. Typically the timbers of vessels were lashed, rather than nailed, together in the belief that the dangers of magnetic rocks were thereby circumvented. In fact, such construction produced a resilient vessel well adapted to withstand the stress of monsoon storms or the jarring shock of coral reefs.

The other circumstance which favoured these voyages was the rise of Buddhism. The old Brāhmaṇism had paid heed to the laws of Manu, which prohibited overseas travel, while the *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* placed foreign voyaging at the head of *patanīyanī* and prescribed a three-year penance. Although in practice the prohibition seems to have been frequently flouted, such an authoritative command must have exerted a strong restraining force. Buddhism, on the other hand, undermined brāhmaṇical ideas of racial purity and the ensuing repugnance to travel. It is, therefore, not surprising that the earliest archaeological remains attesting Indian influence in South-East Asia are images of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, a favourite talisman of sailors, which have come to light on sites as widely scattered as T'ailand, Vietnam, Sumatra, East Java and Sulawesi. In Malaya a Buddhist inscription, allegedly from the fourth century A.D., has been found at Bukit Mĕriam in Kĕdah. It consists of two couplets. The first is a commonly used Buddhist formula, the second has been construed as: "Through ignorance *karma* [the effect of former deeds on one's present or future condition] is accumulated; *karma* is the cause of man's being born again. Knowledge ensures that man no longer produces *karma*, and it follows from the absence of *karma* that man is not born again."*

It used to be thought that these traders were the instrument by which Indian culture was introduced into South-East Asia, but we now know that this was not so. The majority of traders were *populo minuto*, peddlers in fact, who hawked

* Professor Kern's translation.

their wares all round the shores of the Indian Ocean and through the lands of Suvarṇadvīpa. In the first place, they were untutored and wholly incapable of transmitting anything but the grosser material forms of Indian culture.[7] In the second, when in South-East Asia they were confined to ghetto-like quarters within the port precincts, and had little opportunity for intercourse with the peasant populations, let alone with the hierarchy of the royal court. The role of these traders in the transmission of Indian culture was that of explorers. It was they who pioneered sailing routes and opened markets. It was they, too, who familiarized the people of India with South-East Asian names and products, and introduced Indian trade-goods into Suvarṇadvīpa. More important as a medium of direct culture transference was the much smaller number of merchant aristocrats, primarily investors and speculators, who did occasionally settle in South-East Asia. Though few in number, their influence was more potent. Being kṣatrīyas, they could not only communicate more or less directly with the royal courts of South-East Asia, but they were capable on occasion of carving out kingdoms themselves. A history of the Chinese Liang dynasty,† for example, preserves a Cambodian tradition that just such an adventurer established himself as ruler over a tiny state in the lower Mekong Valley, which later became the powerful Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain. Nor must we underestimate the compulsive power of example in promoting the so-called Indianization of South-East Asia. Not only were kṣatrīyas present in South-East Asia, but Austronesian traders had for long been coasting the shores of peninsular India even reaching Madagascar. We can be sure that by the beginning of the Christian era Indian customs were already familiar to many South-East Asian chieftains, who sought to the best of their ability to model themselves on Indian rulers. If we look carefully

† *Liang Shu*, Chap. 54.

into certain early texts we can sometimes catch a glimpse of this process in operation. Both the Bornean Aśvavarman and his son Mūlavarman had proud Sanskrit names, but Kuṇḍunga, the name of the grandfather, seems to be Indonesian.[8] In similar fashion Sañjaya, founder of the early Javanese kingdom of Mataram, bore a Sanskrit name, although that of his uncle Sannāha was clearly Javanese recast in Sanskrit form.[9] It is apparent that rulers such as these throughout the length and breadth of South-East Asia were adopting certain aspects of Indian culture. Once this process had begun, South-East Asian rulers soon came to realize the value of Indian political concepts as a means of consolidating their own power and stratifying their subjects. But a ruler could only be recognized as a god-king if he were properly consecrated, and this, in India, was the prerogative of the brahman *varṇa*. It was a natural development, therefore, that brāhmaṇs should be summoned to the courts of South-East Asia for the sake of their consecratory powers. By means of protocol and ritual they alone could maintain the king as a divinity in the eyes of his subjects. These brāhmaṇs it was who introduced into South-East Asia the divine consecration of a monarch, Hindu religious formulae, mythological genealogies, Indian iconography, epic characters and plots, and the complex ceremonial of Indian court life. They were few in number, but a distinctly superior cultural pattern requires few propagandists for its diffusion. Moreover, it seems likely that, in later days at least, there were increasing numbers of South-East Asian priests who styled themselves brāhmans. Certainly by the early centuries of the Christian era there were numerous *soi-disant* brāhmaṇs ministering to the rulers of South-East Asian kingdoms.[10] The arts and customs of the nobility in these states were also Indian, and Sanskrit was the sacred language.

There has been a great deal of speculation as to the regional provenance of the Indian cultural influences which

flowed over South-East Asia in these early centuries, and it is unlikely that the last word has yet been said; but the evidence of scripts, plastic arts, architecture, literature, place-names, dynastic traditions and ethnology points uncompromisingly to South India as the main source.[11] This is particularly true of the Malay Peninsula, where the only remains exhibiting North Indian origins are a few Gupta-style figures[12] and fragments of Buddhist votive tablets in tenth-century Nāgāri script from a Kēdah cave.[13] The rest are all of South Indian provenance. For example, more than a century ago Colonel James Low found in Kēdah Buddhist inscriptions written in Pallava characters,[14] together with a tablet inscribed with the prayer of a sailing-master for a safe voyage, also in Pallava script.[15] More recently in the Bujang valley Dr. Quaritch Wales has unearthed inscribed quotations from the *Sāgaramati-paripṛcchā* in Pallava Grantha script.[16] An inscription from Bukit Choras,[17] and writing on silver discs found on Sungei Batu Estate in Kēdah,[18] are also in South Indian script. In addition a bronze casket containing foundation deposits and a miniature *ḍamaru* drum, all from the Bujang valley, are of South Indian type, and a dagger hilt from the same district closely resembles one depicted on the Mahiṣāsura Maṇḍapam bas-relief at Mahābalipuram.[19] Finally—and here we anticipate a later chapter—an inscription which has come to light at Tākua-pa implies that a community of Tamils was settled there in the ninth century of the Christian era.[20]

We must, however, be on our guard against regarding Indianization as precisely delimited in time and place, when it was in fact a process of cultural diffusion operating over centuries. Not only are the changing phases of civilization in the Indian homeland apparent in the material remains by which we know them, but the pattern of migration is complicated by local currents originating from centres of diffusion situated within South-East Asia. Finally, it must be

stressed that the majority of our sources for the study of Indianization show us only the results of the process, so that for the present we must be content with a largely inferential understanding of its origins.

To this generalization there may be one partial exception. In the *Hikayat Marong Mahawangsa,* often referred to as the Kĕdah Annals,[21] it is related that Marong Mahawangsa, who "traced his lineage from the demi-gods", came from the far west—from Rum as the author of the *Hikayat* says, thereby neatly mortising his tale into the Alexander corpus—across the Sea of Hindustan. After honouring the ports of India with his presence, Marong Mahawangsa called at the Talaing (Mōn) ports of what is now Burma, before turning southwards towards Tavoy and Ujong Salang. After weathering a succession of sumatras, Marong Mahawangsa landed at the foot of Gunong Jĕrai, where he established himself as lord over the native inhabitants. He built himself a palace "on good land very beautifully situated", and his retainers settled round about. In the course of time the settlement prospered, so that under Marong Mahawangsa's son it was able to send out colonies to the north, east and south. Different versions of this story attribute respectively seven and nine rulers to the dynasty founded by Marong Mahawangsa, and are further at variance in according them respectively Khmer and Sanskrit styles. If an historical event ever lay behind this tale, it has been transmuted to such an extent that the dynasty of Mahawangsa, meaning "Great Family", includes neither of the two Kĕdah rulers specifically mentioned in Indian records. This is hardly surprising, as the surviving text of the *Hikayat Marong Mahawangsa* dates only from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Yet when the legendary material is stripped away—and there is much more of it than appears in my abbreviated synopsis—it may be that there remains a core of fact, namely the settlement on the coast of Kĕdah of a kṣatrīya from India with

a band of followers. It may be just possible that, through the vicissitudes of Kĕdah history, there persisted in folk-lore the memory of an actual happening, which did not differ essentially from the arrival of the first Kauṇḍiṇya in the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain, as related in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

THE HEGEMONY OF THE KINGDOM OF THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

First Century A.D. — *Circa* 550

The morning came; my boat danced on the dark blue water,
her white sails proud of the favour of a friendly breeze.
She kissed thy shore, a stir ran athwart thy sky,
And the green veil fluttered on the breast of the nymph of thy woodland.
We met in the shade of the nightfall,
in the dark hours of the earth;
the still evening was touched to its depth
by the blessings of the Seven Holy Stars of Wisdom.
The night waned; and Dawn scattered her prodigal gold
on the path of our meeting
along which the two companion souls
Combined their journey through ages among a throng of gigantic visions.

At the dawn of the historical period a maritime trade-route stretched from the Red Sea to South China. Strictly speaking, it should be described as a series of trade-routes, for no merchants or merchandise travelled from end to end. Three main sectors can be distinguished. In the far west, trade was, until about the beginning of the Christian era, an Arab monopoly, but from that time an increasing share was claimed by Graeco-Egyptian merchants. Beyond the southernmost point of India Western merchants seem not to have penetrated.[1] The trade of the Bay of Bengal was in the hands of Indian merchants, who exchanged beads and amulets for gold, ivory, camphor, gharuwood, rhinoceros horn and bezoar stones. Some, as we have seen, voyaged yet farther eastwards

to Insulind, but the bulk of the trade in Malaysian waters seems to have been controlled by a people known to the Chinese collectively as "barbarians". Chinese sources are not explicit about them, but we may infer that they comprised a succession of people ranging from Malays around the coast of the peninsula to Chams along the shores of Indo-China. Further north, in the Gulf of Tong-King and along the South China coast, Yüeh sailors were the carriers of merchandise. There is an interesting reference to this sector of the trade-route in the *Annals of the Former Han Dynasty*,* which tells how the personal assistants of the Chinese emperor—"Interpreters of the Yellow Door", as they were called—sailed from Tong-King towards a port which was probably on the east coast of India in search of pearls and other exotic products. Midway through their voyage of nine months' duration they were forced to undertake a portage of ten days' march, before resuming their journey, and it has been suggested that this was in fact a crossing of the Malay Peninsula, possibly from Patani to Kĕdah, but more probably by way of the Meklong valley and the Three Čedis Pass to Tavoy. If this were indeed so, this text represents the first mention of the Malay Peninsula in any literature, and appropriately it occurs in connection with a stage on the South Asian trade-route.[2]

It is not without significance that the earliest recorded states in South-East Asia developed at three separate points along this trade-route, namely on the narrow coastal plain of Quang-Nam province in present-day Vietnam, in the valley of the lower Mekong, and on the isthmian portion of the Malay Peninsula. It is probable that the isthmian states arose slightly earlier than did those in Indo-China, for the peninsula was the first landfall of most Indian voyagers to the East.

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* Chap. 28, pt. 2, pp. 32 a and b [*Siŭ-pu pei-yao* Edition].

Certainly it was the site of some of the earliest Indianized settlements recorded in Chinese annals. Chinese sources preserve a Malay tradition that at the close of the first century of the Christian era the celebrated kingdom of Langkasuka was founded in the neigbourhood of Patani, and by the third century Tun-sun, a trading mart in the extreme north of the peninsula, was at the peak of its prosperity. At the same time Chinese sources mention a dozen or so other petty states in the isthmian tract.

Among the three political foci mentioned above, there was one which emerged as an imperial power. The discrete coastal plains of Vietnam and of the Malayan isthmus were too restricted to provide the resources necessary for an imperialistic policy, but the broad plains of the lower Mekong offered an agricultural base whence a determined monarch might expand his realm. When it first entered history this kingdom consisted of a series of feudal fiefs strung along the Mekong river from the delta to the lake of Tonlé Sap. It has left us no literary records, but in Chinese annals it features as the Kingdom of Fu-nan. These two syllables are an Ancient Chinese transliteration not of a place-name but of the second part of an Old Khmer title, *Kuruṅ Bnam*[3] (King of the Mountain), the style of the earliest rulers. *Bnam* is related to Modern Cambodian *phnom,* which also means "mountain". What the original name of this kingdom was we have no means of knowing, so we shall call it the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain. Its capital, Vyādhapura, (the City of Hunters) was situated appropriately at the foot of the sacred hill of Ba Phnom, on whose summit the ruler entered into mystical communion with the tutelary deity of the state. Such communion between god and king, through the intermediacy of a priest, is an ancient Mesopotamian concept which can be traced eastward by way of India to several parts of South-East Asia.

According to the traditions of the country, in the first

century of the Christian era the kingdom was ruled by a woman, Queen Willow Leaf. As the willow is not indigenous to this country, some commentators have suggested that Willow Leaf may have been a Chinese scribe's error for Coconut Frond. Be that as it may, the story accords with the matrilineal organization postulated for the old Dong-So'n culture. The legend continues, saying (if we read between the lines) that the Queen was forced to yield to an adventurer who had assumed the name of Kauṇḍiṇya. This was the name borne by a brāhmaṇ clan originally from North India, a branch of which was influential in Mysore in the second century A.D. This legend has been compared with another current in Pallava India in which the Brāhmaṇ Kauṇḍiṇya espoused the daughter of the Nāga King.[4] In the Mekong valley the union of Kauṇḍiṇya and the local princess was the foundation of the first dynasty of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain.

In a world of coastwise trade this kingdom enjoyed a propitious location, of which it took full advantage, so that by the latter part of the second century of the Christian era the lower Mekong valley was occupied by a wealthy unified state under an autocratic ruler. At this time the Kauṇḍiṇya dynasty was succeeded by that of the Fan, which is again a Chinese version of a long-lost ethnic name. The founder of this line was known to the Chinese as Fan-man, and, as we cannot know this ruler's true name we may as well call him by the Chinese version.

As soon as he had consolidated the metropolitan territory of the kingdom, Fan-man turned his attention to neighbouring states, and by force of arms extended his boundaries to include all the territory between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. At this time the empire was probably as extensive as that ruled by any of the later Khmer monarchs. But before Fan-man could exercise complete control over the

South-East Asian sector of the great maritime trade-route which skirted southern Asia he had to incorporate within his polity one more territory of supreme strategic importance, namely the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula, a portage on a grand scale. Here the geological structure of the isthmus funnelled trans-peninsular trade through a series of easily traversable corridors toward nodal estuaries. In these focal situations there developed trading marts, which grew increasingly prosperous as the economic opportunities of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain attracted merchants from all parts of India and South-East Asia. Although they performed a valuable service in expediting the transport of goods across the isthmus, these emporia could only be regarded by the rulers of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain as parasites of the empire, which drained off an unnecessarily generous portion of the trading profits that would otherwise accrue to the imperial treasury. If they were brought within the policy, on the other hand, their entrepôt function would still continue but their wealth would swell the coffers of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain. This was achieved early in the third century. Chinese annals relate that Fan-man "ordered the construction of great ships and, crossing right over the Gulf of Siam, attacked more than ten states... He extended his kingdom for 5,000–6,000 li."* In the middle of this enterprise Fan-man fell ill and the campaign was halted. But his work was done, and for the next three centuries the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula, with its flourishing ports and transit trade, was under the dominion of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain.

Of the precise location of the isthmian ports we are ignorant. Our only literary sources for this period are Chinese dynastic histories, which preserve fragments of ambassadorial reports now lost.[3] But it is abundantly evident

* *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 9a [*Po-na pen erh-shih-ssŭ shih* Edition].

that the wealthiest of these settlements was that known to the Chinese as Tun-sun. Its real name has not been reconstructed and its location is a matter of inference, but it was almost certainly in the far north of the peninsula. Some investigators have linked this name to an archaeological site at P'ong-Tŭ'k in the lower Meklong valley, which was excavated by Professor George Coedès in 1927.[6] Here was found an assemblage of articles going back to the second century. The earliest of these was a Graeco-Roman lamp of Pompeian style, moulded in the shape of a bird with an erect palmette tail, and bearing a likeness of old Silenus on the cover-flap. Presumably this lamp had passed from hand to hand across the length of Asia, and it was impressive testimony to the existence of the trade-route mentioned above. Another early object from the same site was a small bronze Buddha in Amarāvatī style.* Whether or not this excavation does mark the site of Tun-sun, these two objects are wholly in keeping with the trading activities ascribed to that city by certain Chinese annals. "All the countries beyond the frontier," so one passage runs, "come and go in pursuit of trade, because Tun-sun curves round and projects into the sea for more than a 1,000 li... At this mart East and West meet together... In the matter of precious goods and rare merchandise nothing is lacking."[7] Another Chinese text, preserved in a late tenth-century encyclopedia,[8] adds certain ethnographic information about Tun-sun. The king, for example, was known by the Old Khmer style of *kuruṅ*, and there were no less than a thousand Indian brāhmaṇs in attendance at the court, who, so says the text, did "nothing but study the sacred canon, bathe themselves with scents and flowers, and practise piety ceaselessly by day and night". The account continues: "The inhabitants of Tun-sun practise the doctrine of the brāhmaṇs

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* See Appendix 1, pp. 193-4.

and give them their daughters in marriage. Consequently many of the brāhmaṇs do not go away." This sentence is of particular significance for it casts grave doubt on the authenticity of the brāhmaṇs. Miscegenation was abhorrent to genuine brāhmaṇs, so we may suppose that those at Tun-sun were really non-Āryans, perhaps Mōns, claiming membership of a *varṇa* from which in India they would have been excluded. In addition to the brāhmaṇs, there were 500 families of Indians—or possibly Persians—who were almost certainly traders. The Chinese ambassador estimated that altogether there were well over 10,000 people in Tun-sun.

The burial customs of the country, as recorded in a Chinese encyclopedia, were distinctive. Corpses were commonly exposed on the outskirts of a settlement so that they could be devoured by vultures ("birds resembling geese, red in colour and with bills like those of parrots, which come flying in myriads", as the Chinese text[9] describes them). Subsequently the cleaned bones were burnt to ashes, placed in an urn and committed to the sea. Cremation, though frequently practised, was considered an inferior course of action, which is rather surprising as it seems to have been introduced into South-East Asia as part of the Indian culture complex. In later centuries, for example, the calcined bones of god-kings were usually entombed in a *caṇḍi* (stūpa). Reserved interment, we have already seen, was a characteristic of the autochthonous Malaysian culture.

Other towns on the isthmus are mentioned in Chinese histories, but none of them can be located with certainty. We may, however, pause here to say a few words about one of them, a port whose name seems to have been pronounced something like Kiu-li.[10] Its especial interest stems from the fact that it is mentioned in another very different record from the opposite end of Asia. In about the middle of the second century A.D. the astronomer Klaudios Ptolemy compiled a list of co-ordinates preparatory to constructing an improved

map of the oecumene. The map was lost at an early date, but the co-ordinates survived and were added to during succeeding centuries. Finally in the tenth or eleventh century the whole corpus was re-edited by an otherwise unknown Byzantine monk, and this is essentially the version we now possess.[11] Kiu-li was not included in the list of place-names for which Ptolemy himself prepared co-ordinates, but at some time during the ensuing millenium it was incorporated in the Ptolemaic corpus. The combined testimony of these records from the opposite borders of Asia locates Kiu-li on the north-east coast of the Malay Peninsula.[12] The presumption is that it, too, was one of the dozen or so states conquered by Fan-man. That it was an important stage on the South Asian maritime trade-route is evidenced by the voyage of one of Fan-man's ambassadors to India late in the second century A.D.[13] The envoy's precise itinerary is obscure, but it is quite clear that Kiu-li was his main port of call *en route* between the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain and the Ganges estuary.

We cannot be certain of the names and locations of the rest of the states over which Fan-man established his hegemony, but the following are fairly certain to have been included among them. Pien-tou and Pi-sung are two states—no doubt little more than villages—linked with Kiu-li in a Chinese encyclopedia.[14] Kĕdah, mentioned under its Sanskrit form of Kaṭāha in early Indian literature, was probably in existence at this time, though it has yielded no archaeological remains earlier than the fourth or fifth century. Tāmbraliṅga, in the neighbourhood of Nāk'on Śrī Th'ăммărat, was thought by Professor Sylvain Lévi[15] to appear under an aberrant orthography in the Pāli Buddhist canon from the second or third century A.D., and we have documentary evidence, from a later date it is true, which preserves the Langkasukan tradition that that kingdom was founded in about the middle of the second century of the

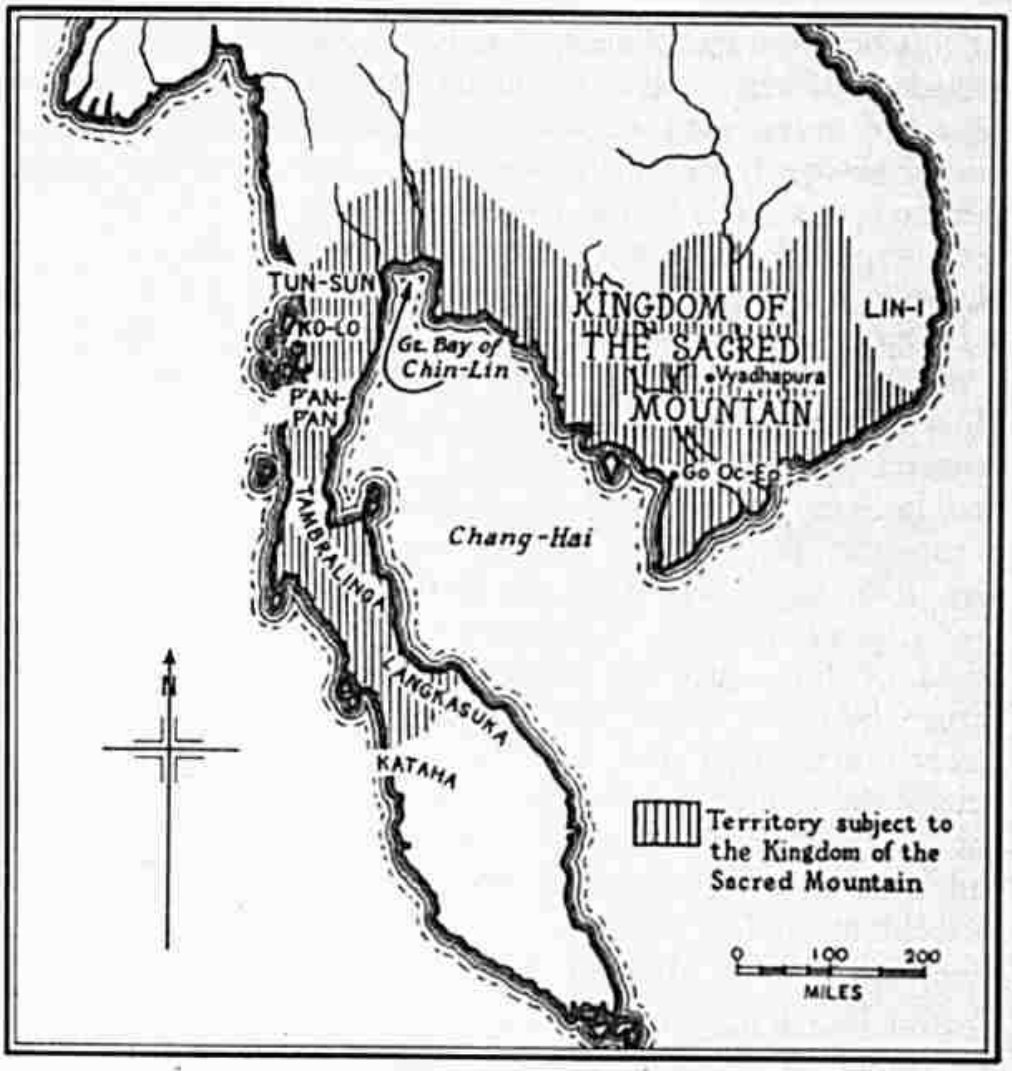

Figure 4 The Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain, *C. A.D.* 350. There is some doubt about the existence of the city-state of Ko-lo (Kālah, Krā) at this time, but it has been included here on the authority of the T'ang Annals.

Christian era.[16] Possibly the merchant state of Kalāh, near the Mergui estuary, was already prospering: at any rate a T'ang encyclopedia[17] claims that it was.

With P'an-p'an, another Chinese version of a lost place-name, we are on firmer ground. This state, although it attained its zenith in later centuries, was already prominent on the isthmus late in the third century, when its history became entwined with that of the great empire to the north.[18]

At this time the Fan dynasty was losing its authority over the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain, and there supervened a period of unrest until an adventurer, believed to be of Indian origin, usurped power in the state. Some scholars think that he was a scion of the celebrated Kuṣān dynasty who had been expelled from the Ganges valley by Candragupta.* However that may be, his line lasted for only just over half a century, when an Indian brāhmaṇ in P'an-p'an instigated a revolt. Like the founder of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain some three centuries earlier, this revolutionary assumed the name of Kauṇḍinya. Apparently he believed that he was the recipient of a divine fiat commanding him to assume the burden of authority. As a Chinese history tells us,[19] "He rejoiced in his heart", and, "When the citizens of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain heard of him, they all welcomed him with delight, went before him and chose him as their king." We need not accept unreservedly this rather naive account, which obviously reflects the received mythology of the successful revolutionary, but it is certain that the usurper completed the task, which had been slowly progressing for at least three centuries, of establishing Indian customs in the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain. It is thought that he probably introduced a Central Indian alphabet, state worship of the *Śiva-liṅga* under the vocable Maheśvara, use of the Saka era in the dating of documents, the honorific suffix *-varman* in the style of the ruler, and a body of mythology from the great store current in India.

The rejuvenated kingdom of the second Kauṇḍinya dynasty endured, and maintained its control over the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula, until the mid-sixth century. It is more than doubtful if it will ever be possible to compile a

* This monarch should not be confused with the Candragupta Maurya described and admired by the Seleucid ambassador, Megasthenes, early in the third century B.C.

comprehensive history of the isthmus at this time, but it is clear that it was the site of about a dozen political entities, of which some at least could have been little more than tribal groupings. Tun-sun, presumably the most powerful, was partitioned among five chieftainships, which implies that some higher form of political organization than that of simple tribal society was already developing in parts of the peninsula. The *'adat* of the tribe was broadening into the law of the state organized according to Indian concepts of kingship. Autonomy, above the level of the village, was being subsumed by a religious glorification of absolute government. Of the economic basis of these kingdoms we know practically nothing save that they were the source of a perfume which, from its description in a Chinese encyclopedia,[20] would seem to have been *patchouli*.[21] But the most significant fact is the clear evidence afforded by both Chinese literary sources and archaeology of the adoption by indigenous societies of some important elements of Indian culture. In its earlier phases this was Buddhist, and on the Malay Peninsula the only archaeological relics which have come to light from this period have been Buddhist, although Hinduism was apparently strongly represented in Tun-sun by the middle of the third century A.D. Thus was initiated the process conveniently, but somewhat inaccurately, termed Indianization, which, in Sir Richard Winstedt's words, was to find the Malay a frog under a coconut shell and leave him a citizen of the world.

Chapter 5

THE HOME OF THE STRANGE & THE PRECIOUS

Circa A.D. 550–800

IN the mid-sixth century the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain was overthrown by the ruler of one of its feudatory states. The revolutionary was the Kṣatriya Śitrasena, and he established his capital, Liṅgaparvata (the Mount of the Liṅga) in the Bassac country, on the slopes of a hill that rose above Vat Phu. On the summit of this hill was a temple consecrated to the god Bhadreśvara. For more than half a century the metropolitan remnant of the old Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain lingered on as a vassal state enjoying some degree of autonomy, but in A.D. 627 it was finally incorporated in the territory of its conquerors. The people of this new power were Khmers, and from this point of time dates the rise of the Khmer Empire of Kambujadeśa, which was to achieve its full glory in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But this name was certainly not used by the royal epigraphists, and probably not by the people themselves, until the early ninth century. Before that date the scribes, at least, referred to their country by the name of its capital city, which was in turn often named after the reigning king. The Chinese, however, used the term Chen-la, a name which seems to have been related to an old Indo-Chinese ethnic designation incorporating the root K.R.M., which occasionally took the form K.M.R.*

Possibly because the Khmers were of continental origin, they failed to consolidate their supremacy over the maritime empire built up by the Fan dynasty. As the hold of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain slipped from the Malayan

* See R.A. Stein, "Le Lin-yi", *Han-Hiue*, vol. 2, fascicules 1-3 (Pekin, 1947), appendix VI: "L'ethnique du Lin-yi".

isthmus, the former dependencies hastened to legitimize their succession from the empire by sending embassies to the Imperial Court of China. The *Annals of the Sui Dynasty* (581-618) note that during the period 605-616 more than ten kingdoms from beyond the southern frontiers brought tribute, but the records of these events had been lost by the time the official Sui documents came to be collated, so that the annalist was able to draw on information relating to only four South Sea kingdoms. We do not even know to which four states he was referring, but it is certain that the kingdom known to the Chinese as P'an-p'an was among them — the isthmian country whence some two centuries earlier the evangelizing second Kauṇḍiṇya had undertaken his triumphal journey to the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain. P'an-p'an had sent several embassies to China even during the hegemony of its northern neighbour, so we may suppose that it had enjoyed considerable autonomy for sometime. With the fall of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain it renewed these embassies. In 540, 551, 571, 584, *c.*616 and 635, for example, its envoys presented themselves before the Dragon Throne. The offerings they brought were described by Chinese chroniclers as "strange and precious". Primarily they were sacred Buddhist relics and emblems for use in the temples that had been built in ever increasing numbers throughout China since the reign of Liang Wu-ti (502-549). Bones of the Buddha, leaves of the *Bo* tree, ivory images, miniature painted stūpas and perfumes featured prominently among these tribute gifts.

It is appropriate here to interpolate a few remarks on the nature of this so-called "tribute". There can be no doubt but that this was construed as denoting some vague concept of suzerainty. In actual fact the word "tribute" is misapplied, for diplomatic missions from South-East Asia to the Chinese court were treated not as *kung shih* (tribute bearers) but as *shih* (envoys), who brought not "tribute" but "offerings".

Nevertheless, comparison of their own civilization with the culture of their neighbours had gone far towards convincing the Chinese of their oecumenical superiority, and the consequent necessity of bestowing gifts on humble suppliants from distant states commensurate with this unique position. In other words, the rulers of neighbouring states had to be dazzled by the magnificence of the Emperor's gifts. Of this the rulers of the states of South-East Asia were well aware, and it is not unlikely that they regarded a tribute mission as a highly profitable investment. In any case the benevolent friendship of the Emperor of China was some guarantee—though by no means an infallible one—against the aggressive designs of other rulers. Hence the alacrity with which the isthmian states hastened to signalize their independence on the dissolution of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain.

To return to the kingdom known to the Chinese as P'an-P'an. Several early Chinese encyclopedias include accounts of this state, but perhaps the best is that in the *Comprehensive Study of Civilization,*[1] compiled by the great scholar Ma Tuan-lin and published in 1319. During a quarter of a century of unremitting labour Ma ransacked Chinese literature for references, so that he was able to provide us with the most detailed of all the descriptions of ancient P'an-P'an. The people were described as living by the water-side and erecting palisades about their settlements. This rather surprised Chinese voyagers who were, of course, accustomed to seeing masonry walls encircling their own towns. The predominant religion seems to have been a form of animism about which the Chinese were hopelessly vague, but there were also monasteries of Buddhist monks. Ma also had an interesting comment on P'an-P'an technology, for he noted that, whereas the spears in use were tipped with iron, the arrow-heads were still of stone. In other words the old Malayan Neolithic technology was still persisting in parts of the peninsula during the sixth and seventh centuries. Yet the court was clearly a very different

world. During an audience the king reclined on a gilded dragon-couch, while his retainers knelt in ranks before him, their arms crossed and hands resting on their shoulders in the fashion of Indian devotees. Additional evidence of strong Indian influence is afforded by the numerous brāhmaṇs who, Ma Tuan-lin tells us, "had come from India in search of wealth". He adds that they were in high favour with the king of P'an-P'an. In the light of this evidence of intense "Indianization", it is a little surprising to read that the chief ministers all bore titles incorporating the Khmer style of *kuruṅ*.

Another important state on the peninsula at this time was known to the Chinese as the Red-Earth Land. It is difficult to define the location of this kingdom with any degree of precision. The name itself, if it be a translation and not a transliteration, is of little help, for red latosols are ubiquitous within the tropics and such toponyms recur frequently. There are, for example, numerous instances of the place-name Tanah Merah on the present-day map of Malaya. Certain astronomical information recorded by Chinese annalists[2] must have been garbled, for it placed the state somewhere in the southern Indian Ocean. But we do know that it was to the southward of Patani for, towards the end of their voyage, the Chinese navigators obtained a running fix on the limestone peaks of that country. Most historians today would place the Red-Earth Land on the Malay Peninsula, and the most probable interpretation locates it in the north-eastern sector. The several Chinese accounts all derive from a lost report, *The Record of the Red-Earth Land*,[3] prepared by an envoy to that country in the years 607-609. As in the case of P'an-P'an, the royal court exhibited a considerable degree of refinement. The following passage transports us to the Lion City, capital of the Red-Earth Kingdom, a world of Indian concepts, where the king is holding audience. This is the sight that greeted the Chinese envoys:

> The city has triple gates more than a hundred paces apart. On each gate are paintings of spirits in flight, *ṛṣis*, and bodhisattvas

and the gates are hung with golden flowers, light bells and hair tassels. Several tens of women either make music or hold up golden flowers and ornaments. Four women, whose appearance and ornaments are reminiscent of those of the wrestlers of the *vajradhara* on the walls of Buddhist stūpas, stand at the entrance. Those stationed on the outside of the gate grasp weapons of war, those on the inside hold white cloths in the passage-way and gather flowers into white nets. All the buildings in the royal palace consist of multiple pavilions with the doors on the northern side. The king sits on a three-tiered couch facing north, and is dressed in rose-coloured cloth, with a chaplet of gold flowers and a necklace of varied jewels. Four damsels attend on his right hand and on his left, and more than a hundred soldiers mount guard. To the rear of the king's couch there is a wooden shrine inlaid with gold, silver and five perfumed woods, and within the shrine is suspended a golden light. [From another source we know that this was in fact a disc with golden rays simulating flames]. Beside the couch two metal mirrors are set up, before which are placed golden pitchers, each with a golden incense burner before it. In front of all these is a recumbent golden ox before which hangs a jewelled canopy, with precious fans on either side. Several hundred brahmans sit in rows facing each other on the eastern and western sides.

All this closely resembles the ritual of contemporary Chen-la, and may be regarded as typical of the royal courts of peninsular South-East Asia during these centuries. The titles of the court officials can also be paralleled in surrounding countries. At their head was the *Sārdhakāra* (a title meaning literally "assistant", but here probably best rendered as Chief Minister). Below him were two *Dhanada* (Dispensers of Blessings), recipients of a title which also occurs on a seal from Oc-Éo, together with three *Karmika* (literally "agents") in charge of political affairs, and a *Kulapati* (Head of the

House), a title applied in Chen-la to the superior of a religious institution. Finally each town appointed a *Nāyaka* (Guide, a term which also occurs on an inscription from Lop'buri) and a *Pati* (Chief).[4] This last is a Sanskrit word which has been incorporated into many Malay honorifics. The life of the common people, we may be sure, differed considerably from this refined and ritualized existence. The Chinese sources relate that Buddhism was the religion of most of the populace, but add a significant note to the effect that "greater respect was paid to the brāhmaṇs". Marriage customs were very similar to those practised in Chen-la. Ma Tuan-lin's somewhat incomplete account of a wedding runs as follows: "An auspicious day is selected, and for the preceding five days the bride's family makes merry and carouses. Then the father, holding the girl's hand, delivers her to his son-in-law. On the seventh day the nuptial rites are completed and the couple considered united."

Burial customs were distinctive and apart from a general similarity to those obtaining in Chen-la, have not been exactly paralleled in ancient South-East Asia. The corpse was laid out inside a chalet erected over water. The mourners then burnt incense, raised banners, beat drums and blew on conch-shells, after which they set fire to the chalet. Eventually both charred wood and calcined bones fell into the water. Both noble and commoner were treated in this way, but the King's ashes were preserved in a golden urn, which was deposited in a temple. It may not be unrealistic to see in this a survival of an old indigenous custom.*

When the Chinese envoys arrived late in 607 they were entertained in a manner fitting for representatives of the Son of Heaven. Drums were sounded (were they the old Dong-

* Cp. p. 26 above. In seventh-century Cambodia the ashes of the nobility were also conserved in gold or silver urns, and the ancient Pyu of Burma apparently buried their kings and nobility in massive stone urns, at the same time that the common people used earthenware. Other contemporary forms of urn burial have been found from Upper Laos to the Lesser Sundas, and from Burma to the Philippines.

So'n drums put to a new use?) and conch-shells blown. These last were very auspicious instruments blown only before battle, as invocations to a deity, or on similar important occasions. A brāhmaṇ minister was sent to conduct the envoys to the city and the king's son welcomed them at the gate. Later in the day they were invited to a banquet. "A hundred men and women sounded conch-shells and drums and two brāhmaṇs conducted the envoys to the royal palace. The chief ambassador presented his credentials in the council-chamber to the accompaniment of Indian music, and the chief minister, a brāhmaṇ, then addressed the guests of honour. 'We are now citizens of the great Middle Kingdom', he said. 'No longer do we regard ourselves as citizens of the Red-Earth Land. As a symbol of our brotherhood I beg you to eat of the coarse fare we provide.' " In these days of violent political attitudinizing, it is amusing to discover that as long ago as the seventh century some Malayan territory was ceded to China by Indians or pseudo-Indians acting on behalf of the indigenous people. A second banquet given for the envoys a few days later was a more social affair. The official Chinese report furnishes the following account: "The pageantry was similar to that on the former occasion. Two tables had been set up in front of the King, and on these were placed leaf-platters, each 15 feet square, and containing yellow, white, purple and red cakes, together with beef, mutton, pork, fish, turtle and tortoise-meat of more than one hundred kinds. The King requested the chief envoy to mount on to his divan, while his retinue squatted on the ground. Each guest took a golden goblet of wine, while maidens played music in rotation, and valuable presents were exchanged."

In the north-west of modern Malaya was the important port of Kĕdah, which dispatched an embassy to the Imperial Court of China in 638.[3] The precise way in which this settlement came into existence can only be a matter of speculation, but it seems to have come under Indian cultural influence at

an early date. Most probably Indian traders found here a community of indigenous folk practising subsistence cultivation, eked out with fishing. It would have been a natural response for these farmers and fishermen to supplement their resources by means of casual trade with Indian merchants making for the Strait of Mĕlaka. In this way there may have developed a collecting centre for the forest products of the north-west. Such a settlement may have been in existence in the fourth or fifth century, for here Col. Low discovered, in addition to the relics cited above, a slab inscribed with a *cattrāvali* surmounting a Buddhist stūpa.[6] Also inscribed on the slab was a Buddhist formula and a Sanskrit prayer in fifth-century Pallava script for the success of a voyage about to be undertaken by a sailing-master called Buddhagupta. The Buddhist formula is repeated on an inscribed stone obtained from an excavation on Bukit Choras, an isolated hillock rising amid the *sawah* about eleven miles south of Alor Star.[7] Of even greater interest is a tablet of sun-dried clay from the lower Bujang valley,[8] which bears three Sanskrit *śloka*, translated as follows: "There are ten powers, four assurances and eighteen independent qualities of the Buddhas... The moments of consciousness (*dharma*) which arise from co-operating circumstances have in no case real existence; there can be nowhere any *dharma* which do not exist in a state of unreality... Who knows this summit of the universe to be at the same time no summit—his knowledge, having reached the summit, extends over all *dharma*."† The script was Pallava Grantha of the fifth or sixth century A.D. The *śloka* occur in a number of Mādhyamika texts, notably the *Sāgaramati-paripṛcchā* and, therefore, belong to the Mahāyānist canon. They are, in fact, the earliest Mahāyānist references extant in South-East Asia. It is clear that by this time Buddhism was firmly established, thus supplementing for Indian voyagers the

† J. Allan's translation.

attractions of commerce with a familiar cultural environment. Vessels from as far off as Ceylon, Nāgapaṭṭanam and Tāmraliptī (modern Tamluk) anchored in the Mĕrbok estuary alongside those from Śrī Vijaya. There are geomorphological grounds, too, for believing that the Mĕrbok at this time may have been wider and deeper than at present.

By the seventh century Buddhism had been superseded by Śaivism. The traveller landing on the shore of the Mĕrbok estuary and looking northward towards Gunong Jĕrai, could now discern in the middle distance a receding succession of temples following the course of the Bujang river. These temples were built of wood or other perishable materials on foundations of rounded boulders from the upper reaches of the Bujang. The rest of the settlement was wholly of *atap* and nearly 4,000 feet above a group of shrines rose from the sacred summit of Gunong Jĕrai, itself doubtless an added attraction to devotees of Śiva.

Only one other among the states of the isthmus need be mentioned, namely Langkasuka. This kingdom, in the neighbourhood of modern Patani, had been founded early in the second century A.D. It seems that subsequently it had featured among Fan-man's conquests and had been incorporated in the Empire of the Sacred Mountain. In the second half of the fifth century, after a dynastic schism apparehtly fostered under Indian or Indianized auspices. the fortunes of the Kingdom were restored. The annals of the Chinese Liang dynasty relate that "the populace turned to a man of virtue. When the King heard of this he imprisoned the man, but the fetters were struck off by a supernatural agency. The King became convinced that the man was a god and, not daring to injure him, exiled him from Langkasuka, whereupon he fled to India. The King of India bestowed on him his eldest daughter in marriage (a likely tale). Not long afterwards, when the King of Langkasuka died, the chief ministers of the kingdom welcomed back the exile and enthroned him as their ruler."[9]

The new king's name is not recorded, but we know that he ruled for over twenty years, and was succeeded by his son, Bhagadatta. In these early years the country was famed for its gharuwood and camphor. *Hoi polloi* made do with the *sarong* which left the upper part of the body bare, but the court notables draped rose-coloured cloths about their shoulders and wore gold rings in their ears. The women additionally coiled jewelled cinctures about their waists. The dress and coiffure of a woman of the period is illustrated by a statuette found at Padang Lawas in Sumatra and pictured by Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in Volume 40 of the *Bulletin de l'Ecole française de l'Extême-Orient* (1940).

During this period Chinese monks frequently visited the city-states of the isthmus on their way to India.[10] Buddhism had been brought to China in the first century A.D., and it was not long before Chinese devotees began to undertake pilgrimages to India, the Holy Land of their faith, in order to study texts and commentaries at first hand. As early as A.D. 413–414 the monk Fa-Hsien had passed through Malayan waters on his way home from Ceylon, but he did not, apparently, actually land on the peninsula.[11] During the seventh century numerous other monks followed in his tracks. The best known of these is I-Ching, a celebrated Buddhist scholar, who spent the years 671–695 in India and the South Seas. He later wrote as follows of his voyage:[12] "At the time when the monsoon began to blow, we set sail for the south... In the beginning of the season in which we leave the constellation Chi,[13] the five-tiered sails carried us away from the sombre north. For long we voyaged over the illimitable deep, where the sea was intersected by mountainous waves and, slanting across the mighty ocean, enormous swells reached cloud-like to the sky. In less than twenty days we reached Śrī Vijaya," at that time one of the world's leading centres of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Here I-Ching spent six months learning the *Śabdavidya,* after which he sailed for Kĕdah, the

point of departure for pilgrims setting out to cross the Indian Ocean. We may think of him strolling with a congenial companion at sun-down beside the tawny Měrbok, and discussing the while the Mūlasarvāstivādin doctrine, or practising Sanskrit grammar with monks returning from the great monastery at Nālandā. In 685, after twelve years' study in India, we find I-Ching again in Kĕdah, this time for a period of several months as he waited for the monsoon to change so that he could take ship for China. It is unfortunate for us that he was so preoccupied with his studies and devotions that he left no account of the port of Kĕdah in his day. Perhaps this was because it was mainly Śaivite, and he thought it best to pass over such a grievous apostasy in silence.

In addition to his purely exegetical writings, I-Ching also compiled a volume of *Memoirs on the Eminent Monks who Sought the Law in the West during the Great T'ang Dynasty.* This takes the form of a series of biographies of some sixty Buddhist pilgrims who travelled to India during the second half of the seventh century. Of these at least thirty-seven voyaged by sea and thus passed through Malayan waters. It was an arduous journey and by no means all the pilgrims lived to see their native land again. Two, in fact, died of tropical diseases in Langkasuka and another at Kĕdah. The actual dangers of sailing through monsoon-swept seas were heightened by the myths and tales of bottomless gulfs harbouring fierce oceanic monsters which circulated through the Orient, so that only the most dedicated and selfless *bhikṣu* ventured over the high seas in search of a means of escape from the cycle of *karma* and rebirth, not only for themselves but for all mankind. The biography of monk after monk bears witness to the rigours of the voyage. The three pilgrims, I-lang, Chih-ngan and I-hsüan, for example, boarded a merchant-ship at Wu-lei and, "setting sail, weathered unnumbered billows".[14] Tao-lin was described as "buffeted through the

southern wastes",[15] and Chih-hung, who challenged the monsoon by starting too late in the season, was forced to abandon his voyage after being "tossed for long on stormy seas".[16] We can imagine the feeling of relief with which pilgrims reached Langkasuka after the first stage of their journey. Here, we are told, the King treated them "with the courtesy appropriate to distinguished guests".[17] No doubt, delighting to feel firm land beneath their feet again, they explored the city, surrounded by walls with double gates, towers and cupolas. Probably they saw the King riding on his elephant of state, shaded by a white umbrella, the symbol of royalty—which had been raised above all Hindu rulers since the coronation of King Rāma to symbolize them as instruments of *Dharma* or Supreme Law — and surrounded by the court yeomanry with their banners, flags and drums.

