Editorial Note

Siti Naaisah Hambali & Mahmud Zuhdi Mohd Nor

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Abdul Rahman Haji Ismail, Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali & Zulkanain Abdul Rahman

Heritage Interpretation in Building Conservation: Lessons from Malaysia
A Ghafar Ahmad

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C. C. Chiam, R. Alias, A. R. Khalid & Y. Rusli

Conservation of Mangrove Forest in Songkla Province, Thailand
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CORRECTION

The correct spelling for 'The Honourable Datuk Wira Omar Kasih' as it appeared in the Melaka Journal of Heritage 2011 Volume 1 is 'The Honourable Datuk Wira Omar Kaseh'.
First and foremost, we would like to thank the Publisher and the Advisory Members of the Melaka Journal of Heritage for the support given for the successful publication of the inaugural volume.

The current volume features four main articles; (i) 'A New Date on The Establishment of The Melaka Malay Sultanate Discovered' written by Abdul Rahman Haji Ismail, Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali & Zulkananin Abdul Rahman; (ii) 'Heritage Interpretation in Building Conservation: Lessons from Malaysia' by A. Ghafar Ahmad, (iii) 'Contingent Valuation Method: Valuing Living Heritage in Melaka City' by C.C. Chiam, R. Alias, A.R. Khalid, & Y. Rusli, and (iv) Conservation of Mangrove Forest in Songkhla Province, Thailand by Arthit Thepkamnoet and Saidatulakmal Mohd. Conference notes were prepared by Mahmud Zuhdi Mohd Nor and Mark Staniforth. The first article continues the inaugural volume's objective in lending a historical perspective on Melaka. The second article, written by one of Malaysia's leading experts on the subject, discusses the importance of heritage interpretation in building conservation, focusing on heritage building conservation projects completed under the auspices of the Department of National Heritage, Malaysia. The third article discusses the economic valuation methods to measure the "non-use" or the intangible goods or matters. While the three main articles devote discussion focusing on Malaysia and Melaka, the fourth is a study on mangrove in Thailand, an interesting contribution from the natural environmental perspective that highlights needs for more comparative analysis of heritage issues. The authors argued that age, average monthly income and education attainment are statistically significant variables in determining the public's willingness to pay ('WTP') for conservation the mangrove forest in Songkhla province. We hope to receive more international contribution that will be of interest and benefits to heritage experts and practitioners in Melaka and globally.

Looking back at the work done at UNESCO and around the globe, 11 inscriptions made it to the UNESCO list of the Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and a further 19 items made it to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2011. In 2010, 4 items made it to the list of Urgent Need of Safeguarding while 46 items were listed in the latter category. Thus the past 2 years have been busy times at UNESCO, not only for their work in the promotion of the 2003 Convention, but also for all the efforts going into
capacity building and the safeguarding of intangible heritage matters at national levels. For Malaysia, the Mak Yong Theatre was inscribed under the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008. The national inventory of the intangible cultural heritage under the National Heritage Act 2005 has grown in number since the law’s coming into force in 2006. Therefore, the Advisory and Editorial board feel that it is important for the Melaka Journal of Heritage to include works relating to the intangible aspect of cultural heritage including but not limited to cultural expressions and traditional knowledge. The editorial board welcomes future contribution in these areas, not only as part of the special focus of the next volume but for other future volumes of the journal.

In our final words, we welcome comments and suggestions on any aspects relating to the content or presentation of the journal.

Siti Naaishah Hambali & Mahmud Zuhdi Mohd Nor
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A NEW DATE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MELAKA MALAY SULTANATE DISCOVERED

Abdul Rahman Haji Ismail, Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali & Zulkanain Abdul Rahman

Abstract

Scholars and historians have never really reached a consensus on the correct foundation date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka. Although the year 1400 A.D. was accepted by many scholars as the foundation date of the Melaka Sultanate, we argue that it is not the correct foundation date. This paper examines a variety of suggestions and mixed information based on various sources, those of the same era and others, which showed discrepancy on the beginning date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka.

Keywords: Melaka, Malay Sultanate, Discovery Date

Introduction

Ancient authors were widely at variance in their dating of the foundation of Malacca. The earliest date assigned to this event was the eighth century by Gaspar Correa, who was notoriously inaccurate when reporting at second hand. Joao de Barros, an unusually conscientious and discriminating historian, proposed the first half of the thirteenth century, Valentijn 1252 or 1253 and Diogo de Couto the first half of the fourteenth century. Eredia, a scholar of honest intent who lived in Malacca some two centuries after the event, placed the founding of the city at 1411, while the son of Afonso de Albuquerque, the conqueror of Malacca, basing his account on original documents, fixed the date at c. 1420. Among modern scholars, only Gabriel Ferrand has attempted to substantiate Correa’s claim for an eighth century foundation, and his arguments have been effectively refuted by Rouffaer. The Malay scholar, Otto Blagden, proposed the last quarter of fourteenth century, while most recent authors have favoured the turn of the century...