Occasionally through the shifting mists of antiquity we are able to glimpse other city-states on the peninsula. Kalāh, in the vicinity of Mergui, was developing a flourishing overseas trade in tin and gharuwood; in the Ligor district Tāmbraliṅga seems to have been temporarily eclipsed by more powerful neighbours; and on the north-east coast, to the south of the Red-Earth Land, was a city-state known to the Chinese as Tan-tan. Each of these will feature in a subsequent chapter.

In an earlier section mention was made of the series of transverse routeways to which the distinctive morphology of the peninsula has given rise. There is abundant evidence that several of these were in use during the first millenium of the Christian era. In the far north excavations at P'ong Tū'k and P'ra Pathom indicate that early travellers from Amarāvatī crossed the Bay of Bengal to the Burmese deltas, whence they penetrated to the plains of the lower Chao P'raya by way of the Three Pagodas and Three Čedis Passes. Under the Gupta hegemony Tamrāliptī (modern Tamluk) rose to importance as a port of embarkation for South-East Asia. Voyagers crossing the Bay of Bengal from

this point would have made their landfall on the Malayan isthmus, so it is not unexpected that Dr. Quaritch Wales should have discovered indications of an Indianized settlement* which flourished on a small island off the estuary of the Tăkua-pa River at some period before the eighth century.[18] Further evidence of Indianization in the higher reaches of the valley attests the use of this route, which eventually leads down to the Bay of Bandon and the ancient cities of Wieng Sra and C'ăiya.

The bearers of Pallava influence who voyaged to the peninsula between the sixth and eighth centuries would be more likely to have sailed from ports such as Nāgapaṭṭanam or Mahābalipuram in the neighbourhood of their capital at Kāñcīpura, but Dr. Wales's researches have proved that the route from Tăkua-pa to C'ăiya was still used. Pallava-style statues still *in situ* at Năk'on Śrī Th'ăммărat, together with two Sanskrit inscriptions of the sixth to eighth centuries, point to the Trang River valley as a third trans-peninsular route. This would accord well with our reading of the Ptolemaic evidence, which places the emporium of Takola in the vicinity of Trang, but so far no significant archaeological confirmation has been obtained from the western sector of this route. Farther south, in Kĕdah, the temples which Dr. Wales discovered, considered together with the importance of the city-state of Langkasuka in the neighbourhood of Patani, guarantee the use of the route which links the west and east coasts by way of the Kĕdah River. It is noteworthy that there is no archaeological or literary warrant for the two shortest trans-peninsular routes. Although the trail from Mergui to Prachuab along the Tenasserim River functioned as the most important route between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we are forced to conclude that it was apparently unused in early times.

* Recently explored by Dr. Alastair Lamb.

Most surprising of all, although H.R.H. Prince Damrong instituted an archaeological search across the narrowest part of the isthmus at Kra, no evidence of its use as a trans-peninsular routeway came to light.

A decade ago the facts discussed in this and the preceding chapters used to be summarized as showing that the Indians who reached the peninsula were seeking not merely to cross it but to settle on it. Consequently they avoided those parts of the isthmus with restricted hinterlands, and settled only in localities with trading and agricultural potentialities. Today I would prefer to re-phrase this conclusion in terms of Indian culture being able to establish itself strongly, and consequently impress itself on the archaeological record, only where there were already fairly dense and prosperous populations, that is, on those coastal plains with agricultural potentialities and, preferably, productive hinterlands.

Chapter 6

THE APOGEE OF THE CITY-STATES

A.D. 800-1000

DURING the period from 550 to 750 the city-states of the Malay Peninsula seem to have enjoyed a precarious independence, but during the eighth century they watched with apprehension the waxing power of the Khmers in the north and of Śrī Vijaya in the south. When Jayavarman II established a new Khmer dynasty in 802, and proclaimed himself King of the Kambuja, he founded a kingdom which was to endure for more than six centuries. His realm of Kambujadeśa comprised two distinct types of terrain, a dichotomy which in the Chen-la period had received formal political expression. In the south was the low-lying country of the Tonlé Sap plains and of the lower Mekong, which was known to the Chinese as Maritime Chen-la; in the north was the upland of Korat and the western terraces of the Annamite Chain, rising in the far north to the mountain flanks of Nan-Chao. Large tracts of the plains had already been reclaimed for *padi* during the time of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain, and the acreage had been extended considerably in succeeding centuries. The uplands, on the other hand, yielded aromatics, resins, drugs and kingfisher feathers, all staple items of South-East Asian trade. This rich resource base was clearly adequate for the erection of a powerful state capable of dominating the trade pattern of peninsular South-East Asia.

Jayavarman established his capital—the first of several—at Banteay Prei Nokor on the lower Mekong, and named it

Indrapura. At the same time he introduced an important element into Śiva worship, namely the cult of the *deva-rāja.* Henceforth the essence of royalty was held to reside in a *liṅga* which was at the same time an emanation of Śiva and the palladium of the state. It was worshipped under a vocable comprising the king's name combined with that of the god. The sacred personality of the king, transmitted to him through the mediation of a brāhmaṇ priest, came to symbolize the mystic essence of the state. The sanctuary of the *liṅga* was situated on the summit of a sacred mountain, either natural or artificial, where the *god-king* entered into communion with the divine world, and which was regarded not only as the centre of the capital city, but also as the axis of the universe. On the king's death this pyramid-sanctuary became his mausoleum. Jayavarman's adoption of the cult of the *deva-rāja* signalized his claim to be a *cakravartin* (universal monarch), and from this time dates the greatness of Kambujadeśa.

In contrast to this land-based empire of the north, drawing its strength from the labour of peasant masses on fertile alluvial plains, the islands of the south were passing under the sway of a thalassocracy based on commerce. The origins of its ruling dynasty, the Śailendras, are obscure, but by the late seventh century we find a ruler styling himself King of the Mountain and Lord of the Isles reigning over a city called Śrī Vijaya, situated in South-East Sumatra. A simple relief map of Sumatra is apt to induce an erroneous impression of the terrain of the island. The broad belt of green which flanks the longitudinal mountain ranges on the east denotes nerely lowland but, by some curious system of thought association, seems to attract to itself the idea of fertility. In fact at least a third of the eastern lowland is forested swamp, an environment that is repeated in the off-shore chain of flat, marshy islands which are still building seawards by the accretion of marine sediments. On the inner edge of these swamps,

at a point where a line of low hills runs out towards the Musi River, was the city of Śrī Vijaya.[1] At first it was of only local importance, but by the end of the seventh century a succession of able Mahārājas had extended their rule over the southern half of Sumatra, the island of Bangka and possibly part of western Java.[2] At this time Śrī Vijaya was one of the world's premier centres of Buddhist scholarship. When I-Ching, the Buddhist pilgrim, visited the city in 671, there were over a thousand Buddhist monks studying the canonical scriptures, and I-Ching himself spent two extended periods studying and translating in the monasteries of the city. In the early eleventh century Dīpaṅkara Atiśa, the reformer of Tibetan Buddhism, studied at Śrī Vijaya under the celebrated teacher Dharmakīrti, whom the Tibetan biography of Atiśa designates as the greatest Buddhist scholar of his age.

Although historical records pay most attention to the intellectual eminence of the city, this could have been nurtured only in a milieu of economic prosperity. There is, in fact, abundant evidence that Śrī Vijaya had established trade relations with places as far distant as India and South China. But once committed to a policy of commercial development, the state became the creature of an inexorable dialectic which forced it from expansion to expansion. In these early days the natural and cultural requirements for the development of an emporium hardly exceeded essentially the possession of a sheltered harbour and a hinterland productive of resins, aromatics and minerals, together with the additional desideratum of a population in some measure civilized, which in this context meant Indianized. Such prerequisites were fairly frequent among the peninsulas and islands of South-East Asia, so that competition developed at an early date and prosperity soon became synonymous with monopoly. At this stage of its evolution one tract of territory became of supreme importance to Śrī Vijaya, and that was the isthmian

sector of the Malay peninsula, which included the portages between the western and eastern seas—what one Chinese chronicler[3] called "an ocean stepping-stone"—and constituted the seat of civilization on the peninsula. It is, therefore, not unexpected that the earliest record of Śrī Vijayan suzerainty beyond the Mělaka Strait should have come from this territory. This is the Ligor stele,[4] dated 775, from the Vat Sema-muang, which testifies to the incorporation of this territory in the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy and the introduction of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Farther south in Perak Śrī Vijayan influence may be attested by a statuette of Lokeśvara dredged up at Bidor.

On the Malay Peninsula this was the age of the city-state. Throughout the isthmian tract nearly every coastal plain and river valley was the seat of a miniature kingdom, governed and organized according to Indian conceptions of statecraft. At a focal point within the realm was the city itself, palisaded or walled according to the resources of the terrain, and dependent on trade for its economic well-being. The smaller of these settlements can have been little more than villages but others had assumed the functions of true cities, with commercial relations extending far beyond the peninsula.

In the far north-west of the isthmus, in the vicinity of Mergui, was the city-state of Kalāh. The precise location of this port has been a matter of controversy among Arabists for some two centuries, but certain topographical features recorded by Arab authors, notably tin alluvials adjacent to a shoaling, archipelagic sea, seem to this author to point to the Mergui district. Here, too, is an islet still charted as Kala. I have argued this whole subject at some length in my account of the historical geography of early Malaya, to which interested readers may refer for documentation of this topic.[5] Chinese records[6] claim that Kalāh was already in existence in Han times, that is, prior to the beginning of the third century A.D., but the earliest

descriptions of the city date only from the middle of the ninth century. The town itself was protected by a wall of piled stone, but all the buildings, even the watch towers, the royal palace and the houses of the nobility were wooden structures. thatched with *atap*. Numerous fresh springs watered the gardens for which the town was famous.

Kalāh had trade relations with both the Arab world of the Middle East and India on the one hand, and China on the other. Arab merchants had been active in the waters of South-East Asia since at least the early seventh century, and tales of Eastern lands had already permeated the popular literature of the Arab world. Kalāh, for example, featured in the *Thousand and One Nights* as a "great empire bordering on India, in which there are mines of tin, groves of bamboo and excellent camphor". Such accounts were customarily embellished with fanciful tales of monsters and prodigies, and many were so transmuted in Arab folk-lore that their settings are unidentifiable. Nevertheless, this *'ajā'ib* literature, as it is called, is one of the Malayan historian's main sources for the ninth and tenth centuries. In subsequent centuries Arab geographers incorporated the more reliable part of this material, together with contemporary observations, in learned treatises, dictionaries and gazetteers, which have proved rich quarries for modern investigators seeking to piece together the early history of South-East Asia. From such sources as this we learn that Kalāh was one of the main ports of call for Arab merchantmen voyaging from 'Umān to China. Mas'ūdi, one of the greatest of Arab historians, wrote that "the town is the general rendezvous for the Muslim ships of Sīraf* and 'Umān, where they meet the ships from eastwards...". Abu al-Fidā', a late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century historian and geographer, reproduced an

* An important entrepôt formerly located near Bandar Tāhiri on the shores of the Persian Gulf. It was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 977.

earlier text to the effect that Muslims, Hindus and Zoroastrians all forgathered in the town. The *'Akhbār aṣ-Ṣīn wa'l-Hind* (Tales of China and India) tells us that merchant vessels made their South-East Asian landfall at Kalāh, where they replenished their water casks from wells within the city, "the water of which they prefer to that from springs and rain". Several accounts refer to the hazards of navigation in the shoaling seas of the Mergui archipelago. Mas'ūdi characterized it as, "like all shallow seas...dangerous and difficult to navigate". Abu Dulaf, writing in the middle of the tenth century at the court of the Sāmānids in Bukhāra, maintained that it was not practicable to navigate the approaches to Kalāh without the aid of a pilot. The truth of this remark is apparent to anyone who reads the Admiralty Pilot for this coast.[7]

All Arab voyagers were impressed by the tin production of Kalāh. Abu Dulaf enthused: "When I arrived at Kalāh I found it very great, with strong walls, numerous gardens and abundant springs. I found there a tin-mine such as does not exist in any other part of the world... In the entire world," he reiterated, "there does not exist such a tin-mine as this one in Kalāh."* 'Abdullāh Muḥammad al-Idrīsi, the doyen of medieval Muslim geographers, added a human touch which has the ring of truth. "The metal," he said, "was pure and bright, but, after its extraction from the mine, merchants adulterated it before exporting it to other places." The other exports of this city-state were mostly forest products such as gharuwood, sandalwood, camphor, brazilwood, ebony, rattan, areca-nuts, and bamboo from the slopes of the Tenasserim hills. Kalāh gharuwood was of especially fine quality, with a fragrance which inspired the lines of the Makkan poet 'Abdullāh ibn-al-'Abbās:

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* Translation by G. R. Tibbetts.

"She disseminates a perfume as pungent as musk
Rolled in the fingers, or as Kalāhi gharu."

Equally famous were the Kalāhi swords forged in the citadel of the town. Abu Dulaf called them "the true Indian swords."

The everyday life of Kalāh was treated only superficially by contemporary writers. That the common people wore the simple *sarong* and preferred to wash in running water rather than in baths is about all that can be gleaned from Arab authors, though Chinese sources preserve a reference to burial customs almost exactly similar to those obtaining contemporaneously in Cambodia.[8] After the corpse was cremated, its ashes were deposited in an urn and cast into the sea. Among the musical instruments of the country, which included the balloon-guitar, the flute, brass cymbals and the calabash, was a metal drum, which was in all probability one of the old Dong-So'n drums described above. The populace would seem to have been unruly, for Abu Dulaf remarked somewhat critically: "The people of this fortress put themselves in a state of defence against their king when they wish to make him respect their interests." The monarch's style, the Śrī Parameśvara, betokens the strength of Indian culture at the court. Several ancient accounts mention the highly organized army of Kalāh, which included bowmen, spearmen, javelin-throwers and squadrons of elephants. A hundred elephants constituted a company, with a hundred men to each elephant. Presumably they were foot-soldiers who advanced behind the elephant in much the same way as the infantry of World War II followed in the shelter of a tank. There were in addition, though, four bowmen who rode in a specially constructed howdah on the elephant's back—the tank crew, if we pursue the analogy. One source[9] declares that Kalāh could put no less than 20,000 troops in the field, but this is no doubt an exaggeration. Nevertheless, the Kalāhi army must have been an impressive sight as it moved into

battle with its elephants trumpeting and its peacock banners waving. In fact, the predominant impression conveyed by both Arab and Chinese authors is of a prosperous trading city, functioning as a collecting centre for forest products and tin, and owing allegiance to Śrī Vijaya. Yet the only legacy which this once famous city has bequeathed to the modern map is its name, now applied to a small island off the estuary of the Tenasserim river.*

Somewhere on the north-east coast of the Peninsula was another city-state whose name is known to us only under a Chinese reduplicated transliteration, namely Tan-tan. As in Kālah, the territory outside the city had been divided into prefectures. A Chinese encyclopedia compiled in the eighth century, the T'ung Tien,[10] records the population as exceeding 20,000 families, which would imply a total population of about 100,000, but this is undoubtedly an exaggerated estimate. Nevertheless, the fact that this figure was incorporated in the work of one of China's most reliable encyclopedists is vivid testimony of the impression which this city-state had made on Chinese envoys. Indian influence is especially prominent in the Chinese account of the royal court. Twice a day the king held audience, clothed in rose-coloured garments, wearing an elaborate head-dress, leather sandals, and precious ornaments about his neck. He governed the state, which for administrative purposes was divided into prefectures and subprefectures, with the aid of eight high officers of state, who were brāhmaṇs. The number eight was not a fortuitous arrangement, but was an astrological attribute of Mount Meru, the centre of the Hindu universe. Preoccupation with the numbers four, eight,

* It is incumbent on me to mention here that Professor S. Q. Fatimi has recently arrived at conclusions which differ radically from those stated here, and with which I cannot agree. The reader is, therefore, referred to "In quest of Kalah", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Singapore, 1960), pp. 62-101.

sixteen and thirty-two is one of the most persistent legacies of Hinduism in the ritual of South-East Asian courts. A ninth-century kingdom in Java, for example, was ruled by thirty-two high officials, and this system is also extant today. It is manifested, for example, in the eight brāhmaṇs—representing the *Lokapāla* guarding the eight points of the brāhmaṇ cosmos — who surround the kings of T'ailand during their coronation ceremonies. In Kĕdah and Pahang there were formerly four great chiefs, eight major chiefs and sixteen minor ones, to which Perak and old Mĕlaka at one time added thirty-two petty territorial chiefs.*

One of the most famous of these city-states, but also the one about which we know least, seems to have been situated in the neighbourhood of present-day Trang. Possibly its real name was connected in some way with the modern name of Tăkua-pa. At any rate, in the Ptolemaic corpus it was known as Takola, and in several Indian texts as Takkola. It was mentioned in the *Mahā Niddesa,* a part of the Pāli Buddhist canon, and occurred again in the *Milindapañha*[11] (Questions of King Milinda). In both texts it featured as an attractive destination for a merchant adventurer somewhere in the eastern Land of Gold. In the Tamil world the same name was rendered as Talaittakkolam, the prefix *talai* being simply the Tamil word for "head", and in this context untranslatable. Some scholars have claimed to recognize this same name in new dress in Arab texts, but this has not so far been adequately demonstrated.[12] An interesting sidelight on this problem may be afforded by the discovery in the valley of the Tăkua-pa River of a ninth-century Tamil inscription, which places a newly constructed tank under the protection of a powerful mercantile corporation known as the Maṇigramam and "the

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* Cp. also the four principal and four secondary queens of Burma, the thirty-two provinces of the old Pyu kingdom and of Pegu in the fourteenth century, and the "Thirty-two Towns of the Khün" in the Shan States.

residents of the military camp". There can be little doubt but that this inscription attests the presence at Tākua-pa of a considerable number of Tamils (including soldiers and merchants), who had a permanent stake in the surrounding countryside. Some Indian scholars have gone so far as to read into the presence of a military encampment at Tākua-pa the extension of the political power of the Pallava king, Nandivarman III (A.D.826–850), over parts of the peninsula. Having rejected this interpretation, as most historians would, we have no means of deciding whether the Tamil colony was indeed politically independent or, perhaps, was tributary to one of the city-states in this region.[13]

The city on the Mĕrbok estuary continued to flourish throughout this period, but Buddhism had succeeded the Śaivism of earlier centuries, and Mahāyānist shrines had been added to the southern end of the sacred avenue leading towards Gunong Jĕrai.[14] Muslim trading contacts are evidenced by fragments of Arab lamps and two silver coins of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate which have come to light during archaeological excavations. Towards the end of this period the pendulum of religious orthodoxy swung back again and Hinduism established itself in the settlement with renewed vigour. The wealth and prosperity of this city is abundantly evidenced by contemporary references in Indian literature. The *Kathā-sarit-sāgara,* for example, bears witness to the elegance of life in Kaṭāha, which it describes as "the seat of all manner of felicities",* and the Sanskrit drama *Kaumudīmahotsava,* written probably in the seventh or eighth century, pays tribute to the social attractions of the town. So great were the imagined excellences of Kaṭāha that late editors substituted it for a less colourful place-name in the *Vāmana* and *Garuḍa Purāṇas,* thus raising it to the position of one of the primary subdivisions of *Bhāratavarṣa* (Greater

* ketanaṃ sarva-sampadāṃ.

India). In addition, the *Agnipurāṇa* also mentions a far-distant territory known as Anda-Kaṭāha, one boundary of which was marked by a mountain peak. Dare we see here a reference to the sacred summit of Gunong Jĕrai? In a Prākrit work *Samarāiccakahā*, written by Haribhadra Sūri, there are tales of voyages to a half-mythical Kĕdah the Great (Mahā-kaṭāhadvīpa), and—as a final example, though there are many others—the *Bṛhatkathāmañjari* of the poet Kṣemendra tells how the virtuous lady Devasmitā followed her husband over the sea to the fabulous land of Kĕdah.

It is literary evidence such as this which provides the historical background for Dr. Alastair Lamb's important excavations in Kĕdah.[15] These took place at a site, known locally as Raja Bĕrsiong's palace,[16] on the lower slopes of Gunong Jĕrai, and concerned an apparently Śaivite sanctuary (*vimāna*) complete with a *maṇḍapa* and flights of steps leading up a complex series of terraces. Dr. Lamb has shown that the temple precincts occupied a space of not less than 300 ft. by 150 ft. The lower parts of the building comprised courses of small stone blocks of poor quality, presumably in imitation of the bricks normally found in ancient structures in Kĕdah, but the upper walls and roof were of wood. In the centre of the sanctuary, beneath the point where the sacred image of the god-king formerly stood, was a *somasūtra* by which the lustration liquids could drain to the outside of the building. Most interesting of Dr. Lamb's finds were six nine-chambered reliquaries of a type similar to two discovered earlier on this site by Dr. Quaritch Wales.[17] But whereas the earlier finds had been rifled and thrown out of the shrine among the debris, the six recent discoveries were found in their original positions and intact. Each of the four reliquaries so far opened has contained a plain, beaten-copper pot holding a number of semi-precious stones, gold dust and traces of organic remains which may have been of human origin, a gold disc bearing a single inscribed letter, a bull image cut from a

sheet of silver foil, a silver square inscribed with five stars, a copper turtle, a copper lotus flower, a gold semi-circle and a gold *liṅga* (both apparently made from gold dust sintered in a mould), several mineral fragments and, finally, a female figure holding a trident and lotus and seated in *padmasana*. The significance of these objects of ritual is still under investigation, but it already seems clear that Dr. Lamb has revealed some of the material apparatus of a ritual such as was practised in Java, where caskets such as those described above were placed beneath a statue of the god-king in a temple specially built for the purpose. It has not proved possible to ascribe a date to this shrine, but Dr. Lamb has tentatively suggested an eighth- or ninth-century foundation. It is profitless to speculate further at this point, but the full reports of these excavations will be a matter of great importance to all historians of Malaya. It is gratifying to know, too, that the Federation Government has subsidized the reconstruction of this temple, which has been undertaken with the advice of French experts from the Conservation d'Angkor.

Of the Red-Earth Land, Langkasuka, P'an-p'an and Tāmbraliṅga we hear little during this period. Presumably they had passed under the domination of more powerful states, but later texts bear witness to the fact that they had not become extinct.

At Kuala Sĕlinsing, amid the mangrove swamps of the Matang district of Perak, has been discovered the site of a settlement of apparently indigenous folk. We cannot affix a name to this settlement, nor can we date it precisely, but experts have hazarded that it probably existed as early as the eighth century and continued into the twelfth.[18] Among the many finds made at this site is a cornelian seal, inscribed with the Sanskrit name Viṣṇuvarmma in box-headed Pallava script. The grammatical form of the name is faulty, which has led several Indianists to the conclusion that the seal

belonged to a commoner. Others have argued that such imperfections betoken a Malayan origin, but this does not seem to the present author to be a necessary corollary. From the same archaeological site came a gold ring of uncertain date, large numbers of beads, and a considerable quantity of good quality pottery. The beads, of cornelian, agate, amethyst, rock crystal and glass are of a type found fairly commonly along the great sea route leading from the Philippines through the Mělaka Strait to India. The pottery was thrown on a wheel and ornamented in a variety or ways. One genre of pot with a distinctive decoration of waved parallel lines has also been identified among the cargo of an ancient boat which Mr. I. H. N. Evans found embedded in the bank of the Pontian River in South Pahang. A stoneware jar, which was found close to the boat, and which has usually been included among the cargo, has been referred to about the tenth century. The vessel itself, which was similar in certain important respects to several depicted on the panels of the outer gallery of the Bayon at Angkor, has been shown to be an ancestral form of the *rua chalom*, used today in the Gulf of T'ailand.[19]

Recently, a study of aerial photographs has brought to light an exciting new discovery in Matang. No less than six sites superficially similar to that at Kuala Sělinsing can be distinguished among the mangrove swamps of this coast, but none has so far been excavated. Further inland the discovery of Mahāyāna bronze statuettes bears witness to Indian influence in the Kinta valley.

Southwards of this point the peninsula was still the home of the aborigine. Austronesians here seem to have been untouched by the great cultural developments taking place on the isthmus. Only two specific place-names can be traced back through the mists of time to this period. The Pahang coast was the haunt of *Orang Laut*, a people described by Arab encyclopedists as having black, wavy hair, "strange figures" and wearing metal collars.[20] Mas'ūdi adds: "In their small

boats they wander round any ships which visit them and shoot a curious type of poisoned dart." Similar folk inhabited the island of Tioman, whither Arab mariners were accustomed to call in order to obtain fresh water from the spring which still flows into the bay on the south-west of the island. Here the water cascades through a bed of sand which both purifies it and renders it as sweet as any in Malaya. Later voyagers found this island, with its sheltered roadstead, good water, abundant timber and wild fowl, equally attractive, and one eighteenth-century directory catalogues it as "very plentiful in refreshments".* During the early period Arab sailors used the "asses ears" or twin peaks of Tioman as points of landfall and departure when crossing the South China Sea *en route* to or returning from Indo-China. Other villages must have existed at sheltered bayheads round the coast of the peninsula, but their history has been irretrievably lost. The Pontian boat mentioned above was presumably engaged in trade at some such village a mile or so within the estuary of the river, so is unlikely to have been wrecked by bad weather. The most likely assumption is that she was overwhelmed by the slumping of the river-bank against which she was moored.

Possibly from this period dates one of the most recalcitrant of all Malayan archaeological problems. This concerns the progressive discovery since 1895 of a series of buried granite chambers in the districts of southern Perak. As these are typically of the elongated shape and size of a coffin, they have usually been interpreted as sarcophagi, and hence are popularly referred to as slab-graves. Unfortunately it has not been possible to prove this function, for although a coarse, and almost invariably fragmented pottery, large numbers of glass and cornelian beads, and socketed iron tools and weapons have been found both inside and outside most of these

* John Thornton, *Oriental Navigation* (London, 1703), p. 461.

structures, not the slightest trace of human remains has been observed in the stiff latosolic clays which fill the stone chambers. It has been suggested that such remains, including teeth, have, in fact, been completely destroyed by the action of acid solutions in the soil. The simple testing of this theory by comparative chemical analysis of clay from inside and outside the chambers has not so far been undertaken, but it has recently been demonstrated experimentally that human bone can under certain conditions in Malaya decompose completely and vanish without trace in as short a time as thirty or forty years.[21] It is not impossible, however, that only a small part of a corpse was deposited in the grave, if grave it was. During what has been somewhat misleadingly called the Hindu-Indonesian period, for example, a small portion of calcined bone from a cremation was often entombed in a *caṇḍi* (stŭpa). Conceivably, but improbably, somewhat similar practices could account for the apparent lack of corpses in Malayan slab-graves.

The majority of the so-called slab-graves appear to have been aligned from east to west, but the significance of this is uncertain. Possibly the corpse was placed so as to look westward to the Malaysian world of the dead. We should be clearer on this point if we knew who were the builders of these graves. At present we can only point tentatively to the very similar Younger Megalithic cist graves of the Pasemah highlands of South Sumatra, Java and Bali. In this connection we may note that the distribution of these structures on the west coast of Malaya might presuppose a Sumatran provenance for their authors.

Whether the people who built these graves were also responsible for the menhirs which occur in several districts of Malaya is a moot question. These latter occur singly and in alignments in Nĕgri Sĕmbilan, Mĕlaka and Kĕlantan, and it is likely that others will come to light as archaeological exploration proceeds.[22] One alignment, that at Kĕmuning,

comprises no less than 150 menhirs. Most stones are tapering monoliths of apparently unworked granite up to ten feet or so in height. Pairs normally exhibit a mutual inward inclination. Nearly all such collections of menhirs stand on low mounds, and all but one known alignment run from east to west. Not infrequently they are *kĕramat*. For example, a pair standing beside the road near Mĕlaka Pindah, and widely venerated, bears the illustrious title of Dato' Śrī Mahārāja, the style of no less a potentate than the ruler of ancient Śrī Vijaya. Another solitary menhir in Tanjong Rimau is known locally as Dato' Manan. The peasant in Mĕlaka-Nĕgri believes that the larger stones in a group mark the graves of the founders of the several Malay tribes, and claims, even though he may not truly believe, that they possess the power of growth. Not unnaturally he therefore refers to such menhirs as *batu hidup* (living stones). Similar alignments of stone menhirs occur widely in South-East Asia. On the Pasemah highlands they are found close to slab-graves, but several scholars believe that this is a fortuitous association, and that the menhirs were erected by men of the Older Megalithic culture, who built dolmens not as burial chambers but as monuments to venerated ancestors. These farming people who, we have seen, had established themselves in South-East Asia by the middle of the second millenium B.C., felt the need to express the fructifying power of the soil in concrete form, so that it might thereby be rendered more approachable for intercession. A menhir thus became not merely the god's lodging but the very deified potency of the earth. The best link with the abstract god now comprehended within the menhir was the chief, who, acting on behalf of the tribe, in his role as intermediary between god and man, came to share in the divinity of the god. Even more efficacious as intercessor was the ancestral chieftain, the progenitor of the tribe, who, after partaking of divinity in his lifetime, had now returned to mingle with the god of the soil. Prominent among the relics of this

Older Megalithic culture in various parts of South-East Asia are stone seats, presumably thrones for ancestral spirits. Just such a seat occurs together with a group of menhirs at Bĕrhala Lima, near Kota Baharu in Kĕlantan, and thus affords some confirmation for the belief that some of the Malayan alignments may indeed be Older Megalithic.

One class of artifact found in and around slab-graves, and in other localities as far east as Raub and the Tĕmbĕling valley, provides a puzzle as perplexing as that of the graves themselves. The artifact in question consists of an iron blade, slender through much of its length but with a wider end turned through an angle of up to 90°. The opposite or slender end is socketed for hafting. All specimens found so far, and they occur in considerable numbers, have been corroded to such an extent that it is impossible to tell whether they ever carried a cutting edge. To the Malays, who occasionally found them in the countryside, these objects were known as *tulang mawas* (apes' bones). As legends relating to malignant ape-like creatures possessed of iron forearms were part of the mythological heritage of the Malays, it is not surprising that they adopted this descriptive expression. Anthropologists and others who argue, conversely, that the legend derives from the existence of men who used the iron blades in far distant times seem to this author to be following a chimera of fancy. In any case, there appears to have been another tradition current in Malaya that the *tulang mawas* were the weapons of early *orang pĕrang* (warriors). In actual fact no one has so far been able to suggest whether these extraordinarily unhandy blades were weapons or tools or objects of ritual significance. Suggestions, it is true, have been made, but none carries conviction. Rather similar objects have, however, been found in Java in a stonewâre jar of early Sung date. This means that the *tulang mawas* cannot be later than about the tenth century but may, of course, be considerably older.[23] Whoever the slab-grave architects with

their strange iron implements may ultimately prove to have been, their artifacts make it clear that they were at a lower level of culture than the inhabitants of the isthmian city-states.

NOTE. Had I been able to read of Dr. Lamb's recent work in volumes 5 and 6 of the *Federation Museums Journal* before writing this and the following chapters, I should have cast several paragraphs in slightly different form. As it is, I commend these important volumes to the reader who wishes to acquire a sound knowledge of isthmian archaeology during this still very obscure period. The references are: A. Lamb, "Report on the excavation and reconstruction of Chandi Bukit Batu Pahat, Central Kedah" vol. 5, new series, *Federation Museums Journal* (1960), and "Miscellaneous papers on early Hindu and Buddhist settlement in northern Malaya and southern Thailand", *ibid.*, vol. 6 (1961).

Chapter 7

THE GREATNESS AND DECLINE OF ŚRĪ VIJAYA

A.D. 1000-1300

By the early eleventh century the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy comprised the city-states of the whole East Sumatran littoral and of the isthmian region of the Malay Peninsula, together with the small trading ports round the rest of the Malayan coast, the kingdom of Sunda in western Java and the islands of the intervening seas. The extent to which the Mahārāja was able to exercise control over the West Sumatran coast and western Borneo is still uncertain. The Śailendran empire was, in fact, a confederation of trading ports dispersed through the western part of the Malaysian world. Population was concentrated along the lower courses of rivers, focusing on estuaries and *kuala*, and settlements were separated by extensive tracts of primeval forest. In such an environment communication had to be by way of the sea. Land routes, apart from the trans-isthmian portages, were practically non-existent. It followed inevitably that the several units of the thalassocracy were more concerned with the interconnecting sea than with the mountainous and forested interiors beyond their own immediate hinterlands, and the extension of political authority from the land to the sea became a corollary of empire building. By the twelfth century the Mahārāja claimed exclusive control over the sea as part of the territory of his realm. The Śailendran style "King of the Mountain and Lord of the Isles" was no longer hyperbole but fact. A Chinese customs official[1] writing in the early thirteenth century, remarked: "If some foreign ship passing Śrī Vijaya should

not enter the port, an armed party would certainly board it and kill the sailors to the last man."

The seas over which the Mahārāja exerted this monopoly of jurisdiction included Mĕlaka Strait as far north as Puket Island, Singapore Strait, the several passages through the Riau and Lingga archipelagos, and the Straits of Bangka, Gasper and Sunda. In the grandiose manner of contemporary South-East Asian rulers he probably also claimed sovereignty over the Sea of Kalāh (the Mergui Archipelago) and parts of the South China and Java Seas, though his authority could have been only nominal in such waters. That the Śailendras were conscious of the debt they owed to the sea which bound the discrete parts of their empire together is evidenced by tales current in the Arab world of the ninth and tenth centuries. The best known of these occurs in the *Book of Roads and Kingdoms*, compiled by Ibn Khurdādhbih, who related that the Mahārāja daily propitiated the ocean by throwing a gold brick into the water, saying as he did so, "Look, there lies my treasury." In the form in which we have it, this story recalls the ritual in which the Doge "wed the sea with rings" in a city where also "the merchants were the kings". One result of this preoccupation with commerce is that the Śailendran dynasty left no great monuments in Sumatra or Malaya comparable to those raised by the Khmers in the valley of the Mekong.

It was during this period of history that Kĕdah achieved the apogee of its power and prosperity. Situated at the edge of the strategic isthmian tract, yet sufficiently far south to share in the trade of Mĕlaka Strait, it functioned at first as a sort of advanced trading post. As the tempo of maritime commerce quickened under the aegis of Śrī Vijaya, so Kĕdah's role became of ever greater importance in the thalassocracy, and by the early eleventh century the town by the Mĕrbok

ranked as one of the two major nodes in the polity of Śrī Vijaya. The other, of course, was the old city of Śrī Vijaya itself, near modern Palembang in Sumatra. In Kĕdah, shrines were built down on the plain course of the Bujang River, as well as on islands of higher ground amid the swamps of the Mĕrbok and along the lower reaches of the Muda. That its trade relations were widespread is attested by Arab glassware and Chinese porcelain which have come to light in archaeological excavations.[2]

The organization of the Śrī Vijayan empire as a thalassocracy enabled the Śailendras to govern an extensive area of difficult terrain without excessive decentralization of authority at a time when land communication was at a minimum, but it also rendered the individual city-states susceptible to attack one at a time by any foreign power that could command a fleet. This happened in the second decade of the eleventh century and provided one of the most exciting episodes in Malaya's history. During the ninth and tenth centuries there had grown up in South India a powerful Cōḷa state, which waxed wealthy on the profits of trade with all parts of South Asia. At the beginning of the eleventh century there were friendly exchanges between the Śailendran Mahārāja, Śrī Māra-Vijayōṭṭuṅga-varman, and the Cōḷa King, Rājarāja I. The latter granted the revenues from the village of Anaimangalam for the maintenance of a Buddhist monastery founded at Negapatam by the Śailendra. The grandiloquent preamble to the grant runs as follows:

> He, this Rājakēsarivarman Rājarāja, who had seen the other shore of the ocean of the collection of all sciences, whose foot-stool was made yellow by the cluster of rays emanating from many a gem set on the borders of the beautiful gold diadems worn by the entire circle of kings, gave, in the twenty-first year of his universal sovereignty, to the Buddha residing in the surpassingly beautiful Cūḷāmanivarmavihāra, of such high loftiness as had overshadowed

the Kanakagiri, which had been built—in the name of his father, by the glorious Māra-Vijayōṭṭuṅgavarman, who, by the greatness of his wisdom, had conquered the teacher of the gods, who was the sun to the lotus forest (the learned men), who was the kalpa-tree to supplicants, who was born in the Śailendra family, who was the lord of Śrī Vijaya, who was conducting the rule of Kĕdah, who had the Makara crest, and who was the son of Cūḷāmaṇivarman who had mastered all statecraft—at Negapatam, delightful on account of many a temple, rest-house, watershed, and pleasure-garden, and brilliant with arrays of various kinds of mansions, situated in the division called Paṭṭanakūṟṟa included in the large group of districts named Kṣatriyaśikhāmaṇi-vaḷanāḍu, which was the forehead-mark of the whole earth...*

The Cōḷa monarch's son renewed this grant at the beginning of his reign in 1014, but during the next decade relations between the two states deteriorated. What finally precipitated conflict between them is unknown. Possibly the Śrī Vijayan monopoly of the trade passing through Mĕlaka Strait impedec the commercial aims of the Cōḷas, or possibly the Cōḷa king, fresh from victories in South India and the Ganges valley, simply felt the need to consummate his conquests by a *digvijaya-yātrā* through foreign territory. Whatever the reason, in about the year 1025 Rājēndra Cōḷa I, the greatest of all Cōḷa kings, essayed a *razzia* on the grand scale. The record of this raid is preserved in a *praśasti* inscribed on a wall of the Rājarājeśvara temple in Tanjore.[3]

The course of the campaign is not easily deducible from the *praśasti*, for the order in which the place-names are arranged seems to reflect the exigencies of verse rather than chronology. It has usually been assumed that Rājēndra first launched his attack against Śrī Vijaya, the heart of the thalassocracy, where he captured the Mahārāja Śrī Sangrāma-Vijayōṭṭuṅga-varman, together with his mighty war elephants and all his treasure.

* Nilakanta Sastri's translation, *History of Śrī Vijaya* (Madras, 1949), p. 75.

Having disrupted the capital of the empire, Rājēndra was able easily to overrun the individual city-states. First he raided along the east coast of Sumatra, and then turned his attention to the Malay Peninsula. Langkasuka, "undaunted in fierce battles", Takkola, "praised by great men of science", Tāmbraliṅga, "mighty in the hazard of battle", and finally Kĕdah, "of fierce strength and protected by the ocean",* all fell before the conquering Tamil. Despite the extravagant claims of the *praśasti,* this far-ranging Cōḷa expedition seems to have effected no great change in the political structure of the peninsula, or in that of the Śrī Vijayan empire for that matter. Doubtless the Mahārāja overtly acknowledged the suzerainty of the Cōḷas for a period of years, and probably also opened Mĕlaka Strait to Indian shipping, but, in accord with Cōḷa policy as practised in South India, Rājēndra seems not to have made any attempt to displace the ruling dynasty. At any rate Śrī Vijaya recovered within a few years, and in 1028 dispatched an embassy to China, which was received with especial honour. Certainly friendly relations had been re-established between the two empires by about 1090, when Kulōṭṭuṅga I renewed the charter granted to the Negapatam monastery discussed above. In any case, the proved existence of a famous corporation of Tamil merchants, The Five-Hundred of the Thousand Districts in the Four Quarters,† in Sumatra in 1088 bespeaks a period of peace between the two great powers, from which there is no reason to think the peninsula was excluded.

Despite the ephemeral political results of Rājēndra's raid, there is some evidence that its memory lingered on in Malay

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* The ringing epithets in this sentence are of no significance to the historian: each is simply a play on words. Tamil *kalai,* for example means "science" and *takkor* means "scholar", so that Talaittakkolam is artificially dignified as "praised by great men of science".

† Tiśaiyāyirattu-Aiññuṟṟuvar.

legend and, I believe, was eventually incorporated in the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*.[4] Dato' Sir Roland Braddell, whose opinions on early Malayan history command respect, has vigorously opposed this idea,[5] but this is one of the rare occasions on which I would venture to disagree with the Dato'. It is true that none of the place-names mentioned in the legends occurs in Rājēndra's inscription, but it does seem to me that the tale of Raja Shulan's invasion of Malaya is just such a memory the substance of which might be preserved in folk-lore, yet with places, times and often personages transposed. It is demonstrably untrue that "all the Rajas of Sind and India and all the Rajas of the regions below the wind" were subject to Raja Shulan, but neither was Arthur a king, still less a king over all the kings of Britain. Yet Arthur was certainly a historical figure.

As Rājēndra Cōḷa's *praśasti* advances no reasons for his raid, neither does the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* deign to justify Raja Shulan's conquest. The actions of the mighty created their own ethic, so that the chronicler was content to record that "Raja Shulan was a mighty Raja ... whose purpose held to reduce all the cities of East and West to subjection". In the early stages of his campaign Raja Shulan was victorious, but as he penetrated more deeply into Malaya he was opposed by a local champion, one Raja Chulin. The passage which describes the approach and onset of the two armies is clearly modelled on similar encounters related in the Hindu epics.[6] Of the Tamil host it was said in another context, "so vast was the army on the march that boundless tracts of forest became treeless plains, the earth rocked as though convulsed by an earthquake, mountains were moved and their summits came toppling down: even the highest hills were brought low and mighty rivers ran dry and became land. Six months passed and the tail of the column had not yet appeared; the

gleam of the weapons was so brilliant that dark nights became as bright as though there were a full moon shining in fine weather." Opposing it, the Malay army was "as a sea at full tide, the elephants and horses were like islands in the sea, the banners and pennons were like a forest, the weapons were serried row upon row, and the hair-pendants on the javelins looked like a field of *lalang* in blossom."* As the armies engaged there arose a mighty roar, so that "even had it thundered in the heavens the sound would not have been heard for the battle cries of the warriors. Only the clash of weapon upon weapon would have been heard. So thick was the dust of conflict that the light of day was darkened as by an eclipse of the sun, and such was the confusion that friend could not be told from foe. Attackers were themselves attacked; here and there men even stabbed their own friends."† Through the long day the struggle swayed back and forth, but the Malays were fighting for their homeland, *kampong* and *sawah,* and towards evening they began to force the men of Kalinga back toward the sea. Seeing his dream of a glorious *digvijaya-yātrā* vanishing, his grandiloquent *praśasti* that was to endure for a thousand years fading before a vision

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* These are, hyperbole apart, idealized battle arrays. Both armies and their trains probably resembled fairly closely those depicted in relief on the east face of the Bayon, where a file of heroes and commanders is followed by a motley assemblage of pack-elephants, ox-carts, musicians, women with children at the hip, and porters carrying game, torches, boxes, gourds and jars; or perhaps approximated even more closely to Harṣa's army as described by Bāṇa in a famous passage in the *Harṣacarita,* VII.

† No epic battle was complete without a tumultous uproar, on which the *Mahābhārata,* for example, dwells with evident enthusiasm. Before the onset "the very skies should be rent by the beating of drums, the blowing of conch-shells and *kāhalas* and the blare of trumpets". Cp. the trumpeting which "re-sounded through heaven and earth" as Arjuna waited in his chariot before battle (*Bhagavad Gītā*). The dust which darkened the light of day was also adopted from the Indian scene, being appropriate enough on the baked plains of the Indus-Ganges *doab* (where battles were fought in the dry season) but wholly anomalous on the rain-sodden soils of the Malay Peninsula.

of a mutilated corpse thrown on a dunghill, Raja Shulan rushed into the fray, hurling a challenge at Raja Chulin. Mr. C. C. Brown's spare translation does full justice to the narrative power of the original text: "He was mounted on an elephant of prodigious size that was, moreover, in season and stood eight cubits at the shoulder. But the elephant of Raja Chulin was no coward, and the two elephants met and fought, with a crash like that of a thunderbolt splitting a hill, while the clash of tusk on tusk sounded like peal on peal of thunder. Neither elephant would own defeat. And Raja Chulin stood up on his elephant, poising his spear which he then hurled at Raja Shulan: and it passed clean through the howdah, projecting a finger span on the far side of it. Whereupon Raja Shulan shot an arrow and transfixed Raja Chulin through the chest so that he fell from his elephant and died. And when the men of Raja Chulin saw that he had been killed, they all of them broke and fled, hotly pursued by the men of Kalinga who slew any that fell into their hands.* The men of Kalinga then entered the fort of

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* The single, ritualized combat between opposing heroes was a concept borrowed from the idealized warfare of ancient India. Cp. E. W. Hopkins, "The social and military position of the ruling caste in ancient India", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 13 (1889), p. 223: "As soon as the armies meet we read that there was complete disorder. The mass is helpless and imbecile, left to itself; the knight is reckless and foolhardy. Instead of remaining to attack the division allotted to him at the outset of the day, he rushes about wherever he please...meanwhile the regiments...stand stock-still and look on at the spectacle, or they fling themselves against each other, two unheeded masses, and cutting and chopping each other in a promiscuous manner, lend their weight against the foe...While this by-play goes on, one knight is slain or flees. Then all his soldiers run away, since they fight not for a cause but for a leader." A further passage in the *Sejarah Melayu* (pp. 18-19), which describes how elephant fought against elephant, horse against horse, bowman against bowman and pikeman against pikeman, is clearly based on the Epic ideal (never observed in practice even in ancient India) that every warrior should fight only against a like opponent. The battle between Raja Chulin and Raja Shulan also bears some similarity to that between the King of Sunda and the Prince of Kahuripan as related in the

Glenggiu and sacked it, gaining more booty than man could count. Now Raja Chulin had a very beautiful daughter called Onang Kiu. She was offered to Raja Shulan, who took her as consort."* Finally, like Rājēndra Cōḷa, Raja Shulan sailed home to Kalinga, taking as his bride the orphaned daughter of his former adversary.