The correct foundation date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka has never been mentioned clearly. Till now, there have been no accurate documents or written manifestations of the same epoch which could finalise the actual date of its foundation. The “Hikayat Melayu”, which is a primary source of the Sulalat-us-Salatin, was written several centuries after the events discussed took place. However, the original version of the “Hikayat Melayu” has not yet been discovered. Previous historians set different foundation dates of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka, starting as early as the 8th century (Gaspar Correa) to as late as 1420 (Braz de Albuquerque). Some scholars decided that the foundation date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was around 1400 A.D. based on several reasons such as the assumption of 16th century Portuguese historians who furnished different possible dates, the theories of Majapahit’s attack on Palimbang in 1397, and the appearance of Malay sultans in China as recorded in the official record of Ming dynasty in the early 15th century.

For instance, after studying the Chinese source and Sulalat-us-Salatin, O.W. Wolters, who presumed that Bai-li-mi-su-la (Parameswara) in Ming records was actually a reference to Raja Seri Iskandar Syah in Sulalat-us-Salatin, is of the opinion that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in 1399 or 1400 A.D. However, as recorded in Chinese documents, some scholars set an earlier date such as 1389/90 or 1394 after taking into account the ruling period of the founder of Malay Sultanate of Melaka when he was first in Singapore. Moreover, some other scholars claimed that the founder of Malay Sultanate of Melaka was originally from Palimbang. The issue of the correct foundation date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was already discussed in detail, and among these scholars were: R.O. Winstedt, W. Linehan, Paul Wheatley, Christopher Wake, Wang Gungwu, O. W. Wolters, Muhammad Yusoff Hashim, Abu Hassan Sham, Mohd. Dahlan Mansoer and many more. Generally, they agreed that the period of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka lasted only for a century. In addition, many explanations have already been given to explain the extraordinary phenomenon of the rapid development of Melaka from a seafront village to a famous port which consequently became an important trade centre in South East Asia.

Other Possible Dates

The claim that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka began around 1400 A.D is not consistent with the manifestation or pronouncement of other sources, which are still considered relevant. Those local and international sources state that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in the middle of 13th century and the period of this sultanate was more than two centuries.
A typeset titled “Ini Dari Sejarah Melayu Asal Raja-Raja” (IDSMAR), which is known as a *Maxwell 9* in western literature, for example, states clearly that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in the 1260s. According to this typeset, the rule began in 663 H and three years later, Singapore was attacked by Majapahit. As a result, the fifth sultan of Singapore, Seri Iskandar Syah, “crossed to the main land” and “founded a city called Malacca”. This typeset, however, does not state the period taken by Raja Seri Iskandar Syah in his journey to arrive in Melaka. Instead, it mentions clearly that he “ruled the country for 25 years... three years in Singapore and 22 years in Malacca”. Thus, according to this source, the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was begun by Seri Iskandar Syah in 666 H corresponding to 1268 A.D.

Another document that is similar to IDSMAR is a copy titled “Ceritera Asal Raja-Raja Melayu Punya Keturunan” (CARMPK). This copy was alphabetised or transliterated into the Roman alphabet by R. Roolvink and documented in C.C. Brown, (ed.) *Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals*, Oxford University Press, 1970, pg. XXVIII-XXXI and republished as an Appendix D in Muhammad Yusoff Hashim, *The Malay Sultanate of Malacca* (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992, pg. 294-296). Apart from a small difference in the copying process, the copy is basically similar to IDSMAR. This copy also states that after three years ruling Singapore starting in 663 H, Raja Seri Iskandar Syah absconded to the Peninsula due to the attack of Majapahit and in 666 H (corresponding to 1268 A.D.) he founded a city named “Malacca”. Similar to IDSMAR, CARMPK also recorded that Raja Seri Iskandar Syah ruled Singapore for 3 years and then Melaka for 22 years.