Whether or not this story does indeed stem from Rājēndra Cōḷa's maritime raid on the empire of Śrī Vijaya is something on which we must be content to speculate. But in any case it is a fine tale, of which the author of the *Sējarah Mēlayu* made the most.

Śrī Vijaya itself recovered from the effects of the Cōḷa raid after a few years, but Kĕdah seems never to have recaptured its lost prestige. In about 1068, in an effort to secede from the empire, she invoked the aid of the Cōḷa king Vīrarājēndra, but with what result is uncertain. Henceforth the kingdom sank into such obscurity that in a thirteenth-century Chinese gazetteer of the South Seas it merited no more than incidental mention. Its position as chief emporium of the peninsula had been usurped by another port whose location confronts us with one of the most tantalizing problems of place-name identification in early South-East Asia. We know this name only in the Chinese transliteration of Fo-lo-an, in which guise it appears in the *Gazetteer of Foreigners*, published in 1225? This is such a valuable source for the history of Malaya that we must pause here to say a few words about it.

The author of the *Gazetteer* was Chao Ju-kua, who was for a time Superintendent of Maritime Trade in Fu-chien. In this capacity he was stationed at Ch'üan-chou, where he

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Kidung Sunda (Dutch version by C. C. Berg, *BKI.*, deel 83 [1927]. Partially Englished by H. G. Q. Wales, *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare*, pp. 57-74).

* Translations by C. C. Brown, *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 25, pts. 2 and 3 (Singapore, 1952), pp. 18-20.

had exceptional opportunities for obtaining information about foreign countries from the merchants and sailors who frequented that port. The book is divided into two sections, the first of which comprises descriptions of countries in South and East Asia and as far west as the African coast and the Mediterranean, that is, of those lands that bordered the sea-route to the West. The second section is devoted to a systematic description of the principal foreign products which entered into maritime trade. Much of the information in both these sections occurs neither in any previous work nor in any other topographical treatise, so it can be assumed that Chao Ju-kua acquired it through his personal associations with overseas traders. Four Malayan states are described in some detail in the *Gazetteer,* several more are mentioned *en passant,* and the products of the peninsula feature prominently in the systematic section.

Fo-lo-an, described as a dependency of Śrī Vijaya and situated only four days sail from Patani, was described as the chief peninsular emporium for the Arab trade.[8] The state was celebrated for its possession of two statues of the compassionate Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, which were believed to be able, by controlling the winds, to protect the port from attack by pirates. The Buddhist *vat* in the country were tiled with bronze and ornamented with gold. Each year, on the day of the full moon of July, the Buddha's birthday was celebrated with processions and music, festivities in which foreign merchants were invited to take part. Indigenous products included several varieties of gharu,[9] lakawood,[10] sandalwood[11] and ivory, for which Chinese traders bartered gold, silver, ironware, lacquerware, porcelain and other sundries. Finally we are told that Fo-lo-an adjoined Pahang, and, so far as terrain was concerned, closely resembled Kĕlantan and Trĕngganu.

Several scholars have proposed locations for this port but none of their interpretations has so far commanded unanimous assent. It does seem, however, that, attractive as a site on the west coast would be from the point of view of Arab trade, the port must be sought in North-East Malaya. Only then can the geographical exigencies laid down by Chao Ju-kua be accommodated. In such circumstances Kuala Bĕrang suggests itself as a possible site. Not only does Bĕrang correspond phonetically to Fo-lo-an—unlikely though this may seem to the reader unfamiliar with early Chinese transliterations—but Kuala Bĕrang is also the place which yielded up the famed Trĕngganu Stone, with its fourteenth-century inscription providing the earliest record of Islam on the peninsula. It is, therefore, not unlikely that Muslim merchants had frequented the area for some time previously. Certainly this site meets the other geographical requirements, and some readers may care to speculate as to whether the protection supposedly afforded by Avalokiteśvara may not have been a dramatization of the difficulty experienced by vessels approaching the shelving Trĕngganu shore during the north-east monsoon.

Other peninsular states described or mentioned by Chao Ju-kua were the ancient kingdom of Tāmbraliṅga, with its palisaded city in the vicinity of Ligor, Langkasuka in the neighbourhood of Patani, C'ăiya, Kĕlantan, Trĕngganu, Kĕdah and an unidentified Jĕlutong, situated somewhere on the isthmus. All formed part of the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy, but the far north of the peninsula constituted the southernmost extension of Cambodia. Here was a state known to the Chinese as Chou-mei-liu:[12] its real name cannot be determined.

It is clear that the political structure of the peninsula had undergone considerable changes since it first passed under the hegemony of Śrī Vijaya. Of the old names which ran thread-like through the pages of Chinese annals, only Langkasuka

Figure 5 The Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy, *c.* A.D. 1150.

and Kĕdah remained, and the latter was already in decline. On the other hand, modern names were becoming more prominent. The gulf between the ancient and modern geographies of Malaya was already partly bridged. Pahang, Kĕlantan, Trĕngganu and C'ăiya appeared in only the thinnest of archaistic disguises. Yet it is clear that cultural and economic development was still restricted to the northern parts of the peninsula. Although Chao Ju-kua referred briefly to Pahang as a source of lakawood, his perfunctory remarks would seem to indicate that it was merely a frontier collecting station. The larger of the peninsular states, however, engaged in a lucrative trade with Arab and Chinese merchants. Under the Southern Sung, in particular, the maritime commerce of China attained its apogee, and the states of the Malay Peninsula supplied the trade with all sorts of forest products, notably aromatic woods, spices, ivory, and rhinoceros horn, a very important item in the Chinese pharmacopoeia. The kingdom known as Chou-mei-liu had the distinction of producing the very highest quality of gharu. In return for these commodities merchants supplied the peninsular states with three categories of goods. In the first place they brought objects associated with everyday living, such things as salt, rice, iron- and earthenware, most of which were used in the coastal settlements though no doubt a proportion were traded to the aborigines of the interior. Second, members of the ruling hierarchy provided a market for luxuries such as gold, silver, silks, porcelain and lacquerware; and finally the court needed to be supplied with objects of ceremonial significance such as parasols. The following table summarizes the trade of China and the Malay Peninsula in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

THIRTEENTH-CENTURY TRADE BETWEEN CHINA AND THE MALAY PENINSULA

(Based on the *Chu-fan-chih* of Chao Ju-kua)

EXPORTS	Chou-mei-liu	Tambra-linga	Langka-suka	Fo-lo-an	Pahang
bees-wax	x	x			
camphor		x	x		
cardamom	x				
ebony		x			
chien)	x				
su) varieties	x	x	x	x	
ch'en) of	x				
chan) gharuwood			x	x	
sheng)			x	x	
ivory		x	x		
lac[13]	x				
lakawood		x		x	x
rhinoceros horn		x	x		
sandalwood				x	
IMPORTS					
earthenware bowls		x			
gold and silver		x		x	
iron				x	
lacquerware				x	
pongee parasols and umbrellas		x			
porcelain vessels		x	x	x	
rice		x	x	x	
salt		x			
skeins of Ho-ch'ih silk[14]		x	x		
sugar		x		x	
wheat				x	
spirits		x	x	x	

Towards the end of this period there were signs that the power of Śrī Vijaya was waning. Possibly the decline had begun early in the twelfth century, for to a Chinese author writing in 1178, Śrī Vijaya was no longer the premier state of Insulind. In his book *Vicarious Replies to Questions as to What Lies Beyond the Passes*,[15] Chou Ch'ü-fei, sometime Assistant Subprefect at Kuei-lin and consequently likely to have been well informed on matters relating to the *Nan Yang*, said, "Of all the wealthy foreign lands which have great store of divers precious commodities, none surpasses the Arab countries. Next to them comes Java, and third is Śrī Vijaya." The attentive reader may also discern implications of an impending dissolution in the work of Chao Ju-kua, who said, "Kampar was formerly a dependency of Śrī Vijaya, but has revolted and set up a prince of its own."[16] Apparently not even the Śrī Vijayan fleet of patrol ships, pirates or free-booters without doubt, could enforce the allegiance of the principalities bordering Mēlaka Strait. There is reason, too, to think that the capital of the empire may have been transferred to Jambi, then known as Mēlayu. Whereas Chao Ju-kua omitted Jambi from his list of Śrī Vijayan dependencies, he did include Palembang, thereby implying that the latter was no longer the focus of the empire. If this were the sum of the evidence, this conclusion could be no more than a remote possibility, but events later in the thirteenth century seem to confirm that such a transfer did take place. The holy alliance conceived by Kṛtanāgara, last ruler of the Javanese state of Singhasāri, was directed primarily towards the forming of an *entente* with Jambi. Other indications of the importance of Jambi are the fact that in 1281 she sent envoys to the Chinese court in her own right, and that Marco Polo in 1297 regarded Jambi as the pre-eminent state in the whole of Sumatra.

To what extent the Islamization of North-East Sumatra contributed to the break-up of the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy we cannot be sure, but the two events certainly appear to be

roughly contemporaneous. As early as 1281 Jambi employed Muslims as envoys to China. Eleven years later Marco Polo noted that the people of Pĕrlak had been converted to Islam, and by 1297 the ruler of Samudra had embraced the new faith. No doubt the exclusiveness of Islam helped to foster a rift between the newly converted Muslim states and the old Buddhist empire within which they had achieved the apogee of their prosperity. The only question is, "How far had the process of disintegration advanced before the coming of Islam?"

Śrī Vijaya seems to have maintained her hold on the Malay Peninsula at least until the end of the twelfth century, for in A.D. 1183 a Buddha image was erected by the Governor of C'ăiya "to afford enjoyment tŏ all the faithful who may adore and worship here". An inscription on the pedestal of the statue, although couched in pure Khmer, was carved in a Śrī Vijayan script. It was also worded in such a way as to imply that C'ăiya was subject to the supreme overlordship of Kamraten Aṅ Mahārāja Śrīmat Trailōkyarāja-mauḷi-bhūṣaṇa-varmadēva, who most scholars are agreed, was a Śailendra. Nevertheless, the authority of Śrī Vijaya over the isthmus must have been waning, because we know that less than fifty years later Dharmarāja Candrabhānu, ruler of Tāmbraliṅga, regarded himself as an independent sovereign. In 1230 he set up an inscription on the ancient site of C'ăiya which runs as follows:

"Fortune! There was a king Candrabhānu—resembling Cupid in his beautiful form, and called Śrī Dharmarāja, Lord of Tāmraliṅga, who gave great felicity to the religion of the Buddha...having for origin this lamp which is the family of those who engender the Family of the Lotus, as expert in policy as Dharmāśoka and Lord of the Pañcāṇḍavamśa.

"Fortune! Happiness! There was a king, support of the Family of the Lotus, Lord of Tāmraliṅga, of powerful arms...by strength of his good works relating to all men, (possessing?) in some sort the power of the sun and the moon...Candrabhānu the bearer of

world-wide fame, the king Śrī Dharmarāja. In Kaliyuga 4332 (A.D. 1230) ..*

To have erected such an inscription at C'ăiya, Candrabhānu must have regarded himself not only as an independent sovereign but also as an empire builder. Whereas less than half a century previously both C'ăiya and Tāmbraliṅga had figured as dependencies of Śrī Vijaya, now C'ăiya was reckoned a fief of Tāmbraliṅga, whose ruler did not hesitate to set up an inscription which bore no reference to the Mahārāja of Śrī Vijaya. At the same time Śrī Vijaya began to suffer from the commercial competition of the Javanese kingdom of Singhasari and from the political inroads of T'ai expansion. To this we shall turn in the next chapter. We need not follow the decline of the old Buddhist empire to its final disintegration in the fifteenth century, when its capital became a pirate lair. Long before that time its palsied grasp had slipped from the peninsula, which became a battle-ground for Javanese and T'ai aspirations.

* Done into English by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (*History of Śrī Vijaya*) from the French translation of George Coedès, *BEFEO.*, tome 18 (1918), pp. 32-33.

Chapter 8

THE CENTURY OF SINGHAPURA

IN the thirteenth century a new star appeared in the firmament of South-East Asia, namely the T'ais. As early as the seventh century A.D. this people had founded the kingdom of Nan-Chao in western Yün-nan, since when they had been slowly filtering southwards. Enclaves of T'ai *padi* farmers had settled among the Burmese, the Mōns and the Khmers, and T'ai mercenaries had served in the Cambodian armies. In 1096 one group had founded the independent state of P'a-yao at the confluence of the Me-p'ing and Me-wang rivers. Early in the twelfth century other groups formed a number of principalities in the Chao P'răya valley. In 1238 a T'ai confederacy ousted the Khmer garrison at Suk'ōt'ai, the capital of the north-western province of the Cambodian empire, and founded the first T'ai kingdom down on the plains of the middle Chao P'răya. The T'ais took advantage of the waning power of Cambodia consequent on the megalomaniacal excesses of Jayavarman VII (1181-c.1218) to extend their power yet farther afield. Qubilai-Qan's conquest of Nan-Chao in 1253 induced many able T'ai leaders to chance their fortune to the southward. Again and again T'ais raided into Cambodian territory. Then in 1270 Rāma K'āmheng (Rāma the Brave) came to the throne of Suk'ōt'ai, and pushed the boundaries of his kingdom into the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula. An epexegesis to a famous inscription raised by Rāma at Suk'ōt'ai in 1292 detailed the boundaries of his realm. "Southwards he has subdued the country up to ... Ratburi, P'echaburi, Năk'ōn Śri Th'ammărat, and beyond to the sea which marks the frontier."[1] It is impossible to be certain of the precise boundaries here intended, but it is clear that Rāma

claimed control over most of the isthmus.

It is during the fourteenth century that we first find incontrovertible evidence of settlement in the extreme south of the Malay Peninsula (other, of course, than a few Mesolithic and Neolithic axes). At some time just before A.D.1300 there came into existence a settlement on Singapore Island, the ancient Singhapura, tales of which were, some five hundred years later, to inspire Sir Stamford Raffles to one of the world's great acts of creative statecraft. The traditional account of the founding of this famous settlement is contained in the *Sējarah Mĕlayu*, the annals of the royal court of Mĕlaka. According to this story a Sumatran prince, Sri Tri Buana, of the line of Raja Iskandar dzu'l-Qarnain,* was cruising in the Riau Archipelago when he had occasion to go hunting on Tanjong Bĕmian. From the summit of a hill whither his quarry had led him, Sri Tri Buana looked across the water to a crescent of sandy beach "so white that it looked like a sheet of cloth". He turned to his minister, Indra Bopal, and inquired the name of the pleasant island. Indra Bopal replied that it was the land called Tĕmasek, whereupon Sri Tri Buana repaired thither. When the prince and his entourage reached the shore "the ship was brought close in and Sri Tri Buana went ashore with all the ship's company, and they amused themselves with collecting shell-fish. The king then went inland for sport on the open ground at Kuala Tĕmasek [the *padang* of present-day Singapore] and they beheld a strange animal. It seemed to move with great speed; it had a red body and a black head; its breast was white; it was strong and active in build, and in size was rather bigger than a he-goat. When it saw the party, it moved away and then disappeared. And Sri Tri Buana inquired of all those

* The *epitheton ornans* ذو القرنين (= bicornus) derives ultimately from the fable of King Midas's asses' ears (*Vide* Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bk. II, ll. 146-193) and *JAOS.*, vol. 81 (1961), p. 426. It is cause for suspicion that the genealogy of the Tribuanic dynasty includes the names of three apsarases from Indra's heaven.

who were with him, 'What beast is that?' But no one knew. Then said Dĕmang Lĕbar Daun, 'Your Highness, I have heard it said that in ancient times it was a lion that had that appearance. I think that what we saw must have been a lion...'" Sri Tri Buana then established a city at Tĕmasek, giving it the name of Singhapura—which, of course, signifies Lion City. "And," the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* concludes, "Singhapura became a great city, to which foreigners resorted in great numbers, so that the fame of the city and its greatness spread throughout the world."*

So much for tradition. The fact that lions are not found in South-East Asia itself sufficiently evidences the mythological nature of this account. In the nineteenth century popular etymology favoured a more mundane derivation of the name from *singgah* and *pura,* meaning "the city where one breaks one's journey". But, despite its specious plausibility when applied to a city located as Singapore is, this was not a satisfactory derivation. Recently Professor C.C. Berg of Leiden has added to his many contributions to South-East Asian history a new interpretation. He believes that a community of monks of the esoteric Bhairava-Buddhist sect from the Javanese kingdom of Majapahit settled on the island of Tĕmasek late in the thirteenth century. Possibly their monastery was on what is now Fort Canning Hill. In accordance with the demoniac and orgiastic sessions which characterized their religion, these monks adopted the sobriquet of "lions", and several cities within the Majapahit dominion, such as Singharājya in Bali and Singhasāri in Java, were designated

* This and the following passages from the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* are taken from Mr. C. C. Brown's translation in the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* vol. 25, pts. 2 and 3 (Singapore, 1952). An alternative thesis alluded to by Sir Richard Winstedt [in D.G.E. Hall, *Historians of South East Asia* (London, 1961), p. 25] attributes the bestowal of the honorific *Singhapura* on the island of Tĕmasek to Vira Rājendra, alias Nila Uttama, the Buddhist third son of Rājendra Cōḷa I, in A.D. 1068.

"Lion"—in this special sense. Professor Berg believes that Singhapura was another such settlement.[2].

Malay tradition preserves an interesting story of Sri Tri Buana's voyage from Tanjong Bĕmian to Kuala Tĕmasek. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* reads as follows: "And when they were come out into the open sea, a storm arose and the ship began to fill with water. Bale as they might they could not clear her and the boatswain gave order to lighten the ship. But though much was thrown overboard they still could not bale the ship dry. She was by now close to Tĕlok Bĕlanga, and the boatswain said to Sri Tri Buana, 'It seems to me, your Highness, that it is because of the crown of kingship that the ship is foundering. All else has been thrown overboard, and if we do not likewise with this crown we shall be helpless with the ship.' And Sri Tri Buana replied, 'Overboard with it then!' And the crown was thrown overboard. Thereupon the storm abated, and the ship regained her buoyancy and was rowed to land."[3] As it has been preserved, this story fails to make sense. Clearly the weight of the crown would have had no ill effect on the stability of a dug-out canoe, let alone on the *lanchang*, with its gilded figurehead, in which Sri Tri Buana was sailing. We must assume that the malign influence of the crown was inherent in its supernatural properties, but what event real or imagined lay behind this story we cannot know. However, it is interesting to discover an apparent echo of this tale in another garbled description of Tĕmasek, this time by a Chinese author writing in 1349.[4] In his version the story is somewhat different, but again focuses on a species of headgear. "In ancient times, when digging the ground, a chief came upon a jewelled head-dress. The beginning of the year is calculated from the [first] rising of the moon, when the chief [formerly] put on this head-dress and wore his [ceremonial] dress to receive the congratulations [of the people]. Nowadays this custom still continues." It is clear that a crown or other head-dress played an important role

in the mythology of Tĕmasek or Old Singapore, but neither the Malay version nor that of the Chinese enables us to evaluate its precise significance. However, this theme of a lost crown is found in other Malaysian contexts. A variant version of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu,* for example, relates that three sons of Alexander the Great—the legendary progenitor of the Śrī Vijayan Śailendran dynasty—disputed over the succession. Eventually they were persuaded to surrender the crown of kingship to an angel, who thereupon let it fall into the Indian Ocean. Substantially the same myth occurs in the folk-lore of Johore, but here it was Alexander's eldest son who let the crown fall into the Strait of Singhapura. Finally, a Sumatran version comes very close to paralleling the account in the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu.* According to this, divers located the crown in the bed of the ocean, but were unable to recapture it from the coils of a serpent. It would seem that somewhere far back in the history of the Śailendra dynasty the lack of a crown had to be explained away, possibly by a usurper legitimizing his reign, and the Tribuanic kings, claiming descent in the line of Alexander Dzu'l-Qarnain through the supernatural births on Si-Guntang Mahameru, had evolved the legend as part of their dynastic mythology. Certainly in later Malay history the crown was considered essential for a valid coronation, so much so that in the eighteenth century Sultan Sulaiman of Riau-Johore declined to be installed until the Bugis had recovered his regalia, and Sultan 'Abdul' l-Rahman had to be installed for a second time in 1822 when the Dutch obtained his crown from Tĕngku Putri Hamidah.

Of the history of Singhapura we know practically nothing for certain, though the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* preserves the names and styles of some members of the dynasty founded by Sri Tri Buana. This name, incidentally, may not be without significance for it was borne, in the form Tribhuvana, by a queen of fourteenth-century Majapahit and by two kings of Mĕlayu in 1286 and 1378 respectively. According to the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu,* Sri Tri

Buana reigned for forty-eight years and was buried on the hill of Singhapura.[5] He was succeeded by his son who assumed the style of the Paduka Sri Pikrama Wira, and is memorable chiefly for his repulse of the Javanese forces of Hayam Wuruk. After reigning for eighteen years he, too, died and was followed by his son, the Raja Muda, with the style of Sri Rana Wikerma. He it was who raised Badang, "the slave of a Sayong man" and performer of prodigious feats of strength, to the rank of a war-chief. Badang repaid his master well for, in a trial of strength with the champion of Kalinga, he won for his royal patron the cargoes of seven ships sent specially by the Raja of Kalinga from the Coromandel coast as stakes for the contest. At the same time he hurled a huge rock from Fort Canning Hill into the estuary of the Singapore river. Until the middle of the nineteenth century this boulder could be seen on the promontory which formed the southern side of the estuary of the river. Apparently natural forces had split it into two pieces, which had fallen apart so that they faced each other at an angle. One of the surfaces thus exposed bore an inscription in fourteenth-century Majapahit Kawi, but it was so badly weathered that it could not be deciphered by the techniques available at the time. It is a great misfortune for historians that the stone was destroyed by explosive in 1843 during the clearing of the ground preparatory to the building of a government bungalow. Had it been possible to re-examine the inscription in the light of modern scholarship there is every likelihood that, though it would probably not have substantiated the tale of Badang, it would almost certainly have provided valuable information about ancient Singhapura. Today there appear to be only fragments of the inscription preserved on a few small pieces of the original stone which were rescued by Colonel James Low immediately after the explosion. One is now in the Raffles Museum at Singapore, the rest in the Museum of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.[6]

The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relates that after a reign of thirteen years Sri Rana Wikerma was succeeded by his son Damar Rajah, who then took the title Paduka Sri Maharaja. He reigned for twelve years and six months. Malay tradition asserts that he was succeeded by his son, with the style Sri Sultan Iskandar Shah, but there is reason to believe that this last ruler of Singhapura, elsewhere known as the Sri Parameswara, was in fact a Javanese or Sumatran renegade, who murdered Sri Rana Wikerma before usurping his throne. In any case, he himself was deposed after a brief reign and fled with his household, first to Sĕletar and then to Muar. According to Malay lore and one European source[7] the instrument of his defeat was the Javanese, but according to other early European writers[8] it was either the T'ais themselves, or one of their peninsular vassals, who ousted the usurper.

No single date in the history of Singhapura can be fixed with certainty, but it is fairly clear that it was a flourishing settlement during much of the fourteenth century. Dr. Linehan has sought to establish a chronology by correlating the evidence of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* with a remark in the *History of the Ming Dynasty*, but in my opinion it is by no means certain that the Chinese phrases on which he has based his argument refer to Singapore at all. Readers who are interested in evaluating Dr. Linehan's arguments for themselves will find them set out in Volume 20 of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, published in 1947. Yet despite the uncertainty as to events during the fourteenth century, the internal geography of Singhapura is better known than that of any other contemporary peninsular settlement. The nucleus seems to have been sited on terraces on the slope of Fort Canning Hill.[9] Today these terraces have been obliterated by builders and landscapers, so that it is impossible to say whether they were natural wave-cut platforms or were carved by the hand of man, but at least one writer remarked on their distinctive appearance in the fourteenth century. This

was Wang Ta-yüan, who in 1349 compiled a Chinese geographical handbook entitled *Description of the Island Foreigners.*[10] He described Fort Canning Hill as resembling—presumably from the seaward—a truncated coil rising to a hollow summit and surrounded by interconnected terraces. Four centuries later John Crawfurd, second Resident of the resuscitated Singapore, commented on the ruins on the hill, the most distinguished being those "seated on a square terrace... near the summit". Subsequently he referred to "another terrace, on the north declivity of the hill...".[11] The ruins mentioned by Crawfurd comprised brick and stone foundations of undetermined date, which were most probably remains of shrines contemporaneous with the ancient settlement. Among the ruins Crawfurd also noticed sherds of pottery, which he unfortunately neglected to particularize, and Chinese coins, which in any case would almost certainly have been valueless for dating purposes. The only remains which have come to light since Crawfurd's time are some gold ornaments of Majapahit workmanship discovered during the construction of a reservoir on the summit of Fort Canning Hill in 1928.[12] In later years, when old Singhapura had become but a memory, the shrines on the hill-top were thought to be the tombs of the Tribuanic dynasty, and as such were avoided by Malays, who called the hill Bukit Larangan (the Forbidden Hill). Munshi Abdullah, writing in 1849, recalled that when Colonel Farquhar, first Resident of modern Singapore, wished to explore the hill, he was accompanied by Mĕlaka men, for no Singapore Malay would venture with him.[13]

The extent of the ancient settlement can be estimated with some degree of accuracy. As long ago as 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles discerned the "lines of the old city and its defences".[14] Presumably he was referring to the rampart and ditch which formerly ran inland from the sea to the base of Fort Canning Hill along the line of the Bĕras Basah river. On the east the settlement apparently reached to the sea, though no

archaeological remains have ever been discovered on the plain of Singapore; on the south it was bounded by the Singapore river and the swamps which formerly occupied the present central business district. With its shrines rising from the terraces of Fort Canning Hill and its rampart, which as late as 1822 was sixteen feet wide and eight feet high, Singhapura must have presented an impressive appearance to voyagers passing through the strait.

At this time Keppel Harbour afforded the only practicable passage for vessels rounding the peninsula. To Chinese mariners it was known as Dragon-Teeth Strait. "Dragon teeth", originally the name applied by Amoy sailors to the two vertical pegs at the bow of a junk through which was carried the anchor cable, was a term easily transferred to twin peaks or headlands or other similar coastal features. In this instance the "dragon teeth" were prominent rocks which had weathered out from strongly jointed granite at the western entrance to Keppel Harbour. One still stands as the last Singapore landmark seen by travellers leaving the island by ship. For those who have not travelled by this means, we may quote John Thornton who, in his *Oriental Navigation* of 1703, described it as a "Bluff-Rock and smooth aloft with Trees, and Grass". The other rock, known to Malays and Europeans as Batu Bĕlayar and Lot's Wife respectively, was demolished in 1848 during the widening of the strait, but was characterized by Thornton as "a scragged Rock, shewing like a ruinated Wall".[13]

Wang Ta-yüan leaves us in no doubt that the main dangers of the strait came not from the hazards of navigation, but from the communities of *Orang Laut* who lurked in the channels. These sea-gipsies . forbore to attack Chinese merchantmen outward bound, but lay in wait for the day when they should be returning through the strait, heavy laden with cargoes of spices, aromatics, drugs, apotropaia and cloths. As they were forced to rely on their sweeps to negotiate the

narrow channel, the junks were especially vulnerable to piratical assault at that time. As soon as they cleared the Karimon Islands their crews donned their armour and erected padded screens as a protection against the arrows of the *Orang Laut* pirates, for they knew, so Wang Ta-yüan continued, that "of a certainty some two or three hundred *prahu* would put out to attack them... Sometimes the junks were fortunate enough to escape with a favouring wind", but on other occasions the crews were butchered and their merchandise pirated by the *Orang Laut*. This, of course, was not an unusual fate for a South Seas trader. All round the shores of the peninsula and among the islands to the southward, both Malays and coastal aborigines turned to piracy whenever it offered a better livelihood than fishing or petty trading. As late as 1900 old men living on the Kallang River claimed they could recall piratical voyages of former days, which had taken them as far afield as T'ailand and Cochin-China.[16]

The relationship of the sea-gipsies of Dragon-Teeth Strait to the settlement of Singhapura is not at all clear. Living outside the enceinte of the town, they probably had little commerce with the religious and trading communities on the hill, and the rampart may have served to protect the city as much from these turbulent neighbours as from foreign raiders. The boom which, the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relates, closed the estuary of the Singapore river, probably also performed a similar service to the inhabitants. Though this boom is mentioned on two occasions in the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*, there are several traditions to account for its origin. *Raffles Manuscript Number 18* itself preserves two versions. According to the first, the construction of the boom was one of the labours of the mighty Badang, whose chief exploit was described above. According to the second version the boom was laid by one Bĕndĕrang, a champion of the Raja of Pĕrlak. Yet a third account, in the Shellabear recension, describes the feat as a joint effort of both Badang and Bĕndĕrang. When ancient

contemporary authorities were so at variance, how can the sceptical historian hope to divine the truth?

One last point is worth mention before we leave the *Orang Laut*. In his *Island Foreigners* Wang Ta-yüan remarked in a tantalizingly obscure manner that "Natives and Chinese dwell side by side" in Dragon-teeth Strait. Who these Chinese were we do not know. Whether Wang assumed that the presence of Chinese among the *Orang Laut* was so well known as not to merit explanation, or whether he was simply careless in his composition can only be guessed. Perhaps the Chinese in question were traders, for Wang later added that the *Orang Laut* themselves produced no fine or rare goods for trade. All such commodities, he said, were obtained from commerce with Ch'üan-chou merchants. In any case, whatever the explanation, this is the earliest extant mention of Chinese residing in any part of the peninsula.

We have seen that T'ai southward expansion went some way towards filling the power vacuum left by the decline of Śrī Vijaya. Another threat to the peninsular states came from Java, an old enemy of the Śailendra dynasty. In 1293 Prince Vijaya, son-in-law of the great Kṛtanagara of Singhasāri who had dreamed of organizing a pan-Malayan union to withstand the encroachments of Qubilai Qan in the South Seas, founded the Kingdom of Majapahit with its capital in the Brantas valley. For the first half century or so of its history its rulers were occupied with domestic revolts, but in 1331 a natural leader by the name of Gajah Mada became Mapatih (Chief Minister) of Majapahit. For over thirty years he was the real ruler of the kingdom, and inaugurated a programme of military expansion in direct contrast to the diplomatic policies of his predecessors. In 1350 the famous Hayam Wuruk became Bhaṭāra of Majapahit. Of him the Buddhist poet Prapañca wrote: "Truly King Hayam Wuruk is a great potentate. He is without cares and worries. He indulges in

all pleasures. All beautiful maidens in Janggala and Kediri are selected for him, as many as possible...". This same poet, in 1365, composed the *Nāgarakṛtāgama*,[17] an encomium in honour of Hayam Wuruk, in which he claimed to enumerate the territories comprising the empire of Majapahit. According to Prapañca this included all Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula as far north as Patani, Borneo, Bali, Makassar, the Banda Islands and the Moluccas. In other words, Prapañca would have us believe that Hayam Wuruk's domains were as extensive as present-day Indonesia, together with the southern half of the Malay Peninsula. Alas, the inexorable progress of historical research has stripped away the imposing façade of grandeur and shown that Majapahit at its greatest extent probably comprised little more than East Java, Madura and Bali. The other names in the impressive catalogue merely reflect the received geographical knowledge of medieval Java, and were incorporated only to glorify the Kingdom of Majapahit in a paean of resounding praise. South-East Asian rulers have not normally been too critical of such eulogies.

In the *Nāgarakṛtāgama* the whole of the southern half of the Malay Peninsula is known as Pahang. The list of place-names within Pahang—presumably those which in Javanese eyes were of some importance—opens with Hujung Tanah (Land's End), the contemporary name for Johore, and then proceeds coastwise from the north-east to the north-west: Langkasuka, with a history already of over a thousand years; Sai, an old name for Tĕlubin; Kĕlantan; Trĕngganu; Nashor, an unidentified name; Paka; the *muara* (estuary) of the Dungun River; Tĕmasek (Old Singapore); Sungei Ujong; Klang; Kĕdah; Jĕrai; and another unidentified toponym, Kañjapiniran. Several of the names in this list also occur in Wang Ta-yüan's geographical handbook. Langkasuka (p.13a and b), for example, was thickly populated, "the inhabitants settled all around like ants, even though the soil was of low fertility". Kĕlantan soil was even worse: "sterile" is

the word Wang Ta-yüan used (p.6b). But the people were great lovers of ceremony. Both men and women wore black cotton *sarong*, except on festival days when they donned garments of red cotton. The Chinese were no more favourably impressed with the soils of Trĕngganu (p. 7a), which they classed as middling to poor, though they admitted that "even the poorest folk had sufficient food". The men of Trĕngganu, it was recorded, were a superstitious crowd, who worshipped Kālī, the consort of Śiva in her fierce and bloody aspect, with Tantric rites that included human sacrifice. Similar rites were performed in Pahang, of which a rather later writer says: "They cut slips of aromatic wood with which to bring about peoples' deaths, sacrifice with human blood, and pray for good fortune to avert calamity."[18]

Among other peninsular states described by Wang Ta-yüan was Tāmbraliṅga (p. 5a and b) which, at least as early as 1230, had declared its independence of the Śrī Vijayan empire. We have seen that in that year its king, Dharmarāja Candrabhānu, had erected a stele at C'ăiya, the inscription on which showed that he not only considered himself an autonomous ruler but was also annexing neighbouring states on his own initiative. During the next forty years the fortunes of Tāmbraliṅga prospered. Concurrently Dharmarāja Candrābhanu seems to have rejected Mahāyāna Buddhism in favour of the Theravāda discipline, an action which procured him the favour of the rulers of the expanding state of Suk'ōt'ai in the north, also a pillar of the Theravāda school. So confident of his power was the ruler of Tāmbraliṅga that in 1247 he dared to interfere in the affairs of Ceylon. Singhalese and South Indian records[19] lead us to believe that a colony of Malays had been established somewhere in Ceylon for some years prior to this, and it would seem likely that Candrabhānu's intervention was in some way connected with the affairs of this settlement. Possibly the settlers were, in fact, men from Tāmbraliṅga. The Singhalese chronicle known as the *Cūḷa-*

vaṁśa states, probably correctly, that Candrabhānu's mission was of a peaceful nature but that subsequently friction developed between him and the Singhalese. The "wicked Javaka soldiers invaded every landing place and, with their poisoned arrows like terrible snakes... laid waste, raging in their fury, all Laṅkā [the island of Ceylon]". The outcome of the conflict seems to have been indeterminate, and Candrabhānu returned to Tāmbraliṅga, leaving his son in command of the Malay colony. A decade or so later Sundara Pāṇḍya invaded Ceylon from South India and eventually imposed his suzerainty over most of the island, including the Malay territory. In an attempt to free his son from the Pāṇḍyan shackles, Candrabhānu, "the Lord of Men" as he is called in Singhalese chronicles, in 1270 again invaded Ceylon, this time supplementing his Malay army with South Indian levies. Alas for Malay imperialism, "the Lord of Men was sent flying defenceless by a Pāṇḍyan general".[20] So severe were the losses suffered by Candrabhānu that they probably undermined his power to resist T'ai southward penetration, and by the dawn of the fourteenth century his kingdom had been incorporated in the realm of Rāma K'āmheng. Nevertheless, during the first half of the new century Tāmbraliṅga flourished under T'ai suzerainty. Wang Ta-yüan remarked that the *padi* fields of the country produced more grain than the inhabitants could consume, but added that, "Newly harvested grain was put aside for future use, for the people were economical in their manner of life."[21]

The outstanding feature of the fourteenth century on the Malay Peninsula was the increasing definition of states in the southern tracts. As far as we can tell, economic life was still more developed on the isthmus, but Kĕlantan, Trĕngganu and Pahang were each allotted a section in Wang Ta-yüan's *Island Foreigners,* and several other names in the southern reaches were incorporated in Prapañca's panegyric. The nature of the trade conducted by these states had changed but little since the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but the range of commo-

dities had widened, tin, tortoiseshell and "cranes' crests"(in reality hornbill casques) having been added to the schedule. Coarse-quality lakawood was a staple export from nearly all the states; Tāmbraliṅga was a source of tin of outstanding quality, and Kĕlantan prided itself on the excellence of its gharu. As these petty kingdoms came to participate more actively in the commerce of South-East Asia, so they developed specialized markets for Chinese trade goods. Tāmbraliṅga, Langkasuka and Trĕngganu, for example, preferred blue-and-white porcelain but Kĕlantan took plain blue. The peninsular textile market was apparently even more individualistic. Whereas pongees were popular in Pahang and Trĕngganu, Annamese cottons were the best line in Kĕlantan, and prints in Langasuka.

It is virtually impossible that the isthmian states were ever subject to Majapahit dominion, but there is some reason to believe that the settlement at Tĕmasek in the extreme south was nominally within the Majapahit sphere of influence. For example, during the reign of Sri Pikrama Wira (possibly c.1347—1362), Hayam Wuruk, Bhaṭāra of Majapahit, sent envoys to Singhapura to demand allegiance. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relates the story of the embassy in some detail. Apparently the envoys brought with them as the customary present "a wood-shaving seven fathoms long, which had been cut without a break in it: it was as thin as paper and rolled up in the form of a girl's ear-stud." This was interpreted by Sri Pikrama Wira as impugning the manliness and valour of the Singapore warriors, but the Javanese envoys repudiated this implication, saying, "No, your Highness, that was not the intention of the Bhaṭāra. What he signifies is simply, 'Is there at your Highness's feet a man who can use an adze like that?' " Nevertheless, the real significance of the gift was not lost on the wily men of Singapore. A carpenter named Sang Bĕntan was called and, in the presence of the Javanese envoys, commanded to shave a boy's head with his adze. "Though the

boy cried and kept moving his head this way and that, the carpenter went on with his work, and in the twinkling of an eye the hair was gone as though it had been taken off with a razor." Sri Pikrama Wira then gave the adze with which the feat had been performed to the envoys to take back to Majapahit as the customary present. This time there was no doubt as to the significance of the gift. The Bhaṭāra of Majapahit knew that the Raja of Singapore implied that if the Javanese invaded his realm their heads would be shaved as was the boy's. To this impudent challenge Hayam Wuruk could make only one reply. He ordered his war-chiefs to prepare a fleet of a hundred ships of the line, "together with small craft beyond number", and sailed for Singapore. "And the Javanese troops landed and fought the men of Singapore; and a great battle ensued. Loud rang weapon on weapon; terrifying was the roar of the warriors shouting; the din was unimaginable.* On either side many were killed and the ground flowed with blood." But the men of Singapore stood firm, and as the sun sank the Javanese retreated to their ships. The author of the *Sējarah Mĕlayu* concludes, "So long is the story of the battle between Singhapura and Java that were I to tell it in detail, listeners would have more than their fill. That is why I shorten it, for diffuseness makes no appeal to the intelligent."

It was not to be expected that the mighty Hayam Wuruk, whose court poet had set him over all the peoples of Malaysia, would countenance the existence of an intransigent kingdom situated in such a strategic position for the collection of tolls and the control of trade. Accordingly, in the latter half of the fourteenth century a new and larger Javanese fleet appeared off Singapore. For some days the forces of Hayam Wuruk besieged the city without notable success. What the outcome would have been can only be guessed, had not treachery played

* Cp. note 6 to Chap. 7.

a hand. An officer of the Treasury, who felt he had been wronged by the Raja of Singapore, opened the gate of the city at dawn, "whereupon the Javanese entered and fought with the men of Singhapura inside the fort. So many were killed on either side that blood flowed like a river in spate and flooded the fort of Singhapura on the sea shore". According to Malay tradition it was this blood which stained bright red the ferrallitic soils on the plain of Singapore, which not even equatorial rainfall has since been able to cleanse. The same tradition attributes the almost complete absence on Singapore Island of *padi*, the staple crop of the Malaysian world, to the cosmic disturbance effected by this battle rather than to a lack of low-lying, level land. But although the Javanese sacked Singapore, they apparently made no attempt at permanent occupation, and sailed back to Majapahit with their loot.

Meanwhile the T'ais, having established their authority over the isthmus, were claiming suzerainty over the rest of the peninsula. As early as 1295 the Emperor of China had placed his veto on this policy. A mission to the T'ai court at Suk'ŏt'ai had conveyed the stern injunction, "Do thou no evil to the Malays", but apparently with no tangible result. Certainly a T'ai fleet of over seventy vessels attacked Singapore in the thirteen-forties. The town resisted for a month, and the outcome was still in doubt when a Chinese imperial envoy sailed through the strait. Fearing to incur the wrath of the Dragon Throne, the T'ai forces scattered into creeks amid the mangrove, and, after raiding coastal villages, sailed back to their homeland. The story as told by Wang Ta-yüan smacks of banditry and piracy rather than organized conquest. Peninsular Malays have ever been prone to label any man or thing from the northward as "Siam", and it is probable that these so-called T'ai raiders were actually Malay or *Orang Laut* pirates from one of the T'ai-controlled states on the isthmus, rather than the official fleet of Suk'ŏt'ai, a state which was

ruled from 1317 to 1347 by T'ammaraja Lü-t'ai, a monarch more interested in works of Buddhist merit than in the vain panoply of war. Nevertheless, we must not forget that three Portuguese historians claim that the last ruler of Singapore, himself a usurper, was forced to flee the country by a peninsular vassal of the T'ai power, though there is disagreement between them as to whether the instrument of vengeance was Pahang or Patani.[22]

There are some indications that, after its final sack by Javanese or T'ais and the flight of its ruler, Singhapura was not wholly abandoned. According to the younger Albuquerque, for example, the Laksamana of Mělaka went to live there after the fall of that city in 1511,[23] and at a slightly later date the ruler of Singhapura was strong enough to be able to defend the settlement against an attack by Mělaka.[24] Both Eredia's maps[25] and Valentijn's text[26] also refer to a settlement on the island, presumably the same one which is mentioned in Portuguese records as late as 1613. But these later references depict a decayed settlement. They leave the impression that the prosperity which had invested the city-state during the fourteenth century had departed. In any case, the fifteenth century belonged to a new city which had grown up on the western seaboard of the peninsula. This city became the focus of an empire which overshadowed and eventually subsumed the city-states of the peninsula as a strangling *pipal* envelopes its host.

Chapter 9

THE CENTURY OF MĚLAKA

We have seen that when the Sri Parameswara fled from the ruins of Singhapura he journeyed by devious ways to Muar, where he established a settlement. The date of these events cannot be fixed with certainty, but there is a strong probability that they occurred at the very beginning of the fifteenth century. The usurping last ruler of Singhapura was perhaps a refugee from the civil disturbances which characterized the reign of Vikramavardhana (1389-1429) in Majapahit. The title of Sri Parameswara by which he was sometimes known is roughly equivalent to Prince-Consort, and indicates that he was a commoner married to a princess of Majapahit.[1] It seems, too, that the Sri Parameswara had, like so many landless Malaysian chieftains before and since, placed himself at the head of a mixed band of Malay and *Orang Laut* corsairs. Such bands have at all times been a feature of Malaysian life, acting as a petty chief's personal task-force constantly available and enthusiastic for piracy, resorting reluctantly to *padi*-farming when a strong government temporarily reduced the profits of rapine, and occasionally acting as the instrument for enterprises of greater and more permanent moment. Each of these three aspects is illustrated in the history of the band who followed the Sri Parameswara. We shall never know what pillage they had perpetrated before they sailed into the Singapore River, but events on the island show that regicide was not alien to their ethic. At Muar, where no rich traders came, they had no choice but to turn their energies against the forest and we read that they began to clear the timber and make fields, to plant trees and establish farms to support themselves.[2]

However, these involuntary colonists had no intention of permanently abandoning the sea and we can imagine them sculling their *prahu* north and south through the mangrove channels in search of loot. In a short while word was brought to the Sri Parameswara of a fertile plain, "a large and spacious place with broad fields and lovely water"[3] in the Bĕrtam district, whither he and at least a proportion of his followers soon migrated, and clearing began anew. At the same time these adventurers commandeered a fishing village at the mouth of the Mĕlaka River as a mart for their spoils. The disposal of illicit loot in this thieves' market attracted not only the corsairs of the strait but also more orthodox traders from the ports of east Sumatra. In truth there was little to distinguish the two professions which were at most times alternatives open to the same ship's crew. Soon Bengali traders were calling at the haven, and by 1403 Mĕlaka had become an established trading centre. A report by a Chinese envoy called Yin-Ch'ing, who visited the settlement in that year, leaves the impression of a prosperous chiefdom nominally subject to Siam.[4] But T'ai control had never been firmly established in the southern tracts of the peninsula, and it is unlikely that this nominal suzerainty inconvenienced the Sri Parameswara to any great extent beyond the annual dispatch to Ayut'ia of forty taels of gold—which, in the flourishing state of his colony, he could well afford.

The site which the Parameswara selected for his settlement in this fortuitous manner was not without advantage. It comprised essentially an easily defensible hill—the present St. Paul's Hill—which overlooked a sheltered estuary where ships could ride at anchor. It was also at the western end of a trans-peninsular trade route which led up the Mĕlaka River to join the Muar-Pahang waterway at the Pĕnarekan portage.[5] The port was not, however, at the strategically critical point on the Strait of Mĕlaka This was in the Klang district where sailing routes were forced in close against the peninsular coast in order to avoid the North and

South Sands.[6] But here the land was bordered by a broad fringe of mangrove and navigation was rendered hazardous by reason of shoals and half-submerged sandbanks. The approaches to Mělaka, by contrast, were safe and commodious, "a sure and speedy navigation", in the phrase of Braz de Albuquerque, "where never a ship was lost".

The account of the founding of Mělaka preserved in the *Sějarah Mělayu* not unexpectedly differs from that related above. In conformity with Oriental practice, the site of the city was prescribed by an auspicious happening, in this case the courage of a tiny white *pělandok* which turned at bay and kicked out at the Parameswara's hunting dogs. Clearly, a place where even the *pělandok* were so full of fight was a propitious site for a city. This legend, which *mutatis mutandis* occurs in traditions relating to the founding of both Pasai and Kandy, was of South Indian provenance. Having decided to establish his settlement at this spot, the Parameswara then named it after the *mělaka* tree[7] under which he was standing when these portentous events took place.

There can be no doubt that the Parameswara was an able ruler and an astute politician. Perhaps he had learnt finesse in the hard school of fourteenth-century Javanese politics. In the early days of his settlement he claimed to be a vassal of Siam, an arrangement to which the T'ais were by no means adverse, for here was a flourishing would-be dependency successfully establishing itself on the very part of the peninsula where T'ai control had never been more than nominal. There is no reason to doubt that the Parameswara accepted T'ai overlordship as the best guarantee of the peaceful development of his settlement, but soon chance strengthened his hand. When Yin-Ch'ing in 1403 arrived at Mělaka with presents from the Emperor, the Parameswara hastened to pledge his allegiance to a power stronger even than the T'ais. To consolidate his new status the Parameswara dispatched envoys to China, where they arrived at court in 1405 and proclaimed

that their lord was "aware of his duty and desired that his country should be considered a district of the empire, in return for which he would offer annual tribute".[8] In acknowledgement of these sentiments the Son of Heaven was graciously pleased formally to confirm the Parameswara in his self-created office of Ruler of Mĕlaka, and ordered the preparation of an inscription to be set up on what is now St. Paul's Hill. Four years later the settlement was raised to the status of a port-kingdom by imperial decree, and in 1411 the Parameswara, together with his wife and son, and accompanied by an enormous retinue of ministers and attendants (Chinese annals say no less than 540 persons) voyaged to China. The Parameswara was received in person by the Emperor while his family, although not admitted to the august presence, was entertained appropriately. These protestations of fealty to China must not be held to imply that the Parameswara renounced his allegiance to Siam: this in fact did not happen until the reign of the last Malay ruler of Mĕlaka (1488-1511). China was far distant, whereas the T'ai kingdom under Int'ăraja (1408-1424) was close at hand and powerful. In the great game of South-East Asian politics the rulers of Mĕlaka used the power of China as a skilful chess player uses his queen, as a *coup de repos*, a piece whose threat is a great deal more powerful than its execution.

In 1409 Mĕlaka was visited by the imperial Ming fleet under the command of Cheng-Ho, a Muslim popularly known as San-pao T'ai-chien (the Three-Jewel Eunuch). In modern Mĕlakan hagiology he figures as Sam-po. Between 1403 and 1433 no less than seven such Chinese naval expeditions showed the flag in the South Seas and Indian Ocean. Some of the fleets, which were very large, comprising up to sixty-two vessels and carrying 37,000 soldiers, reached as far west as Makkah, 'Adan, Mogadishu and Juba. The instigator of these enterprises was the Yung-lo Emperor, third of the Ming dynasty, who was seeking to re-establish abroad the prestige of the Chinese empire. The circumstances attending the preparation

and departure of these fleets were inscribed on a stone erected by Cheng-Ho in the Temple of the Celestial Spouse at Ch'ang-lo immediately prior to the sailing of the last expedition. The inscription runs in part as follows:

> "In the unification of seas and continents the imperial Ming dynasty has surpassed the Three Dynasties and has come to excel even the Han and T'ang. The countries beyond the horizon and from the ends of the earth have all become subjects, and distances and routes can be calculated to the uttermost parts of the west and the farthest bounds of the north, however distant they may be. Thus the barbarians from beyond the seas, though their countries are exceedingly far off, with double translation have come to audience, bearing precious objects and presents. The Emperor, approving of their loyalty and sincerity, has ordered us and others, at the head of several tens of thousands of officers and flag-troops, to embark on more than a hundred large ships, and to go to confer presents [on the barbarians] in order to manifest the transforming power of the [imperial] virtue, and to treat these distant people with kindness... We have traversed [on seven separate voyages] more than 100,000 li of the immense ocean, and have beheld on the main huge waves rising mountain-like to the sky. We have seen barbarian regions far away hidden in a blue transparency of light vapours, while by day and night our lofty sails, unfurled like clouds, continued their star-like course, traversing the savage waves as if they were a public thoroughfare...".*[9]

With Cheng-Ho there sailed on some of his voyages two men who were subsequently to write accounts of their travels. The first of these was Ma-Huan, a Muslim interpreter, who published his *Triumphant Visions of the Shores of the Ocean*[10] in 1451. The second was Fei-Hsin, a junior officer of the fleet, who was expiating in compulsory military service some political crime committed by a member of his family. His description of his voyages is contained in a volume entitled *Trium-*

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* Protessor J. J. L. Duyvendak's translation slightly modified.

phant Visions of the Starry Raft,[11] that is, the ship of the imperial ambassador. From these accounts we learn that the men of Mĕlaka neglected cultivation of the land in favour of fishing and, above all, trade. The soil, in any case, was described as saline and sandy. Cattle, goats and poultry were scarce and consequently costly, a head of buffalo being priced at a *kati* of silver. Ma-Huan seems to have been particularly impressed with the crocodiles inhabiting the river, which he referred to as dragons. His account of the people of Mĕlaka shows him to have been an accurate observer of material culture, for he described Malay life much as it still exists in the remoter *kampongs* of the peninsula. Mores, dress, houses, mats and dug-out canoes were all described in some detail. Nor did Ma Huan neglect to mention the were-tigers which could "assume human form, frequent the capital and mix with the populace. If anyone recognized one of these creatures he used to seize and kill it."[12]

Another valuable by-product of Cheng-Ho's voyages is preserved in a work written by Mao Yüan-i and entitled *Notes on Military Preparedness*.[13] This was not offered to the throne until 1628, but Professor Duyvendak has shown that some of the material incorporated in the book derived from the early fifteenth century.[14] This included a series of combined charts and sailing directions based on the collated logs of Cheng-Ho's fleets. Unlike European charts and sailing directories which are usually published separately, this Chinese work combines both functions on one sheet of paper. The chart itself takes the form of a cartogram in which the coast is depicted as a continuous, irregular line running from left to right. This is an ancient device which has recently been revived by the manufacturers of commercial road maps. Its great advantage is that it enables several divergent routes to be compressed within a frame of manageable dimension. The chart runs from Jewel-Ship Depot at Nan-ching all the way to the East African coast and the Red Sea, but is especially detailed in Malayan waters.

In fact it preserves the most detailed information about the Malayan coast ever obtained by the Chinese in early times, and provides the first cartographic representation of a large number of Malayan place-names, including Langkasuka and Tĕmasek.

Equally valuable to the historian are the sailing tracks which are depicted on the charts by broken lines and annotated with navigational directions. From these it has proved possible to reconstruct the tracks of the Chinese vessels through Malayan waters.[15] Approaching the coast of the peninsula by way of the Aroa Islands, the navigator set course SE. by E. As Pulau Jĕmur, the largest of the Aroa Islands, sank below the horizon, so Bukit Jugra rose dead ahead, and, steering directly for this, the pilots worked their way through the North and South Sands with the aid of the lead. Once the vessels cleared the rips and races, their navigators steered parallel the coast as far as the Karimun Islands, breaking their journey only at Mĕlaka, the most important entrepôt in the Strait. Thence they turned eastwards towards Sĕlat Sĕmbilan and the western entrance to Keppel Harbour. Junks were then warped through the narrow passage between Bĕlakang Mati and Pulau Brani on the one side and Singapore Island on the other, and course was set almost due east to Pedra Branca, the Horsburgh Light of modern charts.[16] Beyond Pedra Branca Chinese mariners followed a short leg of five watches towards Pulau Aur, whose twin peaks were thought to be separate islands. Thence they fetched directly to Pulau Kundur.

It is interesting to compare contemporary Arab sailing routes with those of the Chinese. The source for the former is a navigational tract, of a date equivalent to A.D. 1462,[17] by the *mu'allim* (master navigator) Shihāb a-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Mājid, traditionally regarded as the pilot who guided Vasco da Gama from Malindi to Calicut. Like Cheng-Ho, Ibn Mājid was subsequently canonized as a patron saint of Arab mariners sailing in the Indian Ocean. His sailing directions were couched

in doggerel *rajaz* metre so that they might be the more easily committed to memory. The following is a literal translation of the directions for a passage round the southern part of the Malay Peninsula (folio 103):

"And if you... would leave the islands of Pulau Sanbīlan[18]
Navigate by the rising of the Scorpion's heart [SE.] to Qafāṣī,[19]
and you will come to grief.
For, from Dang-Dang [Dinding] and Pulau Sanbīlan (between
which is an *iṣba'*[20]) then deviate not.
And as for the route to Johor, this fortress, and to [Pulau] Bĕrhala,
know it is by Canopus.
As for Sumatra, O my Brother, when you have sailed from Tākwā
[Tākua-pa] by the Southern Cross [S. by E. or S. by W.], you
will approach it.
And another said, the most obvious path to Sumatra, our pole
should be that of Canopus [due S.].
And if you should desire from Sumatra to aim for China, when
you travel,
Set course by the Crown[21] [SE. by E.] rejoicing to Bĕrhala also
with Johor;
And if you would leave these behind, set the compass on the small
Dog-Star and be not slow
To Mal'aqa. Listen to my positions, and the water will be 10
fathoms.
He will come before Mal'aqa, and perceive Fal Fāsalār[22] with
al-Qafāṣī, and know
Fal Fāsalār is a mountain, and Qafāṣī is an abundance of shallows
in the water;
Where are gaps, O my Brother, when you see Fal Fāsalār with
Simāk [Arcturus, i.e., ENE.], then give thanks,
And if you desire the land of Mal'aqa, then rely upon the small
star of the Dog
Till near Singapūr, and travel thence towards Taik[23] by the Great
Bear [rising NNE., setting NNW.].
Then steer from Tinggi in the direction of Ṣūrā by the setting of
the famous Seven.[24]"*

* Translation, with the grammatical solecisms of the original text preserved, by G. R. Tibbetts.

On the whole, Arab sailing practice approximated closely to that of the Chinese, except that the Arabs made their Malayan landfall in the neighbourhood of Penang or even farther north, in contrast to the Chinese who preferred a route from the Sumatran coast by way of the Brothers, Pulau Bĕrhala and the Aroas.

Little is known about the routes followed by Indian shipping at this period, but a chance remark in another Arab sailing manual[23] shows that ships from the Coromandel Coast, at least, followed a track roughly similar to that of the Arabs off the North-West Malayan coast. However, they avoided the divergence towards the Aroas recommended by Ibn Mājid, and entered the treacherous passage between the North and South Sands by means of cross bearings on Jĕmur and Pulau Angsa.

During the reign of the Parameswara, Mělakan trade increased many fold in both volume and variety. Whereas the other ports on both the Sumatran and peninsular coasts of the Strait existed for the export of the products of their territories, Mělaka's prosperity depended on her ability to control the commerce passing between the Archipelago and the Indian Ocean. Whereas Deli, Rokan, Siak, Kampar, Indragiri, Kĕdah, Perak and Bĕruas flourished in proportion to the wealth of their immediate hinterlands, Mělaka was buoyed up on the flood tide of South-East Asian commerce. To take full advantage of her situation, Mělaka had, like Śrī Vijaya before her, to implement her monopoly of the trade through the Strait, and this the Parameswara achieved when he fitted out a fleet of patrol boats, manned by *Orang Laut*, which forced all vessels negotiating those waters to call at the port for the payment of dues.

Despite this rapid commercial progress, the most significant event during the reign of the Parameswara was the coming of Islam, the new faith that had already established itself in at least two North Sumatran ports by the close of the thirteenth

century. The earliest record of Muslim influence on the peninsula is a series of laws and commandments inscribed on a stone stele found at about the beginning of the present century near Kuala Bĕrang in Trĕngganu.[26] The inscription is the earliest example anywhere in South-East Asia of the Malay language rendered in Arabic script; and affords incontrovertible evidence of a Muslim community existing in North Malaya during the fourteenth century. The exordium runs as follows:

> "...God's Apostle, together with the Blessed Spirits (a salutation to them)...trust in the Great High Godhead, cause the servants to hold firmly to the doctrines of Islam, together with true regard for the laws, govern all the servants of the Great High Godhead in this land of mine. The expounders on earth of the doctrines of God's Apostle (God bless him and give him peace) are the Raja Mandulikas[27] who have true regard towards the Great High Godhead. Such exposition is incumbent upon all Muslim Raja Mandulikas following all the commands of the Great High Godhead together with true regard for the setting in order, for the country, of such exposition; and when Sri Paduka Tuhan first ordered the setting up of this record in the country of Trĕngganu it was a Friday in the month of Rejab, in the year Cancer, in the religious era of our Lord the Apostle of God..."*

The closing date is rendered as *tujoh ratus dua* but it is uncertain whether or not the statement ran on to the next face of the stele, the upper part of which has been lost. Nevertheless, it has been shown that the Muslim date, whatever final digits may once have followed the legible section, must have been equivalent to a Christian date somewhere between 1303 and 1387. This poses a difficult problem, for it means that Islam was established in North-East Malaya up to a century before there is any record of its having reached the west coast. We have seen, however, that the main Arab emporium on the peninsula was situated in the vicinity of Trĕngganu, and that the Chinese form of its name—the only version

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* Translation by H. S. Paterson.

extant—can be equated phonetically with [Kuala] Bĕrang. Conceivably, as has already been suggested in Chapter 7, Islam in Trĕngganu was a legacy from this Arab trading activity.

According to the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* the essential truths of Islam were revealed to the ruler of Mĕlaka by supernatural agencies.[28] Tomé Pires[29] offers a more prosaic account according to which Islam crossed the Strait from Pasai along with material merchandise brought to the thieves' lair of Mĕlaka, and the deal was clinched when the Parameswara took into his harem a daughter of the Sultan of Pasai and concurrently adopted the Muslim style of Sultan Megat Iskandar Shah. Mĕlaka Malays became zealous propagators of the new faith. Through the media of commercial relationships, military conquest and diplomatic royal marriages Islam spread through the southern half of the peninsula, to the east coast of Sumatra and to Java.* The old Hinduism and Buddhism and their manifold syntheses were supplanted by a new borrowing from the vast cultural reservoir of India.

> "The time wore on, the dark night came upon us,
> and we knew not each other.
> The seat we shared was buried under the Dust
> raised by Time's chariot wheels.
> By the receding flood of oblivion I was borne back
> to my own lonely shore —
> my hands bare, my mind languorous with sleep.
> The sea before my house remained dumb
> of the mystery of a meeting it had witnessed.
> And the garrulous Ganges spoke not to me
> of a hidden long track to her other sacred haunt."[30]

In 1424 Sultan Megat Iskandar Shah "left this perishable world to go to one that abideth", and was succeeded by his son, who adopted the style of the old Śailendra, Sri Maharaja. Some authors have seen in this gesture a desire by the new

* See footnote on p. 186.

ruler to recreate the thalassocracy once ruled by the Kings of the Mountain. Practically nothing is known of this monarch who passed like a shadow through the early days of Mělakan history. Some recensions of the *Sějarah Mělayu* credit him with the institution of Mělakan court ritual. If so, he derived his inspiration from the Hindu past rather than from the adopted faith of his father. In fact, it is not unlikely that he was an apostate from that religion who sought to re-establish the Hinduism of Malaya's past. His Sanskrit style is some confirmation of this, as in a way may be the garbled, almost adventitious account of his reign in the *Sějarah Mělayu.*[31] The editor of these annals, himself a descendant of a line of illustrious Muslim ministers, would not have been likely to extol the achievements of a *kāfir,* even one who had belonged to the dynasty which his fathers had served so well. By the Portuguese chroniclers, who obtained their information ultimately from Malay sources, the Sri Maharaja was not so much as mentioned. Certainly, as far as can be judged from results, he was an able ruler who continued the diplomatic policy of Iskandar Shah. Immediately after his father's death he hastened to China to obtain from the Dragon Throne confirmation of his succession and thereby forestall any T'ai machinations that might be engendered by envy of the rising city-state.[32] Nor was this precaution unnecessary, for seven years later we hear of T'ai fleets blockading the sea-route to the north. In 1431 three Mělakan envoys arrived at the Chinese court as supernumeraries to a Sumatran tribute mission.[33] In the august surroundings of the Son of Heaven their tale must have sounded pathetic, a sad sequel to the honourable investiture of the Sri Maharaja less than a decade previously. Their prince, they said, earnestly desired to appear in person but was prevented by T'ai forces patrolling the South China Sea. He, therefore, wished to send a report but could command no amanuensis capable of draughting such a document. In default of a formal embassy, these three envoys

were commissioned to plead for the Emperor's indulgence. As they had brought no offerings, the officers of the Board of Rites advised that they should be honoured with no imperial presents, but the Emperor, appropriately magnanimous, decreed that, by virtue of their honourable intent which had brought them across many leagues of sea, they should receive uniforms and rolls of silk. More to their benefit and for the greater welfare of Mĕlaka, he dispatched an injunction commanding the T'ai king to "live in harmony with his neighbours and not to flout the edicts of the imperial court". Subsequently relations between Ayut'ia and Mĕlaka must have improved, for in 1433 the Sri Maharaja himself was able to undertake the journey to China, together with his consort and ministers.

This story of the Mĕlakan envoys should warn us to beware of investing the city with too great political importance at this stage of its development. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that during the long reigns of these first two monarchs, great changes had supervened in the fishing village which had formerly harboured a pirate lair. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* says: "From below the wind [eastwards] to above the wind [westwards] Mĕlaka became famous as a very great city, the Raja of which was sprung from the line of Sultan Iskandar Dzu'l-Qarnain, so much so that princes from all countries came to present themselves ...".[34] This was the hyperbole of a professional eulogist, but there was yet a core of truth in the statement. It was not princes who contributed to the wealth and prestige of Mĕlaka, but traders, the majority of whom were of a much more humble status. Mĕlaka had arisen by chance at the very hinge of the countries above and below the wind. In the words of Tomé Pires, a Portuguese apothecary who spent two and a half years in the city early in the sixteenth century: "Mĕlaka was a city made for merchandise, fitter than any other in the world; the end of monsoons and the beginning of others."[35] Owing to the wind régimes of South-East Asia, few vessels attempted to make the through

voyage from China to India: the rest found at Mělaka a convenient port for the transhipment of their cargoes. In the narrow estuary of the Mělaka River, vessels from China, the Archipelago and India all unloaded their cargoes at different seasons of the year, and Mělaka port grew rich on the profits of this transhipment trade. By the second decade of the fifteenth century she had developed a flourishing entrepôt trade in which the products of the archipelago were exchanged for the staple manufactures of India and China. She had become in effect the collecting centre for the spices, drugs, scented woods, and resins of the archipelago and the distributing centre for both the textiles of Gujerat, Coromandel, Malabar and Bengal and the porcelain, cotton, prints, silks, brocades, metalware and trinkets of China.

As the wealth of the port increased, so it acted as a magnet drawing to itself a cosmopolitan population comprised not only of Peninsular Malays, who formed a majority, but also of merchants from beyond the sea. Three years after the founding of the settlement its population had reached about 2,000, but by 1424 this number had trebled.[36] The earliest of these, and the most numerous at this period, were traders from Pasai, a Muslim stronghold in North-East Sumatra, so that one writer remarked that whereas Mělaka "used once to be a village of Pasai, Pasai became at length a village of Mělaka".[37] Prominent among the other ethnic groups in the city were Gujaratis, Klings, Parsis and merchants from lands as far distant as Arabia.

There is little evidence on which to base a geography of the town, but it seems clear that the upper slopes of the present St. Paul's Hill were maintained as a royal precinct enclosing the palace of Iskandar Shah and the barracks of his bodyguard. At the base of the hill clustered the pile-built houses of the Malay sector of the town, which was also beginning to spread across the river, while the Parameswara's *Orang Laut*, their numbers swollen by later arrivals scavenging

along the coast and lured by the promise of early gains, had taken up their preferred site, close against the water's edge. Few of the immigrants showed any inclination to undertake cultivation of the soil. Indeed, farming was but poorly developed throughout the south of the peninsula at this time. Furthermore, the alluvial soils adjacent to the town were probably still too saline for *padi*-farming. In any case, sago, not rice, was the staple food of these early colonists, supplemented by quick-growing crops such as sugar-cane, bananas, jack-fruit, and vegetables.[38]

The death of the Sri Maharaja marks a convenient point at which to close the first phase of Mĕlaka's history. The fishing village had been transformed into one of the premier ports of Malaysia. Now it was about to enter into the era of its greatness as one of the chief political powers of South-East Asia. But this was to be accomplished only after a dynastic upheaval in which real power was to pass from Malay hands temporarily into those of a foreign faction.

In 1444 the Sri Maharaja died, leaving two sons. The younger, by a princess of Rĕkan, was a mere child known as Raja Ibrahim, but he was preferred for the succession by the old Malay Bĕndahara (Chief Minister) as an offspring having royal blood on both sides. In due course he was installed as the Sri Parameswara Deva Shah, with his uncle, the Raja of Rĕkan, acting as regent. The elder of the Sri Maharaja's sons, called Raja Kasim, had been born of the daughter of a wealthy Muslim Tamil merchant who had married into the ruling house of Pasai, and could, therefore, claim royal blood on only one side of his genealogy. At the time of which we speak, Kasim's uncle—a son of the old Tamil merchant—was also prominent in the trading community of Mĕlaka. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* would have us believe that the administration of the Regent was so tyrannical that it provoked a popular uprising which, with the aid of a saintly ship's captain (an unlikely conjunction of attributes) whose vessel happened to

be lying in the estuary, succeeded in deposing the foreign tyrant. A closer reading of the sources throws doubt on this interpretation, and leads us to conclude that the revolt was inspired less by popular discontent than by personal ambition. It was a foregone conclusion that Raja Kasim, the son of a Sultan, would be discontented with his lot as a fisherman on the Mĕlaka waterfront, and we should not be surprised to find him engaged in a plot to recover what he doubtless regarded as his rightful inheritance. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relates that the seed of subversion was sown in the following manner:[39]

> "And after a time a ship arrived from the regions above the wind. And when the ship had anchored the fish sellers all came to sell their fish to the crew. And Raja Kasim came selling fish like the other fishermen. Now there was aboard the ship a certain merchant called Maulana[40] Jalalu'd-din who, when he saw Raja Kasim, bade him come aboard and treated him with every mark of respect. And when Raja Kasim asked, 'Why do you treat me with such respect, Sir, seeing that I am only a seller of fish?' Maulana Jalalu'd-din answered, 'You are a son of the Raja in this city, and one of these days you will be a Raja of Mĕlaka!' And Raja Kasim said, 'How am I to become Raja? If I had your spiritual power to help me, Maulana, I might become Raja...' And the Maulana replied, 'Go ashore, Sir, and seek some one who can carry through this affair of yours. God willing, it will be successfully accomplished.'"

Acting on this advice, Raja Kasim selected as his confidant the wily old Tamil, his uncle. On a moonless night the conspirators gathered their faction together outside the picket-fence of the Bĕndahara's house, lured him out by a ruse, and announced that they were about to murder the Raja of Rĕkan. To this the Bĕndahara, catching the glint of a *kĕris* and sensing the hostility of the group towards himself, replied meekly that Raja Kasim, being a member of the royal house, commanded his allegiance as much as did the Sultan. Thereupon, Raja Kasim

led his rabble in the storming of the palace. The populace was at first confused but, on learning that the Bĕndahara was in the rebel company, shrugged their shoulders and returned to their homes. Meanwhile, the Raja of Rĕkan defended the boy ruler valiantly but eventually was overpowered and both were killed. Malay tradition, mindful of its cardinal tenet of loyalty to one's ruler, asserts that it was the Raja of Rĕkan who slew the boy as he himself was in his death agony. This sounds very like edited history, but even if the Raja were guilty of this supreme *lèse-majesté,* it is likely that he considered such a death a lesser fate than falling into the hands of a gang who dared raise their hands against members of the royal line. To later generations the boy king, who had reigned for only seventeen months, was known as Sultan Abu Shahid (the Martyr King).

As a result of this rebellion Raja Kasim succeeded to the throne with the style of Sultan Muzaffar Shah, and immediately rewarded his uncle with the title of Sri Nara 'diraja, thus founding the political fortunes of a famous house which would number among its descendants the author of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu.* His treatment of the Maulana who had assisted him with spiritual aid was probably consistent with that person's contribution to the success of the *coup d'état* but was also typical of the morality of the time. The price of the Maulana's help had been stipulated as the young consort of the Raja of Rĕkan. But when the day of reckoning came and the new Sultan saw the beauty of the girl, he regretted his promise and sought a means of reneging on his contract. Eventually he decked out one of his prettier servant girls in the attire of a Rĕkan princess, and palmed her off on the Maulana, who accepted her and "took her away with him to the regions above the wind".

Despite Sultan Muzaffar Shah's unsavoury beginnings, he proved an able ruler. One of his first acts was the promulgation of a code of laws "in order that there should hence-

forward be uniform justice in the decisions of his ministers".* But the Malay nationalists among his subjects were not happy under what they no doubt regarded as foreign rule, and for much of his reign Muzaffar was troubled by the threat of conflict between the Malay and "Tamil" factions. Early in his reign the second of Mĕlaka's Bĕndaharas, the Dato' Sri Amar 'diraja—the old *fainéant* who had fatalistically accepted the course of events when roused from his bed by Raja Kasim's mutineers—returned to the Mercy of God, and Muzaffar appointed the Sriwa Raja, a nephew of the Sri Amar 'diraja, to the vacant office. So far the Malay party was still represented at a high level in the government, but the Sultan turned more and more to his uncle for advice, and the Sriwa Raja became increasingly a powerless figurehead. The proud Malay, son and nephew of former Bĕndaharas, could not brook the contumely of his position and committed suicide by poison. Muzaffar Shah then took the opportunity of raising his uncle to the position of Bĕndahara, but he deemed it prudent to mollify the Malay party by himself marrying the dead minister's daughter, Tun Kudu. Her brother, Tun Perak, was offered no office in the government and prudently retired to a virtual exile in the frontier district of Klang, where he established himself as Pĕnghulu, and is remembered to this day as the culture hero who brought that region under cultivation.

As the years went by the bitterness between the two principal factions in the state reached a point at which civil war seemed inevitable. So serious was the situation that Muzaffar Shah was constrained to try to persuade his uncle to resign. This the Bĕndahara agreed to do at a price—the price of a fifteenth-century adventurer, namely that he should be allowed

* This digest, known as *Risalat Hukum Kanun*, was subsequently ascribed to the reign of Mahmud, last Sultan of Mĕlaka (1488-1511), but there is little doubt that the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* (and five MSS. of the code) are correct in attributing it to Muzaffar.

to take Tun Kudu, wife of the Sultan, into his house. This would probably not have been acceptable to the Malays, but the decision did not rest with them. Sultan Muzaffar forthwith divorced Tun Kudu and sent her to her brother's house to pass the period of her *iddah*. Even the former Bĕndahara's own family sneered at him for selling his office in this manner. "What is all this nonsense about you marrying a young wife —an old man like you with eyebrows that go down to your eyelashes!"* But perhaps the Tamil had tired of the responsibilities of office. He was an old man now, had learnt much of the ways of men, and, hard as *chĕngal* wood, had risen to hold the most powerful office in a wealthy port-city. How better could a man pass the evening of his days in this impermanent world than in musing on the vicissitudes of life, in the company of a young woman whose arts would console him for the loss of a power which he was no longer able to wield effectively in any case? The bitter sweetness of a Tiresias was possibly a fair exchange for the thankless burden of office in a Malay state—even when the "clouds and rain" had passed. There can be little doubt, too, that Muzaffar was not displeased with the outcome of his diplomacy. Perhaps with the passage of time he had outgrown the need for the tutelage of his uncle. It is more than likely that he had for some time been taking his own decisions in the maturity of his years and had been finding the presence of his uncle an increasingly heavy incubus. In any case, his marriage to Tun Kudu, cross-eyed but otherwise not unfair, had probably been at the best a diplomatic expedient. Now his kingdom was reunited and Muzaffar could turn his attention to the perils that threatened from without.

These perils stemmed as usual from the northward, where the T'ai rulers were casting envious eyes on the wealth of the

* R. J. Wilkinson's translation.

new port. Possibly they were aware that the domestic preoccupations of Muzaffar Shah were preventing him from cultivating the close relations with the Chinese court which had been the cornerstone of his predecessors' foreign policy. There was also the virtual certainty that the embassy of a usurper and regicide would have been snubbed by the Emperor on the advice of the Board of Rites. Not until 1456, when the T'ais were mounting a new seaborne invasion of Mĕlaka, did Muzaffar send his first tribute mission to China.[41] Already in the year of Muzaffar's accession a T'ai army had marched overland by way of the Tĕmbĕling valley and the Sĕrting-Muar portage, but had been defeated by the Mĕlakan levies somewhere in Ulu Muar. Later tradition ascribes the toponym Rotan Siam to the place where the fleeing T'ais threw down their canes.[42] It was partly on account of the prodigious valour of Tun Perak, Pĕnghulu of Klang, in this conflict that he was later raised to the office of Paduka Raja. Now, a decade later, when the T'ais were again threatening to invade Mĕlaka from the seaward, Muzaffar Shah raised him to the supreme office of Bĕndahara. Immediately Tun Perak put to sea with the Mĕlakan fleet. His second-in-command was another of the Mĕlakan heroes who have left great names to romance, namely the Sri Bija 'diraja, one Tun Hamzah of the Muntah Lĕmbu[43] line who traced his ancestry to the herald who issued from the mouth of Sang Superba's bull on Bukit Si-Guntang Guntang. Legend dubs him the Stooping Chief and tells that he would never hold himself erect save on the field of battle. A scouting vessel commanded by Tun 'Umar, Tun Hamzah's reckless son, first sighted the T'ai fleet off Batu Pahat and sank several vessels, which considerably damaged morale on the enemy ships. That night the Malays fastened firebrands to the mangroves growing along the water's edge, so that the T'ai commanders overestimated the size of the Mĕlakan fleet and returned home in despair. In reality there was certainly more to the story than

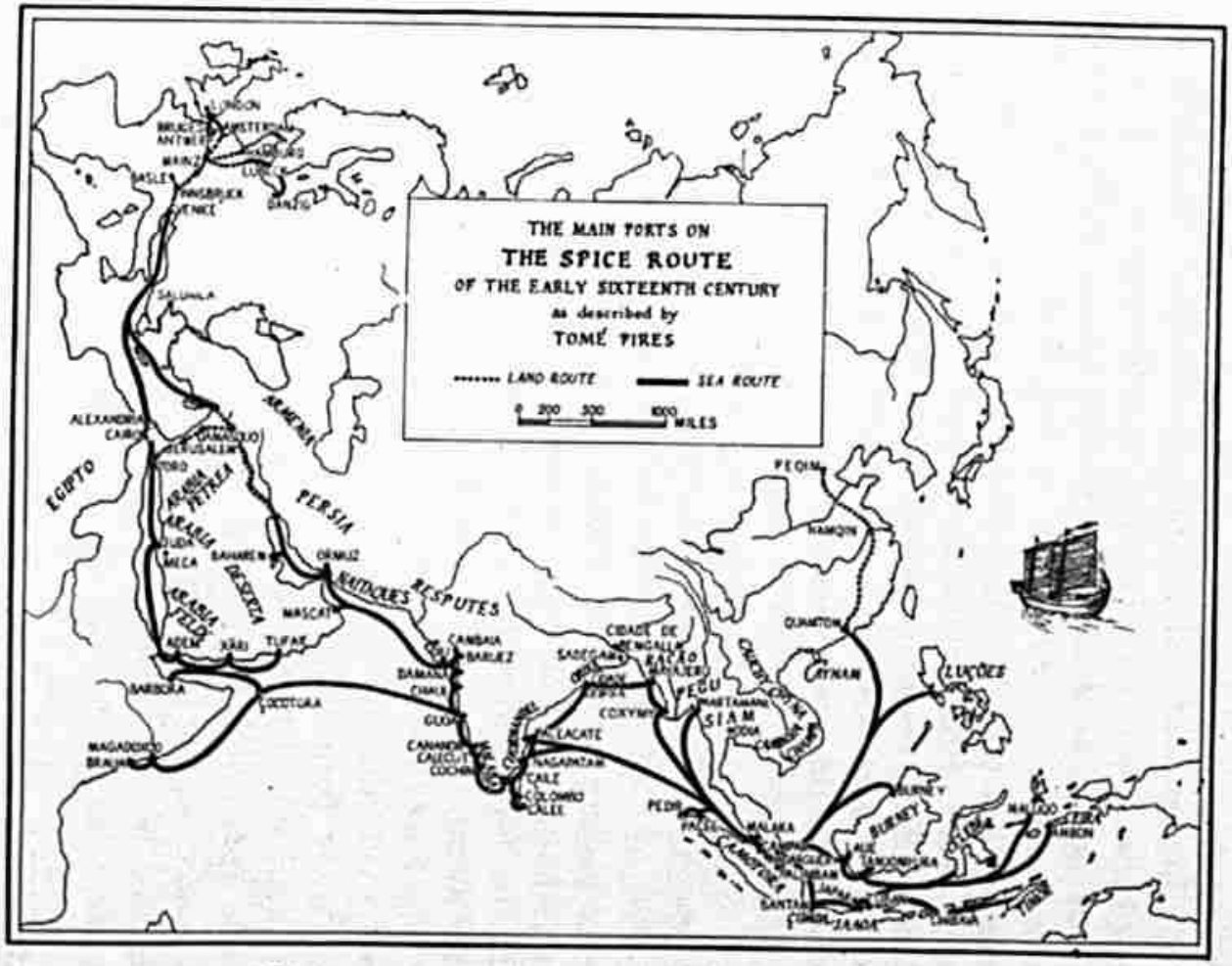

Figure 6 The position of Mělaka on the spice route.

that. T'ai chronicles, in fact, claim that Mělaka was in enemy hands for a short while, but the Malay annalist was a great admirer of *chĕrdek*, the cunning and nimbleness of wit which distinguished Malays from other people. The victory at Batu Pahat is just another example, substituted perhaps as a literary device, to obviate the necessity of recording an unbecoming defeat at the hands of the despised T'ais. The dispatch of a third T'ai expedition was apparently prevented by the death of the commander-in-chief of the T'ai forces, but Muzaffar Shah, deeming it prudent not to risk another engagement, sent two of his suavest envoys to propitiate the T'ai court.[44] In this they were successful and we hear no more of T'ai invasions for nearly half a century.

It was Muzaffar who first began to extend the boundaries of Mělaka so that it became a territorial power rather than a city-state. In order to enforce a monopoly over the commerce passing through the Mělaka Strait, he needed to extend his authority over the bordering coasts. In achieving this, he laid the foundations of the empire which subsequent rulers were to consolidate. First he incorporated the Dindings and Sĕlangor into his realm for the purpose of supplying Mělaka with foodstuffs and tin, and then established his sway over the lower Batu Pahat valley. Campaigns against Kampar, Indragiri and Rĕkan not only brought both shores of the Strait under Mělakan control but also safeguarded the flow of gold from the Minangkabau hinterland. Finally, Muzaffar imposed his authority on Singapore and Bĕntan, pirate lairs at the strategic meeting point of the China and Java Seas.

In 1459 Muzaffar Shah died and was succeeded by Sultan Abdul, his son by Tun Puteh, a daughter of the second Bĕndahara, the Sri Amar 'diraja. The new ruler took the style of Sultan Mansur Shah. At the time of his succession he was still in his teens, so it is to be presumed that he was strongly influenced by Bĕndahara Tun Perak, who was his

third cousin. In fact, both Malay romance and the more sober chronicle of Tomé Pires[45] depict Mansur as an urbane sybarite, caring more for theology and scholarly exegesis than for war, and leaving the administration of affairs to his Bĕndahara, Tun Perak the Sri Paduka Raja. Under the shrewd but ruthless direction of this great officer of the crown Mĕlaka entered upon its most glorious period.

Tun Perak's first act in the new reign was to seek investiture of his Sultan from the Emperor of China. This accomplished, he felt strong enough to secure the eastern approaches to his realm. Perhaps he remembered the campaigns of twenty years earlier in which he had won his spurs, when a T'ai army had penetrated as far as Ulu Muar. A less perspicacious statesman than the Bĕndahara would have been able to draw the conclusion that the frontier of Mĕlaka must rest on the Tĕmbĕling rather than the Muar. In any case, he invaded Pahang, a dependency of Ayut'ia, with two hundred sail great and small. "After the fighting had lasted some while, then by the will of Almighty God who subjecteth all His servants to His power, Pahang was easily defeated", and its governor, the Maharaja Sura, brought captive to Mĕlaka, where he was incarcerated for a while in a barred prison within the house of the former king-maker, the Sri Nara 'diraja. Eventually, because of his great knowledge of elephant lore, he was appointed head of the royal mahouts. His daughter was received into Mansur Shah's harem where she bore two sons, both destined to be sultans. The Bĕndahara's chief field commander, the Sri Bija 'diraja, was appointed Viceroy of Pahang, where he ruled with equity for a decade.[46]

The second imperial conquest was Siak, whose recalcitrant Raja had refused to admit the overlordship of Mĕlaka. The men of Siak, according to Malay tradition,[47] stood little chance against the Homeric heroes of Mĕlaka, and the country was thoroughly subdued, its ruler killed. But Tun Perak was a statesman of stature—he would hardly have survived as the

architect of imperialism through four reigns had he been less —with no wish to build an empire of festering resentment. He placed the dead Raja's son on the throne and persuaded Sultan Mansur Shah to give him one of his daughters in marriage. Thus was Siak bound to the fortunes of Mĕlaka. Subsequently Rupat, Jambi and Bĕngkalis in Sumatra, and the Karimun Islands at the southern end of Mĕlaka Strait were brought under Mĕlakan control. On the peninsula Tun Perak added Kĕdah, Perak, Bĕruas, Bĕrnam, Johore and Trĕngganu to the empire.

The reign of Sultan Mansur Shah has traditionally been regarded as marking the apogee of peninsular Malay power and culture. As such it has become a vehicle for romance. More legendary happenings are attributed to this reign than to any other in Malay history, and connected in one way or another with most of them is the paladin Hang Tuah, the paradigm and culture hero of Mĕlaka Malays. He first appeared as a page in the entourage of Bĕndahara Tun Perak, subsequently graduating into the service of the Sultan. While still a youth he rendered yeoman service in a variety of rather inglorious jobs, including hauling the Sultan's favourite horse out of a cesspool and slaying a Javanese who had run amok. Subsequently he blossomed out as the champion fighter among the household guards, who followed closely beside his Sultan at all times, ready and eager to accept any challenge offered by the warriors of rival princes. As befitted a hero of legend, Hang Tuah's prowess in war was matched by the comeliness of his countenance and the elegance of his carriage. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*[48] says: "Wherever he went he caused a sensation, so struck were the people by his bearing. If he entered the gallery of the audience hall, there was excitement in the gallery. If he went to the market, there was excitement in the market... And if Hang Tuah passed, married women tore themselves from the embraces of their husbands so that they could go out and see him." In Java supposedly

"wives and maidens alike were all a-flutter at the sight of Hang Tuah, the Raja of Mēlaka's war-chief, passing by", while the passion of the women of Majapahit[49] was so intense that the young bucks of the town composed the following verse:

Titik embun didaun dasun
Mapanchuran didaun birah
Saben dina amboi katon
Uru edan rasa manira
Basah mandi dipapan
Mandi dipapan malu manira
Isin lara amboi mapan
*Bijer mangisnya tangen ing sira.**

In the whole of Malaysia, only one other war-chief could rival Hang Tuah, and that was Sangka Ningrat, war-chief of the Raja of Daha.

Hạng Tuah was not only the pampered darling of the court but also the idol of the ladies of the royal harem, a situation

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* These extravaganzas afford yet another example of the influence of Indian epics on Malay literature. Similar passages are incorporated in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Buddhacarita* and the *Kādambarī*, and are reproduced with minor differences in the *Hikayat Pandawa Jaya*, the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* and the Kawi version of the *Bhārata-yuddha*. Sir Richard Winstedt's translation of the passage describing Kriṣna's approach to Hastināpura as related in the *Hikayat Pandawa Jaya* is quoted below for the sake of comparison with the *Sējarah Mēlayu* account of Hang Tuah in Majapahit.

> "The women hurried to see him [Kriṣna]; some with hair dishevelled and untied, others with disordered dress, others with face half powdered, some with quids of tobacco half prepared, some with only one eye painted. All the shopkeepers left their wares and salesmen stopped in the midst of selling, exclaiming, 'We don't care if our goods are stolen, provided we see Krishna.' Some had oil on only one side of their bodies. Wives left husbands and children, while some held up their breasts and cried, 'We present these to Batara Krishna.' All the women of Hastinapura hurried as if they were being chased by an enemy and some brought ivory dolls, saying, 'There is your father Batara Krishna.' They rushed to climb platforms and the platforms collapsed, and they fell sprawling, some with broken limbs, others with limbs sprained or bruised."

conducive to intrigue, conduct to which Hang Tuah was if anything predisposed. So it was not long before he was caught out in an *affaire* with one of the ladies of the palace, and the Sri Nara 'diraja received the hero's death warrant signed by Mansur Shah himself.[30] Taking his life in his hands (because, says the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*, he did not consider such a trifling offence merited death), the Sri Nara 'diraja merely imprisoned Hang Tuah in stocks in a hut in the depths of the forest. And there he might have remained for the rest of his life but for an unforeseen happening. A year later a former fellow-guardsman of Hang Tuah, one Hang Kĕsturi, was trapped *in flagrante delicto* in an intrigue with one of Sultan Mansur Shah's concubines. The Sultan and his whole household thereupon withdrew from the polluted palace, which was surrounded by the household guards, but none was brave enough to venture into the building to execute the renegade. Meanwhile Hang Kĕsturi slew his mistress and, fearing the traditional Malay retribution of a spear-thrust between the slats of the raised floor, placed trays, platters, salvers and trenchers on the boards. The clatter of the trays as he leapt from side to side of the room served further to intimidate any would-be attackers. In vain did the Sultan command his guards to advance. Not a man would brave the narrow entrance where Hang Kĕsturi waited, his *kĕris* poised. In this plight the Sultan was heard to murmur, "Alas that Hang Tuah is no more. If Tuah were alive he could efface the shame that has been put upon me. If Tuah were alive I would pardon him though his offence were as great as the Hill of Kaf."[31] On hearing this, the Sri Nara 'diraja had Hang Tuah brought from his prison. After his long confinement in the stocks he walked stiffly, but Sultan Mansur Shah gave him his personal *keris*, the finest in the royal armoury (Hang Tuah was a marvellous judge of *kĕris*, the

Sějarah Mělayu tells us). The ensuing duel between Hang Tuah and Hang Kěsturi forms the subject of two of the best known passages in Malay literature. Hang Tuah's conduct is repugnant to modern minds but reflects faithfully the ethic of fifteenth-century Mělaka. Unsteady on his feet and "using his *kěris* like a man who had lost the knack", Hang Tuah drove his weapon into the wall where it remained fast. As Hang Kěsturi moved in to deal the death blow, Hang Tuah cried out, "Does a man who is a man stab another like that? If you are a man, let me free my *kěris*!" Hang Kěsturi, perhaps for old times' sake, complied and Tuah wrenched his weapon from the wall. Three times this happened, and on each occasion Hang Kěsturi drew back to allow his opponent to recover his *kěris*. "Presently by the will of God it was Hang Kěsturi's turn to stab the wall so that his *kěris* stuck fast in it. Forthwith Hang Tuah stabbed him through the back to the heart, whereupon Hang Kěsturi cried, 'Does a man who is a man go back on his word like that, Tuah?...' To which Hang Tuah replied, 'Who need play fair with you, you who have been guilty of high treason?' and he stabbed Hang Kěsturi a second time and killed him."[52] The body of Hang Kěsturi was cast into the sea, his wife and children executed and his house razed to the ground, even the earth beneath it being carted into the sea, but Hang Tuah was raised to the office of Laksamana (Admiral) and received Batu Pahat as his fief.