In the field study conducted in 2009 by Prof. Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali and Dr. Zulkarnain Abdul Rahman, they found several other sources/documents which also stated that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in the middle of 13th century A.D. Those documents are “Salasilah ANM, SP/75”, “Salasilah Singkep (Lingga)”, “Salasilah Pulau Penyengat”, and “Salasilah Bintan (Tengku Husin)”. According to those documents, the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in 1249, 1251, or 1254 A.D.6

As mentioned earlier, western historians are of the opinion that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded in the 13th century. Among them is de Barros who claims that Melaka was founded in 1240 A.D. and Francois Valentijn (Valentyn) who believes that the Sultanate was founded either in 1952 or 1953 A.D. A Dutch source, which is still a valid reference today, “Lyst der Koningen van Malakka” 7 states that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka started in 1252 A.D.
To sum up, the onset date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka can be listed as below:

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</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Salasilah</em> Singkep (Lingga)</td>
<td>1251 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Salasilah</em> Pulau Penyengat</td>
<td>1251 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumber Belanda (Beschryvinge)</td>
<td>1252 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francois Valentijn</td>
<td>1252/3 M</td>
</tr>
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<td><em>Salasilah</em> Bintan (Tengku Husin)</td>
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<td><em>Ini Dari Sejarah Melayu Asal Raja-raja</em> (IDSMAR)</td>
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<td>1268 M</td>
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**Table 1:** Sources/Documents on the Foundation Date A.D. of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka

**Analysis**

IDSMAR and CARMPK record dates on the basis of Hegira year calculation, which is a Malay practice of date calculation after they embraced Islam. Meanwhile, the other sources of the abovementioned list record dates based on Anno Domini (A.D.) calculation. The use of A.D. in *Salasilah* ANM, SP/75, *Salasilah* Singkep (Lingga), *Salasilah* Pulau Penyengat, and *Salasilah* Bintan (Tengku Husin) indicates that those documents or sources were produced later, namely after the strong western influence in Malay Archipelago. It is possible, that those documents were written in the 20th century like the Dutch source “Lyst der Koningen van Malakka” which was written after the 18th century.

The recorded date or year based on Hegira calculation proved that both sources, IDSMAR and CARMPK, were written by Malays themselves. Because the habit of recording dates was not a common practice among traditional Malays, yet, there is a possibility that IDSMAR and CARMPK were also written after the influence of the west in the 19th century. The date of 1268 A.D. as mentioned above is obtained after the year 666 was converted to the calculation based on the A.D. year. Thus, the originality degree of information in this source is higher compared with those
A New Date on The Establishment of The Melaka Malay Sultanate Discovered

four other sources. However, if the information is observed wholly, it is questionable indeed. Among them is in IDSMAR which stated that Sultan Ahmad Syah ascended the throne replacing his father Sultan Mahmud Syah in 922 and died in 942/943 (H). 922 (H) corresponds to 1516 A.D. namely five years after Melaka was conquered by Portuguese. Meanwhile, 942 and 943 H correspond to 1535 and 1536 A.D. respectively, that is, seven or eight years after Sultan 'Alaudin Riayat Syah II ascending the throne replacing his father, Sultan Mahmud Syah who died in Kampar in 1528 A.D. This date is found as incorrect as Raja Ahmad was enthroned at the end of 1510 or at the beginning of 1511, namely before Melaka was conquered by Portuguese in August 1511. He died around 1516 A.D. On the other hand, CARMPK stated that Sultan Ahmad Syah died in 945 H or 1539 A.D. For other examples, Seri Iskandar Syah was recorded to be on the throne in 663 H and ruled Singapore and Melaka for 3 and 22 years respectively. However, he was recorded dead in 678 H i.e. ten years earlier than the correct date namely 688 H.

In the Dutch source "Lyst der Koningen van Malakka", the real variance of the dates stated can be seen clearly. The dates mentioned in the "Lyst der Koningen van Malakka" seem to be organised based on every tenure of ruling for each sultan in Singapore, Melaka, and Johor until 1708 A.D. Yet, numbers of inaccurate recorded dates are detected. For instance, the ruling of Sultan Mansur Syah was recorded to end in 1447 A.D. but the ruling of his replacement, Sultan 'Alaudin Ri'ayat Syah was written to start earlier i.e. 1337 A.D. Besides, Sultan Ahmad Syah Melaka was recorded to be on throne in 1513 A.D. and died in 1540 A.D.; meanwhile, it is known that he was enthroned at the end of 1510 or at the beginning of 1511, and he even experienced the war defending Melaka from the attack of Portuguese and died in Bintan around 1516 A.D.

From the above discussion, it is clear that there is a collection of documents or sources which states that the Malay Sultanate of Melaka was founded by Raja Seri Iskandar Syah in the middle of the 13th century. The question is - where are those sources getting the information of that particular issue from? There is no clear indicator that the issue of founding the Malay Sultanate of Melaka in those sources except in "Lyst Der Koningen van Malakka". Interestingly, both IDSMAR and CARMPK recorded in the year of Hegira calculation, while the rest including "Lyst der Koningen van Malakka" were in Anno Domini calculation. The distinction of "Lyst der Koningen van Malakka" is when it also states the tenure of ruling for each sultan of Singapore, Melaka and Johor, in addition to the dates of being on the throne until the period of 1708 A.D. It is obvious that in the case of the founding of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka, the year of 1252 A.D. was obtained by a reverse calculation through subtracting