The stories of Hang Tuah are legendary, adapted from Sanskrit, Tamil, Persian, Arabic and Javanese tales, as are those of the other swashbuckling dandies whose exploits fill the pages of Malay romance, warriors such as Hang Jěbat, Hang Kěsturi, Hang Lěkir, Hang Hasan, Tun Bijaya Sura, Indra Sěgara, Tun Bija Diraja and the like. They are the Malay counterparts of the Homeric heroes, and as everyone knows, the *Iliad* exerts small appeal in the twentieth century. "All that fighting! Those appalling gods and

goddesses—so silly, so small-minded, so *vulgar!*"* One or two superb tragic episodes cannot relieve the tedium of the remainder of the narrative. Yet both the Malay and the Greek carryings-on do reflect idealized conceptions of societies which did exist at widely different periods of the world's history. For both the months between sowing and harvesting were slack farming seasons when make-believe wars were got up to relieve the boredom of a circumscribed existence. And in Malaya such conditions continued into the nineteenth century. Raiding and piracy were endemic in the season of the year. Anyone who doubts this should read J. R. Logan's "Memoirs of Malays", published in *The Journal of the Indian Archipelago* in 1848.[33]

The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* preserves a record of just such a raid by a Bugis chieftain from Makassar during the reign of Mansur Shah.[34] With a fleet of two hundred ships he sailed out of Makassar harbour to carve for himself a kingdom by conquering, as he boasted, every city below the wind. First he ravaged the coasts of Java and then turned his attention to Ujong Tanah (Johore) and the coastal districts of Mĕlaka. One of the first assignments of Hang Tuah on his elevation to the office of Laksamana was to rid the Straits of this pirate. This he accomplished, but the Bugis was finally cured of his itch for adventure only when he met the fleet of Pasai under the Raja Kĕnayan, whom tradition describes as braver even than the Laksamana.

War and commerce did not wholly pre-empt the time of the Mĕlaka court. With trade and other foreign intercourse came Ṣūfi mysticism, to which the Malay mind had been rendered susceptible by centuries of esoteric Hinduism. Under the rule of Mansur Shah, Mĕlaka became the premier centre of Muslim learning in the East, the spiritual focus of South-East Asian Islam. It was during this reign that a certain

* F. W. Bateson.

missionary, Maulana Abu Bakar, brought from Makkah a work of Muslim mysticism called *Durr al-manzum* (The String of Pearls). Apparently his proselytizing activities were not at first welcomed by the Mĕlakan theologians, but the missionary persisted in his efforts and eventually succeeded in converting no less a person than the Kadli of Mĕlaka. Subsequently Sultan Mansur sent the *Durr al-manzum* to be expounded by a learned doctor at Pasai and himself studied Sūfi doctrine with Maulana Abu Bakar. Later in his reign the Sultan also sent an envoy to Pasai to seek an answer to an eschatological problem: were the pains of hell eternal or transient? The official spokesman of the Pasai theological college, one Tun Makhdum[35] Mua, precipitately quoted the Qur'ān[36] to the effect that they were transitory, but that same evening one of his students presented arguments which caused the theologian to revise his opinion. Hastening to the Mĕlakan ambassador, Makhdum Mua explained that though it was proper for him to give the vulgar answer in public, in private he would be pleased to expound the esoteric doctrine. This he did, but the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* omits the answer.[37] Presumably it was not greatly different from that suggested by the Persian Ṣūfi mystic 'Abd-al-Qādir al-Jīlāni,[38] namely that the powers of endurance of the damned continued to develop until they were ultimately transmuted into a divine immunity from the fires of hell. For this interpretation Makhdum Mua was rewarded with the gift of two women, one from Makassar and one from Muar, together with seven *tahil* of gold dust.

The reign of Mansur Shah is usually regarded as marking the apogee of Malay power, but it is doubtful if this ruler was personally responsible for the successful imperialistic policies that raised Mĕlaka to the rank of a major South-East Asian empire. Malay annals leave us only a caricature of the Sultan and use his possibly insipid personality as a foil for the colourful exploits of his Bĕndahara the Paduka Raja. Yet

Mansur seems to have been as just and humane a man as his situation permitted, not uninterested in intellectual matters but also something of a ladies' man. His only positive action which can be resurrected was the kĕrising by his own hand of his uncle whom he suspected of treason,[59] and this may well be construed as the action of a fearful youth striking out in desperation at the author of a suspected conspiracy. Government policy throughout Mansur's reign was devised by his Bĕndahara, Tun Perak, "a Malay of the Malays" as Wilkinson characterizes him, and a statesman whom the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* ranks as a peer side by side with the Dato' Raja Kĕnaya of Pasai and the Mapatih Gajah Mada of Majapahit. His power in the state is well exemplified in the following anecdote from Malay tradition.[60] During a street brawl Sultan Mansur's heir-designate, Raja Muhammad, stabbed to death the son of the Bĕndahara, upon which Tun Perak's followers seized their arms in readiness for the revolt which they were sure would follow. But the Bĕndahara simply said: "You cannot be disloyal to the mound without being disloyal to the hill ... and it is the custom of Malays never to be disloyal to their masters. But as for having this prince as our master—never!" As a consequence Raja Muhammad was sent into exile as first Sultan of Pahang, never to be ruler of Mĕlaka. By casting the incident (which was probably apocryphal in any case) in this form the author of the *Annals* was able to illustrate the cardinal principle of Malay loyalty to the Sultan at the same time that he used it as a foil to focus attention on the power of the Bĕndaharas—among whom were numbered his own forebears.

As was customary in the writings of the time, when—in the words of the Bĕndahara Paduka Raja—the grass began to wither in the royal mead the annalist put into the mouth of Sultan Mansur Shah an ethical exhortation for the guidance of his heir. "Upon you," Mansur admonished his son, "is laid the duty of faithfully cherishing those who are subject

to you and of liberally forgiving any offences they may commit." This doctrine had been practised only imperfectly by the Sultan in his lifetime, but literary convention demanded that he should subscribe to it on his deathbed. Mansur then urged his son to put the business of God before his own interests, and died. It was fitting that the funerary inscription of one so concerned with the impermanence and uncertainty of life should liken this world to the insubstantial web of a spider.[61]

Sultan Mansur Shah had fathered numerous offspring. According to the later recensions of the *Annals*, his eldest son, by a daughter of Maharaja Sura who had been brought to Mělaka from Pahang as part of the spoil of the campaign which had deposed her father, had been exiled after the fracas in which the Bĕndahara's son had been killed. Mansur then designated his son by a Javanese wife (whom the *Sĕjarah Mělayu* confused with a heroine of twelfth-century romance[62]) as heir-apparent, but this lad fell victim to an amok late in Mansur's reign. Sons by a Chinese wife, with no chance of succession, established themselves as territorial chiefs in Sĕlangor. Finally there was a son by a daughter of the Sriwa Raja, the old Bĕndahara who had committed suicide in protest against the advancement of the Tamil faction. The youth was thus a nephew of Tun Perak, who secured his succession to the throne. The new ruler adopted the style of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-din Ri'ayat Shah. His elder half-brother who had been passed over sulked in Pahang and nursed his resentment for the rest of the reign. This is the story as it appears in the later or Johore version of the *Sĕjarah Mělayu*. In *Raffles MS 18*, which preserves an earlier draft of the *Annals*, 'Ala'u'd-din was described as Mansur's son by his Javanese wife, and there can be little doubt that this is the correct version, which was subsequently edited to enhance the prestige of the Bĕndaharas.

Most authors have considered 'Ala'u'd-din as the ablest of

Mĕlaka's sultans. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* merely states that he "was a man of such strength that he had no rival in those days",[63] but his administrative record speaks for itself. He seems to have attempted to recover some of the authority which his father had been content to yield to the Bĕndahara. A notable instance of this occurred when, after personally supervising the suppression of robbery in the city, he took the opportunity of publicly rebuking the Tĕmĕnggong, at this time Tun Mutahir, a scion of the Tamil family, in full durbar for neglect of his duties.[64] 'Ala'u'd-din's foreign policy was conducted with equal firmness. Under his guidance the empire attained its maximum extent with the acquisition of Lingga. The Sultanate now incorporated all the northern shore of Mĕlaka Strait, the strategically important sectors of the southern or Sumatran shore, the archipelagos commanding its eastern approaches and sundry other island bases. Successors, but not descendants, of the Sri Parameswara had indeed succeeded in recreating the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy in a more closely integrated pattern based on Muslim, not Hindu or Buddhist, conceptions of kingship. 'Ala'u'd-din avoided war when diplomacy was adequate for the defence of his realm, but he did not scruple to use force when policy required it. His fleets soundly defeated an armada from Aru that was threatening the Mĕlaka coast,[65] and his Laksamana browbeat the Sultan of Siak, who had ordered executions within his dominion without first obtaining sanction from Mĕlaka,[66] into remembrance of his position of vassalage. Perhaps 'Ala'u'd-din's greatest error of political judgement occurred when he was persuaded to install his eldest son and heir-apparent as ruler of Kampar, ostensibly to train him for the day when he should succeed his father as Sultan of Mĕlaka. Unfortunately for the dynasty and state, 'Ala'u'd-din died while his heir was still in Sumatra, and Bĕndahara Tun Perak, now a very old man, secured, as eleven years previously, the election of a much younger son. Thus did he recover in large measure the power and influence

which, during the reign of 'Ala'u'd-din, had accrued to the throne. 'Ala'u'd-din died in the prime of life, probably before the age of thirty, and it was soon rumoured among his subjects that he had been poisoned. This was the normal assumption in the Malay world when a man died young. The pious might say that an allotted span in the Book of Life had been rubbed out, but the common man tended to be more concerned with the instrument of fate and, in the absence of *kěris* or spear, could only assume poison. In this instance some suspected the ruler of Indragiri, others the discontented half-brother languishing in his remote fief of Pahang, and a few modern historians have pointed an accusing finger at the Bĕndahara. This last imputation seems out of character. In a lifetime of intrigue Tun Perak had shown a high degree of finesse in his dealings with the royal household and had, so far as we know, usually been able to attain his ends without resorting to violence. In any case, there were plenty of natural causes capable of killing a man in his prime in fifteenth-century Mělaka without invoking violence.

'Ala'u'd-din, despite his undoubted ability as a ruler, is a shadowy figure in Malay literature. Possibly the author of the *Sějarah Mělayu,* himself one of a line of Bĕndaharas, was unsympathetic to a Sultan who had arrogated to himself the powers which had been for half a century the prerogative of chief ministers. Yet he did, in the manner of the time, dignify 'Ala'u'd-din's death with the customary ethical exhortation, in this instance modelled on a similar episode in the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai.** The speech of the dying Sultan is worth reproducing at least in part as an exemplar of what the medieval world conceived the principles of statecraft *ideally* to be.[67]

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* A. H. Hill, "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* vol. 33 pt. 2 (1960), pp. 65 [Malay version] and 126 [English].

"Know well, my son, that this world will not endure. Yea, my son, all that liveth here upon earth cannot but die in the end; it is only the True Faith that endures for all time. When I am gone, be diligent in God's service; abstain from taking other men's goods unlawfully, for God's poor are entrusted to your keeping. If they are in distress, be swift to help them. If they are victims of injustice, inquire diligently into the matter, so that in the day of Judgement Almighty God may not lay a heavy burden of responsibility upon you, for thus saith the Prophet [may God bless him and give him peace], 'All ye who tend will be questioned as to your tending'; that is to say, all rulers will be questioned by God as to the manner in which they have tended their subjects. Therefore, it is your bounden duty to do justice and be diligent in inquiry so that some day in the world to come you may be taken into God's loving care for all eternity. See to it that you consult with your ministers and chiefs, for no ruler, however great his wisdom and understanding, shall prosper or succeed in doing justice unless he consult with those in authority under him. For rulers are like fire and their ministers are like firewood, and fire needs wood to produce a flame. 'Subjects are like roots and the ruler is like the tree'; without roots the tree cannot stand upright. So it is with rulers and their subjects. As for the Malays, however grievously they may offend, be not hasty in putting them to death except in cases where that penalty is ordered by the law of God, for the Malays are your clay. As the Tradition says, 'The slave is as it were the clay of his master.' If you put them to death when they have done no wrong, your kingdom will be brought to nought. Remember, my son, these my last injunctions to you and act upon them so that God may grant you the blessing which should be yours as a ruler."

In securing the succession for 'Ala'u'd-din, Tun Perak had, probably unwittingly, rendered his country a great service. Now, by raising his great-nephew to the throne he practically ensured the ultimate destruction of Mĕlaka. The new ruler took the style of Sultan Mahmud Shah. It is difficult to arrive at a true assessment of this monarch's character for accidents of history have given his biographers small reason to praise him. To the author of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu,* which has moulded the historical perspective of twelve generations of

Malays, Mahmud was cruel and tyrannical, an ingrate who had ordered the execution of the greatest of all Mělaka's Bĕndaharas—who incidentally happened to be the author's uncle. To the Portuguese chroniclers Mahmud was the treacherous Sultan who had imprisoned some of the crew of the first Portuguese vessels to call at Mělaka. Tomé Pires, who reached Mělaka only a year after Mahmud had been deposed, called him "a very fickle man of diabolical cruelty",[68] but this was doubtless the version current among Portuguese captains who had recently taken part in the storming of the city. The truth of the matter seems to be that he was a callow youth when he succeeded to the throne, and as such wholly under the influence of the Bĕndahara, for whom he must have entertained sentiments not only of gratitude but also of respect, possibly the hero worship that inexperience cannot but extend to a tempered maturity. When Tun Perak died he was succeeded in office by two other able ministers, who relieved Mahmud of responsibility in much the same way as had Tun Perak. Under these circumstances there was little for the Sultan to do but resort to the delights of the harem with which he had been familiar throughout his youth. When these palled he naturally turned to similar recreations outside the harem. One of his most notorious intrigues cost him the services of an able minister. The story goes that early one morning Mahmud was surprised leaving the house of Tun Bayajit, the son of Laksamana Hang Tuah. As the Sultan was hastening up from the river he met Tun Bayajit returning from a visit to his estates, accompanied by a numerous retinue of guards. This explosive situation afforded the author of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* an opportunity to introduce a theme of which he never tired, the inalienable loyalty of the Malay to his lord. According to the traditional account, Tun Bayajit balanced his spear across the palm of his hand and delivered a pompous admonition to his master, to which the Sultan sanctimoniously replied: "What he says is right. I have done

him a wrong for which by the law of God he could take my life. It is only because he is a Malay subject who refuses to waver in his loyalty that he behaves as he is behaving now."[69] We may choose to believe that the meeting was more acrimonious than is related here but, nevertheless, Tun Bayajit did refrain from raising his hand against his Sultan. In old Mĕlaka this ultimate *lèse-majesté* was committed only by members of half-caste Tamil families. Despite Sultan Mahmud's gift of a prized mistress to Tun Bayajit, the latter divorced his wife and never again appeared at court.

Another of Mahmud's intrigues resulted in a double tragedy.[70] On visiting the house of a courtesan one night he found one Tun Ali Sandang already enjoying the lady's favours. As the thwarted ruler returned homeward he accorded one of his guards, Tun Isak, the honour of taking a quid of betel from the royal caddy, a token of favour which placed the recipient in an invidious position, for he knew that, according to the custom of Mahmud's court, this was the price of Tun Ali's head. According to the ethic of the court, murder of a friend became sublimated into self-immolation so long as it was undertaken to gratify a Sultan's whim. Accordingly Tun Isak stabbed the Sultan's amorous rival. But the royal favour extended no further than urging the murderer to flee from the vendetta which Tun Ali's family was sure to start. For years Tun Isak wandered through the Malay world. We read of him first in Pasai, then in Aru and finally in Brunei, where he married into the royal household and raised a family. But the lure of his homeland proved too strong and eventually he returned to Mĕlaka, trusting to Sultan Mahmud to protect him. He quickly learnt the fickleness of royal favour, for when a member of Tun Ali's family drove an elephant goad through Tun Isak's skull, Sultan Mahmud said never a word.

With this example before him, it is not surprising that

Mahmud's brother, Raja Zainal-'Abidin, should have been notorious for his debauchery. The *Annals* relate that he "would take any woman that was to his liking, and those that were not he would give to the youths around him: and great was the debauchery of Mělaka in those days." Eventually even the dissolute Sultan found his brother's conduct an embarrassment and intrigued to have him murdered secretly.[71]

Insulated, as he was, from the conduct of affairs, Mahmud surrounded himself with sycophantic but unmannerly boors with no personal or governmental responsibilities. Chief among these were the Sriwa Raja, Tun 'Omar, Hang 'Isa and Hang Husain Chengang, but his favourite companion above all was the Sriwa Raja. This was a worthless fellow who presumed to treat his Sultan with gross discourtesy. If the tales related in the *Sějarah Mělayu*[72] have any basis in fact, the Sriwa Raja must be unique in Malay annals, for courtesy on every occasion, and above all towards one's ruler, is the cardinal characteristic of Malay social and personal relationships. Government posts and money from the State Treasury were squandered by Mahmud on these coxcombs to the detriment of the realm. But that Mahmud was not wholly averse to intellectual pursuits is attested by his interest in Sufi mysticism. At first he sought permission to study with the former Kadli Yusuf, he who, after being converted by Maulana Abu Bakar, had become an anchorite. However, when Sultan Mahmud arrived with his retinue, Yusuf barred the door and refused to admit him. Only when the Sultan came as a suppliant beggar would the recluse receive him.[73] As he might have said, a truly indigent man is one who is sundered from the grace of Allah, a dispensation to be obtained only by meditation. Subsequently Mahmud dispatched an embassy to Pasai to seek the answer to a theological conundrum similar to that which his grandfather had propounded more than thirty years earlier,[74] but the *Sějarah Mělayu* preserves

neither the problem nor its solution.

Early in the reign of Mahmud Shah the Bĕndahara Tun Perak "returned to the Mercy of God, and was buried by the Sultan according to the custom for Bĕndaharas". He had served as Chief Minister under four Sultans, three of whom had been members of his own family and thrice had secured the succession to the throne for his own nominee, in each instance a youth who was unlikely to take power into his own hands. And only once had the Bĕndahara's judgement been at fault in this matter. Then Sultan 'Ala'u'd-din had proved unexpectedly independent and Tun Perak had been forced temporarily into the background of Mĕlakan politics. But the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* did not exaggerate when it compared him to the great Gajah Mada who was the real ruler of Majapahit for over thirty years. As we look back over his varied life, first as a semi-exile educating the people of a backward and remote district to play their role in an expanding empire, subsequently as Paduka Raja, then as Laksamana and finally, for at least half his life, as an *éminence grise,* the most powerful man in the most important port of South-East Asia, we cannot but feel that the vicissitudes of life had bred in him humanity and wisdom. This is certainly the impression that the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* leaves with its readers, which is impressive testimony when we remember that the author was a member of the rival family of Bĕndaharas who had little cause to praise Tun Perak. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*[75] preserves a well-known instance of the old statesman's sagacity. In the whole of the realm only two ministers, the Bĕndahara and the Laksamana, had been granted the privilege of faring abroad in a litter. The Laksamana used this privilege on all possible occasions, but the Bĕndahara stored his litter in a place of honour in the hall of his house. His household servants, who would have liked to share in the reflected glory of the Bĕndahara as he travelled through the streets in state, remonstrated with their master for his lack

of ostentation, to which he replied, "Is it I who am so simple, or is it you?" When the Laksamana passed through the streets, he continued, the crowd gaped and asked if he were the most important man in the state. The knowledgeable few replied that the Bĕndahara was a yet greater man than the Laksamana and thus the Bĕndahara's prestige was enhanced whenever the Laksamana was seen in his litter. Moreover, travelling in a litter, the Bĕndahara might have been mistaken for the Sultan himself, which could have had grievous consequences for the servant of a dissolute and capricious monarch.

Tun Perak was succeeded in office by his younger brother, the Pĕrpateh Puteh, himself already well past middle age. He introduced no innovations in policy, but during the few years in which he held office he quelled revolts efficiently but unspectacularly, and tightened the bonds which bound the empire together. His administration was careful and soundly principled, and he had the good sense not to try to emulate his illustrious brother's achievements. Men who achieve high office for the first time in their old age are seldom successful administrators, but Tun Puteh was an exception. Just after 1500 he died, remembered by Malays chiefly for the prodigality with which he ran his household. His family and the Malay populace in general were hopeful that the Dato' Paduka Tuan, son of Tun Perak, would succeed to the office of Bĕndahara, but Mahmud yielded to the persuasions of his mother and appointed her brother, Tun Mutahir the Sri Maharaja. The new Bĕndahara was a member of the "Tamil" family and son of Tun Ali, chief minister to Sultan Muzaffar Shah through the greater part of his reign. The direction of policy thus reverted to that family after an interval of nearly half a century. The author of the *Malay Annals* described Tun Mutahir as "the grandest of all the Bĕndaharas",[76] but both these men were of the same family, and it is difficult to see how an impartial observer could rank Mutahir's Bĕndaharaship with that of the great Tun Perak. Mutahir was not only a high officer of government

but also a wealthy trader, who was not always scrupulous to keep these two activities separate. The *Sējarah Mēlayu* takes a charitable view of his mercantile speculations, merely stating that the Bĕndahara was invariably lucky in his ventures,[77] but how could he be otherwise when he combined in one office the duties of Prime Minister, Lord of the Treasury, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and Lord Chief Justice, in addition to exercising general control over all other officers of state. Raja Bongsu did not let his uncle's reputation go unpublicized, and added that in ships bound for Mĕlaka from above the wind it was the custom, as the anchor was being weighed, for the master of the ship, after reciting the usual prayer, to add, "May we reach Mĕlaka safely and see Pisang, Jĕram, the stream of Bukit China, and Bĕndahara Sri Maharaja."* The opinion here attributed to the merchants frequenting Mĕlaka is not borne out by several anecdotes recorded in the *Sējarah Mēlayu*,[78] which depict Mutahir as overwhelmingly arrogant and not infrequently guilty of rank discourtesy. But these are judgements from an Occidental viewpoint and should not be attributed indiscriminately to Mutahir's age. The same may be said of the Bĕndahara's venality, upon which Western historians have commented with Judaeo-Christian distaste, but it is unlikely that Mutahir's contemporaries would have viewed his conduct in such an unfavourable light. A minister was expected to recoup his family fortunes during his term of office, and only when the cost of his favour became outrageous was he criticized adversely. And it was difficult to set too high a price on the goodwill of a Mĕlakan Bĕndahara, particularly this one, who controlled with all but absolute power the destiny of the state.

Yet the central theory of government in the Malay world required that a minister should accord unqualified loyalty to his Sultan, and on several occasions Mahmud chose to ques-

* Or, as some texts have it, to swear by Mĕlaka for a port, Jĕram for bananas, Bukit China for water, and the Sri Maharaja for a Bĕndahara.

tion Tun Mutahir's conduct in this respect. The best known instance concerned the Bĕndahara's daughter, who was a girl of surpassing beauty (all the ladies who featured in the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* were surpassingly fair save poor Tun Trang, grand-daughter of Mutahir, who was merely "quite pretty"). Tun Mutahir, knowing as well as most the character of his Sultan, and being further aware that Mahmud's consort had recently died, was careful to keep his daughter confined to the house. It was, in fact—according to the opinion of the Raja di-Baroh, uncle of Mahmud and brother of 'Ala'u'd-din—the custom that "when there was no Raja Pĕrĕmpuan, it was the daughter of the Bĕndahara who became Raja Pĕrĕmpuan." Sultan Mahmud first cast eyes on the girl on the occasion of the festivities in celebration of her marriage to a son of the Sri Nara 'diraja, and immediately the bowels of the royal lecher were stirred with jealousy. From that day forward he harboured a grudge against the Bĕndahara who had cheated him of one of the most tasty dishes his kingdom could provide.

The manner in which Tun Mutahir flaunted his wealth could have contributed little to mollify the Sultan. He loved to boast of his wealth in the company of his fellow merchants, and when in a good humour would pour out a chestful of gold coins on to the mat and invite the children of his house to help themselves. Mutahir's inordinate pride may also have caused Sultan Mahmud some alarm, for the Bĕndahara was indeed acting as a ruler rather than a minister. He would descend his stairway only to greet the Sultan or the heir-apparent, would rise from his seat only for the Sultan of Pahang, and treated all other rulers as his inferiors. This supercilious attitude was matched by his personal vanity. He did not scruple, for instance, to enquire of those attending his audience whether he or his son were the more personable, and was evidently pleased when they sycophantically awarded him the palm. He would, too, change his clothes as often as seven times a day, and was reputed to have a thousand jackets

in his wardrobe, and twenty or thirty headcloths ready tied on tailors' dummies.[79]

Nor was the Bĕndahara's pride in family and office entirely baseless. Mĕlaka was at this time the premier port in South-East Asia. The life-blood of the city was commerce, and she maintained her power and increased her wealth by clamping a monopoly on the crucial sector of what was at that time the world's most frequented trade-route, namely the Mĕlaka Strait. From May to September unnumbered *prahu* from islands to the eastward converged on Mĕlaka, running before the monsoon, and in addition eight vessels sailed each year directly to the Moluccas where they bartered Cambay cloths and the tails of white Bengal oxen for cloves and other spices.[80] These were then shipped westwards together with a rich variety of other island products, scented woods, drugs, *batiks* and many more commodities. Mĕlaka's trade relations with the countries across the Indian Ocean were dependent on a commercial symbiosis which she had developed with Cambay. This was the port where merchants from Cairo, Makkah, 'Adan, Ormuz, the Levant, Asia Minor and East Africa gathered, preparatory to forming themselves into companies for the voyage eastwards. Merchants from other sectors of the Indiar subcontinent formed their companies either at Calicut or Pulicat. Whereas the merchants from Coromandel handled the bulk of Mĕlakan commerce, those from Cambay monopolized the cream of the trade, that is, such valuable commodities as white sandalwood, Barus camphor, silk, seed-pearls, spices, *fruseleira* and Chinese brocades. These last were fed into the main stream of trade flowing through Mĕlaka Strait by ten junks which arrived annually at Mĕlaka on the north-east monsoon, bringing besides the brocades, satins, taffetas, musk and rhubarb. For ships from Pegu, Mĕlaka was the key port in a triangular trade. Towards the end of the north-east monsoon, in February and March, fifteen vessels fetched southwards to the Strait with cargoes

of rice, aromatics, rubies and silver. On the 1st July each year they weighed anchor for Pasai, where they supplemented their Mělakan cargoes, made up from the China and island trade, with consignments of pepper. In August they sailed for Martaban and home. The Siam trade, too, yielded high profits for Mělaka merchants, thirty vessels making the round trip annually. Lac, benzoin, brazilwood, ivory and Siamese cloth constituted the bulk of their cargoes which were exchanged in Mělaka for slaves, aromatics, spices, Kling cloths, Cambay brocades, rose-water and cowries. Just after 1500, however, this trade came to an end. Sultan Mahmud finally repudiated formally the figment of Siamese suzerainty, an action which goaded the T'ai king, at the best of times envious of Mělakan wealth, to instigate an invasion of Pahang by his vassal, the ruler of Ligor. In the ensuing campaign the Běndahara showed himself, despite his foppish ways, to be a capable field commander and the T'ai forces were repulsed;[81] but the profitable trade of former days between Siam and Mělaka was never resuscitated until sovereignty had passed out of Malay hands.

The town, too, had changed greatly since the days of the Parameswara's fishing village or even those of the Sri Mahārāja's fortified settlement. The present St. Paul's Hill was still a royal demesne, but the old palace, polluted by Hang Kěsturi's sordid crime had been replaced by a new structure whose architectural proportions and embellishments were commensurate with the dignity of the most powerful ruler on the peninsula. Shortly after its construction, this palace was burnt to the ground, possibly struck by lightning, but the *Sějarah Mělayu*[82] claims to preserve a description of it, which is more likely to have been a likeness of the most splendid building conceivable to the Malay mind than of any existing *istana*.

"The palace had seventeen bays, each interspace between the pillars being eighteen feet, with pillars in circumference the span

> of a man's arms; the roof had seven tiers. Between were cupolas, and every cupola was furnished with a dormer-window, its roof at right-angles and terminating in flying crockets, all of them carved. Between the spires was trellis-work with pendant and pyramidal decoration. All the spires were gilded and their tops were of red glass, so that in sunlight they gleamed like fire. All the walls had eaves and inset were large Chinese mirrors that flashed in the sun like lightning dazzling the sight. The cross-beams were of kulim [*Orania macrocladus*], a cubit in width and nine inches thick; the door-sills were two cubits wide, a cubit thick and curved; the cross-bars were forty in number and all of them were gilded... It was given the name of *mahligai*,[83] and its roof was of copper and zinc tiles."

Apparently such work was undertaken as a *corvée* levied on the several districts of the west coast. The labour involved in re-building the palace after the fire was apportioned as follows: the men of Bĕntan Karangan collected the materials, the men of Ungaran constructed the shell of the building, the men of Panchur Sĕrapong decorated the audience hall, the men of Suir the pavilion, the waiting rooms were prepared by the men of Sudar and Sayong, the drum hall by the men of Apong, the mosque was erected by the men of Tĕntai, and the entrance gate was the responsibility of the men from Muda.

Down by the river was the business quarter of the town, with the main bazaar situated on a stone bridge spanning the river. The wealthier merchants lived to the north of the river amid orchards and tanks, but maintained business offices within the town. A hostelry and specially protected godowns were provided for foreign merchants. It was a rumbustious, cosmopolitan port where, prior to the reign of 'Ala'u'd-din, and possibly after his death, violence was an unquestioned accompaniment to life. Malays always formed the bulk of the population but Arabs, Persians, Gujaratis, Malabaris, Klings, Chinese, Chams, Siamese, Arakanese, Javanese and

men from the eastern archipelago could be seen in the bazaars of Mĕlaka on any day. Tomé Pires averred that no less than eighty-four languages could be heard in the streets,[84] and estimated the number of foreign merchants in the city in the early years of the sixteenth century at about 4,000, of which 1,000 were Gujaratis.[85]

Despite the wealth and importance of Mĕlaka, the immediate hinterland of the port appears to have been very little developed. At the time of Tomé Pires' visit it was clothed with an almost uninterrupted mantle of forest, diversified only occasionally by an isolated *kampong*. Muar and Batu Pahat were small farming communities; Singapore was practically deserted and *de pouca Importância*. Northwards the country was more closely settled. The *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relates that an unbroken line of villages stretched from Kampong Kling, the Tamil quarter of Mĕlaka, to the Linggi river, and there was no need for travellers journeying even as far as Jĕnggĕra to take firing with them, for wherever they stopped on the way there would be a settlement.[86] Sungei Ujong, Klang, Perak, Sĕlangor and Bĕrnam, all under the direct rule of Mĕlaka, were small coastal villages of from 200-400 persons. In addition to paying an annual tribute of tin, they supplied foodstuffs for the capital. Bĕruas, which local legend inflated to a city so large that a cat would take three months to circumambulate its roof tops, seems to have been nothing more than a village with a fleet of trading *prahu*. Across the mountain spine of the peninsula, Pahang was the chief port, with a flourishing trade in forest products, tin and pepper. Jimaja, one of the Anambas Islands, was a pirate lair—similar to what Mĕlaka had been at its inception —where *Orang Laut* freebooters disposed of their loot.

To the northward of the latitude of Perak, Siam held sway. On the east coast Kĕlantan, Sai, Patani, Bang Kamma Sen, Bang Sabhan, Koh Ta Kut and P'echaburi were small trading

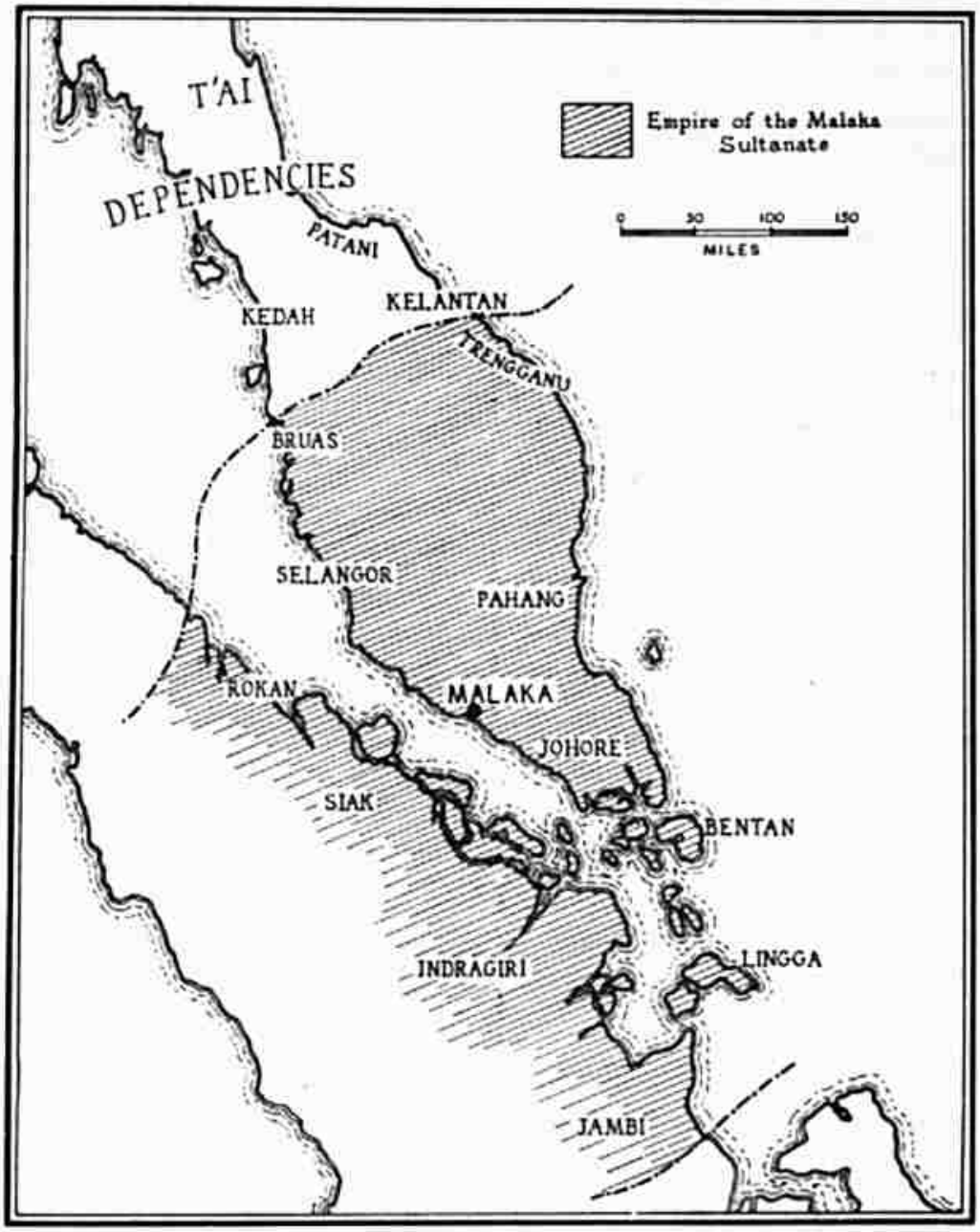

Figure 7 The Mĕlaka Sultanate at its greatest extent.

ports governed by a T'ai official from Ligor. On the west coast Kědah, which in this context subsumed Ujong Salang and Trang, was the most important of a series of coastal settlements, but it had fallen far below its former estate when it had constituted one of the two nodes of the Śrī Vijayan thalassocracy. Its *padi* fields were extensive, but its chief cash crop was pepper, some of which was sent overland to Patani for shipment northwards, and the rest collected by a single Gujarati vessel that paid an annual visit to the west coast. Over the remainder of the peninsula stretched league upon league of forest holding few attractions and many fears for the Malay. Almost the only inhabitants in this vast waste of land were the aborigines, Jakun and *Orang Laut* in the south, Senoi in the interior of Perak and Kědah, Semang in the north and east, and Chao Nam fishermen through the Mergui Archipelago.

It will have become clear from the anecdotes strung together in the preceding pages that Mělaka was governed effectively for a large part of its pre-European century by its Bĕndaharas or Chief Ministers. Yet, apart from the Dato' Sri Amar 'diraja (who had thrown in his lot with Raja Kasim) and Tun Mutahir (whose treason is recounted below), these all-powerful ministers seem to have exhibited exemplary loyalty to their sultans. Second in rank only to the Bĕndahara, and usually a member of his family and his heir, was the Tĕmĕng-gong, a sort of Chief of Police charged with the duty of building prisons, arresting criminals, carrying out executions and supervising markets and weights. The reader will recall that it was during his tenure of the office of Tĕmĕnggong that Tun Mutahir was publicly rebuked by Sultan 'Ala'u'd-din for neglect of his police duties. Other members of the inner Council of Four were the Sri Nara 'diraja, who acted as Secretary and Treasurer to the Sultan, and the Laksamana, Chief Sea-Lord and Warden of the Coast. Tradition has it

that the title, originally the name of Rāma's half-brother who had protected Sītā against the assaults of Rāvaṇa, was first bestowed in jest on the young Hang Tuah who was constantly comparing himself with the hero from the *Rāmāyaṇa.**

These four ministers formed a sort of inner cabinet who, in theory at least, advised the Sultan on affairs of state. In addition there were eight major chiefs. It is uncertain which offices were included in this category but those of the Imam Paduka Tuan, (Chief religious dignitary), and the four Shahbandars,† (Comptrollers of the Port), seem to have been among them. Each of these last could be, and often was, a foreigner. Typically there was one who dealt with Gujaratis, and he tended to be the most influential. The other three superintended respectively the trade with countries above the wind (that is, India, Burma and Pasai), with countries below the wind (that is, the archipelago) and with China, Indo-China and Luzon. Below the eight ranked sixteen minor chiefs; and thirty-two petty territorial headmen who were not entitled to the designation *mĕntĕri* (minister). Most of these were assistants to greater chiefs. This preoccupation with the astrological multiples of four was, of course, a legacy of Hinduism persisting under Muslim guise. Relations between the Sultan and his ministers and chiefs, and among the officials themselves were prescribed by a rigorous system of protocol, the minutiae of which occupy several folios of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu.*[87] So important was ritual in the life of the Mĕlakan court that the full implications of whole passages in classical Malay literature are often overlooked by the reader unfamiliar with the rigid etiquette obtaining there.

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* In Perak in later days the Laksamana's authority extended "up-river as far as the tide can reach, down-river to the line where the surf breaks on the bar and the grey mullet come to the surface". [Sir Richard Winstedt, *The Malays* (revised edition, 1950), p. 76].

† Purnadi Purbatjaraka has recently published a useful paper on this office: "Shahbandars in the Archipelago", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Singapore, 1962), pp. 1-9.

This, then, was Mĕlaka in 1509, the year in which the "white Bengalis" arrived from the regions above the wind. The factors which had made Mĕlaka wealthy were precisely those which brought about her downfall. Her monopoly of the traffic through the main constriction of the spice route from the Moluccas to Venice had brought her rich rewards; now it was to make her the prey of another power competing for these rewards. By 1509 the Portuguese, a small nation of less than 1,500,000 people, had wrested mastery of the trade of the Indian Ocean from the Muslim powers of Egypt and India, and had begun to drain off a considerable portion of the spices which had hitherto found their way to Venice. But it was still only a fraction of the total tonnage which was as yet unloaded in Lisbon, and it was natural that the Portuguese Viceroy of the Indies should turn his attention farther eastward to the home of the nutmeg and the clove. As a result, on 1 August 1509, a squadron of ships under the command of Diogo Lopez de Sequeira dropped anchor in Mĕlaka roads, and a deputation waited on the Bĕndahara. It brought a letter from King Manuel of Portugal to Sultan Mahmud, and requested permission to trade with the merchants of Mĕlaka. At this point the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* introduces into its narrative a vignette which carries the seal of verisimilitude.[88] It pictures the Malays flocking to the beach and crowding round the visitors the like of whom they had never seen before. Some twisted their beards or touched their heads, others took off and examined their hats, and still other grasped their hands. In a formal audience with the Bĕndahara, Sequeira was given robes of honour and in return Tun Mutahir was presented with a gold chain—so say our sources, though it was almost certainly of base metal. Unfortunately one of the Portuguese captains committed the gross discourtesy of placing it over the Bĕndahara's head with his own hands, at which the Malay guards would certainly have cut him down

had not the Bĕndahara restrained them, saying, "Take no notice. These fellows are only mannerless boors." Thus the incident passed off, but it left the Malays convinced that the Portuguese were a race of vulgar ruffians. Yet it is hard to blame the rough Portuguese sailor who was unaware of the exquisite manners of the Malay court. It was inevitable that such mistakes should occur when representatives of widely differing cultures met each other for the first time.

Despite the formal protestations of goodwill by the Bĕndahara, there were circles in Mĕlaka who were not eager to admit the Portuguese to the trade of the Strait. Foremost among these were the Gujaratis and other Indian merchants who had had experience of Portuguese trading methods on the Malabar coast. Apparently this group brought the Bĕndahara over to its persuasion, with the result that a surprise night attack was hatched against the interlopers' ships. It miscarried when a Javanese girl swam out to warn her paramour in one of the Portuguese vessels, and the Bĕndahara's guard was able to capture only a score or so of the crew who happened to be ashore at the time. Sequeira, after voicing threats, had no choice but to weigh anchor and return to India before a dying monsoon left him stranded in front of the hostile city.

Some historians take the view that Sequeira had been sent to Mĕlaka specifically to manufacture a *casus belli*. Whether or not this were so, it was clear to the Viceroy of the Indies, at this time the great Afonso de Albuquerque, that the Portuguese victories in the Indian Ocean would not bear their full fruit as long as Mĕlaka controlled her crucial strait. At a meeting of his general staff he is alleged to have lamented the fact that the capture of Malabar had not halted the flow of spices to Cairo, but added, "If we take this trade of Mĕlaka away out of their hands, Cairo and Makkah are entirely ruined, and to Venice will no spicerie be conveyed except that which

her merchants go to buy in Portugal." It was inherent in the process of South-East Asian history that the quest for spices would specify Mělaka as the focus of Portuguese aspirations once the Indian coast had been subdued.

Meanwhile within Mělaka events were taking a new turn, activated, as so often happened, by subterfuge and intrigue. Bĕndahara Tun Mutahir was accused of plotting the assassination of Sultan Mahmud, an imputation which Mahmud, who had never forgotten the insult implicit in the Bĕndahara's rejection of him as a son-in-law, was only too willing to believe. There is a difference of opinion as to whether this accusation was fabricated or whether Tun Mutahir did in fact lead a rebellion. The author of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*[89], a nephew of the Bĕndahara, claims that his uncle was maligned and accords him a Roman death. Together with his son, the Tĕmĕnggong Tun Hasan, his brother the Sri Nara 'diraja (nepotism was not frowned upon in Mělakan society) and other members of his family, Tun Mutahir awaited the arrival of the Sultan's guards. When his followers prepared to resist, the Bĕndahara rebuked them, saying, "Would you be disloyal to your Raja and spoil the good name of your forebears? It is the glory of the Malay that he is loyal to his ruler. If any of you resist, I will denounce him in the world to come." Tun Sura 'diraja and Tun Indra Segura thereupon entered the hall, bearing the Sultan's execution *kĕris* on a salver which they placed before Tun Mutahir, saying, "His Highness' greetings and prayers to God. Verily the will of Almighty God cometh to pass on this day"; to which the Bĕndahara and the Tĕmĕnggong replied, "Whatsoever cometh to pass in accordance with God's decree we accept." Forthwith the whole family with the exception of one child, Tun Hamza, was put to death. Subsequently—so says the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*—Mahmud became convinced of the innocence of Tun Mutahir, and wrought a fearful vengeance on those who had borne false witness against him. The barbarities inflicted on this occasion matched those

which all but exterminated the Bĕndahara's family and, though a sad reflection on the morality of old Mĕlaka, were only too common in all South-East Asia at this time: the Laksamana was castrated, a Tamil trader was impaled horizontally and his wife and children executed, and several others suffered death in an only slightly less hideous form.

This picture of the innocent Bĕndahara bending his head to the royal will is wholly consonant with Malay ideals, but it is not entirely in accord with what we know of the character of Tun Mutahir. It is hard to conceive of this arrogant minister, whose father had not scrupled to engineer a *coup d'état* which had spilt the royal blood of the Martyr King and who accorded himself precedence over the lesser kings of Malaysia, surrendering his power when absolute sovereignty was within his grasp. Several historians have also pointed out that, according to the annals, the child Hamza, the Bĕndahara's grandson and the only member of the family to be spared, was gashed "from the nape of the neck to the nipples," a wound inconsistent with a formal execution. It is more than likely that the Bĕndahara was in fact contemplating revolt when the Sultan, secure in the support of Tun Perak's family and the numerous officials and merchants of Mĕlaka whom Tun Mutahir had alienated by his arrogance, struck first, and that the Bĕndahara's family, including high officers of state, was overpowered only after a severe struggle. It is not surprising that the Tĕmĕnggong and the Sri Nara 'diraja elected to throw in their lot with the Bĕndahara, for they were of his family and owed their appointments to him. Probably they were already implicated in the plot, but were they not they knew that the punishment of treason was visited not only upon the traitor but upon his whole family. In the times of which we speak nothing less than extirpation of the root and branches of treachery could give a ruler the illusion of security. Now Mahmud raised the Paduka Tuan, the aged

son of Tun Perak, to the office of Bĕndahara, thus restoring to that family the honour which every Mělaka Malay regarded as its right. The toothless old man was already paralyzed and begged to be excused from office, but the Sultan insisted. Probably he considered the paralytic less of a threat to the throne than a more active minister, and in any case the family's superb loyalty over half a century appeared to offer the strongest available guarantee of peace in the state. But the Mělakan government was about to meet its severest test and was sorely to miss the services of an energetic Bĕndahara. However, for a year or so there was peace in the realm and Mahmud returned to his theological studies. For him the sorry business of 1510 was somewhat relieved by the transfer of Tun Mutahir's wealth to the royal coffers and of his daughter, denied to the Sultan in the bloom of her youth but still comely, to the royal harem. To some this brief intermission has seemed to be the zenithal period of Mělakan power.

Barely a year after Tun Mutahir's abortive plot the false calm was shattered. It is debatable whether Tun Mutahir's perfidy expedited the mounting of a Portuguese expedition against Mělaka, but that it would have come sooner or later there can be no doubt. Economic pressures more powerful than the wills of individual men and deriving from regions far westward of the Indian Ocean were forcing the Portuguese fleets eastward towards the vital point at which they could exert complete control over the spice supply of the world. On 1 July 1511, the day on which Sultan Mahmud's daughter was being married to the Sultan of Pahang, Albuquerque's fleet was reported to be off the promontory of Tanjong Tuan. As the vessels sailed into Mělaka roads they dressed their yards with flags and fired salvoes of shot—whether as a threat or a salute is not recorded. It is doubtful if the Malays were very impressed by this demonstration. We may envisage their expert seamen running shrewd eyes over the fleet of less than

a score of vessels, of which several were walty and strained after long years at sea. What had the twenty thousand troops of the Sultan, including Javanese levies and Turkish mercenaries trained in European warfare, to fear from this battered fleet? Moreover, was this puny force not operating two thousand miles from its base, and would it not have to hoist sail, as Sequeira had done, for the regions above the wind when the monsoon changed? Was not the city sufficiently well provisioned with rice from Java to withstand a much longer siege than this? And were not Mĕlaka's natural defences of marsh and forest more than adequately supplemented by palisades and artillery (it was later claimed that the gun founders of Mĕlaka were the equal of those in Germany)? Where the armies and fleets of Siam had failed, how could these white Bengalis succeed?

Albuquerque, too, may have been less sure of victory than his biographer assumes, for his initial act was the sending of a request to the Sultan for the release of the Portuguese captured in the attack on Sequeira's forces. Mahmud was in a dilemma. As he might have said, *Tĕpok nyamok mĕnjadi daki.* On the one hand, he could not retain the prisoners without provoking the vengeance of Albuquerque. This, it is true, did not at the moment appear potentially impressive, but tales of the Viceroy's victories over powerful states beyond the sea were certainly current in Mĕlaka at this time. On the other hand, if Mahmud surrendered his captives he would be yielding up hostages for the security of the town. In the circumstances he could only temporize, if possible until the monsoon should change. But Albuquerque was aware that neither Indian politics nor the regimen of the weather would permit him to engage in the courtesies and delays of Oriental warfare, and sent an ultimatum to the Sultan demanding not only the return of the prisoners but also compensation and the right to build a fortress at Mĕlaka. Again Mahmud's

reply was non-committal, so a Portuguese task force burnt the houses along the Upeh shore and also some Gujarati ships at anchor in the roads. Finally Mahmud released the prisoners, at the same time as he apparently decided on armed resistance. In this he was probably influenced by his younger Malay mĕntĕris and the Muslim merchants in the city. Among these latter was Utimutiraja, a Javanese headman, whose wealth and prestige among his own countrymen ensured their adherence to whichever cause he made his own. For the moment he was supporting the Malays. So too were the Hindu merchants in the city, but there was little cordiality between them and the Muslims, both Javanese and Gujarati, for whom Utimutiraja was the spokesman.

When he saw flags and bunting break out along the Malay ramparts as a symbol of defiance and preparation for war, Albuquerque called a conference of his commanders aboard his flagship. Among those present was Ruy d'Araujo, one of the released prisoners who, as a result of his two-year confinement in Mĕlaka, knew the geography of the city well. He pointed out that the bridge over the Mĕlaka river would have to be the focal point of the attack, not only because it was the sole link between the residential suburb of Upeh and the main town, but also because the only firm ground for a landing adjoined the bridge. Elsewhere the Portuguese troops would have to cross deep, clogging mud flats. In accordance with this strategy, at dawn on 25 July Albuquerque launched a pincer movement on the bridge from north and south. The Sultan* personally led his troops in defence of the bridge, riding on his elephant Jituji. Behind him on the pack-saddle crouched the Makhdum Sadar Jahan, Mahmud's religious *guru*. Lecher and mystic though he may have been, according to the tradition embodied in the *Annals*, the Sultan did much to

* Some recensions say that it was the Sultan's son who defended the bridge.

redeem his reputation in the battle for the bridge.[90] When the Makhdum cried out in terror, "Let us return to the palace. This is no place to contemplate the unity of God," Mahmud urged his elephant forward wherever the fighting was fiercest. But after some seven hours of struggle the Portuguese did succeed in capturing the bridge and, as the sea breeze sprang up in the early afternoon, they fired the houses on either bank of the river. Fanned by the breeze, the flames spread inland, destroying a large part of the city, including the palace. Despite their gains the Portuguese were hard pressed, and the morale of the uninjured was seriously undermined by witnessing the sufferings of their comrades who had been wounded by poisoned arrows. All but one of those who suffered from such wounds did in fact die. Under the circumstances, with his troops hungry and exhausted after a full day in which they had been exposed to the heat of the sun and the emotional stress of battle, and being unable to erect an adequate breastwork for their defence through the night when the Malay counter attack was sure to come, Albuquerque gave the order to withdraw to the ships.

The Viceroy seemingly expected that the city would surrender on the morrow. On the contrary the Sultan assembled all the forces at his command, and refortified the bridge with palisades and a hundred bombards. The young nobles of the city were eager for battle, each dreaming that he would emulate the exploits of the great Hang Tuah. In the strained hours of the night they kept up their courage by boasting of their prowess, and reciting aloud the story of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiah, son of Caliph 'Ali and a gallant hero of romance.*

* As yet another example of the influence of Indian culture on Malay literature, Sir Richard Winstedt has pointed out the parallelism between this episode and Krisna reciting the Bhagavad-Gītā to Arjuna before the battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas. ["A History of Classical Malay Literature", *Royal Asiatic Society, Malayan Branch*, vol. xxi, pt. 3 (1958), *Monographs on Malay Subjects* No. 5 (Singapore, revised edition, 1961), pp. 130-131].

Many of the merchants, on the other hand, were beginning to doubt the impregnability of the city, and Utimutiraja took the precaution of sending a present of sandalwood to the Viceroy at the same time as he ordered his followers to help strengthen the defences. On succeeding days more and more of the merchants chose to temporize, and several negotiated for protection during the sack of the city which they considered imminent. The weaknesses in the Mĕlakan defences were not of a material nature; rather were they inherent in the structure of Mĕlakan society, which comprised heterogeneous congeries of people gathered together for purposes of trade. As long as Mĕlaka was prospering the common aims and mores of commerce held the various groups together, but when trade came to a standstill and cargoes were commandeered, burnt or lay rotting in godowns, the several sections of society each began to seek its own salvation. For the merchants this lay in a resumption of trade at the earliest possible moment. For the Malay party in the Government it lay in the defeat of the insolent kāfirs and the resumption of the *status quo*. For the Sultan, who can say? Some have believed that he was largely indifferent to the struggle and believed he could stand aloof while the war party within Mĕlaka and the invaders settled the issue among themselves.[91] This lack of unity within the city contrasted strongly with the singleness of purpose of the very much smaller group of Portuguese who, though some of the captains from time to time had doubts about the chances of success of an assault, were held together by the dynamic and colourful personality of their leader.

The final assault came on 10 August, when the Portuguese succeeded in storming the bridge from the shelter of a tall junk which they floated up against the piers on a spring tide. This time they were able, after hard fighting, to consolidate their position and, on the morrow mounted a successful assault on the great mosque of Mĕlaka. The Sultan's son

fought valiantly but his unruly squadron of elephants was no match for the disciplined Portuguese troops. A score of Malay war-chiefs were killed including Tun Salehu'd-din, and the aged Bĕndahara was carried from the battle cursing his family for not hurling him against the enemy. At this stage of the battle Albuquerque, still fearing that the storming of the city might be a costly operation, offered to spare it if Mahmud would grant permission for the building of a fortress and pay an indemnity. Booty obtained by negotiation would in any case be undamaged by fire or vandalism, and an inhabitable city would be of more use to the Portuguese than a charred and deserted ruin. However, the Malays refused to negotiate, possibly because the Sultan had already fled from the city. At all events when Albuquerque's troops marched five abreast through the streets a few days later, there was little resistance, and Mĕlaka passed out of Malay hands for four and a half centuries. This is the prescriptive point at which to close the narrative. The rest is anticlimax. There were to be other Malay kingdoms on the peninsula, to be sure, but none which achieved a position in Malay tradition remotely comparable to that of Mĕlaka, a city which, as Tomé Pires put it, "was made for merchandise".[92]

Chapter 10

EPILOGUE

As the reader has turned the preceding pages he cannot have failed to perceive the enormous lacunae in our knowledge of the early history of the Malay Peninsula. And by far the widest gaps occur in the prehistoric period. We still have no precise chronological framework on which to base a reconstruction of this era, and the sequence of ecological adaptations by which the inhabitants of the peninsula adjusted their social organizations and economies to the natural environment can only be inferred from the general course of events in neighbouring parts of South-East Asia, augmented now and then by equally tenuous deductions as to the significance of archaeological discoveries. These latter bear witness only that, for the earliest groups of *Homo sapiens* inhabiting the peninsula, gathering and hunting were important activities, but it cannot be doubted that these Hoabinhians supplemented their diet with starchy root and fruit crops. By the beginning of the second millenium B.C. so-called Proto-Malays were certainly farming on the Malay Peninsula, but their crops can only be guessed at. By analogical reasoning it can be surmised that foxtail and Job's tears were possibly the earliest cereals to be grown on the peninsula, with *padi* in the later Neolithic. Taro, yams, *birah,* bananas, sugar-cane and coconuts were all probably cultivated at this time, with the sago palm also laid under contribution by those tribes inhabiting appropriately swampy localities. By the closing years of the pre-Christian era the rural landscape of the peninsula had been stamped with the essential lineaments of the pattern

which it was to bear until the advent of commercial agriculture in the late nineteenth century.

Any discussion of authority relationships in prehistoric Malaya must depend on still more tenuous inferences than do the conclusions with regard to ecological adaptation, for there is a complete absence of direct information. Among the earliest farmers, political leadership could only have been inchoate and weak. Judging from the remnants of such societies as exist in the modern world, rule was predominantly oligarchic, the prerogative of family heads. *Ladang* cultivation does not appear to have been capable of supporting a non-farming *élite,* though an embryonic chieftain class may be discerned among some contemporary shifting agriculturalists in Burma, Sumatra and Borneo. Subsequently the development of wet-*padi* farming must have induced the emergence of stable and sedentary *kampong* communities, thus concentrating population in discrete and sharply defined units which have been compared to the pre-Spanish *barangay* on the coastal lowlands of the Philippine Islands.[1] These constituted labour pools which could be manipulated by an emergent ruling group in whom was institutionalized the fusion of political status and control over labour. And we must remember that in these early centuries control over labour, not control over land, was the sociological basis of authority.[2]

As to the ideological framework within which these developments took place, we can say little with certainty. It has been postulated that in the earliest times the root-crop gardeners had already acquired a deep respect for their ancestors and a belief in the existence of both remote deities who controlled the elemental forces of nature and local spirits of more limited power and unpredictable temperament.[3] At a succeeding stage, among *ladang* farmers, there arose a warrior's ethos of head-hunting. Among other contemporary or, possibly, later groups, head-hunting was replaced by ritual sacrifice. These two ways of obtaining scalps were usually mutually

exclusive in South-East Asia, but in both the head was regarded as a talisman of fertility, power and health. Nor is this all speculation and analogy. Dong So'n bronze drums not uncommonly portray exultant warriors in the tall feather head-dresses which even today distinguish successful Malaysian head-hunters, and Professor Heine-Geldern has claimed to recognize the objects which some of the warriors carry in their right hands as the skulls of defeated enemies.[4] With the spread of wet-*padi* farming and the consequent attachment of groups of agriculturalists to the gods of specific localities, religious thought seems to have become increasingly complex. It is hazardous to speculate on the degree of sophistication which Dong-So'n religion may have attained at its apogee, but its relatively complex cosmological dualism of mountain and sea, its burial customs and its stone monuments testify to a considerable degree of theological speculation.

At about the beginning of the Christian era the culture of the isthmian tract of the peninsula was transformed by an infusion of traits from the Indian subcontinent. Petty traders, working their way from village to village through the archipelago and mainland, had for long familiarized South-East Asians with products of India and the grosser material aspects of her culture. Subsequently there was established between the ruling *varna* of India and the tribal chieftains of South-East Asia a cross-cultural link (Chapters 3 and 4) which revolutionized authority relationships in the latter region. Glimpses of this process by which supra-village political units emerged first in Campā, the Lower Mekong valley and on the isthmus of the Malay Peninsula, and later in Java and Borneo, are afforded by Chinese dynastic histories and encyclopedias. At the core of this transformation which replaced culture with civilization was the concept of the god-king. Holding power by virtue of a manifest divinity that transcended the *'adat* of the tribe, the god-king was liberated from the traditional constraints that had limited the personal power of the tribal chieftain. In other words,

his inherent divinity as a visible form of the godhead was reflected in the total absolutism of his political authority. Such divine incarnation, characteristic of Hindu and Mahāyāna kingdoms, was obviously incompatible with the theological premises of the Theravāda states of later times. Here the justification of kingship was the monarch's good *karma*, that is, his religious merit acquired in previous lives. But both theories of monarchy were easily subverted in the interests of usurpation. In a Hindu state he who could demonstrate that he was an incarnation of Śiva or Viṣṇu was *ipso facto* justified in seizing the supreme power; in a Buddhist kingdom a would-be ruler who could display a *karma* of great strength was virtually entitled to the throne even though he acquired it through the blackest of treachery.[5] Something of this is hinted at in the tale of the Langkasukan kṣatrīya who manifested supernatural power by breaking his fetters and was subsequently raised to the throne by brāhmaṇ ministers of state. It appears even more clearly in the assumption of power in the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain by a divinely inspired brāhmaṇ from P'an-p'an.[6]

The legalization of a monarch's status as a god-king required the ministrations of a staff of priests of the brāhmaṇ *varṇa* who alone could consecrate the king and, by means of an appropriate ritual, ensure the concentration of Śiva's (or Viṣṇu's) cosmic essence within the royal body during its lifetime. In the early days of incipient Indianization these brāhmaṇs were perhaps drawn at least to some extent from India, but in later days South-East Asian families seemed to have aspired to this rank in considerable numbers. In ancient Cambodia brāhmaṇ chaplains (*purohita*) featured prominently in inscriptions, the appointment of *purohita* to the *deva-rāja* being at one time reserved exclusively to the family of Śivakaivalya. A dearth of epigraphic records prevents our attaining such a detailed knowledge of events on the Malay Peninsula, but there are abundant references in Chinese histories to the

important role of brāhmaṇ ministers in the isthmian kingdoms. Here we need only draw the reader's attention to the college of brāhmaṇs, more than a thousand strong, in Tun-sun (Chap. 4); the brāhmaṇ officials of the Red-Earth Land (Chap. 5); the eight high brāhmaṇ ministers of Tan-tan (Chap. 6); and the numerous brāhmaṇs high in favour with the king of P'an-p'an (Chap. 5). But consecration and divine possession were not the only requirements of a ruler. Protection from rivals—who might also claim incarnate divinity—and enforcement of inspired decrees necessitated the maintenance of a corps of kṣatrīyas who, in return for material support would act as personal and household guards and as organizers of the army. In time these religious and military personnel came to form a predominantly hereditary *élite* who progressively assumed the character and functions of a bureaucracy rather than of a personal staff to a ruler.[7]

The fact that the maintenance of these clerical and military staffs was beyond the competence of a village chieftain foreshadowed subsequent territorial developments. Certain chiefs, by reason of organizing ability, bravery, wealth or kinship alliances began to emerge as leaders among their class and to establish regional chiefdoms, consolidating their control with the cement of their personal divinity and a consecrated stratification of social status among their subjects. In this context there began to develop competition among emergent god-kings for control of neighbouring villages, not for the sake of their territories as such but for the purpose of controlling their labour reservoirs—what Professor Geertz in a perceptive study has called those "traditionally bound packages of labor".[8] Thus arose the nuclei of the isthmian kingdoms discussed above. Possibly the period of transition can be discerned in the Chinese ambassador's account of Tun-sun, a state in the far north of the peninsula in which five territorial chieftains acknowledged the supremacy of a *kuruṅ*. Subsequently, as the preceding

chapters will have demonstrated, from the Meklong in the north to the Mĕrbok in the south nearly every coastal plain afforded a base for a miniature kingdom. In the north, the narrowest sector of the peninsula constituted the territory of a state known only by the Chinese reduplicated transliteration of P'an-p'an. Southwards, as the peninsula broadens, it is possible to distinguish a dual succession of kingdoms, one series focussing on the east coast, and one on the west. In the east, in order from north to south were Tāmbraliṅga, Langkasuka, the Red-Earth Kingdom and Tan-tan, together with, at a later date, Kĕlantan, Trĕngganu and Pahang; in the west were Kra (Kalāh), Takola and Kĕdah.

Associated with the development of these Indianized kingdoms was a new landscape feature, the town. Where Hinduism prevailed the old spirit-house of the tribal village had been transformed into a temple housing the sacred *liṅga*, the palladium of the state, which marked the axis of the kingdom. Adjacent to this national sanctuary was the palace of the god-king, as nearly commensurate with his cosmic status as the resources of the kingdom permitted; and grouped round about were the residences of the brāhmaṇ ministers, the barracks of the royal guard and the royal rice granaries. Beyond these clustered the quarters of the artisans who ministered to the needs of the court. In a Theravāda Buddhist state the axis was not a temple—there are no gods, no temples and no cults in the Theravāda discipline—but the royal palace. Otherwise the capital of a *cakravartin* did not differ significantly from that of a *Hindu ruler*. Wherever possible both enclosed a reproduction, either natural or artificial, of Mount Meru, the cosmic mountain of ancient India round which sun, moon and stars revolved, and atop of which was located the national shrine. By thus constructing the city as a world in miniature, the state was brought into accord with the cosmic harmony, and the national welfare and prosperity linked to the great parallelism

that held between Man and the Universe. Typically the walls of such a city faced squarely in the direction of the four sacred winds. Roads, buildings and even the dwellings of officers of state were oriented in the same direction, and at the centre rose the eminence that *was* Mount Meru, for the ancients did not distinguish effectively between symbol and substance. In Java, Cambodia and Burma these attributes of the city are readily recognizable in archaeological and epigraphic remains, but on the Malay Peninsula, where specific evidence is lacking, we can only surmise that the city-states were laid out on the principles which obtained wherever Indian culture set its stamp. However, there are a few pertinent remarks embedded here and there in Chinese histories, and these have received appropriate comment in the preceding pages.

It must not be assumed that these phases of socio-cultural development proceeded uninterruptedly throughout the whole of what I have called the Isthmian Age. Boundaries were unknown but frontiers—wastes of uninhabited forest separating tracts of more or less permanent settlement—fluctuated constantly, and states underwent a continual process of absorption and fission as charismatic rulers competed for control over labour in the villages scattered peripherally around the capitals of the city-states. Of one isthmian state achieving a permanent hegemony over its neighbours there is no evidence whatever. Such qualified political unity as does from time to time gleam through the obscurities of our texts was invariably imposed from without, and then never wholly enveloped the peninsula. Even Kĕdah in its heyday as a nerve centre of the Śri Vijayan thalassocracy could extend its dominion no farther north than Kra. From the dissolution of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain in the middle of the sixth century A.D. until the southward advance of the T'ais in the second half of the thirteenth century the isthmus was politically divided, first among a group of competing city-states, and then between the

continental power of the Khmers in the north and the thalassocracy of Sri Vijaya in the south. Throughout this period the southern half of the peninsula remained a land of forest and swamp, inhabited by aborigines whose ancient *'adat* preserved its character essentially uninfluenced by alien cultures.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries an expanding demand for Asian luxuries in the cities of Renaissance Europe induced a quickening of international trade throughout Malaysia, which in turn induced the emergence of a series of bazaar cities on both sides of the Asian Mediterranean,* that great seaway running from the Strait of Mĕlaka through the Java and Flores Seas to the Bandas and Moluccas. For a time in the fourteenth century the inland Javanese kingdom of Majapahit made strenuous efforts to assert her authority over this developing commerce, in which attempt she was succeeded in the fifteenth century by the bazaar cities of the North Javanese coast. But no Javanese state, neither the territorial empire of the interior nor any of the port-kingdoms of the north, was sufficiently powerful to overcome the incubus of a disadvantageous geographical situation, and primacy among the port cities of fifteenth-century Malaysia passed to Mĕlaka, located on the strategically critical sector of the great trade-route stretching from the Moluccas to Venice and beyond. Founded —or rather commandeered—more or less fortuitously by a regicide from Singhapura at the head of a band of corsairs, in less than a quarter of a century the fishing village had become the chief entrepôt for the whole of South-East Asia. There, where monsoons met, the commerce of India was merged with that of China and the archipelago. Even more crucial for Mĕlaka's prosperity than this focal situation was her ability to control the spice trade passing between the Moluccas and the Mediterranean. Through the Archipelago, and again through the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, spices could be shipped by many routes, but to the Strait of Mĕlaka, a natural

* Geertz's apposite phrase, *The Development of the Javanese Economy*, p. 60

funnel in places less than forty miles wide, there was no practicable alternative. The power that ruled the Strait was in a position to apply a tourniquet to the world's major artery of trade, and the whims of a Malay ruler would be the final arbiter of prices in the Hansa ports of North-West Europe. This was the situation Tomé Pires had in mind when he coined his famous phrase, "Whoever is lord of Mēlaka has his hand on the throat of Venice."[9]

Into the new port flocked Malays from the archipelago, Gujaratis, Parsis, Klings and Arabs, merchants and adventurers from all the trading ports of South and East Asia. And it was not impossible for a foreigner of comparatively humble origins to rise—though only through treachery and violence—to the highest office in the realm, and on one occasion to attain the supreme rule. The cosmopolitan heterogeneity of Mēlaka, where a basically traditionalistic Malay population was strongly leavened by a turbulent foreign element, was ill-suited to receive waves of charismatic power transmitted through the medium of a god-king, the more so as a large proportion of the merchant fraternity was Muslim by religion. Nor was a divinely inspired, but economically constricting, stratification of society likely to appeal to this individualistic merchant class. Islam, on the contrary, was particularly well adapted to this situation. Professor Geertz has described the symbiosis between Islam and what he calls speculative, adventurous capitalism in the following words: "Mosque and (pre-capitalist) market are a natural pair in the sense that the far-flung, small bulk speculative commerce the second implies creates the kind of social experience (and the kind of social man) to which the teaching of the first seems especially relevant and the social forms in which those teachings are cast especially well designed. The spiritual equality of all men in the face of the absolute majesty of God, the common community of all who live under His explicitly revealed, humanly unquestioned and utterly comprehensive laws, and the ethical universalism

in terms of which true believers are obligated to treat one another would seem more congenial views of the relation between this world and the next for peripatetic peddlers buying and selling in many markets, among many sorts of people, under all kinds of political order; much more congenial than a theory holding a particular local administrative bureaucracy to be a spiritually graded hierarchy culminating in a fusion of the divine and human at its apex. For Hinduism's attempt to sacralize a political community built around inequalities in military power, Islam substituted an attempt to sacralize a commercial community, built around commonalities in economic motivation...".[10]

In the light of this analysis, it is not surprising that Islam had firmly established itself in Malaya before the middle of the fifteenth century. Not only did it free the foreign (and Malay) merchant class from the oppressive stratification of Hinduism, but it also brought the Malays into an ideological comity that was international, it made them citizens of the world instead of subjects of a god-king in a narrowly circumscribed river valley.*

The geography of Mĕlaka town has been described above. In many ways it was typical of the bazaar cities of South and East Asia. It was composed essentially of ethnically homogeneous "quarters", each being under the control, officially or informally, of a headman. Some of these headmen, such as Utimutiraja of Kampong Java, wielded considerable authority amounting virtually to limited rights of extraterritoriality.

* Since this w written Dr. A. Johns has called attention to the probable role of the Ṣūfī orders in the propagation of Islam in the Malay world: "Sufism as a category in Indonesian literature and history", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Singapore, 1961), pp. 10-23. Dr. Johns is still in the process of clarifying and elaborating his stimulating hypothesis, and at this juncture I would only suggest that the success of the Ṣūfī teachers owed much to the milieu of social tension and conflict that had developed in the port cities of Malaysia as the forms and institutions deriving from the old traditionally stereotyped Hindu and Buddhist civilizations proved increasingly inadequate—and unadaptable—to a burgeoning volume and variety of commercial transactions.

The several ethnic groups were socially insulated from each other and self-contained in a manner strongly reminiscent of the Middle Eastern Muslim city.[11] Inter-ethnic relations, except among the wealthiest members of each community (when they were not always harmonious), were restricted to rigorously competitive commercial dealings. Socially superior to even the wealthiest of the merchant princes were the members of the Malay ruling *élite*, and at the apex of the social pyramid came the Sultan, the Shadow of God upon Earth and not, therefore, fundamentally different from the *god-king* in his fusion of divine with political status. As mediators between the Malay ruling class and the predominantly foreign[12] commercial community there were four shahbandars, three of whom in the latter days of Malay Mēlaka were often themselves foreigners.

All these groups, Malay, Javanese, Sumatran, Bugis, Gujarati, Persian and Arab, were theoretically welded into a unity, the *ummah Muḥammadiyyah*, by a pervading loyalty to the tenets of Islam. In practice their loyalty was to their own ethnic group, its customary law and its welfare rather than to the city of Mēlaka. Malays were jealous of Javanese, Gujeratis of Arabs, and all were suspicious of the Hindu Tamil. The foreigners, in any case more often than not transients with no permanent stake in the town, were residents in, but not citizens of, Mēlaka, and they resented the Malay *élite* as existing parasitically on the profits of their commerce. In other words, the town was a mosaic of communities each with its own interests which, in normal times, were polarized into a common orientation by the coercive forces of commerce. But when the very success of Mēlaka's monopoly of the spice trade induced the intervention of new forces from outside the Asian realm, and the polarizing force was thereby disrupted, then the loosely assembled mosaic fell apart, and a troop of half-hearted, scurvy-ridden soldiery, driven on by one dedicated man, was able to overthrow the premier city of South-East Asia.

Appendix 1

THE STATUARY OF THE MALAY PENINSULA IN EARLY TIMES

"The Venerable Ānanda: The half of the holy life, Lord, is friendship with the beautiful, association with the beautiful, intimacy with the beautiful.

The Exalted One: Say not so, Ānanda; it is the whole, not the half of the holy life. Of a monk who has friendship, companionship, intimacy with the beautiful, this is to be expected: that he will develop the Āryan Eightfold Path, make much of it".

Saṃyutta Nikāya

"When a man proceeding onwards from terrestrial things by the right way of loving, once comes to sight of that Beauty, he is not far from his goal. And this is the right way...he should begin by loving earthly things for the sake of the absolute loveliness, ascending to that as it were by degrees or steps, from the first to the second, and thence to all fair forms; and from fair forms to fair conduct, and from fair conduct to fair principles, until from fair principles he finally arrive at the ultimate principle of all and learn what absolute beauty is. This life, my dear Socrates, said Diotima, if any life at all is worth living, is the life that a man should live, in the contemplation of absolute Beauty...."

Plato: *Symposium*

Translated by Robert Bridges

The art of South-East Asia in early times was inspired by Indian concepts, either Buddhist or Hindu, and Indian art was wholly religious, with a primary purpose of instructing the devotee, of communicating to him the essential truths of his religion. It was, in fact, utilitarian in aim, didactic in treatment, and dedicated to producing objects of worship in a culture which was ordered and given purpose by religious belief. The Indian artist did not seek consciously to produce a work of art, but rather to teach the way to a spiritual

experience. Although he worked within a strict metaphysical canon which ensured that his creation was a fit object of worship, aesthetics as such played no part in his thought. An evaluation of a work as beautiful by Western standards is consequently irrelevant to its original purpose. As Ananda Coomaraswamy has said, "All things in India have been valued in the light of one ruling passion, the desire to realise a spiritual inheritance."*

The Indian artist, then, sought not to rival the creations of Nature, but to interpret them. In this connection it is important to remember that the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon were merely different aspects of the one, single Supreme Being, manifested in countless forms and attributes. The depiction of so magnificent a conception of godhead was far beyond the attainment of an art which merely imitated Nature, and this the Indian artist never attempted. Instead he sought "to suggest the Idea behind sensuous appearance, not to give the detail of the seeming reality, that was in truth but *māyā*, illusion... To mistake the *māyā* for reality were error indeed." And, to give point to these remarks, Coomaraswamy invokes a passage from the *Bhagavad Gītā:* "Men of no understanding think of Me, the unmanifest, as having manifestation, knowing not My higher being to be changeless, supreme", [VII, 24].† It is not surprising, therefore, that the Indian artist did not use a model for his god or Buddha, but drew on thoughts and feelings stored in his memory, and these could be evoked only by the age-old practice of ecstatic meditation. With the aid of religious exercises the sculptor strove to attune his mind to that of the deity whom he was portraying, itself an attribute of the Supreme Being, the Infinite. Osvald Sirén has called this "the

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* *Essays in National Idealism* (Madras, 1909).

† *The Aims of Indian Art* (London, 1908), p. 4.

highest form of conception, the purest kind of inspiration. The knower becomes the object of his knowledge, the artist the thing he visions or conceives, and if he possesses the proper means of exteriorization, he will transmit in symbols or shapes or signs something which contains a spark of that eternal stream of life or consciousness which abides when forms decay."*

An art deriving from these premises had no place for the cult of anatomical exactitude, but led inevitably to symbolism. Only thus could the artist confront the supplicant simultaneously with the truths of his belief and with the gods with whom he must communicate in prayer. "Indian symbols of art voice the same truth as Indian philosophy and myth. They are signals along the way of the ... pilgrim's progress directing human energies to the same goal of transmutation. Our task, therefore ... is to understand the abstract conceptions of India's philosophical doctrines as a kind of intellectual commentary on what stands crystallised and unfolded in the figures and patterns of symbolism and art..."† It follows that the multiple arms and heads which occurred so frequently in Indian sculpture were simply a symbolic means of displaying simultaneously the divers attributes of the deities. The stylized postures each conveyed to the devotee significant and specific truths of his faith. More will be said about these postures in connection with particular statues. Related to this use of symbolism in Indian art was the common custom of depicting all the important incidents of a story on a single panel. The principal characters were represented as many times as was necessary to enable the observer to grasp the complete story.

* "Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism and its relation to art," *The Theosophical Path* (1934).

† Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* (1945), pp. 195-6.

To an artist working within the tradition described above, there was nothing to be gained by making an exact replica of a man's outward appearance. What the Indian sculptor was trying to do was to produce the universal man of which his subject was a particular manifestation. This meant that there was hardly any difference in the treatment of the body of a human and that of a god, for both were represented in universal, not particular, form—as the reality behind the shadow. Muscles, veins and bones were never emphasized and seldom depicted. Even Śiva Naṭarāja in the dionysian frenzy of his dance of eternal becoming on the last night of the world is poised in a serenely cadenced movement which shows no sign of strain. The whirling turn is evoked solely by the positioning of the legs, not by muscular tension. It is as though the god personified the stillness at the heart of the eternal flux of creation and dissolution. One might say that in Indian sculpture energy and ecstasy are evoked, not imprisoned. There are no Samsons defeating Philistines and no dying Gauls; in other words, no descriptions, only emblematic evocations in a language intelligible to all spiritually minded men.

BUDDHIST ART

Over thirty years ago E. B. Howell pointed out that, though the Buddha himself renounced the world and its vanities, the *Saṅgha* which he founded appropriated the artistic heritage of the Āryan people of India.* The Lord Buddha himself reputedly forbade his own portrayal, so that for five hundred years his presence was represented on carved reliefs by the Bodhi Tree (under which he had attained enlightenment), the Wheel of the Law (which he had set turning at Sārnāth), his footprints (symbolic of his first act after he was born, namely the taking of seven steps to proclaim his supremacy

* *A Handbook of Indian Art* (London, 1927).

over the world), a water-jar containing sprays of lotus (the flower which blossomed at every miraculous step), a stūpa (the reliquary mound erected over his ashes), an empty saddle (signifying Prince Siddhārtha's flight from the worldly life on his horse Kanthaka), a vacant throne (indicative of the Buddha's supremacy), or an umbrella (symbol of royalty). But as the Buddha came gradually to occupy the position of a god in popular imagination, so his statue began to appear in Indian art. As there were no authentic portraits—and probably even had there been such exemplars—he was conceived according to certain canonical formulae. Invariably he was represented as the *Mahā-Puruṣa* (Great Personage) endowed with thirty-two major symbols and eighty minor ones.

Among the major symbols the *uṣṇīṣa* and the *ūrṇa* were pre-eminent. The former, which appeared as a protuberance on the crown of the Buddha's head, symbolized the flame which emanated from the Thousand-petalled Lotus in the brain of the Enlightened and, as it exceeded normal bodily extension, signified that the Buddha, too, surpassed all limits. The *ūrṇa*, (the third eye of developed wisdom) was shown as a nodule, in later times a jewel, between the eyebrows. Tradition characterized it as the source of a light illuminating the dark places of the universe and symbolizing the supreme spiritual power of the Buddha. Although *bhikṣus* invariably did and do shave their heads, the Buddha, even though a monk, was depicted with hair rolled into curls. This convention commemorated the legend that when the Śākya Muni encountered the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, earliest of the line of Buddhas, he spread his hair as a mat before Dīpaṅkara, upon which all the powers of Dīpaṅkara were transmitted to the Śākya Muni. The curl itself, by reason of its circular shape, was a symbol of eternity, and the right-hand spiral in which it was represented symbolized the motion of the sun and the path of life. The enlarged ear lobes of the Buddha signified that he was all-hearing. Generations of craftsmen and artists

learnt to depict the body of the Enlightened One as perpetually youthful, calm and self-possessed, like "a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker", a vehicle of dynamic psychological power. The best of the seated Buddha figures are pure monumental art, eloquent symbols of what a man may become after lifetimes of struggle.

The earliest statuary showing Indian influence in South-East Asia is Buddhist, for it was Buddhism which undermined the Hindu aversion to foreign travel and they were Buddhists apparently who pioneered the exploration of Suvarṇadvīpa. The earliest *rūpas* (images) are in the style of the later Āndhra period as typified by sculptures at Amarāvatī. They have been discovered as far afield as Sulawesi, eastern Java, Vietnam, Sumatra, and, finally, P'ong-Tŭk, where Professor George Coedès unearthed a bronze walking Buddha in this style **[1]**.* The hands, one of which is broken off, are in the position of *abhaya mudrā* (freedom from fear), and the figure wears the Buddhist robe (*saṅghāṭī*), though in this instance the right shoulder is not bared as in typical Amarāvatī style. Although the figure is of less fine workmanship than that of the best Āndhra bronzes, it does preserve something of the rhythmic tension, the free movement of the hips, the so-called Greek folds of the drapery, and the low *uṣṇīṣa* characteristic of that school. The billowing fold at the bottom of the mantle is less evident than in most Amarāvatī-style Buddhas. There is a conflict of opinion as to the date of this statue. Professor Coedès ascribes it to the second century A.D., but Sir John Marshall will admit no date earlier than the fifth century.[1]

At the same site Professor Coedès discovered several small bronze standing images of the Buddha with the stiff draperies and conventionalized body treatment of the Gupta style.

* Numbers in bold type refer to the items listed in the Catalogue at the end of the Appendix.

Coomaraswamy has called the art of this period "the flower of an established tradition, a polished and perfected medium, like the Sanskrit language, for the statement of thought and feeling ... Philosophy and faith possess a common language in this art that is at once abstract and sensuous, reserved and passionate." In all periods of Indian art garments were assimilated to the form of the body so as not to mask the plastic rhythms evoked by the figure beneath, but this tendency achieved its maximum expression in the Gupta period where the body appeared nude beneath a diaphanous cloth. The statuettes from P'ong Tŭk **[2]** are of poor workmanship, lacking the subtle convexities of typical Gupta art, but their affinity to that genre is clearly evident. In the best of them it is possible to make out the snail-shell convention in the representation of the hair, the prominent *uṣṇiṣa* and the lotiform eye separated from the brow by a razor-edge, all characteristic of Gupta art. Contrariwise, the figures preserve the elongated form of Amarāvātī, together with the heavily billowing fold of the *saṅghāṭi,* now strangely anomalous when the pleats of the drapery no longer undulate obliquely across the body in momentarily arrested movement. It is unlikely that any of these statuettes is much later than the sixth century.[2]

One of the most interesting of Malayan Buddhist relics was discovered by Dr. Quaritch Wales at a site in the Bujang valley of Kĕdah. This is a bronze standing image of the Buddha, 8½ in. high, which apparently represents a transition from Amarâvatī to Gupta style **[3]**. The treatment of the drapery and torso, the swelling roundness of the face, the lightly outlined eyebrows and full upper eyelids are characteristically Gupta, but the bare right shoulder, the low *uṣṇīṣa,* and the gathering of the robe into folds falling below the left hip are derived from the Amarāvatī school. The figure exhibits a marked *hanchement,* which we must presume to be a provincial exaggeration of the much slighter axial break

that imparted a quality of litheness to the Sārnāth Buddhas. This is perhaps a debased *tribhaṅga* pose, possibly originally adapted for Buddhist purposes from Hindu art. The right hand, of which the fingers have been broken, is extended in *varada mudrā*, conveying the promise of the fulfilment of the wishes of devotees. The fifth century A.D. has been proposed as the date of this statue.[3]

From Vieng Srā (City of the Lake) on the Luang River in South T'ailand, comes a small sandstone bas-relief of pure Gupta style **[4]**, which also exhibits a decided *hanchement*. Like the Kedah Buddha, the right hand is in *varada mudrā*. Dr. Wales ascribes this figure to the sixth or seventh century A.D.[4]

In 1931 a bronze Buddha in Gupta style was dredged up at Pĕngkalen, near Ipoh **[5]**. The upper portion of the statue was broken off by looters in 1941, but has since been reconstructed in plaster from photographs. The figure was free-standing, with the hands in *abhaya mudrā*. It dated probably from the sixth century A.D.[5] With this figure was found a bronze throne, on which a Buddha must have formerly been seated in European fashion **[6]**. The plainness of the style led Dr. Wales to propose a date not later than the sixth century A.D.[6] Early in the present century a small free-standing bronze image of the Buddha was found—it is claimed below some sixty feet of alluvium—at Tanjong Rambutan **[7]**. It passed into private ownership and only a blotched photograph has been published, but it appears to have been of Gupta style, with the hands in *abhaya mudrā*. Possibly it was a seventh-century creation.[7]

With the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism the conception of the Bodhisattva ousted that of the Arhat as the human ideal. A Bodhisattva is a being of immeasurable compassion who refrains from entering into full Buddhahood so as to be able to help suffering humanity.

"Because I could not muse apart
In world-oblivious ecstasy,
But felt like fire-drops on my heart
The tears of all humanity,
I cast aside that source of pride
The glittering robe of selfish peace,
And donned the dress of painfulness
Until all others' pain should cease.

In house and market, shop and cell,
Wherever men in bondage be,
Yea, in the very depth of Hell,
My puissant pity sets them free.
Nor shall I cease to strive for peace
Till every trembling blade of grass
That feels with pain the sting of rain
Into Nirvana's bliss shall pass.

Let me endure unending pains,
Drain to the dregs grief's bitterest cup;
While one unhappy life remains
My own I cannot render up.
Nirvana's joy would only cloy
Should it to me alone befall:
Closed evermore Nirvana's door
Unless I enter last of all."[8]

The Mahāyāna universe subsumes numerous Bodhisattva, of whom the most important to mortals still struggling in the coils of the Chain of Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca-samuppāda*) is Avalokiteśvara (The Lord who Looks Down). This magnificently compassionate Bodhisattva, who can assist even those in *Avīci*, the deepest of all purgatories, was commemorated in innumerable statues. Always Avalokiteśvara was depicted as a king, signifying temporality in contrast to the spirituality of the Buddha. Robes were almost invariably

elaborate and the torso was often covered in jewels. In Malaya an impressive, free-standing bronze image, 31 inches high, was dredged up in a tin-mine at Bidor **[8]**. It is immediately identifiable by the presence of a *dhyānī Amitābha Buddha*—the presiding deity in the highest Mahāyānist heaven, where the blest are reborn in the buds of lotuses—in the towering head-dress. This so-called head-dress is actually a pyramidal crown composed of rhythmically arrayed locks of hair (*jaṭāmukuṭa*). Statues of Avalokiteśvara took many forms. The 108 which are painted on a running panel in colour in the Macchandar Vahal (the temple of Matsyendranātha, the great Nātha Yogin) have been analysed by Benoytosh Bhattacharyya,* and the example from Bidor approximates closely to the form known as Mahāvajranātha *Lokeśvara.* It is eight-armed, with the hands holding the following symbols:

Right	*Left*
(i) *Akṣamālā* (rosary)	(i) *Pustaka* (book)
(ii) *Tridaṇḍī* (trident)	(ii) *Pāśa* (noose)
(iii) Arm broken off but, by analogy with Bhattacharyya's illustration, may have been in *abhaya mudrā*	(iii) *Padma* (lotus)
	(iv) *Kalasa* (water vessel)
(iv) In *varada mudrā*	

This statue also exhibits another interesting, and perhaps significant, iconographical feature, namely a tiger head on the right thigh. Dr. Lamb has suggested that this symbol, which so far has been found only on statues from the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula, the west coast of Sumatra and western Borneo, may have been restricted, within South-East Asia, to the art of Śrī Vijaya.†

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* *The Indian Buddhist Iconography, mainly based on the Sādhanamālā* (Oxford, 1924), p. 185 and plate 60.

† "A note on the tiger symbol in some South-East Asian representations of Avalokitesvara", *Federation Museums Journal,* vol. 6, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), pp. 89-90.

Another bronze statue of Avalokiteśvara, 11 inches high, was discovered at a depth of about twenty feet in an open-cast tin-mine at Sungei Siput **[9]**. This time the image took the form of a four-armed *jaṭāmukuṭa Lokeśvara* on a lotus pedestal. Image, pedestal and backing were each cast separately. One hand is now missing, but the *mudras* were originally as follows:

Right	*Left*
(i) *Akṣamālā* (rosary)	(i) *Kalaśa* (water vessel)
(ii) In *varada mudrā*	(ii) Broken, but formerly held the *padma* (lotus), a remnant of which is still visible against the left shoulder.

Finally, from a neighbouring mine in 1938 came a bronze image of Avalokiteśvara seated in *lalitāsana,* that is, with the right leg extended towards the ground in European fashion and the left crossed with the sole of the foot upwards **[10]**. The image, which has been taken out of the country, has only been described from photographs which are too indistinct to permit the definitive identification of all the symbols, but Dr. Wales believes them to have been:

Right	*Left*
(i) *Akṣamālā* (rosary)	(i) Possibly disposed in a *mudrā*
(ii) Perhaps *dhanu* (bow)	(ii) Either *daṇḍa* (staff) or a broken *aṇkuśa* (goad)
(iii) *Kartri* (knife)	(iii) *Kalasa* (water vessel)
(iv) *Varada mudrā*	(iv) *Padma* (lotus)

These three Mahāyāna bronzes have all been ascribed without controversy to the period from the eighth to tenth centuries A.D.[9]

The masterpiece of early peninsular Buddhist sculpture is now only a fragment. It consists of the head and torso, in black bronze (T'ai=*samrit*), of a Bodhisattva, most probably a form of Avalokiteśvara, though this cannot be determined for certain as the head-dress is missing **[11]**. It was brought to Bangkok from Vat Brah Dhatu at C'āiya by H.R.H. the Prince Damrong. The breaking of the body on its axis indicates that the complete figure was cast in an easy *tribhaṅga* pose common to all periods of Indian sculpture, and the effect of lissomness which this imparts to the statue is emphasized by the sacred thread of the twice-born that passes from the left shoulder diagonally across the body and reaches below the waist. The precision of detail of the decoration, exquisite in itself, sharp and hard in definition, is used in typically Indian fashion to enhance the texture of the flesh, and to suggest a vibrant inner tension expressing itself in a magnificent plastic quality in the bronze. Particularly is this evident around the navel, in the neck folds and where a cord passes in front of the right shoulder. The figure exhibits strong affinities with the bronzes of Nālandā and the ninth- or tenth-century sculptures of the Pāla dynasty, and there can be no doubt that it is there that we should look for its inspiration. Its style is especially close to that of the famous Sānchī torso, probably datable between the seventh and ninth centuries, which has been published on many occasions, but is perhaps most readily accessible in a splendid reproduction in Benjamin Rowland's *The Art and Architecture of India* (Harmondsworth, third rearranged impression, 1954).

Several other Pāla-style Bodhisattvas have been found in the isthmian region. Among these is a standing *Lokeśvara* in black bronze, holding a lotus in its left hand and with its right arm extended in *varada mudrā* **[12]**. The jewelled ornaments on neck and arms and the head-dress are finely modelled, but the lower half of the figure is of a poorer order of workmanship. There is no sacred thread of the twice-born,

though a scarf is draped diagonally across the body where the thread normally runs. Dr. Le May has ascribed this figure to the ninth century.[10] Closely resembling this figure in style, but of finer workmanship, is a mutilated statue of a standing Lokeśvara in black bronze, like No. 11 a treasure from the Vat Brah Dhatu **[13]**. The legs are broken off below the knees and all eight arms at the elbow, but the head-dress (with a *dhyānī* Buddha) is intact, and the ornaments, including the sacred cord of the twice-born, are modelled with a metallic precision in strong contrast to the texture of the flesh. There is no suggestion of the *tribhaṅga* which imparted such lissomness to the C'ăiya Lokeśvara, and by comparison this figure appears stiff and formal. Professor Coedès, in view of the statue's obvious Pāla affinities, ascribes it to the ninth or tenth century.[11] Also in the Pāla tradition is a stone relief of a seated Lokeśvara believed to have come from the isthmus **[14]**. Its identity is sufficiently established by the carving of a lotus-flower above the left shoulder and a lotus footstool beneath the right foot. The face and torso are especially finelly modelled. The most probable date is the ninth century.

The Vat Sala T'u'ng at C'ăiya has yielded an interesting sandstone standing statue of Lokeśvara **[15]**. The feet and arms are missing, but enough of the figure remains to show that it originally possessed very distinctive characteristics. Chief among these was a total absence of ornamentation, except for the simplest of ear pendants. The body was swathed in a *sarong*, the presence of which is now betrayed solely by a sort of membrane between the legs and a sharply delimited lower border. There was no girdle defining its upper edge, and neither was there any trace of a brāhmaṇic cord. A lion-skin, an attribute of Lokeśvara, is still indicated by incised lines on the left shoulder and breast. In sharp contrast to the plainness and severity of the rest of the figure is the highly elaborate coiffure, which has an apparent affinity with that of a Lokeśvara from Kanheri. Coomaraswamy has

dated this latter to the sixth century A.D.,[12] and it is possible that the C'ăiya figure could be from the same period. The graceful stance, with a gentle hanchement of the right hip and the left knee slightly flexed, imparts to this badly mutilated statue a pleasing, almost feminine, grace. In similar style is another mutilated grey-limestone image of Lokeśvara, also thought to have come from C'ăiya **[16]**. In this instance the features recall those of the pre-Khmer Harihara statue from Asram Maharosei. Coedès doubtfully has proposed a sixth-century origin.[13] The last of the isthmian Bodhisattvas is another from the Vat Brah Dhatu at C'ăiya **[17]**. It is a sandstone Lokeśvara standing on an opened lotus. A *sarong* drapes the lower half of the figure, falling in stylized folds between and on each side of the legs. The decoration is in direct contrast to that of [15] and [16], for whereas the coiffure is simple and ear-pendants lacking, the torso is covered with a profusion of ornament. A lion-skin draped across the back shows the head on the right hip and the tail on the left shoulder. The right hand is in *varada mudrā* and exhibits a wheel incised on the palm. The left hand is broken. So far no one has been able to suggest a plausible date for this statue. Finally mention must be made of a disfigured sandstone head of a Bodhisattva from Khao Nam Ron, near C'ăiya, which seems to show pre-Khmer influence **[18]**.

The last Buddhist statue which we shall mention, reputedly from the Vat Hua Vieng at C'ăiya, poses an important historical problem. It comprises a Hīnayāna Buddha seated on a Nāga, the ensemble being fashioned in black bronze (later gilded) and about 4 ft. in height **[19]**. This is almost the only peninsular statue which can be dated accurately, for the base of the Nāga bears an inscription:

> "In 1105 [Śaka (= A.D.1183)], in the year of the Rabbit, by order of the Kamrateñ Añ Mahārāja Śrīmat.. on the third day of

the waxing moon of Jyeṣṭha... The Mahâsenâpati Galânai, who governs the country of Grâhi, invited Mrateñ Śrî Nâno to make this statue. The weight of the samrit is one bahâra, two tula and the value of the gold used for decoration is ten tamling. Erected for the faithful to venerate and worship."*

The language and orthography of the record approximate closely to those of Old Khmer inscriptions, but the script itself is similar to that of Javanese *Kawi*. Strangest of all, whereas the form and execution of the Nāga bespeak a Khmer origin, the Buddha, which is detachable from its seat, shows not a trace of Cambodian influence. Rather do the posture of the body, the positioning of the legs, which are drawn inwards in sympathy with the cushion-like shape of the Nāga coils, the disposition of the right hand in *bhūmi-sparsa mudrā* (earth-touching gesture), the heavy fold of the robe, oval face, swallow eyebrows and "Dvāravatī" nose point to a Mōn origin. Professor Coedès seems to think that the Buddha is of later date than the Nāga. Dr. Le May, on the other hand, prefers to interpret the two parts of the statue as contemporary, but cast by craftsmen respectively under Mōn and Khmer influence.[14]

With the rise of Tantric Buddhism a new group of feminine divinities came into prominence. They were conceived as the consorts and potency (*śakti*) of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Mahāyānist pantheon, and were often depicted with many arms and in ferocious poses. So far as I know, only one statue of such a divinity has been found on the Malay Peninsula. This is a small bronze image of Tārā, consort of Avalokiteśvara, in Javanese style which was dug up from a depth of 4 feet by a farmer near C'ăiya and photographed by Dr. Quaritch Wales **[20]**. The figure, eight-

* From a French translation by Professor Coedès, *BEFEO*, tome 18 (1918), p. 35.

armed and sitting on a lotus throne, has a hemispherical backing plate. It probably dates from the tenth century.[15]

HINDU ART

It must be emphasized that the Hindu and Buddhist traditions of sculpture are not separate and distinct. These terms denote only the subject matter of the art which derived from the lore of the respective religions, and do not imply differences of technique. At several periods Hindu and Buddhist sculptors worked in virtually identical styles.

Among the more interesting of the Brāhmaṇic sculptures found on the Malay Peninsula are those comprising a group of three figures carved in very high relief on a schistose stele which still stands, though broken into three separate slabs and partly enveloped by the twin trunks of a forest giant, on the bank of the Tākua-pa River **[21]**. These figures were "discovered" in 1905 by W. W. Bourke, commented on in 1909 by Lunet de Lajonquière, photographed and published in 1935 by Dr. Quaritch Wales, and identified in 1949 by Professor Nilakanta Sastri.[16] In the centre stands Gaṅgādhara, Upholder of the Ganges, an honorific bestowed on Śiva who, to save the earth from the impact of the Ganges as it streamed down from the toe of Viṣṇu, caught the waters on his brow and checked their flow with his matted hair. On Gaṅgādhara's right is the saint Bhagīratha, at whose behest the Ganges was first brought down to earth. The third member of the group is Pārvatī, the Mountaineer, wife of the god Śiva and daughter of Himavat, the Himālayas. The style of the group, showing the graceful poses and emotionally expressive gestures, the heart-shaped faces (like the leaf of the pipal-tree) and almost tubular thinness of the limbs, the high relief and iconography, is characteristic of

Pallava sculpture and, in conjunction with the testimony of an inscribed slab found on the same site, implies a date during the ninth century.

Local legend tells that the three figures were formerly enshrined in a small sanctuary whose foundations can be seen on the summit of a neighbouring hill. The statues were supposed to have been dragged thence by Burmese raiders, but abandoned during a squall which was interpreted as a bad omen. Dr. Wales has scorned this story, but to me it seems quite as probable as his own scheme, whereby the statues were abandoned during an attempt to transport them over the hills from Tākua-pa to the east coast of the peninsula.* Recently local Chinese residents have recognized the figures as patron saints, species of *genii loci* as it were, and burnt joss before them.

In the early nineteen-thirties a splendid sandstone statue of Viṣṇu in human form (Vasudeva), over 6 ft. in height, was brought to Bangkok from the hill of P'ra No', near the estuary of the Tākua-pa River **[22]**. The four arms expressive of divine nature clothed in human guise, are now all broken, but in their pristine form were disposed as follows: the upper right hand held a disc, representing the eternal circle of time and the cycle of life; the lower right a lotus symbolic of created power; while the upper left hand held a conch, a symbol of sound, the attribute of Akāsa, the abode of Viṣṇu; and the lower left grasped a club, representing Viṣṇu's ability to destroy the enemies of the world. The god is represented as wearing a tall mitre (*kirīṭa*), and the lower part of the body and most of the legs are draped in a *sarong*-like garment. As befits the Supreme Deity, the statue radiates a majestic placidity. It was probably carved in the seventh century A.D.

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* On this point see Alastair Lamb's recently published paper, "Three statues in a tree: a note on the Pra Narai group, Takuapa", *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 6, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), pp. 64-68.

Another fine sandstone statue of Viṣṇu, 4 ft. 10 in. high and very similar to that of P'ra No', comes from Vieng Sră in the province of Surāṣṭradhānī **[23]**. It is of pure Pallava style, and not even the loss of the two anterior arms has destroyed its virility and poise. It was possibly produced in the eighth century A.D. Yet a third mitred Viṣṇu in sandstone, this time with all but the anterior right arm intact, formerly crowned the summit of C'ăiya hill between Bandon and Surat **[24]**. From Vieng Sră also comes another sandstone Viṣṇu in almost pure Indian style **[25]**. The god is represented with four arms, of which two hold—in a characteristically Indian manner between the index and second fingers—respectively the conch and disc diagnostic of Viṣṇu. One of the other hands is in the posture of *santi*, and the fourth is extended across the upper part of the thigh. Despite the typically Indian detail of the dress and execution of the relief (e.g., the raised background between the head and the upper hands), the face bears traces of Khmer influence. Of peculiar interest is a standing image of Viṣṇu in limestone, 27 inches high, from C'ăiya **[26]**. The posterior left arm is broken off. The decorated head-dress, the enormously distended ear-lobes from which hang large ornaments, and the decoration in general are so peculiarly florid as to be distinctive. Until a few years ago, and probably even now, other similar statues could be seen *in situ* at Năk'ōn Śri Th'ăммărat.

It seems that statues of Śiva were rare on the peninsula, for only one has so far been identified. This is a sandstone statuette in high relief, depicting *Śiva-Bhairava*, (Śiva in his aspect of terror) **[27]**. The god is represented nude and standing with his back against a dog. His four hands hold respectively a trident, a drum, a skull and a noose. The grim face is encircled by flames and snakes are coiled around the loins.

In addition to the figures described above, remains of Brāhmanic images have been located at Vat Mai C'olath'an

and Vat Sala T'u'ng, but they have not to my knowledge been described or photographed, and I have been unable to discover their subsequent history. Various other parts of the peninsula have also yielded odds and ends of Hindu provenance. From the Bujang valley in Kĕdah. for instance, comes a headless and badly weathered terracotta Gaṇeśa, the elephant-headed son of Śiva, and the leader of the Gaṇas, Śiva's capering imps **[28]**.[17] When complete it was about 18 in. high. Of the four arms demanded by Pūraṇic scriptures, only the lower left remains, disposed as if holding a woodapple to be picked up by the trunk. The other hands most probably grasped respectively a lotus, an axe and a ball of rice-cake. The god is seated with his right knee raised in the attitude of *mahārājalīlā* (royal ease). On Sungei Batu Estate, at the foot of Gunong Jĕrai, has been found a badly mutilated image of Durga as *Mahisāsura-mardini* (Destroyer of the Buffalo-Demon) **[29]**, while a broken head from the same site has been interpreted as belonging to Śiva's mount, the bull Nandi **[30]**. Finally, built into a retaining wall near the Stadthuis in Mĕlaka there used to be a stone *makara*, which may either by some chance have survived since Hindu times or, more probably, been imported from Java by a Dutch official. It closely resembles the *makara* of the Prambanan temple complex **[31]**. The *makara* was a curious creature which began its career in Indian mythology as a crocodile. Later it came to be represented by a monstrous combination of fish and elephant, and by medieval times had acquired an enormous fan-like tail.

With the passage of time a retraditionalizing process began to make itself evident in the aesthetic style of Campā, Cambodia and Java. This was a measure of the pervasive success of Indian acculturation and reflected—in Geertz's words—"the progressive stabilization of religious and political power within the ruling class, which comes to look more like an

independent bureaucracy than a personal staff to the king, and the development of a genuine urbanism with true towns."* The fact that Indian cultural influence was strongly represented on the isthmian tract at an early date might have led to the expectation that a specifically peninsular aesthetic spirit would manifest itself during the first millenium A.D. The reason that Malayan historians have failed to distinguish such a manifestation lies in the political history of the isthmus which, for most of this period, was subject to the dominion of outside powers, notably Cambodia and Śrī Vijaya. What we have on the northern territories of the isthmus in the late twelfth century, for example, are competing Cambodian and Mōn aesthetic styles represented by the Hīnayāna Buddha and *Nāga* from Vat Hua Vieng.

It has proved impossible to reproduce more than a handful of the early statues which have been found on the peninsula, so the following catalogue has been prepared to enable the interested reader to consult some of the better reproductions in reasonably easily accessible books and journals, or possibly to arrange to see the statue itself in one of the regional museums.

* * * *

Since this was written Dr. Alastair Lamb has established a new level of excellence for archaeological photography on the peninsula. Among his several series of fine reproductions are included the following:

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* C. Geertz, *The development of the Javanese economy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), pp. 83-84. This retraditionalization is the same process which Max Weber (*The theory of social and economic organization*, New York, 1947) called the routinization of charisma and which, I repeat here, denoted the successful consolidation, not the superficiality, of Indian acculturation. It signified not, as some writers have believed, that local genius was reasserting itself against foreign influence, but that Indian culture had thoroughly pervaded the courts of South-East Asia. It was (Geertz) "a reflection of the increasing success of hinduization (in the more total sense of the word) rather than a breaking loose from it".

1. A dancing figure, 2 feet 6 inches high from Batu Lintang in Kĕdah. The sculpture has been badly weathered, but the style of the head-dress and the attitude of the feet suggest Khmer, or perhaps Cham affinities [*Vide* A. Lamb, "Lifting the veil from Malaya's remote past", *Hemisphere*, vol. 5, no. 8 (Sydney, 1961), p. 6; and *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 5, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1960), plate 179].

2. A free-standing, (apparently) stone Buddha from the museum of Vat Mahatat at Nak'on Śrī Th'ăммărat. [*Federation Musuems Journal*, vol. 6, new series, plate 115].

3. A stone image of Viṣṇu from the same museum [*Ibid.*, plate 114].

CATALOGUE OF STATUARY FROM THE MALAY PENINSULA

1. Provenance. P'ong Tŭ'k, T'ailand.
   Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
   Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Excavations at P'ong Tŭ'k", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 21, pt. 3 (Bangkok, 1928), plates 17 and 18. H.G. Quaritch Wales, *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 28. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 3, and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 27.
2. Provenance. P'ong Tŭ'k, T'ailand.
   Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
   Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Excavations at P'ong Tŭ'k", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 21, pt. 3 (Bangkok, 1928), plate 16. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 6, and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 30.
3. Provenance. Bujang Valley, Kēdah.
   Location. Raffles Museum, Singapore.
   Reproduction. D.C. and H.G. Quaritch Wales, "Further work on Indian sites in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 20, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1947), plates 1 and 2. R. Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London,

1954), Fig. 47. M.W.F. Tweedie, *Prehistoric Malaya* (Singapore, 1955), plate 12. Dato' Sir Roland Braddell, "Most ancient Kedah, Part I", *Malaya in History*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Kuala Lumpur, 1958). S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), pp. 53 and 54.

4. Provenance. Vieng Srǎ, T'ailand.
   Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
   Reproduction. H.G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 9, no. 1 (London, 1935), plate 5 (1), and *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 76.

5. Provenance. Pĕngkalen, near Ipoh.
   Location. National Museum, Kuala Lumpur.
   Reproduction. I.H.N. Evans, "Buddhist bronzes from Kinta, Perak", *Journal of the Federated Malay States' Museums*, vol. 15, pt. 3 (Taiping, 1932), plates 42 and 43. R.O. Winstedt, "A history of Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1935), opp. p. 22. H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 28. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 61.

6. Provenance. Pĕngkalen, near Ipoh.
   Location. Taiping Museum.
   Reproduction. I.H.N. Evans, "Buddhist bronzes from Kinta, Perak", *Journal of the Federated*

Malay States' Museums, vol. 15, pt. 3 (Taiping, 1932), plate 44. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 62.

7. Provenance. Tanjong Rambutan, Perak.
   Location. Unknown (in private ownership).
   Reproduction. A. Wright and H. Cartwright, *Twentieth century impressions of British Malaya* (London, 1908). S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 60.
8. Provenance. Bidor, Perak.
   Location. National Museum, Kuala Lumpur.
   Reproduction. H.G.Q. Wales, "Archaeological researches on ancient Indian colonization in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1940), plate 79. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Śrī Vijaya", *BEFEO.*, tome 40 (1940), plate 5. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 55. Alastair Lamb, *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 6, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), plates 101 and 102; and "Lifting the veil from Malaya's remote past", *Hemisphere*, vol. 5, no. 8 (Sydney, 1961), p. 7.
9. Provenance. Sungei Siput, Perak.
   Location. In private ownership in Sungei Siput.
   Reproduction. H.G.Q. Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (Singa-

pore, 1940), plate 80. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 60.

10. Provenance. Sungei Siput, Perak.
    Location. In private ownership in India.
    Reproduction. H.G.Q. Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1940), plate 81. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the ages* (Third Edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 58.

11. Provenance. Vat Brah Dhatu, C'āiya.
    Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
    Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 4, and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plates 15 and 16. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 40, and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 52. B. Rowland, *The art and architecture of India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (Harmondsworth, third rearranged impression, 1954), plate 165. Photographs of a tinted plaster cast have been published by M. Voretzsch, "Uber altbuddhistische Kunst in Siam", *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, vol. 6 (Berlin, 1917), Fig. 17;

H.R.H. Prince Damrong, *Tamnan Buddhacetiya Syam* (Bangkok, B.E.2469= A.D. 1926), p. 92 and G. Coedès, *Bronzes khmèrs*, tome 5 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1923), plate 47.

12. Provenance. Believed to be from the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 44 and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 54.

13. Provenance. Vat Brah Dhatu, C'ăiya.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 3 and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 17. H.G.Q. Wales, *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 190. Photographs of a tinted plaster cast have been published by H.R.H. Prince Damrong, *Tamnan Buddhacetiya Syam* (Bangkok, B.E. 2469 = A.D. 1926), p. 92. and G. Coedès, *Bronzes khmèrs*, tome 5 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1923), plate 47.

14. Provenance. Believed to be from the isthmian tract of the Malay Peninsula.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 43 and *The Culture of South-East*

Asia (London, 1954), Fig. 53.

15. Provenance. Vat Sala T'u'ung, C'āiya.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 9 and *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 19 (Bangkok, 1925), plate 13 and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plates 12 and 13. H.R.H. Prince Damrong, *Tamnan Buddhacetiya Syam* (Bangkok, B.E. 2469= A.D. 1926), p. 92.

16. Provenance. Possibly C'āiya, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 7 and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 6 [Plates 6 and 11 have been transposed in most copies of this work].

17. Provenance. Vat Brah Dhatu, C'āiya.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 8 and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 14.

18. Provenance. Khao Nam Ron, near C'āiya.

Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, *Les collections archéologiques national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 13.

19. Provenance. Reputedly from Vat Hua Vieng, C'ăiya.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 43 and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 55. G. Coedès, "Le royaume de Çrĩvijaya", *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 18, no. 6 (Hanoi, 1918), plate III.

20. Provenance. Near C'ăiya.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 9, no. 1 (London, 1935), plate 5 (2), and *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 190.

21. Provenance. On north bank of Tăkua-pa river, opposite P'ra Narai Hill, T'ailand.
Location. *In situ.*
Reproduction. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 9, no. 1 (London, 1935), plate 4 (2), (3) and (4), and *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 48. R. Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Figs. 49 and 50. Alastair Lamb, "Lifting the veil from Malaya's remote

past", *Hemisphere*, vol. 5, no. 8 (Sydney, 1961), p. 2 [Bhagīratha only], and *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 6, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), plates 94-98.

22. Provenance. P'ra No' Hill, Tākua-pa.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 9, no. 1 (London, 1935), plate 2 (1).

23. Provenance. Vieng Sră, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Rapport sur les travaux du Service Archéologique pour l'année 2467", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 19 (Bangkok, 1925), plate 13, and "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 14, and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 9. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 48 and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 51.

24. Provenance. Śrī Vijaya Hill, between Bandon and Surat, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. A drawing was reproduced by G. Coedès, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 15.

25. Provenance. Vieng Srǎ, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Rapport sur les travaux du Service Archéologique pour l'année 2467", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 19 (Bangkok, 1925), plate 12; "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (1927), plate 5 and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatic* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 10. H. G. Q. Wales, *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), opp. p. 154.

26. Provenance. C'ǎiya, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national de Bangkok*, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 10. R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam* (Cambridge, 1938), illustration no. 39 and *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), Fig. 48.

27. Provenance. Vieng Srǎ, T'ailand.
Location. National Museum, Bangkok.
Reproduction. G. Coedès, "Rapport sur les travaux du Service Archéologique pour l'année 2467", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 19 (Bangkok, 1925), plate 12, "Recent archaeological progress in Siam", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 1, no. 1 (London, 1927), plate 6, and *Les collections archéologiques du Musée national*

de Bangkok, tome 12 of *Ars Asiatica* (Paris and Bruxelles, 1928), plate 10.

28. Provenance. Bujang Valley, Kĕdah.
Location. Taiping Museum, Perak.
Reproduction. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* vol. 18, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1940), plates 71 and 72. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 30.

29. Provenance. Sungei Batu Estate, Kĕdah.
Location. Taiping Museum.
Reproduction. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 36.

30. Provenance. Sungei Batu Estate, Kĕdah.
Location. Taiping Museum.
Reproduction. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 37. Alastair Lamb, "Lifting the veil from Malaya's remote past", *Hemisphere,* vol. 5, no. 8 (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), p. 7.

31. Provenance. Mĕlaka town.
Location. Mĕlaka town.
Reproduction. R. O. Winstedt, *Malaya* (London, 1923), p. 160. S. Durai Raja Singam, *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, Kuantan, 1954), p. 28. S. Durai Raja Singam, "The makara at Malacca," *Malaya in History,* vol. 4, no. 1 (Kuala Lumpur, 1958), p. 36.

Appendix 2

CHINESE AND ARAB NAMES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

Chan hsiang (an inferior grade of gharuwood) 暫香

Chao Ju-kua 趙汝适

Ch'en hsiang (a superior grade of gharuwood) 沉香 ; also known as p'eng-lai gharuwood 蓬來香

Chen-la 眞臘

Cheng-Ho 鄭和

Ch'ien-Han Shu 前漢書

Chien hsiang (a fibrous and uncompacted grade of gharuwood) 箋香

Chih-Hung 智弘

Ch'ih-t'u Kuo 赤土 國

Ch'ih-t'u Kuo Chi 赤土國記

Chou Ch'ü-fei 周去非

Chou-mei-liu 舟[州]眉流

Ch'üan-chou 泉州

Chu-fan-chih 諸蕃志

Chü-li [Kiu-li] 拘利

Fa-Hsien 法顯. Appeared in *T'ung Tien* as Fa-Ming 法明, after the name Hsien had been appropriated by the Emperor Chung-Tsung.

Fan-Man 范蔓

Fo-kuo Chi 佛國記

Fo-lo-an 佛囉安

Fu-chien Wen-hua 福建文化

Fu-nan 扶南

Ho-ch'ih 荷池

Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan 星槎勝覽
I-Ching 義淨
Kung shih (tribute bearer) 貢使
Liang Shu 梁書
Ling-wai Tai-ta 嶺外代答
Ling-ya-ssŭ-chia (Langkasuka) 凌牙斯加
Lo-yang Ch'ieh-lan Chi 洛陽伽藍記
Lung-ya Chiao-i (Langkawi) 龍牙交椅
Lung-ya-men 龍牙門
Ma Tuan-lin 馬端臨
Mao Yüan-i 茅元儀
Ming Shih 明史
Nan-chao 南詔
Nan-yang Hsüeh-pao 南洋學報
Nan-yang Yen-chiu 南洋研究
P'an-p'an 槃槃，盤盤
Pei Shih 北史
Pien-tou 邊斗
Pi-sung 比嵩
Sheng hsiang (gharuwood pruned from a newly felled tree) 生香
Shih (envoy) 使
Shih-tzu Ch'eng 獅子城
Su hsiang (an inferior grade of gharuwood) 速香
Sui Shu 隋書
Ta-T'ang Hsi-yü Ch'iu-fa Kao-seng Chuan 大唐西域求法高僧傳
T'ai-p'ing Huan-yü Chi 太平寰宇記
T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan 太平御覽
Tan-tan 丹丹，單單
Tao-i Chih-lioh 島夷誌畧
Tao-Lin 道琳
Tun-sun 頓遜

T'ung Tien 通典
Wang Ta-yüan 汪大淵
Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao 文獻通考
Wu-lei 烏雷
Wu-pei-chih 武備志
Yao Ch'a 姚察
Yao Ssŭ-lien 姚思廉
Yin Ch'ing 尹慶
Ying-yai Sheng-lan 瀛涯勝覽
Yüeh 越

In Chinese texts Pahang is referred to variously as 蓬豐, 彭坑, 彭杭 and 彭亨; Kĕlantan as 吉蘭丹; Trĕngganu as 丁家盧 and 丁架路; Kĕdah as 羯茶, 迦乍, 吉達 and 吉陀; Mĕlaka as 滿剌加.

* * * * *

Aloeswood (= gharuwood. Ar.= 'Ūd) عود
Areca palm (= Pĕnang palm. Ar. = Fawfal) فوفل
Camphor كافور
Cardamom (Ar. = qāqulla) قاقلة
Ebony (Ar. = abnūs) ابنوس
Fulū Pāsalar (= Pulau Parcelar = Bukit Jugra) فلو پاسلار
This is the curious version (with P transcribed successively by ف and پ) employed in Arabo-Persian sailing directories.
Fulū Sanbīlan (= Pulau Sĕmbilan) فلو سنبيلان
Iṣba' (= finger: a navigational term) اصبع
Kalāh كلاه كله كلة كلّه كلّة كلاة
Mĕlaka ملاقه ملاق
Qafāṣī قفاصي
Sandalwood سندل
Sappanwood (= brazilwood. Ar. = baqqam) بقم

Singapur سنغافور
Sribuza (= Śrī Vijaya) سريبزة
Ṣūrā صورا
Suwarndib (= Suvarṇadvīpa = Land [specifically "Island"] of Gold) سورن ديب
Tākwā (= Tākua-pa) تاكوا
Tiyūmah (= Tioman) تيومة

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Abbreviations

BEFEO	*Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* (Hanoi)
BKI	*Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië, uitgegeven door het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* ('s-Gravenhage)
BRM	*Bulletin of the Raffles Museum*, series B (Singapore)
JFMSM	*Journal of the Federated Malay States' Museums* (Taiping and Kuala Lumpur)
JMBRAS	*Journal of the Malayan* [formerly *Straits*] *Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Singapore)
JSBRAS	*Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JTG	*The Journal of Tropical Geography* [formerly *The Malayan Journal...*] (Singapore and Kuala Lumpur)
TBG	*Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde uitgegeven door het Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (Batavia and 's-Gravenhage)

Chapter 1. Prolegomena

There are detailed descriptions of the physique of the Malay Peninsula in E. H. G. Dobby's *Southeast Asia* (6th edition, London, 1958), chapter 6, and in Charles Robequain's *Le Monde malais* (Paris, 1946), book 2, chap. 1. Those who prefer evocative to systematic writing can turn to Sir George Maxwell's *In Malay Forests* (first published in 1908 and re-issued in the Malayan Reprint Series in 1957); Sir Hugh Clifford's *Studies in Brown Humanity* (1898), *Malayan Monochromes* (1913), and *The Further Side of Silence* (1917); or Sir Frank Swettenham's *The Real Malay* (1900) and *Malay Sketches* (1903). Papers on Malayan history are scattered through learned journals from all parts of the world, but especially valuable are those in the *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (prior to 1923 the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, instituted in 1878). It was in this Journal that Dato' Sir Roland Braddell presented his pioneer interpretations of early Malayan history: vol. 13, pt. 2 (1935), pp. 70-109; vol. 14, pt. 3 (1936), pp. 10-71; vol. 15, pt. 3 (1937), pp. 64-126; vol. 17, pt. 1 (1939), pp. 146-212; vol. 19, pt. 1 (1941), pp. 21-74; vol. 20, pt. 1 (1947), pp. 161-86 and pt. 2 (1947), pp. 1-10, 10-19; vol. 22, pt. 1 (1949), pp. 1-16, 16-24; vol. 23, pt. 1 (1950), pp. 1-36, 37-51, and pt. 3 (1950), pp. 1-35; vol. 24, pt. 1 (1951), pp. 1-27. In "Malayadvipa: a study in early Indianization", in *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, vol. 9 (1956), pp. 1-20, the same author examines the possible origins of the place-name "Malaya". For readers of Chinese the *Journal of the South Seas Society* (*Nan-Yang Hsüeh-pao*, instituted in 1940) is a mine of information relating to Malaysiana, which has recently been supplemented by the *Bulletin of South-east Asian Studies* (*Nan-Yang Yen-chiu*, first issued in December, 1959). The general historical development of South-East Asia during ancient times has

been admirably summarized by Professor B. Harrison, *South-East Asia: a Short History* (London, 1954), D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (London, 1955), and George Coedès, *Les Etats hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948). Dr. Wang Gung-wu's "The Nanhai Trade", *JMBRAS*, vol. 31, pt. 2 (1958) is an informative, monographic treatment of Sino-Malaysian relations up to the tenth century A.D. Very recently Professor Hsü Yün-ts'iao has published the first volume of his projected history of Malaya in Chinese: *Ma-lai-ya Shih* (Singapore, 1961).

Chapter 2. The Forging of a Culture

The only comprehensive account of the Malayan Stone Age is contained in M. W. F. Tweedie, "The Stone Age in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 26, pt. 2 (1953), which includes a full bibliography of works published up to that time. Some modifications of Tweedie's conclusions have been necessitated by Dr. G. de G. Sieveking's excavation at Gua Cha, the first results of which have been published in the *Federation Museums Journal*, new series, vols. 1 and 2 (1954-5), pp. 75-138. Part II of the report on this excavation is scheduled to appear in vol. 4 of the same *Journal*, together with an analysis of the Malayan Palaeolithic culture by Mrs. A. de G. Sieveking. Our scanty knowledge of the Metal Age in Malaya has been summarized in a paper by Prince John Loewenstein, to be published in the *JMBRAS*. A popular account of the whole prehistoric period is contained in M. W. F. Tweedie, *Prehistoric Malaya* (Singapore, 1955). Numerous other papers on the archaeology of Malaya have appeared in the *Journal of the Federated Malay States' Museums*, the *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* and the *JMBRAS*. H. R. van Heekeren's two volumes, *The Stone Age of Indonesia* ('s-Gravenhage, 1957) and *The Bronze-Iron Age of Indonesia* ('s-Gravenhage, 1958), both contain information relevant to the prehistory of the Malay Peninsula. Recently Anthony Christie has published a superbly illustrated conspectus of South-East Asian prehistory in Stuart Piggott's *The Dawn of Civilization* (New York and London, 1961), pp. 277-300. A volume entitled *The Bronze Age in South-East Asia*, by the same author, is scheduled for publication in 1962.

1. On this topic the reader may consult for general information E. A. Hooton, *Up from the Ape* (revised edition, New York, 1946) and W. E. Le Gros Clark, *The Fossil Evidence for Human Evolution* (Chicago, 1955). Of more specific import are D. Black, P. Teilhard de Chardin, C. C. Young and Pei Wen-chung, "Fossil man in China", *Geological Memoirs of the National Geological Survey of China*, series A, no. 11 (1933); H. L. Movius, "Early man and Pleistocene stratigraphy in southern and eastern Asia", *Papers of the Peabody Museum*, vol. 19, no. 3 (Cambridge, Mass., 1944) and "The Lower Palaeolithic cultures of southern and eastern Asia", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new series, vol. 38, no. 4 (Philadelphia, 1949). Palaeolithic cannibalism is summarized in chapter 1 of E. O. James, *Prehistoric Religion* (New York, 1957).

2. H. Mansuy, "Contributions à l'étude de la préhistoire de l'Indochine", *Mémoires du Service géologique de l'Indochine*, tome 12, fascicules 1, 2, 3 (Hanoi, 1925) and *La Préhistoire en Indochine* (Paris, 1931).

3. On this difficult question see C. A. R. D. Snell, "Human skeletal remains from Gol Ba'it, Sungai Siput, Perak, Malay Peninsula", *Acta Neerlandica Morphologicae Normalis et Pathologicae*, vol. 6, pt. 4 (1949), pp. 1-25; D. A. Hooijer, "Fossil evidence of Austromelanesian migrations in Malaysia", *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 6 (Albuquerque, 1950), pp. 416-22 and "Austro-melanesian migrations once more", *ibid.*, vol. 8 (1952), pp. 472-7; G. H. R. von Koenigswald, "Evidence of a prehistoric Austromelanesoid population in Malaya and Indonesia", *ibid.*, vol. 8 (1952), pp. 92-96. W. L. H. Duckworth, writing earlier than any of these authors, did not suggest Melanesian affinities for the material he examined: "Human remains from rock-shelters and caves in Perak, Pahang and Perlis and from Selinsing", *JMBRAS*, vol. 12, pt. 2 (1934), pp. 149-67. Publication of the results of Dr. Sieveking's excavations at Gua Cha should do much to clarify this problem.

4. It is not unlikely that the Province Wellesley shell-mounds bear some affinity to those of Somrong-Sen, near the Tonlé Sap in Cambodia, which have formed the subject of a report by E. Worman, Jr., "Semrong-Sen and the reconstruction of prehistory in Indo-China", *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 5 (Albuquerque, 1949), pp. 318-29. According to Worman (p. 192), the Somrong-Sen culture was contemporary with the Late Hoabinhian of Indo-China.

5. The dates quoted in this chapter are those tentatively proposed by R. von Heine-Geldern, "Prehistoric research in the Netherlands Indies", *Science and Scientists in the Netherlands Indies* (New York, 1945). Cp. also the same author's "Urheimat und fruheste wanderungen der Austronesier", *Anthropos* (1932), pp. 543-619 and "Ein Beitrag zur Chronologie der Neolithicums in Südost-Asien", *Festschrift F. W. Schmidt* (1932).

6. I. H. Burkill, "A list of Oriental vernacular names of the genus *Dioscorea*," *Gardens Bulletin, Straits Settlements*, vol. 3 (Singapore, 1924), pp. 131-244.

7. J. G. Andersson, *Children of the Yellow Earth* (London, 1934), pp. 335-6.

8. C. O. Sauer, *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals* (New York, 1952).

9. For a survey of this topic see G. de G. Sieveking, "The distribution of stone bark-cloth beaters in prefiistoric times", *JMBRAS*, vol. 29, pt. 3 (1956), pp. 78-85.

10. I. H. N. Evans, "On a find of stone implements associated with pottery", *JFMSM*, vol. 12, pt. 5 (1928), plate 52, fig. 8; "Further notes on stone implements from Pahang", *ibid.*, vol 15, pt. 1 (1930), plate 4; and "Excavations at Nyong, Tĕmbĕling River", *ibid.*, vol 15, pt. 2 (1931), plates 13 and 14. To the present author these blades seem more like skinning tools than reaping knives.

11. British usage normally distinguishes between river gravels and alluvium. The former term is reserved for the coarser material deposited by a river in or near its course but which, by the combined processes of up-building and meander sweep, eventually forms a sheet of gravel over the whole valley floor, and consequently over terrace remnants. Alluvium, by contrast, is the fine-grained material spread contemporaneously over a valley floor by seasonal flooding.

12. R. von Heine-Geldern, *op. cit.*
13. Tweedie, "The Stone Age in Malaya", *op. cit.*, p. 46.
14. *Ibid.*
15. E.g., R. von Heine-Geldern, "Die Megalithen Südostasiens und ihre Bedeutung für die Klärung der Megalithenfrage in Europa und Polynesien", *Anthropos*, vol. 23, pp. 276-315; H. G. Quaritch Wales, *The Mountain of God* (London, 1953) and *Prehistory and Religion in South-East Asia* (London, 1957).
16. G. de G. Sieveking "Excavations at Gua Cha, Kelantan. 1954. Part I", *op. cit.*, p. 101.
17. For these remains see W. Linehan, "Traces of a Bronze Age culture associated with Iron Age implements in the regions of Klang and the Těmbĕling, Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 24, pt. 3 (1951), pp. 1-59. The Malayan drums are classified by Prince John Loewenstein in his summary of the Metal Age to be published shortly. On this topic generally see F. Heger, *Alte Metalltrommeln aus Südost-Asien* (Leipzig, 1902); V. Goloubew, "L'âge du bronze au Tonkin et dans le Nord Annam", *BEFEO.*, tome 29 (1929), and "Le tambour métallique de Hoang-ha", *ibid.*, tome 40 (1940), pp. 384-409; R. von Heine-Geldern, "Bedeutung und Herkunft der Altesten Hinterindischen Metalltrommeln", *Asia Major*, vol. 8 (1932), pp. 518-37; H. G. Quaritch Wales, "The religious significance of the early Dongson Bronze drums", paper read at the *Twenty-Third International Congress of Orientalists*, 24th August, 1954.
18. N. J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* (second edition, 1931), pp. 42-45 and G. Coedès, *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948), pp. 25-26.
19. For an ecological and nutritive analysis of *kampong* gardens consult G. J. A. Terra, "Mixed-garden horticulture in Java", *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography* [now *The Journal of Tropical Geography*], vol. 3 (1954), pp. 33-43.
20. H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Prehistory and Religion in South-East Asia* (London, 1957), chap. 3.
21. H. D. Collings, "Report of an archaeological excavation in Kedah, Malay Peninsula", *BRM*, series B, no. 1 (1936), fig. 8 and Tweedie, "The Stone Age in Malaya", figs. 14 and 15.
22. P. V. van Stein Callenfels, "A remarkable stone implement from the Malay Peninsula", *BRM*, series B, no. 1, pp. 38-40.
23. *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331 and several earlier sources. For a translation of the relevant passage see Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), p. 49.

Chapter 3. Buddhist and Brāhmaṇ on the Malay Peninsula

There is no comprehensive account of the transference of Indian culture to South-East Asia, and this chapter has been built up from a variety of scattered sources. Possibly the best analysis of this period is that in Chapter 2 of Professor George Coedès's *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948). A full set of references for this chapter is incorporated in

the present author's *The Golden Khersonese* (Kuala Lumpur, 1961).

1. These stanzas and those which follow in Chapters 4 and 9 comprise a poem entitled "To Java", translated from his own Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore in 1927. I have to thank Mr. S. Durai Raja Singam of Kuantan for bringing this poem to my attention and for providing me with Tagore's translation.

2. *Vāyu Purāna*, chap. 48. Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's translation is conveniently accessible in *JMBRAS*, vol. 15, pt. 3 (1937), pp. 115-116.

3. The *Jātaka* has been translated by E. B. Cowell and others in 6 vols: *The Jātaka* (Cambridge, 1895-1907).

4. In conformity with his chosen metaphor Somadeva divided his work into 124 *taraṅga* (waves) totalling some 22,000 *śloka*. The episodes referred to in the text are taken respectively from *taraṅga* 54, *śloka* 97 *et seq;* t. 123, s. 110; t. 56, s. 56-64.

5. Gharuwood is the pathologically diseased, fragrant wood yielded by about half the trees comprising the genus *Aquilaria*. The Malay *gharu* derives by metathesis from the Sanskrit *agaru*, a name applied to the wood by North Indians of the classical period on account of its weight (Skt. *garu* = "heavy"). Other English names used for this commodity in historical literature were eaglewood (from the French term below) and aloeswood (from the Hebrew *ahaloth*). In French it was often referred to under the names *bois d'aigle* and *bois de calembours*, in Portuguese as *pao d'aguila, calámpat, calambac, calembuco* and other similar forms.

6. Abu-al-Rayḥān Muḥammad ibn-Aḥmad al-Bīrūni (973-1048), "considered the most original and profound scholar Islam produced" (Philip K. Hitti).

7. This interpretation constituted one of the main themes in the writings of J. C. van Leur, a young Dutch economic historian who was killed in the Battle of the Coral Sea. See particularly his *Indonesian Trade and Society*, published in English at the Hague in 1955. Subsequently Professor F. D. K. Bosch arrived at much the same conclusion from his studies in archaeology and the history of art: *Het vraagstuk van de Hindoe-kolonisatie van den Archipel* (Leiden, 1946).

8. J. Ph. Vogel, "The yūpa inscriptions of King Mūlavarman from Koetei (East Borneo)", *Bijdragen*, vol. 74 (1918), pp. 167-232; B. Ch. Chhabra, "Three more yūpa inscriptions of King Mūlavarman from Koetei (E. Borneo)", *Journal of the Greater India Society*, vol. 12 (1945), pp. 14-17.

9. H. Kern, *Verspreide Geschriften*, deel 7 ('s-Gravenhage, 1917), pp. 115-28.

10. E.g., the 1,000 brāhmans at Tun-sun who were mentioned in the *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 788, [For a translation of the relevant passage see Wheatley, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1956), p. 21]; the "brāhmaṇs come from India in search of wealth" whom Chinese envoys encountered at P'an-p'an, a city-state on the Bay of Bandon [Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*]; and those who officiated in the Red-Earth Kingdom, p. 56 *et seq.*

11. For a summary of this evidence see Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese.*

12. See Appendix 1.

13. J. Low, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 17, pt. 2 (1848), pp. 62-66 with comments by J. Laidlay, pp. 66-72. Reprinted in *Miscellaneous Papers relating to Indo-China*, vol. 1 (1886), pp. 223-32.

14. J. Low, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (1849), pp. 247-9. Reprinted in *Miscellaneous Papers relating to Indo-China*, vol. 1 (1886), pp. 232-4. H. Kern's transcription in *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Hfd. Lett., 3 reeks, deel 1 (1883).

15. J. Low, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 17 (1848), pp. 62-66 and Laidlay, *ibid.*, pp. 66-72. Reprinted as above, note 13. Also R. L. Mitra, *ibid.*, pt. 2, p. 71; H. Kern, *Verspreide Geschriften*, deel 3, p. 255 *et seq;* and B. Ch. Chhabra, *Journal As. Soc. Bengal (Letters)*, vol 1 (1935), p. 14 *et seq.*

16. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological researches on ancient Indian colonization in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 18 (1940), pp. 8-10.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

20. p. 74.

21. Extracts from this work have been translated into English by James Low, "A translation of the Keddah Annals", *The Journal of the Indian Archipelago* (1849), pp. 1-23, 162-181, 253-270, 314-336, 467-488. There is a romanized version of the text by A. J. Sturrock in the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 72 (1916), pp. 37-123. Other papers relating to this *Hikayat* include R. N. Bland, "Story of the Burong Garuda and the Raja Merong Mahawangsa", *ibid.*, no. 54 (1910), pp. 107-115; and C. O. Blagden, "The cannibal king in the 'Kedah Annals' ", *ibid.*, no. 79 (1918), pp. 47-8.

Chapter 4. The Hegemony of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain

The *locus classicus* for the history of the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain is Paul Pelliot's famous paper "Le Fou-nan", in *BEFEO*, tome 3 (1903), pp. 248-303. A more recent account may be consulted in Part I of L.P. Briggs's *The Ancient Khmer Empire, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 41, pt. 1 (Philadelphia, 1951). The peninsular kingdoms of Tun-sun, Kiu-li, Langkasuka and P'an-p'an are discussed in the following papers by the present author: "The Malay Peninsula as known to the Chinese of the third century A.D.", *JMBRAS*, vol. 28, pt. 1 (1955), pp. 1-23; "The Golden Chersonese", *Transactions and Papers of the Institute of British Geographers*, no. 21 (Oxford, 1955), pp. 61-78; "An early Chinese reference to part of Malaya", *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, vol. 5 (1955), pp. 57-60; "Langkasuka", *T'oung Pao*, vol. 44 (Leiden, 1956), pp. 387-412; "Tun-sun", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1956), pp. 17-30.

1. This sector of the great South Asian maritime trade-route was described in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, a manual of commerce and navigation in the Indian Ocean in the first century of the Christian era, which was compiled by an anonymous Graeco-Egyptian sea-captain, probably in the last quarter of the first century A.D. The standard translation of W. H. Schoff, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (Philadelphia, 1912), is somewhat dated but a new translation is currently being prepared by Dr. Gervase Mathew for publication by the Hakluyt Society. The best edition of the text is that established by

H. Frisk, "Le Périple de la Mer érythrée", *Högskolas Arsskrift*, vol. 22 (Göteborg, 1927), pp. i-ix, 1-145.

2. The voyage of the Chinese ambassadors is discussed in the author's "Probable references to the Malay Peninsula in the Annals of the Former Han", *JMBRAS*, vol. 29, pt. 2 (1956), pp. 79-85.

3. B. Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese* (Paris, 1923), graphs no. 41 and 650: *b'iu-nam*.

4. On the implications and ramifications of this legend see L. Finot, "Sur quelques traditions indochinoises", *Mél. S. Lévi*, p. 203; G. Coedès, "La légende de la Nāgī", *BEFEO*, tome 11 (1911), pp. 391-3; J. Przyluski, "La princesse à l'odeur de poisson et la Nāgī dan les traditions de l'Asie orientale", *Etudes Asiatiques publiées à l'occasion du vingt-cinquième anniversaire de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient;* edited by G. Van Oest; tome 2 (Paris, 1925), pp. 265-84; V. Goloubew, "Les légendes de la Nāgī et de l'Apsaras", *BEFEO*, tome 24 (1924), pp. 501-10.

5. The embassy, led by K'ang-T'ai, a senior secretary to a board, and Chu-Ying, a cultural relations officer, visited the Kingdom of the Sacred Mountain in C.A.D. 245. During their stay in the country the envoys questioned an ambassador from the Murunḍa king about his homeland and the other regions he had traversed. They also seem to have visited several neighbouring territories [*Liang Shu*, chap. 54]. On their return to China K'ang-T'ai and Chu-Ying both compiled reports on their travels which, although long since lost, were widely quoted in subsequent Chinese encyclopedias. For the bibliography of these reports, which are the sole literary source for our knowledge of the Peninsula in the third century, A.D., consult Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, Appendix 2 to Part 1.

6. G. Coedès, "Excavations at P'ong Tük in Siam", *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology* (Leiden, 1927), pp. 16-20; "The excavations at P'ong Tük and their importance for the ancient history of Siam", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 21, pt. 3 (Bangkok, 1928), pp. 195-210.

7. *Liang Shu*, chapter 54, p. 7a.

8. *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 788.

9. *T'ai-p'ing Huan Yü Chi*, chap. 176.

10. B. Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary*, graphs no. 484 and 527.

11. In this evaluation of the Ptolemaic corpus I have followed Leo Bagrow, "The origin of Ptolemy's Geographia", *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 27 (1945), pp. 318-87

12. The arguments for this conclusion are presented in Wheatley, "An early Chinese reference to part of Malaya", *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, vol. 5 (1955), pp. 57-60.

13. *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 22b and *Shui Ching Chu*, Chap. 1, p. 12b [Shu-pu pei-yao Edition].

14. *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 788.

15. *Etudes Asiatiques*, tome 2, pp. 26-27.

16. *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 18a *et seq; T'ung Tien*, chap. 188; *T'ai-p'ing Huan-yü Chi*, chap. 176; *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331.

17. *T'ung Tien*, chap. 188.

18. *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 10a; *Hsin T'ang Shu*, Chap. 222C, p. 2a and b [Po-na pen erh-shih-ssü shih Edition]. See also *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331.

19. *Liang Shu*, chap. 54.
20. *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chaps. 788, 790.
21. Identified by B. Laufer, "Malabathron", *Journal Asiatique*, tome 12 (1918), pp. 28-29

Chapter 5. The Home of the Strange and the Precious

The history of Chen-la is conveniently summarized in Briggs's. *The Ancient Khmer Empire.* Dr. and Mrs. Quaritch Wales's archaeological discoveries in Kĕdah are reported in *JMBRAS*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (1940) and vol. 20, pt. 1 (1947), pp. 1-11. The present author has annotated the several Chinese descriptions of the Red-Earth Land in *JMBRAS*, vol. 29, pt. 2 (1956), pp. 79-85.

1. *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331.
2. *T'ung Tien*, chap. 188.
3. Substantial extracts from the lost report are preserved in parallel passages in the *Sui Shu*, chap. 82; *Pei Shih*, chap. 95; *T'ai-p'ing Yü-lan*, chap. 787; and *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331.
4. Correlations by G. Coedès, *Les états hindouisés*, p. 135.
5. *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331 [Po-li section].
6. J. Low, "An account of several inscriptions found in Province Wellesley, on the Peninsula of Malacca", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 17, pt. 2 (1848), pp. 62-66. Reprinted in *Miscellaneous Papers relating to Indo-China*, vol. 1, pp. 223-6.
7. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological Researches", *op. cit.*, p. 7.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.
9. *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 18a *et seq.*
10. Chap. V of Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, is a conspectus of voyages by Chinese monks through South-East Asian waters.
11. *Fo-kuo Chi*, *c.* A.D. 420. The best of four available translations is that by H. A. Giles, *The Travels of Fa-hsien* (Cambridge, reprint 1958).
12. *Ta T'ang Hsi-yü Ch'iu-fa Kao-seng Chuan* [P'in-Ch'ieh ching-she ta-tsang ching Edition].
13. About 1 November; that is, as soon as the north-east monsoon had set in.
14. *Ta T'ang Hsi-yü* . . ., pt. 1, p. 94b, Wu-lei was a small seaport west of present-day Pakhoi on the Gulf of Tongking.
15. *Ibid.*, pt. 2, p. 97a.
16. *Ibid.*, pt. 2, p. 99a.
17. *Ibid.*, pt. 1, p. 94b.
18. H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. 9 (1935), pp. 1-35 and *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), chapter 3.

Chapter 6. The Apogee of the City-States

The Khmer empire is dealt with fully in L. P. Briggs's book and in G. Coedès, *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948). The inscriptions

on which the history of ancient Cambodia is based have been published by G. Coedès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, 5 tomes (Hanoi, 1937-51). The rise of the Śri Vijayan thalassocracy is the subject of chapters 1-4 of K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's *History of Sri Vijaya. The Sir William Meyer Lectures, 1946-47* (Madras, 1949). The Arab texts relating to the Malay Peninsula during this period have been translated and annotated by G. R. Tibbetts, "The Malay Peninsula as known to the Arab geographers", *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, vol. 8 (Singapore, 1956), pp. 21-60. [Reprinted in Chinese in *Bulletin of the Institute of Southeast Asia*, vol. 1 (Singapore, 1959), pp. A1-A27.]

1. I have here followed what may be regarded as the orthodox interpretation of early Śrī Vijayan history, which was proposed by George Coedès in a classic paper in 1918: "Le royaume de-Çrivijaya", *BEFEO*, tome 18, pp. 1-36. Subsequently Coedès's conclusions have been questioned by a succession of authors, including R. C. Majumdar, "The Śailendra empire up to the end of the tenth century", *Journal of the Greater India Society*, vol. 1 (1934), pp. 11-27 and *Suvarnadvipa* (Dacca, 1937-8); J. L. Moens, "Śrivijaya, Yāva en Katāha," *TBG*, deel 7 , afl. 3 (1937), pp. 317-487. Abridged English translation by R. J. de Touché, *JMBRAS*, vol. 17, pt. 2 (1940); H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. 9 (1935), pp. 1-35 and "Archaeological Researches", *JMBRAS*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (1940). Recently Professor J. G. de Casparis has re-interpreted the evidence relating to the Javanese Śailendras, but without prejudice to a Palembang location for the later capital of the empire: *Inscripties uit de Çailendra-Tijd* (Bandung, 1950) and "Twintig jaar studie van de oudere geschiedenis van Indonesië (1931-51)", *Orientatië*, no. 46 (Djakarta, 1954).

2. On the evidence of four stone inscriptions, from Kedukan Bukit (Palembang), A.D. 683; Talang Tuwo (Palembang), A.D. 684; Karang Brahi (Jambi river), A.D. 686; and Kota Kapur (Bangka), A.D. 686. These are most easily accessible in a French translation by George Coedès, *BEFEO*, tome 30, and in an English translation by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in his book *History of Śri Vijaya*, pp. 113-16.

3. Yao Ch'a and Yao Ssŭ-lien, *Liang Shu*, chap. 54, p. 7a (A.D. 629).

4. Transcribed and translated by B. Ch. Chhabra, "Expansion of Indo-Aryan culture during Pallava Rule, as evidenced by inscriptions", *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 1 (1935), pp. 1-64; modified by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of Śrī Vijaya*, pp. 119-121.

5. *The Golden Khersonese*, pp. 216-224.

6. *T'ung Tien*, chap. 188; *T'ai-p'ing Huan-yü Chi*, chap. 176; *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 331.

7. E.g., " . . . in shaping this course the tidal streams . . . must be allowed for, as the soundings give little warning of the approach of dangers; but none of the channels between these islands should be used, as the tidal streams are strong and irregular; between these islets and Kisseraing island is foul ground, with numerous patches which dry." [*Bay of Bengal Pilot* (Seventh edition, London, 1940), pp. 342-86.]

8. *T'ung Tien*, Chap. 188. Cp. note on p. 57.

9. *Wen-hsien T'ung K'ao*, chap. 332.

10. Chap. 188.

11. Texts of both passages reproduced by S. Lévi, "Ptolémée, le Niddesa et la Bṛhatkathā", *Etudes Asiatiques,* tome 2, pp. 52-53.

12. The several references to Takola in ancient literatures have been collated by the author in "Takola emporion", *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography,* vol. 2 (Singapore, 1954), pp. 35-47.

13. The implications of the inscription from Tākua-pa have been examined by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in "Takuapa and its Tamil inscription," *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* vol. 22, pt. 1 (1949), pp. 25-30.

14. On Kĕdah in this period see the author's "The seat of all felicities", *The Historical Annual,* no. 3 (Singapore, 1957), pp. 99-106.

15. A full report of Dr. Lamb's excavations has not yet appeared, but outlines have been published, illustrated with excellent photographs, in *Malaya in History,* vol. 4, no. 2; vol. 5, nos. 1 and 2 (Kuala Lumpur, 1958-9).

16. Raja Bĕrsiong (Raja Maha Prit Durya) was, according to one tradition, the fifth ruler in the dynasty founded by Marong Mahawangsa (p. 39 above).

17. Wales, "Archaeological Discoveries", *op. cit.,* pp. 20-21, plate 32.

18. *Ibid.,* p. 56; Otley Beyer, *JFMSM,* vol. 12 (1928), pp. 191-192. Also I. H. N. Evans, *ibid.,* vol. 12 (1929), pp. 121-31, 139-42 and 181-4; vol. 15 (1930), pp. 23-24, 25-27.

19. The Pontian boat and its cargo are the subject of a paper, "Further notes on the old boat found at Pontian in southern Pahang", by Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill in *JMBRAS,* vol 25, pt. 1 (1952), pp. 111-33. Mr. I. H. N. Evans's original paper on his finding of the boat is in the *JFMSM,* vol. 12, pt. 4 (1927), pp. 93-96. The boat itself is now on display in the Perak Museum at Taiping.

20. Tibbetts, *op. cit.,* p. 38.

21. This information was sent to me by Mr. John Matthews, Curator of Museums, Federation of Malaya. As the official report has not been published, I have quoted his exact words.

22. The menhirs of Mĕlaka State were discussed by Mr. M. C. ff. Sheppard in "Batu hidop—megaliths in Malacca Territory", *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum,* series B, no. 1 (Singapore, 1936), pp. 61-71.

23. The latest paper on *tulang mawas,* which includes references to previous work, is Prince John Loewenstein's " 'Tulang mawas' re-examined", *JMBRAS,* vol. 26, pt. 1 (1953), pp. 37-42.

Chapter 7. The Greatness and Decline of Śrī Vijaya

The apogee and decline of Śrī Vijayan power has been ably expounded by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in chapters V and VI of his *History of Śrī Vijaya,* and the geography of the Malay Peninsula during these centuries has been reconstructed, so far as the sources permit, in the present author's *The Golden Khersonese.*

1. Chao Ju-kua, *Chu-fan-chih* (1225), p. 13 [Feng Ch'eng-chün's edition, Cp. note 7 below].

2. Wales, "Archaeological Researches" *passim;* and A. Lamb, "Research at

Pengkalan Bujang", *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 6, new series (1961), pp. 21-37; "The bases of glass vessels from Kedah and Takuapa compared," *ibid.*, pp. 56-63; and "Kedah and Takuapa", *ibid.*, pp. 69-88.

3. This inscription was originally published by E. Hultzsch in *South Indian Inscriptions*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 105-9. Subsequently it has been re-interpreted by several scholars, notably by Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in "Śrī Vijaya" *BEFEO*, tome 40 (1940), chapter 7, and *History of Sri Vijaya*, chap. 5.

4. The *Sējarah Mēlayu (Genealogies of the Malay Rajas)* is the most famous and, from a literary point of view, the best of all Malay works. Its original author is unknown, but from internal evidence seems to have lived in Mēlaka during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Shah. Subsequently, in 1612, a MS. of this version was edited by—or more likely to the order of—a Raja Bongsu, later Sultan 'Abdullah, at the Johore court of Pasir Raja. There are several extant recensions of this work, of which that contained in *Raffles MS. 18*, generally held to be the most authentic, has been ably translated by Mr. C. C. Brown in *JMBRAS*, vol. 25, pts. 2 and 3 (1952). All quotations from the *Sējarah Mēlayu* in this volume are abstracted from Mr. Brown's work. The text of this version has been transcribed into romanized form by Sir Richard Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, vol. 16, pt. 3 (1938); another recension was romanized by Dr. W. G. Shellabear, *Sējarah Mēlayu* (second edition, Singapore, 1909).

5. *JMBRAS*, vol. 14, pt. 3 (1936), pp. 46-48.

6. For an account of ancient Malaysian warfare consult H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare* (London, 1952). Indian warfare is analysed in G. T. Date's *The Art of War in Ancient India* (London, 1929) and V. R. R. Dikshitar's *War in Ancient India* (Second edition, Madras, 1948).

7. The *Gazetteer of Foreigners (Chu-fan-chih)* was translated by F. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill under the title *Chau Ju-kua: his work on the Chinese and Arab trade in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries*, and published at St. Petersburg in 1911, but a proportion of the identifications of both commodities and place-names has been rendered obsolete by more recent work. There is an annotated Chinese edition of the text, *Chu-fan-chih chiao-chu*, by Feng Ch'eng-chün, published at Shanghai in 1940. Cp. note 1.

8. *Ibid.*, [Feng's edition], p. 19.

9. See note 5 to Chapter 3.

10. A rosewood liana, *Dalbergia parviflora*, whose scented heartwood is used for joss-sticks.

11. *Santalum album*.

12. In the *Gazetteer* this place-name appears as Teng-liu-mei. The rationale of the emendation proposed here is set out in Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, pp. 65-66.

13. A gummy deposit secreted on boughs and twigs by the female lac insect, *Tachardia lacca*, and not to be confused with lacquer, a juice from the lac tree *(Rhus vernicifera)*.

14. Ho-ch'ih was a silk-producing district in Shen-si under the Sui dynasty. Probably some silk cloth still bore this name in the thirteenth century.

15. *Ling-wai Tai-ta*, chap. 3. The Chinese text of this work is readily available in the *Ts'ung-shu Chi-ch'eng* series.

16. *Chu-fan-chih Chiao-chu* [Feng's Edition], p. 20.

Chapter 8. The Century of Singhapura

There is no comprehensive synthesis of events on the Malay Peninsula during the fourteenth century, and I have compiled the interpretation here presented from the piecemeal works of Dutch, French, English and Chinese scholars. The primary sources are Malay annals and Javanese records, supplemented by Chinese and T'ai more or less incidental allusions. The best account of the dynastic history of ancient Singhapura is the late Walter Linehan's "The kings of 14th century Singapore", *JMBRAS*, vol. 20, pt. 2 (1947), pp. 117-27. On this topic see also G. P. Rouffaer, "Oud-Singhapoera, en de Djohor-rivier", *BKI.*, deel 77 (1921). The rise of the T'ai nation is summarized succinctly in English by Professor D. G. E. Hall in chapter 7, "The T'ais and the kingdom of Ayut'ia", in his *A History of South-East Asia* (London, 1955), and in French by Professor George Coedès in chapters 12 and 13 of *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948). Earlier accounts, such as those in W. A. R. Wood's *History of Siam* (London, 1926) and W. A. Graham's *Siam*, 2 vols. (London, 1924), are inaccurate on many points. The classic history of Java during this period is incorporated in N. J. Krom's *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* ('s-Gravenhage, 1931), but more recent work by C. C. Berg and J. G. de Casparis has revised some of Krom's conclusions.

1. G. Coedès, *Inscriptions de Sukhodaya* (Bangkok, 1924), pp. 37-48.
2. Lecture to the University of Malaya Historical Society, Singapore, 29 November, 1956.
3. *Sějarah Mělayu*, p. 30.
4. *Tao-i Chih-lioh*, [Chih-fu-chai ts'ung-shu edition], p. 16a and b. See note 10 below.
5. The mythology of the Singapore dynasty is related in *Sějarah Mělayu* on p. 31 *et seq.*
6. Illustrations of fragments of the Singapore monolith were first published by J. W. Laidlay in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 17, pt. 2 (Calcutta, 1848), plate 3, opp. p. 68. Subsequently this article was reprinted in *Miscellaneous Papers relating to Indo-China*, vol. 1 (London, 1886, edited by R. Rost), pp. 227-32. Recently both Mr. S. Durai Raja Singam and Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill have reproduced Laidlay's plate, the former in *India and Malaya through the Ages* (Third edition, 1954), p. 49, the latter in *Memoirs of the Raffles Museum*, no. 3 (Singapore, 1956), p. 23.
7. *Sějarah Mělayu* and Diogo do Couto.
8. Braz de Albuquerque, João de Barros, Tomé Pires and Godinho d'Eredia.
9. The topography of ancient Singapore is described in Chapters 8 and 20 of *The Golden Khersonese*.
10. *Tao-i Chih-lioh*. This is a description of ninety-nine countries, ports and noteworthy localities ranging from the Moluccas to Arabia and the African coast. Wang Ta-yüan, the author, had himself traded in a considerable number of foreign localities in and subsequent to 1330.
11. The remains of ancient Singhapura as they existed in 1819 were described by John Crawfurd in his *Journal of an embassy from the Governor-General of India to the courts of Siam and Cochin China* (London, 1828), pp. 44-47.

12. The jewellery found on Fort Canning Hill has been described in detail and illustrated by Sir Richard Winstedt, "Gold ornaments dug up at Fort Canning, Singapore", *JMBRAS*, vol. 6, pt. 4 (1928), pp. 1-4. Originally the hoard included a pair of large, flexible five-strand, gold bracelets weighing 50 *mayam* each. One was in perfect condition, the tongue of its clasp sliding into its socket with ease; the other had its fastening partially crushed and two of its strands broken. Each bracelet bore a plaque with an incised *kala*-head. In addition there was a signet ring with a bird in flight incised on the bezel, three pairs of ear-rings set with small diamonds, a jewelled clasp and an elliptical ornament set with a ruby *en cabochon*. The gems were all of inferior quality, but the gold was of 24 carat fineness. In this description the past tense has been used because, during the Japanese occupation of Singapore, all except three of the ear-rings and the broken bracelet disappeared from the Raffles Museum. The present whereabouts of the rest of the hoard is unknown.

13. *Hikayat Abdullah*, translated by A. H. Hill, *JMBRAS*, vol. 28, pt. 3 (1955), pp. 130-1.

14. Raffles's remarks on the ruins of early Singapore are contained in letters which he wrote to William Marsden on 31 January, 1819 and 21 January, 1823.

15. There is in the Raffles Museum a water-colour of this rock by an unknown artist. The painting has been reproduced by Dato' Sir Roland Braddell, "Lung-ya-men and Tan-ma-hsi", *JMBRAS*, vol. 23, pt. 1 (1950), plate 5 and by Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill, *Memoirs of the Raffles Museum*, no. 3 (Singapore, 1956), plate 1.

16. W. W. Skeat and H. N. Ridley, "The Orang Laut of Singapore", *JSBRAS*, no. 33 (1900), p. 248.

17. The *Nāgarakṛtāgama* was first translated into Dutch by H. Kern and annotated by N. J. Krom ('s-Gravenhage, 1919). Professor C. C. Berg's re-interpretation of the implications of this text are set out in "De sadeng-oorlog en de mythe van Groot-Majapahit", *Indonesië*, vol. 5 ('s-Gravenhage, 1951), pp. 385-422.

18. Fei-Hsin, *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan* [*Triumphant Visions of the Starry Raft*, i.e., of the ship carrying the Imperial Ambassador], chap. 2, p. 2a and b (*Ts'ung-shu Chi-ch'eng* edition).

19. Pāṇḍyan inscriptions of 1263 and 1264 [*BKI*, 1927, pp. 470-1 and *Cūlavaṁsa*, LXXXIII, 40.]

20. The imbroglio involving the rulers of Tāmbraliṅga and Ceylon has been most ably evaluated by Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Śrīvijaya, Candrabhānu and Vīra-Pāṇḍya", *TBG*, deel 77 (1937), pp. 251-68.

21. Based on Wang Ta-yüan's account.

22. Note 8 above.

23. *Comentários*.

24. Shellabear edition of *Sējarah Mēlayu* (Singapore, 1910), p. 250.

25. J. V. Mills, *JMBRAS*, vol 8, pt. 1 (1930), plate 6.

26. *JSBRAS*, no. 15 (1885), p. 134.

Chapter 9. The Century of ***Mĕlaka***

Braz de Albuquerque (*Comentarios*, 2 vols., Coimbra, 1923), João de Barros (*Asia*, vols. 1-8 in the edition of Barros and Couto, Lisbon, 1777-88), Gaspar Correa (*Lendas da India*, 4 vols., Lisbon, 1858-66), Diogo do Couto (*Asia*, vols. 10-24 in the edition of Barros and Couto, Lisbon, 1777-88), Tomé Pires (*Suma Oriental*, 2 vols., London, 1944), Godinho de Eredia (*Declaraçam de Malaca e India meridional com o Cathay*, *JMBRAS*, vol. 8, pt. 1, 1930), François Valentijn (*Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, 8 vols., Dordrecht and Amsterdam, 1724-6), and the author of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* (*c.* 1540) all relate in greater or lesser detail the founding of Mĕlaka and substantial portions of its later history. In this chapter I have sought to correlate the several versions, but this is no easy matter. The Portuguese authors are rarely in total agreement among themselves and, so far as the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* is concerned, *Raffles MS. 18* often differs considerably from the Shellabear and other recensions. Generally speaking, I have tended to give preponderant weight to the opinions of de Barros, a conscientious and discriminating historian, and Pires, who reached Mĕlaka in the year following the Portuguese conquest, and who was, wherever we can test his statements, an accurate reporter. The Malay traditions relating to the Sultanate, I have used mainly as reflecting fairly faithfully the temper of the city in its golden age. This is in effect the technique adopted by those authors who have previously recounted the history of Mĕlaka. Foremost among them are R. J. Wilkinson, *A History of the Peninsular Malays* (Third edition, Singapore, 1923), chap. 5 and "The Malacca Sultanate", *JMBRAS*, vol. 13, pt. 2 (1935), pp. 22-67; and Sir Richard Winstedt, "A History of Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (1935), chap. 3. The following are important papers dealing with particular aspects of Mĕlakan history: G. P. Rouffaer, "Was Melaka emporium vóór 1400 A.D. genaamd Malajoer?" *BKI*, deel 77 (1921), pp. 1-174, 359-604. Sir Richard Winstedt, "The genealogy of Malacca's Kings from a copy of the Bustanu's-Salatin", *JSBRAS*, no. 81 (1920), pp. 39-48; "Hikayat Hang Tuah", *JSBRAS*, no. 83 (1921), pp. 110-22; "The Malay Annals or *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*", *JMBRAS*, vol. 16, pt. 3 (1938).

The numerous MSS. of the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* offer two main versions of the story, of which the older, as related in *Raffles MS. 18*, is considered the more reliable. In 1938 Sir Richard Winstedt published a romanized edition of this text (*Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 16, pt. 3: corrigenda *ibid.*, vol. 18, pt. 2, 1940, pp. 154-155), and T. D. Situmorang and A. Teeuw produced an Indonesian romanization at Jakarta in 1952. In the same year C. C. Brown issued an English translation (*Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 25, pts. 2 and 3). Previously John Leyden (English, 1821), L. Marcel Devic (French 1878), Aristide Marre (French, 1874) and H. Overbeck (German, 1927) had translated all or part of the later version into the European languages indicated. For details see J. C. Bottoms in K. G. Tregonning, *Malaysian Historical Sources* (Singapore, 1961), p. 52.

1. N. J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* ('s-Gravenhage, 1931), pp. 436-7; P. V. van Stein Callenfels, "The founder of Malacca", *JMBRAS*, vol. 15 (1937), p. 160.

2. Pires, vol. 2, p. 232 [Armando Cortesão's edition].
3. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
4. *Ming Shih*, chap. 325.
5. P. Wheatley, "A curious feature on early maps of Malaya", *Imago Mundi*, vol. 11 (Leiden, 1954), pp. 67-72. For a different interpretation of the matters discussed in this paper see C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Singapore Old Strait and New Harbour, 1300-1870", *Memoirs of the Raffles Museum*, no. 3 (1956), p. 30. In any event, the Muar-Pahang route remained in use until the nineteenth century, when it was described by at least two travellers: Charles Gray ["Journal of a route overland from Malacca to Pahang, across the Malayan Peninsula", *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, vol. 6 (Singapore, 1852), pp. 369-75] and a Mr. Daly [extracts preserved in A. M. Skinner's "Geography of the Malay Peninsula", *JSBRAS*, no. 1 (1878), pp. 59-60].
6. These sandbanks and shoals were known to the Portuguese as the Capacia Shoals, to the Chinese as the Cotton Shoals, and to the Arabs as Qafāṣī.
7. *Emblica officinalis*, a tree of not more than moderate size which occurs through Malaysia as far east as Timor.
8. *Ming Shih*, chap. 325.
9. This inscription was first published by Mr. Chin Yün-ming in *Fu-chien Wen-hua*, vol. 26 (1937), pp. 1-48 and commented upon by Professor J. J. L. Duyvendak in *T'oung Pao*, vol. 34 (1938), see esp. pp. 349-50. The inscription is reproduced on a plate opposite p. 350 of this article, and on plate 3 of the same author's *China's Discovery of Africa* (London, 1949).
10. *Ying-yai Sheng-lan*. For the bibliography of this text see P. Pelliot, *T'oung Pao*, vol. 30 (1933), pp. 264-339.
11. *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan*. The tortuous bibliography of this work has been elucidated by the combined efforts of J. J. L. Duyvendak [*Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, niewe reeks, deel 32, no. 3 (1933), pp. 1-74] and P. Pelliot, *T'oung Pao*, vol. 30 (1933), pp. 241-64.
12. From chapter 62 of the *Chi-lu Hui-pien* edition as published in the *Ts'ung-shu Chi-ch'eng* series.
13. *Wu-pei-chih*. The charts of the Malayan coast referred to in the text occupy folios 14 verso-17 recto of chap. 240.
14. "Ma Huan re-examined," *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam*, Afd. Lett., n.t., deel 32 (1933), p. 20.
15. This section of the chart has been exhaustively analysed by Mr. J. V. Mills, *JMBRAS*, vol. 15, pt. 3 (1937), pp. 1-48.
16. For the run from Karimun to Pedra Branca consult Gibson-Hill, "Singapore Old Strait and New Harbour, 1300-1870", *Memoirs of the Raffles Museum*, no. 3 (Singapore, 1956), pp. 11-45.
17. This tract is preserved in *MS. Arabe 2292* of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The section relating to Malayan waters has been translated and annotated by G. R. Tibbetts, *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, vol. 9 (1956), pp. 58-59.
18. Pulau Sĕmbilan Mĕlaka [not Pulau Sĕmbilan Siam].

19. Note 6 above.

20. Literally "finger." The unit of measurement of the altitude of the Pole Star, by which the Arabs of this period measured latitude. Cp. the Portuguese *pulgada*.

21. *Iklil* in the constellation of the Scorpion.

22. = Pulau Parcelar = Bukit Jugru.

23. Mislection for [Pulau] Tinggi.

24. The seven stars of the Great Bear.

25. *al-'Umdat al-Mahrīyah fī Ḍabṭ al-'Ulūm al-Najmīyah* (1511), compiled by the mu'allim Sulaimān bin Aḥmad al-Mahrī, and preserved in *MS. Arabe 2559* of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The Tamil sailing-route is described in folio 56.

26. This inscription was first published by H. S. Paterson in *JMBRAS*, vol. 2, pt. 3 (1924), pp. 252-8 and dated approximately by C. O. Blagden, *ibid.*, pp. 258-63.

27. Sanskrit word meaning "Governor." Also the *gĕlar* of the territorial chief of Klang under the Mĕlaka sultanate (if Winstedt's emendation of منديلير كلغ in the *Sĕj. Mĕl.* to read *Mandalika Kĕlang* is justified). The term also occurs in the *Risalat Hukum Kanun* (Malay: *Undang-Undang Mĕlaka*) of *c.* 1450 and in a Pahang legal digest prepared for 'Abd al-Ghaffar in 1596. Pires noted that mandulikas held office in Sungei Ujong, Klang, Sĕlangor, Bĕrnam, Dindings, Bĕruas and Perak (Cortesão, *The Suma Oriental*, vol. 2, pp. 261 and 490).

28. pp. 52-54, copied from a similar passage in the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*. All references in this chapter to the *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu* relate to Mr. C. C. Brown's translation (for which see note 4 to Chap. 7 above).

29. Pires, vol. 2, pp. 241-2.

30. Rabindranath Tagore. Cp. note 1 to Chap. 3. The final stanza of the poem is irrelevant to the present study but is reproduced here for the sake of completeness.

Thy call reaches me once again
across hundreds of speechless years.
I come to thee, look in thine eyes,
and seem to see there the light of the wonder
at our first meeting in thy forest glade,
of the gladness of a promise
When we tied golden threads of kinship
round each other's wrist.
That ancient token, grown pale,
has not yet slipped off thy right arm,
and our wayfaring path of old
lies strewn with the remnants of my speech.
They help me to retrace my way to the inner chamber of thy life
where still the light is burning that we kindled together
on the forgotten evening of our union.
Remember me, even as I remember thy face,
and recognize in me as thine own,
the old that has been lost, to be regained and made new.

31. *Sĕjarah Mĕlayu*, pp. 52 *et seq.*

32. *Ming Shih*, chap. 325.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Sējarah Mēlayu*, p. 59.
35. Pires, vol. 2, p. 286.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
37. Braz de Albuquerque, *Comentários*.
38. Ma-Huan, *Ying-yai Sheng-lan*, p. 32 and *Ming Shih*, chap. 325.
39. *Sējarah Mēlayu*, p. 62.
40. Arabic = my Lord. Used when addressing religious dignitaries.
41. *Ming Shih*, chap. 325.
42. Probably a reference to the practice of planting sharpened stakes in the ground in order to impale an impetuous force in pursuit.
43. Bull's vomit.
44. *Sēj. Mēl.*, p. 69.
45. *Ibid.*, chapters 9-13; Pires, vol. 2, pp. 249-50.
46. *Sēj. Mēl.*, pp. 92-94.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 96 *et seq.*
48. *Ibid.*, p. 78 *et seq.*
49. At this time the glories of Majapahit were in fact long since passed, and the rump of the old kingdom was maintaining itself precariously in the highlands of the interior. Economic and political power had passed to the Muslim coastal kingdoms of Java; but romance knows no temporal bounds. In similar fashion Malay tradition confuses Mansur Shah's Javanese wife with the heroine of a twelfth-century romance (*Sēj. Mēl.*, pp. 76 *et seq.*).
50. *Sēj. Mēl.*, p. 84 *et seq.*
51. The axis of the universe, which was at various times and contemporaneously held to include all or part of the Tertiary mountain ranges extending between and incorporating the Caucasus and the Himalaya.
52. *Sēj. Mēl.*, pp. 84-86.
53. *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, vol. 2 (1848), pp. 353-61. The Greek situation is apparent in, *inter alia*, the oft repeated introductory phrases of Thukydides which run something like, "Next summer, at about the time of the corn's coming into ear..." The following is typical: "About the same time in the spring, before the corn was ripe, the Peloponnesians and their allies invaded Attica under Agis, the son of Archidamus, king of the Lacedaemonians, and sat down and laid waste the country..." [*History of the Peloponnesian War*, Bk. 4, chap. 12]. Compare with this 2 Samuel XI, 1: "And it came to pass, at the return of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle..." and the phrasing of a sixth-century Sanskrit inscription from Hanchey in Cambodia: "When, in autumn, Bhavavarman set out to attack foreign nations..." [*Liste générale des Inscriptions*, no. 81].
54. *Sēj. Mēl.*, chap. 12.
55. A religious teacher, though the word is never used in this sense in the Middle East. Its use in the *Sējarah Mēlayu* is one of numerous indications of the Indian provenance of Mēlakan Islam.
56. XCVIII, 6-8. "Lo! those who disbelieve, among the People of the Scripture and the idolaters, will abide in fire of hell. They are the worst of created beings.

"Lo! those who believe and do good works are the best of created beings.

"Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden underneath which rivers flow, wherein they dwell for ever. Allah hath pleasure in them and they have pleasure in Him. This is for him who feareth his Lord".

57. This incident is related in the *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, pp. 100-2.

58. Founder of the Qādirite fraternity, one of the most tolerant and charitable of Muslim sects. Jīlāni lived from 1077-1166, so that there had been adequate time for his sermons to become well known in Pasai by the mid-fifteenth century.

59. Pires, vol. 2, 247.

60. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, pp. 97-98.

61. From his tombstone.

62. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*,

63. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-15.

65. *Ibid.*, chap. 15.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 117 *et seq.*

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-5.

68. Pires, vol. 2, p. 254.

69. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, pp. 128-9.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 126

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 132-3.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-2.

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-5.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

78. Notably his public snubbing in the palace of the wealthy Kling, Raja Mendaliar, with whom Mutahir had been on terms of friendship in private life. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, p. 161.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

80. This account of the trade of Melaka is based mainly on Tomé Pires,

81. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, chap. 21.

82. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-67.

83. A Tamil word meaning "palace" or "princess's bower", which, incidentally, testifies to South Indian influence at the Mĕlakan court.

84. Pires, vol. 2, p. 269.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 254-5.

86. *Sĕj. Mĕl.*, p. 157.

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-59.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 161-4.

90. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-8.

91. E.g., R. J. Wilkinson, *History of the Peninsular Malays* (3rd edition, 1923), p. 44.

92. Pires, vol. 2, p. 286.

Chap. 10. Epilogue

1. C. Geertz, *The Development of the Javanese Economy: a socio-cultural*

approach (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 39.

2. Forcibly emphasized by Geertz, *ibid.*, chap. 3.
3. R. Linton, *The tree of culture* (New York, 1955), p. 174; H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Prehistory and religion in South-East Asia* (London, 1957).
4. "The drum named Makalamau", *India Antiqua* (Leiden, 1947), p. 175, note 27. The best among many accounts of contemporary Malaysian head-hunting is that contained in N. Adriani and Alb. C. Kruyt's *De Bare'e Sprekende Toradjas van Midden-Celebes (De Oost Toradjas)*, part 1 (Amsterdam, 1950), chap. 6. See also Alb. C. Kruyt, *De West-Toradjas op Midden Celebes* (Amsterdam, 1938). Older works dealing with this topic are C. Hose and W. McDougall, *The pagan tribes of Borneo* (London, 1912) and W. H. Furness, *Homelife of the Borneo Headhunters* (New York, 1902).
5. The political implications of the concept of the *deva-rāja* are sketched out by R. von Heine-Geldern in "Weltbild und Bauform in Sudostasien", *Wiener Beitrage Zur Kunst und Kultur Asiens* (1930), pp. 34-45 and "Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1942), pp. 15-30. See also G. Coedès, "Note sur l'apothéose au Cambodge", *Bulletin de la Commission archéologique de l'Indochine* (1911), pp. 38-49 and L. Finot, "Sur quelques traditions indochinoises", *ibid.*, pp. 20-37.
6. Chapters 4 and 5. An instance of the almost infinite elasticity of a *karma* once accumulated and adequately displayed is related in *The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma*, translated by Pe Maung Tin and G. H. Luce (London, 1923) p. 54.
7. This is, of course, in Max Weber's terms, a transition from patriarchalism (authority, though a private prerogative of the ruler, being exercised on behalf of the group as a whole in accordance with *'adat*) to sultanism (the maximization of absolute authority on a personal basis, free from traditional limitations, and supported externally by a corps of bodyguards, preferably mercenaries) [Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York, 1947, pp. 346-7]. I have refrained from using the term "sultanism" in the text for fear of possible confusion with the dynasty of Mĕlaka sultans described in Chapter 9.
8. *The Development of the Javanese Economy*, p. 42.
9. vol. 2, p. 287. Cp. the gist of the speech which Braz de Albuquerque put into the mouth of his father, p. 168 above.
10. *The Development of the Javanese Economy*, pp. 90-1.
11. For a discussion of the functional rather than civic unity of the typical Muslim town, a concept readily applicable to fifteenth-century Mĕlaka, see Xavier de Planhol, *Le Monde islamique: Essai de Géographie religieuse* (Paris, 1957), chap. 1 and particularly G. E. von Grünebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, Memoir of the American Anthropological Association, no. 81 (1955).
12. Tun Mutahir (pp. 157-158) was an exception.

Appendix 1. The Statuary of the Malay Peninsula in Early Times

1. G. Coedès, "Excavations at P'ong Tük in Siam", *Annual Bibliography*

of Indian Archaeology (Leiden, 1927), pp. 16-20 and "The excavations at P'ong Tük and their importance for the ancient history of Siam", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 21, pt. 3 (Bangkok, 1928), pp. 195-210.

2. *Ibid.*

3. D. C. and H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Further work on Indian sites in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 20, pt. 1 (1947), p. 8.

4. Wales, "A newly explored route of ancient Indian cultural expansion", *Indian Art and Letters*, new series, vol. 9, no. 1 (1935), p. 18.

5. I. H. N. Evans, "Buddhist bronzes from Kinta, Perak", *JFMSM*, vol. 15, pt. 3 (1932), pp. 135-6; and H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological Researches", *op. cit.*, p. 50.

6. Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (1940), p. 50.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Verses by Bhikṣu Saṅgharākṣita

9. Wales, "Archaeological researches", *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

10. Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia*, pp. 82-83.

11. G. Coedès, *Ars Asiatica*, tome 12, planche 17.

12. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927), plate 43, fig. 164.

13. G. Coedès, *Ars Asiatica*, tome 12, planche 11 (erroneously entitled planche 6).

14. G. Coedès, *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, pp. 45-47, and Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia*, pp. 85-87.

15. H. G. Q. Wales, *Towards Angkor* (London, 1937), p. 194.

16. W. W. Bourke, "Some archaeological notes on Monthon Puket", *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 2 (Bangkok, 1905); Lunet de Lajonquière, *Bulletin de la Commission archéologique de l'Indochine* (Paris, 1909 and 1912); Wales, "A newly explored route", pp. 14-15; and K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Takuapa and its Tamil inscription", *JMBRAS*, vol. 22, pt. 1 (1949), pp. 26-27. More recently Dr. Alastair Lamb has visited the Pra Narai group and summarized the evidence in "Three statues in a tree..." *Federation Museums Journal*, vol. 6, new series (Kuala Lumpur, 1961), pp. 64-68.

17. Wales, "Archaeological researches", *op. cit.*, p. 39.

Plate I Bronze image of the Buddha excavated by Dr. H. G. Quaritch Wales in the Bujang Valley, Kēdah and dating probably from the fifth century A.D. The treatment of the facial contours, torso and drapery is characteristically Gupta, but the low *uṣṇīṣa*, the bare right shoulder, and the gathering of the robe into folds below the left hip betray Amarāvatī influence. Reproduced by permission from M. W. F. Tweedie's *Prehistoric Malaya* (Singapore, 1955).

Plate II Bronze image of the Buddha in Gupta style dredged up in a tin-mine at Pĕngkalen, near Ipoh, and ascribed to the sixth century A.D. Reproduced by permission from Sir Richard Winstedt's "A History of Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1935).

Plate III Bronze image of Mahāvajranātha *Lokeśvara* found in a tin-mine at Bidor. It probably dates from the ninth century A.D. Reproduced by permission from Dr. H. G. Quaritch Wales's "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1940).

Plate IV Mutilated statue of a *Lokeśvara* in black bronze from Vat Brah Dhatu at C'āiya. It dates probably from the ninth or tenth century A.D. By courtesy of the National Museum, Bangkok.

Plate V The apogee of peninsular art: a mutilated *Lokeśvara* in black bronze from Vat Brah Dhatu at Cāiya. A strong affinity with Nālandā bronzes indicates a ninth- or tenth-century origin. By courtesy of the National Museum, Bangkok.

Plate VI Hinayāna Buddha on a *Nāga* allegedly from Vat Hua Vieng. An inscription on the base of the *Nāga* dates it to A.D. 1105. Whereas the Buddha apparently shows Môn affinities, the *Nāga* is clearly in Khmer style. By courtesy of the National Museum, Bangkok.

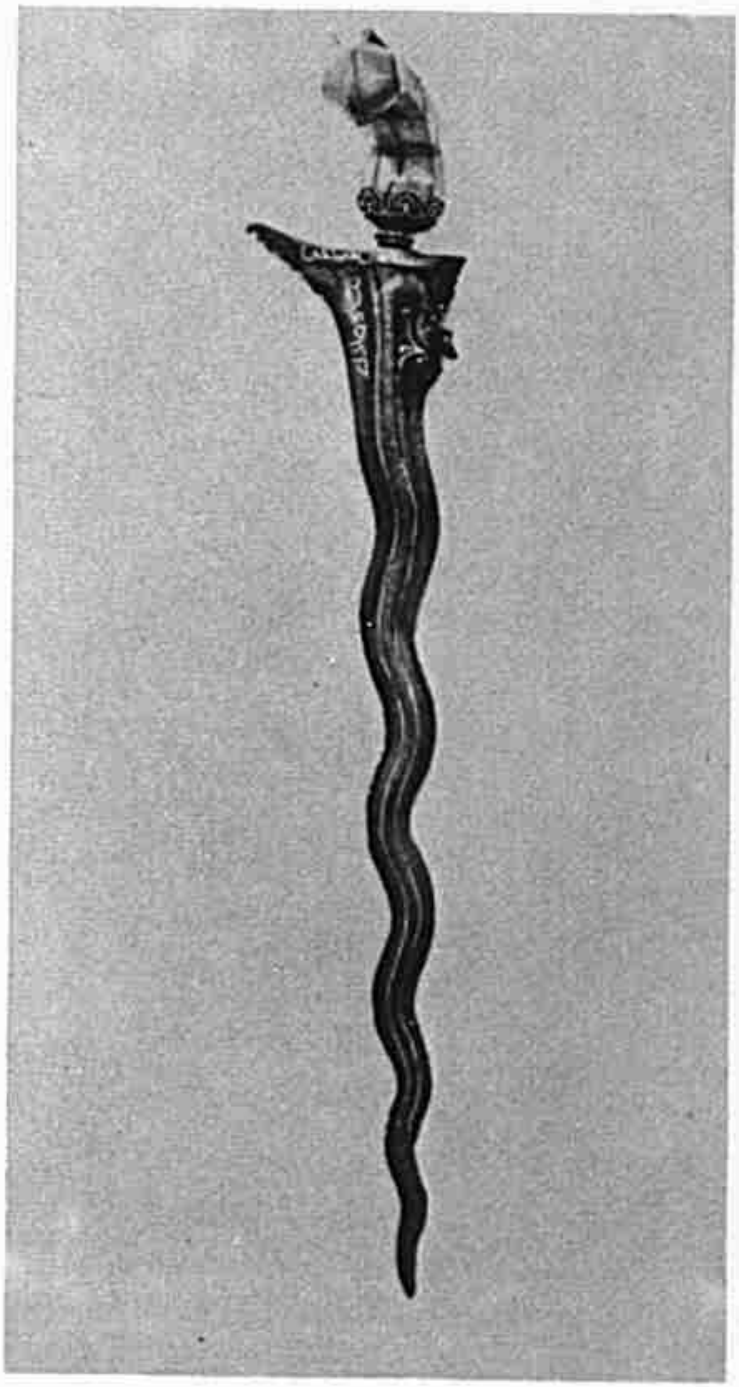

Plate VII *Kēris* of Muzaffar Shah, Sultan of Mĕlaka, 1446-59. Reproduced by permission from Sir Richard Winstedt's "A History of Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1935).

Plate VIII Tombstone of 'Ala'u'd-din Ri'ayat Shah, Sultan of Mĕlaka, 1477-88. Reproduced by permission from Sir Richard Winstedt's "A History of Malaya", *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (Singapore, 1935).

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